

# EXPLORING WORKPLACE INCIVILITY AND THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC WORK ETHICS IN ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENTS

Nur Aulia Fahada Misaridin <sup>1</sup>  
Nur Yani Che Hussin <sup>2</sup>  
Raja Nurul Hafizah Raja Ismail <sup>2</sup>  
Nurul Khair Ishak<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Management and Informatics, Sultan Ahmad Shah Pahang Islamic University (UnIPSAS)

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Islamic Studies, Sultan Ahmad Shah Pahang Islamic University (UnIPSAS)

Email: fahada@unipsas.edu.my

## Article history

**Received date** : 28-11-2023  
**Revised date** : 29-11-2023  
**Accepted date** : 20-11-2023  
**Published date** : 31-12-2023

## To cite this document:

Misaridin, N. A. F., Che Hussin, N. Y., Raja Ismail, R. N. H., & Ishak, N. K. (2023). Exploring workplace incivility and the role of islamic work ethics in academic environments. *Journal of Islamic, Social, Economics and Development (JISED)*, 8 (59), 428 – 435.

---

**Abstract:** *Workplace incivility in the academic workplace has received less attention in studies. Workplace civility in academic settings is critical for maintaining a healthy university atmosphere and boosting teaching-learning outcomes. Individuals, teams, departments, and the campus community might suffer because of workplace incivility. Therefore, academic institutions are urged to provide a civic environment. In recent years, one of the most often debated topics has been ethics, specifically Islamic work ethics (IWE) that can be applied in any business applications and behaviours. Therefore, this article will explore the fundamental concepts of Islamic work ethics as they apply to the workplace. This paper will demonstrate how Islamic work principles might improve workplace civility in an academic setting.*

**Keywords:** *workplace incivility, Islamic work ethics*

---

## Introduction

'Workplace incivility' refers to a variety of actions that vary in severity, persistence, and frequency. It might involve impolite and discourteous attitude, undermining others, bullying, violence, harassment, emotional abuse, abusive supervision, social isolation, or interpersonal conflict. According to a CIPD survey, slightly more than a third of UK workers encountered a big incidence of conflict or an ongoing challenging relationship in the preceding year. It was shown that 15% of employees had encountered bullying, 4% had experienced sexual harassment, and 8% had experienced various types of harassment in the previous three years Young, J. and Gifford, J. (2022).

The concept of workplace civility takes on a significant relevance in the hallowed halls of academia, where seeking of knowledge and the exchange of ideas are important. Academic workplace civility is critical for maintaining a healthy university atmosphere and boosting teaching-learning outcomes (Hendricks et al., 2021.). The interactions between professors, researchers, administrators, and students in the academic community have a substantial influence on the entire academic experience (Clark & Ritter, 2018). Individuals, teams, departments, and the campus community can all suffer because of workplace incivility. As a result, robust rules, and procedures to combat workplace incivility and foster a healthy academic work environment are critical.

In every company, doing the right thing is like an indicator that points everyone in the correct direction. It is not just about following the rules; it is about making decisions that are fair, honest, and respectful. This is referred to as ethical behaviour, and it is critical for a variety of reasons. When employees perform ethically in the workplace, it contributes to the development of trust so they can work better as a team, be more creative, and accomplish success together. Ethical behaviour also makes people feel good about their jobs, increases everyone's morale, and makes them proud to be a part of the team.

In the workplace, Islamic ethics offers a special guide for creating a fair and compassionate environment. These values, rooted in the teachings of the Quran and Prophet Muhammad, shape our actions and decisions at work. Following Islamic principles means building a workplace culture where everyone is treated fairly, acts with honesty, and cares about the well-being of everyone involved. This paper intends to study the core principles of Islamic work ethics applicable to the workplace. In addition, it will point out how Islamic work ethics can enhance workplace civility in academic environment.

## Literature Review

### Workplace Incivility

In the workplace, incivility is defined as "low-intensity inappropriate conduct with ambiguous intent to cause harm to the target, in violation of workplace mutual respect norms" (Koon & Pun, 2018). Several studies have linked workplace incivility to job burnout (Cropanzano et al., 2003; Rahim & Cosby, 2016; Shi et al., 2018).

According to Liu & Zhou (2018), workplace incivility has a strong indirect effect on OCB via burnout. Furthermore, workplace incivility had a greater favourable effect on burnout for individuals with stronger emotional commitment, meaning that workplace incivility may be more destructive to people who are more engaged to their companies. Incivility causes emotional exhaustion in service members, decreases intrinsic drive, and limits inventive

thinking. The findings of this study suggest a negative association between workplace incivility and creativity in service professionals, which is completely and sequentially mediated by emotional tiredness and intrinsic drive (Hur & Moon, 2016).

Workplace incivility has also been associated to turnover intention, psychological contract, job satisfaction, work stress, and work engagement (Alias et al., 2022; Sao et al., 2022; Vasconcelos, 2020). Incivility in the workplace has little influence on knowledge exchange in the public sector, according to the study (Alias & Ojo, 2020). However, Cingöz and Kaplan (2015) observed a statistically negligible and negative association between workplace incivility and job satisfaction.

Workplace incivility in academic settings is a complicated phenomenon including numerous sorts of disrespectful and discourteous behaviour among members of the academic community. Scholars and educators have increasingly recognised the potential for this issue to undermine the core collegial and collaborative atmosphere required for excellent academic endeavours in recent years.

Incivility in the academic profession can present itself in a variety of ways, including subtle, passive-aggressive actions as well as more overt demonstrations of contempt. Negative workplace behaviours can take many forms, including the use of condescending language, adopting dismissive attitudes, implementing exclusionary practises, and undermining colleagues' contributions (Clark & Ritter, 2018; Taylor et al., 2019). Instances of uncivil conduct can occur in a variety of academic settings, including classrooms, research labs, administrative offices, and other comparable situations.

Understanding the core elements that contribute to incivility is critical for properly addressing and mitigating this issue. Several variables, including increased competition for research funding, the need to publish, and the tenure process, may all contribute to the development of a stressful academic environment (Wilson & Smith, 2015). Furthermore, power inequalities, poor communication, and a highly competitive academic atmosphere may all contribute to the formation of an environment conducive to the spread of incivility (Thomas, 2018).

The consequences of workplace incivility affect a wide range of domains. Individual faculty members' experiences with stress, anxiety, and decreased work satisfaction have the potential to impair their efficacy in teaching and doing research (Brown & White, 2019). The existence of incivility inside an academic institution can have a negative impact on cooperation, creativity, and the organization's overall goal (Adams, 2020).

Addressing and reducing workplace incivility requires a holistic approach. Institutions, according to Johnson and Martinez (2017), may develop specific rules of behaviour, enable transparent communication, and provide training programmes focused on conflict resolution and interpersonal abilities. Furthermore, the development of a nurturing and all-encompassing academic environment in which a variety of opinions are valued has the potential to improve a professional environment characterised by mutual regard (Lee & Green, 2021).

### **Existing studies on IWE and Workplace Incivility**

Islamic work ethics give a unique framework for encouraging respect and harmony among co-workers while tackling the problem of professional incivility in the workplace. These ethics, which are based on Islamic teachings, emphasise qualities such as justice, compassion, and respect for others, providing a basis for creating a healthy and inclusive work environment.

Several studies have been conducted on both Islamic work ethics and workplace incivility. In a research conducted by Nauman et al. (2023) revealed that there exists an inverse correlation between Islamic work ethics and employee deviant behaviours, whereas organizational politics and supervisor-initiated workplace incivility exhibit a positive correlation with employee deviant behaviours. The research additionally discovered that the association between Islamic work ethics and employee deviant behaviours is subject to moderation by organizational politics.

However, there are studies that show people who have high Islamic work ethics tend not to involve in workplace incivility. According to (Murtaza et al., 2017), employees with a high degree of IWE exhibit less retaliatory behaviours than those with a low level of IWE. In other research, Scholars have determined that Islamic work values boost individuals' motivation and prevent harmful outcomes such as WPI (Nasution & Rafiki, 2019).

### **Findings**

Islamic work ethics (IWE) encompass a collection of values and concepts that are derived from Islamic teachings and serve as a guiding framework for the conduct of those adhering to the Islamic faith within the context of their professional endeavours with emphasis on the fundamental values of honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, and social responsibility across all dimensions of professional endeavours (Akhmadi et al., 2023).

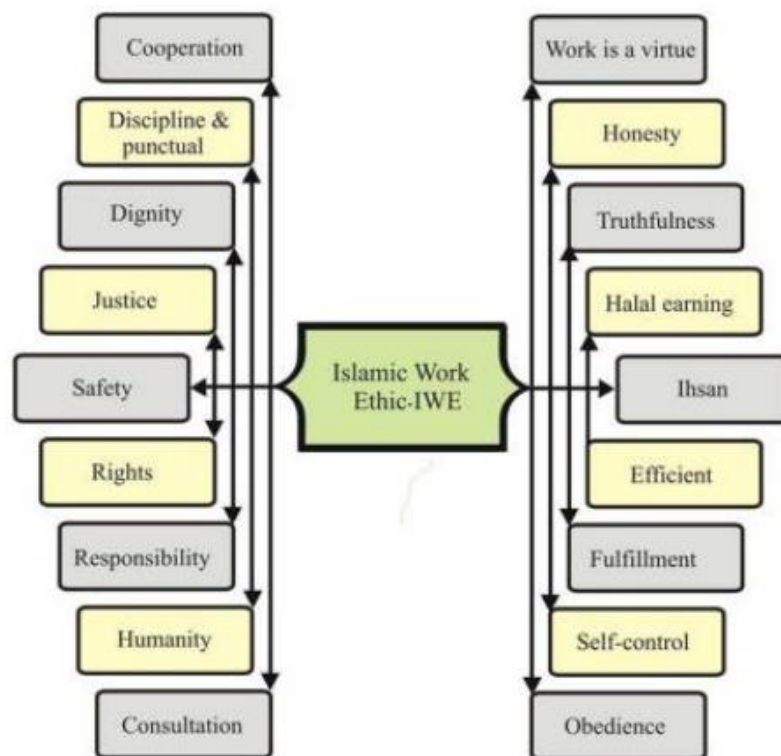
The convergence of Islamic ethics and professional conduct exerts a substantial impact on persons across diverse occupational domains, providing a moral framework that is deeply anchored in the teachings of Islam. Islamic ethics are rooted in the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith, which emphasize the importance of values such as integrity, fairness, and responsibility. These principles serve as a moral compass for professionals, directing their ethical behaviours. Professionals are advised to adopt a commitment to honesty, exercise impartial judgement, and demonstrate social responsibility, thereby fostering a work atmosphere characterized by compassionate leadership and ethical decision-making. This paradigm encompasses the promotion of diversity, inclusivity, and the prevention of discrimination in professional interactions. In general, the correlation between Islamic ethics and professional conduct not only influences personal development but also fosters a constructive and morally conscious professional collective.

From a pragmatic standpoint, this correlation manifests itself in professionals making judgements guided by ethical values, displaying respect towards others, and actively contributing to the betterment of society. The practice cultivates a heightened awareness of one's obligations and liability, placing significant emphasis on the significance of impartiality and equity in professional transactions. In the professional realm, individuals rely on ethical principles derived from Islamic teachings to guide their actions and establish a moral framework. These values play a crucial role in shaping behaviour and cultivating a professional environment characterized by honesty, compassion, and inclusivity.

Ali & Weir, (2010) conducted a study which suggests that the foundation of IWE consists of four fundamental concepts: effort, competition, transparency, and morally acceptable conduct. On the contrary, researchers have conducted examinations on Islamic Work Ethics (IWE) across many cultural contexts where Islam serves as the predominant religion. While there are certain commonalities in work ethic among Muslims globally, it is important to acknowledge that each culture is influenced by distinct contextual beliefs and practices (Kalemci & Kalemci

Tuzun, 2019). The Islamic Work Ethic (IWE) encompasses the principles of akhlaqul karimah, as prescribed by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), which Muslims are obligated to embrace and incorporate into their everyday business practices, extending beyond religious ceremonies (Nasution & Rafiki, 2020). It is imperative to acknowledge that Islamic Work Ethics is a view that is subject to change and development, and its understanding may alter depending on various cultural and regional circumstances. Scholars frequently investigate these concepts by employing qualitative approaches, like interviews and case studies, to get insights into their practical application across many organizational contexts.

Aldulaimi (2016) has established a theoretical construct for the IWE consisting of 18 characteristics that have a substantial influence on the workplace by relying on IWE literature and analysing Islamic teachings, regardless of different branches of Islam. These ethics are taken from Sharia's primary texts (the Quran and Sunah).



**Figure 1 Theoretical framework of Islamic Work Ethics by Aldulaimi (2016)**

The study concluded that Islamic ethical standards are heavily dependent on one's religious trust in Allah. Committed employees can immediately assist an organisation since they are balanced in all aspects.

### Methodology

The present study employed a content analysis technique. A search that was conducted by researchers for articles indexed in Google Scholar and Scopus site that contained the terms “work incivility” and “Islamic work ethics” in their titles. This also includes journals that were published in Emerald publication. In the subsequent phase, a similar search technique was conducted for the term “incivility in academic”. The scope of the searching process did not include terms that consist of work incivility in other areas. While it is acknowledged that this approach may present a constraint to the study, the decision was made to conduct the search

only based on article titles. This was done to specifically target publications that are directly relevant to incivility and Islamic work ethics. About 20 articles with the keyword mentioned above were used as reference to this concept paper.

### **Discussion**

Promoting workplace civility fosters an environment of mutual respect and productive communication among teachers, administrators, and personnel. When individuals believe themselves to be regarded and treated with respect, they are more likely to collaborate and collegial, resulting in increased levels of cooperation in the context of research activities, curriculum creation, and other academic endeavours.

In terms of mental health well-being, a reduction in instances of incivility might reduce tension and anxiety among academics and staff, leading in increased job satisfaction and general well-being in the workplace. There is a link between workplace civility and higher levels of job satisfaction among professors and staff members. Individuals are more likely to regard their employment as meaningful and to have a sense of pleasure when they are exposed to courteous and friendly conduct. It has been discovered that creating a civic work atmosphere has a good influence on faculty members' productivity levels. Faculty members who work in an environment of mutual respect and collaboration have higher levels of engagement.

Therefore, the effort to instill Islamic moral ethics is critical to improving an organization's efficiency and quality. Islamic work ethics somehow able to curb workplace incivility by provide civil environment (Hendryadi, 2022). Indeed, this approach must be emphasised, since moral and ethical challenges in both wealthy and developing countries are rising at an alarming rate. Islam's work ethics are inextricably related to religious and spiritual ideals (Aldulaimi, 2016). According to an Islamic perspective, work ethics in an organisation have the potential to directly influence job satisfaction and work performance levels. IWEs will lead to higher job performance by increasing confidence and contentment, prioritising organisational goals over individual wants, and having a sense of peace and tranquillity at the workplace. As a result, it is critical that IWEs be ingrained in organisational practises in any country.

### **Future research direction**

Future research should be conducted to better understand the factors that can control workplace incivility from Islamic perspective. Factor such as religiosity should be considered in future studies. Furthermore, future study should focus on workplace incivility in academic contexts, which has gotten less emphasis in studies. In conclusion, workplace incivility is a significant issue that negatively impacts both employees and organizations especially in academic environment that critical to educate society.

## References

- Akhmadi, A., Hendryadi, Suryani, Sumail, L. O., & Pujiwati, A. (2023). Islamic work ethics and employees' prosocial voice behavior: The multi-role of organizational identification. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2174064>
- Ali, A. J., & Weir, D. (2010). Islamic Perspectives on Management and Organization. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion*, 2(3), 410–415. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14766080509518602>
- Aldulaimi, S. H. (2016). Fundamental Islamic perspective of work ethics. *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research*, 7(1), 59–76.
- Alias, M., & Ojo, A. O. (2020). Workplace Incivility : The Impact On The Malaysian Public Service Department. *European Journal of Training and Development*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJTD-02-2020-0031>
- Alias, M., Ojo, A. O., & Ameruddin, N. F. L. (2022). Workplace incivility: the impact on the Malaysian public service department. *European Journal of Training and Development*, 46(3/4), 356–372.
- Cingöz, A., & Kaplan, A. (2015). The Effect of Workplace Incivility on Job Satisfaction and Organizational Trust: a Study of Industrial Enterprises in Turkey. *The 2015 WEI International Academic Conference Proceedings*.
- Clark, C. M., & Ritter, K. (2018). Policy to foster civility and support a healthy academic work environment. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 57(6), 325–331.
- Cropanzano, R., Rupp, D. E., & Byrne, Z. S. (2003). The relationship of emotional exhaustion to work attitudes, job performance, and organizational citizenship behaviors. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88(1), 160.
- Hendricks, L., Reysen, S., Zaidy Mohdzain, K. M., Oliveira, J. T., & Dang, Q. (n.d.). *Student Satisfaction: Importance of Civility and University Identification Predictors*.
- Hendryadi, H. (2022). Encouraging employees' voice behavior through Islamic work ethics and civility climate: The role of organizational identification. *Jurnal Manajemen Strategi Dan Aplikasi Bisnis*, 5(2), 353–366.
- Hur, W., & Moon, T. (2016). The Effect Of Workplace Incivility On Service Employee Creativity : The Mediating Role Of Emotional Exhaustion And Intrinsic Motivation. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 3(June 2015), 302–315. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSM-10-2014-0342>
- Kalemci, R. A., & Kalemci Tuzun, I. (2019). Understanding Protestant and Islamic Work Ethic Studies: A Content Analysis of Articles. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 158(4), 999–1008. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-017-3716-y>
- Liu, W., & Zhou, Z. E. (2018). Effect of Workplace Incivility on OCB Through Burnout : the Moderating Role of Affective Commitment. *Journal of Business and Psychology*.
- Murtaza, G., Roques, O., & Talpur, Q. (2017). Effects of Workplace Incivility and Islamic Work Ethic on Organizational Retaliation Behaviors. *Academy of Management Proceedings*, 2017(1), 13037.
- Nasution, F. N., & Rafiki, A. (2020). Islamic work ethics, organizational commitment and job satisfaction of Islamic banks in Indonesia. *RAUSP Management Journal*, 55(2), 195–205. <https://doi.org/10.1108/RAUSP-01-2019-0011>
- Nauman, S., Basit, A. A., & Imam, H. (2023). Examining the influence of Islamic work ethics, organizational politics, and supervisor-initiated workplace incivility on employee deviant behaviors. *Ethics and Behavior*, 0(0), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10508422.2023.2275200>
- Rahim, A., & Cosby, D. M. (2016). A model of workplace incivility, job burnout, turnover intentions, and job performance. *Journal of Management Development*.

- Sao, R., Chandak, S., & Bhadade, P. (2022). Price of Workplace Incivility: Impact on Turnover Intention. *ECS Transactions*, 107(1), 8939.
- Shi, Y., Guo, H., Zhang, S., Xie, F., Wang, J., Sun, Z., Dong, X., Sun, T., & Fan, L. (2018). Impact of workplace incivility against new nurses on job burn-out: A cross-sectional study in China. *BMJ Open*. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2017-020461>
- Taylor, H., Harle, C. A., Johnson, S. M., & Menachemi, N. (2019). WORKPLACE INCIVILITY EXPERIENCED BY HEALTH ADMINISTRATION FACULTY. *The Journal of Health Administration Education*.
- Vasconcelos, A. F. (2020). Workplace incivility: a literature review. *International Journal of Workplace Health Management*, 13(5), 513–542.
- Young, J. and Gifford, J. (2022) Bullying and incivility at work: an evidence review. Practice summary and recommendations. *London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development*.