

# Islamic ethics and commitment among Muslim nurses in Indonesia

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# Islamic ethics and commitment among Muslim nurses in Indonesia



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Ethical principles are among the topics that are widely emphasised in the Islamic society. Ethics is a set of values, do's and don'ts that can play an important role in the effective management of organisations. If employees of organisations, especially medical staff, are working in the atmosphere of Islamic ethics, they show functional behaviours in line with the goals and missions of organisation. Due to the direct relationship and treatment of nurses with recipients of medical services, nurses' behaviours have significant impact on the quality of services provided by medical centres. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between Islamic ethics and commitment of 1100 Muslim nurses in Indonesia in 2021. This study was performed by descriptive-analytical correlational method. Data were collected using Islamic ethics and organisational commitment questionnaires and measured by Pearson correlation coefficient in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and structural equation modelling analysis (SEM) in linear structural relationships (LISREL). The results indicate that Islamic ethics have significant and positive relationship with nurses' commitment as  $p = 0.542$  and  $t = 5.63$ .

**Contribution:** According to the research findings, it can be concluded that commitment of nurses can be improved by applying Islamic ethics in medical centres.

**Keywords:** Islamic ethics; Islam; religion; nurses; commitment.

## Introduction

Similar to any other society, Islamic society needs management. In general, an Islamic society focuses on the divine, religious and moral values of Islam and observes them in official and unofficial relations. The Islamic management approach in the Islamic community is integrated with Islamic values, behaviours and attitudes, which affect Islamic management. Therefore, no appropriate planning can be made without having a proper understanding of the values and one cannot direct other sections, social organisations and tasks. The Islamic community needs a type of management that has human and religious values based on ethical principles and focuses on Islamic ideals (Aldulaimi 2016). Today, managers of organisations attempt to increase the productivity of their organisations by using the resources at their disposal. It is notable that human resources are one of the most important resources of an organisation. Accordingly, it is best to focus on issues that improve the performance of human resources in organisations (Anwar, Gani & Rahman 2020). Therefore, multiple studies have evaluated factors affecting human resources' performance in the workplace. Meanwhile, nurses' commitment plays a vital role in determining the quality of services provided to clients. Similar to other concepts of organisational behaviour, organisational commitment is defined by various techniques. Most commonly, organisational commitment is regarded as a type of emotional dependence on the organisation. According to this method, a person who is strongly committed to the organisation receives their identity from the organisation, becomes engaged in the organisation's activities, blends with it and enjoys being one of its members (Athar et al. 2016). However, this sense of commitment to the organisation depends on various factors. Nowadays, we live in a time of intermittent technological advancement and unprecedented increases in social facilities across the world. Unfortunately, these achievements have decreased the role of values and spirituality in the work and family life of individuals (Wan Husin et al. 2020). This briefly explains the decline in commitment to the

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organisation and Islamic ethics in the workplace. Therefore, it is best to utilise Islamic teachings for individual and organisational benefits, which ultimately leads to community excellence. Islamic ethics is a set of principles that has been approved by Islamic teachings. Morality refers to the inner traits of human beings that are institutionalised within them. This term includes both positive traits, such as chivalry and bravery, and negative traits, including obscurity and cowardice. It also involves traits such as tolerance, courage and social ethics such as humility and self-sacrifice. In fact, Islamic ethics refers to the parts of the Islamic teachings that are related to the virtues and vices of human deeds (Nasution, Sembiring & Harahap 2021). Islam highly values ethics and morality. In addition, the Holy Quran speaks on ethical concepts such as good and evil, justice and oppression, patience and kindness. According to the Holy Quran, the important mission of the prophet is to correct the morality of human beings (Surah Al-Baqarah, Ayat 151; Surah Al Imran, Ayat 164; Surah Al-Jumu'ah, Ayat 2). In a narrative, the prophet of Islam introduced the purpose of his prophecy as completing moral virtues (Majlesi 1403AH; Nouri 1408AH). In addition, managing the social and individual life of human beings, which is one of the objectives of this religion, is only possible by adhering to a certain set of ethical principles. Therefore, without ethics, religion is unable to achieve its goals and reward human beings in the hereafter (Mesbah Yazdi 2011). Uncertainty and sudden occurrence of disasters and diseases require special attention and nurses, as the largest human resource, have a serious role in maintaining and promoting the health of patients. In the event of accidents and illnesses, the use of nursing care in order to provide quality care services is of particular importance. Given the importance of nursing services in the community, and with regard to the significance of Islamic ethics and commitment, the present study aimed to evaluate Islamic ethics and commitment among Muslim nurses of Indonesia in 2021.

## Islamic ethics

As a branch of the humanities, ethics focus on the recognition of examples of values and shows ways to achieve virtues and avoid vices. In the philosophy of ethics, there are various views of the goodness or badness of a subject. In religious ethics, these consequences may also occur in the other world, which is spiritual, whereas in non-religious ethics, the occurrence of desired results for human society, for example, is considered only in the material world. In this type of ethics, ethical micro-patterns and affairs with desirable results for human society might be determined based on the consensus of prominent psychologists and sociologists and not necessarily by custodians of the religion (Abdi, Nor & Radzi 2014). In individual ethics, there is a 'personal should', and the person himself makes decisions and rules that obligate him to do or not do the task. In this case, the purpose of righteousness is to improve the life status in the community (Tufail et al. 2016; Widyarini & Muafi 2021). Here, we refer to the writings of teachers such as Motahari to present a simple

definition of the science of ethics. From Motahari's perspective, the science of ethics includes the science of living or how to live (Motahari 1980).

According to Tabatabai, ethics can be defined as an area that discusses human habits related to human beings' animal, human and plant grades in order to distinguish virtues from vices and determine which soulful habits are good and lead to human excellence and which ones are bad and result in failure. By doing so, human beings can recognise their virtues, avoid their vices and perform good deeds so that they could attain public praise, as well as scientific and practical bliss (Tabatabai 1984). Motahari (1980) explains the definition of the science of ethics mentioned above by expressing that in fact, there are two branches of 'how to live': the branch of how to behave and the branch of how to be. How to behave is related to human actions (which also includes speech), whereas how to be is related to human habits and temperaments.

From the point of view of many Western thinkers, ethics is an informal social regulation because if a rule is passed by the assembly and implemented by competent judicial authorities, it is recognised as a law and is discussed as a legal issue. Meanwhile, non-codified principles accepted or rejected by the community gain an ethical perspective. According to this view, ethics is a set of unofficial laws. General ethical principles are nothing but accepted rules of social behaviour, and special ethical rules are nothing but the application of those rules in special cases (Faruqi 2007). Western theorists have eliminated God and ethics from the daily life of human beings by using various methods. In addition, they have changed values and induced definitions into society to achieve their goals. Many ethical crises faced by developed countries are due to the lack of attention to divine values (Gorsuch & Smith 1983; Kettani 1984). From the perspective of Islam, ethics is a set of principles and values that regulate human behaviour. In addition, they have been determined based on revelation teachings and have developed principles and regulations to realise the goals of the existence of humans on earth. The ethical system of Islam is full of moral virtues and practical advice that helps Muslims to observe their religion and take a step towards reforming the affairs of this world and the hereafter.

Ethical systems devoid of Islamic values, which are mostly defined to ensure human happiness and enjoyment in their lives, do not think about their ultimate objectives and only consider conscientiousness as their motto. Meanwhile, the divine guidelines and objectives in Islam play a constructive role in the training and cultivating of the human soul. In general, a Muslim is obligated to adhere to these guidelines and is considered a sinful person in case of violation of divine rights (Abdul Halim 1410AH). The religion of Islam is a set of ideas, teachings and practical instructions revealed to the Prophet by God in the form of guiding teachings. In addition, Islam has developed an ethical system in the form of a set of teachings that show the proper way of living and determine

the do's and don'ts of values that govern human behaviour. Therefore, it is obvious that there is a close relationship between religion and ethics. In other words, ethics is an inseparable part of religion. Without a doubt, the fundamental origin of ethical precepts in Islam is not hedonism, nor is it wisdom, conscience, custom, society, modernity, and other things that other ethical schools have proposed. In fact, divine revelation is the source of commands and criteria of action and ethical order. Accordingly, 'good' is what has been ordered by God to be done by human beings while 'bad and evil' is what has been forbidden by God. In other words, Islamic law is a law that is in harmony with healthy nature and agrees with mature thought. It is no surprise that the Quran describes pious and virtuous people as 'owners of wisdom'. In this regard, some commands and prohibitions mention this point; for instance, in Surah Al-An'am, Ayat 151, we read: '...this is what He has enjoined upon you so that you may exercise your reason'. Therefore, ethics in Islam does not rely only on decisive command and devotional duty. In fact, it relies on addressing thoughts and stimulating consciences about an understandable and rational moral system with definite worldly and other-worldly consequences. Regarding Luqman's orders to his child, we read in Surah Luqman, Ayats:

O my son! keep up prayer and enjoy the good and forbid the evil, and bear patiently that which befalls you; surely these acts require courage; and do not turn your face away from people in contempt, nor go about in the land exulting overmuch; surely Allah does not love any self-conceited boaster; and pursue the right course in your going about and lower your voice; surely the most hateful of voices is braying of the asses. (vv. 17-19)

In addition, several ayats have mentioned ethics, such as Al-Baqarah, ayats 1, 129 and 151; Al-Iman, ayats 79, 159 and 164; An-Naml, ayats 19 and 48; An-Nahl, ayat 90; Ash-Shams, ayats 9 and 10; Al-A'la, ayats 14 and 15; Luqman, ayat 12; Yusuf, ayat 101; and Al-An'am, ayats 84 and 85.

## The concept of commitment

Organisational researchers have mentioned about a lack of consensus on the definition of organisational commitment (Benkhoff 1997; Mowday 1998; Scholl 1981; Suliman & Isles 2000a, 2000b; Zangaro 2001). Scholl (1981) indicates that the way organisational commitment is defined depends on the approach to the commitment that one is adhering to. Therefore, organisational commitment is defined as a force that commits the person to the organisation (Gheitani et al. 2019). According to Suliman and Isles (2000a, 2000b), there are four approaches to organisational commitment, namely, attitudinal, behavioural, normative and multidimensional approaches. The attitudinal approach mostly refers to commitment as a set of behavioural intentions of employees towards their organisation. The most accepted conceptualisation of an attitude of organisational commitment explains this concept as the relative power of identifying an individual with a particular organisation and his participation in a particular organisation (Mowday et al. 1979). The second

approach is referred to as organisational commitment behaviour (Zagaro 2001). The focus of research according to the behavioural approach is on the obvious manifestation of commitment. The behavioural approach emphasises the belief that an employee continues his work in the organisation because investments such as time spent in the organisation, friendships made with the organisation and pension benefits tie the employee to the organisation. Therefore, an employee commits to the organisation because of 'marginal costs', which are extremely expensive. The basis of this approach is made based on the Becker (1960) theory of lateral advantages, according to which the employees' commitment to the organisation continues due to the decision of the person, which occurs following estimating the costs of quitting. According to this scholar, this type of commitment occurs only when the employee understands the costs related to the lack of continuation of a relationship with the organisation. The third approach is the normative approach which argues that the consistency between employee values and goals and organisational goals force the employee to feel committed to the organisation (Becker, Randall & Reigel 1995). From this perspective, organisational commitment can be defined as 'a set of internal normative pressures to act in a way, which meets organizational goals and interest' (Weiner 1982). The multidimensional approach is the last and relatively new approach, which assumes that organisational commitment is much more complex, compared to emotional dependence, perceptual costs or moral obligation. Based on this approach, organisational commitment develops as a result of the interaction of all three components. Various studies have been conducted in the area of the new concept of organisational commitment (Suliman & Isles 2000b). Nonetheless, the concept of organisational commitment has been assessed by various researchers. In addition, various definitions have been provided in this regard. For instance, O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) define organisational commitment as the basis of an individual's psychological attachment to the organisation, which is distinct from either the antecedents of commitment or from its consequences. Moorhead and Griffin (1995) have considered organisational commitment as a sense of identity and an individual's dependence on the organisation. From their perspective, commitment affects important behaviours such as shifts and absences, and can have many positive results. In addition, more committed employees have more order in their work, stay longer in the organisation, and work harder. Moreover, organisational commitment is an attitude that shows the level of interest, attachment and loyalty of employees to the organisation and their desire to stay in the organisation (Asutay, Buana & Avdukic 2021). This attitude can involve the desire, obligation or need of the individual and include three affective, continuance and normative dimensions (Allen & Meyer 1991). According to Derry and Iverson (1998), organisational commitment is the degree of an individual's loyalty to the organisation. In addition, Miller and Lee (2001) believe that organisational commitment is a structure in which the members of the organisation are obliged and committed to the beliefs and actions that are the continuation

of their activities and obligations to the organisation of their workplace. On the other hand, Cohen (2003) defines organisational commitment as a force and ability that require individuals to perform related behaviours and actions towards one or more goals. Chang, Chi and Miao (2007) regard organisational commitment as an inner state that provides a kind of desire, need and obligation to work in an organisation. Overall, the similarity of all these definitions is that everyone considers organisational commitment as a person's loyalty to an organisation that is manifested in their participation in organisational decisions and their interests in the success and well-being of the organisation.

## Components of commitment

Since the introduction of the concept of organisational commitment, various dimensions have been defined for the concept and have been mentioned in different models, including the two-dimensional model by Angle and Perry (1981) (value commitment and commitment to stay), the three-dimensional model by O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) (commitment of obedience, commitment to assimilation and commitment to internalization), the three-dimensional model by Penley and Gould (1988) (moral, calculative and alienative commitment), the three-dimensional model by Allen and Meyer (1991) (affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment), the two-dimensional model by Mayer and Schoorman (1992) (value commitment and continuance commitment), and the three-dimensional model by Jaros et al. (1993) (affective, continuance and moral commitment). However, the most common model was proposed by Allen and Meyer (1991), which includes three components:

- **Affective commitment:** This commitment refers to identification with, involvement in, and emotional attachment to the organisation. This leads to stronger commitment due to the willingness to perform tasks in the organisation.
- **Continuance commitment:** This commitment refers to the necessity and desire to remain in the organisation due to the costs incurred by the person as a result of leaving the organisation.
- **Normative commitment:** This type of commitment denotes a type of feeling of obligation to stay in the organisation as a member. In this type of commitment, employees remain in the organisation because they feel they have to do their job in it.

## Methodology and data analysis

This study aimed to examine Islamic ethics and commitment among Muslim nurses in Jakarta, Indonesia in 2021. The statistical population included 1100 nurses, and data were collected using standard questionnaires. The data collection process continued for 3 months. In addition, Allen and Meyer's (1991) organisational commitment scale was applied to assess the subjects' organisational commitment.

In this three-scales instrument, items 1–5 are related to affective commitment, whereas items 6–10 and 11–15 are related to the continuance and normative commitment, respectively. Moreover, the 17-items questionnaire by Darwish (2000) was applied to assess Islamic ethics. In total, 1084 completed questionnaires were returned. Regarding gender, 54% of the participants were female and 46% were male. In terms of marital status, 36% of the participants were single and the rest (64%) were married. In addition, 32% of the nurses were aged below 30 years, whereas 53% and 15% of the participants were aged 30–40 years and above 40 years, respectively. Data analysis was performed in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). In addition, the reliability of the Islamic ethics and commitment questionnaires was approved at a Cronbach's alpha of 0.78 and 0.81, respectively. In addition, the validity of the questionnaires was approved by using construct validity in linear structural relationships (LISREL) software. The fitness indices of the model approved the appropriateness of the research tools, such that  $\chi^2/df = 2.1213$ , Root Mean Square Error of Approximation = 0.073, Goodness of Fit Index = 0.90 and Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index = 0.90 were obtained. Pearson's correlation was used to determine the bilateral relationship between research variables (Table 1).

In addition, Figure 1 shows the structural model of the research, where decisions were made about how Islamic values affect commitment based on  $p$ -value and  $t$ -value statistics. In addition, Table 2 shows the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. Given the fact that  $p$ -value was above zero, the relationship was positive, and because the  $t$ -value was more than 1.96, the independent variable (Islamic Ethics) had a significant effect on the dependent variable (Commitment) (Table 2).

## Discussion

Ethical principles can be described and determined by a perspective based on values. In other words, this view sees moral codes as the development of values or their interpretations of behaviour. Values are explained and operationalised by a set

TABLE 1: Pearson's correlation between research variables.

Commitment	Islamic ethics	
0.573	1	Significant Pearson's correlation Islamic ethics
1	0.573	Significant Pearson's correlation Commitment

TABLE 2: Evaluation of the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

Variables	$p$	$t$	Results
Islamic ethics → Commitment	0.542	5.63	Significant and positive

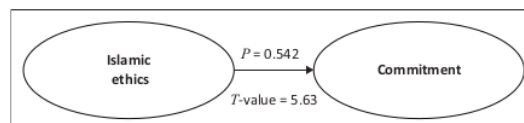


FIGURE 1: Research structural model.

of ethical-behavioural standards. In this perspective, ethics is a social system in which values are operationalised. In other words, ethics reflects the standards or behaviours that a person is expected to adhere to. Ethical principles show how to decide between competing moral rules, customs, and values. On the other hand, while values are enduring and change in the long run, ethical principles cannot be changed. They are universal ethical principles that differ from one organisation to another, not in the titles of these principles but in the degree to which they are accepted or practised. In addition, it can be argued that a value-oriented society is not necessarily morally oriented, whereas an ethical society adheres to its values. In other words, ethics can be one of society's values, but it is not necessarily so. Adherence to values, on the other hand, is a characteristic of an ethical society. In the current turbulent era, when organisations are moving towards specialisation and continue to operate in close competition, they need committed human resources as the main and most necessary factor in addition to tools and equipment in order to survive.

Organisational commitment involves a dynamic interaction between a person and his or her environment and is a multidimensional feature that can be considered as a mental state that motivates individuals to remain committed to the organisation. As organisations and institutions grow and the volume of their activities increases, the need for committed human resources increases. As a result, the better and more quality this capital is, the more likely it is that the organisation will succeed, survive, and improve. Conversely, if organisations are unable to employ quality and committed human resources, they will not be able to access other resources such as equipment and raw materials and will face many problems such as reduced efficiency and productivity, which will eventually lead to the organisation's failure. Commitment can be considered as an important professional and organisational attitude that has become the focus of attention for the field and the managers of organisations due to its obvious importance in the functioning of organisations. This attitude has undergone many changes in recent decades, especially with recent developments in the field of business such as mergers. Commitment experts have paid special attention to commitment and have given it great importance as one of the basic attitudes related to work and organisation and have conducted numerous researches on it. Given the significant role of nurses in healthcare environments, the current research was performed among 1100 Muslim nurses in Indonesia. According to the results, there was a significant and positive relationship between Islamic values and the commitment of nurses (Tables 1 and 2, Figure 1). Therefore, organisational managers must pay special attention to Islamic teachings, especially Islamic values in the workplace so that community members, as well as themselves could benefit from its advantages.

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### Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

## Authors' contributions

The authors contributed to the design and implementation of the research, to the analysis of the results and to the writing of the manuscript.

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## Ethical considerations

This article followed all ethical standards for research without direct contact with human or animal subjects.

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## Data availability

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

## Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated agency of the authors.

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