

# Development and Validation of the Islamic Work Exemplary Scale in Indonesia

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## Article Information:

Received July 21, 2023

Revised August 26, 2023

Accepted September 3, 2023

**Keywords:** development;  
exemplary; Islamic; scale;  
validation

## Abstract

The ethical and moral crisis in Indonesia has spread to the work environment, as evidenced by the high level of fraud and abuse of power. This phenomenon requires effective solutions, one of which is Islamic Work Exemplification. This concept is relevant to Indonesia as a country with the largest Muslim population and aligns with universal ethical principles. The main challenge is to implement and measure these principles in daily behavior. Although many studies have shown the influence of religion on work ethics, researchers have yet to make a serious effort to develop and validate the Islamic Work Exemplary Scale. This study aims to develop, validate, and estimate the reliability of the Islamic Work Exemplary Scale. An exploratory method based on a quantitative approach was used in this study. Respondents as scale test subjects were randomly selected from as many as 453 employees from Indonesia's government and private sectors. Respondents were divided into two groups: 180 for the small-scale pilot test and 273 for the large-scale pilot test. This study used exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to identify factors and dimensions and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to prove validity and reliability. The results showed that of the 37 items tested, 31 were valid and reliable. The items formed four important aspects of Islamic work ethics: honesty, responsibility, professionalism, and religiosity. Although this study has some limitations, the results of this study are important and can be used as a basis for further research on Islamic work ethics.

## INTRODUCTION

Globalization has changed various aspects of life, not least in the field of human resource management (HRM) (Crane et al., 2019; Kamoche et al., 2012). Although globalization brings opportunities, ethical and moral issues in the workplace are increasingly challenging for organizational leaders. These challenges include abuse of power, corruption, bribery, undisciplined behavior, and waste, all of which have become major issues in HRM (Adeniran, 2019; Tamunomiebi & Ehior, 2019). In line with the rise of these challenges, the moral and ethical crisis has received serious attention from scholars.

Moral and ethical crises in the workplace include harmful behaviors such as corruption, collusion, nepotism, abuse of power, weak discipline, lack of commitment, individualism, irresponsibility, and the crisis of examples (Treviño et al., 2014; Zhang et al., 2017). The prevalence of corruption and abuse of power in Indonesian public organizations strongly indicates the lack of internalization of ethical values in the workplace. Data from Transparency International, a global organization focused on fighting corruption, reinforces these findings.

### How to cite:

Sumin, S., Retnawati, H., & Sayadi, W. (2023). Development and Validation of the Islamic Work Exemplary Scale in Indonesia. *Islamic Guidance and Counseling Journal*, 6(2). <https://doi.org/10.25217/0020236392000>

### E-ISSN:

2614-1566

### Published by:

Institut Agama Islam Ma'arif NU (IAIMNU) Metro Lampung

While Indonesia has improved its ranking to 40th in 2019, it was previously at a very low position of 143rd out of 180 countries surveyed in 2007 (Corruption, 2021). These behaviors can potentially reduce organizational performance. In line with Freund's (2019) study, a lack of attention to work ethics can lead to reduced organizational productivity and satisfaction. Consistent with the results of Brown et al. (2005) study, it was found that poor work ethics can damage an organization's reputation.

In order to address this issue, Frisch & Huppenbauer (2014) proposed the work exemplary approach. This approach emphasizes the role of leaders or individuals as role models in demonstrating appropriate behaviors, attitudes, and ethics. Through this approach, members of the organization can observe and learn from the examples of leaders or colleagues, encouraging them to adopt the same values and ethics. Workplace modeling involves more than just visible behavior; it also includes attitude, commitment, integrity, and the principles that underlie that behavior. This work's exemplary approach is consistent with Engelbrecht et al.'s (2017) assertion that it can effectively shape and strengthen an organization's ethical and moral culture.

Secular ethical frameworks have long been recognized in the Indonesian workplace, such as implementing professional codes of conduct, principles of good corporate governance, and other business ethics (Hasan, 2020). However, as a country that guarantees its citizens the freedom to profess and practice any of the six major world religions, religion plays an important role in determining ethical behavior (Widana, 2021). Researchers such as Murtaza (2016), Javed et al. (2017), Hassan et al. (2021), and Hanif et al. (2022) have proven the importance of religious values in improving work behavior and ethics. Therefore, integrating religious values to improve workplace behavior, which can be assessed using a standardized scale, has effectively improved employees' work ethics and morale. However, there is still a need for research on Islamic work exemplars. Although relevant, Freund's (2019) study focuses more on general ethical issues and does not delve into specific aspects such as Islamic work exemplary. Freund's (2019) study focuses only on ethical leadership. In short, previous studies have discussed work exemplary in secular concepts rather than Islamic work contexts.

### Work exemplary

Indonesia is known for its cultural and religious diversity, which provides a unique background for understanding the concept of exemplarity. In this context, values derived from religion, particularly Islam, play an important role in shaping the country's work ethic and professional ethics. Given the significance of Indonesia's cultural background in influencing work ethic, it is important to examine how this concept is articulated and analyzed in academic literature. Such insights support a more integrated understanding of global and local views of role models in the workplace. We can refer to Gibson (2004), who offers a new understanding of role modeling as a construct related to individual needs, aspirations, and expectations. He argues that role models provide a paradigm for individuals to emulate, especially in positions of influence such as parents, educators, supervisors, or mentors. Gibson distinguishes role modeling from other developmental relationships and advocates a dimensional framework of role modeling that combines current theory and research.

According to Walumbwa et al. (2010), role models or exemplars refer to leaders with higher levels of psychological capital, including efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience. These leaders are seen as attractive and credible sources of information for their followers to model their behavior after. Furthermore, Walumbwa et al. (2010) revealed that work exemplary or service behavior can include meeting or exceeding performance standards, persisting in efforts to improve performance, and meeting customer and colleague expectations. Meanwhile, according to the study of Rudiyanto et al. (2022), the term "exemplary" in [the educational context] refers to a method for strengthening students' integrity values through emulation and advice from boarding school administrators. This method includes direct influence through

management's words and behavior and indirect influence through stories that can affect students' characteristics. Referring to the three definitions we cited from previous studies, work role models can be defined as behaviors displayed by individuals, usually in positions of influence, that are considered worthy of emulation by others. These behaviors are seen as worthy of emulation based on needs, desires, ambitions, performance standards, ethical values, and integrity.

Gibson (2004) proposes the Modeling Indicator, which includes two cognitive dimensions (positive/negative, global/specific) and two structural dimensions (near/far, up/down). [Positive/Negative: This dimension refers to the valence of a role model's characteristics or behaviors, whether they are viewed as positive or negative by the individual. Positive role models exhibit desirable traits or behaviors that individuals want to emulate, while negative role models represent behaviors and attitudes that individuals want to avoid. [Global/Specific: This dimension represents the extent to which an individual emulates the various attributes of a role model versus choosing specific attributes. On the global side of this continuum, individuals may engage in "wholesale" role modeling, where they directly adopt the style or traits of others. On the side, individuals may selectively apply certain traits to their repertoire of skills. Close/Distant: This dimension refers to the closeness of the role model to the individual. Close role models are those with whom the individual has a direct relationship, such as mentors or supervisors. In contrast, distant role models may be public figures or individuals who have yet to meet in person. [Up/Across-Down: This dimension represents the hierarchical relationship between the individual and the role model. Role models depicted through this are those who are hierarchically superior to the individual, such as a boss or senior colleague. In contrast, across models, up role models are peers or colleagues at the same level, and down role models are subordinates or individuals who are hierarchically inferior to the individual. Overall, the indicators of work exemplary put forward by Gibson (2004) provide a robust and flexible framework for understanding and measuring workplace role modeling. It facilitates a better understanding of how and why individuals choose to emulate the behavior of others and how various factors and contexts can influence this process.

### Measurement Dimension of Islamic Work Exemplary

The term exemplary in the Arabic dictionary refers to words with similar meanings, such as *miṣālun*, *quḍwatun*, *uswatun*, and *'ibratun* (Team, 2014). The term "*uswatun hasanah*" (good example) is often combined with the word "*ḥasanah*" (good) in practice so that it becomes "*uswatun ḥasanah*" (good example). The concept of exemplary has been explained in the Qur'an, especially in Sūrah Al-Aẓḥāb [33]: 21 as follows: "Indeed, in the Messenger of Allāh *Subḥānahu wa Ta'ālā* there is indeed a good example for you, (that is) for those who hope for (the mercy of) Allāh *Subḥānahu wa Ta'ālā* and (the coming of) the Day of Resurrection and who remember Allāh a lot" (LPMQ, 2022). Ibn Kathir explains this verse in his tafsir: "This noble verse is the most significant main evidence, which encourages us to imitate the Messenger of Allāh *Subḥānahu wa Ta'ālā* in all his words, deeds, and actions [attitudes, words, and deeds]. Ibn Kathir adds in his explanation that "*Allāh Subḥānahu wa Ta'ālā*. Commands the believers to imitate the Prophet Muḥammad, peace be upon him (PBUH) in his patience, determination, alertness, and struggle, and to keep waiting for a solution from Allāh *Subḥānahu wa Ta'ālā* (Pustaka, 2022). Relevant to sūrah Al-Aẓḥāb [33]: 21, the Sufiyana study (2021) found that the Quran can be used as a normative basis for exemplary behavioral education methods in Islam. The examples set by the prophets and companions of the Prophet [can] be used as a foundation and support by Islamic education practitioners. The Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) is the perfect role model for Muslims to follow daily. The concept of "*uswatun ḥasanah*" is essential to Islamic education, emphasizing the importance of exemplary behavior and character.

Aspects of exemplary can be seen from the words, speech, and actions of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), Saw, which can be read from the translation of the hadith as follows: Honesty: In the Qur'an, sūrah Al-Baqarah [2]: 42, Allāh says: "And do not confuse the true with the false and do not conceal the true when you know it" (LPMQ, 2022). Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) said in a hadith narrated by Bukhari and Muslim: "Verily, honesty leads to goodness, and goodness leads to heaven" (Pustaka, 2022), emphasizing the value of honesty in Islam. Honesty in Islamic work includes truth in communication and integrity in action. It includes not misusing company resources, not taking advantage of one's position for personal gain, and always giving one's best at work. According to the hadith we mentioned, honesty can lead one to heaven, which shows the importance of honesty in every aspect of life, including work.

Amanah: Amanah or trust is an essential value in Islam. In the Qur'an, sūrah An-Nisā' [4]: 58, Allāh says: "Verily, Allah enjoins you to deliver the trust to those who are entitled to it..." (LPMQ, 2022). Relevant to the hadith of the Prophet narrated by Bukhari: "... If the trust is lost, then wait for the doomsday" (Pustaka, 2022). In the work context, Amanah involves respecting the rights and interests of all parties involved. This can mean keeping company secrets, meeting deadlines and commitments, and using company resources wisely and efficiently.

Fair: Allāh says in the Qur'an, Surah An-Nisā' [4]: 135, which says: "O you who believe, be you who always uphold (the truth) for the sake of Allah, bearing witness with justice..." (LPMQ, 2022). The Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) has also explained in the hadith narrated by Muslim, that: "If an imam (leader) commands piety to Allāh *Subḥānahu wa Ta'ālā* and to be just, then he (the imam) will be rewarded for it, and if he (the imam) commands other than that, then he will be punished" (Pustaka, 2022). Justice in Islamic work includes equal and fair treatment of all employees, avoiding discrimination, and providing fair and appropriate compensation.

Competence: In the Qur'an, sūrah Al-Mujādalah [58]: 11, Allah says: "Allah will elevate those who believe among you and those who are given knowledge by several degrees..." (LPMQ, 2022). The Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) also emphasized in a hadith from Bukhari that: "...If affairs are left not to the experts, then wait for the apocalypse" (Pustaka, 2022). Competence in the context of work includes having the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to do a job well. It also includes continuous learning and self-improvement. According to the hadith we have mentioned, if affairs are not left to the experts, then wait for the apocalypse, showing how vital competence is in Islam. Competence is valued in Islam.

Responsibility: Responsibility is a core value in Islam. In the Qur'an, sūrah Al-Zāriyāt [51]: 56, Allah says: "And I did not create the jinn and humans but that they may serve Me" (LPMQ, 2022). The Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) emphasized in a hadith narrated by Bukhari and Muslim, that: "....know, every one of you is responsible for the one he leads" (Pustaka, 2022). According to Islam, responsibility in duty includes taking responsibility for one's actions, completing assigned tasks promptly and properly, and fulfilling commitments to employees, customers, and other stakeholders. Earnestness: In the Qur'an, sūrah Al-Imran [3]: 200, Allāh says: "O you who believe, be patient and strengthen your patience and keep watch (at the borders of your country) and fear Allah, that you may be fortunate" (LPMQ, 2022). In a hadith narrated by Ibn Majah and Ahmad, the Prophet also emphasized that: "... Strive for that which is beneficial to you and do not lose heart..." (Pustaka, 2022). Being severe in the context of work includes giving the best effort, trying to achieve goals, and not giving up quickly in the face of challenges.

Religiosity: Maintaining religious observance is the essence of Muslim life. Allah says in the Qur'an sūrah Al-Baqarah [2]:197: "And do good (to others), surely Allah loves those who do good" (LPMQ, 2022). The Prophet emphasized this in a hadith narrated by Bukhari: "...I asked you what he commanded you, and you replied that he commanded you to pray, give charity (zakat), refrain from doing bad deeds, fulfill promises, and fulfill trusts." Then he said: "These are among the attributes of a Prophet." (Pustaka, 2022). Religion in the work context includes complying with Islamic laws, such as praying on time, giving zakat, and avoiding actions prohibited in Islam. Specific aspects and indicators of exemplary Islamic work can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Aspects and Indicators of Work Exemplary

No.	Aspects	Conceptual Definition	Indicator
1.	Honest	Truth and integrity in various aspects of life. An honest person will speak the truth and act accordingly.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Consistency between words and actions</li> <li>2. Reporting work results correctly</li> <li>3. Carry out duties and responsibilities according to standards and rules.</li> <li>4. Transparency in decision-making.</li> <li>5. No manipulation or abuse of authority.</li> </ol>
2.	Amanah	A trust that must be fulfilled and maintained.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Carry out tasks earnestly.</li> <li>2. Respect the tasks and responsibilities assigned.</li> <li>3. Maintain confidentiality and organizational assets.</li> </ol>
3.	Fair	Fairness and balance in all things. In the workplace, this means treating everyone equally and impartially.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fairness in treating coworkers, Fairness in division of labor and remuneration.</li> <li>2. Does not favor or discriminate.</li> <li>3. Recognizing and Valuing Individual Contributions</li> </ol>
4.	Competent	Possess the knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform a task or job well.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Possess relevant knowledge and skills.</li> <li>2. Efficiency in carrying out tasks,</li> <li>3. Prioritizing work quality</li> <li>4. Commitment to continuous learning and self-development.</li> </ol>
5.	Responsible	Have a commitment to carry out tasks and work to the best of their ability and accept the consequences.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Admitting mistakes.</li> <li>2. Willing to accept the consequences of one's actions.</li> <li>3. Willing to correct mistakes made.</li> <li>4. Show initiative and proactivity in carrying out tasks</li> </ol>
6.	Earnest	The desire and effort to achieve the best results in every task or job.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Doing the best work possible (Perfecting the work).</li> <li>2. Consistency and persistence in carrying out tasks,</li> <li>3. Demonstrate dedication to the job,</li> <li>4. Achieve or exceed set work targets.</li> </ol>
7.	Religious	Religion means practicing religious teachings in every aspect of life.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Perform the five daily prayers and other acts of worship.</li> <li>2. Demonstrate attitudes and behaviors that reflect Islamic values.</li> <li>3. Applying Islamic work ethics</li> <li>4. Appreciate and implement Islamic values in the workplace.</li> <li>5. Foster good working relationships based on respect and appreciation.</li> </ol>



## Rationale of the Study

The rationale for this research lies in the need to understand and measure the concept of Islamic work exemplary. While there have been many studies on work behavior and Islamic work ethics, there is still a void in the literature regarding specific indicators and measurement aspects of Islamic work exemplary. The uniqueness of Islamic work culture and practices in Muslim-majority countries, including Indonesia, demands a deeper understanding and appropriate measurement tools to assess and promote Islamic ethics and morals in an organizational context.

## Purpose of the Study

The main objective of this research is to explore the aspects, dimensions, and indicators and develop a valid and reliable scale for measuring Islamic work exemplary. This research focuses on developing a tool that organizations can use to measure and improve Islamic work exemplary, thus contributing to the improvement of ethics and morals in the workplace.

## METHODS

### Research Design

The research method used to develop and explore the Islamic work exemplary measurement scale is an explorative method with a quantitative approach. Scale development stages are based on procedures introduced by DeVellis (2021). DeVellis details eight steps in the scale development process: [1] Clearly define what you want to measure: This involves a clear conceptual definition and understanding of the theoretical constructs to be measured. [2] Creating a pool of items: Develop several items that reflect the construct. Here, items are defined as individual statements or questions respondents respond to. [3] Selecting a measurement scale: Designing a response scale. [4] Conducting Expert Review: Taking feedback from experts in the field to evaluate the quality and relevance of the items. [5] Evaluating Items Through Factor Analysis: Conducting EFA to determine the factor structure of the items. [6] Optimize Scale Length: Review the scale length and number of items. [7] Conduct Scale Validation: Prove the scale's construct validity by measuring the extent to which the scale measures the desired construct. [8] Develop Scale Norms: Establish scale norms by evaluating the scale in relevant population samples.

### Respondents

The population of test subjects in this study were employees of the Government, State-Owned Enterprises, and private employees in Indonesia. Respondents were selected as many as 453 using a simple random sampling technique based on the inclusion criteria: Muslim and domiciled employees in Indonesia. These criteria were set to obtain data that reflects the diversity of the work environment in Indonesia in an Islamic context, which allows testing the scale in various professional backgrounds, thus providing a broader representation of the integration of Islamic values into actual work practices so that the generalization of findings will be more accurate.

Based on EFA and CFA analysis guidelines, the ideal sample size is at least 5-10 times the number of measured variables, as Hair Jr. et al. (2020) suggested. EFA and CFA analysis samples can be obtained by halving the total sample by an unequal portion (Fabrigar & Wegener, 2011). Using different samples for EFA and CFA analysis supports independence between exploratory and confirmatory stages, avoids overfitting, and ensures that the factorial structure found is not an artifact of a particular sample but rather a representation of the broader population (Brown, 2015; Hair et al., 2019). Based on these guidelines, the sample was divided into two categories: 180 respondents for the small-scale trial and 273 for the large-scale trial. The small-scale trial stage focused on proving the factorial validity and unidimensionality of

the scale through EFA. Subsequently, a large-scale trial was conducted to prove construct validity and estimate reliability using CFA.

### Instruments

The instrument to develop and validate the exemplary Islamic work scale is based on a self-assessment instrument. The scale used is a Likert-type attitude scale with five answer options (Sumin, 2022). The scale design is presented in a linear continuum format, ranging from "Strongly Disagree," code 1, to "Strongly Agree," code 5, with three other response options between the two extremes. We used the Likert scale, as it provides a platform for respondents to articulate their agreement or disagreement with a statement while measuring the intensity of their feelings or beliefs. The Likert scale is relevant for measuring Islamic work exemplary, which includes ethical values that may have different intensity gradations for each person.

### Raters

The draft scale evaluation process involved five specialized raters selected based on specific selection criteria and qualifications. These five raters included a psychometrician, a psychologist, a human resource management specialist, a Qur'anic and Hadith interpretation professor, and a linguist. The criteria and qualifications for selecting these assessors included expertise in relevant fields, experience, and specialized competence in scale assessment. Their involvement is to provide an in-depth assessment of the scale content (Sukmawati et al., 2022). In addition, they were also responsible for highlighting and providing suggestions for improvement, especially regarding the relevance of the scale statements to the indicators and the grammatical aspects used. The results of the content assessment were then analyzed using the Aiken V formula to obtain the content validity coefficient and analyzed using Krippendorff Alpha to estimate inter-rater reliability (Aiken, 1985; Krippendorff, 2011). Aiken V content validity was assessed based on the normal distribution threshold (Z) at a probability of  $\alpha = 5\%$ , using a one-sided hypothesis test, and a reference value of 1.65 was obtained. Items with a Z value  $\geq 1.65$  have good content validity (Aiken, 1985). Meanwhile, inter-rater reliability was based on Krippendorff's criteria as follows:  $.0 \leq \alpha$ ; no agreement,  $.0 < \alpha \leq 0.2$ , low,  $.2 < \alpha \leq .4$ ; moderate,  $.4 < \alpha \leq .6$ ; moderate,  $.6 < \alpha \leq .8$ ; substantial, and  $.8 < \alpha \leq 1$ ; almost perfect.

### Tools of Data Analysis

This study was divided into two stages of analysis. The first stage checked the unidimensionality of the instrument with EFA in R Studio version 4.3.0, taking into account criteria such as model fit and EFA factor loading (Clinkinbeard et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2023). The second stage focuses on construct validity with CFA, concerning the standards proposed by Hu & Bentler (1999) and Kline (2015). The instrument should achieve a load factor threshold of  $>.5$  in the initial stage and  $>.7$  in CFA (Hair Jr. et al., 2020). Convergent validity is measured through AVE, with a minimum AVE threshold of  $>.5$  and  $.7$ , indicating perfect validity.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

#### *Proof of Content Validity and inter-rater reliability*

The expert review stage is a crucial aspect of the development and validation process of the Islamic work exemplary scale to produce content validity. This review involved five selected experts who have in-depth knowledge and experience in the relevant field. The experts rated the 42 items on the scale based on the relevance of each item to the predetermined indicators. Content validity assessment was conducted using Aiken's V formula (Aiken, 1985) on the scores obtained from the experts' assessment. Based on the results of calculations with

Aiken's V formula, 37 items were rated as 'Valid,' while five other things were rated as 'Invalid.' Specifically, for the 37 items ordered as 'Valid,' the next step was to check inter-rater agreement or inter-rater reliability.

Inter-rater reliability refers to the consistency of ratings between different raters. This stage aims to ensure that the ratings provided by the experts are based on objective and consistent standards, not personal preferences. This stage is very important because it will ensure that the items in the scale have credibility and are reliable in measurement. Through this process, the quality and reliability of the scale can be provided, and the results can be used as a basis for further research and application. Inter-rater reliability in this study was estimated using Krippendorff's Alpha formula (Krippendorff, 2011). This formula can assess inter-rater reliability on ordinal data according to the type of data generated in the study. The R program version 4.3.0 analysis showed that the coefficient value of Krippendorff's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) reached 1. The  $\alpha$  value of 1 signifies a perfect level of agreement between the raters. The experts' assessment of the 37 valid items in the scale showed absolute agreement. The value reflects high consistency of assessment between raters, with no variation in assessment. This proves that the assessment is reliable and accountable. Therefore, the 37 items validated by experts can be used further.

### ***Instrument Unidimensionality Check, Determining the Number of Factors***

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) analysis was used to assess sample adequacy in the context of factor analysis, showing a range of Measure of Sampling Adequacy (MSA) values between .616 and .965. Most indicators demonstrated high MSA values, indicating good sample adequacy for factor analysis. In aggregate, the overall MSA score was .936, reflecting an adequate level of sample adequacy for factor analysis. Relevant to the MSA test, Bartlett's test was also used to support the assessment of data fit. This test rejects the null hypothesis that all variables in the analysis are independent of each other, or in other words, the correlation matrix is the identity matrix. If the p-value for Bartlett's test is less than the specified significance level (.05), this indicates sufficient factor structure, thus validating the use of EFA. Bartlett's test in this study showed significant results. The value of Chi-square is 4787.088 with a significance level (P-value) of .000 and degrees of freedom (DF) of .666. The null hypothesis is rejected because the significance level is less than .05. Therefore, there is strong evidence that the variables are correlated in the population, supporting the data's eligibility for factor analysis.

EFA allows researchers to look for interpretative and meaningful patterns in the data. As we saw in this study, several aspects and indicators of the Islamic Work Exemplary scale were placed in the EFA model to identify the dominant factors that explain the variation in the data. The factor loadings generated by the EFA analysis using the results of the "oblimin" rotation and the "maximum likelihood" factoring method showed that items c14, d17, d18, d19, e26, and e27 did not provide clear patterns or contribute significantly to their respective factors. Therefore, these four items were removed from the model. Items c14, d17, d19, and e27 form different factors from other items within the same construct, signaling that they may measure different constructs than expected. In contrast, items d18 and e26 had Factor Loadings below the approved threshold of .32.

These items had to be removed to ensure the constructs' integrity and relevance in explaining the variation. After removing these six items, the EFA was rerun to obtain factor loadings that best represented their constructs and contributed to factor formation. This re-analysis allowed the patterns in the data to emerge more clearly without the distraction of the previously removed items. As a result, we get all Factor Loadings  $> .32$ , which accurately describe their respective constructs and contribute significantly to factor formation.

Based on the results of the EFA that has been conducted, empirical evidence reinforces that model 2, which consists of four factors and 31 items, has good model fit quality. The four



factors, Honesty, Accountability, Professionalism, and Religiosity, demonstrate a robust data structure, as shown by the fit index test results. The fit indices include RMSA and RMSR, which both received low values (.04 and .05), indicating that the forecast error and residual variance generated by model 2 are minimal. Furthermore, the TLI value of .886 and RMSEA of .067 indicate that the model does a better job of explaining the variation in the data compared to the null model and has a good fit when applied to the population. Equally important, the lower BIC index in model 2 (-1,172.09) compared to model 1 indicates that model 2 is more suitable and effective in predicting the data considering the model complexity adjustment. Based on the fit indices, the second model has higher TLI and RMSEA values and lower BIC values than the first model. This indicates that the second model is better than the first model in explaining the patterns in the data. Therefore, this EFA analysis can select the second model as the better model.

EFA after the deletion of six items (c14, d17, d18, d19, e26, and e27) that have factor loadings below the .32 threshold in model 1, a new Factor Loading is obtained, which measures the extent to which each indicator is related to its underlying factor. All indicators in Model 2

Table 2. New aspects formed from the EFA

Factors	Items	Scale Statement
Honest	a01	I make sure my actions align with what I say.
	a02	I submitted my work report correctly (without fabrication).
	a03	I perform my duties and responsibilities in accordance with organizational standards and rules.
	a04	I implement transparent decision-making processes.
	a05	I try to avoid activities that could potentially harm the organization.
	a06	I try to maintain my integrity by not utilizing my authority for personal gain.
Accountable	b07	The task given is a mandate and I try to carry it out as best I can.
	b08	I try not to disappoint those who give me trust in carrying out my duties.
	b09	I appreciate the duties and responsibilities attached to my position.
	b10	I try to maintain and utilize the organization's assets wisely.
	b11	I am committed to maintaining the confidentiality of organizational information and data.
	c12	I try to treat all coworkers fairly and without discrimination.
	c13	I ensure that tasks are distributed fairly and according to employees' competencies.
	c15	I try to be objective in any situation.
	c16	I try not to overlook the contributions of others in my work.
	e22	I am ready to admit my mistakes in my work.
	e23	I am willing to accept the consequences of my actions at work.
	e24	I consider the impact of my actions before making a decision
	e25	I am committed to correcting any mistakes I make in my work.
Professionalism	d20	I am committed to learning and developing myself continuously.
	d21	I strive to update and apply the latest knowledge in my field of work
	f28	I try to give my best in every task I do.
	f29	I am consistent and persistent in my work.
	f30	I show readiness to take on new challenges at work.
	f31	I have high dedication (devotion) in carrying out every job.
	f32	I strive to achieve or exceed the work targets set.
Religious	g33	I try to worship on time, even if my assignments are piling up.
	g34	I try to demonstrate attitudes and behaviors that reflect Islamic values in the workplace.
	g35	I try to apply work ethics that are in accordance with the teachings of Islam.
	g36	Respecting and applying Islamic values in the workplace can strengthen my professional and personal identity.
	g37	Islam has taught me the importance of respect and appreciation in every interaction with coworkers.

have Factor Loading values above the .32 threshold. Overall, the EFA results without items c14, d17, d18, d19, e26, and e27 show a more transparent and coherent factor structure, with each indicator significantly contributing to the factor formed. This indicates that each aspect of exemplary Islamic work can be well translated into the underlying factor that represents it, thus validating the factor structure of this scale.

Based on the "oblimin" rotation results using the "maximum likelihood" factoring method, four factors formed from the seven aspects of the scale developed. There are several aspects of exemplary Islamic work forming the same factor; namely, "Amanah," "Fair," and "Responsible" appear to contribute significantly to the formation of the F1 factor. The indicators in these aspects show this evidence with a strong Factor Loading on the F1 factor. This interpretation reflects the possibility of a close relationship between these aspects in Islamic work, implying a shared dimension in determining work exemplary behavior following Islamic teachings. Furthermore, the aspects of "Competent" and "Earnest" appear to contribute to the formation of factor F2. The indicators included in these two aspects have a significant Factor Loading on the F2 factor. This finding implies a link between "Competent" and "Earnest" in the context of active and result-oriented attitudes and behaviors at work, which may be another important dimension in determining Islamic work behavior. While the "Religious" aspect items formed factor 3, and the "Honesty" aspect formed factor 4, the scale items in these two aspects did not form a new factor.

EFA has successfully extracted seven initial factors representing exemplary Islamic work: honest, trustworthy, fair, competent, responsible, earnest, and religious. The extraction process resulted in four dominant factors. The first factor, F1, retained its original name of "Honest." The second factor, F2, was named "Accountable," integrating the concepts of trustworthiness, fairness, and responsibility. The third factor, F3, is called "Professionalism," and includes competence and earnestness. Meanwhile, the fourth factor, F4, retains its original name, "Religious." The new factors can be seen in Table 2.

### ***Determining the Number of Measurement Dimensions***

The factor evidence in Table 2 does not depend solely on factor loadings. To enhance the validity of the interpretation, additional analysis was conducted through visualization techniques, as represented by the scree plot in Figure 1 and the Variable Factor Map in Figure 2. The scree plot helps identify the fault points that indicate the optimal number of factors. At the same time, the Variable Factor Map provides a graphical representation of the relationship between the variables and the identified factors. Such a comprehensive approach ensures the integrity and accuracy of factorial interpretation. Scree Plot parallel analysis offers an essential indication of the factorial structure of the data. The Scree Plot identifies the 'elbow' point as a marker for many factors. The point refers to the point at which the plot curve begins to slope or curve. Parallel analysis is one technique for the effective validation of many factors.

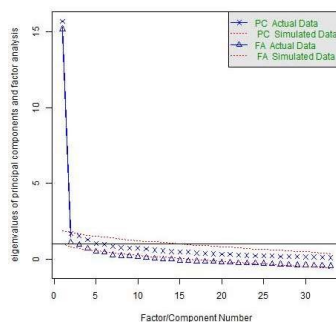


Figure 1. Parallel Analysis Scree Pots

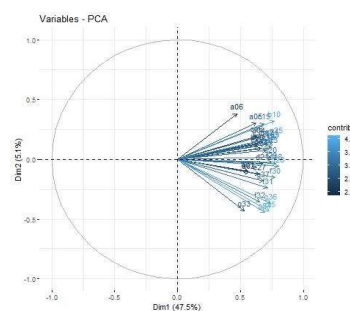


Figure 2. Variable Factor Map Principal Component Analysis

Based on the scree plots visualization of the parallel analysis in Figure 1, at the point of intersection of the eigenvalue set at 1, four intersection points are identified that lie below the line of the principal component simulation results. The analysis depicts one 'elbow' shaped point significantly separated from the others. This phenomenon usually indicates the dominance of a dimension that accounts for significantly more variance in the data than the other dimensions. In this context, intersection points represent factors, while 'elbow' points represent dimensions. The presence of four intersection points above the empirical data line and one 'elbow' point significantly away from the other points supports the interpretation that the factorial structure of the data is likely to be represented by one dominant dimension with four factors. We used the Variable Factor Map to support and verify the scree plot results in Figure 1. A variable Factor Map, biplot, or plot is a valuable visualization tool in a factor or principal component analysis. These plots display the relationship between the original variables and the factors or components resulting from the analysis. They can show how much each original variable contributes to a particular factor or dimension.

The Variable Factor Map in Figure 2 provides a two-dimensional data visualization. The first dimension (dimension 1), which usually explains the most significant variation in the data, explains 47.4% of the total variance. At the same time, the second dimension (dimension 2) explains an additional 5.4% of the variance. Based on the Scree Plot in Figure 1 and the Variable Factor Map in Figure 2, it can be concluded that the measurement items of the exemplary Islamic work scale in this study form a unidimensional measurement.

### **Proof of Construct Validity**

CFA is a statistical technique used to verify factors identified through EFA (Watkins, 2018). Through CFA, we can evaluate the measurement model of the Islamic Work Exemplary scale, which includes proving construct validity and estimating reliability. Construct validity can be assessed using several statistical methods. According to Campbell & Fiske (1959) and Hair Jr. et al. (2020) several statistical approaches can be used to assess construct validity, one of which is convergent validity. Convergent validity measures the extent to which items or indicators that are supposed to measure the exact construct correlate with each other (Brundle et al., 2019). Convergent validity can be measured through the average value of variance extracted (AVE). Hair Jr. et al. (2020) explained that an AVE value of more than .5 indicates good convergent validity. Fit indices in CFA are used to evaluate the extent to which the proposed model fits the data. Fit indices in this study are shown in Table 3.

Chi-square probability measures the extent of the difference between the observed data and the data predicted by the model. Chi-square probability values  $> .05$  indicate a good fit between the observed and predicted data in the research model. However, the chi-square is very sensitive to sample size; chi-square indicates a poor fit even though the model fits the data, so we need to look at other fit indices. Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) shows the extent to which the model fits the sample when applied to the population. A lower value indicates a better fit. The RMSEA value of .064 indicates an acceptable fit in this study case. Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) indicates the average difference between

Table 3. Fit Indices

Fit Indices	Threshold	Results	Description
P. Chi-Square	$> .5$ (Good)	.000	Poor fit
CFI	$\geq .95$ (Good), $> .90$ (Acceptable)	.929	Acceptable
RMSEA	$\leq .06$ (Good), $\leq .08$ (Acceptable)	.064	Acceptable
SRMR	$\leq .08$ (Good)	.045	Good fit
TLI	$\geq .95$ (Good), $> .90$ (Acceptable)	.919	Acceptable
IFI	$\geq .95$ (Good), $> .90$ (Acceptable)	.930	Acceptable
PNFI	$> .50$ (Good)	.764	Good fit

Table 4. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Construct	<i>AVE</i>
Honest	.452
Accountable	.556
Professionality	.625
Religiosity	.584

Table 5. Standardized Factor Loading CFA.

Construct	Items	Loading
Honest	a01	.614
	a02	.625
	a03	.763
	a04	.764
	a05	.639
	a06	.633
Accountable	b07	.765
	b08	.676
	b09	.804
	b10	.812
	b11	.756
	c12	.734
	c13	.717
	c15	.744
	c16	.691
	e22	.709
Professionality	e23	.757
	e24	.744
	e25	.817
	d20	.798
	d21	.687
	f28	.85
	f29	.824
	f30	.82
Religiosity	f31	.817
	f32	.731
	g33	.6
	g34	.728
	g35	.842
	g36	.904
	g37	.819

Table 6. Reliability Estimation

	Honest	Accountable	Professionality	Religiosity
Alpha	.838	.944	.922	.892
Omega	.810	.919	.905	.827

the observed covariance and that predicted by the model; an SRMR value of .045 indicates a good fit.

Comparative Fit Indices (CFI) evaluate the extent to which the model performs better compared to an independent baseline model. Values close to 1 indicate a better fit, and a CFI value of .929 indicates an acceptable fit. Tucker-Lewis Indices (TLI) or Non-Normed Fit Indices (NNFI) evaluate the extent to which the model performs better compared to the null model (no relationship among variables). Values close to 1 indicate a better fit. TLI value of .919 indicates an acceptable fit. Incremental Fit Indices (IFI) evaluate the improvement in the model's fit compared to the null model. A value close to 1 indicates a better fit, and the IFI value

of .930 indicates an acceptable fit. Parsimonious Normed Fit Indices (PNFI) is a version of NFI that is adjusted for model complexity. Higher values indicate a more parsimonious (simple but effective) model; the PNFI value of .764 indicates a good fit. Overall, the resulting fit indices indicate acceptable fit, implying that the exemplary Islamic work scale model fits well with the data.

Based on the AVE value in Table 4. The Honest construct has an AVE of .452, meaning the construct can explain 45.2% of the variance in the Honest indicators. This value is slightly below the standard 0.5, considered ideal, indicating that the indicators in this construct may not correlate well. However, evidence of construct validity is not only partially measured using AVE but must be supported by other measures, such as factor loading. The Accountable construct has an AVE of .556, meaning the construct can explain 55.6% of the variance in the Accountable indicators. This value exceeds the .5 standard, which is considered ideal, indicating adequate convergent validity. The Professionalism construct has an AVE of .625, meaning the construct can explain 62.5% of the variance in the Professionalism indicators. This value exceeds the .5 standard, which is considered ideal, indicating good convergent validity. The Religiosity construct has an AVE of .584, meaning the construct can explain 58.4% of the variance in the Religiosity indicators. This value exceeds the .5 cutoff, which is considered ideal, indicating adequate convergent validity.

Factor loading in CFA represents the correlation between the original variable and its latent factor or construct. Technically, the Factor Loading value reflects how significantly the measurement items contribute to the measured construct. The variation of the latent construct items explained by the items can be measured by the square of the Factor Loading, also known as commonality. Factor Loading has a minimum threshold of .5, which means that the factor explains at least 25% of the variation in the variable. (Shrestha, 2021). This is obtained by squaring the Factor Loading value ( $.5 = .25$  or 25%). Although not a measure to assess validity, factor loading is helpful to strengthen or support the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) in convergent validity.

Based on the standardized factor loading table in Table 5, each measurement item significantly contributes to explaining the variation of the 'Honest', 'Accountable', 'Professionalism', and 'Religiosity' constructs. All items in each construct show a Factor Loading of more than .5, indicating that each construct covers about 25% or more of the variation in the related variable.

### **Construct Reliability and Internal Consistency Estimation**

Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of internal consistency. An alpha value of  $>.7$  is acceptable and indicates that the scale items measure the same concept (Matsudaira et al., 2017). Meanwhile, McDonald's Omega is an alternative to Cronbach's Alpha which is more reliable in measuring construct reliability. An Omega value of .7 indicates better reliability (Chakraborty, 2017).

In Table 6, all factors (honesty, accountability, professionalism, and religiosity) have alpha values that exceed the .7 threshold. Based on the Alpha and Omega values presented, each factor (honesty, accountability, professionalism, and religiosity) appears to have good reliability. This means the items within each factor work well together to measure the same concept. Therefore, we can be confident that the results we get from these scales are reliable and consistent.

The CFA Path Diagram in Figure 3, generated through the R program syntax, provides an informative graphical representation of the relationship between the various measurement items and the latent constructs they measure, as well as the covariance between the items within each of the same constructs. Each measurement item is represented as a yellow square box. Meanwhile, the latent constructs are depicted as blue oval circles. The inclusion of arrows



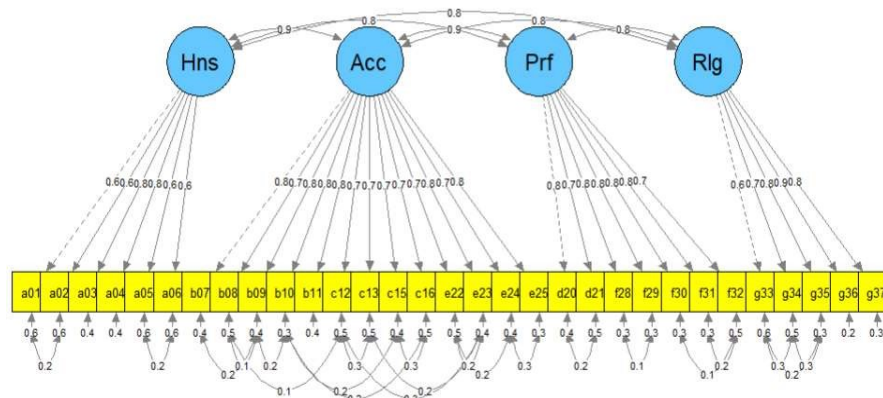


Figure 3. CFA Path Diagram

leading from the latent construct to the measurement items reflects the measurement relationship of the latent construct measured through its items. The value included on each of these arrows, the standardized loading, indicates how much each measurement item relates to the relevant latent construct. Specifically, a number close to 1 indicates a strong relationship.

Furthermore, any lines connecting measurement items within the same construct reflect the covariance between those items. The determination of covariance between items in one construct is based on the recommendations of the model modification index generated by CFA to obtain a fit model. This step shows how variation in one measurement item can be understood through variation in other items within the same construct.

## Discussion

This study has successfully explored and identified seven important aspects of the initial stages of establishing an Islamic Work Exemplar scale. These seven elements are honesty, trust, fairness, competence, responsibility, sincerity, and religiosity. The findings align with and corroborate previous literature on work ethics in the Islamic view. Honesty is a principle emphasized in the Qur'an surah Al-Baqarah [2]: 42, in line with the study of Heryadi & Subandi (2021), which revealed that honesty guides individuals to maintain consistency between words and behavior. Trust is stated in the Qur'an surah An-Nisā' [4]: 58, reflecting the principle of trustworthiness in Islam. Justice, the principle on which Islamic work ethics is based, is also emphasized in the Qur'an surah An-Nisā' [4]: 135. Meanwhile, competence is valued in the Qur'an surah Al-Mujadalah (58): 11, and responsibility in surah Al-Zāriyāt [51]: 56. The Qur'an surah Āli-'Imrān [3]: 200 advocates sincerity, while religiosity, as an integral part of Islamic work ethics, is explained in the Qur'an surah Al-Baqarah [2]: 197 (LPMQ, 2022). Beekun (1997) suggests these principles as the foundation of Islamic work ethics based on the interpretation of the Qur'an and Hadith. The concept of work exemplary has been explained in the Qur'an surah Al-Azāb [33]: 21, which states that the Prophet is an example for believers. In his tafsir, Ibn Kathir emphasizes the importance of imitating the Prophet's behavior in all speech and actions. Relevant to this verse, Sufiyana's (2021) study found that the Quran is the normative basis for exemplary education in Islam, and the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is considered a role model for Muslims. Exemplary aspects in the context of Islamic work can be seen in the words, speech, and actions of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Based on evidence of content validity, considering relevant experts' opinions, 37 of the 42 items of the draft Islamic Work Exemplary Scale that have been developed show high content validity. DeVellis & Thorpe (2021) argues that content validity is important in scale development. Evaluations conducted by experts in relevant fields ensure that the items are aligned with the concepts to be measured (Fernández-Gómez et al., 2020; Guillot-Valdés et al., 2022). Inter-rater reliability indicates perfect consistency among expert comparisons, providing

an in-depth view of the instrument's validity (DeVellis, 2005). Mach et al. (2017) underlined that agreement among raters is an important indicator of scale reliability.

This study successfully explored and integrated several aspects of Islamic work ethics into one factor, focusing on trust, fairness, and responsibility incorporated in the "Accountability" factor and competence and earnestness incorporated in the "Professionalism" factor. This choice of incorporation is based on the close correlation between these aspects, which reflects the intrinsic relationships in Islamic work ethics (Bamigboye, 2015). This fit also supports the interrelated principles of Islamic ethics in a professional context. The four main factors identified in the Islamic work ethics scale are honesty, accountability, professionalism, and religiosity, represented by 31 measurement items. These results confirm that the Islamic Work Exemplification Scale forms a unidimensional measurement structure. The unidimensional measurement structure of the Islamic work exemplary scale is different from the research of Hanif et al. (2022), who found that the Islamic work ethic forms a multidimensional measurement. However, Hunsu et al. (2022) emphasized that constructs with a single dimension facilitate interpretation and use in academic research.

Standardized factor loadings generated by CFA with values greater than 0.5 indicate the significant relevance of each item in measuring the intended construct (Ehido et al., 2020; Shrestha, 2021). This value indicates that each item contributes significantly to the factor in question, corroborating the construct's validity in the study context. In addition, the evaluation of model fit using various indices, such as RMSEA, SRMR, and CFI, provides a more comprehensive view of the features and performance of the research model. Although sample size can affect the chi-square index, combining these indices provides a more precise and reliable evaluation of model fit (Luo et al., 2022; Reyes et al., 2022).

### Implications

This research can help us understand how to integrate Islamic values in the workplace. The research shows a new tool companies can use to see and improve employees' adherence to Islamic values. For example, this tool can be used when assessing employee performance, training, or incorporating Islamic values into corporate culture. The results of this study can also serve as a basis for future research on work culture or Islamic work ethics.

### Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

This study has some limitations that need to be considered: Simple random sampling methods may limit the representation of a very large overall population. Future researchers could try more complex and structured sampling techniques to include a wider population representation. The distribution of the instrument through online methods may lead to less accurate responses due to the need for more strong engagement from the respondents. Future researchers should consider combined survey methods, such as online and face-to-face, and provide clearer guidance to respondents, which may improve the quality and accuracy of responses. Although this scale explored some aspects of Islamic work ethics, other principles or dimensions still need to be accommodated in this study. Future researchers should conduct preliminary studies or focus groups with experts in Islamic work ethics to help identify and incorporate other relevant dimensions or principles to make this scale more comprehensive.

### CONCLUSION

The study developed a measurement instrument to evaluate Islamic work ethics based on seven core aspects: honesty, trust, fair, competence, responsibility, earnest, and religiosity. These aspects are drawn from ethical principles in Islamic teachings, such as those in the Qur'an and Hadith. Through validation by experts and statistical analysis, the instrument proved valid and reliable. Further factor analysis showed that the initial seven aspects could be simplified into four

main aspects: honesty, responsibility, professionalism, and religiosity. These findings reinforce that Islamic ethical principles are highly relevant in professional work. In addition, the instrument has proven to be effective, valid, and consistent in describing the constructs measured. Therefore, this scale presents a reliable method to assess work ethics based on Islamic teachings, both for practical and academic purposes.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to the respondents, including Muslim employees in the government sector, state-owned enterprises in Indonesia, and private employees who have voluntarily responded to the pilot test of the Islamic Work Exemplary scale. The highest gratitude is given to the experts who have given their time to conduct content validation and provide suggestions for improvement on the developed scale. The authors would also like to acknowledge the contributions of the various parties who played a role but cannot be mentioned individually for their support in this study.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

The first author played a crucial role in various stages of this research, from formulating the initial idea, identifying research gaps, searching for novelty, in-depth literature review, scale design, and survey implementation to data analysis and interpretation for the preparation of this article. Meanwhile, the second author presents essential contributions, especially in methodology and data analysis techniques. Meanwhile, the third author makes significant contributions according to his expertise, especially in ensuring that the Islamic work exemplary material presented is appropriately based on the teachings of the Qur'an, Hadith, and the principles of religiosity and noble values of Islam.

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[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-51496-3\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-51496-3_4)

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Islamic Guidance and Counseling Journal

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