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AOSIS

Islamic religiosity and job satisfaction among Muslim teachers in Malaysia

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Authors:
Muhammad Yafiz[1] ORCID
Mohammed Yousif Oudah Al-Muttar[2] ORCID
Saade Abdalkareem Jasim[3] ORCID
Qurratul Aini[4] ORCID
Anna Gustina Zainal[5] ORCID
Yousef A. Baker El-Ebiary[6] ORCID
Rasha Abed Hussein[7] ORCID
Tayseer Rasol Allahibi[8,9] ORCID
Ngakan Ketut Acwin Dwijendra[10] ORCID

Affiliations:
[1]Department of Social Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences, Universitas Islam Negeri, Sumatera Utara Medan, Indonesia

[2]Department of Educational Administration, Faculty of Educational Administration, Universitas Pendidikan, Pendidikan, Indonesia

[3]Department of Medical Laboratory Techniques, Faculty of Medical Laboratory, Al-maarif University College, Al-anbar-Ramadi, Iraq

[4]Department of Social Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences, Universitas Muhammadiyah, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

[5]Department of Communication, Faculty of Communication, University of Lampung, Bandar Lampung, Indonesia

[6]Department of Informatics and Computing, Faculty of Informatics and Computing, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia

[7]Department of Medical Sciences, Faculty of Medical Sciences, Al-Manara College For Medical Sciences, Misan, Iraq

In recent years, researchers have paid special attention to religiosity and the practice of religious beliefs. If people put religiosity at the forefront of their affairs and maintain the roots of religion in various aspects of work and family life, they will see God present and watchful in doing all things, and the result of such a vision will be the successful performance of deeds and walking the path of perfection. Having a heartfelt belief in the value of work and adhering to it will result in a greater desire to work. Religiosity is a variable that can be related to job variables. In addition, it can play an important role in the behaviours of employees. In Islam, work is a virtue and is necessary to balance the personal and social life of the individual. Given the importance of this issue, the present study aimed to evaluate the relationship between Islamic religiosity and job satisfaction of Muslim teachers in Malaysia. In total, 2200 Muslim teachers of Kuala Lumpur and Penang were selected for the study by simple random sampling. Data were collected by using standard questionnaires and analysed by Pearson's correlation coefficient in SPSS. According to the results, there was a significant and positive relationship between teachers' Islamic religiosity and job satisfaction as $P = 0.784$ and $T = 0.000$ which was less than the Sig level of 0.05.

Contribution: According to Islamic teachings, working for a Muslim is like worship. Based on the findings of this research, teachers with higher Islamic religiosity enjoy higher job satisfaction.

Keywords: Islam; religiosity; religion; job satisfaction; Muslim teachers.

[AQ1]

[AQ2]

Introduction

In human society, the most basic job is education, and the person who carries out this mission is a teacher. The work of a teacher refers to any effort that is made to guide, develop and educate a person. It is according to this definition that prophets are called human teachers. Parents and other family members also have a teacher role compared to the younger ones. But in naming the different classes that have taken on the task of education, only one group is called a teacher; that is, those who undertake the mission of educating our children from childhood and primary education to youth and higher education. In the Islamic society, this important task is the responsibility of honourable, satisfied and conscientious human beings who are engaged in building and shaping the talents of the faithful and skilled out of commitment and compassion. The Holy Quran considers the role of divine work for the work of teachers. The first Surah that was revealed to the Holy Prophet, Muhammad (PBUH), in verses 1 to 5 of Surah Al-Alaq refers to this role. In this Surah, the attribute of teaching for God Almighty is mentioned. That is what teachers are doing. In addition, the role of the teacher in society is the role of the prophets, that is, teachers try to nurture and educate members of society by following the example of divine messengers. This role has been specified in several verses of the Holy Quran. For example, in verse 2 of Surah Jumu'ah, he says: And he teaches them the Book (Holy Quran) and the Wisdom. 'The importance of any work should be measured by its role and value. The importance of the work of education and a teacher is so great that building and guiding an individual is equal to reviving all members of society. God says in verse 32 of Surah Al-Ma'idah: 'Whoever saves a

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[8]Department of Nursing, Faculty of Nursing, Altoosi University College, Najaf, Iraq
[9]Department of Social Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences, The Islamic University, Najaf, Iraq
[10]Department of Social Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences, Udayana University, Bali, Indonesia
Corresponding author: Muhammad Yafiz, yafizmuhammad14@yahoo.com

human being from death, it is as if he has resurrected all people'. The purpose of reviving a person is to guide and nurture him. If one leads a youth to the right path and takes on the task of humanisation, it is as if he has revived the whole world. Thus, it means to revive, nurture and guide.

Religion is a phenomenon at a high social level and the origin of all social works and institutions, such as human cognition and the identity of human society (Bagasra 2021). Religion is one of the institutions of the human community, such that human beings have never lived without this phenomenon and have not given up on it. In fact, no religion-free culture can be found in the past, and no one thinks that culture other than this will be created in the future (Mohamad 2017). Religiosity and maintaining the basis and root of religion in various matters will generate a space for actions that can be corrected and evolved, where possible shortages can be even compensated for to reach excellence. Evidence suggests that religiosity results in people's happiness and satisfaction plays a significant role in de-escalation of tension, and reduces the mental distress of individuals (Joseph, Linley & Maltby 2006). Work-life is one of the important aspects of human life, which gives them a social identity and is always discussed throughout one's life. It is crucial to evaluate people's job satisfaction because of the importance of its consequences. In this regard, various studies must be conducted to assess this issue. Meanwhile, the religiosity of people can affect their job satisfaction as an individual characteristic (Athar et al. 2016). It is notable that limited research has been conducted on this matter. In addition, most studies have focused on the relationship between religiosity and mental variables in non-Islamic environments or have used models to assess religiosity that is not designed in full accordance with Islam (Ji, Ibrahim & Kim 2009). In the education industry, evidence suggests a positive relationship between job satisfaction and the performance of educational staff members and teachers, as well as a positive association between job satisfaction of teachers and students' perception of service quality (Pandya 2017). It is accepted that more satisfied people offer services of higher quality, which increases the loyalty of clients (education industry customers). Therefore, the existence of loyal customers results in organisational development and increased profitability. Furthermore, job satisfaction is an important issue for teachers, principals and students mainly because a decrease in teachers' job satisfaction leads to their increased absenteeism, quitting and relocation (Asutay, Buana & Avdukic 2021).

Today, it is surely understood that human resources are important parts of any organisation because none of the factors and facilities (buildings, machinery, equipment and tools) work without their presence. In fact, the organisation's fate is determined by the behaviour and performance of its human resources. In other words, the success or failure of an organisation relies on the behaviour of its human resources (managers and employees). However, statistics show that a low percentage of employees work with all their might and dedicate all efforts to the success of their organisations.

A considerable part of employees' abilities and potential has yet to be actualised and emerge as optimal performance and behaviour. Therefore, one of the major concerns of organisational managers is to identify the factors for improving the behaviour of human resources in the organisation (Damghanian, Davoudi & Fartash 2016). Various views exist on the factors and matters that can affect the behaviour and performance of employees, which mostly emphasise the material components and facilities of the organisation.

The holy religion of Islam has plans for all life affairs of humans, including guiding them in a way that their material and spiritual benefits are provided. In addition, it expresses all needs required for the growth and excellence of humans (Gheitani et al. 2019). Even though material factors and facilities impact the improvement of employees' performance, it is more important to evaluate the factors affecting the behaviours of human resources from the perspective of Islamic teachings, especially in Islamic organisations, and use them to improve employees' performance and satisfaction through enhancing their Islamic beliefs and values (Hassi, Balambo & Aboramadan 2021). In this respect, the improvement of human resources' behaviour means encouraging them to adopt behaviours that are in line with providing material and spiritual benefits of the individual and the organisation and guiding the people in accordance with the development of the world and the hereafter. Given the fact that the religion of Islam is the most complete and constructive model of human life, the present study aimed to evaluate the relationship between Islamic religiosity and job satisfaction of Muslim teachers in Malaysia in 2021.

Concept of religiosity in Islam

In religious texts, 'belief' is linked to the concept of 'faith'. In other words, faith may be a state which arises from a set of deep beliefs that not only becomes the origin of certain behaviours but also directs emotions and feelings and can be the origin of peace of mind. In general, employees' beliefs can weaken or strengthen the organisation. There is a clear bilateral link between faith and practice in Islamic teachings, the improvement of decline in each of which is associated with the improvement and decline in the other one. Therefore, the faith–good deeds combination is one of the most common Quranic combinations (Arzani & Arzani 2014). From the perspective of Islam, religious beliefs are any type of belief that has a religious origin, such as believing in God, the afterlife and prophecy. Religious beliefs can also be defined as a set of measures, behaviours, beliefs and attitudes expressed in relation to the principles and sub-principles of religion and other religion-related areas, which in humans can determine a person's lifestyle (Musazadeh & Elmi 2016). Islamic beliefs and Islamic religiosity are defined as original Quranic and Islamic beliefs, according to which humans believe that God watches all of their deeds: 'Does he not know that Allah does see?' (Surah Al-Alaq, Ayat 14), and are sure that their actions are recorded with all details and they will be judged

in the hereafter and rewarded or punished based on their good and bad deeds. Institutionalisation of such beliefs in the organisation can direct the behaviour and performance of human resources regarding their organisational responsibilities. Quran is Prophet Muhammad's biggest and eternal miracle, whose teachings are presented with the philosophy of human guidance. Quran depicts religiosity in a way that the existence of man reaches a stage of growth in the light of religion, where the principle of the existence of a religious man becomes the divine temple and a place for the manifestation of God. In this stage, everything that comes out of human existence has a prominent symbol of religion. In other words, a religious person becomes a mirror and sign of the manifestation of the whole religion, and whatever comes as a religious requirement is the same as religion (Qayyumzadeh 2011).

[AQ9]

In this regard, it should be noted that religion, in fact, is a general and comprehensive picture of the existence of humans, which is all obligations, duties, rulings and orders provided by the Sharia. It is also a recitation of the existence of humans and a general image of mysteries and needs existing in this mysterious creature. In this image, humans are divine creatures, who are pragmatic, truthful, moral and virtuous, and demand to connect to eternity. Finally, humans are completely perfectionist beings, who seek this perfectionism in connection to the Almighty Truth of the Universe. In simpler terms, religion is a set of principles, beliefs and behaviours proposed for the guidance and salvation of human beings (Ozaei 2021). Religion is so objective, pervasive and complex that no period in human history has been devoid of religious beliefs. In general, religiosity is defined as religious diligence in a way that influences the attitudes and actions of individuals (Fathi & Amrani 2017). Nonetheless, there have been conflicts among theorists and socialists regarding the definition of religion and religiosity. Sociologists and psychologists in the field of religion tried to study the state of religiosity empirically. Various components have been discussed in Islamic studies to define religiosity, some of which include 'monotheism' (Tawhid), 'prophecy', 'afterlife', 'beliefs', 'rulings', 'ethics', 'faith', 'worship' and 'sharia' (Shojaei Zand 2006).

Religion is defined as the beliefs and a series of practical and moral instructions brought from God by prophets to guide humankind (Elmi 2008). Religion has been used in the Quran with various meanings, including punishment and reward (Surah Al-Fatiha, Ayat 4), obedience and servitude (Surah Az-Zumar, Ayat 11), monarchy (Surah Al-Baqarah, Ayat 93), Sharia and law (Surah Al-Kafirun, Ayat 6), nation (Surah Al-An'am, Ayat 161), submission (Surah Al Imran, Ayat 19), and beliefs (Surah Al-Baqarah, Ayat 256). Religion includes the rules and regulations of God for the possessors of wisdom (human beings), which include principles and sub-principles. God says, 'Surely the (true) religion with Allah is Islam' (Surah Al Imran, Ayat 9). He also states: 'And whoever desires a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted from him, and in the hereafter, he shall be one of the losers' (Surah Al Imran, Ayat 85).

Job satisfaction

People must have a job to provide a better life for themselves and their families. Job is considered a tool that strengthens the position of humans in the realm of human existence and helps them to achieve their aspirations. However, being satisfied with one's job is an important issue (Hassan et al. 2016). Studies have shown that slacking, lack of sense of responsibility, absence from work, lack of proper guidance from clients, lack of proper protection and care of the property, lack of attention to the quality of work and the tendency to be easy-going can be related to dissatisfaction with the job and doing high-quality and desirable work and timely and effective presence in the workplace (Tastan & Davoudi 2020). People who are satisfied with their jobs do it with pleasure, which acts as a source that decreases their stress, mental pressure, fatigue and other negative factors related to their jobs. As observed, job satisfaction in organisations is of paramount importance and requires social sciences research (Rastgar et al. 2012).

Job satisfaction has attracted significant attention in areas of organisational behaviour and management literature, which is because of the relationship between job satisfaction and other concepts such as organisational commitment, turnover intentions, absence, job performance, and organisational citizenship behaviour. In addition, keeping employees satisfied and productive, and committed to their jobs seems essential in today's turbulent environment that affects organisations' environmental changes (Abbas et al. 2014). Theoretical definitions of job satisfaction include evaluation and expectation components. For instance, Locke (1976) defines job satisfaction as a pleasant feeling obtained from the evaluation of various aspects of the job. Similarly, Mottaz (1988) defines job satisfaction as an emotional response obtained from the assessment of work conditions. It is also stated that job satisfaction is a function of job-related rewards and values. Maslow (1943) assumes that within every human being there exists a hierarchy of five needs, including physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging needs, esteem needs and self-actualisation needs. According to Maslow's pyramid, once a need is satisfied, it is no longer a motivator. Therefore, organisations need to know what level of hierarchy their employees are in and need to meet that need or higher levels. Moreover, Herzberg's motivational hygiene theory proposes that two factors are involved in the job satisfaction or dissatisfaction of a person. According to Herzberg's two-factor theory, internal factors, such as job opportunities, supervisor relationships, growth and the job itself, are associated with job satisfaction. On the other hand, external factors such as organisational policies, administration, supervision and working conditions are associated with job dissatisfaction (Herzberg 1966). In addition, Vroom's expectancy theory (1964) and Wiley's work and motivation have helped expand the concept of job satisfaction. The expectancy theory argues that the desire to behave in a particular way depends on what people expect from the reward they receive for that behaviour as well as the attractiveness of those rewards. Therefore, the theory suggests

[AQ1] that individuals are motivated to perform well if they know that their extra performance is recognised and rewarded (Vroom 1964).

Many researchers have mentioned the redesign of occupations as a factor for increasing people's job satisfaction, which will increase job attractiveness. However, this is realised when the characteristics of people's jobs and duties are changed. In general, job characteristics are the content and nature of the tasks (Spector 1997). Hackman and Oldham have developed the most effective theory regarding the effect of job characteristics on people. The basis of the theory of job characteristics is that people are motivated by inner satisfaction with the tasks they perform. [AQ1] People derive more pleasure in doing their job and accurately carry out their responsibilities when they find meaning in it. According to job characteristics theory, there are five basic characteristics that can be applied to all jobs, which include skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback. These characteristics will lead to three psychological modes: the meaningfulness of the job, responsibility and knowledge of results. The variety, as well as the importance and the identity of the tasks, creates a feeling of having an important job. In addition, job autonomy creates responsibility in the person, and giving feedback will make them aware of their job results. These three psychological modes lead to job satisfaction and motivation. In other words, the more these three psychological states are present, the better is the motivation, job satisfaction and job performance of individuals. People's attitudes towards various aspects of their jobs must be taken into account in order to define and measure their job satisfaction. Each employee pays more attention to some aspects of the job and others pay more attention to other indicators of job satisfaction (Hackman & Oldham 1976). Recognition and attention of organisations to different attitudes of employees and also enriching different aspects of the job will lead to increased job satisfaction, which will have positive results for both the individual and the organisation. The Holy Quran has pointed out various aspects of jobs in different ayats. [AQ10] For instance, 'O you who believe! fulfil the obligations' (Surah Al-Ma'idah, Ayat 1). One of these covenants is the responsibility of individuals in various occupations commanded by the Quran to be fulfilled to the fullest. In the Quran, God commands us to acquire wealth. In an ayat, he says: '…except that it be trading by your mutual consent' (Surah An-Nisa, Ayat 29), which is indicative of satisfaction with the job. In another ayat, he refers to salary and wage, stating: '(Musa) said: If you had pleased, you might certainly have taken a recompense for it' (Surah Al-Kahf, Ayat 77). In a conversation between Shoaib and Moses in another part of the Quran, we read: '…on condition that you should serve me for eight years' (Surah Al-Qasas, Ayat 27). As mentioned in the above ayats, some components in the field of job satisfaction are expressed in the Quran because of the importance of jobs.

Methodology

This was an applied study in terms of objective and a descriptive-correlational study regarding the data collection method. In other words, this research was applied because of being done in line with the practice and needs of society. In addition, it was descriptive because of assessing the current status. Moreover, it was correlational and a field study because of evaluating Islamic religiosity and job satisfaction of Muslim teachers.

Statistical population and sampling method

The statistical population included 2200 Muslim teachers in Kuala Lumpur and Penang in 2021. The participants were selected through a random sampling method. [AQ1] A total of 2084 standard questionnaires were returned, and analysed after their distribution in the research population. In terms of gender, 67% of the participants were male teachers and 33% were female teachers. Regarding age, most respondents were in the age range of 35–45 years. In addition, 29% of the teachers were single and 71% were married.

Measurement tools

The validity of the questionnaires was approved by using content validity. In this regard, the research tools were provided to 10 experts who are faculty members in the areas of theology, psychology and sociology. The generality of the instruments was approved after assessing their questions. In addition, the reliability of the questionnaires was confirmed by using Cronbach's alpha test in SPSS (see Table 1). [AQ2]

In this regard, Cronbach's alphas above 0.7 were indicative of the appropriate reliability of the tools (Faal Qayyumi & Momeni 2017). It is notable that a standard questionnaire by Worthington et al. (2003) and a job satisfaction inventory by Stamps and Piedmonte (1986) were applied to assess religious beliefs and job satisfaction, respectively.

Results

In this study, data analysis was performed in SPSS using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test (to assess the normal distribution of the data), and Pearson's correlation coefficient (to evaluate the relationship between Islamic religiosity and job satisfaction).

Table 2 presents the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test results, according to which the variables with a significance level above 0.05 had a normal distribution. Normality of the data allowed the use of parametric tests in the data analysis process. The relationship between the variables is evaluated below.

Research hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between Islamic religiosity and job satisfaction of Muslim teachers in Malaysia in 2021.

TABLE 1: Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the questionnaire.

Variables/components	Number of questions	Cronbach's alpha coefficient
Islamic religiosity	10	0.82
Job satisfaction	24	0.88
Source:		[AQ11]

TABLE 2: Kolmogorov–Smirnov test.

Variables	K-S statistic value	Level of significance	Result
Islamic religiosity	0.822	0.532	Normal
Job satisfaction	0.946	0.474	Normal

[AQ11] *Source*:

TABLE 3: Pearson's correlation coefficient results for evaluation of the research hypothesis.

Variables	Number of samples	Correlation coefficient	Error rate	Level of significance
Islamic religiosity → Job satisfaction	2084	0.784	0.05	0.000

[AQ11] *Source*:

$$H_0 : r = 0$$
$$H_1 : r \neq 0$$

According to Table 3, because the significance level (sig = 0.000) was lower than the predicted error rate (α = 0.05), the relationship between the variables was significant. In addition, because the correlation coefficient was estimated at 0.784, H_0 was rejected and H_1 was approved. Therefore, there was a significant direct relationship between Islamic religiosity and job satisfaction (confidence level = 95%). In other words, Muslim teachers' job satisfaction increased with an improvement in their Islamic religiosity in Malaysia.

Discussion

The Quran and Sunnah are two enduring sources of religious science inference. In the time of the occurrence of a kind of heresy and distortion in religious teachings, these two eternal sources are the best sources for achieving the truth of religion, and understanding its scope and dimensions. Religiosity and religion in the view of the Quran and Sunnah are nothing but an illustrative version and representation of human existence. In the view of ayats and hadiths, religiosity is the manifestation of the whole religion in the human body and soul. Religion is a shining light before humans. Therefore, it observes the integrity of human existence in all dimensions. It means that religion works towards and interferes with any need and tendency that exists in human beings. Therefore, the intervention area of religion includes all dimensions of human existence. By virtue of nature and intellect, human beings need an interconnected set and system of thought, which is intervened by religion (theoretically and belief-related). In addition, their origin and afterlife and issues related to them are properly explained. Therefore, religion has a comprehensive and systematic worldview. On the other hand, humans are innately inclined to high moral concepts, which is a very active part of interventions of religion. In addition, because humans need material and economic affairs, the economic realm is an important part of Islamic teachings.

The present study was conducted to evaluate the relationship between Islamic religiosity and job satisfaction of Muslim teachers in Malaysia in 2021 by taking a different approach to the existing methods and models. According to the results, there was a positive significant relationship between Islamic

religiosity and job satisfaction of Muslim teachers of Malaysia (p = 0.784). Because every human being makes decisions in different stages of life according to their beliefs, attitudes and values, it is worthwhile to strengthen the behavioural outputs of individuals by improving the religious teachings and Islamic religiosity. This confirmed the research hypothesis, [AQ3] showing that not only accurate Islamic beliefs can improve the performance of human behaviours along with other strategies, but also the accurate correction of Islamic beliefs of human resources is less costly, compared to other factors, and will have the most impact on the improvement of the behaviour and performance of human resources in the workplace and in society. According to the teachings of the Quran, there is a deep and bilateral relationship between accurate beliefs and the positive behavioural outputs and decent performance of a person. One of these positive behavioural and functional outcomes is job satisfaction, which was addressed in the current study. The nature and [AQ3] necessity of faith and sound beliefs are that the believer behaves with faith, proper and healthy behaviour, and adheres to the principles of his beliefs and beliefs. True beliefs often have positive consequences and correct actions. In addition, belief in divine supervision and accurate recording of human performance (e.g. Surah Al-Alaq, Ayat 14; Surah Al-Ahzab, Ayat 45; Surah At-Tawbah, Ayat 105; Surah Al-Mutaffifin, Ayat 20–21, and so on), which is the basis for calculation and evaluation on the Day of Judgment, affects human behaviour. The effect of this belief on behaviour is strengthened when this belief is strengthened. In other words, the stronger this belief, the greater is the impact on employees' organisational behaviour, job satisfaction and performance improvement. Accordingly, managers will be better able to [AQ1] behaviourally improve the performance of the organisation's workforce if they can establish and institutionalise specific basic beliefs and assumptions that God Almighty has put forward in his Word in the minds of the employees. Therefore, our findings can be used by people, organisations and societies in the Islamic community based on Quranic teachings and models.

Acknowledgements

Competing interests

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

Authors' contributions

M.Y. conceptualised the article. M.Y.O.A.-M. reviewed and edited the article, and oversaw the project administration. [AQ13] S.A.J. xxx. D.A. curated the data and provided the resources [AQ14] to conduct the research. A.G.Z. validated the results. Y.A.B.E.-E. xxx. R.A.H. was responsible for investigation. [AQ15] T.R.A. came up with the methodology. N.K.A.D. validated the results and reviewed and edited the manuscript.

Ethical consideration

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

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Data availability

Data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author (M.Y.) upon reasonable request.

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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