

## **Extrinsic and Intrinsic Principles of Islamic Work Ethic: An Analysis of Malay Literatures in Malaysia on Islamic Work Ethic**

<sup>1</sup>Shukri Ahmad, <sup>1</sup>Mohamad Khadafi Rofie,

<sup>1</sup>Musa Yusuf Owoyemi and <sup>2</sup>Aminurraasyid Bin Yatiban

<sup>1</sup>Department of Civilization and Philosophy, SLCP, College of Arts and Sciences, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Santok, Malaysia

<sup>2</sup>Institute of Excellence for IslamicJerusalem Studies,  
College of Government and International Studies, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Santok, Malaysia

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**Abstract:** Islam has outlined work ethic based on al-Quran and al-Sunnah. Some salient characteristics such as al-Taqwa, righteousness, Itiqan, Ihsan, al-Qist, al-Birr, Itqan and Ihsan are prominent features in al-Quran and al-Sunnah concerning work ethic. These concepts outlined in the Quran and Sunnah have also become part of the focus of Malay literatures concerning Islamic work ethic written by some Malay writers in Malaysia. In the light of this, using the qualitative method of comparison and content analysis, this study discusses these eight principles of Islamic work ethic taken from the Quran and Sunnah and how they have been used in the work of Malay Muslim writers in Maalaysia. It analyses how these concepts feature in the works of Malay Muslim writers on work ethic and how they are given the subdivision of intrinsic and extrinsic categories. The result shows that although some of these concepts and others were used in the Malay Muslim literatures, nonetheless, they all still conform to these eight broad categories as taken from the Qur'an and Sunnah when critical analysed, hence, the study concludes that these eight concepts of Islamic work ethic are relevant in the work of the Malay Muslim writers on Islamic work ethic and their division into extrinsic and intrinsic categories are justified as some of they are apprent on the work done while others are inner motivators of work in an Islamic way.

**Key words:** Islamic, work, ethic, Malay, Muslim, literatures, extrinsic, intrinsic

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Islam is a religion that is based on three main principles, namely beliefs, practices and courtesy/moral. The combination of the three principles of Islam produces a good Muslim, psychologically and physically. Beliefs, is one aspect of Islam that binds a Muslim, to submit to and obey the instructions and commands of God. While the practice of Islam is a pattern of management by humans in line with what has been outlined/ordained by God to be practiced, this can only be done through laws and rules of life. Finally, courtesy/moral has to do with the mode of behaviour of a Muslim such as Ihsan is (kindness) which is an attitude about showing kindness to parents, relatives, neighbours, orphans, the poorest etcand sometimes it is called a moral or ethical code and good manners.

Indeed islam is a religion that emphasises the concept of human beings as the implementor of Allah's law or divine commands. This mandate involves the

responsibility of man as a vicegerent of God which includes being true and obedient to God's commands as well as being responsible to oversee and govern the world. Thus, in the Islamic doctrine man is identified as a caliph of God on earth. Theman's responsibility, therefore, deserves to be carried out by way of courtesy/morals which includes honesty, hardwork, sincerity and others-this is the primary content of trust in God.As an employee and as a manager in the workplace everything has to be done in an honest and honourable way. The Prophet stated that Allah chose Islam for you, then you shall observe it with good manners and generosity. Certainly, no one is perfect in Islam but with both manners and generosity, one can attain to goodness.

In terms of work and benefit, it is part of human nature to receive benefit from research. The research which is done with honesty, integrity and efficiency is said to be inline with religious recommendation. In fact islam requires all Muslims to work hard and in line with these principles. This means that Islam is a religion that

emphasizes work as an ethic, so that everyone can live a good life whether in this world or in the hereafter as the rewards of work done under the Islamic principles goes beyond this world. Apparently Islam is a religion that emphasizes the execution of work ethic in every area of life and employment. This position of Islamic work ethic can be understood from the Qur'an (al-Jumaah; 10, al-Mulk; 15, al-Nahl; 80, Yaasin; 34, al-Muzzammil; 20 and al-Hadid; 25). Although, the Qur'an did not say clearly that these verses refer to work ethic, this is expected since the Qur'an is neither a philosophical treatise nor yet an academic enterprise on work ethic, nonetheless, the salient features of the concept of work and work ethic can be discerned quite clearly from these referred verses just as other field of knowledge could be derived from its other verses.

In view of the above, the objective of this study is to analyse some of the concepts that are found in the Qur'an and Sunnah as they relate to work and Islamic Work Ethic (IWE) and see how Malay literatures on Islamic work ethic have used the same concepts and which of them form the intrinsic and extrinsic values in Islamic work ethic. In order to achieve the objective of this study, the methodology employed is qualitative in nature using comparative tools and content analysis. The reason for adopting this methodology is because the work is based on library research and the aim is to compare the Islamic work ethic view from the Quran and Sunnah with that of Malay literatures on Islamic work ethic and analyse the concepts that are used in both in order to see whether they are in concord or not.

In other words, the task of this study is to first explain the concept of Islamic work ethic from the prism of the Qur'an and Sunnah. Second, see how these concepts and others related to them are used and understood in Malay literatures on Islamic work ethic and see if they are in tandem with that of what is enumerated under Islamic work ethic and, third, highlight the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of these concepts of Islamic work ethic.

**Islamic work ethic:** Work ethic is a set of values which is based on hard work, diligence and perseverance. In addition, it also involves a belief in the moral function in shaping the work and the ability to develop moral character of the workers. A work ethic may involve reliability, initiate or maintain social skills and a properly done work/assignment. The actors who are capable of implementing work ethic in the workplace should be granted more responsibility in the organization. While, workers who are not able to establish good work ethic may be estimated to be incapable of justifying the salary paid

by the employer and should, therefore, not be recommended for promotion or higher placement in the organization. In the Western world, work ethic is founded on the concept of "Free Market" according to the theory of capitalism. Under this concept every person who exerted him/herself, work hard and follow the rules deserves to be rewarded with a higher position and will go forth in the hierarchy of the organization. While those who are not working hard enough or weak will not be allowed to enjoy further promotion as a result of their performance (Hassan, 1998; Hussein, 1989).

In Islam, on the other hand, the work ethic refers to a set of values or belief systems in accordance with the Quran and the Sunnah. For sure, the Islamic work ethic demands for multi-dimensional relationships with diverse views of life socially, politically and economically. The Muslim workers must have eight things that involve attitudes (attitudes) and temperament (behaviours) and another five aspects involving beliefs (beliefs) in the work place. Both of these views above are included as a part of Islamic work ethic by Owoyemi (2012) in their research. However, they, temperament and attitude and belief are the fundamental basis of Islamic work ethic and they will be further enumerated in this study below in order to show why this is so.

**Excellent temperament and attitude:** Muslim workers must have the nature and ability that meet the demands of working life with the utmost application of excellent temperament and attitude in the workplace. This means that hard work and hard effort coupled with the right temperament and attitude are prized as a natural state for their own benefit. The nature and propensities of satisfying excessive physical pleasures should be avoided and living in a simple way with earnest and honest effort is the way a Muslim is expected to spend his/her lifespan. Ahmad *et al.* (2013) described some attitudes that a Muslim has to strive to live with. Among what can be inferred from their work are the followings: Muslim workers, men and women should spend more time at work place and spend a little recreation. They should depend on work attendance record by drawing a low rate of absenteeism. They also deserve to be highly productive and try to imbibe the quality of producing results. Muslim workers should feel proud to be at work and on duty as best as possible. Likewise, they should have the feeling of togetherness, commitment and loyalty to their profession, organizations and members of the working group. Muslim workers should have a sense of achievement orientation and struggled continuously for

promotion and to move forward. They also should work honestly to earn wealth and maintain it through sharp attitude and wise investment. Simplicity should be observed all the time and unnecessary entertainment be avoided as a waste of time. These, in essence are the expected excellent temperament and attitude expected of a Muslim worker in his/her workplace as well as in his/her social life. However, these excellent temperament and attitude could be grouped into eight concepts as mentioned earlier and all of these eight concepts are enumerated in the Qur'an and Sunnah. They are: 'Amal Salih', Birr, Taqwa, Al-Qist, Maaruf, Ihsan, Mas'uliyah and Itqan. These concept will form the basis of our discussion in this paper and our concern will be how Malay literatures have treated these concepts in their writings on Islam.

**Beliefs:** As mentioned earlier, belief is the second most important fundamental in Islamic work ethic. In terms of beliefs, it is posited that any Muslim employee must regard work as a jihad and in this sense, the activities of work cannot be separated from belief in Islam (Ibrahim, 1991). A Muslim should combine work, worship and leisure time with the goal of worship for the sake of Allah (Taqwa). They also must be living in a simple and contented way or qanaah is, in order to achieve a balance between management and customers, so that all revenue will be become clean (halal). In other word, Muslims are expected to make sure that they do not get involved in any illegal activities which are against the Islamic principles (they have to exhibit Ihsan). Moreover, the real job of a Muslim is to seek as much as they can of the bounty of Allah's reward and His joy. Lastly, zakat and virtue are the primary objectives for performing any work in order to improve productivity. Based on this, it will not be out of order to say that Taqwa and Ihsan are cardinal belief which are Muslim is expected to exhibit as part of his/her workethic.

**Principles of islamic work ethic from Al-Quran and Al-Sunnah:** Having explained these two broad fundamentals of Islamic work ethic (excellent temperance and attitude and belief), we now turn to explain further the first fundamental of excellent temperament and attitude which we mentioned earlier as containing eight concepts ('Amal Salih', Birr, Taqwa, Al-Qist, Maaruf, Ihsan, Mas'uliyah and Itqan). What will be done below is to turn to the Qur'an and Sunnah and see how these eight concepts are understood and used in relation to Islamic work ethic.

**The concept of 'Amal Salih':** Work in Arabic is conveyed through the terms al-'amal, al-kasb and as-sun'. The basic meaning of the word al-Amal is derived from 'Amila, meaning 'to do, act, operate, be active, work or to produce' (Wehr and Cowan, 1979). While, the term al-kasb is derived from kasaba which means, 'to gain, acquire, to earn or to profit'. Hence, the term al-kasb means the acquisition, earning or gaining in subsistence (Ibid). In the Qur'an, the word 'amal was repeated 320 times and kasb >61 times. The term 'amal was mentioned together with the term iman (faith) and salih (righteousness) >20 times (Izutsu, 1966). Similarly, the term Iman and Salih are tied together into almost inseparable links. Just as the shadow follows the form, wherever there is iman there are salihat or 'good works'. Allah says:

“Those who believe and do good works (salihat); such shall be the inhabitants of paradise, to dwell therein forever”

Defining Amal Salih, Wan Mohd Nor says it includes 'all those actions that emerge out of and in conformity to the Islamic world-view'. They include the ritual obligations and other religious duties as well as efforts of social significance along moral, spiritual, intellectual, or socioeconomic lines. From this, it is clear that Salih is a pervasive attribute in every aspect of Muslim conduct. Sometimes, the term salih is also applied to the characteristics of man. We may also note that the 'believers' are also called, characteristically, the 'Salih servants':

“Verily, We have written in the Psalms, after the remembrance, the earth shall my Salih servants inherit” and also

Furthermore, it should be remarked that the term salih has link with the word abd (servant) which is derived from 'abada; meaning to serve or worship. As Allah mentions in the Qur'an 'I did not create man and Jin but only to let them serve me. While the term 'ibadah is defines as "giving full subservience to Allah alone in all of His instructions and commandments and rejecting subservience to other than Allah in all aspects" earthly and hereafter's affairs. In other words, it means that a servant who performs salih deeds which are concerned with earthly activities is considered as doing a religious duty. On the other hand, Allah has mentioned in the Qur'an the relationship between Amal Salih and Allah's reward. Many verses in the Qur'an explain that those who work righteousness in earthly activities and ritual affairs will be bestowed with a reward in the Hereafter:

“Verily to those who believe and work righteousnes, verily we shall not suffer (to be Perished) the reward of any (who do a single) righteous deed” (Kahf, 30)

The verse above has thus guaranteed that a good man is entitled to gain both temporary and permanent rewards from Allah. Temporary bounty refers to fulfilment of human needs by Allah in worldly activities while permanent reward refers to the rewards in Paradise and in the Hereafter. Besides that, the concept of righteous-work (Amal Salih) has a close relationship with knowledge. In the Qur'an, several verses urged men to observe and think about the creations of the heavens and the earth. Elsewhere, Muslims were told that Ocean was subservient to men. In this sense, knowledge in the Qur'an must be thoroughly explored by Muslims. These explorations are good deeds and considered a jihad for which men are entitled to get rewards from Allah. Moreover, in another passage of the Qur'an, Allah has linked Iman and good deeds with the importance of time. Thus, it can be concluded that righteous-work acts as a motivator of Muslims toward working earnestly. Therefore, righteous-work or amal salih has become a salient characteristic of IWE.

**Birr:** Equivalent to Salih in meaning, though not in form is the word al-Birr which is perhaps among the most elusive of the Qur'anic moral terms. In the Qur'an, Allah says:

“The birr does not consist in your turning faces towards the East or the West but (true) birr is this that one believes in God and the last day and the angels and the Scripture and the Prophets; that one gives one's own wealth howsoever cherished it may be, to kinfolk, orphans, the needy, the wayfarer and beggars and also for the sake of slaves that one performs the ritual prayer, pays the alms. And those who keep their covenant when they have once covenanted and are patient in distress and hardship: these are they who are sincere; these are they who are God

It is a fact that the concept of Birr, indirectly understood is asking Muslims for working hard. Muslims are considered birr if they fulfil all the duties, social as well as religious. In this sense, Muslims will only fulfil the elements of birr like giving their own wealth to whosoever cherished it if they work hard and pay the alms. Therefore,

in another verse, we found Birr coming together with alms giving: “You attain not to birr until you expend of what you love and whatever you expend, God is aware of it”. The passage above also shows that birr are those who are ‘patient in distress and hardship’. Patience is insisted upon throughout man's entire life and develops in man the ability to face not only dangers, trials and difficulties but onslaughts of greed, fear, suspicion and desire. The concept of patience could also be understood as working hard without giving up in line with rida to Allah's predetermination. Allah says in other verses; “Do not despair of God's soothing mercy except those who have no faith”.

**Taqwa:** Taqwa or piety, has the most explicit connection with birr. Allah says:

“It is not birr that you should enter your houses from the backs of them. But birr is To fear (Allah). So enter your houses by the doors and fear Allah”

The term taqwa is derived from waqa which means ‘to preserve or to safeguard’. To Maududi, Taqwa consists of man's awe of God, the consciousness of his duty towards Allah and an awareness of his accountability to Him; that the world is a place of trial where God has sent man for a specified period of time; that God's decisions on the day of Judgement on an individual's future in the Hereafter will depend on how he makes use of his energies and capabilities in the given period of time at his disposal in this world (Maudoodi, 1984). Taqwa is related to heart and mind. The one who cleans his heart and mind is considered a successful person. The pure of heart means a struggling against passion and evils which could make a man to be lazy, unmotivated, uncompetitive and unethical. Muttaqi is the one who has attained taqwa and is a struggler in order to obtain the pleasure of Allah and Allah has promised to guide Muttaqi in His right way. Indeed, Muttaqi people will gain Allah's blessing in handling their worldly activities.

Therefore, from the above explanations, it can be understood that Taqwa is one of the utmost virtues which can develop a work ethic of the Muslim Ummah. Muslim scholars such as Ibn Taimiyyah, Imam An-Nawawi, Al-Ghazali, Ibn Sina, Ibn Miskaweh and others had developed their work ethic through the concept of taqwa. Taqwa in this sense become their motivational spirit of work ethic in all fields of life.

**Al-Qist:** The term al-Qist derived from qasata means to act justly, in fairness. Al-Qist means justice, fairness or equity. Allah says in the Qur'an; “As to those who have

not fought you on account of religion nor driven you out from Your homes, God forbids you not that you should show *Birr* (*tabarru*, verb) to them And act equitably". In the passage mentioned above, the term *qist* is almost synonyms with *birr*. However, according to Izutsu *Birr* "is a comprehensive word for all actions motivated by love and righteousness and stimulated by the religious experience of 'fear' and 'surveillance' while, *Qist* has a much more limited application, being used chiefly as a forensic term for justice, or impartiality in dealing with others" (Izutsu, 1966). Ali (1975, 1988) *al-Qist* or Justice not only deals with an administration of codified legal rules and procedures in a regular law court but it is also linked with the quality of the human mind which helps an individual to distinguish between right and wrong in life.

Based on the viewpoints above, it can be understood that justice has a close relationship with the function of the human mind. While *Taqwa* is also related to mind and heart, it is clear that there is a relationship between justice and *Taqwa*. Allah says "Be just! It is closest to God's consciousness". The activities of the Prophet himself demonstrated the importance of justice. The reason of his prophecy was that it constituted a 'mercy for the entire world' by seeking to uplift and improve human conduct. A man who possesses work ethic is one who applies justice. A Muslim who applies justice is a man who has work ethic. Hence, through justice, one has ensured IWE. In another passage, the Qur'an has used the term *adl* 'just' equivalent with the term justice:

"O ye who believe; be steadfast witness for Allah in equity and let not the enmity of any People seduce you that ye deal not justly. Deal just that is nearer to your duty. Observe your duty to Allah"

It should be noted that 'deal justly' *adl* here is made equivalent to 'not suffering any wrong'. Therefore, we may assume that the term *qist* in such context is clearly opposed to the term *zulm*, *jawr* (oppression) or *tughyan* (tyranny). In another passage, we find clear relation between *azzalim* and unjust or deceitful. It shows linkage among the terms *qist* or *adl*, *zalim* and *gharar* 'deceit'

**Maaruf:** The term *maaruf* in the Quran is also equivalent to the English word 'good'. Izutsu mentioned that *maaruf* is defined very often as "what is acknowledge and approved by Divine law". Moreover, this term also denotes such things as the manner of speech and talking, moral duties and obedience to Allah. Furthermore, Allah

says in the Quran: "Let there be one community of you, all inviting men to good (*Khair*, enjoining the *maaruf* and forbidding the *munkar*. Those shall be the (ultimate) winners". In the passage above, there is a substantial relationship between *khair* and *maaruf*. The Quran mentions the (ultimate) winners are those who enjoin goodness which is approved by God and forbid harmful which is disproved by God. All *maaruf* are *khair* while all *khair* are considered 'amal *salih*. In other words, all *maaruf* which comprises of all good deeds must be done earnestly as a work should be done earnestly. In the Qur'an states that the material effort in the world is a part and parcel of Islamic *weltanschauung*. "But seek, with the (wealth) which God has bestowed on thee the Home of the Hereafter, nor forget thy portion in this world but do thou good as God has been good to thee and not those who do mischief."

In sum, all of the Quranic terminology mentioned and explained above seems to give positive values towards work. These terms indicate two important conceptual aspects. Firstly, it positively commanded Muslims to have a life of spiritual grace, moral earnestness and material effort. It means that, a Muslim society must be an austere and industrious society. Secondly, the insistence on working hard in life also includes the production of commodities for the benefit of the Muslim communities.

**Ihsan:** The word compassion is mentioned in the Quran 52 times.. The term *Ihsan* is the concept used in measuring the quality of human's goodness and love for God. According to Qardhawi (1995, 2000), *Ihsan* or courtesy in term of linguistic means to carry out tasks in neat, tidy, perfect and good and beneficial ways. *Ihsan* also mean someone who is doing something in the approved manner and guide as shown by legislation. The messenger of Allah said in a hadith: You should worship Allah as if you see Him and if you cannot see him, then surely Allah sees you. (Bukhari and Muslim)

According to Kathir (1994), Sufyan bin Uyainah said, goodwill is conditions in your heart better than outside of your heart. Based on this concept of courtesy, an employee will have the courtesy that would have the feeling that God is always watching what you do, though he could not see his Lord with his/her eyes. *Ihsan* can also be linked with love. The highest love is love to God and God loves His servant. God's love will motivate a Muslim to carry out his responsibilities as best as possible. Thus Allah will reward a person in love with good. *Ihsan* is also an effort made to find all the benefits

for the Hereafter. This means that every good action is Hasan. Hasan is the answer to something good which could pose as a reward for the after life.

The purpose of Ihsan is also to do a job or task in the best possible and successful way or manner. Ihsan also means to seek perfection in doing something with a certain added value. In a hadith the Prophet said which means: Verily Allah has enjoined on all matters Ihsan. When you kill, kill well. When you slaughter, slaughter well. Sharpen the blades and make the slaughtered animal comfortable (Narrated by Muslim, chapter amr bi wa al-ihsan zabih qital).

The concept of Ihsan also directed workers to be true in all matters as recommended by the Prophet Muhammad in the Hadith on Ihsan. True nature is the nature of the Prophet and through this nature, it is connected with the nature of trust. Additionally, clean or hygiene is one element that arises from goodwill because these properties are guarding the conduct and practice of human (Abidin, 2005). Clean work also includes the neatness aspect of the job which is also classified as goodwill. Cleanliness is a cover of the spiritual and material as well as spiritual and bodily.

**Mas'uliyah:** There are some words that are expressed by the Quran which have relationships with masuliyah like mas'uul, tama'ninah, wafa, trust, pious, wizr (expense), Herman (supervision) and caliphate. The word, Mas'uliyah, has been mentioned in the Quran as much as five times (Baqy, 1991). Mas'uliyah mentioned herein are properties embedded between accountability and trust. Mas'uliyah this concept is important to reflect the relationship between humans and our fellow human beings as well as human relationship with God. Accountability to God means that one must fulfil the commands of Allah and His Apostle as charged by each trust. Rejection means trust betrayed. Treacherous treatment resulted in sin and consequence of sin is punishment and wrath of God (Oliver and Brief, 1987).

Therefore, accountability has a very strong bond with trust because responsibility is to accept and implement the mandate given. This can be confirmed by the words of the Prophet that says: Each of you is a leader and each of you will be held accountable for his leadership (Bukhari and Muslim). The word 'trust' is derived from the Arabic language which can be defined as loyal, trustworthy, honest and kind. However, from a deeper context, trust is understood as the trust placed by one individual to another party in maintaining or keeping

things or will no matter whether it is real or not real. Clearly, masuliyah concept is a combination of responsibility and trust to work with ethical principles advocated by the Quran and Sunnah. Responsibility and trust are two things that are related because the responsibility is to implement the mandate given. Masuliyah meet the requirements of the principle of life and work and the execution were carried out by Muslims in all fields of endeavour by them. In addition, this principle expressed the commitment of a cohesiveness and satisfaction with work and tasks performed by employees.

**Itqan:** Itqan or Etqan meaning strong, neat, meticulous, careful, best (Razi, 1990). The Prophet said which means: God loves when someone is doing something he would do it with diligence (Bayhaqi). As Allah says in the Holy Quran: And you see the mountains and think them solid but they pass away as the clouds. Thus, the act of God who has made all things firmly and neatly as possible; Indeed, it was deep knowledge of what you are doing.

Itqan here show the precision and care that have been mentioned by Allah in the Quran (Zuhayli, 1991). This is the only verse that mentions "Itqan" In al-Quran. Here, specified schedule verses 2:15 says about itqan found in al-Quran. Itqan according to the terms of the Malay language means persistence, competence and expertise. Meanwhile, itqan also translated as earnestness (Noresah, 2000). Islam encourages its followers to work very diligently and professionally. The concept of Itqan can be seen through the life of the Prophet himself in all areas of the business either worship or other matters. This can be demonstrated through the implementation of Itqan by the Prophet in worship as reported by Aisyah that the Prophet used to pray to Allah, the exalt, at night to the extent that his legs become swollen.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Having analysed the concept of Islamic work ethic from the Quran and Sunnah above, we now turn to the third part of this article which has to do with how Malay literatures in Malaysia utilizes these concepts of Islamic work ethic as outlined in the Qur'an and Sunnah especially the ones listed above. In other words, the focus of this part of the article is to search, compare and analyse Malay literatures found in three forms of writings: published books, journal and conference proceedings



Fig. 1: Principles of Islamic work ethic

papers and using the analytical and critical methods, to discuss knowledge-oriented initiatives by Malay Muslim writers in Malaysia on Islamic work ethic. Thus, given the principles outlined above on Islamic work ethic, this study examined a total of 30 literatures written by Malay authors which have explained the principles of Islamic work ethic and try to see how these are in tandem with the concepts of Islamic work ethic discussed in the section above. This study is based on writing, stating the principles of Islamic work ethic, written by Malay scholars in Malaysia.

#### Islamic work ethic: some values from Malay literatures:

Among the values of Islamic work ethic expressed by the researchers of Malay literatures are as follows; (niyat) intention worship Allah, Al-Birr, trust and responsibility, sincerity, diligent, disciplined, justice, thankful, work design, time management, courtesy, competitive, consultation, cooperation, balanced, educated, clean, efficient, resignation, piety, innovation (islah),

introspection, loyalty, truthfulness, patience, promise, not too love materialism, philanthropist, humility, tolerant, task based on expertise, facilitate, maaruf, thrifty, good works (Fig. 1).

This study found out that there are five values of IWE which are most dominant in the works of Malay scholars on Islamic work ethic, these are: diligent (which appears 20), the trust and responsibility (which appears 19), justice (which appears 14), sincerity (which appears 12) and collaboration (which appears 11). While the others could be sum up as follows; sincerity in worship (which appears 10), Ihsan (which appears 10), deliberated (which appears 10), birr (which appears 9), efficient (which appears 8), gratitude (which appears 7) the truth (which appears 6) discipline (which appears 6) and piety (which appears 5). Others are Maaruf (which appears 5), balanced (which appears 4) respect (which appears 4) clean (which appears 4) and good deed (which appears 4). Meanwhile, other principles such as not to love the world, task based on expertise, competitive, education, tolerant and

self-reflection (appears 3) while, keep promise and Patience (appears 2). In addition, work design assigned, specialist, innovation, loyalty, generous, humble, facilitate and thrift, all of which are included in the Islamic work ethic but were all mentioned just once (1).

If we examine and analyse critically, all the values that are just mentioned above, it would be seen that they are included in the eight major principles that have been discussed earlier under the section on Islamic work ethic. This principles can be observed in Fig. 1.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

By researching on all the values in the Malay scholars' literatures, it can be concluded that the characteristics of Islamic work ethic as discussed by them focused on two main values which we can categorize as intrinsic and extrinsic values because some of them are inner to the worker while others are external and apparent in the work done. The intrinsic value is associated with the goals of work and it is very significant and dominant in all of the writers' works. For example, they all recognize that work must be done for the sake of Allah. So, in that sense, principles such as sincerity, gratitude and piety must be the first aims of any work and all of these are internal to the worker, intrinsic. Likewise, the Malay literatures also acknowledge that work must be associated with pleasure and devotion to God. Without sincerity, the pleasure of Allah, gratitude and clarity of objectives, no work at all is considered as belonging to or coming under the Islamic work ethic. The explanation of these Malay scholars seems to go against the views of the Western scholars who do not give attention to the concept of hereafter and the divine goal. The ambiguity in relation to the Lord is among the factors that led to work ethic in the West failing to discipline the human mind in following the commands of God and absolving humans of any misconduct and ethical violations when it comes to work exploitation and excessive profit seeking orientation which may be detrimental to the society as seen in the capitalist system for example.

The Malay literatures agreed that inner values are more important than the type of work and workload (Abdullah, 1989). For example, almost all of them named trust, honesty, fairness, compassion, simple, clean, resignation; self-reflection, devotion and patience, qanaah, humility, tolerance and brotherhood as important internal feature of the construction of work ethic in Islam. These principles are considered to be intrinsic by them and as the excellence of an organization that translates to Islamic work ethic. If an organization has employees who are competent, highly skilled with technology skills but

without emphasis on these intrinsic values (which are considered to be part of human soft skills), the scholars believe that the organization does not have the power of Islamic-oriented work ethic. This is so because unethical practices may become the order of the day in such organization as profit will be the goal which in turn harms the society at large as seen in the contemporary time. Therefore, imbibing these intrinsic values becomes fundamental when it comes to Islamic work ethic as discussed by these Malay literatures.

The external values are also important in the opinion of these scholars. These extrinsic values include principles such as perseverance, overtime work, skills and efficiency in work. Overall these qualities will help employees achieve organizational goals in terms of productivity gains and higher income. The scholars also agreed that the work ethic of Islam is an engaging feature on the motives of work with the aim of divinity, the set of attributes and internal commitment and hard work (Ibrahim, 1991).

If we analyze all our discussions so far and all the values that has been explained above, we can conclude that there are two intrinsic values, Taqwa and Ihsan, both of which are among the Islamic work ethic and both of which summarizes the internal values highlighted by the Malay literatures while Amal Saleh, al-Birr, al-qist, Masuliyah, Maaruf and Itqan from the Islamic work ethic form the extrinsic values or the external values enumerated by the Malay literatures.

The two intrinsic values of taqwa and ihsan will encourage an employee to carry out their work with commitment, creating a sense of satisfaction with the work done and enjoying the rewards of work with gratitude. Thus, these taqwa and ihsan form the internal value of personal attitude, knowledge, understanding and compliance of a Muslim employee. These values will also control the behavior, actions and implementation on how work will be carried out by a Muslim employee.

While as earlier mentioned, the extrinsic values could be summed up in the Malay literatures as Amal Saleh, al-Birr, al-qist, Masuliyah, Maaruf and Itqan, all these external elements are associated with an action, progress and the work done by each worker when carrying out the tasks assigned to them with commitment, enthusiasm and satisfaction with the work and they will certainly receive a reward from the work as promised either in this world and the hereafter.

Overall these qualities will help employees achieve organizational goals in terms of increasing work productivity and income. Both the intrinsic and extrinsic values as shown in Fig. 2 are the value of a work ethic that produces a superior goal. This goal will dominate the



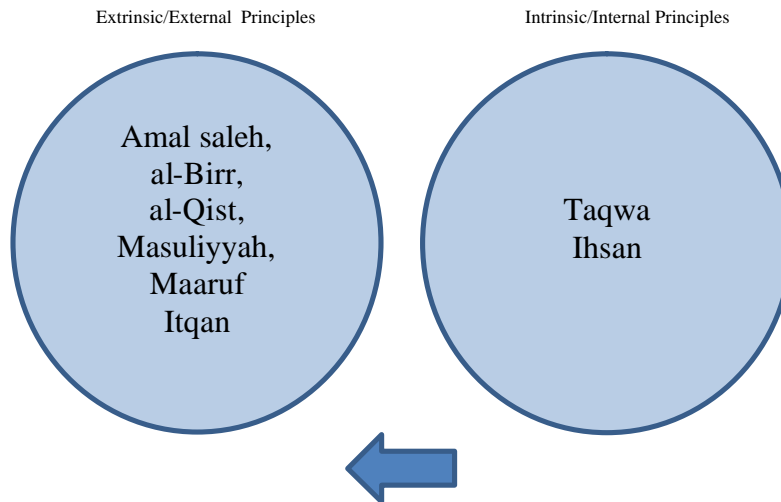


Fig. 2: Intrinsic and extrinsic principles of Islamic work ethic

whole of human life in order to serve God by engaging in work that pleases Him and at the same time gives a livelihood to the worker.

### CONCLUSION

There are eight the principles of Islamic work ethic that are discovered through the Quran and hadith in general. The principle of Taqwa, Amal Saleh, al-Birr, al-qist, Ihsan, Masuliyah, Maaruf and Itqan. This word has been mentioned in the Quran and Hadith and both are mutually reinforcing each other. Although, Al-Quran and Hadith does not explicitly linked these words to work ethic but it can be understood and used to draw up a guide to Islamic work ethic. Following the above, the Malay scholars have come up with their concept of Islamic work ethic which are categorised into two, intrinsic and extrinsic values. These two categories when properly analysed yielded to the eight concepts of Islamic work ethic as listed above. While two of the eight Islamic work ethic, taqwa and ihsan, are said to be intrinsic according to the analysis of the Malay literatures on work ethic; the remaining six of the standard Islamic work ethic, Amal Saleh, al-Birr, al-qist, Masuliyah, Maaruf and Itqan are said to be extrinsic in the Malay literatures analysis. Hence, the internal and external division diagram above. Therefore, although some of the terms and concepts used by the Malay literatures are different from the ones classified under Islamic work ethic as earlier mentioned, they, nonetheless, have the same connotations as the ones outlined under Islamic work ethic hence the ease with which later fits into the intrinsic and extrinsic idea of the Malay literatures.

From these discussions, it is clear that the Qur'an contains concepts that are directly related to work and ethic of work. It is full of admonition on the importance of work and the responsibilities that come with work. Added to this is the fact that man's gain from his/her work, from the point of view of these Qur'anic concepts about work is not limited to this world only but extend to the hereafter -hence it is a double edge sword. Work in Islam entails everything that one can think about e.g. morality, accountability and justice. Exerting one's best, being sincere, being just and avoiding time wastage are cardinal principles of the Islamic work ethic. As explained above, work is compulsory for a Muslim and idleness is frowned upon by the religion. Work is an unending thing even at leisure time because leisure is expected to be fruitful in the life of a Muslim either for learning or trying to improve oneself in other aspects of life. The Muslim worker who strive to work must have a sense of implementing Islamic work ethic. When he/she works with a spirit of getting rewards of Allah, he/she will be more committed and diligent. It is clear that the Qur'an is a rich fountain of work ethic which is left for us to discern from its pages and implement in our lives and societies. A proper analysis of the concepts and terminologies of the Qur'an is bound to yield for Muslims as well as all mankind things which could be beneficial and help in solving contemporary problems and issues which humanity is grappling with on a daily basis.

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