

# Impact of Islamic Work Ethics on Knowledge Sharing Behavior and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

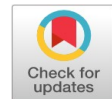
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**Abstract:** The purpose of this research is to study Islamic Work Ethics (IWE) and their impact on Knowledge Sharing Behavior (KSB) and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) of employees. To explore the relationship of IWE with knowledge sharing behavior of employees and OCB, a survey was conducted, questioner technique was used to collect data, and 150 questioners were distributed to the employees of different organizations. The empirical results indicate a positive and significant influence of IWE on KSB and OCB. The study provides a direction to Pakistani managers to prevail in the Islamic work environment to satisfy employees and increase employee commitment. IWE aligns employees' perceptions and norms with their respective work environments in Islamic societies like Pakistan.

**Keywords:** IWE, KSB, OCB, Significant influence, Islamic societies

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## INTRODUCTION

In today's context, work ethics gained significant importance, especially business ethics, and all the research work has been based on Western societies' concepts and experiences (Husin & Kernain, 2019). According to Ali (1992), IWE concepts are derived from the concepts of QURAN and SUNNAH, which are an institution for economic development in an Islamic context. The past researches are not in accordance with believers of Islam. The research on IWE covered limited areas e.g., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intentions, etc.

Teh and Yong (2011) check the knowledge sharing in organizational behavior's perspective of employees in IT industries from Malaysia and suggest future researchers study these variables in a different profession and work environment e.g., Islamic context. So this study aims to explore the impact of IWE on KSBs and OCBs of employees in an Islamic society like Pakistan. Furthermore, IWE create such a culture that encourages employees to go the extra mile in the workplace by helping co-workers and creating a good corporate image. In today's competitive world employees' tacit knowledge and employees strong bound with organization and co-workers are only additional factor to become great organization, that why the study aspire to explain the role of IWE to engage employees in knowledge sharing and organizational citizenship behaviors rather than western workplace environment (Hameed, Bhatti, Khan, & Syed, 2020).

OCB defined as behavior that (a) goes beyond the basic requirements of the job, (b) is to a large extent discretionary, and (c) is of benefit to the organization (Ameer, 2017). OCBs are not informal organizational function behavior but it can influence the organization's performance. There are numerous researches to check the effect of OCBs on organizations working, but it is an uncovered area that how IWE cause the OCBs (Nguyen, 2020).

KSB is a behavior where an individual shares his/her experience with others willingly (Bo Shing & Xiaodie, 2017; Neminno & Gempes, 2018). This piece of research focus on the Islamic believes and norms of Muslim employees which affect their KSB in context of IWE. The purpose of this study is to suggest to managers firstly that the Islamic work environment and IWE help the employee to be more comfortable

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and committed to the organization. Secondly, it satisfies employees that they are following the preachings of Islam and earning HALAL wealth.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### IWE

Work ethics are a set of values that employees adapt according to the organizational culture. [Shamsudin, Kassim, Hassan, and Johari \(2010\)](#) check the effect of the IWE as a moderator between customer relationship and satisfaction, they said that work ethics are mainly focused on moral values but moral values are different in Islamic and western context so IWE and work ethics are two different domains. The only similarity between IWE and work ethics is that both based on commitment, Dedication, and competitive environment, etc, IWE covers moral, psychological, and social aspects along with economic aspects ([Yousef, 2001](#)).

IWE is based on the sayings of QURAN and practices of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), as QURAN state that there should be fair balance and honesty in business ([Ali, 2005](#)). [Ali \(2005\)](#), according to the practice of Holy Prophet (PBUH), wealth must be earned, fair wages, quality work, reliance on self-transparency in business, lawful deeds, and intentions, so IWE focus on intentions to quantify moralities instead of considering outcomes.

[Yousef \(2001\)](#) argues that IWE is significantly correlated with role conflict and role ambiguity, IWE focuses on the following areas e.g., work as a virtue, cooperation in work, creative work as a source of motivation and happiness. [Rice \(1999\)](#) states some components of the Islamic ethical system e.g., Moral filter, Unity (tawhid), Justice (Adalah), Trusteeship (Khilafah), Need for balance.

### KSB

Employee knowledge is an asset for any organization. The resource-based view ([Barney, 2001](#)) claims that knowledge is the most important resource for an organization to gain a competitive advantage. KSB can be studied in three dimensions: knowledge-sharing intention, knowledge-sharing attitude, and subjective norms toward KSB ([Chennamaneni, Teng, & Raja, 2012](#)). Norms are different in all the cultures and religions which shape the behavior of employees respectively.

[Teh and Yong \(2011\)](#) argue that the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) had been used in researches regarding IS like intention to share information in weblogs, in this study he applied TRA to check KSB of IS professionals by an additional factor of motivation e.g., self-worth, in-role behavior, and OCBs. The research also states that by following TRA attitude is a significant predictor of behavior.

According to [Nonaka and Takeuchi \(1995\)](#), there is two types of knowledge one is Tacit knowledge which is highly personal and based on individual experience, and the other is Explicit knowledge which is easy to share and can be codified in a symbols system, so tacit knowledge make human asset human resource which ultimately leads to competitive advantage for the organization. [Liang, Liu, and Wu \(2008\)](#) argue in their meta-analysis that KSB and social exchange theory factors (perceived benefit e.g., satisfaction and reputation, cost e.g., risk, and loss of value) are significantly correlated.

### OCB

OCB is an activity of helping others without any time boundary ([Ameer, 2017](#)). [Erkutlu \(2011\)](#) combines OCB with equity theory that if an employee feels justice in an organization then he/she practices OCB as a reaction to the action of organizational justice. According to the [Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, and Bachrach \(2000\)](#) there is seven dimensions of OCB helping behavior, Sportsmanship, Organizational loyalty, Organizational compliance, Individual initiative, Civic virtue, and Self-development. There are so many researches on OCB in a different context but there is very limited research in the context of the Islamic ethics.

[Tagliabue, Sigurjonsdottir, and Sandaker \(2020\)](#) explain the main predictors of OCB, which are job satisfaction, transformational and supportive leadership, interesting work and job involvement, organizational support, trust, organizational justice, and psychological contracts, and employee characteristics.

### Relationship among IWE, KSB, and OCB

Kumar and Rose (2012) argue that IWE plays a role of moderator between KSB and innovation capability in public sector organizations, and results indicate that intrinsic motivation which is dependent upon IWE is found in public sector organizations which moderate the knowledge sharing behavior. Motivation and justice in work culture encourage those employees who have the intention of knowledge sharing. Fairness, effective communication, employee relations at the workplace are some important factors of organizational culture having IWE which provide such culture that encourages knowledge sharing.

**H1:** IWE has a positive influence on employee knowledge-sharing behavior.

Alhyasat (2012) claimed that OCB is the most significant element of IWE, the study results that dimensions of IWE like forgiveness, kindness, and obedience motivate employees' citizenship behavior. Trust is an important factor in IWE which is also a predictor of organizational citizenship behavior, this mechanism aligns the interest between employee and organization. As employee feels trust in an organization which leads to polish the perception of justice and fairness in organization encourage the employee to go an extra mile for the organization so IWE are such organizational factors which motivate employee to exhibit organizational citizenship behavior.

**H2:** IWE directly and positively related to organizational citizenship behavior of employees.

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

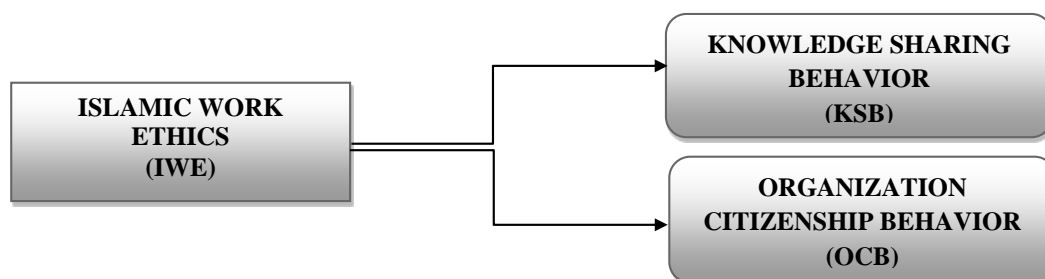


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

### METHODOLOGY

#### Research design

A causal study was conducted to check the impact of IWE on employees' KSB and organizational citizenship behavior. All the variables were studied in a field setting, as environmental variables were not controlled, and research interference was also minimal. Unit of analysis was different organization and lastly, the time horizon of the survey was cross-sectional, i.e., data collection was conducted only once.

#### Questionnaires

The questionnaire is adapted from previous research papers for measuring the impact of IWE on KSB and OCB. As these scales were properly tested for reliability and validity. The questionnaire consisted of three variables, including the IWE scale by Ali (1992), the Knowledge sharing scale by Bock, Zmud, Kim, and Lee (2005), and the OCB scale. IWE scale consisted of 17 items e.g., Dedication to work is a virtue, with 0.832 Cronbach's alpha. The knowledge sharing scale has 7 items e.g., I shared business knowledge about the customers, products, suppliers, and competitors with my co-workers with 0.779 Cronbach's alpha. OCB has 12 items e.g., I help colleagues who have been absent from work.) having 0.817 Cronbach's alpha.

The Likert scale was used to check the responses of respondents (Ending points: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree).

### Population

The population for the survey consists of full-time employees of public sector and private sector organizations. A total of 150 questionnaires are being distributed among employees to get data on desired Independent and Dependent variables, and only 131 questionnaires were received back.

### Statistical methods

After the collection of data through questionnaires, then data collected from questionnaires were entered into SPSS software to generate results. To the interpretation of results, Correlation (association between variables) and regression (change independent variable due to change in independent variable) statistical techniques were used.

### RESULTS

The demographic table explains the number of genders (e.g., male or female) among three levels of career stage (e.g., low level, middle level, or top-level). The total number of respondents was 131, 76 were males (19 at low level, 43 at middle level, and 14 at top level) and 55 were females (25 at low level, 26 at middle level, and 4 at top level).

Table 1: Demographical distribution

		Career Stage			Total
		Low level	Middle level	Top-level	
Gender	Male	19	43	14	76
	Female	25	26	4	55
Total		44	69	18	131

Table 2 shows the mean, standard deviation, and correlation among all the variables of vital interest. Values of standard deviation reflect that the variable of IWE ( $SD = 0.498$ ) and organizational citizenship behavior ( $SD = 0.603$ ) are less deviated from their mean values as compare to knowledge sharing behavior ( $SD = 0.672$ ).

Table 2: Descriptive statistics and correlation

	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1. IWE	3.94	0.498	(0.832)		
2. KSB	3.59	0.672	0.519***	(0.799)	
3. OCB	3.35	0.603	0.698***	0.702***	(0.817)

In addition KSB ( $r = 0.519$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) and OCB ( $r = 0.698$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) were found to be positively associated with IWE. For all study variables hypotheses are in expected direction.

Table 3: Regression analysis on IWE and KSB

	KSB		
	Beta	$R^2$	Change in $R^2$
IWE	0.519	0.3497	0.349***

Note:  $N = 202$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*  $p < 0.05$

Table 3 shows the overall fitness of the model and explains the individual variation in Knowledge sharing behavior (DV) caused by predictors (IWE). The goodness of fit for the proposed model is 34.9% ( $R^2 = 0.349$ ). Beta is showing the rate of change caused by predictor independent variable e.g., 51.9% change in KSB due to IWE.

Table 4: Regression analysis on IWE and OCB

	OCB		
	Beta	R <sup>2</sup>	Change in R <sup>2</sup>
IWE	0.698	0.488	0.488***

Note: N = 202, \*\*\* p < 0.001, \*\* p < 0.01, \* p < 0.05

Table 4 shows the overall fitness of the model and explains the individual variation in Organizational citizenship behavior (DV) caused by predictor (IWE). The goodness of fit for the proposed model is 48.8% ( $R^2 = 0.488$ ). Beta is showing the rate of change caused by predictor independent variable e.g., 69.8% change in Organizational citizenship behavior due to IWE.

## DISCUSSION

The main objective of this study was to highlight the effect of IWE on KSB and organizational citizenship behavior. The directions of results were in accordance with past literature. There was a significant positive correlation between IWE and knowledge-sharing behavior. According to social exchange theory, when an employee feels some benefits from an organization like trust and identity, so the employee feels protected which leads to the employee commitment which encourages the employee to share their knowledge with their co-workers as an input.

Organizational citizenship behavior and IWE are also correlated. The findings of this relation were also in the expected direction in comparison with past studies as variables are positively correlated as well. Situational factors like workplace flexibility, encouragement, etc. triggered organizational citizenship behavior among employees. IWE provide such a culture which based on trust and care for employees which increase the satisfaction and commitment of employees (Hassi, Balambo, & Aboramadan, 2021; Koh & Boo, 2001; Yousef, 2001) and also help to retain and motivate them which encourage the employee to behave in a positive direction which is health for organization culture. The findings of this study show that IWE have an impact on the formation of organizational citizenship behavior in an organizational tertiary setting. This means that increasing and deepening religious values, particularly those related to work values emphasized in Islam, such as work intention, trusteeship, work type, work for the Islamic community, justice and fairness, cooperation and collaboration, and work as the sole source of ownership, is more likely to have a positive effect on OCB improvement.

### Implications of the study

The current piece of study provides practical implications for organizations operating in Pakistan. In today's world, it is important to retain and satisfy competent employees, organizational culture having IWE as an ingredient furthermore strengthens the work environment which increases and polish workplace relations and commitment. All these factors encourage the employee to engage in knowledge sharing and organizational citizenship behaviors. According to organization support theory, flexible organizational culture leads to person-organization fit. Past studies suggest that IWE in the workplace help to retain employees, so Pakistani organizations having Islamic culture can align the interests of employees with the organization by using IWE in the workplace.

## LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this particular study were significant and in the expected direction. Besides this, it also has some limitations. Firstly, the sample size was small ( $N = 131$ ), which is not sufficient to apply results to the whole population. Secondly, only the Likert scale was used to collect responses which may cause single method bias invalidity. Thirdly, the data was collected from different organizations without analyzing their existing culture. For future researches, it can be a direction that firstly analyzes the current culture of the targeted organization e.g., Islamic or western ethical culture, and then compare that which is more beneficial for Pakistani organizations. Future research could replicate the findings in different work settings and cultures. Such replications may also provide evidence for our study results' applicability and external validity. Future research could look into how the IWE affects other

important work-related thoughts and actions. such as creativity, engagement at work, and deviant behavior

## CONCLUSION

The study concluded that alignment of employees and organization interest encourages the employee to exhibit knowledge sharing and organizational citizenship behaviors. IWE reveal such organizational culture which helps in the alignment of employees and organization interest. The results of the study provide empirical evidence which further strengthens the literature and hypothesis as well. The study adds to existing body of work in a variety of ways. First, the study investigated the impact of the IWE on OCBs and KSBs, thereby expanding the IWE literature. Second, the study provided some additional evidence for the IWE concept's external validity. Third, the study looked at the role of the IWE in organizational settings, where both knowledge-sharing and citizenship behaviors are crucial.

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