

## WORK PRODUCTIVITY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ISLAMIC ECONOMIC PHILOSOPHY

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to examine the philosophical implications of work productivity in human life, which is closely related to time management, responsibility, and the quality of good deeds. This study uses a qualitative approach with library research. This approach was chosen because the research focuses on conceptual and philosophical studies of work productivity from an Islamic perspective. The results show that work productivity is not only understood as the ability to produce maximum output, but also as a form of devotion to Allah SWT. Islam views work as worship when it is based on sincere intentions, carried out in a legal manner, and aims to benefit oneself and society. Islamic philosophical values such as monotheism, trustworthiness, ihsan, and justice are the main foundations for building a productive and sustainable work ethic. The concept of work in Islam emphasizes a balance between material and spiritual aspects, so that productivity is not solely measured by economic results but also by the moral values and blessings generated. Thus, Islamic philosophy offers a paradigm of work productivity that is holistic, humanistic, and oriented towards happiness in this world and the hereafter.*

**Keywords:** *Work Productivity, Islamic Work Ethic, Tawhid-based Productivity, Spiritual-Material Balance, Ihsan and Accountability.*

### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji implikasi filosofis produktivitas kerja dalam kehidupan manusia, yang berkaitan erat dengan manajemen waktu, tanggung jawab, dan kualitas amal baik. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan riset pustaka. Pendekatan ini dipilih karena penelitian ini berfokus pada studi konseptual dan filosofis produktivitas kerja dari perspektif Islam. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa produktivitas kerja tidak hanya dipahami sebagai kemampuan untuk menghasilkan output maksimal, tetapi juga sebagai bentuk pengabdian kepada Allah SWT. Islam memandang kerja sebagai ibadah ketika didasarkan pada niat yang tulus, dilakukan dengan cara yang sah, dan bertujuan untuk memberi manfaat bagi diri sendiri dan masyarakat. Nilai-nilai filosofis Islam seperti monoteisme, kepercayaan, ihsan, dan keadilan merupakan landasan utama untuk membangun etika kerja yang produktif dan berkelanjutan. Konsep kerja dalam Islam menekankan keseimbangan antara aspek materi dan spiritual, sehingga produktivitas tidak hanya diukur dari hasil ekonomi tetapi juga dari nilai-nilai moral dan berkah yang dihasilkan. Dengan demikian, filsafat Islam menawarkan paradigma produktivitas kerja yang holistik, humanistik, dan berorientasi pada kebahagiaan di dunia dan akhirat.

**Kata Kunci:** *Produktivitas Kerja, Etika Kerja Islam, Produktivitas Berbasis Tauhid, Keseimbangan Spiritual-Material, Ihsan dan Akuntabilitas.*

## INTRODUCTION

Islam, as a revealed religion, has given birth to a holistic economic system known as the Islamic economic system. Besides Islam, no other religion in the world has given birth to an economic system. The economic systems existing in the world, other than the Islamic economic system, were not born from religion but from specific ideologies. For example, the capitalist economic system was born from capitalism, the communist economic system was born from communism, and the socialist economic system was born from socialism. Unlike other materialistic economic systems, the Islamic economic system encompasses both material and spiritual aspects. One important element of the economy that receives significant attention in various economic systems, including the Islamic economic system, is the world of work.<sup>1</sup> As human knowledge advances, the needs they seek to fulfill also increase. The many necessities of life that must be met encourage people to work because they want to achieve a decent life. To achieve this, a person must work hard.<sup>2</sup> In order to meet adequate needs, work productivity is needed. Work productivity is an important component in achieving individual, organizational, and national development goals. Productivity not only reflects work results but also reflects the efficiency of resource utilization, including labor, in producing valuable output. Labor productivity remains a challenge in many sectors, both in developed and developing countries.

Cross-country studies show that factors such as work environment, motivation, work-life balance, and the use of advanced technology significantly affect employee productivity.<sup>3</sup> The issue of work productivity is multidimensional and influenced by various internal and external organizational factors. A comprehensive examination of the relationship between work and productivity is crucial. This understanding is crucial for formulating effective and applicable performance improvement strategies to address today's global workplace challenges. The thoughts of economists can further explore this relationship, both from Western (conventional) figures and from Muslim scholars. Some thoughts that can be raised are: According to Drucker: Productivity is not about the quantity of work, but the value of the work results. The main key is: choosing the right task focus on priorities avoid worthless work An important concept: *doing the right things* , not just *doing things right*.<sup>4</sup> Another thought comes from economist Nicholas Bloom. He highlights productivity, namely that work productivity is determined by the quality of management. Bloom's main idea emphasizes that differences in productivity between firms are primarily due to the quality of management practices. An important factor is performance monitoring , target setting and incentive systems Companies with good management produce high

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<sup>1</sup> Amena Nizham, Mezzaluna Rizqi Aulia, and Universitas Lambung Mangkurat, "Pandangan Islam Terhadap Produktivitas Orang Yang Bekerja Dalam Perspektif Ekonomi Islam," Jurnal Religion: Jurnal Agama, Sosial, Dan Budaya 1, no. 6 (2023): 1066–74.

<sup>2</sup> Hardiansyah dan Yanwar, "Pengaruh Etos Kerja Terhadap Kinerja Karyawan PT. AE," Jurnal AL-Azhar Indonesia Seri Humaniora 3, no. 2 (2015): 150–58.

<sup>3</sup> et al Widiatmoko, "Pengaruh Lingkungan Kerja Dan Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia Terhadap Produktivitas Kerja Karyawan. Karimah Tauhid," UNIDA-JUMP, 2024.

<sup>4</sup> PF Drucker, Management Challenges for the 21st Century (New York: HarperBusines, 1999).

productivity.<sup>5</sup> Several Muslim economists have also expressed some of their ideas, including Umar Chapra, who views productivity as having to produce human well-being, not merely economic output. Chapra emphasized that all factors of production in Islam are a trust from Allah, so their use must reflect the values of monotheism, justice, and balance.

The main principles of production in Islam include monotheism, *maslahah*, justice, and the *halalness* of products. Mannan emphasized that there is a fundamental principle that must be applied, namely economic welfare.<sup>6</sup> Mannan stated that regarding productivity, the production process must be monitored and calculated from the pre-production to post-production processes, including its impact on society. The production process is certainly not allowed to violate the teachings of the Qur'an and the hadith. The concept of Muhammad Abdul Mannan's thinking is still very relevant if the concept is applied to a country. To support efforts to achieve prosperity, government intervention must be increased related to economic activities in both material and non-material aspects.<sup>7</sup> Muslim economist, Muhammad Nejatullah Siddiqi, focuses on work productivity. In Siddiqi's view, work productivity is determined not only by work efficiency but also by spiritual values, ethics, and economic justice. He emphasizes that work is part of worship, so internal motivations such as faith, honesty, and responsibility significantly influence performance. Furthermore, productivity is also influenced by external factors such as equitable wealth distribution, a profit-sharing (*riba-free*) financial system, and the role of institutions like *zakat*. A just system will increase community motivation and economic participation. In essence, according to Siddiqi, high productivity is achieved if there is a balance between moral motivation (internal) and a fair economic system.<sup>8</sup>

In the context of modern organizations, the relationship between job satisfaction and productivity is further strengthened by empirical evidence. Recent research has found that employee happiness levels are positively correlated with productivity, meaning happier employees tend to work more effectively and produce higher output. Furthermore, other factors such as work-life balance and leadership style have been shown to significantly impact productivity, indicating that productivity is not only related to technical aspects but also socio-psychological aspects within an organization.<sup>9</sup> Since its introduction by Aristotle, the concept of happiness has become a common theme that has been widely studied, reviewed, and researched in various scientific disciplines. In its original concept, happiness means a human desire that can be achieved if humans develop all their capacities to the maximum, in accordance with life in society. Along with the development of the post-modern world, the concept of happiness has undergone quite significant development. Aristotle's concept of happiness, which is based on the Philosophy of life (way

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<sup>5</sup> & Van Reenen (Bloom, N., "Measuring and Explaining Management Practices across Firms and Countries.," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 22, no. 4 (2007).

<sup>6</sup> M. U Chapra, *Islam and the Economic Challenge* (Leicester: Islamic Foundation, 1992).

<sup>7</sup> Qori Imtinan, "Islamic Economic Thought By Muhammad Abdul Mannan: Production Theory (Mainstream School)," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi Islam*, 7, no. 3 (2021).

<sup>8</sup> MN Siddiqi, *Muslim Economic Thinking: A Survey of Contemporary Literature* (Leicester, UK: The Islamic Foundation, 1981).

<sup>9</sup> Arma Putri & Chairael, "Pengaruh Kelelahan Kerja Dan Pemanfaatan Teknologi Terhadap Produktivitas Kerja," *Journal of Economics and Management Sciences*, 2025.

of life), has transformed into a definition/concept that can be measured. Since then, various measuring instruments for happiness have emerged, for example, the Societal Happiness Index, the Individual Happiness Index, the Community Happiness Index, and other.<sup>10</sup> Related research was conducted by Wijaya et al., with the results of the study showing that workplace happiness among HR employees at PTPN IV Regional I Medan was categorized as high with a hypothetical mean value of 207.5, an empirical mean value of 275.78, and an SD value of 35.775. A total of 10 HR employees were categorized as medium and 45 HR employees were categorized as high.

The highest aspect that forms employee happiness in the workplace is the contribution aspect with a contribution value of 32.953% and the lowest aspect is confidence with a contribution value of 10.979%.<sup>11</sup> Another analysis focusing on work team dynamics found that effective communication and team member engagement play a key role in achieving organizational productivity, suggesting that the social aspects of work are also very important.<sup>12</sup> In an organizational environment, if there is an increase in interpersonal communication, it will have a positive impact on the level of commitment to the organization. By involving an effective communication process, all tasks in an organization can be carried out well. A group of people who work together to complete a task or achieve a common goal is known as a team. In teamwork, each member brings unique expertise, experience, and skills that contribute to achieving team goals. Communication, cooperation, coordination, research, and mutual support between team members are important aspects of an effective work team. Through cooperation and synergy, work teams can increase efficiency, productivity, and work quality.<sup>13</sup>

Effective communication, participative leadership, and psychological safety are key factors that shape solid teamwork and have a positive impact on employee performance and job satisfaction. However, there are a number of organizational contexts where teamwork does not contribute significantly, indicating the need for attention to contextual factors, organizational culture, and psychosocial dynamics. This study provides theoretical and practical contributions in designing evidence-based organizational interventions to improve teamwork effectiveness sustainably.<sup>14</sup> New workplace trends are also impacting contemporary productivity. International studies show that hybrid work models and flexible scheduling can support productivity, as flexibility allows workers to adjust their work rhythms, thus maintaining a work-life balance.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, a report on a public sector trial of a four-day workweek in Scotland showed that productivity could increase without reducing full-time

<sup>10</sup> Antonny Wijaya and Chistin Natalia, "Hubungan Kebahagiaan Dan Produktivitas Di Era Post Modern" 8, no. 1 (2023).

<sup>11</sup> Hanida Aulia Wijaya, Shirley Melita S Meliala, and Rahma Afwina, "Bahagia Di Tempat Kerja : Studi Deskriptif Pada Karyawan Bagian Sumber Daya Manusia Di PTPN IV Regional I Medan Happiness at Work : A Descriptive Study on Human Resource Employees at PTPN IV Regional I Medan" 6, no. 2 (2025): 861–70.

<sup>12</sup> et al Hasanuddin, "Dinamika Tim Kerja Dan Produktivitas," *Jurnal Cahaya Mandalika*, 2025.

<sup>13</sup> et Al Suliastiani, "*Dynamics Of Interpersonal Communication In Improving*," *Jurnal Komunikasi* 2, no. 2 (2024): 186–97.

<sup>14</sup> et al Velandi, "Kontribusi Kerja Sama Tim Terhadap Efektivitas Organisasi : Systematic Literature Review," *Jurnal Manajemen Bisnis Digital Terkini* 2, no. 3 (2025).

<sup>15</sup> et al Laan, "Is This Work? Revisiting the Definition of Work in the 21st Century," *JWAM* 15,2, 2023.

working hours, with a positive impact on employee wellbeing and motivation.<sup>16</sup> Time spent working is a fundamental aspect of working conditions that impacts many aspects of an individual's life. Here, we study how a 4 day workweek intervention without salary reduction affects worker well-being. Organizations underwent a pre-trial work reorganization to improve efficiency and collaboration, followed by a 6-month pilot. Analysis of pre- and post-trial data from 2,896 employees in 141 organizations in Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States revealed improvements in burnout, job satisfaction, mental health, and physical health a pattern not observed in 12 control companies.

Reductions in working hours at both the firm and individual levels correlated with improvements in well-being, with larger reductions at the individual level (but not at the firm level) associated with greater improvements in well-being.<sup>17</sup> From an Islamic economic perspective, work is not just a physical activity or a means of earning income, but also a form of worship and social responsibility. Work is seen as a means to generate value (economic and social benefits) and draw closer to God through good intentions and lawful endeavors.<sup>18</sup> Overall, the relationship between work and productivity reflects a complex interaction between human, organizational, and technological aspects. Efforts to increase productivity cannot focus solely on one aspect, but require an integrative approach that includes improving work quality, designing a good work environment, optimal use of technology, and paying attention to employee welfare and motivation. By understanding these dynamics, organizations can formulate more effective strategies to achieve performance goals and competitive advantage in the dynamic modern era.

This study discusses the importance of an integrative strategy between digital technology and human resource management in increasing organizational productivity, by emphasizing the synergy between technical and human element.<sup>19</sup> This research is important because work productivity is influenced by the complex interactions between people, organizations, and technology. An integrative understanding helps design effective strategies, improve work quality, employee well-being, and motivation, while maintaining organizational competitiveness in the modern era. The gap this research aims to address is the lack of studies that view productivity holistically, integrating human, organizational, and technological aspects simultaneously. Previous research tends to focus on only one aspect, or emphasizes performance output without considering employee well-being, motivation, and adaptation to work changes in the digital age. This study aims to fill this gap with an integrative approach that can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence productivity sustainably.

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<sup>16</sup> "No Title," n.d., [https://www.hrgrapevine.com/content/article/2025-08-28-scottish-government-four-day-work-week-trial-boosts-wellbeing-productivity?utm\\_source](https://www.hrgrapevine.com/content/article/2025-08-28-scottish-government-four-day-work-week-trial-boosts-wellbeing-productivity?utm_source) .

<sup>17</sup> et al Fan, "Work Time Reduction via a 4-Day Workweek Finds Improvements in Workers' Well-Being," 2025.

<sup>18</sup> Baharuddin et al, "Corporate Social Responsibility: An Empirical Study on Islamic Banks in Indonesia. I-Finance," *Journal on Islamic Finance*, 9, no. 1 (2023).

<sup>19</sup> MM Sulaeman, "The Role of an Integrative Strategy for Optimizing Digital Technology-Based Business Information Systems to Increase Employee Productivity through a Sustainable Personnel Management Approach," *Jurnal Minfo Polgan* 14, no. 1 (2025).

## METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative design aimed at developing an in-depth understanding of work productivity from the perspective of Islamic philosophy. It focuses on elucidating the meanings, foundational principles, and ethical values that underpin productivity within an Islamic worldview. The research adopts a library-based, normative–conceptual approach, which enables a systematic integration of classical Islamic teachings with contemporary perspectives on work productivity. Such an approach is particularly appropriate given that the concept of productivity in Islam is inherently philosophical and value-laden, thus requiring rigorous engagement with authoritative textual sources. The data sources comprise both primary and secondary materials. Primary sources include the Qur’an and Hadith, particularly texts addressing work, effort, and productivity, as well as classical Islamic scholarship on ethics, economics, and labor—such as the works of Ibn Khaldun and Al-Ghazali. Secondary sources consist of academic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and contemporary studies on productivity, management, and Islamic philosophy. Additionally, selected case studies and popular writings on the implementation of Islamic work ethics in modern organizational contexts are utilized to enrich the analysis. The analytical framework combines thematic content analysis and conceptual–philosophical analysis. Thematic analysis is employed to identify and categorize key constructs related to productivity, including discipline, trust (amanah), effort (ikhtiar), responsibility, and ethical conduct. Meanwhile, conceptual analysis facilitates a critical comparison between Islamic principles and modern theories of productivity, thereby bridging classical intellectual traditions with present-day organizational practices. This dual analytical approach ensures both depth of interpretation and contextual relevance. The study ultimately aims to construct a comprehensive conceptual mapping of work productivity grounded in Islamic philosophy, to articulate the ethical and spiritual values that enhance productivity, and to contribute as a scholarly reference for future research on Islamic work ethics and productivity..

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Work and Productivity from an Islamic Philosophical Perspective

One important element of the economy that has received significant attention from various economic systems, including the Islamic economic system, is the world of work, as it is understood to be the primary engine of economic activity at both the micro and macro levels. Generally, work is understood as any purposeful activity undertaken by individuals, both mentally and physically, to achieve desired outcomes within an organizational or social context. Work is an activity carried out by individuals or groups of people to carry out tasks and responsibilities set out in an organization with the aim of achieving optimal work results. In the context of work management and productivity, work is not only related to physical involvement but also includes aspects of behavior, mentality, skills, and work relationships that support the achievement of organizational goals.<sup>20</sup> According to organizational behavior studies, work can be defined as a purposeful activity performed by humans, both physical and mental, that is

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<sup>20</sup> Pranoto, C. D., & Handoyo, “Perbedaan Produktivitas Kerja, Kepuasan Kerja, Dan Budaya Organisasi Antara Karyawan Bekerja Dari Rumah Dengan Bekerja Dari Kantor,” *Manajemen Bisnis Dan Kewirausahaan* 8, no. 4 (2024).

directed toward a specific goal beyond the activity itself. This includes the tasks, responsibilities, and roles that individuals must complete within an organization.<sup>21</sup> The concept of work from an Islamic perspective differs from the secular view, which often positions work as merely an economic activity. In Islam, work is understood as part of *worship* and a moral responsibility towards Allah and fellow human beings, manifested through values -such as honesty, professionalism, and trustworthiness. Islam rejects laziness and encourages its followers to work hard to fulfill their daily needs and bring benefits to society. This Islamic work ethic is reflected in the Qur'an and *Sunnah*, which emphasize work as an obligation that must be carried out optimally and based on the principles of goodness, trustworthiness, and the hope of Allah SWT's pleasure.<sup>22</sup> Scholars define work from various perspectives, including according to Al -Syaiban Work ( *al-kasb* ) is an effort to obtain halal sustenance. It is an individual obligation and social responsibility. According to Al -Ghazali Work must be based on morals, justice, and balance between this world and the hereafter and reject destructive economic practices (usury, hoarding).<sup>23</sup> Meanwhile, Ibn Khaldun views work as a human activity that is a source of economic value, the basis for the progress of civilization, and a means of fulfilling individual and social needs in a productive and organized manner.<sup>24</sup>

Meanwhile, the Productivity is a mathematical comparison between the amount produced and the resources used during production, which can be labor, land, raw materials and auxiliary materials, machinery and equipment.<sup>25</sup> The term productivity generally reflects the relationship between output (work results) and input (resources used). In management and economics literature, productivity is often defined as the ability of the workforce or organization to produce work results (goods/services) effectively and efficiently with available resources. Productivity feasibility is reflected in production volume, product quality, effectiveness and efficiency, and the realization of maximum worker satisfaction. Therefore, society must be directed to develop productive personalities so that production feasibility can be achieved.<sup>26</sup> In the Islamic perspective, productivity is closely related to ethics. Islamic work ethics have a positive and significant impact on productivity. Productivity also directly improves employee performance. There is a relationship between Islamic work ethics that results in productivity and work quality. This means that the higher the Islamic values (honesty, discipline, trustworthiness), the higher a person's work productivity.<sup>27</sup> According to Ibn Khaldun, the main concept of productivity is directly related to labor, production and the progress of civilization. The value of an item is determined by the amount of work contained in it. The prosperity of a country is determined by

<sup>21</sup> Laan, "Is This Work? Revisiting the Definition of Work in the 21st Century."

<sup>22</sup> N Kholis, "Work Ethics in an Islamic Perspective . Al Mawarid," Journal of Islamic Law 9, no. 1 (2004).

<sup>23</sup> & Saputra Syarifuddin, S., "Al-Ghazali and Market Behavior: Business Ethics Perspective in the Book of Ihya Ulum Ad-Din," Scientific Journal of Islamic Economics 6, no. 3 (2020).

<sup>24</sup> Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History* (Princeton University Press, 2005).

<sup>25</sup> Afandi, *Produktivitas Kerja: Teori Dan Aplikasi* (Yogyakarta: Andi Offset., 2019).

<sup>26</sup> Abdul Hamid Mursi, *SDM Yang Produktif Pendekatan Al-Quran Dan Sains* (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1997).

<sup>27</sup> Faiq & Sholahuddin, "The Influence Of Islamic Work Ethic , Productivity , And Employee Performance : Mediating Work Quality At," *Ekombis Review: Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi Dan Bisnis*, 12, no. 2 (2024): 1695–1714.

the level of production. Taxes that are too high can reduce productivity. Productivity is the basis of economic growth and welfare.<sup>28</sup> According to Al-Ghazali, the main concept of productivity is not only material, but also: spiritual morals. Production must follow the principles of: justice, honesty, and social welfare. Production activities must be carried out effectively (organized), cooperatively (cooperation). The purpose of production is not only profit, but also *social welfare*.<sup>29</sup> Thus, the relationship between work and productivity is very close. Work is the primary activity performed by individuals within an organization, while productivity is a measure of the effectiveness of that work activity. In other words: Work is the process or activity carried out by workers to produce output. Productivity is a measure of how effectively workers produce output from a given amount of input. Productivity, in an organizational context, is a key indicator of operational success because it shows the extent to which work activities can produce maximum results with available resources.<sup>30</sup> High employee productivity can be achieved if employees have the desire to improve their skills, thereby achieving company goals effectively and efficiently. This is influenced by several factors, including education level, training, skills, discipline, attitude, work ethic, motivation, work environment, production facilities, and health. Human Resource functions such as appropriate recruitment, ongoing training, and compensation systems directly impact work enthusiasm and productivity. Flexible work arrangements and job satisfaction have a significant and positive influence on employee productivity, both partially and simultaneously. Flexibility in work schedules and locations contributes to improved performance, while job satisfaction arising from positive working conditions and relationships further enhances productivity. Adopting a flexible work model and fostering job satisfaction are key strategies for improving employee productivity.

Organizations aiming to remain adaptive and competitive must consider these aspects in designing modern and responsive work policies -being and autonomy.<sup>31</sup> Islam views work as part of spiritual values and worship. Work ethic stems from Al-Quran and Sunnah. The relationship between work and productivity can be seen from the stronger religious values, the higher work productivity. Productivity arises from a combination of faith, ethics, and work skills.<sup>32</sup> Spirituality in the workplace can increase motivation to improve work behavior. Values such as prayer, role model, and intention influence productivity. Work relationships in Islam are spiritual, social and productive.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>28</sup> et al Aziz, "The Concept of Law and Market Mechanism According to Ibn Khaldun and Imam Introduction The Relationship among the State, Individuals, and Society Remains a Foundational Concern in Economic Analysis Because It Shapes Policy Design, Market Behavior, And," *Al Muamalat* 8, no. 2 (2025): 10–21, <https://doi.org/10.21111/muamalat.v8i2.2>.

<sup>29</sup> R Hidayat, "Integrasi Ibadah Dan Produktivitas Kerja Dalam Ekonomi Islam," *Jurnal Manajemen Syariah*, 5, no. 1 (2022).

<sup>30</sup> Saadah and Zagladi, "Bibliometric Analysis of Work Productivity," *Humantech: Indonesian Multidisciplinary Scientific Journal*, 2, no. 7 (2023).

<sup>31</sup> et al Fadillah, "Jurnal Maneksi (Management Ekonomi Dan Akuntansi) WORK FLEXIBILITY AND SATISFACTION: KEY PREDICTORS OF PRODUCTIVITY IN THE WORKPLACE," *Jurnal Maneksi (Management Ekonomi Dan Akuntansi)* 14, no. 4 (2025): 1973–81.

<sup>32</sup> Fadillah.

<sup>33</sup> Putro & Riiono, "Islamic Work Ethic: Values of Islamic Spirituality At PT. Andromeda," *Psychoislamedia Journal of Psychology* 4, no. 2 (2019).

## Work and Human Life

In Islam, humans are God's creation, possessing both a spiritual and material essence, a respected existence, highly esteemed dignity, and moral and social responsibilities. Human existence in Islam is emphasized through its primary role as vicegerent on earth. (QS. Al- Baqarah : 30) *"And (remember) when your Lord said to the Angels, "I will make a caliph on earth". They said, "Are You going to make someone who will cause damage and shed blood there, while we glorify You and sanctify Your name?" He said, "Truly, I know what you do not know."*<sup>34</sup> This is also in line with Surah A'raf: 56: *"And do not cause corruption on the earth after it has been set in order, and pray to Him with fear (of being rejected) and hope (of being answered). Indeed, the mercy of Allah is near to the doers of good."*<sup>35</sup>

As caliphs, humans are responsible for creating a just and peaceful social order. Human existence is not only for themselves, but for the welfare of all creation. Human existence gains meaning when they realize and carry out the Divine mandate in all its dimensions: spiritual, social, economic, and ecological.<sup>36</sup> The realization of one's role as a caliph on earth is through work. In human life, work is not only a means of earning income but also has deeper dimensions related to dignity, identity, and the meaning of life. Work plays a crucial role in shaping individual identity and contributing to societal development. Through work, humans can express creativity, achieve self-actualization, and build meaningful social relationships. However, in practice, modern workplaces often face various challenges that can threaten human dignity. Workers are often victims of exploitation, discrimination, and inequality in the fair distribution of work. This often occurs when productivity and economic gain are prioritized without considering basic workers' rights.

This emerging inequality reflects a disregard for the human dimension of work activities.<sup>37</sup> Objectively, humans work to fulfill all their needs, but fulfilling these needs is actually an effort for something more fundamental: realizing and maintaining survival. In fact, this effort is for the sake of a more advanced and meaningful existence. This is due to the fact that every human being always strives for a better life and avoids suffering.<sup>38</sup> Through work, people can recognize their potential, develop their abilities, and have a positive impact on the environment, both on a small and large scale. Through work, a person fulfills his needs while helping others. Therefore, work is an obligation because it is a way to survive. Society's views on work vary. Some view it positively as something useful, while others view it negatively, such as viewing work as a burden to be avoided.<sup>39</sup> Work is not only about fulfilling material needs, but also spiritual ones. The deepest need of the human soul is to confront one's own alienation. It ignites the spirit of life and ignites the fire within to endure life's hardships. French philosopher Rene

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<sup>34</sup> "S. Al Baqarah 30," n.d.

<sup>35</sup> "S. Al A'raf :56," n.d., <https://tafsirweb.com/2510-surat-al-araf-ayat-56.html> ).

<sup>36</sup> Maulana .et al, "Eksistensi , Martabat , Dan Tanggung Jawab Manusia : Suatu Tinjauan Filosofis Dalam" 3, no. 3 (2025): 315–21.

<sup>37</sup> et al Maria, "Martabat Manusia Dalam Dunia Kerja : Tela ' Ah Ensiklik Laborem Exercens," Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Dan Teologi 2, no. 4 (2024).

<sup>38</sup> Wijaya and Natalia, "Hubungan Kebahagiaan Dan Produktivitas Di Era Post Modern."

<sup>39</sup> Y Laki, "Menelaah Makna Kerja Dalam Ensiklik Laborem Exercens Dan Rerum Novarum Serta Implikasinya Pada Permasalahan Dalam Dunia Kerja.," Jurnal Masalah Pastoral 4, no. 1 (2016).

Descartes famously said, "I think, therefore I am." It is no exaggeration to say that if we work hard, we will say, "I work, therefore I am."<sup>40</sup>

### Philosophy of Work in Islamic Economics

The Islamic economic system views work not only as the primary driver of economic activity but also as a noble deed aimed at achieving the common good. Work is a command from Allah SWT and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Therefore, all forms of unemployment, including begging, are reprehensible. Therefore, work in the Islamic economic system is a necessity for every Muslim, a Sharia obligation, and is seen as a form of worship for those who perform it.<sup>41</sup> Work is a manifestation of the efforts of Muslims to mobilize all their abilities, both in terms of intellectual, energy, and worship, to show their value as servants of Allah SWT, who are able to conquer the world and make themselves the best people on earth.<sup>42</sup> From an Islamic economic perspective, work is not only a physical activity or a means to earn income, but also a form of worship and social responsibility. Work is seen as a means to generate value (economic and social benefits) and draw closer to God through good intentions and lawful endeavors.<sup>43</sup> Work ethics from an Islamic economic perspective does not only refer to efforts to earn a living or material goods to support oneself and one's family by spending time day and night, from morning to evening, continuously and tirelessly, but work includes all forms of practice or work that have elements of goodness and blessings for oneself, one's family, the surrounding community, and the country.<sup>44</sup> The Quran commands us to always seek God's bounty on earth by working as an expression of gratitude. Even after prayer, we are encouraged to immediately spread out in search of God's bounty. This is stated in Surah Al Jumu'ah: 10:

وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَاذْكُرُوا لِعَلَّكُمْ تَفْلِحُونَ

*"When the prayer has been performed, then spread out on the face of the earth; and seek the grace of Allah and remember Allah often so that you may be successful"*

The phrase "spread throughout the earth" comes from Surah Al-Jumu'ah verse 10, which commands Muslims to seek Allah's bounty (halal sustenance, knowledge, etc.) and remember Allah as much as possible after the Friday prayer is finished, in order to achieve good fortune, teaching balance between worship and worldly activities with the right intention.<sup>45</sup> The first hadith mentioned regarding the best work is that which is the result of one's own hands. Another hadith states: "No one eats food that is better than the food he eats from the hard work of his own hands. Because the Prophet David 'alaihi salam used to eat from

<sup>40</sup>Triyono Guntur, "Kerja Sebagai Mode Eksistensial Manusia," n.d., <https://thecolumnist.id/artikel/kerja-sebagai-mode-eksistensial-manusia-2462>.

<sup>41</sup> Triyono Guntur.

<sup>42</sup> Rahyu dan Ulhaq, "Etos Kerja Dalam Pandangan Agama Dan Pengaruhnya Terhadap Pembangunan Ekonomi Islam," J-ESA Jurnal Ekonomi Syariah 6 (2023): 79–88.

<sup>43</sup> A Rini, F. & Suryanto, "Filosofi Kerja Produktif Dalam Perspektif Ekonomi Islam," Jurnal Ekonomi Islam Modern 7, no. 2 (2023).

<sup>44</sup> Rini, F. & Suryanto.

<sup>45</sup> "S.Al Jumu'ah :10," n.d., <https://tafsirweb.com/10910-surat-al-jumuah-ayat-10.html> ).

*the hard work of his hands ."* (HR. Bukhari, no. 2072, from Al-Miqdam).

In fact, as mentioned in this hadith, looking for work with one's own hands has been exemplified by prophets such as Prophet David ' *alaihis salam* <sup>46</sup> Islamic morality teaches that *"the higher hand is better than the lower hand."* From Hakim bin Hizam (may Allah be pleased with him), from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: *"The upper hand is better than the lower hand. And start with those you rely on. And the best charity is that given to those who do not need it. Whoever guards his honor, Allaah will protect him, and whoever feels that he has enough, Allaah will give him enough ."*<sup>47</sup> Indeed, someone who carries firewood until his back hurts is better than begging, sometimes given and sometimes refused. The condition of "raising hands" can be realized by a Muslim, if he is willing to work hard and smart, so that in the end he is able to help his brothers and sisters in need. Generosity shows very high and noble human values, not only before fellow human beings, but also before God. Generous people are superior to those who worship religiously, because generous people, no matter how small , their ritual worship behavior can be directly felt by humans. Meanwhile, no matter how small the stingy or stingy nature that is inherent in worshippers, their stinginess feels bitter like bile to others.<sup>48</sup> In Islamic economics, work is conceptualized in several dimensions, including: *firstly*, Work as Worship, Islamic economics emphasizes that every work activity carried out with good intentions (sincerity) and is halal can be considered as worship. Thus, work is not only a means to fulfill material needs, but also a means of self-actualization and moral development. A worker who is honest, fair, and responsible in his work automatically carries out the principles of worship in Islam.<sup>49</sup> Every halal and beneficial endeavor is considered as worship if it is directed for the sake of Allah. *Secondly*, Obligation to Work: Islam encourages its followers to work hard and be independent, and prohibits laziness and begging.

- a) Legal Compliance and Honesty: Work must be carried out legally, honestly, fairly, and without harming others.
- b) Responsibility and Trust: Every job is a trust that must be carried out responsibly and professionally.
- c) Balance between this world and the hereafter: Working aims to fulfill the needs of life in this world without forgetting the hereafter.
- d) Social Benefits: The results of work are not only for oneself, but also for the welfare of society, such as through zakat, infaq, and alms <sup>50</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> "Hadis Pekerjaan Terbaik," n.d., <https://rumaysho.com/26761-inilah-pekerjaan-terbaik-menurut-nabi-muhammad.htm>.

<sup>47</sup> "Tangan Di Atas Lebih Baik Dari Tangan Di Bawah," n.d., <http://repository.umy.ac.id/handle/123456789/4737>.

<sup>48</sup> Dalinur, "Etos Kerja Islam," Wardah 26, no. 14 (2013).

<sup>49</sup> N. Ahmad, L. & Putri, "Prinsip Etika Kerja Islami Dan Pengaruhnya Terhadap Produktivitas Karyawan," Jurnal Ekonomi & Bisnis Syariah 9, no. 1 (2024).

<sup>50</sup> Ahmad, L. & Putri.

## **Social and Economic Obligations**

In Islam, work also has a social obligation dimension. The results of work should benefit oneself, one's family, and society. This philosophy promotes economic justice, where workers receive fair wages and the results of their work do not harm others.<sup>51</sup> This concept emphasizes productivity in line with the principles of ethics, justice, and shared prosperity.

## **Employment and Economic Independence**

In Islamic economics, work is a means to achieve economic independence and avoid dependence on others. This is in line with the principle of responsible and productive resource management. This work philosophy encourages individuals to exert maximum effort, improve skills, and innovate while still adhering to sharia principles.<sup>52</sup>

## **Work Ethics in Islam**

Work ethics in Islam emphasizes: Honesty and integrity in work, discipline and professionalism, avoiding behavior that is detrimental to oneself and others. Prioritizing the quality of useful work results. The basic principle in Islam is to do valuable and useful work, and vice versa, work that is futile and brings harm.<sup>53</sup>

## **CONCLUSION**

Work is a fundamental human activity that serves not only to meet economic needs but also as a means of self-actualization, identity development, and social contribution. Productive work activities can improve an individual's quality of life and support the achievement of organizational goals. Work and human existence have a symbiotic relationship. Through work, humans express themselves, gain social recognition, build identity, and improve psychological well-being. Work ethic gives meaning to work, while work strengthens existence through self-actualization, goal achievement, and social contribution. The philosophy of work in Islamic economics emphasizes work as a form of worship, a means of economic independence, and a social obligation. The Islamic work ethic encourages honesty, integrity, and discipline, while the philosophy of work in Islamic economics emphasizes the values of worship, ethics, social justice, and economic independence. Productivity from an Islamic perspective is not only about the quantity of output, but also about the quality of work, good intentions, and positive social impact. In Islamic economics, work is seen as worship when done with the right intentions and in a legitimate manner. Work is not only for material gain, but also to earn God's pleasure and benefit others.

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<sup>51</sup> Ahmad, L. & Putri.

<sup>52</sup> et al Setyawan, "Community Empowerment in Increasing Local Economic Independence," Community Service and Educational Research 4, no. 1 (2025).

<sup>53</sup> Setyawan.

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