

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter covers literature review on elements, gender differences and Islamic values in work culture. It continues to present the theoretical framework, problem statement and hypotheses.

ELEMENTS OF WORK CULTURE

Work is defined as activities that produce goods and services for one's own use or in exchange for pay or support (Reskin and Padavic, 1994). Culture refers to the sum total of the shared values and beliefs as well as the behavior of people (Ahmad Sarji, 1992). A culture is formed when attitudes, feelings and behavior of the people are so natural to them that they may even be unaware of the image they project of their behavior pattern. An excellent work culture contains fundamental values, which are, commitment, quality, consciousness, learning paradigm, timeliness, accountability, integrity, honesty and objectivity. Two main elements of work culture will be discussed here, namely, work values and job satisfaction.

Work Values As Work Preferences and Ethical Work Behavior

There is no widely accepted definition of work values (Pryor, 1981). Organizational researchers use the term work values to encompass a variety of notions ranging from business ethics to work preferences. Most value theorists agree that values are standards or criteria for choosing goals or guiding action and are

relatively stable over time. It develops through the influences of culture, society and personality (Dose, 1997). Pryor (1997) adopted the term 'preferences' because he viewed work values as being concerned with what individuals like or prefer in a job, instead of what they think is good or ought to be done.

Dose (1997) proposed a comprehensive definition of work values and a structural framework consists of a two by two dimensional, with one continuum ranging from personal to social consensus type values, and the other axis corresponding to moral versus preference values. According to him, work values are evaluative standards relating to work or the work environment by which individuals discern what is 'right' or assess the importance of preferences. Some values have moral implications. The moral component expresses a standard that distinguishes whether something is right or wrong; alternatively, values may be simply being preferences for which there is no moral aspect.

Social consensus values are those, which members of a certain culture agree are relatively important, which are often learned due to the influence of others (Fazio and Zanna, 1981). Greater social consensus may also lead to greater attempts to influence individuals towards the majority view (Dose, 1997). However, not all work values are socially determined. These values may be held personally or socially and may or may not have a moral element. Four quadrants are involved, namely social moral, personal moral, personal preferences and social preference. Value systems proposed by the business ethics literature occupy the social-moral quadrant. As ethics, they are principles concerning moral duty. Personal moral codes lie within the personal-moral

quadrant. They are emphasized when the value of the organization do not conform to the values the individuals deem important. Research that asks for rating of what individuals find important, belong in personal-preference quadrant. In social preference quadrant, values are consensually values are being desirable but impose no moral standard.

The difficulty of assessing the boundaries of the work values domain should also be noted. Researchers must therefore remain open to new variables (Dose, 1997). The present study chose Dose's comprehensive definition as the conceptual definition of work values. This research discusses two definitions of work values; work preferences and ethical work behavior.

Job Satisfaction

Locke (1976) gives a comprehensive definition of job satisfaction as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job extensions. The researcher chose Locke definition as the job satisfaction operational definition. However, operationally, Locke's overall job satisfaction definition is not applied in this study. Rather a single global question measure was used.

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN WORK CULTURE

Two main elements of work culture are work values and job satisfaction. Rapid expansion of the female labor force has generated a considerable body of

research exploring the issue of gender differences to these two elements as discussed below:

Work Values

Extant literature of gender differences in work values, which mostly defined as work preferences, reveals contradictory results. Early studies focused on gender differences in the relative importance of intrinsic and extrinsic job features (Centers and Bugenthal, 1966). Intrinsically motivated people accomplish work for its own sake, rather than for the purpose of acquiring any material or social rewards. Extrinsically motivated people work for the purpose of acquiring pay, promotions or job security.

In early studies, women were found to place greater importance on extrinsic values such as pay and working conditions, where as men attached greater importance to intrinsic factors such as the opportunity to use one's abilities and one's overall job satisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1957). By contrast, other researchers suggested that women attached greater importance to intrinsic values rather than men. Velasco (1998) examines trend in the work values of young men and women using 20 years of survey data represent all U.S. high schools seniors. Young men valued money and other extrinsic rewards of work in slightly higher proportions than did young women. Importantly, it should be understood that it is difficult to gain insight into the meaning people attach to questions. For example, an individual may value a promotion not simply because it affords them high status and prestige along with increased pay, but because it also allows them the opportunity for personal growth

and fulfillment on the job. Thus, valuing a promotion is both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated.

Besides using extrinsic and intrinsic terms in comparing work values between gender, two broad approaches have been used to explain gender differences in work values, the gender socialization model and the social structural model.

Proponents of the gender socialization model argue that observed differences in work values reflect traditional patterns of gender socialization. Men put emphasis on pay and career advancement but women put greater concern for social aspects of their work. Research by Betz and O'Connell (1989) found that even within the same occupation, men expressed greater concern than women with income, job security and advancement; women on the other hand, tended to place greater emphasis on working with people. Elizur (1994) also claimed that women were more people oriented and concerned with affective values, the men tended to be concerned more with pay, influence, independence and responsibility. Rowe and Snizek (1995) stated that implications of the gender socialization model leads to the conclusion that women's work values are determined before they enter the labor force, thus occupational segregation of the sexes can be justified on the basis of pre-employment socialization. This argument can be used to account for the lower earnings and non-advancement of women compared to with men.

However, proponents of the social structural model argue that observed differences in work values reflect men's and women's differential positions in the workplace

hierarchy and their differential access to the system of the workplace rewards. Kanter (1976) argued that women's work values were influenced by the fact that women tended to work in lower status positions, which typically offer relatively little opportunity for career advancement.

In their study of a large Australian federal organization, Neil and Snizek (1987) concluded that neither the gender socialization model nor the social structural model could adequately predict work values, and they suggested the need for a model that takes into account both organizational and socio-demographic variables. De Vaus and Mc Allister (1991) empirically assessed the viability of job, family role and social characteristics models in accounting for gender differences in work values and job satisfaction.

Using sample of working-class job applicants, Harris and Earle (1986) focuses on how work objectives are affected by gender and situational values. Male-female work values are fairly similar, but sex differences increased in the presence of children. Rowe and Snizek (1995) analyzed the work value preferences of 7,436 full time male and female workers, representing all major occupational classifications and all major industries. The data showed no consistent support for general differences between men's and women's work values. Instead it suggests that regardless of gender, one's preference for a given work value depends, in large part, on one's age, education and occupational prestige. Occupational prestige (the prestige of the respondent's occupation) was measured in 10-unit intervals from low to high prestige. The results showed occupational prestige provided the best indicator of preference for high

income among both men and women. Married persons especially women, were more likely than the non-married to express preference for high income. The best predictors for job security appear to be age, education (males only) and occupational prestige. With the increasing age, both men and women are less likely to emphasize the importance of opportunities for advancement achieved or because older workers adjust to the realization that with increasing age fewer promotional opportunities are available. They also argued that alleged gender differences are minimal, at best, and continued emphasis on differences merely serves to reinforce traditional gender-role stereotypes and to perpetuate gender inequality in the work place.

Job Satisfaction

The competing hypotheses of socialization and structural theories can be used to investigate the possible existence of gender differences in job satisfaction. Women are socialized into values, attitudes and behaviors that are communal in nature, whereas men's socialization reflects agentic values and behaviors (Eagly A.H., 1987). A communal orientation involves a concern with others, selfishness and a desire to be at one with others, whereas, an agentic orientation is manifested in self-assertion, self-expansion and the urge to master. This argument provides the reason why women are satisfied with jobs in which they can interact with others in a supportive and cooperative way, even though the jobs may be only minimally demanding and challenging.

The socialization perspective can be contrasted with the structural view. This view suggests that any observed differences in job satisfaction are attributable, not to

gender, but rather to other variables that systematically co-vary with gender because of the prevalent segregation by gender of jobs in organization (Kanter, 1982). Although the socialization and structural perspectives generate opposing predictions, no study has tested the two approaches against each other (Betz and Fitzgerald, 1987).

The relationship between work values and job satisfaction is not a straightforward issue but one requiring multiple explanations. Study by Cheung and Scherling (1999) suggests that sex differences in job satisfaction are not attributable to different work values held by men and women. They conducted a study of 927 employees in Taiwan as an attempt to explore sex differences in job satisfaction and to discover whether these differences in job satisfaction are attributable to sex differences in work values. The results supported the hypothesis male employee has higher job satisfaction and job level than a female employee. However, work values did not seem to mediate the effect that produced the sex differences in job satisfaction. They argued that their study demonstrates Taiwan is different in its traditional, Confusion-oriented society and supports the view that a patriarchal society, being women at a disadvantage. Man's superiority over the women is a teaching of Confucianism. Moreover, work values were found virtually equally important for both male and female employees. It did not endorse gender socialization as an important determinant of work values. Some reasons were presented behind sex difference in job satisfaction. Female workers were in lower ranks than male workers even though they had the same background characteristics and qualifications. A glass ceiling blocking the prospects of female workers exist in the high-technology industry in Taiwan would partly

contribute to women's lower satisfaction with job status. Furthermore, as Taiwan moves toward industrialization and modernization, it has advocated export-oriented growth especially through labor-intensive industries. Such industries have hired many female workers at low wage levels.

Hence, it is possible that the cultural setting may determine sexual inequality and thereby sex differences in job satisfaction.

Cheung and Scherling (1999) findings were supported by Mason (1995) who tested a sample of over 13000 US employees from approximately 130 organizations and divisions across a variety of industries. An important finding is that women and men in management apparently did not differ from one another in their sources of job satisfaction at work.

Researchers studying work attitudes should not treat either female or male subjects as homogeneous group but should take into account individual demographic characteristics, recognizing that the relationship of satisfaction and organizational variables may co vary with gender. Many researches have proven the relationship between individual demographics characteristics and job satisfaction. Kiyak and Hamazi (1997) present a model linking personal and job related factors to job satisfaction, job commitment and turnover from the study conducted on women working in facilities serving older people. Consistent with many studies of job satisfaction in diverse occupation, satisfaction was the greatest among female employees who were older, married, had been on the job longer, and had a

professional position. Golding et al. (1983) compared male lawyers, female lawyers and female legal secretaries concerning their work satisfaction, employment-related gratifications and deprivations and their work values. Responses were largely similar. When they differed, the splits tended to be along the lines of job status rather than gender.

Previous studies had also found relationships between job satisfaction and age (Pugliesi, 1995), organizational tenure (Steffy and Jones, 1990), education (Corzine et al., 1994), marital status (de Vaus and Mc Allister, 1991) and religious affiliation (Niehoff, 1995).

WORK CULTURE AND ISLAMIC VALUES

Most of the elaboration of work-related issues concerns on the matter of increasing productivity, an approach closer to materialistic concept. In defining work culture, Ismail (1993) has seriously discussed the concept of excellence. This concept is not merely from material aspect but rather excellent in achieving individual and society happiness, physical, mental and spiritual satisfaction. He claimed that the sensitivity of Muslims towards work culture is very low. The writer for discussion has forwarded some questions:

- i) What are the reasons for work
- ii) What are the good work ethics
- iii) How to improve work quality
- iv) Why do we have to work

In addition, Wan Muhammad Nor (1991) claimed that the work culture applied in the society seems to be materialistic, non-intellectual and non-united. The material concept does not concern on intellectual matters. It suggests that any work is an effort, which provides pay. The educational system puts priority to labor outcome for the government institutions and private sector. This indirectly strengthens the meaning of work as payable effort. The lower respect given to teaching profession supports this claim. Furthermore, most of payable and non-payable efforts are less likely to base on knowledge, truth and willingness to think on the meaning and effect of the steps taken. Most of the effort is based on '*hawa*' pressure, sociopolitical need and short-term economic pressure, making people diligently pursuing leisure. The non-united concept in work culture can be seen from the separation of knowledge, moral and humanity in the conception, training and implementation of work. Many higher-level officers still do not notice that cultivation of Islamic values will improve daily quality work.

The Islamic conception of work not confine to mere production of goods and services for intermediate or final consumption. It conceives of work primarily as an act to of devotion to Allah. 'I Have only created Jinns and men, that They may serve Me (51:56)' (Abdullah Yusuf, 1992). However, to be accepted as an act of devotion to God, one must abide to these five rules. The work must not deviate from Islamic guidelines and involve only permissible item. The work is done with pure holy intention and done diligently. Finally, the work should involve shari'ah principles and does not obstruct from fulfilling religious obligation.

Syed Othman Al-Habshi (1993) stated five implications for this conception of work. Firstly, three forms of reward namely material rewards, nonmaterial rewards such as satisfaction and reward in Hereafter. Secondly, one is highly motivated to perform his tasks to the best of his ability. Thirdly, one can develop into a very proactive, diligent, disciplined, reliable and organized performer. Fourthly, one will always attempt to keep away immoral practices in the course of his duties. Finally, development of quality workers with excellent performance is the net result of the Islamic conception of work.

He further argued whilst many Muslims are aware of the true Islamic conception of work, a good number too have not attempt to practice it although it is for his own advantage and benefit. This is true not only among those in the public and private sectors, but also in the political and voluntary sectors. Concern has been expressed in recent years over certain acts and behavior, which are repugnant to good moral values, such as increasing incidence of white collar crimes such as fraud, criminal breach of trust, frequent disclosure of fraudulent get-rich-quick scheme and not forgotten bribery.

Research done by Anti-Corruption Agency found corruption cases are rapidly increasing and entering to various sector of society especially in the public sector (Utusan Malaysia, 1998). Bribery cases involving senior government officers also have also increased (Berita Minggu, 1998). Research conducted by Socio Economic Research Unit (SERU) Prime Minister Department on the effects of corruption found

that the perception of young generation towards the crime is rather soft (Utusan Malaysia, 1998). This perception involves the attitude of high tolerance accepting of corruptions activities and their effects on the society. If there is no effort to change this young generation perception, they may continue to accept corruption as a minor crime.

Some studies have included religiosity as one of its independent variable to explain job-related variables. Niehoff (1995) surveyed employees of a Catholic University concerning their level of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Religious affiliation was significantly related to job satisfaction when combined with academic degree and job classification. Zakaria (1993) analyzed the factors associated with work attitudes of 686 diploma program students at Universiti Pertanian Malaysia. The results showed religiosity and student perception of parental work values, accounted for a significant unique proportion of the variance in work attitude and claimed them as the best predictors of the work attitudes. Triono (1995) took a similar study on 1024 students of Technology and Vocational Education College, Medan, Indonesia. He also found religiosity as one of the best predictors of the work attitudes.

Theory and research on job satisfaction and work values have been focused on cases in the Western world and have not addresses issues in other societies or ethnic groups (Tuch and Martin, 1991). More researches are necessary to elucidate relationships among gender, job level, work values and job satisfaction in non-Western societies

such as the Malays because of the pre-analyzed views of most of Malaysian on the Malay work culture.

Ahmad (1998) viewed the work ethics of the Japanese and Korean as hardworking and diligent. He argued that it might due to the living pressure, limited land as well as the scarce resources. In explaining the weakness of the Malay work culture, he claimed that work culture is influenced by the social and economic condition of the country. The stable economic and social condition of Malaysia makes the Malays less eager to improve his work systems. The Malays are well known of not completing the task within the time frame. Ismail (1993) also argued that Malay Muslims perceived work as a daily spontaneous act or one of routines that does not involve planning, ethics and quality improvement.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The purpose of the present study is to explore gender differences in work values defined as preferences or ethical work behavior and in overall job satisfaction. Five main variables are the dependent variables; intrinsic work values, extrinsic work values, ethical work behavior, attitudes toward religious issues at work and overall job satisfaction.

An attempt was made to show the gender differences in work values defined as preferences, reflecting the traditional patterns of gender socialization. Preferences, viewed by Pryor (1979), as being concerned with what individuals like or prefer in a

job, instead of what they think is good or ought to be done. Few studies focused in the relative importance of intrinsic versus extrinsic values. Women tended to place greater value on the social aspects of their work, whereas men were more concerned with pay and career advancement. All of us are subject to the effects of traditional gender-role socialization, which implies that women's work values must necessarily differ from men's because women are obviously different. It is argued that gender related differences in work values result from person centered variables and represent the psychological differences in the socialization of male and female employees. Women see their work as less central than men, as a result, gender differences in work values will exist even when exogenous factors are held constant. On the basis of the above arguments, researcher theorized that the female respondents would be more inclined toward the intrinsic work values rather than the males.

However, study by Neil and Snizek (1987) suggested the need for a model that takes into account demographic and socio-demographic variables. De Vaus and McAllister (1991) empirically assessed family role and social characteristics models in accounting for gender differences in work values. Some who favor the structuralist's perspective propose that differences in work values observed in a group of workers are attributable not to gender but to characteristics of the work itself (job status, type of work, job tenure).

Brown (1962) stated that each individual internalized religion and values at a different level, and he or she differed from others in both the direction and the intensity of religious faith. Many researchers who have tried to measure these

differences in religiosity or religious commitment have found it difficult simply because the appropriate instruments or scales did not exist (Peatling, 1968). The situation might be a reason why few studies have been conducted to determine the relationship between religiosity and work values. In this study, religiosity will be measured from five dimensions; highest formal religious education, informal religious education, understanding in *ibadah/amalan*, attending Islamic courses and political/societal involvement.

Study by Harpaz (1998) and Cherrington (1980) suggested that intrinsic work values would show positive relationship with religiosity. Individuals with strong religious convictions will tend to have a greater inclination toward intrinsic work values, whereas nonreligious individuals will be less susceptible or will not exhibit a propensity toward intrinsic work values.

The competing hypotheses of socialization and structural theories can be used to investigate the possible existence of gender differences in job satisfaction. Women are satisfied with jobs in which they can interact with others in a supportive and cooperative way. Past research has also shown that employee job satisfaction is a function of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards offered by a job and status associated with job level. Furthermore, research has shown that task, status, monetary reward and social relationships are four essential factors of job satisfaction. However, in the present study, overall job satisfaction is not a product of mentioned factors by adding their scores but rather a single question measure.

In determining the relationship between religiosity and job satisfaction, Blood (1969) found that the more a person agreed with the Protestant work ethic, the greater was his or her degree of job satisfaction. Similarly in the present study, the higher religious education and understanding, the higher his/her job satisfaction. The Islamic conception of work is not confining to mere production of goods and services but rather conceives of work primarily as an act of devotion to Allah. The fact that one moves from the mosque to his place of work and regularly punctuates his working hours to perform the prayers, deeply colors the meaning of work itself. The Islamic prayers transform the space and time within which work took place and thereby work itself gains a religious complexion that determines its ethical meaning in the Islamic context. The whole question of work and work ethics in Islam is in fact never perceived from merely an economic point of view but should also include an ethical one as related to the general Islamic perspective in which economics and ethics are combined. Any economic activity, which is completely divorced from ethical considerations based on justice, is considered illegitimate. Therefore, religious education background will show positive relationship with the ethical work behavior and attitudes toward religious issues at work, which is the second definition of work values.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Women's participation in the workplace has been increasing steadily, but what women actually want at work remains a point of disagreement (Mason, 1995). To explain the gender differences in work values and job satisfaction, most

researchers used the competing hypotheses of socialization and structural theories. Early studies focused on gender differences in the relative importance of intrinsic versus extrinsic job features. Taveggia and Ziemba (1978) reported that compared to men, women tended to place greater importance on intrinsic job features, which is also supported by the proponents of the gender socialization model. Whether the preceding theses and claims are definitely valid and applicable to Malay employees in Malaysia is an empirical question. Scholars researching on women in non-western cultures may have to critically examine the local data as what the researcher tend to do in her small-scale research.

The Meaning of Working Study (MOW International Research Team, 1987) investigated the extent to which work itself has significance for people and what that significance is. The variables include work centrality, the view of work as either an entitlement or an obligation, the cognitive centrality, dependence and critically of valued work outcomes. Harpaz (1998) continued examining religious conviction in relation to the meaning of work through representative samples of the labor forces in Germany, Israel, and the Netherlands. Among workers with strong religious convictions in Germany and the Netherlands, the meaning of work was positively related to the variables of work centrality, obligation norms, and intrinsic orientation.

However, the same workers negatively related the meaning of work to economic orientation and entitlement norms. Cherrington (1980) surveyed 3,053 workers in 53 American organizations. One conclusion was that work-related activities acquire the properties of a learned reinforcer and become intrinsic rewards, and acquisition of

such positive properties may be enhanced for work activities if these are congruous with strong political ideology or religious convictions. In contrast with the early theories on gender differences, these findings suggest that intrinsic work values will be related to religious observance. Again, as nearly all Malays are Muslim, question arise whether this claim holds for Malay employees in Malaysia.

Regarding Islamic education and understanding, study by Hafsi (1987) found that among Muslims living in Japan, the higher their religious involvement, the higher their work centrality. Triano (1995) also found that religiosity as one of the best predictors of the work attitudes. The reason would be best explained by the fact that Islamic conception of work is not confining to mere production of goods and services but rather conceives of work primarily as an act of devotion to Allah. With these claims, religious society should portray positive work culture, which the researcher tries to find out in the present study.

HYPOTHESES

From the theoretical framework discussed above, five hypotheses were developed for this study. They are as follows:

- H_A 1. Female employees' work values will be more strongly influenced by non-work factors (intrinsic values) than will male employees' work values, consistently with the traditional gender role socialization model.

- H_A 2. Regardless of gender, employees with strong religious background will tend to have a greater inclination toward intrinsic work values; whereas non-religious employees will not exhibit a propensity towards intrinsic work value.
- H_A 3. Regardless of gender, employees with strong religious background will demonstrate higher ethical work behavior.
- H_A 4. Regardless of gender, employees with strong religious background will demonstrate positive attitudes toward religious issues at work.
- H_A 5. Regardless of gender, employees with strong religious background will demonstrate higher job satisfaction.