

# Foundations of Academic Deeds: Islamic Leadership, Citizenship and Ethical Conducts

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**Abstract:** *The performance of academics is a crucial aspect of the quality of educational programs in higher education. Thus, more revisions are increasingly essential to bring out the vital dimensions that can help to sustain innovative academic performance. Numerous research outcomes suggest innumerable variables, but interestingly relevant for the Islamic universities context is that Islamic leadership competencies significantly influence employee performance. Most of the studies emphasized encouraging results for leadership from the Islamic tenets on employees' multi-dimensional performance, but in other industries than higher education institutions. Thus, it is significant to review the properties of focused Islamic leadership on academic performance in Islamic universities, as scholars also recommend. This paper is inclined to reconfirm organizational citizenship behaviour from the Islamic perspective in connection with Islamic leadership and various contemporary performance measures of academics at higher education institutions. These are not documented well in the existing knowledge frame, particularly within Social Exchange Theory. In addition, this paper establishes the association of Islamic work ethic, leadership following the tenets of Islam, and task and contextual performances. It has become an issue that has fascinated the courtesy of numerous worldwide scholars and researchers. However, thru the literature review, only a few studies focused on cross-cultural and Islamic perspectives. Therefore, it is timely to examine leadership, work ethics and organizational citizenship behaviour from Islamic viewpoints that can affect lecturers' academic performance, such as teaching, research, and service performance. This paper proposed several empirical research suggestions to address the theoretical gaps and reconfirm the previous studies' findings.*

**Keywords:** Academic performance, Islamic leadership, Islamic Organizational citizenship behaviour, Islamic work ethics

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## 1. Introduction

Higher education institutions (HEIs) of the Republic of Indonesia have made Islamic values the foundation for carrying out all their obligations as mandated in the Law on Higher Education (Law No. 12/2012). Besides progress with the national education framework that enduringly promotes righteousness and Faith in Almighty Allah (SWT). One honourable cry for the advancement of

civilization and the wellbeing of humanity in the context of educating the nation's life and expanding modern sciences and know-how by safeguarding pious values and nationwide harmony. Islamic values are present in the vision and mission of Islamic universities in Indonesia. It is a hallmark and differentiator of universities other than Islamic bases. In addition, Islamic universities carry out worldly-oriented educational practices and practices that are Sahrawi-oriented.

The goal of Muslim educators is to create quality educational institutions and ensure everyone has the best opportunity to study in the most outstanding educational institutions (Rahman, 1994). There is a need for educational institutions that fully adhere to the Islamic educational philosophy and outline the prominent landscapes of the Islamic education structure at all echelons of education, including primary, secondary, and tertiary (Ali, 1988). Moreover, many provinces in Indonesia are very closely related to traditional Malay culture, where the main religion of the Malays is Islam. Besides being Muslim, other characteristics of Indonesian Malay are the language, friendliness, and openness (Hasbullah, 2014).

Islamic universities in Indonesia have shown good development in terms of quantity but need a drastic improvement in quality to become part of the leading global universities. A university can be of high quality if it can answer the challenges of the times as a moral responsibility to those who influence the development of its organization (stakeholders) and can continue to improve its existence in global competition. Attention to the quality of Islamic universities is significant because many Islamic universities still have tremendous potential to optimize overall performance. In practice, a Muslim in managerial and non-managerial positions at an Islamic university is still not proven extensively to use Islamic principles to carry out every element of work activity (Supriyanto & Ekowati, 2020). In addition, in his research, Rumijati (2018) said that human resources in Islamic universities, such as leaders, lecturers, and managerial employees, must behave according to Islamic values and principles to achieve the aspiration of a balanced education.

Islamic universities have the same roles and tasks as other universities in Indonesia. The primary function of HEIs in Indonesia is to provide knowledge, and sufficient skills that enable the nation's life progression as mandated in the 1945 Constitution, be responsible for the quality of human resources, and continuously improve its ability to manage and develop the world of education. Every tertiary institution, including Islamic tertiary institutions, is challenged to produce human resources with modern competencies, skills, and abilities that follow the needs of a growing industry and the characteristics and aspirations of each student (Sary & Saud, 2018). Universities can meet these challenges in their journey to improve academic performances through enhanced teaching and learning, increased research competency, and extensive community services. Good academic achievement will undoubtedly affect the overall learning process, impacting the quality of graduates and the sustainable progression of the HEIs. However, in reality, from various previous research references, the performance of lecturers, especially from private universities, has not been optimal (Ng'ang'a & Wesonga, 2012; Sary & Saud, 2018). Therefore, it is timely to examine leadership, work ethics and organizational citizenship behaviour from Islamic viewpoints that can affect lecturers' academic performance, such as teaching, research, and service performance.

## 2. Literature Review

Gunawan, Kusumaningrum, Triwiyanto, Zulkarnain, and Nurabadi (2018) show that a university's success is resolute by the accountability of lecturers and the ability to realize the compulsions of the Tri Dharma in Indonesian higher education, namely teaching; research; and community service. Besides being a teacher, lecturers must also conduct scientific research and provide services to the community to implement the Tri Dharma of Higher Education as directed in the Law (12/2012) of the Republic of Indonesia concerning the tertiary level of education. Elfindri, Rustad, Nizam and Dahrulsyah (2015) stated that lecturers aim to fulfil three main tasks: teaching, research, and community service following the Indonesian education system. Lecturer performance is an essential aspect of the quality of educational programs in HEIs. Virtuous performance by a lecturer can positively impact the university as an unabridged (Anra & Yamin, 2017).

Cultivating quality lecturers must prioritize improving every aspect of the HEIs and budge forward akin to the national educational mission. Lecturers are the foremost resource in realizing the quality of learning, so a lecturer needs to be involved in activities that always uphold his work competence. Performance is the outcome of work by an individual or a workgroup in an organization across the industry using their authority and responsibilities to achieve goals legitimately (Prawirosentono, 2002). If the aim is to improve lecturer performance, the university leaders must determine improvement strategies by implementing leadership with superior academic supervision to receive positive outcomes from lecturer performance measures.

In recent years, both academics and practitioners have become acutely aware of effective employees and exemplary leadership for performance improvement (Kehoe & Wright, 2013)). Interestingly Bachtiar (2012) suggests that the role of leaders in HEIs is directly related to the performance quality of human resources, especially lecturers. Numerous studies reported a solid association between leadership style, lecturers' gratification, and academic performance at HEIs (Asbari, Purwanto, & Santoso, 2019; Purwanto, Wijayanti, Hyun, & Asbari, 2019). Human resource management requires the correct pattern of leadership style to create synergy between superiors and subordinates (Roscahyo, 2013).

Researchers offer various leadership models to expand the eminence of human resources and surge work capacity. Bass (1985) offers transformational and transactional leadership styles, Greenleaf (1996) offers servant leadership, Fry (2003) offers Spiritual leadership, and Beekun (1999) offers Islamic leadership styles. As a republic with most of the population is Muslim, Indonesia is appropriate from the leadership side to place Islamic Law or Islamic administration as the dominant one. In the modern era, superior organizational leaders pave the way for profit-oriented and norm-oriented.

The Qur'an explains that Allah (SWT) has given humans the directive to become the Khalifah on earth (Surah Al-Baqarah: 30). In addition, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also said: "Each of you is a leader, and every leader will be held accountable." Moreover, Prophet Muhammad detailed that "If Allah puts a person in a position of authority over the affairs of Muslims and he isolates himself (from them), does not fulfil his needs, desires and escapes from poverty, Allah will distance himself from him. them." The previous postulates of the Qur'an and Hadith emphasize that

leadership is essential in Islam. Leadership practices following the Islamic perspective highlight decent headship abilities, talents, creativity, and innovation to promote Shariah-compliant work efficiency.

The elementary principles of Islamic leadership, such as deliberation, fairness, honesty, and trust, greatly influence organizational effectiveness and goal achievement. According to numerous statements, leadership in Islamic civilization focuses on truthfulness and righteousness (Shuvro, Saha, & Alam, 2020). Like traditional leadership approaches, leadership in Islam serves as a bridge for leaders to influence the attitudes and behaviours of their subordinates to reach consistent organizational success (Ali, 2007). Aini's (2019) research shows that Islamic leadership positively affects Islamic work ethic, work drive, and corporate members' attitudes towards positive performance.

Individual performance influences group performance, affecting total organizational scheduled versions. Thus, organizations should strive for the highest individual performance to attain work excellence. Good performance demands acceptable work behaviour as projected by each work unit that collectively contributes to the organization. Today's behaviours required by organizations are explicitly on role behaviour, and perhaps extra-role behaviours are welcomed. This extra-role behaviour is also known as one of the critical attitudes of citizenship behaviour in an organization, abbreviated as OCB henceforward. Every organization, especially universities, demands OCB to develop good work attitudes to affect the organization's overall performance (Ali, Shohib, & Ibrahim, 2021). For researchers interested in studying various forms of organizational performance, the empathetic cause and natural process of OCB are top priorities. It was well noted in the literature decades ago (Organ, 1988) and remains relevant today.

In many studies, OCB has made a constructive input to the progress of many different types of organizations, including universities, such as the role of OCB in improving good university governance (Munawir et al., 2019) and the role of OCB in increasing job satisfaction and HEIs commitment (Romi & Ahman, 2020). OCB practices in universities need to be continuous to create good work attitudes characterized by work productivity and a high level of participation, harmonious work attitudes with their subordinates, active communal engrossment, reciprocated respect, collaboration, and structural conceit (Sopiyana & Soelinc, 2020). From a different point of view, OCB is encouraged to explore academia in higher education. Lecturers' roles such as teaching, guiding, researching, community service, administration, and other additional tasks that can impact OCB should be in close attention and implemented optimally.

The OCB study has become an issue that has fascinated the courtesy of numerous worldwide scholars and researchers. However, thru the literature review, only a few studies focused on OCB from a cross-cultural and Islamic perspective, especially from the Republic of Indonesia. Islam teaches that the behaviour of good citizens is related to the concept of behaviour in humans. Emphasis on moral behaviour as Faith is a strong belief in Allah (SWT) in the believer's heart. The focus of Faith, in this case, shows individual actions where actions and thoughts describe the individual's personality in society (Kamil, Sulaiman, Osman-Gani, & Ahmad, 2014). Faith in Islamic teachings is understood as belief and refers to affirmation. Affirmations consist of the heart, which means thought and action in obedience. Islamic teachings have conveyed that efforts to coordinate the connection between employees and the employer should be under the complete

guidelines of the Qur'an and Sunnah. Thus, the conceptualization of OCB from the Islamic standpoint is an urgent matter that requires high concentration for Muslims who work in Islamic or non-Islamic organizations.

Researchers should dig deeper into OCB from an Islamic perspective influenced by Islamic leadership to determine how it affects academic performance, specifically at Islamic universities. Previous research by Rasuli, Khairul, & Shi (2019) and Fasa (2018) realized that OCB could mediate the association between dynamic organizational leadership on employees' overall performance. From an Islamic perspective, OCB has succeeded in improving the organization's quality and workforce performance (Hadi, Sadaghiani, Ghandour & Tajzadehnamin, 2015; Kamil, Osman-Gani, Sulaiman & Ahmad, 2010; Kamil, Sulaiman, Selladurai & Khalid, 2015).

Another variable that is necessary and could strengthen the role of Islamic leadership on academic performance is Islamic work ethics. The Islamic work ethic views leadership as a strategic position in realizing a relationship with *Baldatun Thoyyibatun Wa Robbun Ghofur* – the perfect blend of harmonious living, prosperity, and religiosity in the attempts of social transformation (Ahmad, 2004). This Islamic society applies the principles of Islam *Minhajul Hayah* (the concept and philosophy of life) in every journey of their life phases. In Islamic work ethics, a leader or *Ulii Amri* is a figure that the people in every activity must obey. The statement of Allah SWT:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ

“O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you.” Surah al-Nisa (59)

Indeed, it is also stated in Sahih al-Bukhari (2955), “It is obligatory for one to listen to and obey (the ruler's orders) unless these orders involve one disobedience (to Allah); but if an act of disobedience (to Allah) is imposed, he should not listen to or obey it.” Therefore, an Islamic work ethic will indirectly affect the way lecturers work by following the rules set by the university leadership so that the progressivity of performance can be optimal. Leadership greatly determines the attitudes and behaviour of individuals in an organization. At the same time, work ethics is a form of personal philosophy in viewing, expressing, believing, and giving meaning to everything in the work environment (Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012). Good leadership and acceptance by individuals form and strengthen the work ethic of individuals.

Another basis for taking this variable also refers to the vision and mission of Islamic universities in Indonesian provinces, which makes Islamic values a guide in achieving goals. The Islamic work ethic is a reliable and valid moderating research variable in the contemporary study. This research assumption is strengthened by Gudono (2017), concluding that Islamic work ethics can maintain leadership quality when a leader can actualize values under religious beliefs and a sense of responsibility in social solidarity with his followers. Qasim, Rizvi, and Irshad's (2020) study shows that the bond between leadership conscience and task performance is substantial if the IWE is high. Conversely, if IWE is low, the influence between ethical leadership and task performance is weak.

Research related to leadership, OCB, and work ethics in an Islamic perspective still has a large room for researchers to do empirically, mainly associated with academic performance in Islamic

universities. The proposed research expects to contribute to theory and practice from an Islamic perspective, especially in organization and behaviour development. The premise formed because lack of specific study has tested the effect of Islamic leadership style with OCBIP as a mediating factor and IWE as a moderator variable on academic performance in Islamic universities of Indonesia specifically and other countries broadly.

### **3.0 Hypothesis Development**

In general, private Islamic universities' academic performances are still average in Indonesia compared to other countries. The quality and quantity of publications, teaching and learning, and community engagements need more attention. These areas are vital for achieving excellence among lecturers of Islamic universities and increasing the quality of higher education as the Government of Indonesia aspired (Monitorday, 2015). However, previous research found that lecturers from private universities were still not optimal in academic performance (Maharsi, 2011; Sari, 2018; Yuningsih, 2012; Ng'ang'a & Nyongesa, 2012). While the performance of lecturers is a crucial aspect of the quality of educational programs in higher education (Anra & Yamin, 2017; Gunawan et al., 2018), more studies are increasingly essential to bring out the vital dimensions that can improvise an academic performance. Numerous research outcomes suggest innumerable variables, but interestingly relevant for the Islamic universities context is that Islamic leadership competencies significantly influence employee performance. Other research that focuses on Syariah-based organizations also positions that leadership following the principles of Islam has an encouraging effect on various performance measures (Aini, 2020; Amaliyah & Fahrullah, 2020; Hakim, 2012; Rusdiyanto & Riani, 2015; Subhan; 2013 Wijayanti, & Meftahudin, 2016; Yulianti, Setiawan, Surachman, & Irwanto 2021; Syamsul et al., 2018; Zulfadli, Yuswar, & Zulhelmy, 2021). Most of the studies emphasized encouraging results for leadership from the Islamic tenets on employees' multi-dimensional performance, but in other industries than HEIs. Thus, it is significant to test the properties of focused Islamic leadership on academic performance in Islamic universities, as scholars also recommend. Rumijati (2018) suggests that human resources in Islamic universities, including leaders, are required to behave following Islamic values and principles. Leaders following true Islamic thoughts can impact the attitudes and behaviour of their members to achieve strategic organizational goals (Ali, 2007).

Furthermore, a leader and follower of Islam must submit to Allah (SWT), comply with sharia, and strive positively on bold mindfulness, esteem, trustfulness, confidence, and growth mindset (Toor, 2008). Hairuddin (2021), in his research, shows that academic staffs at state Islamic universities in Indonesia have a high tendency and enthusiasm to practice OCBIP in their respective workplaces. This study is also inclined to reconfirm OCBIP's role as a mediator connection between Islamic leadership and various contemporary performance measures of academics at private HEIs, which is not documented well on empirical grounds (Soegandhi et al., 2013). OCBIP has succeeded in improving organizational quality and performance in many different businesses, including universities (Hadi, Sadaghiani, Ghandour & Tajzadehnamin, 2015; Kamil, Sulaiman, Gani, & Ahmad, 2010). Besides, Sani and Vivin (2020), Ardian (2021), and Morteza et al. (2019) state that leadership practices found to have a positive influence on OCBIP in industries other than HEIs need further research to contribute empirical significance to the existing frame of knowledge, particularly on Social Exchange Theory (SET). Thus, this research's outcome will contribute to SET, specifically the link between Islamic leadership and OCBIP. Research by Qasim, Rizvi and

Irshad (2020) shows that the association between leadership conscience and task performance is substantial if the Islamic work ethic is high. Usman (2019) also found that IWEs moderate the relationship between leadership following the tenets of Islam and task and contextual performances. Despite the claims of Qasim, Rizvi, & Irshad (2020) that IWE moderated leadership, OCB and job performance, the research of Ahmad, Nawab & Shafi (2021) shows that IWE as the research moderator results in a bit of bearing on the association between unworldly leadership norms, inclusive practice and OCB. All these researchers confidently used the Social Exchange Theory as the foundation for their studies, and the results are encouraging despite mixed findings. Thus, it is essential to perform this study to close the theoretical gaps and reconfirm the previous studies' findings. We hypothesis the following based on the review of literature:

- H1: There is a positive relationship between Islamic leadership and lecturers' academic performances.
- H2: There is a positive relationship between Islamic leadership and organizational citizenship behaviour among lecturers.
- H3: There is a positive relationship between organizational citizenship behaviour and lecturers' academic performances.
- H4: Organizational citizenship behaviour mediates the relationship between Islamic leadership and lecturers' academic performances.
- H5: Islamic work ethic moderates the relationship between Islamic leadership and lecturers' academic performances.

#### **4. Methodology**

Previous scholarly work reviewed, analyzed and synthesized to examine leadership, work ethics and organizational citizenship behaviour from Islamic viewpoints that can affect lecturers' academic performance, such as teaching, research, and service performance. The body of knowledge in this field is extensive, yet concepts are fragmented and still evolving within the frame of Social Exchange Theory. This paper proposed several empirical research suggestions to address the theoretical gaps and reconfirm the previous studies' findings. Ultimately, it guides future research, including quantitative and qualitative analyses, using quantifiable and unquantifiable methods in business and non-business situations of HEIs.

#### **5. Discussion and Conclusion**

This paper focuses on the academic performances of lecturers employed at the Islamic Universities, related to all base performance information about teaching, research, and community services. It is noticed from the literature that several factors can affect lecturers' academic performances, for instance, organizational support, discipline, organizational work climate, job pleasure, organizational culture, and many more. This paper focuses on Islamic literacy as another factor that can influence the academic performances of lecturers at private HEIs. Therefore, the research is more focused and does not deviate from the critical issues within the HEIs. The proposed study is limited and only looks at Islamic leadership's direct influence on lecturers' academic performances. The study's second primary goal is to examine the mediated function of organizational citizenship behaviour following the tenets of Islamic and IWE as moderating variables.

The proposed research is to have practical implications on Islamic universities, specifically across Indonesia elsewhere. Islamic universities will inspire to play a prominent role in providing education based on Islamic principles and values, strengthening lecturers' academic performance. This paper showcase the holistic significance of Islamic leadership processes, organizational citizenship behaviour from an Islamic standpoint, Islamic work ethic and multilevel performance of lecturers. Leaders will find future research outcomes beneficial. To increase knowledge about Islamic leadership in taking action, formulating appropriate strategies and policies to increase lecturers' awareness, understanding, and perception of positive behaviour based on Islamic principles to improve lecturers' academic performances. In addition, this paper aims to provide a sense of intellectual urgency to determine the scope to which Islamic leadership, citizenship behaviour in organizations, and work ethics in an Islamic perspective can positively influence lecturers' academic performances.

Even though previous studies have focused more on the academic performance of lecturers, there has not been much research conducted, especially on Islamic universities in exploring Islamic behaviour, including leadership behaviour and follower behaviour, to improve lecturers' academic performance. This paper provides new-fangled literacy on the association between Islamic leadership and private HEIs with a vision and mission founded on Islamic ideals. This paper also offers innovative literacy related to OCBIP and IWE as moderating variables, assuming that academic performance needs Islamic leadership. Theoretical gaps in the SET could be addressed and narrowed thru the suggestions by integrating Islamic leadership, OCBIP, IWE and versions of lecturers. The link is not comprehensively studied using the SET, and thus it is vital to prove the significance of SET in addressing the associations of variables of the proposed study. It is high in anticipation that this paper can create room for expanding the underlying theory by linking Islamic Leadership, Ocbip, and Islamic work ethics with academic performance to help academics achieve the best performance.

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