A Study on Practice of Islamic Professional Ethics in Shaping an Ethical Work Culture within Malaysian Civil Service Sector

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Abstract

An implementation of Islamic Professional Ethics (IPE) is an essential aspect which requires understanding, appreciation and application by every employee in order to heighten moral virtues of each individual and elevate competency of an organization. This study aimed to identify the criteria for practices of Islamic Professional Ethics (IPE) in shaping the culture of professionalism and ethical work. This study employed a quantitative method through a survey using questionnaires which were distributed to a total of 380 managerial and professional employees in the Royal Malaysian Customs Department. The findings revealed eleven important criteria for IPE and the three most prominent were trust, sincerity and truth. This study helps in bridging the gaps in literature on Ethics Professionalism Islam in the organization. Future research should focus on the implementation of Professionalism Ethics Islam (IPE) in various organizations by analyzing the basics of IPE not only in theoretical but also practical aspects.

Keywords: ethical work culture, Islamic professional ethics, Malaysian public service sector

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

An implementation of Islamic Professional Ethics (IPE) is an essential aspect which requires understanding, appreciation and application by every employee in order to heighten moral virtues of each individual and elevate competency of an organization. Thus far, the revelations of ethical and professional issues are frequently expressed through print or electronic media on cases like ethical misconducts involving corruption, abuse of power, fraud, sexual harassment, workplace discrimination, violation of civil properties and other offenses. In the case of Malaysian Civil service sector, values and ethics have been introduced through few principles like purity, efficiency and honesty, Islamic values inculcation, Exemplary leadership, Excellent work culture and 12 Poles (INTAN, 1994). However, ethical misconducts still persist like rude attitude, irresponsible acts in performing duties, dishonest behavior and others (Zawiah, 2011).

Throughout history, the success and collapse of a civilization have often been linked to ethical issues, and breaches of moral virtues. For example, the powerful Roman and Persian civilizations were weakened by the betrayals of the dignitaries of the country (Abdullah, 2000). Hence, Islamic Professional Ethics (IPE) can be used as a standard guideline to improve the execution of tasks, responsibilities and decision-making in organizations (Nor ‘Azzah, 2007). The guidelines generate efficiency and accuracy in terms of procedures, product specifications and decision making. This in turn will prevent fraud, abuse of power and other forms of moral misbehavior among civil servants in the organization. Therefore, this study aimed to identify the criteria for practices of Islamic Professional Ethics (IPE) in shaping the culture of professionalism and ethical work.

1.2 Literature Review

1.2.1 Ethics

The etymology of ethics consists of two essential bases; individual characteristics and social rules which govern and limit the right and wrong conduct of an individual (Shaw, 2002). Ethics is not only focusing on truth as