Islamic Human Resource Management (IHRM) Practices Impact on Employees' Work Engagement: An Empirical Study

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1. Introduction:

It costs organizations up to $350 billion per year when their employees are disengaged with their work [42]. On the other hand, engaged employees are productive, involved, committed, have low turnover intentions, create customer satisfaction [12, 19, 35, 36] and enhance organizational performance [80, 87]. Literature[21, 39, 89] indicates that approximately 40% of workforce around the globe are highly engaged. In order to enhance employees' work engagement (EWE), human resource management (HRM) practices play an important role [31, 38-40, 50, 52, 55, 58].

Even though the aforesaid relationship has been established but still researchers[5 , 55] emphasize that this relationship should further be enhanced by analyzing emerging HRM practices. In line with the aforesaid suggestion, recent literature [1, 9, 11, 16, 17, 27, 30, 34, 45, 48, 64, 86] puts emphasizes on Islamic Human Resource Management (IHRM) practices which looked vital but are still under researched.

The importance of studying IHRM and its effects on Muslim employees in organizations, gets further amplified, when we try to understand the baseline structure of Muslim employees' behavior in organizations. Practices in the workplace are aligned with their religious philosophies [8] and religious instructions [70] because "religion exercises a powerful influence over the personal and social behaviour of human beings" [49]. Religion normally reflects as a particular structure of belief, worship, and also conduct [13, 20, 25] and the Muslim community essentially shares a considerable basic belief and social legacy [83]. Furthermore, business organizations in Islamic countries or those being managed by Muslims, generally claim to follow Islamic management principles [64, 84, 85]. One such practice is managing human resources, according to Islamic

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instructions or Islamic Human resource management practices[27, 44, 45, 54, 86]. Theoretical support to fulfil proposed knowledge gap can be attained from social exchange theory (SET) [26]. According to Farooq, et al. [33], Farooq [32] and Azhar and Farooq [15] social exchange theory by structures follows Islamic teachings, whereas, by substance it does not. As in Islam the exchanges are taking place simultaneously between an individual and Allah, and between an individual with other individual/organization. SET provided the bases for Islamic human resource management practice and employees' work engagement relationship. On the basis of the aforesaid discussion, the aim of the current study is to diminish the gap between, Islamic Human Resource Management practices and employees' work engagement.

2. Literature Review:

2.2. Employee work engagement:

The term "Employee Engagement" was first used by the Gallup organization in 1990s as a result of 25 years of survey interviews from employees and managers [57]. Gallup defines 'Employee Engagement' as "employees are involved in, enthusiastic about and committed to their work and workplace" [42]. Kahn [53], discussed work engagement as when an employee submerged himself in work so as to express himself physically, cognitively, and emotionally in role performances. Work engagement is the opposite of burnout, and in this employees have a feeling of vigorous and compelling association with their work enactments (vitality, participation) and they consider themselves ready to deal with their workloads (proficient adequacy) [59`].

Schaufeli, et al. [80], defines engagement as "a positive, fulfilling, work related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (p. 74). Whereas Vigor is described as unusual amounts of liveliness and mental versatility during work, the ability to put enthusiastic efforts in one's work, and display of diligence while dealing with challenges. Dedication is defined as a feeling of sovereignty, willingness, motivation, and superiority in one's work. While Absorption is described as one's determination as well as jolliness towards work. The difference between Kahn [53] and Schaufeli, et al. [80] interpretaion of work engagement are former emphasize individual's role while doing work, whereas later focus on individual's work itself. In sum, Kahn [53], and Schaufeli et al.[80], describes work engagement in such a way that it involves a components of behavioral, enthusiastic (vigor), an passionate (dedication), as well as a cognitive (absorption).

At employee level, work engagement enhances when these factors are perceived by an employee these include but not limited to, when he feels

empowered, gets feedback regarding his work [18, 78], social support from coworkers [12, 18, 41, 76, 79]. Whereas, at organiztional level antecedents/drivers of employees' work engagement are development opportunities in organiation [12] existence of procedural justice [37, 75], accessibility of information [41], perceived organizational support (POS) [71] and human resource management [31, 38-40, 50, 52, 55, 58]. Summing up the aforesaid, when employees perceive that their organizations take care of them, they pay back by becoming more engaged with their work [72, 74].

2.3. Islamic human resource management (IHRM) practices:

The conventional way to deal with human resource depends on theories which actually describe that corporations require productive and adequate Human Resource [6, 48, 86] and its objectives are worldly [73]. Whereas, the Islamic Human Resource Management theories, standards, and practices are established upon the direction of the Holy Quran and Sunnah [48, 86] unrelated with money-oriented rational [27], and includes both worldly (*Al-Duniya*) and hereafter (*Al-Akhirah*) objectives [22, 24, 25, 73]. The utilization of the Islamic way to deal with Human Resource is assumed to accomplish a steadiness and also coordination for the wellbeing of the individual workers as well as groups, whereas western theories are concentrated on the direction, efficiency of the workers in the operational circumstances [27]. In sum, Islamic Human Resource Management practices are defined as "performing of basic HRM functions (such as; Recruitment, Selection, Performance Appraisal, Training and Compensation) in accordance with guidelines prescribed in the Quran and Hadith (the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)" [43, p.788]. Moreover, the functions of IHRM are defined as Recruitment: "Islam calls for recruitment as offering job vacancies in the way of God with trust and responsibilities" [43, p.788] selection: In Islam employee's selection is based on justice, competency of employees, honest decisions and individual capacity [43, 45]. Performance Appraisal: "Islam recognizes performance appraisal as a mechanism to ensure that every effort will not be left unrewarded" [43, p.788], training and development: "beginning from the moral and spiritual development of human and manifested eventually into physical development" [43, p.789], compensation**:** "Islam emphasizes that workers should get adequate and reasonable wages for their work" [43, p.789].

3. Hypothesis Development:

According to the Islamic teachings recruitment and selection is dependent upon the standards of equity, proficiency, genuineness, and allotting work in accordance with workers' ability [9, 43, 67]. Islam endorses an impartial selection structure that is free of partialities [54]. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) reproves administrators of profanity as per the command of Allah

and His prophet (PBUH) by selecting awkward individuals for an occupation. The main principles that are defined by the Islamic teachings are the key elements for increasing worker's level of engagement [75]. So, the Islamic way of recruitment and selection would increase the employee engagement. If there is resemblance between the desire of a candidate and the position requirements, then the worker would likely be absorbed in work and feel pleased while enacting the job [29]. When employees perceive that their organization endorses an impartial selection structure, that is free of partialities, as Islam teaches us [54], then they are motivated by their work, and feel galvanized about the organization's standards.

H1: Islamic based Recruitment & Selection practice, has a positive impact on employee's work engagement.

Training and development practices which are based upon honesty, can significantly enhance employees' level of work engagement and the ability to learn new things. Organizations have to arrange training sessions to motivate employees, to improve their intellectual capacities and by which employees' render various problems [14, 88]. Employees who receive sufficient training and development, feel more satisfied and enthusiastic, to engage themselves in work related activities [56]. From an Islamic point of view, the practice of training and development furthermore emphasizes the significance of learning and participating in, intellectual as well as spiritual development [68]. By such practices employees feel pleased to engage themselves with their work [3, 14, 43, 56, 62, 75].

**H2:** Islamic based Training and Development practice, has a positive impact on employees' work engagement

Utilization of effective performance appraisal system, would cultivate worker level of engagement and deliver greater amounts of performance [38]. The accurate appraisal and reward structure, increases employees' spirits and leads employees to work engagement [75, 80]. Moreover, when a reward system is strategically designed, it helps to generate coveted employee behaviors, and commitment to the organization [81]. The Islamic view is readable for assessing work performance, just, devout, praiseworthy, also capable staff members ought to be appreciated for their effective work performance (Ahmad, 1995). Islam commands compensation proficiency, building up an appraisal framework that treats entire workers judiciously with no inclination, and maintaining a strategic distance from dishonest routine of subjective performance appraisal [54]. Inadequate performance appraisal may bring about creating frustration amid workers and lead towards work burnout [41, 60]. On the other hand, accurate appraisal as well as reward structure increases staffs' spirits and leads to employee engagement [75, 80].

H3: Islamic based Performance Appraisal practice, has a positive impact on employees' work engagement

When reward system is strategically designed, it generates desired behaviors, organizational commitment [81], performance and engages workers [61]. Fruitful compensation procedures not only satisfy the worker's essential prerequisite but also increases engagement [77]. From Islamic perspective the purpose behind compensation is that workers' perceive work as vigorous. Allah (SWT) mentions in the Holy Quran, "We will not allow to be lost the reward of any who did well in deeds" [65Quran 18:30], Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "Whoever puts an effort and succeeds gets two new lands and whoever puts an effort and does not succeed gets one reward" [82Sahih Muslim]. In Islam, compensation is on worker's commitments and on his fundamental needs. [4, 43, 45, 54, 69]. The prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, "It is most important for you to provide food and clothing to your assistants" [28Sahih Bukhari].

H4: Islamic based Compensation practice, has a positive impact on employees' work engagement.

Figure 1: Theoretical Model
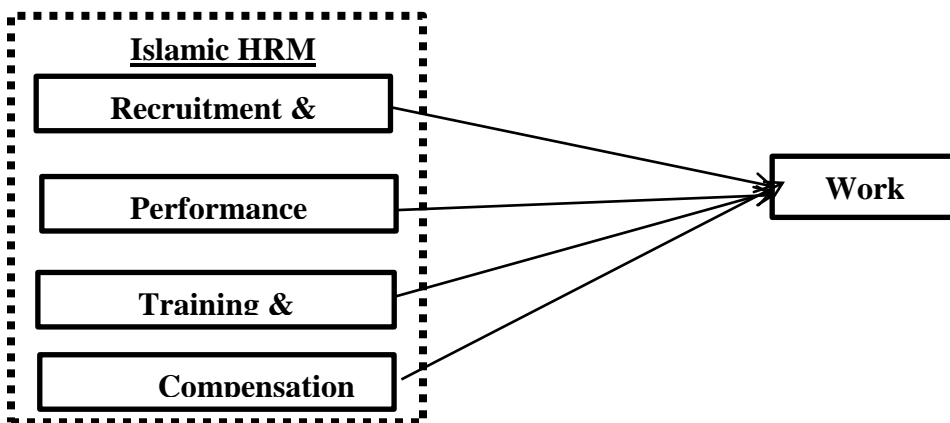
4. Method:

The sampling frame consists of Muslim employees working in the hospitals and educational institutes in Lahore. A total of 380 questionnaires were collected using purposive sampling, as this much response is plenty when the population is unknown [51].

In order to measure employees' work engagement (EWE) and its subcomponents (vigor, dedication, and absorption) UWES-9 developed by Schaufeli, et al. [80] was adopted. Islamic human resource management (IHRM) was measured by adapting Hashim [45] scale which contains

recruitment and selection, performance appraisal, training and development, and reward and compensation system.

5. Analysis:

The demographic profile of the respondents is presented in table 1. Based upon the factor analysis, the conceptual model of the present study was modified as presented in figure 2. The means, standard deviations, Cronbach's alpha reliabilities, and correlations are presented in Table 3, and ANOVA between demographics (age, education, total experience, experience in current organization, desigation, and spirituality) and employees' work engagmenet is presented in table 4. Furthermore, demographic variables having significant ANOVA value (p≤0.05) with EWE were controlled, when regression analysis was performed between EWE (EWE, Vigor, Dedication, and Absorption) and Islamic Human resource management practices (Recruitment/Selecion, and Training & development).

Table 1: Demographic Profile

Demographics	Classification	Percentage	Demographics	Classification	Percentage
Gender	Male	63.4		20-30 years	48.2
	Female	36.6		30-40 years	47.6
Education	Matriculation	0.3	**Age**	40-50 years	3.4
	Intermediate	2.1		50≥ years	1.1
	Bachelor	33.7	**Experience in Current Organi-zation**	>1 year	28.4
	Master	54.2		1-4 years	47.9
	PhD	9.7		5-9 years	18.2
Designation	Staff	22.4		10-14 years	3.9
	Administration	26.8		15-20 years	0.8
	Faculty	28.2		20≥	0.8
	Doctor	20.3	**Experience**	>1 year	8.4
	Senior Man-ager/HOD	2.4		1-4 years	45
Individual's Spirituality	Not at all	0.3		5-9 years	33.9
	Somewhat close	16.8		10-14 years	8.4
	Very close	50.5		15-20 years	2.4
	As close as possible	32.4		20≥ years	1.8

Figure 2: Modified Conceptual Framework
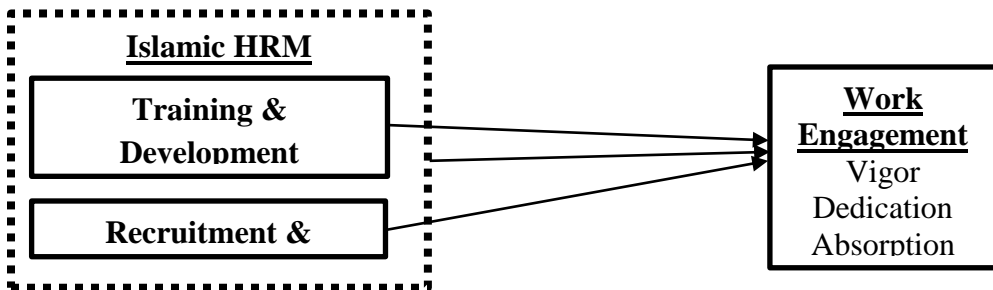
Table 2: Factor Analysis of Islamic Human Resource Management

	Items	Component		
		1	2	3
1	My organization conducts a test on candidates' Islamic understanding during the selection process	.780		
2	To what extent does your organization practice Islamic approach in recruitment?	.669		
3	My organization believes a good Muslim will be a good employee	.643		
4	My organization informs the candidate about the job requirement and details	.777		
5	To what extent does your organization inform the candidates about the salary they will receive?	.736		
6	To what extent does your organization recruit candidates who are competent and honest?	.811		
7	To what extent do you recruit candidates responsibly and do it with full of AMANAH?	.708		
8	My organization will reject the qualified candidates if it is proven that the candidates are not good Muslims	.704		
9	My organization emphasizes on improving one's performance		.600	
10	My organization conducts Islamic training programs for employees regularly		.747	
11	My organizations encourages employees to seek knowledge		.589	
12	My organization conducts training regularly		.877	
13	This organization promotes training seriously		.808	

14	My organization practices Islamic approach in appraising employees			.726
15	My organization does not practice any favoritism in evaluating employees' performance			.593
16	The appraisal is done by superiors and clients			.806
	% Variance Explained	29.27	20.65	14.54
	Reliability	0.67	0.62	0.13
	KMO and Bartlett's Test		0.776	

Components: 1=Recruitment/Selection, 2=Training and development, 3=Performance Appraisal

Table 5 indicates that Islamic human resource management's: training & development positively contributes to overall EWE B=.229(p<.000), and its sub constructs namely: vigor B=.185(p<.000), dedication B=.225(p<.000), and absorption B=.270(p<.000). Whereas, recruitment/selection only positively contributes to EWE B=.146(p<.000), and two of its sub constructs namely: dedication B=.237(p<.000), and absorption B=.141(p<.000). Furthermore, total variation explained in EWE, vigor, dedication, and absorption due to Islamic human resource management (training &development and recruitment/selection) are 0.193, 0.094, 0.182, and 0.13 respectively.

Table 3: Correlations and Reliabilities

Sr.	Variable	Mean	S.D	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Recruitment/selection	3.43	0.68	(0.67)					
2	Training & Development	3.54	0.68	0.503	(0.62)				
3	EWE	3.95	0.53	0.321	0.389	(0.79)			
4	Vigor	3.93	0.58	0.173	0.259	0.776	(0.60)		
5	Dedication	4.23	0.64	0.363	0.366	0.761	0.390	0.63	
6	Absorption	3.68	0.77	0.235	0.308	0.86	0.538	0.456	0.68

All correlation are significant at p<0.001. Standard deviation (S.D), Reliabilities in ( )

6. Discussion:

The findings of the current study provide support to the existing literature [5, 31, 38-40, 50, 52, 55, 58] that employees' work engagement (EWE) can be

enhanced through effective human resource management (HRM) practices, and supplements this relationship by adding Islamic human resource management practices in the aforesaid relationship, and further affirm Hashim [43] and Azmi and Hamzah [17] that Islamic HR practices might have a positive relationship with other HR outcomes.

This study further endorses Beekun [23] and Tayeb [86] that in Islam, individuals perceive work as a requisite and a self-contained cause of success that leads them towards *falah* (worldly and hereafter success) [85]. As in Islam, an individual is instructed to work with full devotion and dedication, in order to improve himself [63, 85]. Moreover, literature also indicates that in Muslim organizations (organizations lead by Muslim leader) administrative practices are influenced by religious beliefs and teachings [2, 7, 8, 10, 11, 85].

When organizations recruit candidates through incorporating Islamic management practices, employees are more committed to work, are ethical, perform well, are disciplined, loyal, and satisfied with their work [85]. In addition when organizations develop a trustworthy relationship with employees beginning from recruitment, then employees are more enthusiastic and show high engagement with their work [46, 66]. With respect to Islamic training and development, organizations should provide knowledge, skills and resources to employees that would make them feel effusively engaged in work. Through training employees feel more secure about their capability to enacting their work, thus aggregating their feelings of obtainability and reducing anxiety [38]. With respect to theoretical advancement, the current study endorses Farooq, et al. [33], Farooq [32] and Azhar and Farooq [15], that social exchange theory by structure follows Islamic teachings, whereas, by substance it does not.

7. Limitation and Future Direction:

Though the findings to the current study provide some significant contributions towards the body of knowledge, however there are some limitations like the respondents of this study are from social service sector, data was collected from only from Lahore, and the nature of the data was cross sectional. With respect to future direction, it is suggested that the relationship between Islamic Human Resource Management Practices and Employee's Work Engagement should be analyzed by incorporating mediators and/or moderators like demographics, organizational justice, personality, job insecurity, and psychological empowerment. This can also be achieved by taking Islamic Human Resource Management Practices as a moderator between employees' engagement and other individual level antecedents or organizational performance.

8. Conclusion:

The results conclude that when Muslim employees perceive that Islam based recruitment/selection, and training and development practice are prevailing in their organization their work engagement enhances. Therefore, organizations can benefit by implementing Islam based recruitment/selection and Islamic training and development practices while bundling up with other HR practices. Furthermore, when employee's innate feelings and religious obligations are fulfilled by organizations' HR practices then employees become engaged. The generalizability of the current study will not be limited to Muslims only because "Islamic concept of personality has universal application, as it holds good in non-Muslim business organization as well" [47].

Table 4: Control Variables

Variables	Work Engagement		Vigor		Dedication		Absorption	
	F-value	Sig.	F-value	Sig.	F-value	Sig	F-value	Sig
Age	3.05	0.029*	1.52	.210	.844	.471	4.43	.004*
Education	1.18	0.319	1.62	.168	1.84	.120	1.08	.368
Total Experience	2.01	0.076	1.99	.080	1.55	.173	4.29	.001*
Current org. Exp.	1.54	0.175	1.94	.088	.889	.489	2.30	.045*
Designation	4.23	0.002*	3.65	.006*	2.52	.041*	3.88	.004*
Spirituality	1.29	0.176	3.19	.042*	2.08	.126	.589	.555

Table 5: Regression Analysis

*significant at p≤0.05

	R square 0.193			R square 0.094			R square 0.182			R square 0.13		
	B	T	Sig.	B	T	Sig.	B	T	Sig.	B	T	Sig.
(Constant)	3.722	41.739	.000	3.897	26.466	.000	4.169	51.028	.000	3.283	24.068	.000
Age	.065	1.430	.154							-.016	-.186	.853
Total Experience										.140	2.112	.035
Current Org. Exp.										-.038	-.612	.541
Designation	.048	1.917	.056	.070	2.652	.008	.023	.791	.429	.055	1.524	.128
Spirituality				-.046	-1.083	.279						
(Constant)	2.409	14.335	.000	3.022	13.885	.000	2.516	12.816	.000	1.873	7.337	.000
Age	.044	1.050	.294							-.009	-.116	.908
Total Experience										.120	1.909	.05

	EWE			Vigor			Dedication			Absorption		
												7
Current Org. Exp.										-.051	-.849	.396
Designation	.061	2.655	.008	.076	2.944	.003	.041	1.500	.135	.071	2.019	.044
Spirituality				-.057	-1.401	.162				1.873	7.337	.000
Training &Development	.229	5.456	.000	.185	3.854	.000	.225	4.424	.000	.270	4.237	.000
Recruitment/Selection	.146	3.421	.001	.071	1.449	.148	.237	4.606	.000	.141	2.174	.030
Dependent Variable	**EWE**			**Vigor**			**Dedication**			**Absorption**		

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