

Ethical Conflicts of The Accounting Profession in Practicing Islamic Work Ethics

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Abstract

The prior study explains that Islamic work ethics have many positive impacts, such as career satisfaction and organizational commitment. By contrast, based on cognitive dissonance theory, we assume that these effects cannot work properly in an environment that does not support workers to implement it, and this will lead to ethical conflicts and dilemmas. In this study, we wanted to find ethical conflict in accounting professionals who felt that their Islamic values at work conflicted with their duties. We examined 50 Muslim accountants in various regions in Indonesia by distributing an online questionnaire to them. Using the data obtained from the questionnaire, we tested the effect by regression. Nevertheless, before that, the testing process will be carried out by passing preliminary test series such as validity, reliability, classical assumption and correlation tests. The research findings state that the practice of Islamic work ethics significantly positively affects the ethical conflict perceived by accountants. It is identified that accountants who practice Islamic work ethics will inevitably feel ethical conflicts themselves due to the circumstances they feel in the workplace. This research can be a reference for Muslim accountants just starting their careers in mitigating and overcoming ethical conflicts in the new world of work. Companies can integrate work patterns with Islamic values and create reporting mechanisms to accommodate Islamic values. The director needs to be a moral compass for their employees.

Keywords: *Accounting profession, Cognitive dissonance, Ethical conflict, Islamic work ethics.*

INTRODUCTION

The accounting profession is key to maintaining organizations' transparency and financial integrity. This task requires high ethical standards to ensure the accuracy of reports and public trust in financial institutions (Bobek et al., 2017; Copeland, 2015). The accounting profession often faces ethical dilemmas, such as pressure to manipulate financial statements, conflicts of interest, and unclear rules. Ethical conflict arises when an accountant must choose between carrying out professional responsibilities and following external pressures that may violate ethics (Joannidès de Lautour, 2019). Global accounting scandals have shown how ethical violations can cause a crisis of confidence and damage the accounting profession's reputation. For example, anyone in the accounting field in Indonesia certainly refuses to forget the accounting scandals that occurred in Indonesia, namely the Garuda Indonesia scandal, EY Indonesia auditing Indosat and sanctioned by the PCAOB, the Century Bank scandal, the Jiwasraya scandal, and many other accounting scandals (Anggria & Trisaningsih, 2023; Hermawan & Kokthunarina, 2019; Limajatini et al., 2019; Roiston & Harymawan, 2022).

Islamic Work Ethics (IWE) is rooted in Islamic teachings emphasizing integrity, justice, responsibility, hard work, and honesty in carrying out professional duties. IWE views work as a form of worship and responsibility to God and society (Salahudin et al., 2016). Prior research proves that IWE positively impacts work-life, such as guiding Muslim professionals, including accountants, in making ethical decisions. IWE can reduce the intention of Muslim bankers to leave their jobs and increase job satisfaction (Jabid et al., 2023). In the same way, applying IWE should reduce ethical conflict because IWE values can help accountants remain steadfast in practising the right work ethics (Amilin, 2016).

Although Indonesia is a Muslim-majority country, it does not necessarily guarantee that companies actively encourage accountants to work under IWE values. In practice, many financial scandals in companies still contradict Islamic ethical principles such as honesty, transparency and justice. Some of the gaps in the work environment that trigger ethical conflicts can be seen in cases such as superior pressure to obscure financial information (Schubert & Boenigk, 2021), neglect of Islamic principles in decision-making (Shamsudheen & Rosly, 2021), and corporate values that are explicitly contradictory to Islamic teachings and values (Shamsudheen et al., 2023). This phenomenon can lead to significant ethical conflict, where accountants feel trapped between following orders from superiors or clients and staying true to their religious values (Killian et al., 2023). Then, some questions arise about IWE. Will the implementation of IWE always give positive outcomes for its implementers? What if the work situation and conditions do not support workers in implementing it? This is a concern that some accountants in Muslim-majority countries such as Indonesia may experience. Cognitive dissonance theory supports this explanation, where internal conflict occurs when there is a mismatch between personal beliefs and behaviour imposed by the environment. Accountants forced to work in a system that does not support Islamic values are likely to experience emotional and moral tension, further exacerbating the ethical conflict they feel (Festinger, 1957).

This study contributes to the literature on Islamic work ethics and its relationship with ethical behaviour in the accounting context. The expected results will show a positive effect of IWE on ethical conflict, reinforcing the predictions of Cognitive Dissonance Theory and sparking further discussion about the relationship between religion and professional practice. The findings are also important for companies and professional organizations in designing policies that support

accountants in maintaining their ethical integrity without having to experience excessive psychological pressure.

The remainder of the article is structured into five parts. The first part addresses the context of IWE and the ethical conflict in the accounting profession. The second part establishes cognitive dissonance theory and the ethical conflict when accountants adhere to IWE. The third part defines the methodologies employed in this research, encompassing sample selection, data acquisition, variable definitions, and regression model equations. The fourth part examines the research findings concerning the methodological steps. The findings are enhanced through a comprehensive discussion that substantiates the research outcomes. The fifth part comprises a conclusion of the research findings, the limitations inherent in the study, and recommendations for future research endeavours.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Cognitive Dissonance Theory

A significant concept in understanding ethical conflict explains the discomfort that arises when an individual holds two conflicting beliefs or behaviors. This theory, initially proposed to understand common spaces in communication and social influence (Festinger, 1957), has found increasing relevance in management research (Hinojosa et al., 2016). Its robustness is evident in its ability to explain behavioral changes, be accepted by various disciplines, and analyze thousands of psychology-related studies over time. This theory even has the potential to explain the discipline of human resource management (Vaughan & Hogg, 2005).

Cognitive dissonance assures that individuals will feel uncomfortable having two conflicting beliefs or behaviors. In the context of ethical conflict, workers, especially accountants, will feel uncomfortable when faced with a situation where they must choose between two actions, one contrary to their ethical values or norms (Babalola et al., 2016; Shah & Lacaze, 2025). By reducing ethical conflicts based on cognitive dissonance, management must realize that ethical conflicts can occur in their company, take steps to prevent them and be ready to help employees who experience them (B. Zhang et al., 2024). Therefore, applying cognitive dissonance theory can help explain why Muslim accountants may experience ethical conflict when their Islamic ethical values do not align with accounting practices in a professional context. This theory allows researchers to understand the internal dynamics influencing responses to ethical incongruence, which may form the basis for designing more effective interventions or solutions.

Ethical Conflict

The central discussion that the author does in this study is to look at the incidence of ethical conflict in accountants. The event when an individual subjectively feels that his beliefs conflict with the actions he must take is a description of ethical conflict (Ariail et al., 2024). In the context of the accountant's work, this gap can be displayed by feelings of conflict between the organizational climate or the accountant's code of ethics and the personal values internalized throughout the accountant's work life (Martins & Casais, 2024).

Ethical conflicts in the accounting profession can involve moral considerations, adherence to professional ethics, or decisions involving Islamic values (Fang & Foucart, 2014). For example, ethical conflicts may arise if superiors encourage Muslim accountants to be dishonest to clients or if accountants are forced to manipulate reports to defraud the public (Kammeyer-Mueller et al.,

2012). These situations can lead to significant personal and professional challenges for Muslim accountants. Ethical conflicts can also occur when organizations, through superiors, expect uncompromising compliance from accountants without considering the religious and ethical values they hold dear. Therefore, through this research, the author wants to see a large differentiation in the world of work that encourages Muslim accountants to experience high ethical conflict when he has to choose the demands of work with Islamic religious values, which are the basis for them at work.

Islamic Work Ethics

The emergence of Islamic work ethics for the world of Islamic work comes from the teaching that Islam considers it a virtue to fulfil the needs of human life (Murtaza et al., 2016). Work is also necessary to balance individual and social life. The Prophet Muhammad guided his followers to work and do anything that is muamalah especially in worklife terms by the instructions of the Quran (Zia et al., 2022). The Qur'an opposes and cautions against dishonesty and fraud in business dealings. In the Quran, "Complete the measure when you measure and weigh with the right scales. That is the best and most favorable result." (Quran 17:35). Superiors who encourage their accountants to behave dishonestly can be perceived as a violation of the principle of justice, only subordinates who have strong Islamic work ethics can resist such encouragement. In the context of an accountant as a worker, the point is that a Muslim has indirectly internalized the IWE in his daily work so that the ethical approach the accountant uses is in line with the breath of the Qur'an (Caniago et al., 2023).

Based on the understanding of Islamic ethical principles that include honesty, justice, and accountability, it can be interpreted that Muslim accountants who actively apply Islamic work ethics will be more sensitive to situations that can cause ethical conflict (Aflah et al., 2021; Clercq et al., 2019). Therefore, accountants with high Islamic work ethics may feel turmoil and conflict in their ethical systems because this contradicts their belief system. However, this same ethical framework also has the potential to guide their ethical decision-making, offering a hopeful perspective on the role of religion in promoting ethical behavior.

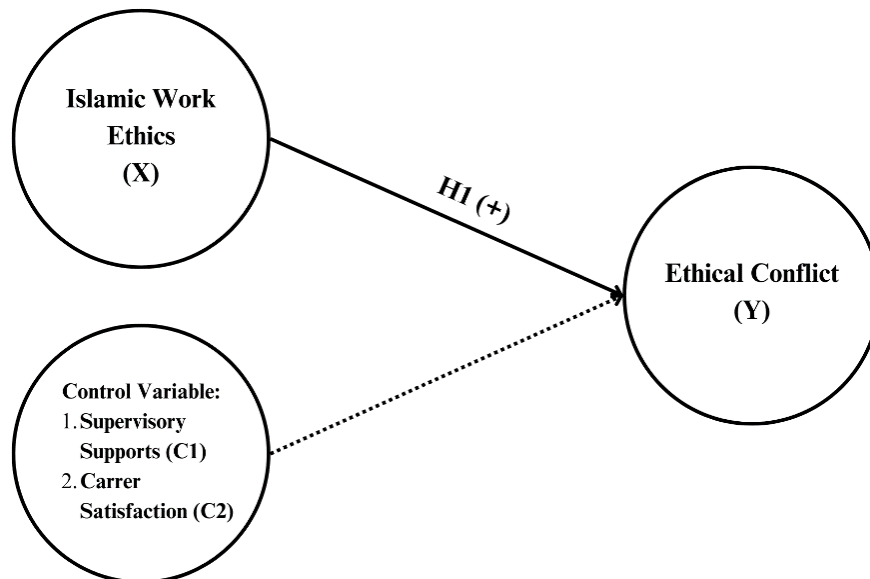
Hypothesis Development

The positive influence of IWE on ethical conflict may occur due to the tension between personal beliefs and professional demands often inconsistent with Islamic moral values. Islamic values are often overlooked in a work environment, prioritizing financial gain. Accountants who apply IWE will feel pressured when their superiors ask them to do things contrary to these principles, such as adjusting the accounts in the financial statements following their superiors' wishes. This mismatch between personal commitment to IWE and pressure to follow unethical practices can lead to ethical conflict. In addition, accountants who adhere to IWE tend to have a higher awareness of ethical issues in the workplace. They are more sensitive to practices that violate their ethical or religious principles, making it easier to recognize ethical dilemmas. Many companies operating within a secular, profit-driven framework indicate a need for more institutional support for IWE values. When accountants face an environment that does not support their commitment to religious values, they are more likely to experience ethical conflict. The absence of support from management or coworkers to practice Islamic ethics can increase the moral pressure accountants feel.

Based on the description above, the positive effect of IWE on ethical conflict can be predicted from the tension between accountants' ethical beliefs and the reality of the work environment. Thus, the hypotheses that can be formulated for this study are:

Hypothesis 1 = Implementing Islamic work ethics tends to drive ethical conflict in Muslim accountants.

FIGURE 1.
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



Source: Author's creation, 2024

METHOD

Sample and Data

This study involved 50 accountant respondents working in various sectors in Indonesia. We provide three criteria for respondent selection: working as an accountant (e.g. accounting, finance, public accountant, tax consultant, and auditor), working tenure of at least 2 years, and being Muslim. Respondents will fill out an online questionnaire that is distributed randomly. Respondents were collected using demographic and professional characteristics relevant to analyzing the relationship between Islamic Work Ethics (IWE) and ethical conflict in accounting. The respondents comprised 22 men (44%) and 28 women (56%). This proportion indicates a relatively balanced participation between male and female respondents, with the majority of respondents being female. Most respondents had a higher education background. Of the total sample, 48 people (96%) had a bachelor's or master's degree, while one person (2%) had a diploma's degree, and another person (2%) had completed a master's degree. This shows that most respondents have a fairly high level of education under the professional demands in the accounting field. Religiously, all respondents are Muslim, so it can be assumed that they understand and carry out ethical directives and guidelines under Islamic religious guidelines.

Variable Definition

Dependent Variable – Ethical Conflict

This study uses the dependent variable ethical conflict, whose indicators are adapted from (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2012), with some adjustments relevant to the accounting profession's context. Ethical conflict is a mismatch between behavioral expectations in the workplace and one's beliefs about what is considered right or wrong. This measurement scale uses a 1-7 Likert approach, with 1 strongly disagreeing and 7 strongly agreeing. This measurement is designed to capture the subjective experience of accountants in dealing with ethical pressure in the workplace. The higher the score respondents give to these statements, the greater the level of ethical conflict they feel. This provides an overview of accounting professionals' moral tension in carrying out their duties.

This study's measurement of ethical conflict consists of six statement items relevant to describing the ethical dilemmas that accountants may face. Respondents are asked to rate the extent to which they experience these conflicts in their daily work using a Likert scale. The statements cover aspects such as the feeling that the entity they work for does not support them ethically, the conflict between accounting standards and the values they consider correct, and the incompatibility between professional responsibilities as accountants and the directions of the entities they work for. In addition, ethical conflict is also measured through feelings that their values are not in line with employer policies or directives and feelings of discomfort when working in an environment with values that differ from their personal beliefs. Respondents were also asked to rate whether their field of accounting work often demands actions that make them feel morally uncomfortable.

Independent Variable – Islamic Work Ethics

This study uses IWE as an independent variable, which is measured based on an instrument developed by Khan et al., (2015); and Murtaza et al. (2016). IWE refers to a set of work values and principles derived from Islamic teachings, emphasizing the importance of ethics, dedication, honesty, and responsibility in carrying out work. These values include moral, spiritual, and social aspects that aim not only for personal well-being but also for the benefit of society. This measurement scale uses a 1-7 Likert approach, with 1 strongly disagreeing and 7 strongly agreeing. Through this measurement, this study aims to assess the level of application of IWE by respondents and how these values affect their professional behaviour, particularly concerning ethical conflicts they face in the workplace.

The IWE measure in this study consists of 17 statements designed to capture the extent to which respondents apply the principles of Islamic work ethics in their professional activities. Some key statements used include the view that laziness is a vice, dedication to work is a virtue, and good work benefits oneself and others. Principles such as fairness and generosity in the workplace are considered essential conditions for the well-being of society, and earning more than one's own needs is seen as contributing to the prosperity of society at large. In addition, IWE emphasizes that one should do the best job possible, that work is a means for personal development and building social relationships, and that life has no meaning without work.

It also includes the view that more leisure time is good for society, that human relationships in organizations must be upheld and encouraged, and that creative work is a source of happiness and achievement. Other values include the view that someone who works hard has a greater chance of getting ahead in life, work provides an opportunity to become independent, and successful people are those who meet deadlines in their work. In addition, IWE also underscores the

importance of consistently working hard to fulfil responsibilities and that the value of work is measured by the outcome and the intentions accompanying it.

Control Variables

In this study, Supervisory Support and Career Satisfaction are used as control variables to control the influence of external factors on the relationship between Islamic Work Ethics (IWE) and ethical conflict (J. A. Kang, 2010). By using these variables, this study can separate the direct effect of Islamic Work Ethics on ethical conflict from other factors that may affect the relationship, such as perceived support from managers and individual satisfaction with their careers.

Supervisory support is measured through three questions designed to evaluate the extent to which respondents feel support from their managers in achieving their career goals. The questions provided refer to previous research. Meanwhile, career satisfaction is measured through five questions focused on respondents' satisfaction with various aspects of their career progress, which also refers to previous research (H. J. (Annette) Kang et al., 2015).

In summary, the definition of variables can be seen in Table 1.

TABLE 1.
VARIABLE MEASURES

Variables	Measures	References
Islamic Work Ethics	Consists of 17 statement items	(Khan et al., 2015)
Ethical Conflicts	Consists of 6 question items. Adapted by the author so that it becomes a relevant question for accountants.	(Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2012)
Supervisory Supports	Consists of 3 question items	(H. J. (Annette) Kang et al., 2015)
Career Satisfaction	Consists of 5 question items	(H. J. (Annette) Kang et al., 2015)

Source: Author's creation, 2024

Empirical Model

This study uses the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) model to reduce the heteroscedasticity problem in the data analysis. This study uses STATA 17.0 software to run the dataset. Before conducting data analysis, we applied winsorization to the variables in the 0.01 and 0.99 percentiles to minimize the impact of extreme outliers (Tukey, 1992). This step was taken to ensure that the data used in the analysis was not distorted by extreme values that could affect the validity of the regression results. Data analysis technique procedures are carried out through several testing steps, including validity and reliability tests, descriptive statistics, classical assumption tests (normality and multicollinearity), Pearson correlation tests, and multiple linear regression tests. This series of data analysis procedures will be concluded at the end by matching the results that appear with the predetermined hypothesis testing criteria. The following regression equation model used in this study was designed to examine the effect of Islamic Work Ethics (IWE) on ethical conflict, taking into account control variables such as Supervisory Support and Career Satisfaction:

$$EC = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 IWE_i + \beta_2 SS_i + \beta_3 CS_i + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

Where:

EC : Ethical Conflicts

IWE : Islamic Work Ethics

SS : Supervisory Supports
 CS : Career Satisfaction
 α : Constant
 β : Coefficient
 ε : Error

RESULTS

Validity Test

The validity of a research questionnaire can be accepted through a test called the validity test. A question can be declared valid if the significance value exceeds the threshold. The acceptable threshold is the minimum correlation ($r > 0.3$), added with a significance value of 1% and 5% with valid strength from strong to weak, respectively. The following summary of the validity test results can be seen in Table 2:

TABLE 2.
VALIDITY TEST

Variable	Instrument	R
<i>Ethical Conflict (Y)</i>	EC1	0,89***
	EC2	0,91***
	EC3	0,95***
	EC4	0,90***
	EC5	0,91***
	EC6	0,92***
<i>Islamic Work Ethics (X)</i>	IWE1	0,34**
	IWE2	0,35**
	IWE3	0,38***
	IWE4	0,49***
	IWE5	0,42***
	IWE6	0,25
	IWE7	0,42***
	IWE8	0,55***
	IWE9	0,51***
	IWE10	0,50***
	IWE11	0,65***
	IWE12	0,55***
	IWE13	0,51***
	IWE14	0,32**
	IWE15	0,54***
	IWE16	0,66***
	IWE17	0,56***
<i>Supervisory Support (C1)</i>	SS1	0,86***
	SS2	0,91***
	SS3	0,69***
<i>Career Satisfaction (C2)</i>	CS1	0,78***

Variable	Instrument	R
	CS2	0,87***
	CS3	0,77***
	CS4	0,89***
	CS5	0,79***

Source: Author's creation, 2024

Based on the validity test results shown in **Table 2**, the following is an explanation for each variable: *First*, Ethical Conflict (Y), the validity test of the Ethical Conflict measurement instrument shows that all items (EC1 to EC6) have very high correlation coefficient (r) values, which range from 0.89 to 0.95. These correlation values are above 0.3, meaning all items are valid and can be used to measure Ethical Conflict. All correlations were significant at the $p < 0.01$ level.

Second, Islamic Work Ethics (X), the validity test results for the Islamic Work Ethics variable show that the instrument has a correlation coefficient (r) that varies, ranging from 0.25 to 0.66. We found one indicator item, IWE6, which has a value of $r = 0.25$. According to the validity rules, the indicator does not meet the minimum correlation limit ($r > 0.3$), so we must remove it from the regression process. The remaining items are all significant at the $p < 0.01$ level, except for items IWE1, IWE2, and IWE14, which are significant at the $p < 0.05$ level.

Third, Supervisory Support (C1), the instrument to measure Supervisory Support, shows an excellent correlation coefficient value, with r values ranging from 0.69 to 0.91. All items (SS1 to SS3) are valid and significant at the $p < 0.01$. *Fourth*, Career Satisfaction (C2), For the Career Satisfaction variable, all items (CS1 to CS5) also have high correlation coefficients, ranging from 0.79 to 0.89, indicating that all items are valid and significant at the $p < 0.01$ level.

Overall, the validity test results show that all instruments used in this study, both for the main variables of Islamic Work Ethics (except IWE6) and Ethical Conflict and the control variables, Supervisory Support and Career Satisfaction, are valid and suitable for further research.

Reliability Test

A reliability test can assess the internal consistency of a research questionnaire. The test was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. Generally, a Cronbach's Alpha value greater than 0.7 indicates that the instrument is reliable. Table 3 shows the following results.

TABLE 3.
RELIABILITY TEST

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Results
<i>Ethical Conflict</i> (Y)	0,960	Reliable
<i>Islamic Work Ethics</i> (X)	0,758	Reliable
<i>Supervisory Support</i> (C1)	0,760	Reliable
<i>Career Satisfaction</i> (C2)	0,870	Reliable

Source: Author's creation, 2024

Table 3. explains that the Ethical Conflict Variable has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.960, which is very high. This indicates that the instrument used to measure this variable has excellent reliability and strong internal consistency. The instrument is reliable. The Islamic Work Ethics variable obtained a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.758. This value indicates that this instrument is reliable and has good internal consistency. This value is above the minimum threshold of 0.7, so this variable is considered reliable.

The Supervisory Support variable has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.760, also above the 0.7 threshold. This indicates that the instrument used for this variable is reliable and can be trusted for research. The Cronbach's Alpha value for the Career Satisfaction variable is 0.870, which is quite high. This indicates that this instrument has excellent reliability and strong internal consistency, making it reliable in research.

Overall, the reliability test results show that all instruments used to measure the variables in this study (Ethical Conflict, Islamic Work Ethics, Supervisory Support, and Career Satisfaction) are reliable and can be relied upon to produce consistent data.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 4 presents the mean, median, minimum, and maximum values of the variables studied: Ethical Conflict as the dependent variable, Islamic Work Ethics as the independent variable, and Supervisory Support and Career Satisfaction as the control variables. This data provides an initial overview of the relationships and variations in the study.

TABLE 4.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Variable	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
<i>Ethical Conflict</i>	22,50	18,50	6,00	42,00
<i>Islamic Work Ethics</i>	93,44	94,00	76,00	112,00
<i>Supervisory Support</i>	16,90	18,00	3,00	21,00
<i>Career Satisfaction</i>	27,42	28,00	16,00	35,00

Source: Author's creation, 2024

Based on the results of descriptive statistics in Table 4, the Ethical Conflict variable has an average of 22.50 with a median of 18.50, a minimum value of 6.00, and a maximum value of 42.00. This shows considerable variation in the ethical conflict experienced by respondents, ranging from very low to very high. On the Islamic Work Ethics variable, the average achieved is 93.44 with a median of 94.00, while the minimum value is 76.00 and the maximum is 112.00. This indicates that most respondents have a relatively high Islamic work ethics.

Furthermore, for the Supervisory Support variable, the mean was 16.90 with a median of 18.00, a minimum value of 3.00, and a maximum of 21.00, reflecting the variation in the level of support respondents felt from their supervisors. As for the Career Satisfaction variable, the average career satisfaction of respondents was 27.42, with a median of 28.00, a minimum value of 16.00, and a maximum of 35.00. This shows that most respondents are satisfied with their careers, although there is some variation in the level of satisfaction. Overall, this descriptive data provides a preliminary picture of the differences in work ethics experience, ethical conflict, supervisory support, and career satisfaction among respondents.

Classical Assumption

As a prerequisite in running the regression test, we conducted a classical assumption test consisting of normality and multicollinearity. The normality test uses the skewness-kurtosis residual method, and the criteria used are accepted if the p-value is more than 0.05. The residual data is indicated to be normal. Also, the multicollinearity test uses the VIF method by looking at the variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance values as a decision-making benchmark. The criterion is accepted if the VIF value is less than 10 and the tolerance value is more than 0.1.

TABLE 5.
NORMALITY TEST (SKEWNESS-KURTOSIS RESIDUAL)

Variable	Obs	Pr(skewness)	Pr(kurtosis)	Joint	
				Adj chi2(2)	P value
residu	50	0,315	0,047	4,88	0,08

Source: Author's creation, 2024

Table 5. presents the results that indicate that the data is normal. This result can be concluded based on the residual p-value above the minimum criterion of 0.05 or 5%. The data displayed is 0.30, which means it is greater than 0.05. So, the data in this study are normally distributed.

TABLE 6.
MULTICOLLINEARITY TEST (VIF)

Variable	Collinearity statistics	
	VIF	Tolerance
<i>Islamic Work Ethics</i>	1,55	0,645
<i>Supervisory Support</i>	1,39	0,717
<i>Career Satisfaction</i>	1,21	0,827

Source: Author's creation, 2024

Table 6 also illustrates that the data does not have a multicollinearity problem. The three variables tested showed VIF values below 10 and tolerance values above 0.1, proving these results.

Pearson Correlation

The Pearson correlation test is a method used to measure how strong the relationship is between two variables separately without considering the influence of other variables. The results of the Pearson correlation test are presented by the author in Table 5 below:

TABLE 7.
PEARSON CORRELATION

	[1]	[2]	[2]	[3]
[1] <i>Ethical Conflict</i>	1,000			
[2] <i>Islamic Work Ethics</i>	0,277* (0,051)	1,000		
[3] <i>Supervisory Support</i>	-0,102 (0,480)	0,528*** (0,000)	1,000	
[4] <i>Career Satisfaction</i>	0,374*** (0,007)	0,410*** (0,003)	0,274* (0,054)	1,000

p-values in parentheses, * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 7 shows the results of the Pearson correlation between the variables Ethical Conflict, Islamic Work Ethics (IWE), Supervisory Support, and Career Satisfaction. The results of this analysis show several significant relationships between variables. First, Islamic Work Ethics and Ethical Conflict have a weak but significant positive relationship (coef = 0.277). This indicates that the stronger the application of Islamic work ethics in the workplace, there is a small tendency for ethical conflict to increase, although it is not so strong.

Furthermore, the relationship between Supervisory Support and Ethical Conflict is insignificant (coef = -0.102), which indicates that support from superiors does not significantly influence the emergence of ethical conflict. On the other hand, Career Satisfaction showed a significant positive relationship with Ethical Conflict (coefficient = 0.374), which means that the more satisfied an employee is in his/her career, the higher the likelihood of ethical conflict. This may reflect the complex dynamics in the relationship between career satisfaction and perceptions of ethics in the workplace.

Overall, this table's results indicate the importance of Islamic Work Ethics in enhancing employer support and career satisfaction, both of which can contribute to the dynamics of ethical conflict in the workplace.

Main Result (Regression Test)

This test can be considered the most important element in the entire research because the hypotheses formulated will be tested empirically through this test. In other words, this regression test is the basis for knowing whether a significant effect exists between the variables studied. The results of this test will provide evidence of whether the hypothesized theory or prediction can be accepted or rejected. For more details, the complete test results can be seen in Table 6 below:

TABLE 8.
REGRESSION TEST

	<i>Ethical Conflict</i>
<i>Islamic Work Ethics</i>	0,453** (2,12)
<i>Supervisory Support</i>	-1,240** (-2,48)
<i>Career Satisfaction</i>	0,877** (2,43)
_cons	-22,869 (-1,39)
r ²	0,257
Adjusted r ²	0,209
N	50

p-values in parentheses, * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 8 presents the results of linear regression tests that measure the effect of Islamic Work Ethics, Supervisory Support, and Career Satisfaction on Ethical Conflict. Based on the regression results, Islamic Work Ethics has a coefficient of 0.453, which shows a positive and significant effect ($p < 0.05$). This means that the higher the application of Islamic work ethics, the greater the likelihood of ethical conflict, with each unit increase in Islamic Work Ethics increasing ethical conflict by 0.453.

Meanwhile, Supervisory Support negatively influences Ethical Conflict with a coefficient of -1.240, which is also significant ($p < 0.05$). This means that the greater the support from supervisors, the less likely ethical conflicts will occur. Every one-unit increase in support from supervisors reduces ethical conflict by 1.240. In addition, Career Satisfaction has a positive coefficient of 0.877 ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the higher the career satisfaction, the greater the likelihood of ethical conflict. Every one-unit increase in career satisfaction will increase ethical conflicts by 0.877.

The r^2 value of 0.257 indicates that these three independent variables can explain about 25.7% of the variation in Ethical Conflict. In contrast, the Adjusted r^2 of 0.209 shows the adjustment considering the number of predictor variables and sample size. With 50 research samples, these results indicate that Islamic Work Ethics, supervisor support, and career satisfaction significantly contribute to the variation in ethical conflict in the workplace.

DISCUSSIONS

Islamic work ethics influence ethical conflict. This study found a significant positive causality relationship between the two variables, proven by the regression test results, which raised the significance value to 0.05.

This study's results align with the statements conveyed in the previous literature by (Clercq et al., 2019) that individuals who actively apply Islamic work ethics will be more sensitive to situations that can cause conflict. This means that the individual will subconsciously feel something contradictory between the values they believe in and the mandate they have to do. This event is enough to logicalize the causal relationship in both variables. The consistency of the results in this study paves the way for new contributions to the understanding of society and academics regarding the importance of adopting employee work systems, in this case, accountants who refer to Islamic work ethics, especially the demographic facts in these organizations where Muslims are the majority (Aflah et al., 2021; Tarab, 2024).

Accountants may face situations where accounting practices commonly applied in business are not fully aligned with Islamic ethical values (Trihatmoko et al., 2024). Pressure to manipulate financial statements can create public confusion, so many fall into the trap of cosmeticizing financial statements. In addition, pressure to recognize transactions that should not be recognized results in comorbid problems inherent in the agency, making the organization's succession lose guidance because the transaction history does not match the reality (Baskaran et al., 2020). There are various other forms of dishonesty in accounting, which is a reality (Anggria & Trisnarningsih, 2023; Hermawan & Kokthunarina, 2019; Limajatini et al., 2019; Roiston & Harymawan, 2022).. The incompatibility of Islamic work ethics with the reality of accountant work is a starting point for enacting cognitive dissonance theory, resulting in inner discomfort for accountants. They realize the difference between what Islamic ethical values expect and the actions taken in their work (Amilin, 2016).

Accountants need to reduce ethical conflicts, and accountants can use various strategies. These could include attempts to justify or rationalize their actions, seek consistency between Islamic values and accounting practices, or even seek alternative courses that align with Islamic ethical values. Efforts that can reduce ethical conflicts perceived by employees are to build a positive ethical climate (Fichter, 2018). The method occurred by creating work values that accommodate the needs of accountants, socializing these values, supervising and accustoming behaviour in line with these values, and giving appreciation to employees who act ethically following agreed values (Kashif et al., 2015).

Not only accountants companies need to act as facilitators in fulfilling accountants' ethical needs. Companies can take tactical steps such as integrating work patterns with Islamic values embraced by their accountants (Bahador & Haider, 2015). In addition, organizing a reporting mechanism and specific whistleblowing system to accommodate the values of accountants is

needed (Santos & Larasati, 2025). Moreover, most importantly, the company, through the director, needs to be a moral compass and role model for its employees; the leadership needs to uphold ethics, both accounting ethics and Islamic work ethics (Wang et al., 2024). This kind of leadership is named organizational ethical leadership (Bakar & Connaughton, 2023). These things are done to create a work climate with integrity and remain following the teachings of Islam.

Another thing that organizations can strive for is to commit to controlling the ethical conflicts that plague their accountants (Wong et al., 2019). Organizational commitment is shown by maintaining a strong belief and acceptance of organizational goals and values, being willing to exert great effort, and having a strong desire to remain a member of an organization highly dedicated to organizational progress (Martínez et al., 2021). The organization must show evidence of this commitment being fulfilled by clarifying organizational values (Joseph et al., 2023), open dialogue and communication with employees, especially accountants (Koleva et al., 2023), revising revisions to organizational policies, and consulting with religious leaders (Darnell & Benton Parish, 2023).

Two remaining control variables provide results that are also consistent with previous research. Career satisfaction and supervisory support are two important things in anticipating ethical conflict in an accountant. In line with what (J. A. Kang, 2010) explains, an employee who is satisfied with his career and gets helpful support from his supervisor will find it easier to handle ethical conflicts himself. However, the results on career satisfaction do not provide harmonious results. Career satisfaction may mean that an employee has reached the upper limit of what employees expect; career satisfaction will result in higher levels of emotional exhaustion and lower career fulfilment (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2012).

This research also has practical implications aimed at individual accountants themselves. Accountants need to have personal awareness of the values they believe have the potential for conflict in their work and mitigate them by increasing self-education on good and relevant ethics in their organization. The ability to manage ethical conflicts also needs to be trained over time. Experience will be the best teacher for both accountants in dealing with the ethical turmoil that always looms over them (T. Zhang et al., 2015).

CONCLUSION

The research findings show that Islamic work ethics positively affects ethical conflict experienced by accountants in Indonesia. The findings of this study are relevant to the accounting profession as they provide an in-depth understanding of how Islamic work ethics values can influence ethical practices and decisions in the accounting context. This research can contribute to the literature on Islamic Ethics by enriching the understanding of how Islamic ethical values can be applied in business and accounting. In an increasingly globalized business environment, this research is also relevant to explore the diversity of ethical values in the global business context and how accountants can maintain their ethical integrity in cross-cultural situations. Practically, this study would advise companies to integrate company work patterns with Islamic values and create reporting mechanisms to accommodate Islamic values. The director needs to be a moral compass for their employees.

However, it is necessary to recognize certain limitations in this study, such as the limited number of research samples mostly focused on the province of East Java. In addition, the next

researcher can refine this research by looking at the case more deeply. For example, it can include the motives of the organization that takes action, thus making its accountants experience ethical conflict. Including controlling factors for ethical conflict to see the impact of moderation weakening, such as the spiritual intelligence of the employee (Supriyanto & Ekowati, 2020) and organizational commitment (Purnomo, 2022), so that it can provide evidence that certain variables can weaken the effect of Islamic work ethics on ethical conflict. As well as trying newer measurements that can increase relevance in the current situation.

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