

# Roles of Islamic Business Ethics in the Formation of Internal Organisational Culture: A Qualitative Approach of Muslims' SMEs in the UK

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## ABSTRACT

This research aims to explore the elements of Islamic business ethics and the roles which shape particular types of organisational culture amongst Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) that are owned and/or managed by Muslims in the UK. A qualitative approach has been adopted, beginning with a conceptual and theoretical model reflecting the authors' research methodology approach. Subsequently, a set of in-depth, semi-structured interviews was conducted. The findings of the study reveal that elements of Islamic business ethics contribute widely to shaping a particular type of organisational culture amongst Muslim SMEs in the UK. Moreover, on the one hand, mercenary type of organisational culture is the dominant culture amongst Muslim SMEs in the UK. On the other hand, within a communal type of organisational culture, people are very sociable and concerned about each other, which will be reflected on the organisation's fine performance. The value of this research is derived from its ability to grasp the formation and impact of organisational culture which is one of the main subjects in business management and organisation studies. The research presents various aspects and features of internal organisational culture formation, impact and possibility to change.

**Keywords:** SMEs, Islamic business ethics, Organisational culture.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Organisational culture has been involved in numerous studies related to organisational performance and change. The influence of an organisational culture type on an organisation's strategies was demonstrated and the most effective organisational culture on a firm's performance was examined, in addition to the impact of organisational culture on corporate strategies in manufacturing organisations. [Abdul \*et al.\* \(2004\)](#) examined the impact of specific types of organisational culture on the business owner's attitude towards change within firms. Arguably, types of organisational culture have a significant impact on the internal and external performance of the firm too. In this regard, [Fard \*et al.\* \(2009\)](#) reported significant relationships between types of organisational culture and learning systems within the organisation. The [Goffee and Jones \(2003\)](#) organisational culture matrix has been adopted in this research. The matrix divided organisational culture into four types, based on sociability and solidarity dimensions. These four types are: communal, networked, fragmented and mercenary.

The process of identifying the research population, which focuses on Muslim SMEs in the UK, raised further questions related to the in-depth beliefs and norms of the research's sample and respondents. These beliefs and norms are considered as parts of the organisational culture components. Thus, an Islamic business ethics term has been involved in the research. From an Islamic cultural point of view, Islamic Law is an integrated system that covers all related issues and concerns with a Muslim's life. Modern business is influenced by the ethics of owners and management groups whose "moral constitution" shapes their business contribution in both local and international economies.

Therefore, the main question of the research has been clarified and determined as "what are the influences of Islamic business ethics on an organisation to shape a particular type of organisational culture?" Thus, the aim of the research is to discover the impact of Islamic business ethics in shaping a particular organisational culture amongst Muslim SMEs in the UK context. This aim is attainable by achieving the following objectives: 1. To develop an understanding of factors and elements of Islamic business ethics and principles. 2. To illustrate the main elements and components of organisational culture. 3. To discover the impact of Islamic business ethics on forming a particular organisational culture type. 4. To add an original contribution to the literature concerned with Islamic business ethics influences in shaping a particular organisational culture.

Based on the research direction, the interpretivism research philosophy with qualitative measures has been chosen. The logic behind the choice is that the elements of practical Islamic business ethics and their impact on shaping particular types of organisational culture have not been previously undertaken. The research population is carefully identified as Muslim owners or managers of SMEs located in the UK amongst all kinds of industry. The research population criteria have been determined to eliminate unforeseen factors that might need further investigation. 15 in-depth interviews were conducted with Muslim owners or managers of SMEs in the UK. This stage is expected to produce an exploration of knowledge concerning elements of Islamic business ethics and their impact on shaping particular types of organisational culture.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In literature, a number of authors have examined the influence of the business owner's or employees' religion on their business (e.g. [Brickley \*et al.\*, 2002](#); [Cavanagh and Bandsuch, 2002](#)). However, the principal influence is based on a belief in business ethics, which is derived from individual personal belief and religion (e.g. [Zinbarg \(2001\)](#)).

Thus, a particular thought and assumption are raised surrounding the impact of Islamic business ethics on shaping a particular organisational culture type, especially when it is recognised that Islam has an impact on the

whole of a Muslim's life. This is obvious in Muslim countries, but how about Muslim owners or managers within non-Muslim countries? The latter point was the main trigger of the motivation for this research and thus to add a new contribution to the field of business ethics' impact on organisational culture.

Accordingly, the following sections cover the theoretical literature related to the main concepts of the research. The first section of literature review consists of organisational culture theory and practical anticipations from different perspectives. Mainly, it includes the concept of organisational culture definitions, historical foundations, practical theories and critical assessments of most of the organisational culture literature. The second and the third sections present business ethics elements from different perspectives, especially from the Islamic point of view. However, the two sections raise several questions about the impact of Islamic business ethics on shaping particular types of organisational culture, which is also considered as part of the research questions. The final section of the literature review presents up-to-date empirical research and studies about the impact of organisational culture on a firm's performance.

## **2.1. Organisational Culture**

Recently, there has been a growing number of researches in organisational culture. The majority of this research adopts specific models of organisational culture types, to measure its impact on a particular aspect of an organisational performance. For example, some authors investigated the organisational culture type influences on manufacturing strategy (Fang and Wang, 2006) on attitudes towards organisational change (Abdul *et al.*, 2004) on an organisation's competences (Zhang and Liu, 2006) and on organisational trust and commitment strengths (Mathew and Ogbonna, 2009). Much of this research concluded that organisational culture has an impact on different aspects of the organisation and if there is a necessity to change its organisational culture, senior managers should think, analyse, evaluate and carefully plan each step.

### **2.1.1. Organisational Culture Concept and Definition**

The concept of organisational culture is linked to several management themes. Schein (1990) argued that the concept itself has no clear measurement, and thus organisations might find it difficult to interpret their internal culture to establish how to benefit from the various theories of an organisation's behaviours. Hatch and Schultz (1997) noted that organisational culture involves visible and invisible criteria that reflect a company's identity and character through many aspects, such as the company's building, its management style and its level of sociability. Recently, the concept of organisational culture was associated with the values and ideology of an organisation's management style, along with several components that create and define the specific internal culture (Zammuto *et al.*, 2000). Others refer to organisational failure to the nature of the internal culture, which is mostly difficult to change (Cameron and Quinn, 2006). Therefore, current organisational culture studies concentrate on developing an instrument that measures internal organisational culture attributes and relevant factors.

The term 'organisational culture' is given to the roles of internal practices within an organisation and involves various components. Based on the nature of these components, the definitions of organisational culture are varied. As a result of reviewing most organisational culture definitions, there is no single, widely accepted definition for organisational culture. Hofstede (2001) defines organisational culture as "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one organisation from another". He considers organisational culture as a unique character of an organisation's employees' beliefs, values and assumptions and to behave accordingly. This definition has been simplified by Martin (2002) when identifying organisational culture as a mix of long term understanding of how to do work which consists of several demonstrations, and which could be visible, such as work learning

procedures and clothing, or invisible, such as norms and beliefs. In general, most of the organisational culture definitions consist of at least one of the two main organisational culture components. These two are cognitive components such as assumption, beliefs, and values (e.g. Marguardt (2002)) and behavioural components, or observable aspects, such as daily practice, artifacts and customs (e.g. Schein (1990)). Therefore, organisational culture is created by an organisation's members, reflecting their beliefs, values, norms and assumptions, to help them with daily work and routines through creating unofficial rules of their behaviour, which can be transferred to the next generation.

### 2.1.2. The Organisation's Character

The foundation of organisational culture has been argued in many cases that form a particular internal organisational culture. Winklhofer *et al.* (2006) configured that organisational culture sources can be determined through four elements that contribute significantly to shaping a particular organisational culture. These elements are:

**An artefact** is the obvious factor that can be noticed and visualised. These artefacts are like the company buildings, employee's uniforms, its internal policies, the company's name and logo, its symbols or rituals. These are considered as an external layer of the organisational culture (Schein, 1990). Other researchers explained the artifact factor in more detail and went further to include even internal procedures of managing paperwork, or working hours (Fairfield-Sonn, 2001). These artifacts are like the company buildings, employee's uniforms, its internal policies, the company's name and logo, its symbols or rituals.

Norms are the next layer of organisational culture components. Sometimes, norms are anticipated totally, or partially, as part of the culture of artifacts (Trompenaars, 1995). It has been claimed that norms are the hidden face of unintentional behaviour. Either unintentional or intentional behaviour, norms are usually considered as the main motivation and encouraging aspects of internal behaviours within an organisation.

Values and beliefs are referred to as in-depth meanings of what people consider things to be true and what things they consider as wrong. Values are usually linked to outstanding principles that have been created a long time ago. According to Skerlavaj *et al.* (2010) values are a collection of standards and what people believe is true, which by time are centralised and converted to behaviours. Furthermore, values are justifiable behaviours that reflect the organisation's identity and image. Thus, value should be circulated and shared, otherwise, it has no significance when it is kept and owned by individual and to make sense.

Basic assumptions are assessed as the inner layer of organisational culture and as the deepest component that cannot be felt. Schein (2004) considers basic assumptions to be "taken for granted that someone who does not hold them is viewed as a foreigner or crazy and automatically dismissed". When an assumption has turned into behaviour, it is very difficult to change. Hence, a basic assumption is about what people experience or hear from others, which can influence people around the organisation as well. The more incidences that occur, the stronger the assumptions will remain and will be difficult to change, which also can be cumulative over time.

### 2.1.3. Organisational Culture Types

Organisational culture as a matter of norms and behaviour is described wildly in the literature. There are much research and many studies that have been conducted to examine the impact of organisational culture on the different aspects of an organisation. Each research has adopted a certain framework for organisational culture, which has been developed previously and usually involves theory and measurement instruments.

One of the most usable and adopted organisational culture theories is the theory and model that was addressed by Goffee and Jones (2003) which categorise organisational culture into four main types based on two dimensions: Sociability and Solidarity. The Sociability Dimension is explained as friendship activities that inspire personal ideas and thought. People within an organisation share their feelings for, and experiences of, personal improvement, their activities in personal relationships and their concern for each other. The Solidarity Dimension is explained as a good style of concentration on an organisation's goals and missions and pays attention to achieve the organisation's commitment plans and growth. Organisations with a solidarity approach are committed to pursuing organisational goals regardless of social activities that are normally associated with people who work for an organisation and never accept a low performance. According to these two dimensions, Goffee and Jones (2003) separated organisational culture into four styles or types. The matrix shows cross performance between sociability and solidarity to explain the nature of organisational culture:

- **Communal:** assigned to high sociability and high performance of solidarity. This type of culture focuses on the organisation's strategies and goals and delivers high performance to increase organisational growth. At the same time, people are very sociable and close to each other. This kind of culture can be found in new and fast motivated companies.
- **Networked:** assigned to high sociability and low performance of solidarity. People in this kind of organisational culture are very sociable and concerned with helping each other. However, they are less enthusiastic to achieve organisation goals.
- **Mercenary:** assigned to low sociability and high performance of solidarity. This type focuses on an organisation's goals and its strategies to gain quick growth and dominate the market. Everyone in this kind of organisational culture has no time for social activities. In addition, the top managers moderate social relationships within the company.
- **Fragmented:** assigned to low sociability and low performance of solidarity. There is no specific goal of where this kind of organisation would go in future due to the employees' low performance. Relationships between employees fluctuate.

#### 2.1.4. Organisational Culture Assessment

Ways of assessing organisational culture are hotly debated. Whether the assessment instruments are qualitative or quantitative, much depends on the researcher's perspective and their purpose for measuring organisational culture (Glendon and Stanton, 2000). There are two schemes for assessing organisational culture:

1. **The typological scheme** which is widely used where organisational culture is assigned to one of the different types of culture despite how many types of the culture there are. One of the most common typological and quantitative instruments of organisational culture assessment is that presented by Cooke and Lafferty (1983) which is called "Organisational Culture Inventory". It has been recommend and used for different purposes such as, to evaluate and manage organisational change, to simplify alliances and mergers strategies and, to manage and control the procedure of sharing values across several units.
2. **The dimensional scheme**, which allocates an organisation to one of the cross dimension matrix (Scott *et al.*, 2003). Essentially, one of the most simple and integrated dimensional organisational culture matrixes is the "Double S Cube" matrix which was obtained by Goffee and Jones (2003) and has been used extensively by researchers or organisations to assess organisational culture.

## 2.2. Business Ethics

Components of organisational culture included individuals' beliefs and norms. These beliefs and norms originate and are derived from various sources, mainly from religion, which is considered in the literature as a significant motivation to standardise ethical behaviours. Thus, clarifying business ethics and its relevant impact on current economic and business is crucial to developing a better understanding of business ethics contributions when forming a particular organisational culture, especially amongst Muslim business owners where religion has a strong impact on their entire life.

### 2.2.1. The Impact of Religious Principles on Business Ethics

While authors such as Vitell *et al.* (2007) argued that religion has little impact on business in general and business has got only one target and that is "Business is business", on the other hand, authors such as Brickley *et al.* (2002); Sims and Gegez (2004) and Salvador and Folger (2009) have stressed the importance of business ethics involvement within business transactions – which are mostly derived from religion – in recent times. Empirically, the impact of religious values on business has not yet been fairly assessed and there is no clear evidence that describes a religion's values and practices in business.

Krueger (1994) raised a controversial question about religious involvement and its contribution to modern businesses as: "*can religion's ethics make a contribution to business ethics in pluralistic and secular contexts in the way that philosophical ethics make a contribution?*" Krueger (1994) "Keeping the Faith at Work: The Christian in the Workplace" has resulted in a substantial debate on the role of religion in business ethics. He made remarkable efforts to prove that people can run a better business whilst keeping their Christian faith. Cavanagh and Bandsuch (2002) asserted that religious workers can bring moral habits to their organisation that enhances the organisation's general integrity and also lead to job satisfaction.

Earlier, Smith and Oakley (1996) indicated the impact of religious people's beliefs on business decision making. The research has been applied to a number of Business School students who had studied at least one ethical module. They found that students, who reported themselves as religious, are less accepting of doubtful behaviour. A more recent study conducted by Longenecker *et al.* (2004) examined the impact of religious commitment on ethical practice in business. They found that "some religious values improve moral judgments on at least some types of ethical issues". Therefore, people who are ascribed to religious practitioners are not likely to accept doubtful behaviour or action within their business, and their ethical behaviour improves the general organisation's business ethics awareness and practice as well.

When the word "religion" comes into literature, the main three perspectives that are usually addressed are Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. As mentioned above, the origin of business ethics are driven by religious principles, and each of these three religions has a solid base and source. For the context of this study, attention is paid to Islamic business ethics.

### 2.2.2. Significant Business Ethics in Organisational Culture

Authors like Wotruba *et al.* (2001) and Vitell and Singhapakdi (2008) have conducted researches about the impact of institutionalising ethics on an organisational culture and they assumed that organisational culture should support ethical codes within an organisation, and managers should enforce organisational ethical practices. The reason behind many of the studies on facilitating organisational culture is to understand the individual's behaviours – which usually consist of ethical and unethical behaviours - and an organisation's norms of controlling internal performance. Organisational culture involves a number of functions that affect organisational ethics performance.

An understanding of what makes up an organisation's culture and how it is created, sustained and learned will enhance one's ability to explain, predict and manage the behaviour of people at work.

On the other hand, some researchers changed the direction of its impact and investigated how organisational culture can enhance ethical practices within organisations. As mentioned earlier, organisational culture involves various elements that start from deep and invisible elements moving to the most visible elements. Corporate and individuals' values are significant components of organisational culture and consist of organisational ethics and moral values. Thus, a company's ethics become vital components of the organisational culture and provide ethical codes to judge right and wrong behaviours.

### 2.3. Business Ethics from Islamic Perspective

Islamic law and its regulations largely influence all Muslims' lives and activities, those that are considered as normal activities, or those related to business. Uddin (2003) claimed that "there is no separation between you as a person and the business you represent or conduct in the Islamic world, business is not only business". Therefore, within the Muslim world, Muslim business owners must comply with Islamic ethics and sustain God's instructions as mentioned in the Quran.

Business ethics are declared in many places in the Holy Quran and Sunnah. In terms of doing business based on Islamic Culture, there are three elements of Islamic equality in business. **First:** "unity" which concerns the belief in one God and all people are equal and to be treated in an equivalent way through cooperation and opportunities. **Second** "justice" which refers to tax contributions (Zakah) giving to those who are in need. **Third:** "trusteeship" which leads to sustainable improvement where leaders manage resources and people's efforts fairly.

As mentioned above, there are many literatures covering Islamic business ethics. Authors like Quddus *et al.* (2005); Wilson (2006) and Ahmad (2011) explain business ethics from an Islamic perspective, however, the majority of these kinds of literature are descriptive and explanatory. Nevertheless, there is some literature that mentions the determination of Islamic business ethics impact and its implementation on Muslim enterprises (e.g. (Graafland *et al.*, 2006; Uygur, 2009; Bin-Shamsudin *et al.*, 2010)). Quddus *et al.* (2005) compared a sum of business ethics from the perspectives of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. From the Islamic perspective, they concluded the following main business ethics:

- 1- Bribery: giving or receiving a bribe is totally prohibited due to its corrupt results upon an individual and social justice;
- 2- Fraud and Cheating: the government and authorities charge people who commit any kind of fraud or cheating. However, in case the authority fails to prove the fraud commitment, there will be no accusation. In the Quran, fraud and cheating are considered mass corruption either individually or socially and they are being assigned as major sins.
- 3- Discrimination: all people are equal and no-one would be given benefits over the other favours.
- 4- Justice: the great mission of the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) is to broaden justice all over the world for peace and honesty.

Moreover, Zainul *et al.* (2004) summarised seller or producer characteristics in Islam. Also, major business principles in Islam is gathered from Al-Bukhari – the narrative book of the prophet Mohammed (PBUH). Practically, there has been little research conducted on the Islamic business ethics impact on businesses or in the field of work. However, some researchers have examined general business ethics impact on businesses. Arslan (2001) examined Weber's Protestant Work Ethics (PWE) – the characteristics and orientation of work ethics amongst Protestants, Catholics and Muslim managers in Britain, Ireland and Turkey. He found that Muslims in

Turkey attained higher levels of PWE when compared to Protestants and Catholics. Another research conducted by Graafland *et al.* (2006) examined the influence of the Islamic religion on the level of Socially Responsible Business Conduct (SRBC). They have assumed that Islamic business ethics are guided by Islamic religion principles. They found that Islamic principles support and encourage business to be widely involved in SRBC. On the other hand, Uygur (2009) investigated what was called “Islamic work ethics” values impact on Turkish entrepreneurs, which was relatively structured according to Weber’s Protestant Work Ethic theory. He found that the concept of Islamic work ethic has no significant impact on entrepreneurs or enterprises. Nevertheless, Turkish entrepreneurs are influenced by something called “Anatolian” Turkish culture, which is a mix of cultures shaped by local and Islamic principles.

A study by Bin-Shamsudin *et al.* (2010) examined the same ethical concept "Islamic work ethics" impact on the relationships between association marketing and customer satisfaction. The main concern was whether Islamic work ethics would have an impact during the process of marketing association that leads to customer satisfaction. They found that "relationship marketing has a significant relationship to customer satisfaction and the practice of Islamic work ethic increases the significance level of the relationship between relationship marketing and customer satisfaction".

Moreover, a more recent research performed by Zulfikar (2012) examined the influence of Protestant work ethic characteristics upon Protestants, non-Protestants, Muslims, Catholics and others businessmen in the US. Of the five dimensions of (PWE), Muslims scored a higher level of work and success dimension, internal location control dimension, negative attitude towards leisure dimension and saving time and money dimensions, whilst Muslims reported insignificantly to work as an end in itself dimension of PWE when compared to the others. Specifically, the concept of Islamic work ethics or Islamic business ethics gains its principles from Islamic ethics that originated from the two main sources of Islamic Law, the Holy Quran and Sunnah. Muslims believe in ethical works as a worshipping practice and through ethical work practices, people sustain and build the earth where there is a maintaining balance between the individual’s needs and social needs, which must be considered by ethical work.

### 3. RESEARCH GAP

By reviewing previous literature, it has been concluded that there is a gap in the theory of business ethics role in the formation of organisational culture amongst SMEs in the UK which is owned by Muslims. Organisational culture types and characters are presented from many different approaches (Martin, 2002; Fey and Denison, 2003). Moreover, the literature concerning the impact of business ethics, especially Islamic business ethics on various aspects of the organisation are reviewed (e.g. Arslan (2001)). Furthermore, previous literature about the impact of organisational culture on various aspects of the organisation are also reviewed (Abdul *et al.*, 2004; Den-Hartog and Verburg, 2004; Fang and Wang, 2006; Zhang and Liu, 2006; Fard *et al.*, 2009; Mathew and Ogbonna, 2009). However, none of this literature focuses on Islamic business ethics roles in shaping particular types of organisational culture.

Thus, as mentioned earlier, the aim of this research has been determined to discover the impact of Islamic business ethics on shaping particular types of organisational culture.

### 4. METHODOLOGY

The main approach of this research is qualitative. This is because there is a substantial part of the research that was not previously covered in the literature. Applied qualitative methods are used to theorise this part. The methodology adopts the interpretivism philosophy. In-depth, semi-structured and face-to-face interviews have been

used. 15 in-depth interviews took place. A list of direct and indirect questions was obtained based on interview preparation procedures suggested by [Mason \(2002\)](#); [Lancaster \(2005\)](#) and [Creswell and Plano-Clark \(2007\)](#). The process of planning and preparing for in-depth interviews presented by [Mason \(2002\)](#) was adopted in this research. One of the main characteristics of a semi-structured interview is the free dual conversation between interviewer and interviewee. This style of interview allows the interviewer to ask questions that are not prepared prior to the interview and are likely to be raised during the interview.

The research population criteria are assigned to 1. Muslims, 2. Who own or manage a small or medium enterprise and 3. Are located in the UK. Initially, a list of suggested participants was obtained with the help of the Muslim Community all over the UK. The list included more than 30 potential participants who were applicable for the research population and sample criteria. All potential participants were contacted via telephone and referral document was addressed to obtain their acceptance to participate in this research. Out of more than 30 individuals, 22 individuals initially agreed to participate. Afterward, a brief of the research and interview style was sent to them in order to prepare for the in-depth interview. 7 individuals out of 22 declined to continue with the process of the interview for unknown reasons. Finally, we managed to contact 15 individuals across the UK. There were 8 located in Birmingham, 2 in Manchester, 2 in Sheffield, 1 in Nottingham, 1 in Coventry City and 1 in Loughborough. Prior to starting the in-depth interview, a consent letter, which had been previously prepared and approved by the University of Birmingham Research Ethical Committee was given to each participant to read and sign before continuing. All interviews were conducted at the interviewees' places in a convenient atmosphere where a tape recorder was used to document the conversation and narrative story. All interviews were conducted at the interviewees' places in a convenient atmosphere where a tape recorder was used to document the conversation and narrative story. The main language of the conversation in English. But, in some cases where interviewees preferred to use their mother tongue, there were three interviews conducted in Arabic.

Three steps have been applied to validate the interviewers' findings: 1. review and reassess the process of data collection and analysis from the beginning of the process to interpretation of the findings; 2. review all interview transcripts to maintain and minimise any discrepancies or misunderstandings and 3. discuss interview data findings with relevant people who are applying for research population criteria. In this case, we expect to validate our findings and establish a theory of Islamic business ethics impact on shaping particular types of organisational culture. In terms of verifying interview data's reliability, a specific protocol for collecting and analysing data is applied that consists of guidelines to be followed in order to complete interview data collection and analysis. Whenever the interview protocol has been checked carefully, any future researcher can follow it and gain similar results.

## 5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

At the beginning of each interview, there was a list of direct checking questions. The reason for this list is to determine the interviewee's type of organisational culture. As has been discussed in the methodology section, this a mandatory step to categorise qualitative evidence based on each type of organisational culture. Based on [Goffee and Jones \(2003\)](#) organisational culture type model, there were 23 items that measured types of organisational culture according to the level of sociability and level of solidarity.

Through qualitative analysis, it has been found that there are four main practical elements of Islamic business ethics. These are personal perceptions, individual morality, trust relationship and self-accountability. Each element of Islamic business ethics was analysed from the interviewee's type of organisational culture point of view.

**The Muslim Owner or Manager's Personal Perceptions:** as for the communal organisational culture type interviewees, it is really obvious that Muslim business owners or managers have an influence on the employees through their personality. They create passion in what business is about and keep reminding them to be a good representative of the business. These influences create a sort of unofficial agreement of what owners are looking for in the long run to enhance businesses. Within a networked organisation, the impact of the owner's or manager's personal perceptions is obvious. People within this type of culture share most of their values with each other. Individuality and personality are much more embedded in this kind of culture. Muslim owners or managers can maintain their businesses' environment for achieving certain planned objectives. Some of the interviewees see themselves as a role model for their business and their employees are influenced by their personality. Another business owner believes himself to be the centre of the business and that the people around him are influenced by his personality. Within a fragmented culture, many Muslim SMEs try to be followers rather than to be followed. Some other interviewees emphasised the values they gained as children or even when they became mature. But they also confirmed that they need someone to keep reminding them of these values, especially these days where more temptations can impact their lives, or even whilst conducting business. Of course, people can face hard times and would not be able to fulfil their religious obligations, but the values they own can make them return to the brightness they have lost for a while. Muslim owners or managers within a mercenary culture consider themselves as the main role model within their organisation and try to embed their rules as business guidelines. Some of the interviewees are passionate to do business for their identity and presence, not only for money but also to keep a feeling of what they can offer to society.

**Muslim Owner or Manager and Employees' Individual Morality:** Within a communal organisational culture, Muslim owners or managers of SMEs, somehow, rely on an individual's morality in terms of hiring new staff. Interestingly, a good level of tolerance exists in a communal organisational culture where owners or managers ignore immoral behaviours in the hope that they won't happen again. Through the interviews' analysis, no evidence could be found of individual morality practice within a networked culture. An interviewee admitted that individual morality leads to total organisation morality practices as part of the product quality they produce, where customers would take it as serious action if they are treated less morally. One of the main attributes of the networked organisational culture is a friendly and homogenous work environment, which encourages social relationships between employees and owners or managers. We found that owners or managers within a networked culture are more patients to staff actions. Often, they consider inappropriate action by staff as a reaction to the work environment, they believe that they have total responsibility to maintain this environment. For fragmented culture, business owners assume that morality practice should be encouraged from the top to down. Again, it is the leader perspective to take responsibly for leading employees. Muslim business owners prefer to hire a person who can conduct his or her morality more than any professionals who may not be moral. Also, other interviewees prefer to show the way of current business morality. Obviously, a business owner has the responsibility of moderating the entire organisation's morality practices. Some other interviewees referred all moral practices in terms of integrity. Within a mercenary culture, whenever it comes to personality, everyone communicates according to their personal attitude and whether being moral, or not, is relative to him or herself. But, within an organisation, employees can influence each other either by adopting bad habits or good habits. So, a less moral person can make an impact on the entire business and the opposite also happens. When a moral person keeps visualising others and criticising unfortunate conventions, all employees will change their habits. Moreover, morality is based on relationships between the owners or managers and companies' employees and also between employees and customers. So, whilst individual morality is a personal issue, still, it passes through to reach positive ends. Therefore, piety and

truthfulness create even better characteristics in a moral person and they can be seen in practice throughout their working and personal lives.

**Trust Relationship between a Muslim Owner or Manager and the Employees:** in communal culture, trust means authority or delegation which must flow down to employees from business owners. In many circumstances, people try to shape a trust relationship within their business, but the majority of interviewees limit trust relationship to a certain level. Business owners also rely on the trust relationship between themselves and their suppliers. According to one of the interviewees, there is no business without a minimum level of trust. But any new business should gain the suppliers' trust and that takes a long time to be built. Of course, every business works hard to gain its suppliers' trust to gain many benefits such as credit facilities or different payment methods. Within a networked culture, the trust relationship is the most dominant work principle that is driven by strong social relationships. Considerably, most respondents who fall within a networked culture rely on strong trust relationships to run their businesses. The most impressive result that we can obtain from interviewees is that Muslim owners build their businesses on trust and strong relationship with employees. Sometimes they do not hire any new employee unless they know him first. All types of organisational cultures consist of certain levels of trust relationships. However, Muslim SMEs having a fragmented culture might be the lowest culture that gives attention to trust relationships. We could not establish a significant support that showed the importance of trust relationships within a fragmented culture. One respondent from a fragmented culture had confirmed the value of trust relationships. However, to consider this declaration as evidence of trust relationship worthiness within a fragmented culture, it must be repeated at least by the same interviewee. Otherwise, the state has less weight to be considered as a significant finding. Trust according to the interviewees with a mercenary culture is about delegation and giving responsibilities. At an early stage of any business, the majority of the work and tasks are done by the owner who could not trust anybody because of source limitations and a fear of loss. But, after the business becomes sustainable, the owner begins to think of hiring people and dividing tasks among them. A description of this stage might be the stage where owners think that they should first control the business and then consider expansion.

**Muslim Owners or Managers and Employees' Self-Accountability:** in communal culture, interviewees found that self-accountability means to respect yourself in what you do and what you have to do in your job. As a matter of fact, no-one will respect you if you do not respect yourself and that can be demonstrated through communicating your personal attitudes of what you believe in and by not disregarding other people attitudes. Mainly, self-accountable people demand to be hired and are also likely to be rewarded as well. The reason for the demand of a self-accountable person is related to the nature of a small business that depends normally on a controllable environment. Similarly, self-accountability is really important when a clear task is not acknowledged in networked culture. Everyone might be interested in receiving a compliment from their manager regardless of how he or she has done the job, but over the time, the compliment might change if the business owner or manager discovers that the only reason for the performance is to seek a reward. Apparently, making mistakes are part of the learning process. All interviewees almost agreed on this human nature process. In a fragmented culture, self-accountability is imitated. In many cases, employees within this type of culture try to demonstrate their personal ethics, especially how accountable they are. One of the interviewees mentioned that he should start from himself to keep watch over his actions and being accountable to himself before asking employees to be self-accountable. Muslim owners or managers within a fragmented culture may have the ability to motivate self-accountability amongst their employees by offering incentives or rewards, these may not necessarily be financial. Principally, organisations with a mercenary culture attempt to achieve high levels of performance. Thus, they have control

systems where self-accountability is meaningless for many of them. We could not find any solid evidence of self-accountability amongst Muslim SMEs who have fallen within the mercenary culture category. However, one of the respondents declared that self-accountability is a personal issue, but can be encouraged by giving broad freedom and delegating full responsibility where employees will be responsible for their activities.

One of the main objectives of conducting in-depth interviews is to develop an understanding of factors and elements of Islamic business ethics and principles and determine and to discover the impact of Islamic business ethics on forming a particular organisational culture type. Across all interviews that we have conducted, we found evidence that: 1- the Muslim owner manager's personal perceptions, 2- Muslim owner-manager and employees' individual morality, 3- trust relationship between Muslim owner-manager and employees and 4- Muslim owner-manager and employees' self-accountability are the main practical ethics that are related to the basic sources of Islam and called 'Islamic business ethics'. These elements have been mentioned by interviewees many times in different situations.

As mentioned above, interviews findings are categories based on those elements most frequently mentioned of Islamic business ethics and the type of each interviewee's organisational culture. In order to understand the extent of the influence of each element of Islamic business ethics on each type of organisational culture, a scale of 5 points influential is implemented where 1 means least influential and 5 means most influential. To configure the final results of each factor, the number of interviewees' mentions and the number of references are added and a final score is divided by 3 which is the median of 5 points influential scale.

It has been found that the impact of a Muslim owner manager's personal perceptions on shaping the communal organisational culture is high and can be considered to be the most influential effective element of Islamic business ethics that contribute in shaping communal culture. In addition, personal perceptions also contribute to shaping networked and mercenary cultures as slightly and moderately influential respectively. Personal perceptions have the least influence on shaping fragmented culture.

Also, the impact of a Muslim owner-manager and employees' individual morality as one of the elements of Islamic business ethics on shaping a particular organisational culture type is evident. It has been noticed that individual morality has less impact on shaping a particular type of organisational culture than do personal perceptions. However, individual morality contribution in shaping communal culture is moderate and offers the least influence on shaping networked and fragmented cultures. On the other hand, individual morality has a slight impact on shaping a communal culture.

As examining the impact of trust relationships, between a Muslim owner-manager and employees, as one of the elements of Islamic business ethics on shaping particular organisational culture type, it can be concluded that the trust relationship between an owner-manager and the organisation's employees has a slight impact on shaping a communal culture. However, a trust relationship has a fine impact on shaping a networked culture where social relationships are high in this type of culture. It has less impact on shaping fragmented and mercenary cultures. As for the impact of a Muslim owner-manager and employees' self-accountability as one of the elements of Islamic business ethics on shaping particular organisational culture type, considerably, self-accountability, which is the deepest ethics of Islamic business, plays a significant role in shaping a particular type of organisational culture, especially in forming a networked culture where it has a fine influential contribution. On the other hand, it has slight influence in shaping communal and fragmented cultures but is least influential in shaping a mercenary culture.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Where Islamic business ethics are considerably deep-rooted in a Muslim's personality, business ethics have a great and significant impact to shape a particular organisational culture.

The more that Muslim owners or managers of SMEs in the UK can indicate the impacts of Islamic business ethics, the more they can maintain and control their internal organisational culture. research findings reveal that a fair contribution of Islamic business ethics within a specific type of organisational culture from the side of the owner or manager's personal perceptions, the owner or manager and employees' individual morality practice, the trust relationships between the owner or manager and the firm's employees and the owner or manager and employees' self-accountability. These business ethics start from abroad to a very deep impact. In the quantitative analysis, the owner's personal perception has shown to make a highly significant contribution, specifically to the shape of a mercenary type of organisational culture. With disregard to other factors that might shape the organisational culture, more or less, the formation of a specific type of organisational culture amongst Muslim SMEs in the UK, depends on the influence degree of each element of the Islamic business ethics. As a proposition, the more that Muslim owners or managers of SMEs in the UK can indicate the impacts of Islamic business ethics, the more they can maintain and control their internal organisational culture.

This research has several limitations. Concerning the population criteria, the research applied only to SMEs in the UK. Due to the involvement of organisational cultures that consist of values and beliefs, broad discussions took place to reduce the impact of unwanted factors by choosing specific groups of ethnic or spiritual respondents. Furthermore, a sample size of the qualitative section was tentatively decided upon after comparing with other research. A sample size of the quantitative part was decided based on the number of SMEs in the UK and the percentage of Muslim people living in the UK.

For future research, it is suggested the application of this research, or part thereof to a different context and to compare results to these research results. It can be applied to a specific industry, a different country or even to different groups of a specific ethnicity. Also, future research is suggested to examine the impact of different types of organisational culture models on strategic growth alternatives and compare the results and findings to the findings of this research.

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