

Research Article

The Influence of Islamic Work Ethics and Work Environment on Generation Z Employee Performance Through Work Motivation as a Mediating Variable

Andika Jani Alkautsar ^{1*}, Suhartini Suhartini ²¹ Universitas Islam Indonesia, Indonesia; e-mail : andika.jani03@gmail.com² Universitas Islam Indonesia, Indonesia; e-mail : 903110101@uii.ac.id

* Corresponding Author : Andika Jani Alkautsar

Abstract: This study aims to analyze the influence of Islamic Work Ethics and Work Environment on the Performance of Generation Z Employees Through Work Motivation as a Mediating Variable. The method used in this study is a quantitative approach with data collection techniques through questionnaires. The sample in this study consisted of 149 respondents who were Generation Z employees who were Muslim. Data analysis was carried out using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the help of SmartPLS 3 software. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Etika Kerja Islam dan Lingkungan Kerja mempunyai pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kinerja karyawan. Islamic Work Ethics has a positive and significant influence on Work Motivation, but the work environment does not have an influence on Work Motivation. Work Motivation has a positive and significant influence on Employee Performance, but Work Motivation is not proven to be a mediating variable between Islamic Work Ethics and Work Environment on Employee Performance.

Keywords: Employee Performance; Islamic Work Ethics; Work Environment; Work Motivation.

1. Introduction

In the current era of globalization, it has driven developments, especially in the world of work. Currently, the most visible change is the emergence of Generation Z, most of whom have entered the world of work, although some are still in education. Generation Z is a generation born between early 1997 and 2012. This generation is known to be different from previous generations because it was born at a time of rapid technological development, especially the internet, thus creating its own uniqueness or characteristics. Therefore, it is very important to understand Generation Z in relation to the world of work, so that an organization can maximize their abilities. Generation Z, also known as the iGeneration or internet generation, has different expectations of the workplace compared to previous generations. They prioritize career growth, demonstrate ambition, and have good technical and language skills (Karina et al., 2021).

One of the factors that is considered to have a significant influence on employees related to work is Islamic work ethics. This is important because some Indonesian people are Muslim and it is very important for organizations to understand Islamic work ethics. Islamic work ethics include several principles such as honesty, integrity, fairness, hard work, accountability, and social responsibility. For Generation Z employees who uphold Islamic work ethics, work is not only considered to earn income, but as a form of contribution to society and worship to Allah SWT. Positive perceptions of Islamic work ethics can motivate employees to improve performance and be responsible. Islamic Work Ethics are a serious effort by utilizing all resources, thoughts, and remembering Allah as a person's role as a servant, who is tasked with managing the world and striving for self-improvement as the best member of society (Khairuummah) Tasmara in (Rahmansyah & Zakiy, 2022).

In addition, the work environment plays a significant role in influencing employee performance, especially among Generation Z. A positive work environment ensures employee comfort, security, and support, which in turn increases motivation and productivity. Generation Z is known to have different characteristics compared to generations X and Y,

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such as the desire to have a job that encourages flexibility, autonomy in their career path, and a strong preference for a supportive work environment (Laka et al., 2024).

Work motivation also serves as a significant mediating variable in the relationship between Islamic work ethics, work environment, and employee performance. Work motivation reflects the extent to which individuals are driven, enthusiastic, and committed to achieving their goals or aspirations (Situmorang, 2022). When employees have strong motivation, it can lead to increased contributions, productivity, and increased creativity to the organization. Several factors influence work motivation, such as perceptions of work ethics and the surrounding work environment. As a new generation in the workforce, they generally show high motivation, which directly contributes to increasing their performance levels (Masrunik et al., 2020).

This study was conducted to fill the gap in the literature because the results of previous studies showed that there is a significant relationship between work ethics and employee performance, as well as work environment and employee performance. However, research examining the impact of Islamic work ethics and work environment on the performance of Generation Z employees is still limited, especially with work motivation as a mediating variable. Therefore, this study is important to fill this gap. In Islamic teachings, as with conventional management practices that emphasize its adherents to respect contracts and agreements as long as they do not violate religious principles. Basically, Muslims are encouraged to be diligent in working and trying to fulfill the agreements that have been made to the organization or company properly (Linando, 2021).

2. Literature Review

Islamic Work Ethics

Islamic Work Ethics functions as a guideline for employees, which is based on the teachings of the Islamic religion as explained in the holy book Al-Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW (Hamsani, 2020). Islamic work ethics embody a comprehensive spirit and attitude towards work that is based on the intention to serve Allah SWT (Lillahita'ala) (Amirul, 2021). Islamic work ethics are closely related to how a Muslim carries out daily activities, such as decision making in the workplace, and how these actions are viewed from an Islamic perspective which can be measured through several indicators such as work intentions, trusteeship, work type, work results for the Islamic Ummah, justice and fairness, cooperation and collaboration, and work as the only source of ownership (Chanzanagh & Akbarnejad, 2011).

Work Environment

The work environment is all conditions that exist around employees when they carry out their duties, which can be physical and non-physical environments, which can ultimately affect employees' ability to carry out their duties and responsibilities while working (Rahmawati et al., 2020). A positive work environment plays an important role in shaping employee performance, because it creates a sense of security and comfort, which allows employees to work better (Chaerudin, 2020). The work environment is an inseparable part of the environment around where the organization or company operates (Pasihul, 2024). A positive work environment supports collaboration, motivation, and well-being, while a negative environment can cause stress and decreased performance. The work environment can be measured through two main indicators, namely the physical work environment and the non-physical work environment (Robbins, 2023).

Employee Performance

Employee performance is the result achieved by an individual in terms of quality and quantity (Fitri & Oktavian, 2022). Employee performance is the achievement and work results of employees in carrying out tasks that directly contribute to the production of goods or services by meeting the standards and targets set by the company (Nurmubin et al., 2022). Employee performance reflects the results of an employee's efforts in fulfilling their responsibilities and completing tasks in an organization or company (Sihombing et al., 2023). Employee performance is something that is very important and influences the success of the company in achieving its goals. Employee performance reflects the extent to which employees contribute to the organization, by assessing how much impact they have on the overall performance of the company. Employee performance can be measured through several

indicators, namely work quantity, work quality, reliability, and attendance (Mathis & Jackson, 2006).

Work Motivation

Work motivation can be interpreted as an inner drive or need that drives a person to work (Supendi, 2022). Performance motivation refers to the motivation that drives employees to consistently exert energy and effort in carrying out their duties as well as possible (Ariansyah, 2021). Work motivation is how much effort an employee makes to fulfill their job responsibilities (Situmorang, 2022). When employees have a positive mindset towards the work environment, their motivation to work better will increase (Yusuff, 2023). Work motivation helps guide activities during work, ensures that employees know the alignment between organizational goals and personal goals, and increases enthusiasm for work (Masrunik et al., 2020). Motivation is an encouragement for individuals to carry out assigned tasks with the aim of meeting their needs. Work motivation can be measured through two indicators, namely hygiene factors and motivator factors (Herzberg, 1966).

Research Model

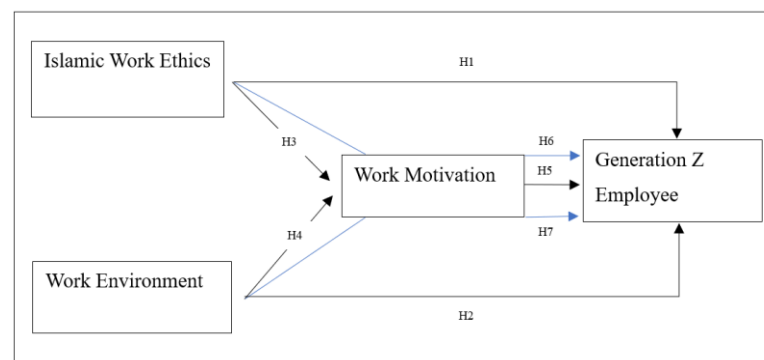


Figure 1. Research Model

Description:

H1: Islamic work ethic has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Generation Z employees.

H2: Work environment has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Generation Z employees.

H3: Islamic work ethic has a positive and significant effect on the work motivation of Generation Z employees.

H4: Work environment has a positive and significant effect on the work motivation of Generation Z employees.

H5: Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Generation Z employees.

H6: Work motivation mediates the effect of Islamic work ethic on the performance of Generation Z employees.

H7: Work motivation mediates the effect of work environment on the performance of Generation Z employees.

3. Methods of Research

This study uses quantitative research methods. Quantitative research is an inductive, objective, and scientific method that involves collecting data in the form of numbers (scores, values) or evaluative statements, which are then analyzed using statistical methods (Hermawan, 2019).

Population and Sample

A population is an individual who is the subject of research or an individual whose characteristics are being studied. While a sample is part of a population (Roflin & Liberty, 2021). This study used a random sampling model (Probability Sampling) with the criteria of respondents being Generation Z Muslim employees who are currently working or have experienced the world of work.

Data Collection Techniques

In this study, the type of power used is primary data. Primary data is data collected directly from original sources for research purposes (Hertina et al., 2024). The data collection method used in this study is using a questionnaire. The author chose a closed questionnaire type that requires respondents to choose answers from a series of choices that have been provided with a likert scale of one to five. The questionnaire was distributed via Google Form to 160 respondents, but only 149 questionnaires were filled out.

Data Analysis Method

Early research was analyzed using Partial Least Squares, a type of multivariate statistical analysis used similarly to SEM in covariance analysis. PLS is effective for connecting a set of independent variables with several dependent variables (Evi & Rachbini, 2023). In running the SEM-PLS model, it is done with the help of the SmartPLS version 3 application or software.

4. Results and Discussion

Measurement Model Testing (Outer Model)

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity assesses whether the measurement indicators effectively represent the underlying construct. The recommended loading factor threshold for convergent validity is above 0.7 (Musyaffi et al., 2022).

Table 1. Outer Loading Indicator Test

Variables	Indicator	Item	Loading Factor	Information
Islamic Work Ethics	<i>Work intentions</i>	IWE1	0.850	Valid
		IWE2	0.833	Valid
	<i>Trusteeship</i>	IWE3	0.823	Valid
		IWE4	0.850	Valid
	<i>Work type</i>	IWE5	0.842	Valid
		IWE6	0.862	Valid
	<i>Work results for the Islamic Ummah</i>	IWE7	0.876	Valid
		IWE8	0.848	Valid
	<i>Justice and Fairness</i>	IWE9	0.794	Valid
		IWE10	0.844	Valid
	<i>Cooperation and Collaboration</i>	IWE11	0.863	Valid
		IWE12	0.845	Valid
	<i>Work as the only source of ownership</i>	IWE13	0.790	Valid
		IWE14	0.781	Valid
Work Environment	Physical Work Environment	WE1	0.819	Valid
		WE2	0.848	Valid
		WE3	0.850	Valid
		WE4	0.867	Valid
		WE5	0.751	Valid
		WE6	0.767	Valid
	Non-physical Work Environment	WE7	0.782	Valid
		WE8	0.753	Valid
		WE9	0.763	Valid
		WE10	0.845	Valid
Employee Performance	<i>Work Quantity</i>	EP1	0.758	Valid
		EP2	0.819	Valid
		EP3	0.803	Valid
	<i>Work Quality</i>	EP4	0.790	Valid
		EP5	0.791	Valid
		EP6	0.816	Valid
	<i>Reliability</i>	EP7	0.780	Valid
		EP8	0.810	Valid
		EP9	0.786	Valid

Motivation	<i>Attendance</i>	EP10	0.779	Valid
		EP11	0.770	Valid
		EP12	0.767	Valid
	Hygiene Factors	M1	0.828	Valid
		M2	0.759	Valid
		M3	0.769	Valid
	Motivation Factors	M4	0.810	Valid
		M5	0.789	Valid
		M6	0.798	Valid

Source: Primary data processed, 2025

Based on table 1, it shows that each indicator in the study has met convergent validity because overall the factor loading values for all variables have met the requirements > 0.7 .

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity assesses whether constructs differ from each other, evaluated by examining the cross loading value. Discriminant validity is established if the cross loading of each indicator is higher for the construct in question compared to other constructs. In the discriminant validity test, the requirement is that each variable must have a value above 0.70 then it is declared valid (Musyaffi et al., 2022).

Table 2. Cross Loading Values

	Islamic Work Ethics	Employee Performance	Work Environment	Motivation
IWE1	0,850	0,320	0,301	0,232
IWE10	0,844	0,336	0,294	0,211
IWE11	0,863	0,334	0,257	0,320
IWE12	0,845	0,279	0,259	0,263
IWE13	0,790	0,390	0,320	0,180
IWE14	0,781	0,312	0,298	0,167
IWE2	0,833	0,313	0,258	0,127
IWE3	0,823	0,396	0,323	0,200
IWE4	0,850	0,404	0,366	0,263
IWE5	0,842	0,358	0,358	0,187
IWE6	0,862	0,336	0,437	0,244
IWE7	0,876	0,316	0,351	0,220
IWE8	0,848	0,336	0,337	0,224
IWE9	0,794	0,333	0,337	0,103
EP1	0,285	0,758	0,447	0,333
EP10	0,320	0,779	0,299	0,362
EP11	0,283	0,770	0,286	0,399
EP12	0,286	0,767	0,301	0,404
EP2	0,297	0,819	0,432	0,186
EP3	0,299	0,803	0,430	0,296
EP4	0,437	0,790	0,441	0,197
EP5	0,331	0,791	0,349	0,285
EP6	0,341	0,816	0,428	0,277
EP7	0,324	0,780	0,466	0,227
EP8	0,413	0,810	0,423	0,336
EP9	0,226	0,786	0,290	0,329
WE1	0,358	0,342	0,819	0,135
WE10	0,328	0,520	0,845	0,142
WE2	0,386	0,420	0,848	0,175
WE3	0,353	0,396	0,850	0,075

WE4	0,299	0,463	0,867	0,230
WE5	0,337	0,297	0,751	0,057
WE6	0,332	0,335	0,767	0,090
WE7	0,268	0,376	0,782	0,099
WE8	0,265	0,329	0,753	0,105
WE9	0,192	0,382	0,763	0,120
M1	0,266	0,343	0,171	0,828
M2	0,186	0,322	0,167	0,759
M3	0,211	0,271	0,074	0,769
M4	0,227	0,331	0,116	0,810
M5	0,153	0,246	0,080	0,789
M6	0,144	0,279	0,127	0,798

Source: Primary data processed, 2025

Based on table 2 which explains that the Cross Loading value for each item exceeds 0.70. In addition, the value of each item is the highest value when associated with the appropriate latent variable than the correlation of other latent variables. This provides an explanation that all variables are real and accurately represent their latent variables, thus proving that all items meet the criteria of discriminant validity.

Composite Reliability

Composite reliability measures the reliability of indicators in a construct, which indicates the actual reliability of the construct itself with a minimum value of 0.7 recommended. Cronbach Alpha is also used to evaluate the reliability of the construct, specifically assessing the consistency of the indicator with the minimum acceptable value for Cronbach Alpha being 0.7. In addition, the AVE value is also used to assess the discriminant validity for each construct, as well as the dependent and independent variables with a minimum value of 0.5 (Musyaffi et al., 2022).

Table 3. Reliability Test Values

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Information
Islamic Work Ethics	0,967	0,969	0,970	0,699	Reliabel
Employee Performance	0,945	0,946	0,952	0,623	Reliabel
Work Environment	0,940	0,951	0,949	0,649	Reliabel
Motivation	0,882	0,890	0,910	0,628	Reliabel

Source: Primary data processed, 2025

Based on table 3 which is the result of the Construct Reliability and Validity analysis, Cronbach's Alpha shows that all variables can be said to be reliable because they have a value of > 0.7 . Furthermore, Composite Reliability shows that all variables can be said to be reliable because they have a value of > 0.8 . In addition, the average variance extracted (AVE) shows that all variables are declared reliable because they have a value of > 0.5 . Based on this analysis, it can be concluded that all variables tested show good reliability and are also valid.

Structural Model Analysis (Inner Model)

R-Square (R^2)

The R Square value or coefficient of determination, shows the extent to which the independent variable explains the variation in the dependent variable (Musyaffi et al., 2022).

Table 4. R^2 Values

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable	R Square
Islamic Work Ethics	Motivation	0,366
Work Environment		
Islamic Work Ethics	Employee Performance	0,070
Work Environment		
Motivation		

Source: Primary data processed, 2025

Based on table 4, it can be concluded that the Islamic work ethics model and work environment together contribute to work motivation with a value of 0.366. This shows that 36.6% of the variance of the work motivation variable can be explained by the Islamic work ethics and work environment variables, while the remaining 63.4% is influenced by other variables. In the Islamic work ethics model, the work environment and work motivation contribute to the employee performance value of 0.070. This shows that 7% of the variation in employee performance can be explained by the Islamic work ethics, work environment and work motivation variables, while the remaining 93% is influenced by other variables.

Path Coefficient

The path coefficient value reflects the strength and direction of the relationship or effect between latent constructs in the study. This estimate is calculated through the bootstrapping procedure (Musyaffi et al., 2022).

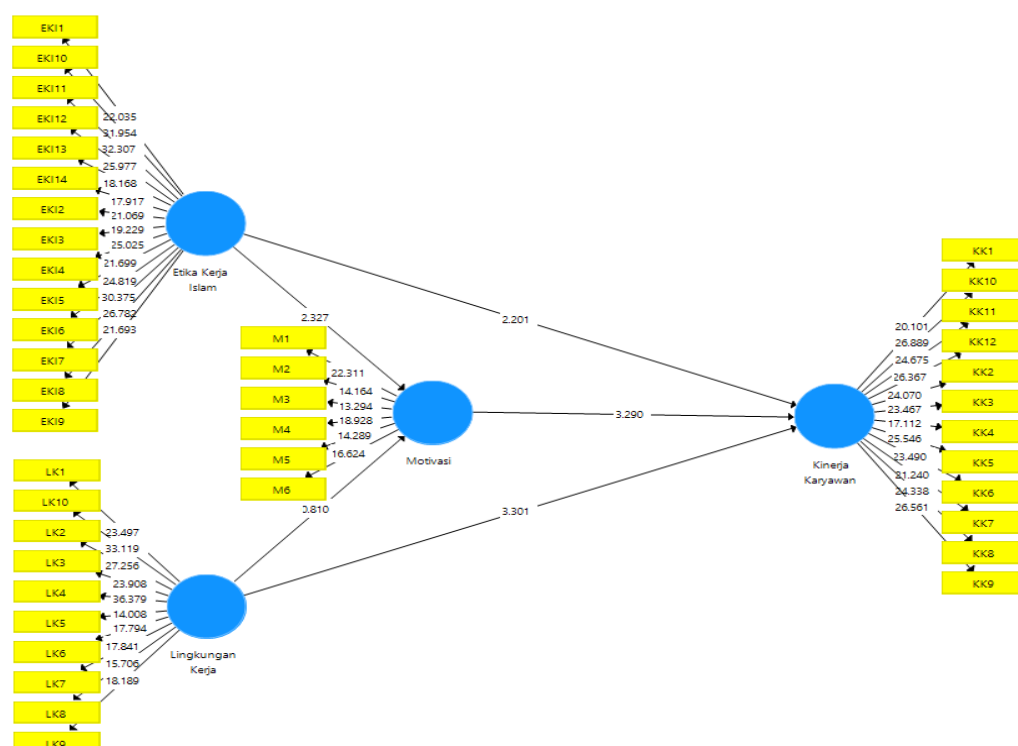


Figure 2. Path Coefficient

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing is carried out by comparing the t-statistic value with the t-table value with the aim of determining whether or not there is an influence between variables (Ariani et al., 2024). The criteria for the t-test are if the significance level is 0.05 (5%) and the t-statistic value is greater than the t-table value (1.96) then the independent variables X1 and X2 have a partial effect on the dependent variable Y and vice versa.

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/ST DEV)	P Values	Information
Islamic work ethics have a positive and significant influence on the performance of Generation Z employees.	0,197	0,193	0,089	2,201	0,029	Hypothesis Accepted
The work environment has a positive and significant influence on the performance of Generation Z employees.	0,370	0,368	0,112	3,301	0,001	Hypothesis Accepted

Islamic work ethics have a positive and significant influence on the work motivation of Generation Z employees.	0,228	0,245	0,098	2,327	0,021	Hypothesis Accepted
The work environment has a positive and significant influence on the work motivation of Generation Z employees.	0,071	0,081	0,088	0,810	0,419	Hypothesis Rejected
Work motivation has a positive and significant influence on the performance of Generation Z employees.	0,273	0,290	0,083	3,290	0,001	Hypothesis Accepted
Work motivation mediates the influence of Islamic work ethics on the performance of Generation Z employees.	0,062	0,071	0,036	1,728	0,086	Hypothesis Rejected
Work motivation mediates the influence of work environment on the performance of Generation Z employees.	0,019	0,024	0,029	0,682	0,496	Hypothesis Rejected

Source: Primary data processed, 2025

Discussion

Table 5 above shows the results of accepting or rejecting the hypothesis and can be understood through the explanation below:

H1: The Influence of Islamic Work Ethics on Employee Performance

Data analysis shows a positive original sample coefficient value of 0.197, t-statistic $2.201 > 1.96$, and p value $0.029 < 0.05$, so the first hypothesis is accepted that Islamic work ethics have a positive and significant effect on employee performance. The results of this study support previous studies, namely Candra et al., (2022), Hamzah et al., (2021), Fadhlurrohman & Mas'ud (2022), Udin et al., (2022), Fanggidae et al., (2020), and Saban et al., (2020). Based on Islamic work ethics, it will foster a work spirit that is shown through professionalism, so that the performance of Muslim Generation Z will increase.

H2: The Influence of Work Environment on Employee Performance

Data analysis shows a positive original sample coefficient value of 0.370, t-statistic $3.301 > 1.96$, and p value $0.001 < 0.05$, so the second hypothesis is accepted that the work environment has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. The results of this study support previous studies, namely Maswani et al., (2021), Parashakti et al., (2020), Nugroho et al., (2020), Nyoman et al., (2023), Idris et al., (2020), and Alkaf et al., (2024). Therefore, a supportive work environment allows employees to carry out their duties effectively, which ultimately leads to an increase in the overall performance of Generation Z.

H3: The Influence of Islamic Work Ethics on Work Motivation

Data analysis shows a positive original sample coefficient value of 0.228, t-statistic $2.327 > 1.96$, and p value $0.021 < 0.05$, so the third hypothesis is accepted that Islamic work ethics have a positive and significant effect on work motivation. The results of this study support previous studies, namely Widyarini & Muafi (2021), Ud Din et al., (2019), Aflah et al., (2021), Pratiwi (2019), Ahmad et al., (2021), and Sulastri (2020). Therefore, the better the implementation of Islamic work ethics, the better the work motivation produced and vice versa, the worse the implementation of Islamic work ethics, the lower the work motivation.

H4: The Influence of Work Environment on Work Motivation

Data analysis shows a positive original sample coefficient value of 0.071, t-statistic $0.810 < 1.96$, and p value $0.419 > 0.05$, so the fourth hypothesis is rejected that the work environment has no effect on performance. The results of this study contradict previous studies, namely Wibowo (2023), Parashakti et al., (2020), and Setiawan & Qomariah (2022). However, on the other hand, there is research that states that motivation is unable to mediate the influence of Islamic work ethics on the work environment, namely Wahyuni & Budiono (2022), Arfa et al., (2024), and Nurcahyo & Indradewa (2022). This can happen because the work environment is not the only factor that influences employee work motivation, especially

for Generation Z. Therefore, the better the implementation of the work environment does not necessarily affect the resulting work motivation.

H5: The Effect of Work Motivation on Employee Performance

Data analysis shows a positive original sample coefficient value of 0.273, t-statistic $3.290 > 1.96$, and p value $0.001 < 0.05$, so the fifth hypothesis is accepted that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. The results of this study support previous studies, namely Harahap et al., (2023), Paais & Pattiruhu (2020), Guterresa et al., (2020), Chrisnanto & Riyanto (2020), Sanjaya & Indrawati (2023), and Sulyantie & Gani (2023). Therefore, work motivation plays an important role in improving the performance of Generation Z employees. Although motivation is unable to mediate Islamic work ethics on the performance of Generation Z employees, by using other factors, high work motivation will have an impact on improving employee performance.

H6: The Influence of Islamic Work Ethics on Employee Performance through Work Motivation

Data analysis shows a positive original sample coefficient value of 0.062, t-statistic $1.728 < 1.96$, and p value $0.086 > 0.05$, so the sixth hypothesis is rejected that work motivation is not proven to mediate the relationship between Islamic work ethics and employee performance. The results of this study contradict previous studies, namely Widyarini & Muafi (2021), Al-Ahliyya et al., (2020), Hassi et al., (2021), Amalya & Setiawan (2024), Ghozali (2020). However, on the other hand, there is research that states that motivation is unable to mediate the influence of Islamic work ethics on the work environment, namely (Aminullah, 2019). Although Islamic work ethics still have an influence on performance, the role of work motivation as a mediator can be influenced by other factors such as generation characteristics, work environment, and career expectations.

H7: The Influence of Work Environment on Employee Performance through Work Motivation

Data analysis shows a positive original sample coefficient value of 0.019, t-statistic $0.682 < 1.96$, and p value $0.496 > 0.05$, so the seventh hypothesis is rejected that work motivation is not proven to mediate the relationship between the work environment and employee performance. The results of this study contradict previous studies, namely Iis et al., (2021), Aribowo et al., (2022), and Widyaningrum (2019). However, on the other hand, there is research that states that motivation is unable to mediate the influence of the work environment on the work environment, namely Sulistyani & Nugroho (2024), Triskamto et al., (2024), and Abdullah (2020). Although the work environment still has an influence on performance, the role of work motivation as a mediator can be influenced by other factors such as generation characteristics, industrial sector, organizational culture, and the research methods used.

5. Conclusions

Conclusion

- a. Islamic work ethics have a positive and significant effect on employee performance.
- b. The work environment has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.
- c. Islamic work ethics have a positive and significant effect on work motivation.
- d. The work environment does not affect work motivation.
- e. Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.
- f. Work motivation is not proven to mediate the relationship between Islamic work ethics and employee performance.
- g. Work motivation is not proven to mediate the relationship between the work environment and employee performance.

Suggestion

- a. Companies need to implement Islamic work ethics values in organizational policies and culture, such as amanah, cooperation (ta'awun), and sincerity, which can increase employee dedication and work enthusiasm.
- b. Companies must create a supportive work environment, both physical and non-physical, with adequate facilities and harmonious working relationships, thus creating a comfortable and collaborative atmosphere.

- c. Companies need to pay more attention to work motivation, by providing fair incentives, career development opportunities, and work flexibility needed by Generation Z.

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