



This book is one of the few books on Islamic ethics that has a special reference to businesses. The earliest contemporary book on the topic in the English language was written by S. M. Hasanuzzaman, entitled *Islam and Business Ethics*, published by the Institute of Islamic Banking and Insurance (2003). The latest book on the topic before the one under review was written by Hussain Mohi-ud-Din Qadri, entitled *Business Ethics in Islam*, published by Routledge (2019).

# PRINCIPLES OF ISLAMIC ETHICS FOR CONTEMPORARY WORKPLACES

ABDUS SATTAR ABBASI & RAZAQ RAJ

There are some other books on the topic that are worth mentioning here:

- Business Ethics in Islam by Abbas J. Ali (ISBN: 978 1 78100 672 6)
- Handbook of Research on Islamic Business Ethics by Abbas J. Ali (ISBN: 978 1 78100 944 4)
- Islamic Business Ethics by Rafik Issa Beekun (ISBN: 1 56564 242 2)
- Business Ethics in Islam by Mushtaq Ahmad (ISBN: 978 8 17151 264 5)

Most of these books, however, take theological views on ethics with little or no reference to workplaces.

The book by Abbasi and Raj starts with an overview of the Islamic foundations of ethics and comparison with other ethical standards. It also contends for the superiority of Islamic work ethics. Islamic work ethics as an integral part of management practices and styles is a central theme of the book. There is a special focus on the implications of ethical consideration on the behaviour of all stakeholders within an organisation, i.e., shareholders, managers, other employees, contractors/suppliers, and the community at large.

The book is written on a topic of immense relevance to contemporary Muslim communities, in general, and the workplaces with Muslim employees, managers and owners, in particular. The topic is also greatly relevant to the private and public sector workplaces in a country like Pakistan wherein ethical foundations of the society have experienced decay in the last three to four decades. Needless to say, the book maintains its international relevance.

The coverage and scope of the book are impressive, as it covers a wide range of topics in twelve carefully written chapters. Starting with an overview of Islamic ethics, the book relates it to contemporary corporate issues like crisis management, corporate governance, the use of information technology, welfare

and well-being, marketing, corporate social responsibility, and conflict management. There are also specific chapters on finance, Maqasid al-Shari'a (the higher objectives of Shari'a) and a range of activities that are not just considered as professional obligations but are also deemed virtuous in an Islamic ethical framework.

There are some novel topics covered in the book, with reference to Islamic ethics. For example, crisis management in organisations, with help from Islamic ethical values, is an interesting topic. There are some other topics the coverage of which conforms to the analyses in other relevant books. Marketing is another topic that attempts to make Islamic ethics relevant to an already thinly differentiated conventional marketing philosophy.

The book can easily be used as a textbook in universities that have a focus on ethics in general and Islamic ethics in particular. Each chapter ends with four discussion questions that will assist both the teachers and the students to facilitate learning. This is a regular feature of a textbook, which remained missing in the above-cited books on the topic.

In the end, it must also be pointed out that the general feel of the book that an accomplished scholar may have is that of the application of general ethical principles to some specific scenarios. This is a difficult task. The book at times gives the impression that the generality is stretched too much to apply to specificities. Having said that, the book is a good addition to the existing body of literature in this field. A future edition must attempt to link general principles of Islamic ethics (derived from the Holy Quran) with specific examples from the early history of Islam.

*Published in the IGI Global book series Advances in Human Resources Management and Organizational Development - AHRMOD*

*(ISSN: 2327-3372; eISSN: 2327-3380)*