

# Conceptual Analysis of Three Principles of Islamic-Based Development with The Concept of Work Readiness

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## Abstract

Work-readiness is a relatively recent term that has been linked with the concept of employability. In this generation, there is a need for youth, particularly graduates, to continuously assess themselves in preparing for their employability for future of work. The term work readiness refers more to the preparation towards gaining future-ready work skills. Its meaning is like the concept of employability which is based on various conventional-based literature. Based on Islamic-based literature, three principles of Islamic-based development have been found to be suitable to support the concepts of work-readiness in terms of role clarity, ability, and motivation. These principles are actor, framework, and aim of Islamic-based development. To date, the concept of work-readiness has not yet been conceptualized according to these principles within current literature. Therefore, the paper elaborates on how the three principles of Islamic-based Development can be reflected and applied for the purpose of enhancing an individual's work-readiness for the future challenges of work. In conclusion, his paper conceptualizes the three principles of Islamic-based development with the factors of work-readiness which lie within role clarity, ability, and motivation. As such, the paper concludes that the three principles are factors that support an individual's employability and work-readiness from an Islamic perspective.

**Keywords:** work-readiness, principles, Islamic-based Development, conceptual analysis

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## Introduction

The concept of employability can be explored in many ways. According to Fakunle (2019), systematic literature review has shown that employability has been studied and explored under three main areas: career management, capital components and contextual components. These areas do tend to overlap within certain areas. In this paper, the author will focus on conceptualizing the concept of employability based on work readiness and three selected principles of Islamic-based Development.

## Literature Review

Work readiness is defined according to a mixture of qualities that differ around the globe (Chigbu & Nekhwevha, 2022). It is considered an indicator of graduates long term job performance and career progression prospects (Chigbu & Nekhwevha, 2022). Another source states that work readiness was defined as the degree to which graduates are seen to have the attitudes and attributes that make them ready and prepared for success in the workplace (Jamal Abdul Nasir & Ain Syazmeen Ahmad Zaki, 2021).

Work readiness also leads to overall career resilience (Borg et al., 2020). In this study, work readiness is classed as under the component of career management of employability in which career management focuses on aspects of employability relating to self-management and signal management (Fakunle, 2019). It is also considered an initiative towards gaining work readiness through embarking on deliberate activities undertaken by individuals with a specific end goal to understand their career goals (Jamal Abdul Nasir & Ain Syazmeen Ahmad Zaki, 2021). Work readiness is categorized under the component of career management because learning experiences have been reported to have an influence upon career planning, and career services 'role in responding to the needs of students (Janeke, 2021).

Work readiness has also been denoted as having a similar meaning to employability. For example, Adegbite (2021) has used the term employability readiness to assess skillsets that are needed for the future of work (Adegbite & Adeosun, 2021). He further denotes that many studies use the term graduate work readiness, while focus on contextual components among employees remain underrepresented (Adegbite & Adeosun, 2021).

According to Fakunle (2021), contextual components refer to the views from perspectives of human resource managers and employees regarding employability (Fakunle & Higson, 2021). Another source connects work-readiness to the adaptations of skills, knowledge and employability for 'future proofing' also known as preparing for future of work (O'shea et al., 2022).

The importance of role in ascertaining employability and work-readiness lie within how professional actors play a role in the process of job creation and job displacement for the future of work (Herbert et al., 2020). Other sources have shown that the role of relevant stakeholders have an impact upon graduate employability and personal work-readiness (Chigbu & Nekhwevha, 2022). Work-readiness also uses the term culturing which refers to the process of exploring how personal behaviours and dispositions are applied beyond knowledge and education qualifications (Herbert et al., 2020).

Overall, the term employability and work-readiness are seen to be similar in meaning and some areas are seen to overlap with a similar meaning. When applied specifically towards evaluating internship programmes, work-readiness can be conceptualized into three main areas which include role, ability and motivation (Kapareliotis et al., 2019). Based on these three concepts under work-readiness, this paper will further analyse these concepts from the Islamic perspectives. According to the Islamic perspectives, the theory of Islamic-based development outlines seven principles leading to holistic development. These principles are: Islamic worldview (*Tasawwur*), Acor, Timescale, Framework, Method, Tools and Ultimate aim (Salleh, 2021). Based on these principles, three principles have been conceptualized to be in

congruence with work-readiness under the areas of role, ability, and motivation. This conceptual analysis is as follows:

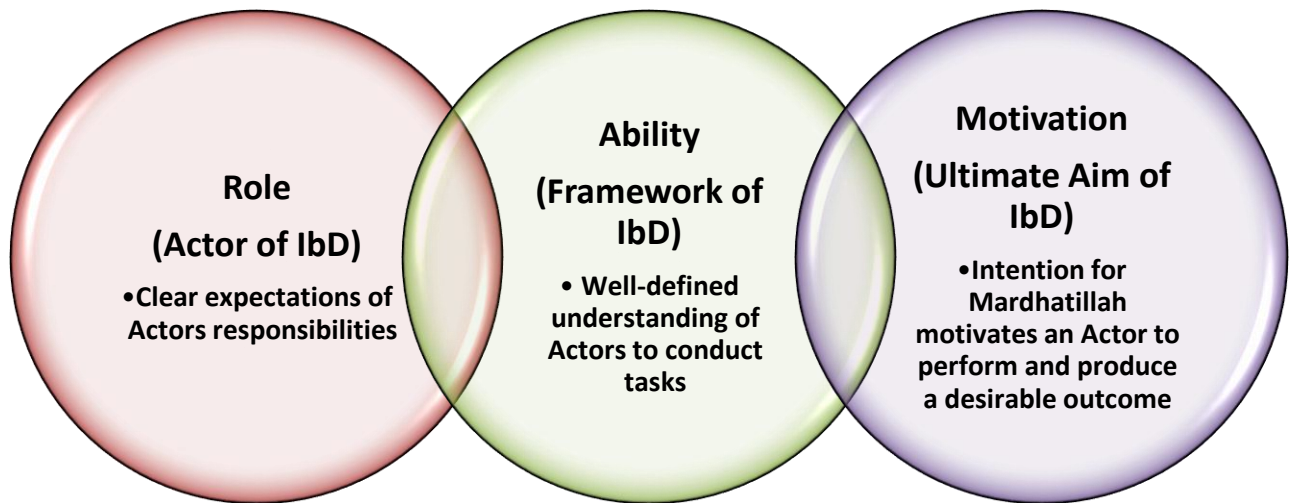


Figure 1: Relationship of Principles of Islamic-based Development with Work Readiness

Based on Figure 1, it can be seen that the role of stakeholders can be interpreted according to the actor of Islamic-based development; ability can be interpreted according to the ability of actors to implement and execute their actions in correspondence to the framework of Islamic-based development; and motivation can be interpreted based upon the intention and ultimate aim of an actor to perform and produce a desirable outcome. This paper attempts to conceptualize how these principles correlate with the variables of work readiness to produce a conceptual framework on work-readiness from an Islamic perspective. This interpretation will be based on comparing and analysing views of the same concept from both conventional and Islamic sources of literature.

## Methodology

The method employed is using literature review and document analysis. The conceptualization of the terms has been conducted by using thematic analysis using both inductive and deductive approach. Deductive approach was used for the conventional literature whereas inductive approach was used for the Islamic literature. As such, the findings show that there is a congruence in between the main concepts of work-readiness with three principles of Islamic-based development.

## Findings and Discussion

### Actor of Islamic-Based Development

The second principle refers to the actor of Islamic-based Development. Under this principle, lies within the intrinsic and physical development of a person in tandem with Islamic

epistemology, ontology and worldview (F. A. Ahmad, 2012). This principle focuses on the role of an actor. The role of an actor of Islamic-based Development is twofold: (1) Servant of Allah and (2) Khalifah (vicegerent). The second role is fulfilled by enhancing his horizontal relationship with the community and the environment (Salleh, 2021). This principle is associated with the notion of role clarity, which is a construct under job preparedness. Role clarity pertains to the comprehension and awareness of the roles that actors are required to perform (Kapareliotis et al., 2019).

From Islamic perspectives, the role of a servant is to worship Allah and not to ascribe any partner to Him while the role of Khalifah is expected to be capable in fulfilling work assigned and realize it as a trust from Allah. This trust also involves knowledge acquisition and practice as a means to attain virtue in this world and hereafter (Bakir et al., 2015). This correlates with the skill of lifelong learning: to shift from ignorance towards understanding; to enhance performance; to change for advancement; to understand and avoid the dangers of vice (Bakir et al., 2015).

Psychological capital has also been linked with human development for the purpose of self-improvement. Conventional research attribute human resource practices such as mentoring and training to upgrade this capital by way of self-efficacy, self-assessment, and self-reflection (Dello Russo, 2020) Contemporary methods of human resource assessment of these skills make use of AI machine learning approach to understand the psychological capital of their human resources (Sato et al, 2021). From Islamic perspective, these capital components encompass a more comprehensive process of human development involving three elements: the spirit, soul, mind, and heart of a man. Human development in Islam relies on the concept of hisbah which entails the following processes: *musyaratah*, *muraqabah*, *muhasabah*, *mu'aqabah*, *mujahadah*, *mu'atabah* or *tazkiyah an-nafs* (Poad & Ibrahim, 2019). The development of spiritual intelligence, which results in higher order skill sets including transcendental awareness, critical existential thinking, personal meaning creation, and conscious state expansion, is the advantage of these practices (Rahman & Shah, 2015).

These abilities are additionally divided into five parts: transcendence; (b) the ability to reach elevated spiritual states of consciousness; (c) the capacity to imbue ordinary occurrences, relationships, and activities with a sense of the sacred; (d) the capacity to draw on spiritual resources to address challenges in daily life; and (e) the capacity to act morally. (Rahman & Shah, 2015). Spiritual intelligence led to commendable attributes such as perseverance, resilience, empathy, ethical behaviour, self-efficacy, and enhanced mutual relations with others (Rahman & Shah, 2015). Additionally, the four primary traits of the prophets—honesty (*Siddiq*), trustworthiness (*Amanah*), communicative ability, accountability, and transparency (*Tabligh*), disciplined decision-making, wisdom, and a proactive attitude (*Fatanah*)—have also been utilized as constructs to gauge spiritual intelligence (Rahman & Shah, 2015). These abilities haven't, however, been reviewed considering work readiness. To attain spiritual intelligence, other behaviours like sincerity (*ikhlas*), effort (*istiqamah*), and resignation (*redha*) have also been emphasized as critical components. (Rahman & Shah, 2015).

Besides vertical relationship, a Muslim as a khalifah is also required to establish a sound horizontal relationship with other humans (Muslim and non-Muslims) as well as establish a good relationship with their surrounding environment. Research has shown that these include social developments (Hasan & Hashim, 2019) by adapting an Islamic-based social value model

to measure attributes such as trust and ethics can be conducted (Arshad, Noor & Yahya, 2015). The third role involves developing a strong relationship with the environment such as sustainability. In Islam, this requires a combination of spiritual leadership, intellectual culture, concept of wholesome being, capacity building, trans humanism, and artificial intelligence (Abdul Rahman & Ibrahim, 2021). For this purpose, Islamic research has attribute sustainability as part of a Khalifah's threefold responsibility (Al-Jayyousi et al., 2022; Dariah et al., 2019). In Islam, a Khalifah is required to moderate his consumption of natural resources and implement ethical distribution of resources according to the rules of Shariat (Al-Jayyousi et al., 2022; Yahya et al., 2020a). Contemporary research highlight the need for multidisciplinary action for the inclusion of Islamic or moral-led sustainability practices highlighting the need for reform and contribution of global Islamic organizations- (Al-Jayyousi et al., 2022).

## Framework of Islamic-Based Development

The fourth principle of Islamic-based Development refer to the framework of development which lie within the basic teachings of Islam: Fardhu' Ain and Fardhu Kifayah. The knowledge of Fardhu 'Ain is referred to a Muslim's individual obligation towards his creator. It is further broken down into three segments which is Tauhid, Fiqh and Tassawuf. Fardhu 'Ain is said to be likened to a tree in which Tauhid is the root of the tree, Fiqh are its branches and Tassawuf is the fruit of that tree (M. S. Salleh, 2021 Sukiman, 2018).

The knowledge of Tauhid is the firm belief that nothing is worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is His messenger. Tauhid is considered the basic foundation of a man's belief and faith towards Allah SWT which strengthens his internal and external development in this life as well as in the hereafter (Sukiman, 2018; M. S. Salleh, 2021). The ability of an actor to regulate his daily actions in line with Fiqh contribute towards ability for him to be ready to work as a Khalifah (Sukiman, 2018; M. S. Salleh, 2021). An example is honesty and transparency in online work practices (Musbah.K. et. al, 2013).

In Islam, the abilities of a khalifah rely on his self-development towards Rushd (Mirakhor & Askari, 2010), to purify oneself from evil characteristics (*Mazmumah*) and acquire virtuous characteristics (*Mahmudah*) (Salleh, 2009; Salleh & Mohamad, 2012). This contributes to stable mental health and psychological well-being. A khalifah who can safeguard his physical *nafs* contributes to stable mental and spiritual health (R. Ahmad, 2015; Hassan & Hashim, 2020) which in turn contribute towards productive and ethical work performance (Hanapi & Saniff, 2015; Ogunbado, 2019).

Conventional literature also agrees that self-reflection, self-assessment, self-efficacy, social cognitive theory and deep learning (Atitsogbe et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2021; Zhao et al., 2021) is an effective means of human development as well as work readiness and employability (Dromer et al., 2021; Müller et al., 2020; Piróg et al., 2021; Sarkar et al., 2021; Sokhanvar et al., 2021). In a similar vein, research on human capital, integrated Islamic education, e-learning, Islamic-based social impact, and human development highlights the significance of embracing Islamic-based development concepts in order to generate morally upright persons. (Johari & Ahmad, 2019; Musbahtiti et al., 2013; Salleh, 2009).

Islam's added value lie in a fundamental belief system rooted in Tauhid and belief in the creator as being the Omnipotent being and the main driver towards all aspects of performance. This requires in-depth understanding of the 99 names of Allah (Sukiman, 2018; M. S. Salleh, 2021). Some additional components to this component is the ability for Khalifah to acquire heart-to-heart learning, ability to innovate rather than replicate, the ability to create one's own standards as opposed to benchmarking, and collaborate rather than compete is considered a strategic method or ability (Salleh, 2012).

This framework differs vastly from conventional approach which lie merely on physical, intellectual, psychological, and emotional performance. The spiritual aspect remains missing. This spiritual ability is considered vital in preparing for future of work due to the fact work tasks can now be replaced by artificial intelligence. Future of work now divides tasks into routine, non-routine, manual, semi-manual and automatic tasks (Kolade & Owoseni, 2022). It has been projected that all routine tasks will be replaced by artificial intelligence leaving only non-routine tasks for humans to fulfil (Kolade & Owoseni, 2022). This requires humans to have higher order skills relying solely on cognitive skills (Kolade & Owoseni, 2022) which relates to both intellect and heart. As such, work-readiness based on the framework of Islamic-based development encompasses all three cognitive abilities: mind (Aql), heart (Qalb), and soul (Nafs).

### **Aim of Islamic-based Development**

The seventh principle looks at the aim of Islamic-based development. There are two viewpoints in this regard which is *Al-Falah* or success in life and hereafter (Salamon, 2009; Chapra, 1995; Hunter, 2012) as cited by (Ithnan & Rosdi, 2018) or *Mardhatillah* (Ghazali, 1990; Al-Qardawiy, 1996; Salleh, 2003) as cited by (Ithnan & Rosdi, 2018).

The third component of job preparedness, motivation, is connected to the seventh principle (Kapareliotis et al., 2019). According to Kapareliotis et al. (2019), motivation elicits desired behaviour to achieve a favourable anticipated consequence. An action's result is determined by its motivation level, but an action's aim also affects motivation (Azahari et al., 2022). Regarding this, the seventh principle makes sure that individuals or workers are aware of how *Mardhatillah* affects the results of a task in terms of intrinsic rewards. Allah promises rewards for actors who follow Mardhatillah's goal in this life and the next. This idea therefore acts as a prerequisite for the initiative of all activities and tasks in the proper order. This principle then serves as a pre-requisite in the initiation of all actions and tasks to gain rewards. As such, it will enable individuals to achieve goals not only at an organizational level, but at the national as well as global level. Islamic education has also been known to support a khalifah's contribution at three levels which are individual, community and humanity (Abdul Rahman & Ibrahim, 2021). This also include contribution in terms of health, education, economy, social as well as Islamic moral development (Ibrahim et al., 2021).

Conventional literature highlights more on individual goals such as values, life goals and career identity as a source of motivation for work (Bates et al, 2019). Some studies, however, do refer to organization goals and global goals such as sustainability (Ashford et al., 2020; Jaiswal et al., 2021; Rekalde-Rodríguez et al., 2021; Rodríguez-Rivero et al., 2020), goals of the industry (Oraison, 2019) and corporate social responsibility (Moore & Khan, 2020).

However, some Islamic institutions still do not instil spiritual goals as part of their vision and mission (Johari & Ahmad, 2019).

Islamic research has contributed towards instilling more spirituality within the goals of national and global institutes through the development of an Islamic sustainable development index (Hasan, 2019), alignment of goals with Maqasid al-Shariah (Haq & Wahab, 2019; Hudaefi & Noordin, 2019) and *Úmranic* framework (Dariah et al., 2019). Other studies have attempted to incorporate the sustainable development goals within Islam while also examining the different approaches and issues associated with the term sustainability (Noor Zahirah et al., 2019; Yahya et al., 2020b). Furthermore, the Quran has no mention of the term sustainability. Nonetheless, Allah is mentioned in the Quran as the Sustainer of all creatures, including the world and all in it, including people and its resources. Because of this, true sustainability according to Islamic beliefs is found in obtaining pleasure of Allah known as *Mardhatillah* in Arabic. (Salleh, 2012).

All things considered, these perspectives suggest that an agent of Islamic-based growth need to take the lead in all activities and labor with the exclusive purpose of appeasing Allah (*Mardhatillah*). This goal ought to be reaffirmed and ought to serve as the foundation for all other objectives, including those that are personal, corporate (vision/mission), national (wawasan), and global (SDG). While not necessarily taking precedence over all other objectives, *Mardhatillah* does so to enable an Khalifah to carry out his duties.

## Recommendations

Moreover, apart from role, the factors of ability and motivation affecting work readiness are also linked and relevant with the 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> principles of Islamic-based development which are Framework and Ultimate Aim. This conceptual analysis is portrayed in Figure 2 (below). As such, these three main principles namely the actor (second principle), the framework (fourth principle) and the ultimate aim (seventh principle) of Islamic-based development (Salleh, 2021) can be conceptualised to evaluate the work readiness of graduates within an Islamic context.



Figure 2: Conceptual analysis of employability based on work readiness and principles of Islamic-based Development.

## Conclusion

The paper analyses Islamic-based development based on three principles: actor, framework, and goal of Islamic-based development. The principle of actor has been linked with role for the purpose of work-readiness with some difference between Islamic and conventional perspectives. Conventional literature focus on human, social and psychological capital whereas Islamic literature includes the aspect of spirituality within the role of an individual, whether it is for work or for generic purposes of life. Similarly, the third principle was compared with ability. Both perspectives agree that ability entails skills for work readiness. Islam however emphasize on human development through purification of the *nafs* and abilities of an individual rely on the successful collaboration of both cognitive and affective skills. In terms of goals and motivation, Islam prioritizes the concept of *Mardhatillah* which to please Allah in all aspects of life. This concept contributes towards the variable of motivation for work-readiness which enables an individual to contribute effectively towards his individual, organizational, national, and global goals.

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