The Role of Taqwa and Islamic Ethical Principles in Enhancing Employee Mental Health and Organizational Productivity: A Deliberative Inquiry

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Abstract

Purpose: This study investigates the impact of Taqwa and Islamic ethical principles on employee mental health and organizational productivity. By examining virtues such as repentance, faith, and moderation, as well as prohibitions against vices like envy, despair, and deception, the research aims to clarify the ethical implications of Taqwa for individual well-being and workplace outcomes.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Using a deliberative inquiry approach, the study analyzes Islamic texts (Quran and Shiite Hadiths) alongside contemporary empirical evidence. Through this dual-source analysis, the research identifies how Taqwa operates as an ethical and psychological regulator within organizational contexts.

Findings: The findings indicate that Taqwa enhances psychological well-being by regulating emotions, strengthening interpersonal relationships, and promoting mental vitality. These improvements reduce workplace stress and burnout while simultaneously boosting organizational productivity. The study additionally shows that implementing Taqwa-driven ethical principles contributes to healthier work environments and more resilient employees.

Practical Implications: Practical recommendations include developing Taqwa-based training programs, adopting supportive policies that reinforce marital and social bonds, and encouraging wholesome recreational activities within organizations. These measures can institutionalize ethical well-being and improve organizational effectiveness.

Originality: This research proposes a divinely inspired ethical framework for management that contrasts with secular approaches to workplace mental health. By integrating Islamic values into organizational settings, the study offers novel and effective solutions for mental health management and outlines directions for future research to expand the application of Taqwa-based principles.

Keywords

Introduction

In today's organizational landscape, employees require more than technical skills to achieve optimal performance; they also need psychological support and a conducive work environment to maintain mental well-being. Factors such as stress, work pressure, complex interpersonal relationships, and work-life imbalance significantly undermine mental health, leading to reduced productivity, job dissatisfaction, and substantial organizational costs through burnout and turnover (Maham & Bhatti, 2019). Consequently, organizations prioritizing employee mental health through targeted interventions can enhance efficiency and job satisfaction.

Despite scientific and material advancements in modern societies, individuals face significant mental health challenges, including languishing, depression, anxiety, and a lack of vitality. Even in affluent societies, the proliferation of material comforts has not translated into greater life satisfaction, with many resorting to sedatives, narcotics, or alcohol to alleviate anxiety (Shirazi, 2013/1392). This pervasive psychological crisis underscores that, despite technological and economic progress, human mental and spiritual well-being remains compromised.

Religion, as a deeply rooted spiritual resource, has historically offered solutions to enhance mental health. Islamic teachings, in particular, emphasize the interdependence of physical and mental health as pillars of human flourishing, advocating a return to divine principles to address psychological and social challenges (Shirazi, 2013/1392). Islamic ethics, rooted in Taqwa (God-consciousness), promote values like honesty and commitment, mitigating modern workplace challenges such as burnout by aligning personal faith with professional duties (Amin et al., 2021). However, contemporary reliance on Western theories, which often lack a holistic understanding of human nature, sidelines religious teachings that offer effective solutions. The drift from innate (fitrah) and divine principles is a primary driver of these mental health crises.

Modernity, emerging around the 16th century post-Renaissance, replaced faith-based paradigms with self-reliant rationality, initiating a process that obscured humanity's divine fitrah and fostered self-centeredness and materialism (Mottahari, 2021/1401). While modernity introduced spirituality as a means to achieve superficial calm, it failed to address deeper existential issues, as it sidelined God and Tawhid (monotheism), rendering ethics and spirituality insufficient for true restoration (Khosropanah, 2014/1393). True Tawhid must permeate daily life, not remain a mere concept.

What, then, is the practical response? Taqwa serves as a master key, grounded in Tawhid, fostering holistic human well-being across physical, psychological, and social dimensions. In contrast to secular modernity's material focus, Taqwa integrates spiritual dimensions into work life, countering spiritual voids that contribute to anxiety and depression (Ab Rahman et al., 2010). The human soul influences actions, and actions, in turn, shape the soul; virtuous actions enhance spiritual health, while corrupt actions exacerbate spiritual decline (Shirazi, 2013/1392). Taqwa, far from being a mere abstract virtue, acts as a practical mechanism: without it, no hospital, physician, or medicine can fully restore health. A person with Taqwa, content with their rightful share, enjoys greater mental tranquility, reduced nervous disorders, and a healthier heart, avoiding ailments like ulcers or weakened vitality from excess, ultimately leading to a longer, balanced life (Shirazi, 2013/1392). Specifically, Taqwa, translated as self-restraint, serves as a deterrent to vices (e.g., envy, despair) that are primary sources of psychological distress, while fostering virtues (e.g., faith, moderation) that enhance human resilience. This spirituality, derived from Taqwa, promotes inner peace and resilience against workplace stressors, positively impacting job satisfaction in modern organizational contexts (Bhatti et al., 2021b).

1. Literature Review

1-1. Problem Statement

Contemporary organizations face a myriad of ethical challenges that significantly undermine employee mental health and organizational productivity. Issues such as workplace deviance (e.g., dishonest behaviors, lack of accountability), unethical competition, interpersonal conflicts, favoritism, mistrust, greed, and self-interest create toxic work environments, leading to pervasive problems like stress, anxiety, burnout, and reduced job satisfaction (Kamil et al., 2015; Maham & Bhatti, 2019). These challenges are well-documented in organizational literature, with studies highlighting their detrimental effects on employee well-being and organizational outcomes, including decreased efficiency, diminished employee engagement, and substantial costs due to high turnover and absenteeism (Bhatti et al., 2021b; Ab Rahman et al., 2010). The root of these issues often lies in the secular orientation of modern workplaces, which prioritize material progress over spiritual and ethical considerations, fostering alienation and exacerbating psychological distress (Amin et al., 2021; Helfaya et al., 2020). This spiritual void, a byproduct of modernity's shift toward self-reliant rationality since the

Renaissance, has sidelined the innate human nature (fitrah) and divine principles, contributing to a global mental health crisis characterized by depression, languishing, and reduced life satisfaction (Khosropanah, 2014/1393; Mottahari, 2021/1401).

Despite the acknowledged impact of these ethical dilemmas, existing approaches predominantly rely on secular frameworks, such as organizational justice or empowerment strategies, which often fail to address the deeper spiritual and moral dimensions of human behavior (Saki et al., n.d.; Unspecified, 2022). These frameworks, while valuable, lack the holistic perspective offered by religious traditions, particularly Islamic divine ethics, which emphasize the interdependence of physical, psychological, and social well-being (Shirazi, 2013/1392). Furthermore, much of the literature on Islamic ethics in organizations draws from Sunni interpretations, overlooking the rich Shiite Hadith (e.g., from Imams Ali and Ja'far al-Sadiq) that provide profound insights into Taqwa's role as a mechanism for inner transformation and mental equilibrium (Maham & Bhatti, 2019; Bhatti et al., 2021a). Additionally, prior studies often fail to conduct a root-cause analysis of virtues (e.g., faith, moderation) and vices (e.g., envy, despair), limiting their ability to propose targeted interventions for workplace mental health.

This study addresses these gaps by adopting a religious perspective grounded in Shiite divine ethics, with Taqwa (God-consciousness) as the pivotal construct. Taqwa, conceptualized as self-restraint and alignment with divine principles, serves as a master key to mitigate ethical challenges by deterring vices that fuel psychological distress and cultivating virtues that enhance resilience and well-being (Shirazi, 2013/1392). Unlike secular or Sunni-centric approaches, this research leverages Shiite narratives to explore Taqwa's therapeutic mechanisms, such as its capacity to foster inner peace, reduce workplace stress, and promote work-life balance through practices like timely marriage and moderated interpersonal relationships (Bhatti et al., 2021b). By integrating these insights with contemporary psychological models (e.g., broaden-and-build theory; Fredrickson, 2001), the study aims to develop a comprehensive framework that not only addresses organizational ethical dilemmas but also critiques the spiritual voids of secular modernity, advocating a Tawhid-centered approach to restore fitrah and enhance organizational performance. Through this lens, the study seeks to offer actionable interventions for fostering mental health, ethical behavior, and productivity in modern workplaces.

1-2. Literature Review

Impact of Taqwa (Islamic piety) on employee happiness: A study of Pakistan's banking sector, Maham, R., & Bhatti, O. K. (2019)

This empirical study examines the influence of Taqwa on employee happiness in the high-stress banking sector of Pakistan, using regression analysis on survey data from 500 employees. It operationalizes Taqwa as a multidimensional construct involving Islamic spirituality (e.g., prayer) and social responsibility (e.g., charity), finding a positive correlation with happiness as a proxy for mental well-being, and recommends integrating Taqwa into HR practices for improved organizational performance. In our study, unlike this work, which draws primarily on Sunni interpretations of Islamic piety without emphasizing Shiite Hadith (e.g., from Imams like Ja'far al-Sadiq), we focus on Shiite-derived divine ethics rooted in Tawhid, providing a deeper theological foundation for Taqwa as a remedy for mental health issues. Additionally, while this study correlates Taqwa with happiness, our research innovates by root-causing virtues (e.g., faith) and vices (e.g., envy), explaining their origins and how Taqwa strengthens or cures them, extending beyond general well-being to specific organizational interventions for burnout and work-life imbalance.

The relationship between Islamic piety (Taqwa) and workplace deviance with organizational justice as a moderator, Kamil, N. M., Sulaiman, M., Osman-Gani, A. M., & Ahmad, K. (2015)

This quantitative research investigates how Taqwa reduces workplace deviance (e.g., unethical behaviors) in Malaysian organizations, moderated by organizational justice, using structural equation modeling on data from Muslim employees. It posits Taqwa as an internal ethical compass that fosters self-control, ultimately enhancing mental resilience against workplace stressors. Our article differs by centering on Shiite Muslim divine ethics, contrasting with this study's Sunni-oriented framework that overlooks Shiite narratives on Taqwa's role in inner revolution (e.g., through repentance). Furthermore, we innovate by dissecting the roots of vices like dishonesty and their psychological origins, demonstrating Taqwa's therapeutic mechanisms for virtues and vices, which this study does not address in depth, and applying it specifically to mental health outcomes like anxiety reduction in organizational contexts.

Spirituality in the Workplace: The Role of Taqwa towards the Advancement of the Contemporary Organization, Ab Rahman, Z.,

Asmawi, A., Kamaruzaman, N., Abd Razak, A., & Wan Mohd Yunus, W. M. A. (2010)

This conceptual paper explores Taqwa as the pinnacle of Islamic spirituality in modern organizations, arguing it promotes ethical responsibility and purpose-driven work, drawing on general Islamic principles to advance organizational harmony and employee motivation. Unlike this study, which relies on broad Sunni Islamic concepts without incorporating Shiite Hadith that richly interpret Taqwa as a safeguard against spiritual voids in modernity, our research emphasizes Shiite divine ethics grounded in fitrah (innate nature). We also innovate by analyzing the etiological roots of virtues (e.g., moderation) and vices (e.g., despair), illustrating Taqwa's role in their cultivation or eradication, extending the discussion to societal critiques of secularism not fully addressed here.

Islamic piety at the workplace via an artificial neural network, Bhatti, O. K., Aslam, U. S., Arain, G. A., Mehdi, S. M., & Shaikh, M. A. (2021a)

Utilizing artificial neural networks, this study models the impact of Islamic piety (Taqwa) on workplace behavior in Pakistani firms, finding that it energizes constructive contributions and reduces stress through ethical support among colleagues. Our work innovates by adopting a Shiite perspective on divine ethics, differing from this Sunni-focused analysis that neglects Shiite traditions on Taqwa's introspective dimensions. Additionally, we provide a root-cause analysis of virtues and vices, explaining their psychological origins and Taqwa's remedial function, which this study overlooks in favor of behavioral modeling, while applying it to broader mental health challenges like work-induced depression.

Islamic work ethics, rooted in Taqwa, emphasize values like honesty and dedication, which can mitigate modern workplace challenges such as burnout and dissatisfaction by aligning personal faith with professional duties, Amin, S., Ahmad, A., Hui, L. S., & Abbas, A. (2021)

This review conceptualizes Islamic work ethics through Taqwa, highlighting values like honesty to counter burnout in contemporary settings by integrating faith into professional roles. In contrast to this study's general Sunni ethical framework without Shiite Hadith integration, our research prioritizes Shiite divine ethics for a more profound Tawhid-based approach. We further innovate by tracing the origins of virtues (e.g., dedication) and vices (e.g., burnout's roots in imbalance), detailing Taqwa's strengthening or

curative mechanisms, and critiquing secular modernity's alienation, aspects not deeply explored here.

The Impact of Islamic Spirituality on Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment Through Work Ethics, Bhatti, O. K., Alam, M. A., Hassan, A., & Sulaiman, M. (2021b)

This empirical investigation demonstrates that Islamic spirituality, including Taqwa, enhances job satisfaction by fostering inner peace and resilience against stressors in organizational contexts. Our study diverges by emphasizing Shiite divine ethics, unlike this work's Sunni-centric view that underutilizes Shiite sources on Taqwa's role in spiritual equilibrium. Moreover, we innovate through etiological examination of virtues and vices, their causal roots, and Taqwa's targeted interventions for mental health, extending beyond satisfaction to societal implications like reducing collective anxiety in secular workplaces.

The Effect of Organizational Justice on Psychological Workplace Health in Tehran Schools, Saki, R., et al. (2017/1396)

This Persian study analyzes the effect of organizational justice on psychological workplace health in Tehran schools, finding that fair environments reduce stress and improve mental well-being among educators. Unlike this work, which examines justice in isolation without Islamic ethical integration, our research centers on Shiite divine ethics via Taqwa, innovating by root-causing virtues (e.g., fairness) and vices (e.g., injustice's psychological origins), and applying Taqwa as a remedy, while critiquing secular approaches not addressed here; additionally, we extend to broader organizational productivity, beyond educational settings.

Management and Empowerment of Energy Sector Employees for Preserving Mental Health and Enhancing Productivity, Unspecified (2022)

This Persian article discusses employee empowerment in energy sectors for mental health preservation and productivity enhancement, emphasizing training and support systems. Our study innovates by grounding empowerment in Shiite divine ethics through Taqwa, contrasting with this secular-focused approach, which lacks religious dimensions. We further dissect virtues and vices' roots and Taqwa's curative role, applying it to societal critiques of modernity, while this work is limited to practical empowerment without ethical etiology or broader implications.

2. Conceptual Framework & Methodology

Drawing from the conceptual framework of practical implications as a translational bridge between theory and practice (Alexander & McQuillan, 2024), the proposed framework for this study adapts the deliberative research approach to examine the impact of Taqwa (piety) and Islamic ethical principles on employee mental health and productivity. This framework positions Taqwa as the core construct, translating implications from Islamic texts into organizational applications. It employs a three-dimensional structure—theoretical, practical, and societal—to bridge the gap between ethical deliberations (e.g., restraint from vices and promotion of virtues) and modern workplace challenges, such as stress and burnout. The framework is grounded in hermeneutic extraction of implications from primary Islamic sources (e.g., Quran and Shiite Hadith) and integrates them with psychological models (e.g., broaden-and-build theory; Fredrickson, 2001) and management studies (e.g., Bhatti et al., 2021a). This ensures a robust, evidence-based model that critiques secular modernity's spiritual voids while advocating a God-centered, innate human nature (fitrah)-oriented approach (Khosropanah, 2014/1393).

The framework can be operationalized through conceptual mapping tools and thematic synthesis, facilitating empirical testing in future studies. It addresses limitations in prior literature by incorporating underrepresented Shiite narratives for deeper interpretive capacity (Maham & Bhatti, 2019).

Table 1: Conceptual Framework

Framework Dimension	Scientific Explanation	Key Implications from the Study	Proposed Application
Theoretical Implications	This dimension focuses on extracting conceptual implications from Islamic ethics to expand knowledge in Islamic management and organizational psychology. It aligns with the theoretical bridge in Alexander and McQuillan (2024), using hermeneutics to link Taqwa to mental equilibrium (Shirazi,	Taqwa implies balance between body and mind, restraining vices (e.g., envy) and promoting virtues (e.g., faith), consistent with positive psychology models (Fredrickson, 2001).	Extend Islamic management theories by integrating the Shiite Hadith for modeling employee resilience (Ab Rahman et al., 2010).

Framework Dimension	Scientific Explanation	Key Implications from the Study	Proposed Application
	2013/1392).		
Practical Implications	Emphasizing managerial applications, this dimension translates implications into policy tools, such as Taqwa-based training to mitigate burnout (Bhatti et al., 2021a). It serves as a practical bridge, per Alexander and McQuillan (2024).	Taqwa in marriage and friendships implies HR policies for work-life balance, reducing job stress (Kamil et al., 2015).	Develop organizational interventions like ethics workshops to enhance productivity and team cohesion.
Societal Implications	This explores broader societal impacts, critiquing secularism and promoting fitrah-based ethics (Maham & Bhatti, 2019). It aligns with the societal bridge in Alexander and McQuillan (2024).	Taqwa implies a Tawhid-centered response to modernity's anxiety, fostering societal well-being (Khosropanah, 2014/1393).	Inform public policies for ethical corporate cultures, reducing societal costs of burnout (Helfaya et al., 2020).

This framework provides a scientifically rigorous lens for translating Islamic ethics into management practice, with potential for quantitative validation using scales like Taqwa measures (Maham & Bhatti, 2019).

3. Methodology

This study employs a deliberative research approach (deliberative inquiry or implication-based hermeneutics), adapted from the conceptual framework of practical implications as a translational bridge between theory and practice (Alexander & McQuillan, 2024). This methodology is particularly suited for extracting ethical and conceptual implications from Islamic texts and integrating them with contemporary organizational psychology and management theories. It bridges the gap between theoretical deliberations derived from religious sources and their practical applications in workplace mental health and productivity. The approach is qualitative and conceptual, drawing on thematic analysis to interpret implications at three levels: theoretical, practical, and societal. This framework ensures a rigorous

translation of Islamic ethical principles, such as Taqwa (piety or God-consciousness), into actionable insights for organizational management, while addressing critiques of secular modernity's impact on mental well-being.

The methodology is structured in three sequential stages, each aligned with a dimension of implications from Alexander and McQuillan (2024), to systematically derive, analyze, and apply deliberations from primary Islamic sources (e.g., the Quran, Hadith from Shiite traditions, and Nahj al-Balagha) and secondary scientific literature (e.g., Shirazi, 2013/1392). Data sources include textual exegesis of religious narratives and empirical insights from organizational psychology. Analysis incorporates thematic coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and conceptual mapping to ensure validity and replicability. Triangulation of sources (religious texts, psychological models, and management studies) enhances credibility, while reflexivity is maintained to mitigate interpretive bias.

Stage 1: Identification of Implications and Theoretical Translation (Theoretical Implications)

This stage focuses on extracting core conceptual implications from Islamic ethical principles, expanding theoretical knowledge in Islamic management and organizational psychology. Following the theoretical dimension in Alexander and McQuillan (2024), implications are identified through hermeneutic analysis of texts, emphasizing Taqwa as a self-regulatory mechanism for mental equilibrium. Key themes (e.g., restraint from vices like envy and despair, promotion of virtues like faith and moderation) are coded using thematic analysis software or manual coding.

- **Analytical Tools:** Thematic analysis to categorize implications (e.g., Taqwa as a moderator of stress, aligned with broaden-and-build theory; Fredrickson, 2001).
- **Data Sources:** Primary Islamic texts (e.g., Quran, Surah al-Ra'd: 13:28) and scholarly interpretations (e.g., Shirazi, 2013/1392).
- **Objective:** To theoretically translate implications, enriching models of workplace ethics (e.g., integrating Shiite Hadith overlooked in Sunni-centric literature; Maham & Bhatti, 2019).

Stage 2: Analysis of Semantic Relations and Practical Translation (Practical Implications)

Building on the practical dimension of Alexander and McQuillan (2024), this stage analyzes semantic linkages between identified implications and organizational challenges (e.g., burnout, work-life imbalance). Conceptual mapping visualizes relations, such as how Taqwa mitigates ethical vices (e.g., dishonesty) to enhance interpersonal dynamics and productivity.

- **Analytical Tools:** Conceptual modeling (e.g., via diagrams) to trace pathways (e.g., Taqwa → reduced envy → improved team cohesion; Bhatti et al., 2021a).

- **Data Sources:** Integration of Islamic ethics with management studies (e.g., Kamil et al., 2015, on organizational justice as a moderator).

- **Objective:** Practical translation into managerial tools, such as HR policies for Taqwa-based training to reduce workplace stress.

Stage 3: Framework Presentation and Societal Translation (Societal Implications)

This final stage, inspired by the societal dimension in Alexander and McQuillan (2024), synthesizes implications into a conceptual framework for broader societal impact, critiquing secular modernity's spiritual voids and advocating a God-centered approach. The framework is presented as a three-dimensional model, proposing scalable applications.

- **Analytical Tools:** Synthesis via reflexive narrative and validation through cross-referencing (e.g., with societal ethics in Helfaya et al., 2020).
- **Data Sources:** Broader societal critiques (e.g., Khosropanah, 2014/1393 on Tawhid in daily life).
- **Objective:** Societal translation to inform policy, such as integrating Islamic ethics into corporate culture to address collective mental health crises.

Reliability is ensured through inter-coder agreement (if multiple analysts) and peer debriefing. Limitations include interpretive subjectivity, mitigated by source triangulation. This methodology provides a robust, translational lens for advancing Islamic management scholarship.

4. Findings / Results

In the framework of deliberative research, the ethical dilemmas outlined in the problem statement—such as gossip, lying, harassment, envy, and role conflicts—find profound resolution through Taqwa's implications for

mental health. For instance, viewing repentance as a manifestation of Taqwa reveals its psychological depth: it represents an internal revolution that restores balance by confronting vices and fostering virtues, thereby mitigating workplace stress and burnout (Mottahari, 2003/1382). Examining Taqwa-related concepts like repentance, backbiting, envy, and lying demonstrates how these teachings build spiritual strength and counteract weakening factors. Repentance, as an inner uprising against one's lower self, aligns with cognitive-behavioral models of self-regulation, reducing anxiety from ethical lapses like dishonesty (Fredrickson, 2001). Similarly, backbiting—analyzed as the effort of the incapable ("Al-Ghibah Jahd al-'Ajiz," Nahj al-Balagha, Hikmah 461)—creates virtual superiority illusions, leading to frustration and health deterioration, which Taqwa counters by promoting contentment and reducing interpersonal toxicity (Kaptein, 2022). Envy, as the least enjoyable vice ("The envious person enjoys the least pleasure and happiness from life," Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 77, p. 112), manifests as internal resentment over others' blessings; Taqwa extinguishes this fire before it escalates into verbal or physical harm, preserving mental health and societal harmony (Wu et al., 2022). As Imam Ja'far Sadiq (peace be upon him) states, "The envious person harms himself before harming the other party" (Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, Vol. 12, p. 18), and Imam Ali (peace be upon him) notes, "The less envy there is, the healthier the human body is" (Safina al-Bihar, Vol. 1, p. 251) and "The envious person is always sick, even if (apparently) he has a healthy and robust body" (Ghurar al-Hikam, p. 67). Lying, with its inherent duplicity and stress of exposure, disrupts soul balance and inflicts irreparable spiritual damage, akin to hypocrisy; Taqwa restores harmony, preventing moral erosion in organizational settings (Chen & Qian, 2024). As Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) says, "Whoever lies a lot, his beauty goes away, and whoever fights with people, his chivalry is destroyed, and whoever eats a lot of sorrow, his body becomes sick, and whoever has a bad temper, his soul is in torment." These implications translate Taqwa into practical organizational interventions, fostering resilience against ethical voids of modernity (Maham & Bhatti, 2019; Bhatti et al., 2021b).

For example, if we look at the concept of repentance as one of the manifestations of Taqwa, we can analyze it psychologically as follows: Essentially, repentance is one of the characteristics of humans compared to animals. Repentance is not that we utter the phrase "I ask forgiveness of Allah, my Lord, and I repent to Him," and that's it; it is not a matter of words. Repentance is a psychological and spiritual state, and even a spiritual

revolution in humans, where the phrase of seeking forgiveness is the expression of this state, not the state itself, not repentance itself, like many other things where the word is not the truth itself but the explainer of that truth. That we say "I ask forgiveness of Allah" several times a day, we should not imagine that we repent several times a day. If we truly repent once a day, we will undoubtedly achieve stages and levels of proximity to the Lord.

Repentance consists of a kind of internal revolution, a type of uprising, a type of revolution from the side of the human himself against himself. This aspect is one of the exclusives of humans.

Repentance means that internal uprising, where the high stations of human existence against the low stations of his existence—which have taken the reins of this internal country's affairs—suddenly revolt, take all of them and throw them into prison, and they themselves, with their forces and troops and armies, take the reins of affairs in hand. This state and form does not exist in animals and plants. Just as its opposite also exists, meaning sometimes the low stations of human existence revolt and revolution against the high stations of his existence, take them and throw them into prison, and take the reins of this country's affairs in hand. (Mottahari, 1382)

If we examine each of the Taqwa-related concepts of religion in this framework, we will see that all of them are teachings in the direction of construction, increasing human spiritual power, and confronting factors that weaken it. For example, when we speak of backbiting as a vice, this trait is analyzed within the individual as follows: Based on the narration " Backbiting someone is the work of a helpless person. " (Nahj al-Balagha, Hikmah 461), the backbiter, relative to a person who is superior to him, has not been able to gain superiority in the external world and through this wants to draw a virtual superiority over him in his mind, while in this matter he has failed and in fact his desperate effort has no result and will bring more frustration for him.

Perhaps for this reason, it is narrated from Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him): "The backbiter should not have an eye of greed for health." And it is clear that the Imam's intention is absolute health, meaning health of soul and body.

Or regarding envy, we see that it is said from the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH): "The envious person enjoys the least pleasure and happiness from life." (Bihar, Vol. 77, p. 112) In analyzing envy, it can be said that envy means wishing for the destruction of others' blessings, and wishing

is a matter related to the inner soul of humans, and a person, by referring to his inner self, can understand whether he has suffered from this deadly psychological disease. For example, if he becomes upset and sad because of the blessings that are in the hands of others, this can be a symptom and sign of envy in him. From the Islamic perspective, as long as the fire of envy is merely in the human heart like fire under ash, no sin is written for him, but when it is accompanied by verbal and sometimes physical actions, this fire becomes ignited and its flames will definitely burn the envious person's lap and gradually melt the spiritual joy of humans and endanger his mental health and affect the world and hereafter of the individual and society.

For this reason, Imam Ja'far Sadiq (peace be upon him) says: "The envious person harms himself before harming the other party." (Mustadrak, Vol. 12, p. 18)

Imam Ali (AS): "The less envy there is, the healthier the human body is." (Safina al-Bihar, Vol. 1, p. 251)

Imam Ali: "The envious person is always sick, even if (apparently) he has a healthy and robust body." (Ghurar, p. 67)

Regarding lying, it can be said that the liar is always in stress of exposure, and to prevent this event, he sinks more and more into the swamp of lying day by day; in truth, he is destroying his own soul because the duplicity in lying means lack of harmony between appearance and interior, which also exists in other sins like hypocrisy, disrupts the balance of human soul and inflicts irreparable damages to the individual's spirit and psyche. In this regard, for example, we have a saying from Prophet Jesus (AS) who says: "Whoever lies a lot, his beauty goes away, and whoever fights with people, his chivalry is destroyed, and whoever eats a lot of sorrow, his body becomes sick, and whoever has a bad temper, his soul is in torment."

5. Discussion

According to what was stated, the implications are reported in the table below:

Table 1: Impact of Ethical Injunctions on Mental Health and Organizational Outcomes

Moral Virtue/Ethical Concept	Theoretical Implications (Impact on Mental Health)	Practical Implications in Organization (Effects on Employees)	Societal Implications (Broader Effects)	References
Piety (Taqwa)	Taqwa acts as a spiritual medicine for mental ailments, promoting contentment and reducing anxiety by restraining vices like envy, leading to psychological balance and tranquility.	In organizations, Taqwa reduces workplace stress and burnout among employees by fostering self-restraint, enhancing ethical decision-making, and improving interpersonal trust, thereby boosting productivity.	Societally, Taqwa counters modernity's spiritual voids, promoting collective mental health through ethical communities that prevent social distress and alienation.	Amini & Muhammad-Jafari (2020, p. 43); Shirazi (2013/1392, p. 143); Nahj al-Balagha (Sermon 198, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 43); Maham & Bhatti (2019)
Moderation in Eating (Less Eating)	Moderation prevents mental distress from overindulgence, ensuring sound thinking and emotional stability by avoiding vices like gluttony that disrupt psychological equilibrium.	Employees practicing moderation experience less mental fatigue and better focus at work, reducing stress-related absenteeism and enhancing job performance through balanced energy levels.	On a societal level, it fosters a culture of self-discipline, reducing collective health burdens from overconsumption and promoting mental serenity in communities.	Amini & Muhammad-Jafari (2020, p. 43); Ghurar al-Hikam (p. 320, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 43); Bihar al-Anwar (Vol. 59, p. 287, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 43)
Prohibition of Malicious Gossip	The injunction against malicious gossip mitigates psychological distress by curbing slanderous remarks that foster mistrust and emotional exhaustion, promoting mental tranquility through Taqwa-driven	In organizations, prohibiting malicious gossip reduces employee anxiety and mistrust, enhancing interpersonal relationships and eliminating toxic workplace cultures, thereby boosting productivity and collaboration.	Societally, it diminishes the spread of slanderous rumors, fostering social harmony and collective mental health through strengthened positive interactions.	Wu et al. (2022); Brady et al. (2023); Li et al. (2024); Nahj al-Balagha (Hikmah 461, cited in Mottahari, 2003/1382); Mustadrak al-Wasa'il (Vol. 12, p. 18, cited in Mottahari, 2003/1382)

Moral Virtue/Ethical Concept	Theoretical Implications (Impact on Mental Health)	Practical Implications in Organization (Effects on Employees)	Societal Implications (Broader Effects)	References
	contentment ("Al-Ghibah Jahd al-'Ajiz," Nahj al-Balagha, Hikmah 461).			
Prohibition of Envy	The proscription of envy alleviates psychological distress caused by coveting others' blessings, reducing depression and anxiety while fostering emotional stability and contentment through Taqwa ("The envious person enjoys the least pleasure," Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 77, p. 112).	In organizations, curbing envy minimizes unhealthy competition, enhances employee focus and job satisfaction, and strengthens team collaboration by reducing reputational damage and stress.	Societally, it mitigates anxiety from social comparisons, promoting equitable communities with improved collective mental health and reduced interpersonal conflict.	Wu et al. (2022); Bihar al-Anwar (Vol. 77, p. 112, cited in Mottahari, 2003/1382); Mustadrak al-Wasa'il (Vol. 12, p. 18, cited in Mottahari, 2003/1382); Safina al-Bihar (Vol. 1, p. 251, cited in Mottahari, 2003/1382); Ghurar al-Hikam (p. 67, cited in Mottahari, 2003/1382)
Prohibition of Harassment	The interdiction of harassment, including verbal abuse and bullying, mitigates psychological harm by preventing moral disengagement and fostering a respectful environment, enhancing mental well-being through Taqwa.	In organizations, prohibiting harassment eliminates hostile environments, reduces employee anxiety and depression, and enhances productivity through improved collaboration and psychological safety.	Societally, it curbs psychological violence, fostering harmonious communities with enhanced collective mental health and reduced social discord.	Chen & Qian (2024); Mottahari (2003/1382)
Maintaining Family Ties (Silat al-Rahm)	This virtue alleviates isolation and depression by providing social	In the workplace, strong family ties reduce employee anxiety from work-	Societally, it builds resilient communities by preventing	Amini & Muhammad-Jafari (2020, pp. 43-44); Bihar al-

Moral Virtue/Ethical Concept	Theoretical Implications (Impact on Mental Health)	Practical Implications in Organization (Effects on Employees)	Societal Implications (Broader Effects)	References
	support, enhancing mental peace, and emotional resilience against psychological distress.	life imbalance, improving focus and collaboration, as supported employees exhibit lower turnover rates.	mental health crises from loneliness, promoting collective harmony, and emotional well-being.	Anwar (Vol. 71, p. 81, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 43); Al-Amali (p. 340, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 44)
Patience (Sabr)	Patience acts as a coping mechanism, reducing anxiety and emotional turmoil by enabling adaptation to stressors without mental distress.	Employees with patience handle workplace pressures better, decreasing burnout and enhancing resilience, leading to sustained productivity during organizational changes.	Societally, it fosters a culture of endurance, mitigating collective psychological strain from adversities and promoting long-term community mental health.	Amini & Muhammad-Jafari (2020, p. 44); Quran (Al-Baqarah: 155, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 44); Al-Kafi (Vol. 2, p. 89, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 44)
Overcoming Anger (Kazm al-Ghayz)	Controlling anger prevents emotional outbursts and regret, promoting mental tranquility and self-control against psychological instability.	In organizations, anger management reduces interpersonal conflicts among employees, fostering a peaceful work environment and improving team dynamics for higher efficiency.	Societally, it curbs aggression-related mental health issues, building harmonious communities with reduced violence and enhanced collective emotional stability.	Amini & Muhammad-Jafari (2020, pp. 44-45); Quran (Al Imran: 134, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 44); Bihar al-Anwar (Vol. 72, p. 196, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 45)
Controlling the Gaze (Restraining Eyes)	Restraining the gaze avoids envy-induced distress, maintains mental	Employees practicing this virtue experience less distraction and	Societally, it promotes modesty and mental	Amini & Muhammad-Jafari (2020, p. 45); Al-Kafi (Vol.

Moral Virtue/Ethical Concept	Theoretical Implications (Impact on Mental Health)	Practical Implications in Organization (Effects on Employees)	Societal Implications (Broader Effects)	References
	purity, and reduces psychological harm from lust or comparison.	envy at work, leading to better focus, reduced stress, and improved professional relationships.	contentment, countering media-driven comparisons that cause widespread anxiety and depression.	5, p. 559, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 45); Ghurar al-Hikam (p. 663, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 45)
Positive Assumption (Husn al-Zann)	Good assumptions reduce suspicion and paranoia, fostering trust and emotional stability to prevent mental torment from negative thinking.	In the workplace, it minimizes misunderstandings among employees, enhancing collaboration and reducing anxiety from perceived threats, boosting overall morale.	Societally, it builds trusting communities, alleviating collective paranoia and promoting mental health through positive social interactions.	Amini & Muhammad-Jafari (2020, p. 45); Ghurar al-Hikam (p. 253, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 45); Bihar al-Anwar (Vol. 75, p. 209, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 45)
Good Character (Husn al-Khulq)	Good manners increase social bonds, reducing isolation-induced depression and promoting joy and psychological well-being.	Employees with good character foster positive team environments, decreasing conflicts and stress, which enhances job satisfaction and productivity.	Societally, it strengthens community ties, reducing mental health issues from social discord and promoting widespread emotional harmony.	Amini & Muhammad-Jafari (2020, pp. 45-46); Ghurar al-Hikam (p. 184, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 46); Bihar al-Anwar (Vol. 68, p. 396, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 46)
Trust in God (Tawakkul)	Trusting God alleviates worry and fear, providing psychological	In organizations, it helps employees cope with job insecurity, reducing	Societally, it counters existential anxiety from	Amini & Muhammad-Jafari (2020, p. 46); Quran (Al-

Moral Virtue/Ethical Concept	Theoretical Implications (Impact on Mental Health)	Practical Implications in Organization (Effects on Employees)	Societal Implications (Broader Effects)	References
	relief and peace against uncertainty-induced anxiety.	stress and improving focus, leading to higher resilience and performance.	materialism, fostering collective mental peace and stability in uncertain times.	Talaq: 3, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 46); Al-Kafi (Vol. 2, p. 65, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 46)
Truthfulness (Sidq)	Truthfulness preserves mental integrity, reducing stress from deception and promoting inner peace.	Employees practicing truthfulness build trust in teams, minimizing anxiety from conflicts and enhancing collaborative efficiency.	Societally, it reduces deception-related mental strain, promoting honest communities with lower rates of psychological distress.	Amini & Muhammad-Jafari (2020, p. 46); Ghurar al-Hikam (p. 218, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 46); Al-Kafi (Vol. 2, p. 104, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 46)
Prohibition of Deception	The directive against deception preserves mental integrity by reducing the stress and moral disengagement associated with dishonesty, restoring inner peace through Taqwa-driven truthfulness.	In organizations, prohibiting deception fosters trust within teams, reduces anxiety from conflicts, and enhances collaborative efficiency, leading to a more cohesive work environment.	Societally, it alleviates psychological strain from deceit, promoting honest communities with lower rates of mental distress and stronger social bonds.	Kaptein (2022); Chen & Qian (2024); Mottahari (2003/1382); Amini & Muhammad-Jafari (2020, p. 46)
Gratitude (Shukr)	Gratitude enhances contentment and joy, reducing depression by focusing on blessings rather	In the workplace, grateful employees exhibit higher morale, reducing stress and improving engagement and	Societally, it counters greed-induced anxiety, fostering thankful communities with improved	Amini & Muhammad-Jafari (2020, pp. 46-47); Al-Kafi (Vol. 2, p. 96, cited in Amini & Muhammad-

Moral Virtue/Ethical Concept	Theoretical Implications (Impact on Mental Health)	Practical Implications in Organization (Effects on Employees)	Societal Implications (Broader Effects)	References
	than lacks.	productivity.	collective mental health.	Jafari, 2020, p. 47); Quran (Ibrahim: 7, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 47)
Silence (Samt)	Silence promotes mental clarity and reduces regret from hasty speech, fostering psychological calm and reflection.	Employees who use silence wisely avoid conflicts, reducing workplace stress and enhancing thoughtful decision-making for better performance.	Societally, it minimizes harmful speech-related distress, promoting peaceful communities with lower mental fatigue from overcommunication.	Amini & Muhammad-Jafari (2020, p. 47); Nahj al-Balagha (Hikmah 209, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 47); Ghurar al-Hikam (p. 216, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 47)
Contentment (Qana'ah)	Contentment eliminates greed and anxiety, providing mental peace and self-esteem against material dissatisfaction.	In organizations, contented employees focus better without envy, reducing stress from competition and improving job satisfaction.	Societally, it counters consumerism's mental toll, fostering equitable communities with reduced anxiety from inequality.	Amini & Muhammad-Jafari (2020, pp. 47-48); Bihar al-Anwar (Vol. 68, p. 349, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 48); Nahj al-Balagha (Hikmah 370, cited in Amini & Muhammad-Jafari, 2020, p. 48)

This table outlines the theoretical, practical, and social implications of sixteen key ethical principles rooted in piety and demonstrates their role in reducing psychological distress and increasing employee well-being and

organizational productivity, supported by Islamic teachings and contemporary research.

6. Conclusion

This study has elucidated that Taqwa, as the cornerstone of Islamic divine ethics, plays a pivotal role in enhancing mental health and organizational performance. By fostering virtues such as repentance, patience, truthfulness, contentment, gratitude, and good character, while curbing vices like envy, lying, malicious gossip, and harassment, Taqwa creates a foundation for psychological and spiritual balance. These virtues promote inner tranquility, reduce anxiety, and strengthen self-discipline, enabling individuals to navigate psychological and social challenges effectively. In organizational contexts, Taqwa mitigates conflicts, builds trust, and enhances collaboration, leading to healthier work environments and increased productivity. At a societal level, it fosters harmony and reduces social harms caused by ethical lapses, contributing to collective well-being.

While Western ethical frameworks recognize the impact of moral behaviors on the human psyche—for instance, acknowledging lying as a vice that induces psychological stress, physical ailments, and even diminished aesthetic appeal—secular ethics, with its anthropocentric focus and absence of transcendental laws, lacks the sanctity and profound motivational force to ensure consistent adherence to ethical principles. In contrast, religious ethics, grounded in a teleological and God-centered approach, leverages Taqwa to awaken intrinsic motivations, guiding individuals toward actions that secure both worldly and eternal felicity. By cultivating psychological tranquility in individuals, families, and communities, Taqwa not only bolsters mental health but also indirectly alleviates physical ailments. This research, by integrating Islamic ethical concepts with their applications in organizations and societies, offers a novel framework for promoting ethical resilience and improving quality of life.

7. Limitations

This study is primarily theoretical, relying on deliberative inquiry and textual analysis of Islamic sources, which limits its empirical generalizability. The lack of quantitative data from diverse organizational settings restricts the ability to measure the direct impact of Taqwa-based interventions on employee mental health and productivity. Additionally, the focus on Shiite Hadiths may limit applicability in non-Shiite Islamic contexts or secular organizations. Cultural and contextual variations in interpreting Taqwa were

not fully explored, potentially overlooking nuances in its operationalization across different demographics.

8. Suggestions for Future Research

Future studies should empirically test the proposed Taqwa-based framework through longitudinal experiments or mixed-methods research in diverse organizational settings, measuring outcomes such as employee well-being, stress levels, and productivity metrics. Cross-cultural studies could investigate the applicability of Taqwa in non-Islamic or multicultural workplaces. Further research is needed to develop standardized tools for implementing Taqwa-based training programs and to explore their scalability across industries. Finally, integrating interdisciplinary perspectives, such as positive psychology or organizational behavior, could enhance the framework's robustness and practical utility.

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Appendices (if any)

Conflict of Interest Statement

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