

Islamic Work-Life Balance Based on *Maqasid Shariah*: Criticism of *Hustle Culture*

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Abstrak. Fenomena *hustle culture* yang menekankan kerja tanpa batas sering kali mengorbankan *work-life balance*. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkritisi *hustle culture* dari perspektif Islam dengan menggunakan konsep *work-life balance* berbasis *maqasid syariah*. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode studi kepustakaan dengan analisis kualitatif terhadap berbagai sumber literatur yang relevan. Hasil penelitian ini menemukan bahwa *hustle culture* sebagai praktik yang tidak berkelanjutan dan tidak sesuai dengan prinsip keseimbangan dalam Islam yang menekankan keseimbangan dalam lima aspek Hifz al-Din, Hifz al-Nafs, Hifz al-Aql, Hifz al-Mal, dan Hifz al-Nasl. Penelitian ini menawarkan *work-life balance* berbasis Maqasid Syariah untuk menciptakan keseimbangan kerja-hidup yang lebih sehat, etis, dan berkelanjutan sesuai dengan prinsip Islam.

Kata Kunci: Hustle Culture, Work-Life Balance, Maqasid Syariah.

Abstract. The phenomenon of hustle culture that emphasizes unlimited work often comes at the expense of work-life balance. This research aims to criticize hustle culture from an Islamic perspective by using the concept of work-life balance based on maqasid shariah. This study uses a literature study method with qualitative analysis of various relevant literature sources. The results of this study found that hustle culture is an unsustainable practice and not following the principle of balance in Islam which emphasizes balance in five aspects of Hifz al-Din, Hifz al-Nafs, Hifz al-Aql, Hifz al-Mal, and Hifz al-Nasl. This research offers a work-life balance based on Maqasid Syariah to create a healthier, ethical, and sustainable work-life balance following Islamic principles.

Keywords: Hustle Culture, Work-Life Balance, Maqasid Shariah.

Introduction

In this modern, competitive era, this phenomenon of *hustle culture* has spread to become part of the lifestyle of many individuals, especially among workers (Iskandar & Rachmawati, 2022). Another term for *hustle culture* is a workaholic (Metris, 2024). *Hustle culture* can lead to *toxic productivity*, which has the potential to threaten a healthy and sustainable life balance (Elim, 2024). Some key features of *hustle culture* are constantly thinking about work all the time, not having time to relax, working at the expense of rest time, obsessing over work success excessively, and experiencing *burnout* due to physical and emotional exhaustion (Balkeran, 2020; Freedman-Diamond, 2024; Maharini et al., 2025; Metris, 2024; Yuningsih et al., 2023).

Hustle culture and *work-life balance* are often considered as two opposing concepts in the modern world of work. However, with good management, a person can remain productive without sacrificing personal health and happiness goals (Elim, 2024). To emphasize *work-life balance*, European countries have implemented short working hours of 25 – 30 hours per week. According to data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), in 2022 Germany will be the country with the

shortest working hours, namely 25.6 hours per week. At the same time, Germany was also named the country with the largest economy in Europe. Meanwhile, the country with the longest working hours is Mexico, namely 43.3 hours per week. Meanwhile, Indonesia is in 20th place as the country that has the longest working hours with an average of 38 - 40 hours per week. (Arifah, 2022; Raras, 2022). Phenomenon *hustle culture* has influenced the work and life patterns of Indonesian society and is most often found in companies' *startup* technology that has a fast work rhythm (Chairunnisah & Kurnia, 2023).

Long before the concept of *Work-Life Balance* Present in modern society, Islamic teachings already regulated in detail about *work-life balance*. Ghazali and Mohamed's (2023) research produced a conceptual framework *Work-Life Balance* which is based on principles of Maqasid Shariah. While Zolkefley, et al (2023) provide a solution to *Work-Life Balance* based on the concept of *Wasathiyah*. However, they have not linked it to the phenomenon of *hustle culture*. This research aims to criticize *hustle culture* in modern work culture by using the concept of *Work-Life Balance* from an Islamic perspective. It is hoped that this research can provide an Islamic-based solution to the challenges faced by modern society in achieving productivity without sacrificing life balance.

Theoretical Studies

1. Hustle Culture

Hustle Culture was presented by Wayne Oates in 1971 in his book entitled "*Confessions of a Workaholic: The Facts About Work Addiction*" with the designation *workaholic*. According to Oates, *hustle culture* is a lifestyle where someone feels that success can only be achieved if they continue to work non-stop and sacrifice their rest time. This mindset encourages individuals to always be productive and feel guilty if they don't do something that is considered professionally valuable. (Budiarjo & Ulinnuha, 2023; Elim, 2024). *Hustle culture* is often associated with pressure to always be busy, work overtime, and sacrifice personal life for professional ambitions. *Hustle culture* can be caused by perfectionism and obsessive traits, as well as social influences. Although in the short term, this culture may stimulate productivity, it also hurts physical and mental health. This culture can cause *burnout* and imbalance in life. So, when this happens it will hurt job satisfaction, quality of life, and employee performance (Kundu, 2023).

2. Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance is defined as a condition where a person can carry out responsibilities in work and personal life in a balanced manner so that there is no imbalance in these two aspects (Rothbard et al., 2021). There are three main aspects to Work-Life Balance. First, time balance (*to balance*), that is, ideally, a person should not only focus on work to the point of sacrificing time with family, resting, or developing themselves. Second, balance of involvement (*involvement balance*) refers to the extent to which a person is psychologically engaged and committed to their work and life outside of work. One needs to pay sufficient attention to these two aspects so that no imbalance causes one of them to be neglected. Third, balance of satisfaction (*satisfaction balance*) refers to the level of satisfaction an individual feels with his or her work and life outside of work. If someone feels satisfied in both aspects, then Work-Life Balance can be said to be achieved (Greenhouse et al., 2003).

Achieving work-life balance conditions is not solely the responsibility of the individual or employee but rather the harmonization of work relationships and mutual commitment between the employee's company and the government. (Hasyim & Najicha, 2023). However, there are several

obstacles to realizing work-life balance. Barriers that originate from individual employees themselves are perfectionism, poor time management, difficulty delegating tasks, difficulty setting boundaries between work and personal life, and the tendency to take work home. External obstacles such as high workloads, pressure from superiors or colleagues, lack of social support, employment policies, and economic demands force a person to work harder. The combination of these two types of obstacles often creates significant challenges in achieving a healthy balance between work and personal life (Ghazali & Mohamed, 2023; Rothbard et al., 2021; Sherly et al., 2025; Wirawan, 2022).

3. Islamic Work-Life Balance Based *Maqasid Shariah*

From an Islamic perspective, work-life balance is not only about balance between work and personal life but also about balance in living life in this world and the afterlife. Islam teaches its followers to work hard, but still maintain the rights of the body, family, and worship (Lusiana et al., 2024). Thus *Work-Life Balance* in Islam includes how a person manages professional responsibilities at work while still having time for family, friends, health, and worship.

Mubarak dkk., (2022) in an article entitled *Maqasid-Shariah and Well-Being: a Systematic Literature Review*, states that holistic welfare, including individual welfare and social welfare, can be achieved through the application of principles *Maqasid Shariah* which provides protection and development of the five main aspects of human life, namely protection of religion, soul, mind, lineage and property. Integration of principles of *Maqasid Shariah* in various sectors, such as education, the economy, and health, can produce more holistic and sustainable policies and practices (Mubarak et al., 2022).

Maqasid Shariah itself refers to the main purpose of Islamic law to protect the five fundamental aspects of human life, which consists of *Hifz al-Din* (Protecting Religion), *Hifz al-Nafs* (Protecting the Soul), *Hifz al-Aql* (Protecting Reason), *Hifz al-Mal* (Protecting Property), and *Hifz al-Nasl* (Protecting Descendants). (Zailani et al., 2022). Thus, work-life balance is based on *Maqasid Shariah* can be interpreted as a harmonious condition between professional responsibilities and personal life that supports the realization of protection of religion (*hifz ad-din*), soul (*hifz an-nafs*), reason (*hifz al-aql*), assets (*hifz al-mal*), and descendants (*hifz an-nasl*) so that individuals can work with a good ethos without neglecting worship, health, knowledge, financial stability, and family harmony following Islamic principles.

Ghazali and Muhammad (2023) in the article entitled *Conceptual Framework of the Work-Life Balance Model Based on Maqasid Shariah Towards Social Well-Being at Universiti Awam Malaysia*, discusses the importance of work-life balance in maintaining high work performance and social welfare. The findings of this research indicate that the implementation of the work-life balance model based on *Maqasid Shariah* can contribute positively to the social welfare of lecturers at Malaysian state universities. Based on the findings, a conceptual framework is proposed *Work-Life Balance* which is based on *Maqasid Shariah* (Ghazali et al., 2023). Next, the Work-Life Balance model based on *Maqasid Shariah* has also been tested as a measuring tool for job satisfaction. As the results of research by Ghazali, et al., (2023) entitled *A Work-Life Balance Model Based On Maqasid Shariah Sustaining The Social Well-Being Of Lecturers In Malaysian Public Universities: A Pilot Study*. The findings show that *Maqasid Shariah* can be the basis for better policies to improve the welfare and performance of workers.

Method

This research is library research, namely research carried out to solve a problem that is based on a critical and in-depth study of relevant library materials. Data collection was carried out using document study techniques, namely by reviewing related books, articles, and research reports. The data analysis technique used is the Miles and Huberman model of qualitative data analysis which consists of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing stages.

First, is data reduction, namely the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming raw data from various literature sources to obtain findings that are the focus of the research. Second, data presentation, where the reduced data is arranged systematically to make it easier to understand so that it can be used as a basis for determining the next research steps. Third, concluding, namely the process of analyzing the data that has been presented to produce new findings.

Discussion

This research aims to criticize *hustle culture* in modern work culture by using the concept of *Work-Life Balance in Islam-based Maqasid Shariah*. In line with the principles of *Maqasid Shariah*, five aspects must be maintained in balance. First, Hifz al-Din (Maintaining Religion), emphasizes a balance between work obligations and worship, such as ensuring time for prayer, reading the Koran, and avoiding work that is contrary to Islamic values or causes negligence in carrying out worship. Second, Hifz al-Nafs (Maintaining the Spirit/Physical and Mental Health), focuses on preventing work fatigue (burnout) by providing adequate rest time and implementing work policies that support mental health, such as flexible working hours and adequate leave. Third, Hifz al-Aql (Maintaining Reason/Education and Intellectuality), provides space for self-development and continuous education without sacrificing family time, as well as avoiding excessive work pressure so that you can continue to think clearly and productively. Fourth, Hifz al-Mal (Maintaining Halal and Blessing Assets/Income), emphasizes the balance between earning a living and living a meaningful life, as well as encouraging ethical ways of working with income from halal sources. Fifth, Hifz al-Nasl (Protecting Offspring/Family and Social Affairs), encourages work policies that support the role of the family, such as maternity leave and time with family, as well as balancing professional responsibilities with social and family obligations so that relationships remain harmonious (Ghazali & Mohamed, 2023).

The Work-Life Balance concept is based on principles *Maqasid Shariah* provides sharp criticism of the hustle culture phenomenon, which emphasizes extreme hard work to the point that it often sacrifices other aspects of life. Hustle culture instills a mindset that success can only be achieved through non-stop work, even at the expense of rest time, health, and social life. This perspective is contrary to the principles of Hifz al-Nafs in *Maqasid Shariah*, which emphasizes the importance of maintaining physical and mental health. Islam teaches balance in all aspects of life, including at work, so that a person does not experience burnout which results in a decrease in quality of life and long-term productivity.

Apart from that, hustle culture often ignores aspects of spirituality and worship because the individual's main focus is centered on material achievement and career. In *Maqasid Shariah*, the Hifz al-Din principle teaches that work-life balance must include fulfilling religious obligations, such as prayer, reading the Koran, and other forms of worship. The Work-Life Balance model based on *Maqasid Shariah* reminded us that blessings at work are not only determined by the number of hours worked but also by the

quality and intention of work. Thus, individuals are encouraged to work professionally without forgetting their spiritual obligations.

From an intellectual perspective, hustle culture tends to prioritize productivity alone without providing space for wider self-development. The principle of Hifz al-Aql in *Maqasid Shariah* emphasizes the importance of maintaining reason and providing opportunities for individuals to continue learning and thinking clearly. Excessive workload can hinder innovation and creativity because a person does not have enough time to reflect, study, or even just rest to refresh their mind. Therefore, Work-Life Balance is based on *Maqasid Shariah* criticizing work cultures that do not provide opportunities for individuals to develop intellectually and emotionally.

Hustle culture also often normalizes labor exploitation under the pretext of dedication to work. In *Maqasid Shariah*, the Hifz al-Mal principle emphasizes that earning a living must be carried out in a halal and ethical manner, including ensuring the welfare of workers. A healthy work culture should not only be oriented towards increasing company productivity, but also ensuring employee welfare with fair policies, such as reasonable working hours, sufficient leave, and appreciation for their efforts. From an Islamic perspective, a person's economic well-being is not only measured by high income but also by the blessings and ethics in seeking them.

Lastly, hustle culture often sacrifices social and family relationships for the sake of career success. Hifz al-Nasl principles in *Maqasid Shariah* emphasize the importance of maintaining a balance between work responsibilities and roles in the family and society. Islam emphasizes that family is the main pillar of life, and ignoring social roles for the sake of personal ambitions can have long-term negative impacts, such as strained family relationships and increased stress levels. Therefore, the criticism of Work-Life Balance is based on *Maqasid Shariah* against hustle culture is that the balance of work and personal life must be based on the principles of justice and sustainability, not just unlimited productivity that sacrifices fundamental aspects of human life.

Work-Life Balance based *Maqasid Shariah* emphasizes that work-life balance focuses not only on productivity but also on overall well-being, creating a healthier, more harmonious, and sustainable work environment. Principle *Maqasid Shariah* not only focuses on individual well-being but also considers institutional interests and productivity. Individuals who have a good work-life balance will be more motivated, have lower stress levels, and can work more optimally. Thus, it will contribute directly to job performance and satisfaction which ultimately increases the productivity of the institution or company (Ghazali et al., 2023). In line with Pamungkas et al., (2024) which confirms that the application of the principle *Maqasid Shariah* can ensure that work policies not only focus on company productivity but also protect welfare and *work-life balance* for employees.

Work-life balance and hustle culture have a conflicting relationship because they represent different approaches to work and personal life. Work-life balance-based *Maqasid Shariah* emphasizes a balance between work and personal life following the principles of protecting religion, soul, mind, property, and offspring, while hustle culture encourages excessive hard work which often ignores spiritual aspects, health, and social relationships. In Islam, working hard is worship, but it must remain proportional so as not to damage physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. Hence, the principle *Maqasid Shariah* corrects the negative impact of hustle culture by ensuring that productivity is maintained without sacrificing personal, family, and religious rights so that life is more harmonious and blessed.

Cover

Hustle culture becomes an obstacle in realizing work-life balance, which emphasizes balance between work and personal life, as well as material and spiritual well-being. From the perspective of *Maqasid Shariah*, hustle culture is contrary to Hifz al-Nafs because it ignores physical and mental health, *Hifz al-Din* for neglecting worship, *Hifz al-Aql* because it inhibits intellectual development due to excessive work pressure, *Hifz al-Mal* because it encourages unethical exploitation of labor, and Hifz al-Nasl because it destroys family and social harmony. Islam teaches that work is worship, but it should not be excessive to the point of neglecting other aspects of life. Therefore, each needs to manage time wisely, set balanced priorities, and ensure that worldly achievements do not come at the expense of life's overall blessings.

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