A Qur'anic Management Framework for Sustainable Work Ethics in the Digital Era: Operationalizing Amānah and Integrity for Organizational Resilience

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ABSTRACT

Purpose –This study addresses the ethical erosion and dehumanizing tendencies of digitally mediated work (e.g., algorithmic control, gig arrangements, and transactional performance pressures) by formulating a Qur'anic management framework for sustainable work ethics grounded in amānah and integrity. It responds to the gap between prevailing digital work norms and Qur'anic moral ideals, with a focus on long-term organizational sustainability.

Methods – Using a tafsīr maudhū'ī (thematic) approach within qualitative library research, the study conducts a structured thematic synthesis: (i) selection of Qur'anic passages relevant to work, trust, justice, and responsibility; (ii) contextual reading through classical and contemporary tafsīr; and (iii) hermeneutic translation of ethical themes into management constructs and sustainability-oriented outcomes (governance, social well-being, and responsible conduct).

Findings–The study constructs an integrative model comprising three pillars—al-'adl (justice), al-amānah (trustworthy integrity), and mas'ūliyyah ijtimā'iyyah (social responsibility)—operationalized as sustainability enablers in digital workplaces. Al-'adl supports fair treatment and worker well-being in data-driven performance systems; al-amānah strengthens ethical governance and accountability under automation; and mas'ūliyyah ijtimā'iyyah matches organizational behavior with collective benefit and CSR-like commitments.

Practical Implications–The framework offers a sustainability-oriented paradigm for human resource management, ethical leadership, and organizational governance, enabling firms to mitigate digital-era risks by embedding justice, integrity, and collective responsibility into codes of ethics, evaluation systems, and digital-work policies.

Originality/value–This study advances Islamic management scholarship by moving beyond normative exposition to propose an operational Qur'anic management framework that links Qur'anic ethics to sustainability outcomes in contemporary digital organizations.

A. Introduction

Digital change has not only transformed the global economic system, but has also reshaped how human beings understand the meaning of work. The digital world often constrains meaning within demands for productivity while simultaneously intensifying the human need for life's purpose. Work that was once regarded as a form of worship and devotion has shifted into a mechanical activity governed by algorithms and performance targets. The Gallup Global Workplace survey (2023) reports that more than 59% of workers worldwide experience a loss of meaning in their work (a "meaning crisis") due to the relentless, fast-paced, and uninterrupted pressures of digital systems. This fact indicates that technological progress can leave an emptiness in the spiritual domain of human life. In such circumstances, work is no longer solely about efficiency, but also about how individuals rediscover spiritual values, sincerity, and the meaning of devotion behind every professional activity. Beyond the "meaning crisis," digital work ecosystems increasingly operate through algorithmic management—performance dashboards, automated rating systems, real-time monitoring, and AI-driven task allocation—that standardize human labor into measurable outputs. This architecture tends to intensify technostress, reduce autonomy, and normalize permanent availability, which in turn weakens inward reflection and spiritual intentionality. In such conditions, the value of amānah is vulnerable to being reduced into mere "compliance," while integrity becomes instrumentally framed as a tactic for reputation and incentives rather than a moral covenant before God. Therefore, the challenge of digital disruption is not only technological but also axiological: it intervenes directly in the worker's ruḥāniyyah (spiritual interior), shaping behavior, motivation, and ethical boundaries in subtle but persistent ways.

The era of digital disruption has brought fundamental changes to work patterns, systems, and values across multiple sectors of life. One important implication of this transformation is a shift in the structure and mechanisms of work. Digitalization has driven an industrial revolution that deeply integrates digital technology into nearly every aspect of social life (Govers & Van Amelsvoort, 2023). On the one hand, digital transformation creates significant opportunities to enhance productivity and work flexibility. On the other hand, this phenomenon also presents moral and spiritual challenges, reflected in the declining understanding of work as worship, the rise of materialistic orientations, and the weakening of commitment to integrity and social responsibility (Nasution & Rafiki, 2020). This phenomenon signals a value crisis in modern work culture that demands a reconstruction of the meaning of work based on Islamic teachings. In management scholarship, these dynamics have been widely discussed under terms such as digital workplace ethics, technostress, algorithmic control, and the governance dilemmas of AI-enabled organizations. Yet, much of the secular literature frames sustainability primarily as organizational continuity, efficiency, and employee well-being, often detached from transcendental accountability. This study positions Qur'anic Management as a complementary and, in certain aspects, a corrective lens: it treats ethical behavior not merely as a corporate instrument but as a moral governance system anchored in accountability (hisāb), trust (amānah), justice ('adl), and collective benefit (maṣlaḥah). Hence, the proposed intervention is not a moral reminder alone, but a managerial

framework capable of informing policies, leadership practices, and governance mechanisms for sustainable work ethics in digital organizations.

From an Islamic perspective, work is not merely an economic activity; it is part of worship and devotion to Allah SWT and a means to realize social welfare (kemaslahatan sosial). The Qur'an affirms that every deed performed with correct intention, good will, and moral responsibility carries the value of worship. As Allah states in QS. At-Tawbah [9]:105, "Work, and Allah, His Messenger, and the believers will see your work"; this verse indicates that work is not merely a worldly activity, but also a moral and spiritual responsibility for which one will be held accountable. The concept of work ethic in Islam is grounded in principles contained in the Qur'an and Hadith, emphasizing honesty, hard work, social responsibility, and integrity in every aspect of life. The Qur'an mentions terms denoting work in its various forms approximately 412 times, indicating the importance of work within Islamic teaching (Ridwansyah et al., 2023). In addition, QS. Al-Baqarah [2]:286 affirms that "Allah does not burden a person beyond his capacity," illustrating principles of justice and responsibility in work. Other verses such as QS. Al-Mu'minun [23]:52–54 and QS. Al-'Ankabut [29]:69 also emphasize the importance of diligence, honesty, and steadfastness in life. To align with the focus on Sustainable Work Ethics, this article adopts an operational definition of sustainability in the Qur'anic perspective as a three-layer continuity: (i) sustainability of the worker (mental–moral well-being, dignity, and balanced capacity), (ii) sustainability of the organization (ethical governance, trust, legitimacy, and resilience), and (iii) sustainability of social value (long-term public benefit and social responsibility). In this framing, sustainability goes beyond short-term productivity; it denotes enduring ethical quality that preserves human dignity and social justice while maintaining organizational integrity across technological change.

In the Qur'anic perspective, work ethic does not merely reflect productivity and individual responsibility, but also constitutes a manifestation of social piety. Values such as 'amal shāliḥ (work that counts as worship and brings public benefit), itqān (professional excellence and earnestness), amānah (moral integrity), and syukr (spiritual motivation) serve as primary foundations for cultivating civilized work behavior oriented toward divine values. This is affirmed in QS. An-Najm [53]:39, "and that a human being will obtain nothing except what he has striven for," as well as QS. Al-Qashash [28]:26, which praises qawiyy (strong) and amīn (trustworthy) as the principal characteristics of the ideal worker in Islam. These verses provide an ethical framework that integrates spiritual dimensions with professionalism in work. Importantly, these Qur'anic references function here not as textual legitimization but as solution-bearing constructs for contemporary management. For instance, QS. At-Tawbah [9]:105 implies accountability and transparency—a governance principle relevant to monitoring systems, audit trails, and integrity mechanisms in digital workflows. QS. Al-Baqarah [2]:286 provides an ethical foundation for workload justice and humane performance design, offering a counter-narrative to digital overload and work intensification. Likewise, the Qur'anic emphasis on steadfast striving (e.g., QS. Al-'Ankabut [29]:69) can be translated into organizational practices that strengthen ethical perseverance under uncertainty rather than merely chasing short-term KPIs.

The reality of the workplace shows a gap between the Qur'an's ideal values and practices on the ground. In Islam, values such as amānah (moral responsibility), itqān (professionalism), and istiqāmah (steadfastness in goodness) should form the foundation of work behavior. However, many workers today are trapped in work schemes oriented primarily toward economic fulfillment alone. This is driven by a spiritual gap evident in the workplace, where many individuals no longer interpret work as worship, but merely as an instrument to achieve economic goals (Fanggidae et al., 2020; Mahyarni, 2019). Within this translation to management practice, itqān can be conceptualized as a quality-management ethic for remote and hybrid work, where output is often judged through fragmented digital signals. Rather than promoting perfectionism, itqān encourages disciplined excellence tied to responsibility and sincerity—supporting sustainable performance without dehumanizing pressure. Meanwhile, amānah functions as a governance principle for data ethics, AI decision-making, and responsibility in automated processes, ensuring that trust is not displaced by automation. Finally, mas'ūliyyah ijtimā'iyyah aligns with contemporary constructs such as corporate social responsibility (CSR) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), but with a Qur'anic grounding that frames social responsibility as a moral duty oriented toward maṣlaḥah (long-term collective benefit), not only stakeholder reputation.

Debates about the sources and orientations of work ethic remain compelling. Max Weber (1978), through his theory of the Protestant work ethic, explains that rationality and hard work are the primary foundations of modern capitalist progress. However, Weber's largely secular view marginalizes the role of spirituality as a source of human work motivation. This view was later challenged by Sinamo (2005), who argues that work ethic is not solely born from economic rationality, but is rooted in moral, cultural, and spiritual values inherent within human beings. For him, work is a noble calling that involves the heart, not merely calculations of profit and loss. Islamic thinkers such as Mahyarni (2019) and Ridwan (2023) emphasize that work ethic in Islam cannot be separated from the values of worship and trust (amanah). Work, in the Islamic view, is a form of devotion that contains moral responsibility and a theological dimension. Spirituality becomes an inner energy that guides professionalism to remain civilized and just. In the author's view, the balance between rationality and spirituality is the key to forming a Qur'anic work ethic that is adaptive to changing times without losing its theocentric orientation. This reflects two poles of thought: one that positions work as a secular-rational activity, and another that views work as a spiritual expression and worship. Between these two major currents, the idea of revitalizing a Qur'anic work ethic becomes relevant—as an effort to bridge modern rationality and Islamic spirituality, so that balance is created between productivity and humanity, between professionalism and divine values.

This condition affects professional integrity and work ethics, including workaholism, which can lead to increased work stress, ethical violations, and even a crisis of meaning in work (Cossin et al., 2021). Prolonged job dissatisfaction can weaken commitment to work quality and social responsibility. Such excessive work practices are often associated with a lack of understanding of the spiritual values that should accompany professional activity (Febriani et al., 2023). This phenomenon indicates a crisis of meaning and workplace spirituality that requires a reconstruction

of values based on an Islamic worldview. It raises a fundamental question: how can the concept of Qur'anic work ethic be revitalized so that it remains relevant to modern needs without losing its spiritual value? Although prior studies (e.g., Nasution & Rafiki, 2020; Fanggidae et al., 2020) have highlighted the relevance of Islamic values for workplace ethics, the literature still shows a clear gap: few studies develop an integrative Qur'anic management model explicitly tailored to digital-era ethical risks, such as algorithmic evaluation, AI-mediated decisions, platform labor, and data-driven surveillance. Much of the existing discussion remains either normative (emphasizing values without operational design) or generic (not specifying how Qur'anic ethics map onto sustainability outcomes and governance mechanisms). Consequently, the originality of this study lies in advancing from value narration to framework construction—linking Qur'anic pillars to concrete sustainability indicators (justice in workload and evaluation, integrity in governance and accountability, and social responsibility in long-term organizational and societal benefit).

Accordingly, this study contributes to the state of the art by positioning Qur'anic Management within the broader debate on sustainable work ethics, offering a conceptual bridge between theological ethics and contemporary management frameworks. It also responds to international discussions on ESG-aligned governance by arguing that Qur'anic pillars can reinforce the "G" (governance) through accountability and integrity, strengthen the "S" (social) through justice and responsibility, and indirectly support sustainability culture at the organizational level. By doing so, the study targets not only Muslim workers' personal morality but also organizational policy and leadership design in digitally transformed workplaces.

This study aims to explore Qur'anic insights on work ethic through a thematic approach (tafsīr maudhū'ī), and to revitalize the understanding of Qur'anic values so that they align comprehensively with the work context in the digital era, encompassing both spiritual and social dimensions. Thus, this research not only contributes to strengthening the theory of Islamic work ethics, but also seeks to revive the spirit of Qur'anic work as worship, social responsibility, and a source of blessing in modern life. The primary focus of this study is the revitalization of work ethic according to Qur'anic principles so that it remains relevant to the dynamics of the modern workplace undergoing digital disruption. Through this research, it is expected that a new conceptual framework of Qur'anic work ethic will emerge—one that is not only grounded in spiritual dimensions, but also capable of responding to the demands of professionalism, technological advancement, and social responsibility in the digital era. This study seeks to present an understanding that Qur'anic values are not static concepts, but living principles that can be reactivated within every historical context.

Accordingly, this article offers a clear novelty by addressing a specific gap: most Islamic work-ethic studies remain value-narrative and focused on conventional workplaces, while secular digital-ethics research often treats sustainability as efficiency and well-being without transcendental accountability. This study bridges both strands by using tafsīr maudhū'ī to synthesize Qur'anic principles—amānah, 'adl, itqān, maṣlaḥah, and hisāb (accountability)—into an operational Qur'anic Management framework that responds directly to digital-era risks such as algorithmic

evaluation, AI-mediated decisions, platform labor, and data surveillance. It also links these principles to sustainability outcomes by strengthening ESG governance through integrity and accountability mechanisms, reinforcing the social dimension through justice in workload and evaluation, and supporting SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) through dignified, humane performance design. Theoretically, the framework shows how Qur'anic ethics can incorporate managerial rationality without losing its spiritual core, producing a sustainability-oriented model for digitally transformed organizations.

B. Literature Review

The discourse on the ontology and teleology of work ethic remains a foundational debate in global management literature because it determines how organizations define "good work" and what counts as "success." In this debate, Weber's thesis on rationalization and worldly asceticism is often read as a philosophical basis for modern managerial efficiency; however, its emphasis on instrumental rationality also risks reducing workers into calculable inputs for productivity. In sustainability terms, such a reduction can undermine the long-run equilibrium of the workplace ecosystem—eroding dignity, psychological well-being, and ethical restraint—thereby threatening organizational resilience. This limitation becomes a critical entry point for value-based paradigms that can preserve long-term ethical balance, especially under digitally intensified work regimes.

Building on this, contemporary critiques—such as Sinamo's view of work as a moral–spiritual calling—can be positioned not merely as ethical commentary but as a managerial necessity: spiritual orientation functions as a stabilizing force that sustains motivation, integrity, and humane leadership beyond short-term incentives. Yet, the contribution of this article is to move one step further by grounding that stabilizing force within Qur'anic Management, where spirituality is not only personal devotion but also organizational governance anchored in accountability (hisāb), trust (amānah), justice ('adl), and public benefit (maṣlaḥah). In this framework, sustainability is understood as the continuity of ethical quality—protecting human dignity, institutional legitimacy, and social welfare—rather than merely maintaining productivity.

While the Islamic Work Ethic (IWE) literature has documented the role of religiosity in shaping motivation and workplace morality, the term "Qur'anic Work Ethic" in this study is treated more specifically as a Qur'anic Management construct rather than a general religious attitude. What differentiates it is its axiological and managerial anchoring: (i) itqān as a performance-and-quality principle with moral boundaries, (ii) amānah as integrity-oriented governance and accountability, and (iii) maṣlaḥah as an orientation toward long-term collective benefit. Accordingly, Qur'anic work ethic is framed as a managerial system that can be translated into organizational rules, leadership norms, and ethical infrastructures—making it directly relevant to sustainable work ethics.

Recent debates on sustainable work ethics increasingly highlight how digital workplaces produce new ethical tensions: algorithmic surveillance, platform-based incentives, AI-driven

selection and evaluation, and data extraction that may amplify inequality and erode trust. These developments shift ethical risk from individual misconduct to systemic governance problems— what can be termed digital justice and cyber integrity challenges. The era of digital disruption has brought profoundly fundamental changes to human work systems and values. The transformation toward a technology-based world of work has not only increased efficiency and flexibility, but has also shifted the meaning of work from worship to merely an economic activity. This shift indicates a spiritual gap in the modern workplace, where many individuals no longer understand work as a form of devotion to Allah, but solely as a means to achieve economic objectives (Fanggidae et al., 2020; Mahyarni, 2019). This condition implies a weakening of professional integrity and work ethics, as reflected in the phenomenon of workaholism, increased work stress, and declining commitment to quality and social responsibility (Cossin et al., 2021). This phenomenon also signals a crisis of meaning in work, in which spiritual orientation is marginalized by demands for productivity and materialism. Consequently, excessive work behavior is often accompanied by dissatisfaction and emotional exhaustion, rooted in a lack of understanding of the spiritual values that should serve as the foundation of professional activity (Febriani et al., 2023).

The Islamic work ethic is rooted in several core values taught in the Qur'an. These values include justice, integrity, and social responsibility, all of which play an important role in shaping an ethical and productive work culture (Mohamed Said et al., 2023).These values teach Muslims to live with piety, justice, and a spirit of striving, thereby generating positive impacts in building careers and harmonious working relationships (Ridwan et al., 2023).The Qur'an provides a systematic philosophical foundation for the development of ethical principles related to work, emphasizing the purposes of creation and life as integral parts of ethical behavior in the work environment (Zulaifah, 2019).It demonstrates that digital disruption does not merely introduce new tools—it reshapes the meaning, structure, and moral risks of work. This condition contributes to weakened professional integrity and diminished commitment to quality and social responsibility, including risks such as workaholism, elevated stress, and a "meaning crisis" where spiritual orientation is marginalized (Cossin et al., 2021; Febriani et al., 2023).

In this context, Qur'anic Management offers a distinctive synthesis: 'adl can be read as a principle for fairness in algorithmic evaluation and workload allocation; amānah as a safeguard for data responsibility, confidentiality, and truthful reporting within automated systems; and maṣlaḥah/mas'ūliyyah ijtimā'iyyah as a basis for social responsibility when organizational decisions affect workers, customers, and communities at scale.

However, much of the prior work has not sufficiently operationalized how these Qur'anic pillars can function as sustainability enablers within management practice. Specifically, the literature rarely articulates how Qur'anic values translate into HR policies (e.g., fair performance metrics, humane workload design), governance mechanisms (e.g., accountability procedures for AI decisions), and ethical leadership behaviors that sustain trust over time. This gap is especially visible in the era of AI, where ethical failures can be embedded in systems rather than in single actors. Therefore, the present study repositions Qur'anic ethics from "normative ideals" into an applied

management framework designed to support organizational resilience and long-term ethical stability.

Studies on Islamic work ethic are extensive, but most still emphasize traditional settings and conventional workplaces, with limited engagement with digital realities. Prior work (e.g., Sulastri, 2019; Zulaifah, 2019) underscores moral and motivational dimensions, yet rarely examines how Qur'anic values operate amid digital transformation—where challenges such as cyber integrity, data ethics, and digital justice become central. This study addresses that gap by extending Islamic work-ethics discourse into digitally mediated work systems and offering both scholarly and practical relevance.

The novelty of this research lies in three extensions. First, it shifts the unit of analysis from general moral motivation to digitally mediated organizational arrangements (e.g., algorithmic management, platform work, and AI-driven evaluation). Second, it explicitly links Qur'anic pillars to sustainability-oriented governance and social outcomes, including ethical governance, worker well-being, long-term trust, and social responsibility. Third, it proposes an integrative conceptual model that connects Qur'anic Management to sustainable work-ethics mechanisms and, in turn, to digital-era ethical risk mitigation (including cyber integrity and digital justice). Accordingly, the contribution is not limited to thematic interpretation (tafsīr maudhū'ī) but advances a testable framework for contemporary management and business-ethics research, while guiding Muslim professionals to contextualize Qur'anic values within modern work systems toward public benefit (kemaslahatan).

Accordingly, this article strengthens its contribution by moving beyond motivation-based accounts of the Islamic Work Ethic and developing a Qur'anic Management framework that is explicitly designed for digital workplaces and aligned with SDGs/ESG. Building on foundational IWE scholarship and recent global debates on digital workplace ethics, the study clarifies key concepts rather than listing them: cyber integrity refers to responsible and truthful conduct within digitally recorded workflows, data ethics concerns privacy, consent, and accountability in data use and AI applications, and digital justice addresses fairness in algorithmic evaluation and workload allocation. These risks are mapped directly to Qur'anic pillars: amānah becomes a governance principle for data responsibility and transparent reporting, 'adl anchors fairness against algorithmic bias and unjust performance design, and itqān frames excellence within humane limits. Methodologically, tafsīr maudhū'ī is justified as a theory-building approach because it synthesizes dispersed Qur'anic guidance into an applied management architecture that can inform HR metrics, workload standards, AI accountability procedures, and ethical leadership norms. Finally, the framework is positioned as strategically relevant by linking its outcomes to SDG 8 and SDG 9, while strengthening ESG—especially governance through accountability and integrity mechanisms and the social dimension through dignity, fair evaluation, and long-term trust in AI-enabled organizations.

C. Methodology

This study is a qualitative study employing a tafsīr maudhū'ī (thematic) approach, namely a Qur'anic interpretive method that collects all verses related to a particular theme and then examines them comprehensively, in depth, and contextually. According to Dr. Abdul Hayyi al-Farmawi in (Humaidi & Kholidi, 2024), tafsīr maudhū'ī/thematic exegesis is an interpretive pattern that involves collecting Qur'anic verses that share the same purpose—in the sense of discussing one topic collectively—and arranging them according to the chronology of their revelation while paying attention to their content, the background and reasons for revelation (asbāb al-nuzūl), and providing explanations, elaborations, commentary, and the main points of their legal rulings. This approach is used to explore in depth the concept of work ethic in the Qur'an through the collection, classification, and analysis of verses related to the theme of work, and then to interpret their meanings contextually in accordance with the challenges of the modern world of work in the digital era.

The data sources for this study are the Qur'anic text containing verses about work, work ethics, responsibility, trust (amānah), professionalism (itqān), and spiritual values related to economic and social activities. Data collection techniques are carried out through a literature review and document analysis (library research), by determining the main topic, namely work ethic from the Qur'anic perspective. Data analysis employs a descriptive–analytic approach, namely interpreting the verses based on their social context.

To ensure methodological rigor and to position this study at the intersection of Ulūm al-Qur'ān and management studies, the thematic exegesis is operationalized as a structured research workflow that converts Qur'anic textual evidence into applicable management principles for sustainable work ethics in digital professional settings. Rather than treating tafsīr maudhū'ī as a descriptive interpretive tradition only, this study employs it as a methodological engine for conceptual synthesis: extracting ethical dimensions from revelation, systematizing them into categories, and translating them into sustainability-oriented norms relevant to organizational practice.

The analysis follows five sequential stages. (1) Term identification (mufradāt mapping): the study begins by mapping core Qur'anic terms and semantic fields related to work and sustainability-oriented ethics (e.g., 'amal, kasb, itqān, amānah, 'adl, ihsān, mīzān, isrāf, fasād, shukr, and responsibility/accountability themes). (2) Verse retrieval and corpus construction: verses are collected through systematic tracing of these terms and their conceptual equivalents, then compiled into a working corpus. (3) Verse categorization: the corpus is organized into analytic clusters (e.g., integrity and trust, excellence and quality, justice and fairness, accountability, social benefit/maṣlaḥah, and prevention of harm/mafsadah). (4) Intertextual interpretation: each cluster is interpreted by considering intra-Qur'anic relations, relevant asbāb al-nuzūl when applicable, and coherence across verses to avoid isolated or fragmented conclusions. (5) Conceptual synthesis into management principles: the interpreted clusters are then transformed into propositions and guiding principles for "Quranic Management on Sustainable Work Ethics," including digital-era

implications such as data ethics, cyber integrity, responsible productivity, and fairness in algorithmic decision-making.

To reduce subjectivity and clarify why a verse is treated as relevant to sustainable work ethics, this study applies explicit criteria. A verse is included if it: (a) contains a direct work-related command/value (effort, responsibility, trust, justice, excellence, fulfillment of contracts); (b) supports sustainability logic (balance, avoidance of excess, preventing harm, maintaining social welfare/maṣlaḥah); and/or (c) provides ethical governance norms that can be operationalized in organizational settings (accountability, transparency, fairness). A verse is excluded when it: (a) is purely ritual-specific without an ethically generalizable dimension for professional conduct; (b) is not conceptually connected to work/organizational life after semantic checking; or (c) risks overextension into managerial claims without interpretive support from the thematic corpus. These parameters ensure that the Qur'anic evidence base is not selected merely by keyword presence, but by its demonstrable relevance to sustainable professional ethics and organizational governance.

Data analysis is conducted through a qualitative content analysis combined with thematic coding. Verses in each cluster are coded into ethical dimensions (e.g., integrity, excellence, justice, accountability, environmental/social responsibility, harm prevention), then synthesized into themes that represent managerial-ethical constructs. The interpretive stage is followed by a contextualization step, where extracted themes are dialogued with modern challenges of digital work (e.g., privacy and data responsibility, cyber integrity, digital surveillance and fairness, platform-based labor ethics, and efficiency pressures). This dialogue does not replace the Qur'anic meaning; instead, it functions as a theoretical bridge that clarifies how Qur'anic ethical imperatives can inform sustainable work ethics amid contemporary organizational realities.

Sustainability is treated explicitly as a methodological lens during synthesis. Each derived principle is assessed for its alignment with: (a) long-term welfare and harm minimization (maṣlaḥah–mafsadah logic), (b) balance and anti-excess orientation (avoiding isrāf and preventing fasād), and (c) ethical accountability across stakeholders (individual, organizational, and societal). This step is designed to ensure that the study contributes not only to classical discussions of work ethic, but also to contemporary debates on sustainable/green work ethics and values-based organizational sustainability in the digital economy.

Finally, this methodology makes a distinct methodological contribution to sustainability-oriented management research by demonstrating how tafsīr maudhū'ī can be replicated as a transparent workflow that bridges classical textual authority and digital organizational realities. The approach does not stop at collecting verses, but systematically (i) maps key work-ethic terms (e.g., 'amal, kasb, itqān, amānah, 'adl), (ii) constructs and clusters a verse corpus, and (iii) validates interpretation through authoritative secondary tafsīr and contextual checks (asbāb al-nuzūl) before translating results into management principles. To reduce subjectivity, verse inclusion is governed by explicit relevance criteria (work-ethic directive, sustainability logic, and governance applicability), and the synthesized principles are then assessed against SDGs/ESG parameters—especially SDG

8/9 and the "S" and "G" dimensions—so that Qur'anic values are operationalized into policy-relevant guidance for humane performance design, accountability in AI-mediated decisions, and fairness in data-driven evaluation. In this way, thematic exegesis functions as a theory-building instrument that can generate universal, sustainability-aligned ethical governance insights usable not only for Muslim professionals but also for organizations seeking values-based ESG practice in digital workplaces.

D. Results

The revitalization of the Qur'anic work ethic is not merely a repetition of classical concepts, but a process of reinterpreting values so that they remain relevant to the digital context. Revitalization is carried out through three approaches: (1) a spiritual approach: instilling awareness that every professional activity has the value of worship if it is grounded in correct intention (QS. At-Tawbah [9]:105); (2) a social approach: restoring the orientation of work toward maṣlaḥah (social welfare), not merely material profit; and (3) a technological approach: directing the use of technology to be ethical, responsible, and supportive of the values of justice and sustainability.

Revitalizing the Qur'anic work ethic in the era of digital disruption is an effort to revive Islamic spiritual values within the modern workplace that is now saturated with technology. In a modern context characterized by rapid technological acceleration and shifting digital work patterns, Islamic work values need to be revitalized—that is, renewed and adjusted to contemporary realities without eliminating their spiritual and moral substance. This revitalization aims to integrate Islamic values into modern work practices that are increasingly dominated by digital technology. The Islamic work ethic is rooted in several key values taught in the Qur'an. Thus, work is not understood merely as an economic activity, but also as worship, a trust (amānah), and a means of realizing social welfare in accordance with the principles of Islamic teachings.

1. Justice as the foundation of work ethic

Justice (al-'adl) is the most fundamental moral principle in the Qur'an and forms the basis of the entire social order, including in the workplace. Allah states in QS. An-Nahl [16]:90:

إِنَّ اللهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَاِيْتَآئِ ذِى الْقُرْبٰى وَيَنْهٰى عَنِ الْفَحْشَآءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُوْنَ ۝

"Indeed, Allah commands you to act justly and to do good, to give to relatives, and Allah forbids indecency, wrongdoing, and enmity. He instructs you so that you may take heed."

This verse affirms that justice is a universal value that must be present in every work activity and organization. In the digital era, the concept of workplace justice also needs to be expanded into digital justice—namely, guarantees of equal access to technology, opportunities for career development, and protection against data exploitation and violations of workers' privacy. Thus, justice in Islam is not only a moral concept, but also an ethical framework for confronting social inequalities that emerge as a consequence of the digitalization of work.

2. Integrity as the moral pillar of the workplace

Integrity (al-amānah) is a central value in the Islamic work ethic that demands coherence between intention, speech, and action. The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: "Whoever deceives us is not of us" (HR. Muslim). This hadith emphasizes the importance of honesty and transparency in every professional activity. In the context of digitalization, integrity needs to be revitalized into digital integrity, namely the capacity to maintain honesty, data authenticity, and ethical conduct in cyberspace. In the Qur'an, Allah SWT states in QS. Al-Ahzab [33]:72:

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ ۖ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا

"Indeed, We offered the trust (amānah) to the heavens, the earth, and the mountains, but they refused to bear it and were fearful of it; yet the human being bore it. Indeed, he is ever unjust and ignorant" (QS. Al-Ahzab [33]:72).

This verse explains that amānah is an extremely weighty moral and spiritual responsibility, encompassing all forms of trust, both in one's relationship with Allah and in one's relationship with fellow human beings. In the context of Islamic work ethics, amānah means: carrying out work honestly and responsibly, even without supervision; safeguarding the authenticity and truth of data or information, especially within modern digitalization; and not misusing entrusted trust or resources (whether material or digital). Thus, digital integrity is a modern actualization of the value of amānah, namely the ability to maintain honesty, authenticity, and transparency in the virtual sphere. Therefore, in responding to digital disruption, integrity should not be understood merely as individual morality, but as an institutional value that guides the behavior of technology-based organizations so that they remain ethical and dignified.

3. Social responsibility as an expression of iḥsān and maṣlaḥah

Social responsibility (mas'ūliyyah ijtimā'iyyah) in Islam reflects care for others and the awareness that work is not only for personal interests, but also for social welfare. Allah SWT states in QS. Al-Baqarah [2]:177:

لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَٰكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ اٰمَنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَالْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ وَالْكِتٰبِ ﴿وَالنَّبِيّٖنَّ﴾ وَاٰتَى الْمَالَ عَلٰى حُبِّهٖ ذَوِى الْقُرْبٰى وَالْيَتٰمٰى وَالْمَسٰكِيْنَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيْلِۙ وَالسَّاۤئِلِيْنَ وَفِى الرِّقَابِۚ وَاَقَامَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتَى الزَّكٰوةَۚ وَالْمُوْفُوْنَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ اِذَا عَاهَدُوْاۚ وَالصّٰبِرِيْنَ فِى الْبَأْسَاۤءِ وَالضَّرَّاۤءِ وَحِيْنَ الْبَأْسِۗ اُولٰۤئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ صَدَقُوْاۗ وَاُولٰۤئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُوْنَ ۝١٧٧

"Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west; rather, righteousness is [the righteousness of] one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Scripture, and the prophets; and who gives wealth, despite love for it, to relatives, orphans, the poor, the traveler, those who ask, and for freeing slaves; and who establishes الصلاة (prayer) and gives zakat; and [those who] fulfill their promise when they promise; and [those who] are patient

in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who are truthful, and those are the God-fearing" (QS. Al-Baqarah [2]:177).

This verse emphasizes that genuine faith is reflected through social concern. In a modern professional context, social responsibility can be realized through contributions to employee welfare, the community, and a healthy and just digital work environment (QS. Al-Baqarah [2]:177). Revitalizing the value of social responsibility in the digital era can be implemented through ethical leadership practices, environmental sustainability (green digital workplace), and the use of technology for the common good (technology for social good). Thus, the Qur'anic work ethic not only demands individual productivity, but also ensures that work outcomes bring broad benefits to society and the natural environment. Social responsibility in Islam is a key factor in realizing work–life balance and equitable productivity. Accordingly, revitalizing this value functions as a bridge between technological progress and social welfare, so that digital work does not lose its human dimension.

To align the results section with international-journal expectations, the findings of this study are synthesized into an integrated Quranic Management framework that explains *how* Qur'anic work-ethic values function as a sustainability mechanism in contemporary organizations—particularly under digital disruption. In this study, "sustainability" is defined as a multi-level endurance of ethical performance that includes: (i) individual sustainability (career integrity, well-being, and meaningful work orientation), (ii) organizational sustainability (long-term productivity, trust, and governance stability), and (iii) socio-environmental sustainability (public benefit/maṣlaḥah, harm prevention/mafsadah reduction, and responsible use of digital infrastructure). Within this scope, Qur'anic work ethics are not treated merely as moral exhortations, but as operational managerial principles that stabilize organizations over time through governance, accountability, and stakeholder welfare.

The thematic analysis indicates that Qur'anic work ethics consistently embed a governance logic: ethical behavior is sustained when organizations institutionalize *accountability, distributive fairness, and social responsibility* as mutually reinforcing components. This moves beyond general Weberian or motivational definitions and positions work ethic as a system of management controls grounded in transcendental values. Hence, moral character in Quranic Management appears as theosentric integrity that influences organizational stability, risk reduction, and long-term trust formation—key conditions for sustainable performance in digital workplaces.

The interpretation of QS. At-Tawbah [9]:105 is synthesized as a model of triadic accountability—Divine (Allah), Prophetic (the Messenger), and Social (the believers/community)—which forms a layered structure of monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

The interaction among these values creates a sustainable work-ethics loop: justice stabilizes structures, integrity stabilizes conduct and information flows, and social responsibility stabilizes stakeholder relations and long-term legitimacy.

A key result of contextualization is that digital disruption expands Qur'anic ethics into institutional requirements. Digital integrity (amānah in cyberspace) entails safeguarding data truthfulness, privacy, and responsible digital behavior as part of organizational policy—not merely individual morality. Digital justice entails equal access to tools, protection from exploitative surveillance, and fairness in digital opportunity structures. These extensions show that Quranic Management can respond to contemporary ethical risks by transforming normative Qur'anic values into organizational standards, codes of conduct, and governance procedures that sustain human dignity and reduce harm.

A further result is the identification of data credibility and privacy as central sustainability pressure points. Across the synthesized themes, integrity is repeatedly tied to protecting truthfulness in reporting and safeguarding what is entrusted—both of which become more vulnerable when performance, evaluation, and decision-making rely on digital traces. The findings therefore imply that sustaining ethical performance requires explicit protection against data manipulation, misinformation, and privacy violations.

In addition, the results indicate that performance durability is linked to humane constraints, not only productivity expansion. When work is organized around continuous availability and metric maximalism, ethical quality becomes fragile and well-being risks increase. The Qur'anic value system appears in the findings as a stabilizing counterweight that keeps performance aligned with dignity, responsibility, and benefit—conditions that support long-term endurance rather than short-term output spikes.

E. Discussion

1. Dialectical synthesis: from normative values to organizational mechanisms in digital workplaces

The study proposes that revitalization of Qur'anic work ethic must be understood as reinterpretation and re-contextualization, not repetition. A key contribution of this study is the explicit extension of classical values into contemporary ethical domains: digital justice and digital integrity. Digital justice broadens justice beyond conventional labor relations to include equal access to technology, fair opportunity in digital work systems, and protection of worker privacy and data rights. Digital integrity reframes amānah in the context of data authenticity, transparency in digital processes, and ethical conduct in cyberspace. The Qur'anic depiction of amānah as a heavy moral responsibility (QS. Al-Ahzab [33]:72) becomes especially relevant in digital contexts where trust is mediated by systems, platforms, and data flows. Likewise, social responsibility is revitalized through contemporary manifestations such as ethical leadership, sustainability (green digital workplace), and using technology for social good. This reframes professional excellence as not only individual competence but also the capacity to shape work systems that protect human dignity and generate broad societal benefit.

The results collectively support the central argument that the Qur'anic work ethic can function as a bridge between modern rationality (efficiency, productivity, innovation) and Islamic spirituality (intention, accountability, amānah, and social welfare). Rather than rejecting technology, the framework directs technological advancement toward ethical ends—ensuring that professional excellence (itqān) is sustained by moral integrity and social responsibility. This integration is crucial for contemporary workplaces, where ethical risks increasingly arise not only from individual misconduct but also from system-level incentives embedded in digital platforms and organizational KPIs. Overall, the findings indicate that Qur'anic work ethics—anchored in worship orientation, justice, amānah, and social responsibility—remain highly relevant in the digital era when reinterpreted through the lenses of digital justice and digital integrity. Revitalization is therefore not a nostalgic return to the past, but a constructive ethical adaptation that enables Muslims (and organizations more broadly) to pursue technological progress while preserving moral purpose, human dignity, and social welfare.

To move beyond a descriptive-normative account, this discussion clarifies the mechanical pathway through which Qur'anic values reshape organizational behavior under digital disruption. The meaning crisis reflected in workaholism and chronic stress is not merely an individual failure; it reflects a structural limitation of secular–instrumental management regimes that over-privilege KPI-driven productivity while under-providing transcendental meaning, ethical purpose, and long-term well-being safeguards. In this sense, the Qur'anic work ethic offers a transformative axiological shift: it reconstitutes work from a profane-mechanistic activity into an ethically governed practice oriented toward worship, accountability, and maṣlaḥah, thereby strengthening psychological sustainability and reducing burnout risks in the long run. These operational definitions position Qur'anic values as measurable management domains (governance, HR policy, compliance, and organizational culture), rather than moral rhetoric.

2. Maqāṣid-based justification: why digital justice and privacy are sustainability prerequisites

The link between QS. An-Nahl [16]:90 and issues such as privacy and data protection becomes methodologically stronger when grounded in Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah. Digital work systems increasingly expose employees to risks that threaten core maqāṣid—particularly protection of dignity and human welfare, protection of intellect (through manipulation/misinformation fatigue), and protection of property/rights (through data extraction and exploitative contracts). From a Quranic Management lens, justice in access to technology is also an economic-sustainability condition: unequal access and data exploitation create persistent inequality, reduce upward mobility, weaken workforce capability development, and ultimately undermine organizational productivity and societal welfare. Therefore, "digital justice" is not an optional ethical add-on, but a structural requirement for sustaining capability, trust, and economic resilience in digitally transforming organizations.

A further contribution of this study is the managerial relevance of iḥsān as a form of self-monitoring that complements (and in some contexts outperforms) purely technological surveillance. Digital monitoring is often "nirwajah" (faceless): it can track outputs but frequently fails to secure moral intent, sincerity, and ethical restraint, while also increasing stress and eroding trust when applied excessively. By contrast, internalizing amānah through iḥsān strengthens intrinsic accountability—employees act responsibly even when unseen—thereby lowering opportunism and reducing agency costs (e.g., costs of monitoring, enforcement, conflict, and turnover). In Quranic Management terms, iḥsān operationalizes a high-trust governance culture: it enables ethical compliance through internal conscience and spiritual accountability, not merely external controls, which supports sustainable HR outcomes such as retention, psychological safety, and long-term performance stability.

Integrating Qur'anic ethics with modern management debates (Green HRM & Digital Leadership)

Positioned against global discussions on Digital Ethics and Sustainable HRM, the Qur'anic work ethic offers a distinctive competitive advantage: it integrates performance with purpose, compliance with conscience, and innovation with moral restraint. In relation to Digital Leadership, the Qur'anic framework implies that leaders should not only drive transformation, but also govern the ethical externalities of transformation—by designing fair digital evaluation systems, limiting intrusive surveillance, strengthening transparency, and ensuring employee well-being. In relation to Green HRM / sustainability-oriented HRM, Qur'anic values provide a coherent ethical architecture that simultaneously promotes (i) human sustainability (well-being and meaning), (ii) economic sustainability (trust, productivity, reduced agency costs), and (iii) socio-environmental sustainability (maṣlaḥah orientation, harm prevention, and responsible digital infrastructure use, including "green digital workplace" practices).

Figure is the network-analytic finding map generated from the tafsīr maudhū'ī workflow, showing how key Qur'anic work-ethic concepts are systematically translated into sustainability-oriented management guidance. The network is designed as a traceable pathway from foundational terms to clustered verse themes, then to validated managerial principles, and finally to ESG/SDG alignment—so the "findings" are presented not as isolated interpretations, but as connected governance routes that explain how Qur'anic ethics can inform humane performance design, accountability in AI-mediated decisions, and fairness in data-driven evaluation within digital workplaces.
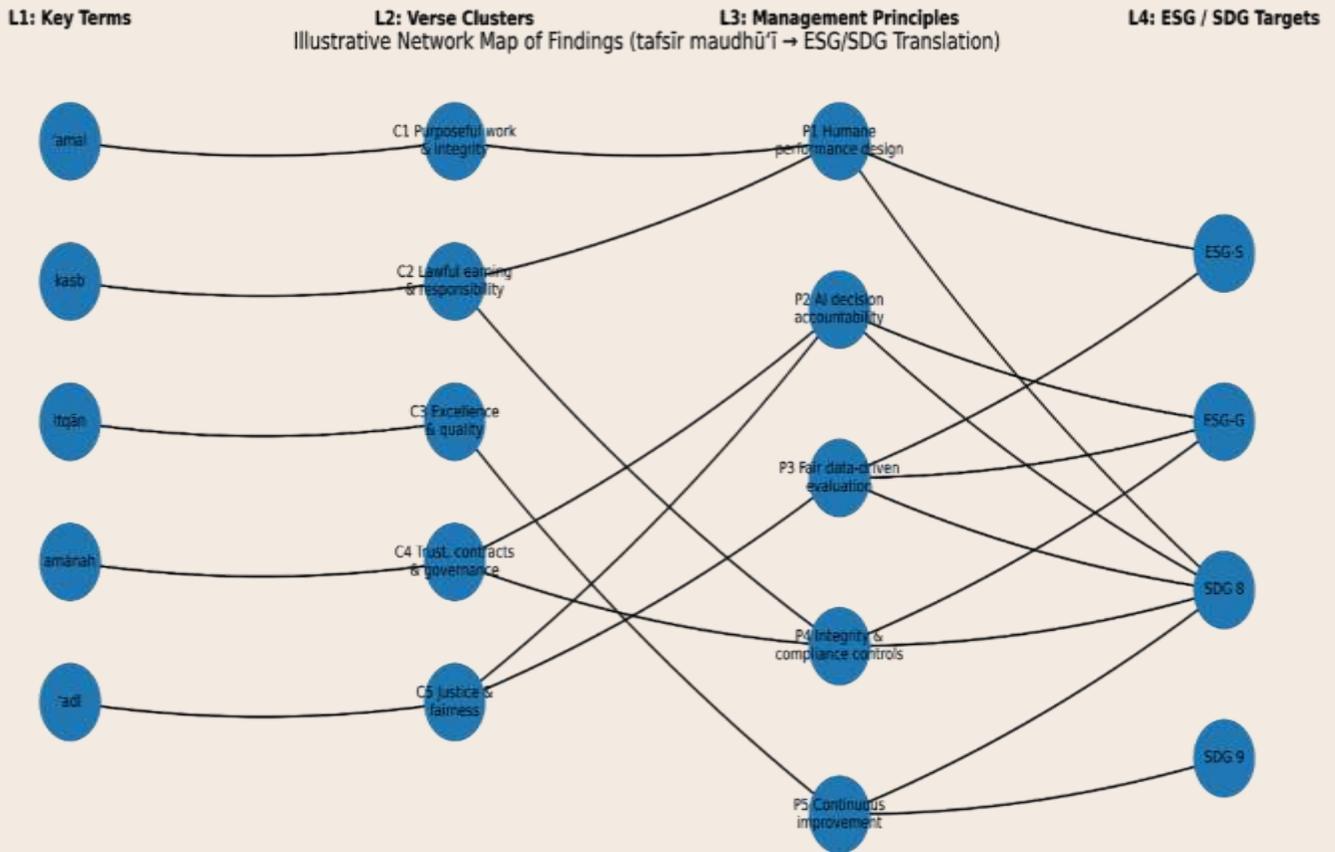
| L1: Key Terms | L2: Verse Clusters | L3: Management Principles | L4: ESG / SDG Targets |

Illustrative Network Map of Findings (tafsīr maudhū'ī → ESG/SDG Translation)

Figure 1. Tafsīr Maudhū'ī Findings Network

Source: Data Processed by Author

Figure 1 visualizes the study's network-analytic translation pathway from tafsīr maudhū'ī to sustainability-oriented management outputs. The network is structured in four layers: (L1) key Qur'anic work-ethic terms ('amal, kasb, itqān, amānah, 'adl) are mapped to (L2) thematically clustered verse corpora, which are then interpreted—through validated secondary tafsīr and contextual checks (e.g., asbāb al-nuzūl)—into (L3) operational management principles, and finally aligned with (L4) ESG/SDG targets. The figure highlights that purposeful work and lawful earning primarily flow into humane performance design and integrity controls (supporting ESG-S and SDG 8), while excellence (itqān) concentrates into continuous improvement with a direct link to SDG 9 and SDG 8. In parallel, trust (amānah) and justice ('adl) form the strongest governance-related routes, connecting verse clusters on contracts, accountability, and fairness to AI decision accountability and fair data-driven evaluation, thereby anchoring ESG-G and reinforcing SDG 8. Overall, the network demonstrates how Qur'anic ethical concepts can be operationalized as traceable, auditable principles for digital workplace governance and sustainability-aligned performance systems.

Through this mapping, the Qur'anic work ethic is shown not only as a moral discourse, but as a management framework for organizational sustainability that addresses the psychological pressures of digital disruption while preserving human dignity, accountability, and long-term societal benefit. The findings also show a clear shift in where ethical risk originates under digital disruption. Misconduct is not only an individual deviation but increasingly a system effect produced by platform incentives, speed pressures, opaque workflows, and data asymmetries. In this context, ethical sustainability depends on whether organizational systems are designed to prevent harm, not merely whether individuals are reminded to be moral. Finally, the findings suggest that sustainability in digital workplaces is strengthened when organizations treat maṣlaḥah (benefit) and harm prevention as outcome criteria alongside efficiency. This expands "success" beyond internal KPIs toward stakeholder welfare and legitimacy. In practical terms, the results point to sustainability as an ethical-performance endurance model: trustworthy data and privacy protection (integrity), fair opportunity and evaluation (justice), and measurable social benefit (responsibility) jointly sustain long-term organizational resilience under digital disruption.

F. Conclusion

In summary, this study answers the research problem by showing that al-'adl, al-amānah, and mas'ūliyyah ijtimā'iyyah form a Qur'anic ethical core that can be translated into digital justice, digital integrity, and maṣlaḥah-oriented responsibility within the SQDE model, offering a sustainability-oriented alternative to purely instrumental ethics in algorithm-driven workplaces. Crucially, this translation also strengthens the article's strategic relevance to the journal's scope: SQDE supports SDG 8 (decent work and inclusive growth) through fair evaluation, humane workload design, and dignity-preserving productivity, and it aligns with SDG 9 by guiding responsible innovation and governance in technology-enabled organizations; at the same time, it concretely reinforces the ESG "S" dimension (worker well-being, non-discrimination, stakeholder trust) and the ESG "G" dimension (accountability for AI decisions, transparency, data responsibility, and auditability). Practically, the framework implies managerial and policy actions such as integrating fairness and integrity into KPI design (e.g., transparent performance metrics, bias checks for algorithmic evaluation, and workload-justice indicators), embedding ethics-by-design controls in data governance (privacy, consent, monitoring limits, and accountability procedures), and adopting a maṣlaḥah-based impact review to prevent harm across workers and communities.

Finally, acknowledging its limits, this study is primarily conceptual and text-synthetic; future research should test SQDE empirically—through case studies, surveys, or mixed methods—to examine its effects on ethical climate, employee well-being, compliance risk, and long-run organizational sustainability across different digital-industry settings. The study's novelty lies in demonstrating how tafsīr maudhū'ī can be converted into an applied management solution rather than remaining a purely normative exposition. Specifically, the thematic synthesis translates Qur'anic ethical imperatives into operational managerial directions for contemporary challenges—such as privacy, data governance, digitally mediated performance control, and well-being under always-on work cultures—thereby moving beyond the "religious labeling" of conventional digital-ethics discourse. Within SQDE, barakah is

framed not as an abstract spiritual ideal, but as a long-term performance logic: ethical consistency, stakeholder trust, and holistic welfare become drivers of durable efficiency, lower moral hazard, and sustained legitimacy.

From a managerial standpoint, SQDE implies actionable priorities for organizational leaders: embedding digital justice into HR and governance policies (fair access to tools, transparent evaluation, non-discrimination, and rights protection); institutionalizing digital integrity through ethics-by-design mechanisms (data authenticity, accountability, and responsible monitoring); and anchoring strategy in maṣlaḥah to ensure the organization's digital transformation advances the Prophetic bottom line—people, planet, profit, and spirituality—as an integrated sustainability commitment rather than a short-term moral agenda.

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