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Wage justice in the management of Islamic educational institutions: An analysis of the Hadith “give the worker his wage before his sweat dries”

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ABSTRACT

This study examines wage justice in Islamic educational institutions through an analysis of the Prophetic hadith “Give the worker his wages before his sweat dries” (HR. Ibn Majah) and its relevance to contemporary human resource management. The study is motivated by persistent issues such as delayed wage payments, inadequate compensation, and structural inequalities affecting educators. Using a qualitative approach with a library research design, this study integrates normative analysis of hadith and fiqh literature with contemporary theories of organizational justice, including distributive, procedural, and temporal justice. The findings reveal that the hadith embodies a multidimensional framework of wage justice that aligns with modern management theory while extending it through ethical and spiritual accountability. However, a significant gap persists between these normative principles and institutional practices, driven by managerial limitations, structural inequality, and cultural narratives that undermine professionalism. In response, this study proposes an integrative model of fair wage management based on competence, welfare adequacy (*kifayah*), timely payment systems, and transparent contractual governance. The study concludes that wage justice in Islam constitutes an institutional obligation that must be operationalized within organizational systems. The proposed model offers both theoretical and practical contributions by bridging Islamic ethical principles with contemporary management practices. Future research is recommended to empirically validate the model across diverse educational contexts.

Keywords: Wage justice; Islamic educational institutions; Hadith; human resource management; organizational justice

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1. INTRODUCTION

The issue of wage injustice in the education sector, particularly within Islamic educational institutions, represents not only a social concern but also a critical matter related to human resource management and institutional governance. Numerous studies indicate that educators, including both teachers and lecturers, continue to experience disproportionate compensation, delayed payments, and structural inequalities within wage systems (Pratama, 2025; Ahyani et al., 2025). These conditions affect not only the individual well-being of educators but also have broader implications for organizational performance and the overall quality of educational services (Juhainah et al., 2025). Therefore, wage justice should be understood as a managerial issue that requires systematic and policy-oriented solutions.

Within the context of Islamic educational institutions, wage-related issues are further shaped by religious values. The principle of justice (*adl*) in Islam emphasizes the fulfillment of workers' rights as a moral and social obligation, including the provision of fair, timely, and transparent wages (Azeez & Miftaudeen, 2024; Mohamad et al., 2024). However, in practice, a clear discrepancy exists between these normative principles and institutional realities. Wage practices are often influenced by financial constraints, weak management systems, and organizational cultures that emphasize notions of devotion (Tobroni & Kamala, 2025; Nurkholiq & Rahayu, 2025). This indicates that wage justice is not merely a normative issue but is closely linked to managerial capacity and institutional policy design.

As a conceptual foundation, the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), "Give the worker his wages before his sweat dries" (HR. Ibn Majah), provides an ethical framework emphasizing timeliness, fairness, and respect for labor. From a modern management perspective, this principle aligns with the concept of organizational justice, particularly in its distributive, procedural, and temporal dimensions. Thus, the hadith can be interpreted not only as a religious doctrine but also as a value-based foundation for developing fair human resource management practices.

Although studies on wages within the Islamic perspective have grown, most existing research focuses on macroeconomic issues, labor law, or general normative analyses (Mohd, 2024; Akmal et al., 2024). Research that specifically integrates hadith-based values with modern management theories in the context of Islamic educational institutions remains limited. Furthermore, studies that systematically link wage justice concepts with institutional management practices in education are still scarce. This gap highlights the need for a more integrative and context-specific approach.

In response, this study contributes by integrating normative hadith analysis with organizational justice theory in modern management to examine wage practices in Islamic educational institutions. Specifically, this study addresses two main questions: (1) how is the concept of wage justice articulated in the hadith "give the worker his wages before his sweat dries", and (2) how is this concept relevant to the management of Islamic educational institutions from a human resource management perspective?

Through this approach, the study aims to provide not only theoretical contributions to Islamic economics and educational management but also practical implications for improving wage systems that are more just, transparent, and sustainable within Islamic educational institutions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Concept of Wage in Islamic and Management Perspective

In the Islamic economic framework, wages (*ujrah*) are conceptualized as compensation for services rendered within a legally binding contractual relationship (*ijarah*). However, this concept extends beyond a purely economic transaction, encompassing ethical, moral, and social dimensions aimed at ensuring justice between employers and employees (Akmal et al., 2024). In this regard, wage determination in Islam is not solely driven by market mechanisms but is fundamentally anchored in normative principles that safeguard fairness, dignity, and social responsibility.

From a theoretical standpoint, Islamic wage principles are grounded in three core foundations: justice (*adl*), adequacy (*kifayah*), and transparency. The principle of justice requires proportionality between

an individual's contribution and the compensation received, thereby preventing exploitation and structural inequality (Mohd, 2024). This aligns partially with merit-based systems in modern management but is more comprehensive, as it incorporates ethical accountability. The principle of adequacy emphasizes that wages must meet the basic needs of workers, ensuring a decent standard of living and social welfare (Mohamad et al., 2024). Unlike conventional economic models that prioritize efficiency and productivity, this principle introduces a welfare-oriented perspective into wage determination. Meanwhile, transparency refers to the clarity and explicitness of contractual agreements, including wage levels, job scope, and payment schedules, in order to eliminate uncertainty (*gharar*) and potential disputes (Azeez & Miftaudeen, 2024).

When examined through the lens of contemporary human resource management, the concept of *ujrah* demonstrates significant alignment with compensation management theories, particularly in relation to internal equity, external competitiveness, and procedural transparency. Internal equity reflects fairness within the organization, external competitiveness ensures alignment with broader labor market standards, and transparency reinforces trust and organizational legitimacy. However, the Islamic perspective extends beyond these dimensions by embedding moral and spiritual accountability into compensation systems.

Therefore, the Islamic concept of wages can be understood as a normative-ethical framework that complements and enriches modern management theories. While conventional approaches often prioritize efficiency and performance outcomes, the Islamic perspective integrates ethical considerations and social justice, offering a more holistic and human-centered approach to wage management. This integrative perspective provides a strong conceptual foundation for developing fair and sustainable compensation systems, particularly within value-based institutions such as Islamic educational organizations.

2.2. Hadith on Wage Justice as Ethical Foundation of HR Management

The Prophetic tradition stating "Give the worker his wages before his sweat dries" (HR. Ibn Majah) constitutes a foundational normative principle in the Islamic conception of wage justice. This hadith establishes a clear ethical obligation for employers to fulfill workers' rights in a timely manner, reflecting a broader commitment to justice, human dignity, and social responsibility within labor relations (Mahmudulhassan & Abuzar, 2025). Rather than merely prescribing a moral guideline, this principle articulates a concrete standard for regulating employer–employee interactions.

From a human resource management perspective, this hadith can be interpreted as a fundamental ethical framework for compensation management. It encapsulates two central values: anti-exploitation and the recognition of the intrinsic value of human labor. The anti-exploitation principle emphasizes that workers must not be reduced to mere instruments of production; instead, they should be acknowledged as individuals possessing inherent economic and social rights (Ahyani et al., 2025). This perspective challenges purely utilitarian approaches in conventional management that prioritize efficiency over worker welfare.

Furthermore, the recognition of labor dignity underscores that work carries intrinsic value that must be fairly compensated both materially and morally. In this sense, wages are not solely transactional payments but also represent acknowledgment of human effort, contribution, and dignity (Pratama, 2025). This aligns with contemporary discussions in ethical HRM that advocate for human-centered management practices, where employees are treated as stakeholders rather than resources.

Importantly, this hadith extends beyond a normative ethical statement by offering practical implications for modern organizational systems. Its emphasis on timeliness directly informs compensation policies, while its underlying values support the development of fair labor practices and employee protection mechanisms. In relation to organizational justice theory, the hadith resonates particularly with temporal justice and procedural fairness, thereby demonstrating its compatibility with contemporary HRM frameworks.

In sum, the hadith serves not only as a religious directive but also as a robust ethical foundation for designing just and sustainable human resource management systems. By integrating moral accountability with managerial practice, it provides a holistic approach to wage justice that is both normatively grounded and operationally relevant.

2.3. Wage Justice Theory in Contemporary Management

In contemporary management literature, wage justice is predominantly examined through the lenses of equity theory, distributive justice, and procedural justice. Equity theory posits that individuals assess fairness by comparing the ratio of their inputs (e.g., effort, skills, and experience) to the outputs they receive (e.g., wages, benefits), both within the organization and relative to external referents (Khudhair, 2024). Perceived imbalances in this ratio often lead to dissatisfaction, reduced motivation, and ultimately diminished organizational performance. This highlights the centrality of perceived fairness as a determinant of employee behavior and organizational effectiveness.

Complementing this perspective, distributive justice focuses on the fairness of outcome allocation, including compensation, which should be based on principles such as proportionality, equity, and, in some cases, need (Mohamad et al., 2024). This approach emphasizes that fair wage systems must reflect both individual contributions and broader considerations of welfare. Meanwhile, procedural justice underscores the importance of fair, consistent, and transparent processes in decision-making related to compensation. Transparent procedures not only enhance legitimacy but also foster trust and acceptance of organizational decisions, even when outcomes may not fully satisfy individual expectations.

When juxtaposed with the Islamic perspective, these theoretical constructs exhibit strong conceptual alignment with the principles of *adl* (justice), *kifayah* (adequacy), and transparency. However, the Islamic framework extends beyond the rational and procedural dimensions emphasized in conventional theories by incorporating moral and spiritual considerations. In Islam, justice is not merely an outcome of rational calculation or procedural fairness, but also an ethical obligation grounded in *maqashid al-shariah*, particularly in safeguarding human welfare and dignity (Mohd, 2024).

This distinction is significant, as it shifts the understanding of wage justice from a purely instrumental concept to a value-driven and holistic framework. While contemporary management theories primarily focus on organizational efficiency and employee satisfaction, the Islamic perspective integrates these with broader ethical imperatives, including social justice and moral accountability. Consequently, the integration of modern wage justice theories with Islamic principles offers a more comprehensive and multidimensional approach to compensation management—one that balances efficiency, fairness, and ethical responsibility.

2.4. Wage Practices in Islamic Educational Institutions

Despite the well-established normative and theoretical frameworks of wage justice in Islamic thought and contemporary management literature, empirical evidence suggests that wage practices within Islamic educational institutions remain fraught with persistent challenges. A growing body of research indicates that educators—particularly honorary teachers and lecturers in private institutions—frequently receive compensation that falls below acceptable living standards and are often subjected to delayed wage payments (Ahyani et al., 2025; Pratama, 2025; Tobroni & Kamala, 2025). These conditions reflect not only economic constraints but also systemic shortcomings in compensation management.

Moreover, structural disparities within wage systems further exacerbate issues of inequality. Significant differences between permanent and non-permanent staff in terms of salary, job security, and access to benefits highlight the absence of a merit-based and equitable compensation framework (Juhainah et al., 2025). Such disparities undermine both employee well-being and organizational commitment, indicating that wage systems are not yet aligned with the principles of distributive justice or professional human resource management standards.

Beyond structural and managerial issues, cultural factors also play a critical role in shaping wage practices. Several studies identify the persistence of the devotion narrative, which is often invoked to justify low compensation levels for educators (Nurkholiq & Rahayu, 2025). From a critical management perspective, this narrative functions as an ideological mechanism that normalizes inequality and weakens employees' bargaining positions. Consequently, wage-related issues in Islamic educational institutions cannot be understood solely in economic or administrative terms but must also be examined through the lens of organizational culture and institutional norms.

Taken together, these findings reveal a substantial gap between the normative ideals of Islamic wage justice, contemporary management theories, and actual institutional practices. This gap underscores the limitations of existing approaches that treat wage justice as either a purely ethical or purely technical issue. Therefore, there is a pressing need for an integrative framework that not only conceptualizes wage justice but also translates it into practical and institutionally embedded management strategies. Addressing this gap constitutes the primary contribution of the present study.

3. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a *library research* design to critically examine the concept of wage justice from a hadith-based perspective and its relevance to the management of Islamic educational institutions. A qualitative approach is particularly suitable for this study, as it allows for an in-depth exploration of meanings, ethical values, and normative principles embedded in religious texts, as well as their interpretation within contemporary management contexts (Adiyono et al., 2024; Shodikin & Intania, 2025).

To achieve this objective, the research adopts an integrated normative and conceptual approach. The normative approach is used to analyze primary Islamic sources, particularly hadith and both classical and contemporary fiqh literature related to wage justice. In parallel, the conceptual approach links these normative principles with contemporary management theories, including equity theory, distributive justice, and procedural justice (Hussin et al., 2024). The integration of these approaches enables the development of an analytical framework that is not only value-based but also theoretically grounded and practically applicable.

The study draws on both primary and secondary data sources. The primary data consist of hadith texts related to wage practices, particularly the narration reported by Ibn Majah concerning the obligation to pay workers before their sweat dries. Secondary data include classical and contemporary fiqh literature, as well as peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2015 and 2026. A purposive sampling strategy was employed to ensure the relevance and quality of the selected literature. The inclusion criteria required that sources be directly related to wage justice, Islamic economics, or human resource management; published in reputable academic outlets; and provide significant normative, empirical, or conceptual contributions. Conversely, sources were excluded if they lacked relevance, were non-academic or unverified, or contained duplicate findings without substantive contribution. The selection process followed a systematic procedure involving identification, screening, and quality appraisal to ensure the validity and credibility of the data (Sulaeman & Zulfikar, 2025).

Data were collected through a structured documentation method. This process involved systematically retrieving literature from academic databases, compiling relevant hadith and fiqh sources, classifying the data based on key thematic areas, and organizing the materials into analytically coherent categories. This procedure ensured that the data maintained both conceptual depth and contextual relevance.

The analysis was conducted using *content analysis* combined with thematic interpretation. The analytical process followed a structured sequence, beginning with data reduction to select and refine relevant materials, followed by coding to identify key concepts such as temporal justice, fair compensation, and contractual transparency. The data were then categorized into major themes, interpreted by examining relationships among concepts and linking them to contemporary management theories, and finally synthesized into an integrated conceptual framework of wage justice. This approach enabled not only descriptive analysis but also critical and interpretative insights (Zahari et al., 2024; Pamirzad & Susyal, 2024).

To ensure validity and reliability, the study employed source triangulation by comparing multiple types of literature—hadith, fiqh, and empirical studies—from diverse perspectives. In addition, an audit trail was maintained by systematically documenting all stages of data collection and analysis, thereby enhancing transparency, methodological rigor, and the replicability of the research.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Dimensions of Wage Justice in Hadith

The Prophetic tradition stating “Give the worker his wages before his sweat dries” (HR. Ibn Majah) can be positioned not merely as an ethical injunction, but as a foundational principle in the construction of a systemic and operational framework of labor justice. From an analytical perspective, this hadith encapsulates a multidimensional conception of wage justice that closely corresponds to the core dimensions of organizational justice, namely temporal, distributive, and procedural justice. This alignment suggests that principles widely discussed in contemporary management theory have, in essence, been normatively articulated within Islamic teachings long before their formal conceptualization in modern organizational studies (Mahmudulhassan & Abuzar, 2025; Mohd, 2024).

Beyond this conceptual compatibility, the hadith reflects a distinctive normative-operational character of justice in Islam, wherein ethical values are inseparable from practical implementation. Justice is not treated as an abstract moral ideal, but as a binding obligation that must be realized in concrete employment practices. In this sense, the hadith functions simultaneously as an ethical foundation and a regulatory framework for equitable compensation systems.

The temporal dimension of justice, as implied in the hadith, emphasizes the obligation of timely wage payment. In Islamic thought, timeliness transcends administrative efficiency and constitutes a moral and legal right of the worker. Unjustified delays in wage payment are considered a form of *zulm* (injustice), as they restrict workers’ access to their means of livelihood (Azeez & Miftaudeen, 2024). From a contemporary management perspective, timely compensation is strongly associated with *organizational trust*, job satisfaction, and employee commitment. Empirical evidence suggests that delayed payments can lead to psychological distress, decreased motivation, and reduced productivity (Mahmudulhassan & Abuzar, 2025). Thus, the hadith expands the notion of justice by establishing time as an intrinsic dimension of fairness, rather than a mere technical consideration.

In addition, the hadith implicitly reflects distributive justice, which concerns the fairness of outcomes in relation to individual contributions. While modern theories such as equity theory emphasize the balance between inputs and outputs, the Islamic perspective extends this framework through the principle of *kifayah*, which requires that wages meet the basic living needs of workers (Mohamad et al., 2024). This introduces a substantive dimension of justice that goes beyond market-based or productivity-driven calculations. Consequently, compensation that may be deemed economically rational within conventional frameworks may still be considered unjust in Islam if it fails to ensure a decent standard of living. This highlights the ethical depth of Islamic distributive justice, which integrates proportionality with human welfare and dignity (Khudhair, 2024).

Furthermore, the hadith embodies procedural justice through its implicit emphasis on clarity and fairness in contractual relations. In the framework of *ijarah*, employment contracts must clearly specify job responsibilities, wage levels, and payment schedules to avoid uncertainty (*gharar*) and potential disputes (Azeez & Miftaudeen, 2024). In modern organizational theory, procedural justice is a critical determinant of perceived fairness and the legitimacy of managerial decisions. Transparent and consistent processes not only reduce conflict but also enhance trust and organizational stability. This indicates that Islamic teachings anticipate key principles of good governance, particularly in ensuring accountability and fairness in institutional practices.

Taken together, these dimensions demonstrate that the concept of wage justice in the hadith is inherently holistic and integrative, encompassing time (temporal), outcomes (distributive), and processes (procedural) in a unified framework. Unlike conventional approaches that often treat these dimensions separately, the Islamic perspective views justice as an interconnected system in which each dimension reinforces the others. The primary contribution of this analysis lies in demonstrating that the hadith is not only normatively relevant but also conceptually robust and operationally applicable within modern management systems. Rather than merely aligning with organizational justice theory, it enriches it by incorporating ethical and spiritual dimensions that are often underexplored in mainstream literature, thereby offering a more comprehensive and human-centered framework for understanding wage justice.

4.2. Reality of Wage Practices in Islamic Educational Institutions

Despite the well-articulated normative framework of wage justice in Islamic teachings, empirical realities within Islamic educational institutions reveal a persistent and systemic gap between principle and practice. Existing literature indicates that wage-related issues cannot be attributed solely to financial constraints; rather, they reflect a complex interplay of managerial deficiencies, institutional structures, and cultural constructions that collectively shape organizational behavior.

Empirically, delayed wage payments represent a primary indicator of the failure to implement temporal justice. Such practices are frequently observed in private Islamic educational institutions that rely heavily on unstable funding sources, including student fees and external subsidies (Tobroni & Kamala, 2025; Nurkholiq & Rahayu, 2025). However, deeper analysis suggests that weak financial planning, lack of prioritization for personnel expenditures, and inadequate control systems are equally significant contributing factors. This reflects a failure to establish a sustainable compensation system, which is essential for organizational stability.

In addition, the prevalence of underpaid teachers indicates structural distributive injustice. Educators particularly honorary teachers and non-permanent lecturers often receive compensation that is not commensurate with their workload and professional responsibilities (Ahyani et al., 2025; Pratama, 2025). Within the framework of equity theory, such imbalance undermines motivation and organizational performance. From an Islamic perspective, this violates the principle of *kifayah*, as it fails to ensure a decent standard of living.

Structural disparities further intensify the problem, particularly between permanent and non-permanent staff. These differences extend beyond wages to include access to benefits, job security, and career advancement (Juhainah et al., 2025). This suggests that compensation systems are influenced more by administrative hierarchy than by meritocratic principles, reflecting failures in both distributive and procedural justice.

Moreover, cultural factors especially the devotion narrative play a significant role in sustaining wage injustice. This narrative often functions as an ideological mechanism that legitimizes low compensation and weakens employees’ bargaining power (Nurkholiq & Rahayu, 2025), thereby hindering the development of professional human resource management practices. To synthesize these findings, the analytical framework is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Analytical Dimensions of Wage Practice Issues in Islamic Educational Institutions

Issue	Root Causes	Managerial Implications	Justice Dimension Affected	Theoretical Link
Delayed wage payment	Weak financial planning; unstable funding; poor budget prioritization	Decreased organizational trust; reduced employee commitment	Temporal justice	Organizational trust theory
Low wages (underpaid teachers)	Input–output imbalance; lack of wage standards; policy limitations	Lower motivation; increased turnover intention	Distributive justice	Equity theory
Structural inequality	Status-based system; non-meritocratic policies	Organizational injustice; reduced fairness perception	Distributive & procedural justice	Organizational justice theory
“Devotion” narrative	Cultural and ideological justification	Weak bargaining power; deprofessionalization of HRM	All dimensions	Critical management theory

The findings in Table 1 demonstrate that wage practices in Islamic educational institutions are characterized by multidimensional challenges encompassing structural, managerial, and cultural domains. The gap between Islamic normative principles and empirical realities should not be interpreted as a mere

technical deviation, but rather as an indication of institutional failure in embedding justice values within organizational systems.

Therefore, improving wage systems requires a comprehensive and integrative reform approach that includes strengthening managerial capacity, redesigning wage policies based on merit and fairness, and transforming organizational culture toward a more professional and justice-oriented paradigm.

4.3. Critical Analysis: Bridging Normative Principles and Institutional Practices

The analysis of the gap between the normative principles of wage justice in Islam and their empirical implementation within Islamic educational institutions reveals that this issue is not merely incidental or partial, but rather structural in nature, rooted in systemic weaknesses in institutional governance. This gap reflects not only a failure in value implementation but also a deeper dysfunction in integrating ethical principles with managerial practices and organizational policies.

From a managerial perspective, insufficient capacity in financial management and human resource administration emerges as a critical barrier to the realization of wage justice. Many Islamic educational institutions lack robust, priority-based budgeting systems capable of ensuring the sustainability of wage payments. Core strategic management functions such as financial planning, budgetary control, and human resource management are often underdeveloped or inconsistently applied. Within the framework of organizational theory, this condition signifies a deficit in institutional capacity, which is a fundamental prerequisite for establishing fair and sustainable compensation systems.

In addition to managerial constraints, cultural bias plays a significant role in shaping wage practices, particularly through the construction of the devotion narrative. In practice, this narrative is frequently employed to rationalize low compensation levels and to obscure the importance of professional standards. From a critical theory perspective, such a phenomenon can be understood as a form of symbolic domination, whereby normative values are instrumentalized to perpetuate structural inequality (Nurkholiq & Rahayu, 2025). Consequently, educators are positioned in structurally disadvantaged roles, with limited bargaining power within institutional settings.

From an institutional standpoint, the absence of structured and merit-based wage policies further exacerbates inequality. Existing compensation systems tend to be shaped by administrative status rather than by competence, performance, or workload. This misalignment contradicts both the principles of distributive justice in management theory and the Islamic emphasis on fairness and proportionality. Furthermore, the lack of transparency in employment contracts indicates a deficiency in procedural justice, undermining trust and organizational legitimacy.

When examined through the lens of *maqashid al-shariah*, wage injustice directly contradicts key objectives of Islamic law, particularly the preservation of wealth (*hifz al-mal*) and the protection of human well-being (*hifz al-nafs*). Inadequate wages not only affect the economic conditions of workers but also have broader implications for quality of life, psychological well-being, and social stability. Thus, wage injustice should not be treated as a purely administrative concern, but rather as a multidimensional ethical and social issue with far-reaching consequences.

Furthermore, this analysis demonstrates that the failure to implement wage justice is not due to the absence of normative principles, but rather to the weak institutionalization of these values within organizational systems. According to institutional theory, normative values become effective only when they are embedded in formal regulations, organizational practices, and cultural norms. Without such institutionalization, justice remains symbolic and fails to influence actual practices.

Therefore, bridging the gap between normative ideals and institutional realities requires a transformative approach encompassing three interrelated dimensions: (1) strengthening managerial capacity through the professionalization of financial and human resource management; (2) reforming wage policies based on meritocracy, fairness, and transparency; and (3) reconstructing organizational culture to recognize educators as professionals entitled to fair economic rights. This approach underscores that wage justice must move beyond moral discourse and be operationalized as an integrated system within institutional governance.

4.4. Proposed Model of Fair Wage Management

Building upon the preceding normative and empirical analyses, this study proposes an integrative and value-based model of fair wage management tailored to Islamic educational institutions. The model is designed to bridge the persistent gap between the ideal principles of Islamic teachings and the realities of wage practices, by systematically integrating Sharia ethical values with contemporary human resource management frameworks. As such, it offers not only a conceptual contribution but also an operational guideline for institutional reform.

Conceptually, the model is anchored in three interrelated pillars of wage justice: distributive, temporal, and procedural justice. These dimensions function as a cohesive system rather than isolated components, forming a holistic framework for equitable compensation management.

Distributive justice is operationalized through a compensation system that proportionally accounts for educators' competencies, workload, and decent living needs (*keifayah*). This approach moves beyond purely financial or market-driven considerations by incorporating professional standards and employee welfare into wage determination. In doing so, it reflects a balanced relationship between contribution and reward, aligning with both *equity-based compensation* principles and the ethical imperatives of Islamic economics (Mohamad et al., 2024; Mohd, 2024). Importantly, this dimension redefines fairness not merely as proportionality, but as substantive adequacy that safeguards human dignity.

Temporal justice is implemented through a structured and consistently enforced wage payment system that prioritizes timeliness. This dimension represents a direct operationalization of the Prophetic injunction prohibiting delayed wage payments. Beyond its ethical significance, timely payment functions as a critical determinant of organizational trust, employee satisfaction, and institutional stability. Consequently, Islamic educational institutions must strengthen financial planning, budgeting discipline, and internal control mechanisms to ensure that wage payments are sustainable and not contingent upon fluctuating financial conditions (Ahyani et al., 2025). This reinforces the importance of aligning financial governance with ethical accountability.

Procedural justice, meanwhile, is realized through transparency and clarity in contractual arrangements (*ijarah*). This includes explicit specification of job roles, wage structures, and payment mechanisms. Such transparency serves to minimize uncertainty (*gharar*), prevent power imbalances between employers and employees, and enhance institutional accountability (Azeez & Miftaudeen, 2024). From a management perspective, transparent procedures are essential for fostering trust, reducing conflict, and ensuring the legitimacy of organizational decisions.

The integration of these three dimensions underscores that wage justice in Islam is inherently holistic, encompassing outcomes, processes, and timing within a unified framework. Unlike fragmented approaches in conventional management, this model emphasizes the interdependence of these dimensions in achieving sustainable fairness. In this context, the proposed model functions not only as a theoretical construct but also as a practical framework that can guide Islamic educational institutions in designing compensation systems that are equitable, transparent, and sustainable.

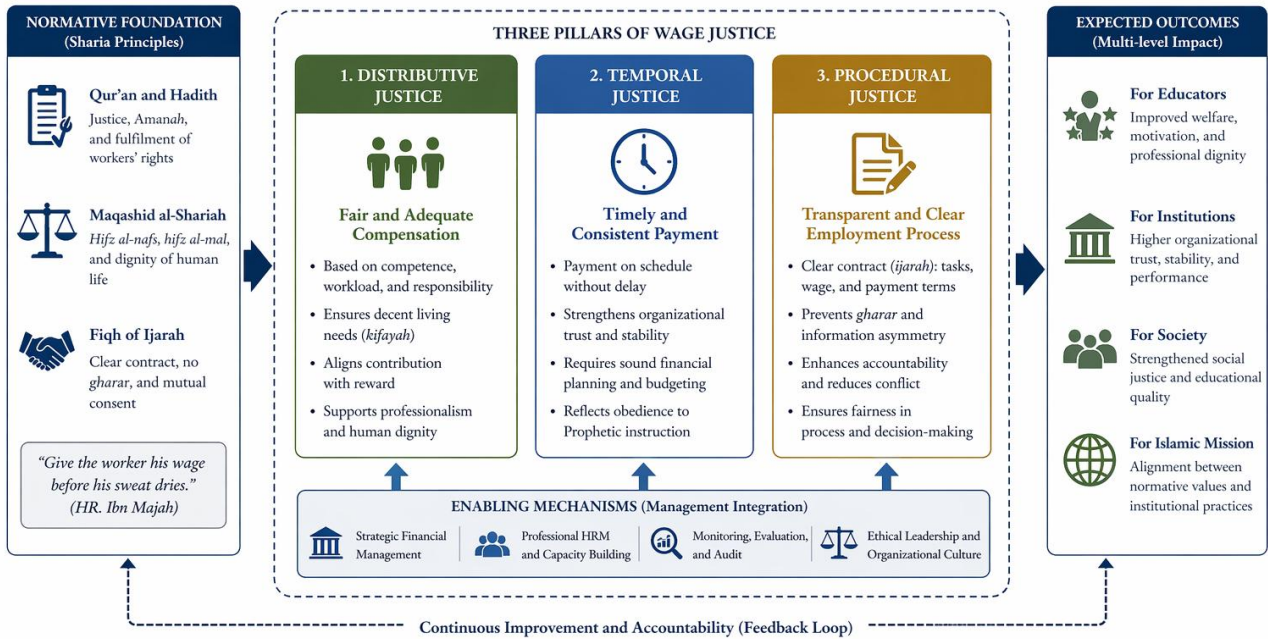


Figure 1. Proposed Model of Fair Wage Management in Islamic Educational Institutions

Based on Figure 1, the implementation of this model is expected to generate multidimensional impacts, including improved educator welfare, enhanced organizational professionalism, and stronger alignment between normative values and institutional practices. In the long term, it contributes to strengthening the moral legitimacy of Islamic educational institutions by ensuring consistency between their ethical foundations and operational realities.

5. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the Prophetic hadith “Give the worker his wages before his sweat dries” (HR. Ibn Majah) provides a robust conceptual and ethical foundation for wage justice that remains highly relevant within contemporary human resource management, particularly in Islamic educational institutions. The analysis reveals that wage justice in Islam is inherently multidimensional, encompassing temporal, distributive, and procedural dimensions, which closely align with the framework of organizational justice while extending it through moral and spiritual accountability.

However, the findings also highlight a persistent and systemic gap between these normative principles and their practical implementation. Wage practices in Islamic educational institutions are shaped not only by financial constraints but also by deeper structural, managerial, and cultural factors, including weak institutional capacity, non-meritocratic systems, and the persistence of ideological narratives that undermine professional standards. This indicates that wage injustice is not merely a technical failure but an institutional and governance issue.

To address this gap, the study proposes an integrative model of fair wage management that operationalizes Islamic ethical principles within a contemporary HRM framework. The model emphasizes competence-based and welfare-oriented compensation, timely and sustainable payment systems, and transparent contractual governance. This integrative approach offers both theoretical and practical contributions by bridging Islamic normative values with modern management principles in a coherent and applicable framework.

In conclusion, wage justice in Islam should be understood not only as a moral imperative but as an institutional obligation that must be systematically embedded within organizational governance. Future research is encouraged to empirically test and refine the proposed model across diverse educational contexts to enhance its generalizability and practical impact.

Ethical Approval

Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement

Not applicable.

Authors' Contributions

TH - Conceptualization, literature review, methodology, writing – original draft, corresponding author.
MA - Conceptualization, legal and maqāṣid analysis, supervision, writing – review and editing.

Disclosure Statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Data Availability Statement

Data are available upon request from the corresponding author due to privacy considerations.

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