

# Work Life Balance and Organizational Commitment among Muslim Generation Y: The Effect of Islamic Work Ethic

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## **Abstract---**

**Purpose:** *This study aims to explore the moderating effect of Islamic work ethic to work life balance and organizational commitment among generation Y.*

**Methodology:** *Participants in this research were 166 Muslim employees, aged 24 to 39 years old. Data were collected using: 1) Work Life Balance Scale from Fisher, Bulger and Smith (2009), 2) Islamic Work Ethic Scale from Ali and Al-Owaihian (2008), 3) organizational commitment scale from Allen & Meyer (1990). Data were analyzed using structural equation modelling with SmartPLS 3.0.*

**Results:** *Both of work life balance and Islamic work ethic have moderate correlation with organizational commitment. However Islamic work ethic has no moderating effect to the relationship between work life balance and organizational commitment.*

**Applications:** *Practical implication of this study suggest organization should consider generation Y work life balance to maintain their commitment. It is also necessary to strengthening employee work ethic, especially in Islamic context.*

**Keywords---** *Work Life Balance, Organizational Commitment, Islamic Work Ethic, Generation Y.*

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Nowadays, millennial or generation Y is in the spotlight in human resource management. Generation Y were born in the era of information technology and education development, so they have different characteristics compared to the previous generation. According to Na'Desh, Alexander and Sysko (Lyons, 2012) specific characters of Generation Y include: selfishness, impatience, narcissism, hedonism, working hard to get praise and appreciation. According to Lloyd (Brown et al, 2009) Generation Y will value the work rather than the organization. Generation Y also ambitious to achieve higher career paths than other generations (Karefalk, Petterssen and Zhu; in Brown et al, 2009). According to Solnet and Hood (2008) Generation Y usually prioritizes themselves and requires constant feedback, appreciation and praise from superiors. Generation Y wants a work and personal balance in a flexible way to identify themselves in their work (Meier, Austin & Crocker, 2010). They also demand creativity and opportunities to have an influence on the company itself (Oktariani, Hubeis & Sukandar, 2016).

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Generation Y tends to have lower organizational commitment than the previous generation (Trapero, Castano, Parra, and Garcia, 2017). Sheahan (Sari, 2018) shows that millennial generation in the Asia Pacific region has an 18 months shorter tenure compared to previous generations, which can last for 4 years. Amin and Rahmiati (2018) also shows that Generation X has a higher organizational commitment than Generation Y.

Folorunso, Adewale and Abodunde (2014) explained that organizational commitment is a factor that contributes to improving employee performance, where employees who are highly committed tend to have better performance. Employees who have low commitment to their work will be more likely to quit their jobs compared to employees who have high commitment (Spector, 2007). This was proven in a study conducted by Sianipar and Haryanti (2014) which showed a negative relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intention, where the higher the employee commitment to the organization, the lower the turnover intention, vice versa. High commitment will encourage employees to work hard in completing tasks according to their responsibilities and are willing to do work outside their responsibilities for the sake of the company (Schappe, 1998).

Swiggard (2011) explains 10 factors that can make Generation Y survive in an organization, which are: compensation, working hours flexibility, work life balance, relationships with colleagues, relationships with superiors, cooperation, employee participation, feelings towards organization, available technology, training and development. Work life balance is one of the factors that affect employee loyalty to the company in Generation Y. According to Greenhaus, Collins, and Shaw (2003) work life balance is defined as a situation when someone experiences attachment and satisfaction balanced in its role as a worker and its role in the family.

Another important factor in organizational commitment is the work ethic (Komari & Djafar, 2013; Miller, Woehr & Hudspeth, 2001). Work ethic is a commitment to the values and the importance of hard work. Person with high work ethic would place a higher value on hard work, autonomy, justice, policy and the efficient use of time, not easily satisfied and the intrinsic value of the work (Miller, Woehr & Hudspeth, 2001).

Among another construct, the Islamic work ethic is chosen according to the conditions of the majority of Indonesian people who are Muslim. In Muslim employee groups, several studies have shown that the Islamic work ethic can be a predictor of organizational commitment (Mohamed, Abdul Karim & Hussein, 2010; Rokhman, 2010). The religious style in the Islamic work ethic can be seen as a personal factor. Steers and Porter (Sopiah, 2008) explain personal factors in the form of expectations of work, self-potential and the individual's will and capacity, motivation and personal characteristics or values.

The work ethics constructs came from the scientific study of Islam known as *Islamic Work Ethics* (Ali, 1988). Islamic work ethic itself is a concept derived from the teachings of Islam, both from the Quran and Hadith about how a Muslim is supposed to work. Islam considers work as something more meaningful than just a personal interest in the economic, social and psychological, to maintain social status, but also to improve social welfare and strengthen faith. Islamic work ethics can be defined as a set of moral principles that provides orientation to do the work and approach to the work as a virtue in human life (Rizk, in Rohman, 2010). Thus, a Muslim should be motivated to do the job as well as possible because it is a part of worship (Ali, 2008). Islam teaches effort is sufficient is an obligation that must be carried out in the working. This effort requires the perseverance, passion and

commitment in working. Islam recognizes excellence as a virtue and encouraging his followers to do everything perfectly. The Hadith said: "Allah loves those who if he do a job, he did it perfectly" (Hadith by Bayhaqi). Islam also requires the Muslims to efficient and competent in doing their jobs, more than the minimum required terms of the job (Kamaluddin and Khadijah, 2010).

Based on the previous studies, Islamic work ethic proved to have an influence in improving the performance and a positive attitude toward the organization. Research conducted by Rohman (2010) shows the Islamic work ethic has a positive correlation with satisfaction and organizational commitment, and has a negative correlation with turnover. Some research conducted by Yousef (2000) shows Islamic work ethic directly and positively correlated to the various dimensions of attitudes toward organizational change and organizational commitment.

This study aims to explore the effect of work life balance and Islamic work ethic on organizational commitment among Generation Y. The analysis will be carried out in two stages. The first step is to examine whether there is a correlation between work life balance and Islamic work ethic. The second stage is to find out whether the Islamic work ethic has a moderating effect on the correlation between work life balance and organizational commitment.

## **II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### ***Organizational Commitment***

Mowday, Steers and Porter (Spector, 2007) explains organizational commitment as acceptance of organizational goals, employee willingness to work hard for the organization, strong desires and beliefs to remain in the organization. Organizational commitment is a psychological manifestation that characterizes the relationship between employees and the organization that influences the employee's decision to continue or not continue his membership in the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Luthans (2006) also states that organizational commitment refers to employee loyalty to the organization and the desire of employees to remain in the organization.

There are three components that can be used as aspects of organizational commitment according to Allen and Meyer (1990):

a) Affective commitment, which includes emotional aspects, employee identification and involvement in the organization. Affective commitment is demonstrated through high involvement. This commitment causes employees to stick to a job because they want it.

b) Continuance commitment, which leads to the calculation of the benefits gained if they remain in the organization and the losses when leaving the organization. This commitment causes employees to need the organization as something that is considered beneficial.

c) Normative commitment, is an obligation to survive in the organization as a necessity. Normative commitment relates to norms and the value of loyalty to the organization. This commitment causes employees to stay in the organization because they feel it is an obligation and it is a good and right thing to do.

### ***Work Life Balance***

Work life balance is a state when a person experiences attachment and satisfaction in their role as an employee and their role in the family (Greenhaus, Collins, & Shaw 2003). Westman, Brough and Kalliath (2009) defines work

life balance is the extent to which individuals are involved and are equally satisfied in terms of time and psychological involvement with their role in work life and personal life, and there is no conflict between both of these roles.

The aspects used to measure work life balance according to Fisher, Bulger and Smith (2009) consist of four dimensions as follows:

a) Work Interfere Personal Life (WIPL), it happens when work takes a lot of time, energy and individual thoughts. Employee will find it difficult to allocate time and maybe lose important activities in their personal lives.

b) Personal Life Interfere Work (PLIW), it happens when personal life disturbs working life. Employee will prioritize their time, energy, and mind to personal life. If employees have personal problem, their performance will be disturbed (Ula, 2015).

c) Work Enhance Personal Life (WEPL), it happens when work can improve the quality of private life. If employee satisfied with their job, feelings of pleasure and pride in their work and skills will impact on personal life. Employee can apply their work skills into everyday life (Ula, 2015).

d) Personal Life Enhance Work (PLEW) it happens when personal life can improve employee's performance. If employee have a good personal life, they will enjoy their work and perform well (Ula, 2015).

### ***Islamic Work Ethic***

According to Nasr (Ali & Al-Owaihian, 2008) Islamic work ethics is an orientation that shapes and influences employee involvement and participation in the workplace. Work is perceived as a virtue to build balance in one's and social life. Ali (1988) describes the Islamic work ethic as a life orientation in business, based on Qur'an, which has extraordinary influence on Muslims and their organizations.

Islamic work ethics are built based on four main concepts as follows (Ali & Al-Owaihian, 2008):

a) Effort, is an enthusiasm to produce high performance for their selves and society. Employee with high involvement will believe they should obtain a decent standard of living by their selves to reduce economic problems.

b) Competition, which includes good intentions to avoid bad behavior, to maintain trust in the scope of the work environment.

c) Transparency, is based on mutual understanding to prevent injustice, sense of trust and openness to the work environment.

d) Morally responsible behavior, is based on responsibility, honesty and openness to gain trust and confidence from the work environment.

### ***Islamic Work Ethic as Moderating Variables between Work Life Balance and Organizational Commitment***

According to Meier, Austin and Crocker (2010) generation Y is the generation that pays more attention to work life balance than generation X. This is supported by the explanation that generation Y is willing to contribute more and extra hours of work to the organization, but will be very sensitive to personal time (Luntungan et al, 2014). Delecta (2011) defines work life balance as an ability where individuals are able to meet work demands, responsibilities and commitments in the family, as well as responsibilities towards other activities. Kim(2014) found that work-life balance produces feelings of loyalty to organization and increases affective commitment.

Based on several previous studies (Yousef, 2001; Sadozai et al., 2013) the Islamic work ethic has a significant correlation with organizational commitment. The higher the Islamic work ethic, the higher the level of organizational commitment that employees have. This might be because individuals with high Islamic work ethics will also have high ethical standards in employment, so they tend to survive in an organization.

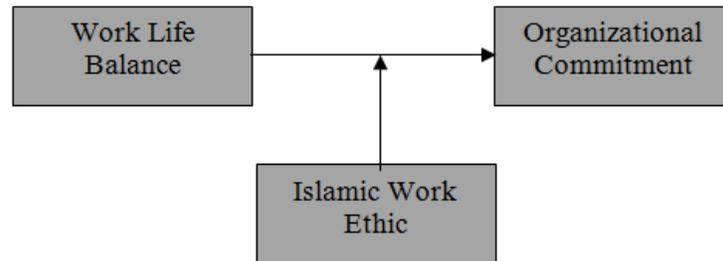


Figure 1: Proposed Framework

As a personal factor, Islamic work ethic is able to have a moderating effect on organizational variables that might influence organizational commitment. The moderating effect of the Islamic work ethic, for example, is seen in the research of Mohamed, Karim & Hussein (2010) regarding the moderating effect of the Islamic work ethic on the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The level of job satisfaction on organizational commitment will be influenced by the level of Islamic work ethic. In addition, Khan et al (2013) found that the Islamic work ethic is also able to moderate the relationship between perceptions of organizational justice and organizational commitment. Employee with high Islamic work ethic tend to have high moral awareness, so they tend to be loyal to the organization even though the conditions faced are not satisfactory. The theoretical framework of this study can be seen in Figure 1.

Based on the explanation, the hypotheses to be tested were:

- H1: work life balance has a positive correlation with organizational commitment to generation Y.
- H2: the Islamic work ethic has a positive correlation with organizational commitment to generation Y.
- H3: Islamic work ethic has a moderating effect on the relationship between work life balance and organizational commitment.

### III. RESEARCH METHODS

#### *Participants*

Participants in this study were 166 employee which includes as generation Y. Generation Y is individuals born between 1980 and 2000 (Meier, Austin & Crocker, 2010). Participants are currently aged 24-39 years old. All of them are Muslim, male and female, both married and unmarried.

#### *Data Collection*

Data were collected using 3 scales: the work life balance scale, the Islamic work ethic scale and the organizational commitment scale.

### 1) Work Life Balance Scale.

Work life balance scale is consisting 17 items according to four dimensions of work life balance developed by Fisher, Bulger, and Smith (2009). The work life balance scale has five alternative answer (ranging from “Never” to “Always”) to respond to each item. "Never" will scored as 1, meanwhile "Always" will scored as 5. Items on the work interfere with personal life (WIPL) and personal life interfere with work (PLIW) are unfavorable statements. Meanwhile, the items on the work enhance personal life (WEPL) and personal life enhance work (PLEW) are favorable statement. The reliability coefficient of the scale was 0.836.

### 2) Islamic Work Ethic Scale

Islamic Work Ethic Scale consisting of 17 items developed by Ali and Al-Owaihah (2008). The scale has five alternative answers to respond to each item, ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”. "Strongly Disagree" will be scored as 1, meanwhile "Strongly Agree" will be scored as 5. The reliability coefficient of the scale was 0.898.

### 3) Organizational Commitment Scale

Organizational commitment was adapted from Organization Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) by Allen and Meyer (1990). This scale measures affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. The organizational commitment scale has seven alternative answers to respond to each statement, ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”. "Strongly Disagree" scored as 1, meanwhile "Strongly Agree" will be scored as 7. This scale consists of 15 favorable items and 9 unfavorable items. The reliability coefficient of the scale is 0.809.

## *Data Analysis*

The moderation effect was tested using SmartPLS3.0 for Mac. In addition, researchers also conducted additional analysis to explore the correlation of each aspect to each research variable, also the correlation of age and tenure to each research variable.

Comparison test to explore the effect of gender and marital status to the work life balance, Islamic work ethic and organizational commitment also performed to understand the data. All additional analyzes were performed with SPSS 22.0 for Mac.

## **IV. RESULTS**

Participants profile in this study can be seen in Table 1. In general, it can be concluded that the proportion of male and female participants is quite balanced (50.6% female, and 49.5% male). The age of the participants sufficiently represents the characteristics of generation Y, although the subjects with the age group 36-39 years has the least frequency (4.8%).

In terms of work tenure, the variation is quite balanced. Participants with less than one year of service being only 6%. Mostly (74.7%) participants were married, with the number of children ranging from 1-3 kids.

Table 1: Participants Profile

Variables		Frequencies	Percentage
Gender	Male	82	49.5 %
	Female	84	50.6 %
Age	24 – 27 years old	61	36.7 %
	28 – 31 years old	58	34.9 %
	32 – 35 years old	39	23.5 %
	36 – 39 years old	8	4.8 %
Tenure	<1 years	10	6 %
	1 – 3 years	55	33.1 %
	3 – 5 years	40	24.1 %
Marital Status	Married	124	74.7 %
	Unmarried	42	25.3 %
Children	None	55	33.1 %
	1	52	31.3 %
	2 – 3	59	35.5 %

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of each research variable. Further analysis shows that not all of demographic variables are correlated with research variables. From the table it can be observed that the age variable has a weak significant correlation with work life balance ( $r = 0.198, p < 0.01$ ) and has a moderate significant correlation with organizational commitment ( $r = 0.379, p < 0.01$ ). Tenure has a weak significant correlation with the work life balance ( $r = 0.159, p < 0.01$ ) and a moderate significant correlation with organizational commitment ( $r = 0.416, p < 0.01$ ). Comparison test showed that there were significant differences in Islamic work ethic scores among male and female participants ( $t = -3,382, p < 0,01$ ), where women's work ethics were higher than men. There is no difference in the score of work life balance and organizational commitment among male and female participants. Based on marital status, there is a difference in organizational commitment among participants who are married to those who are not married ( $t = 3,890, p < 0.01$ ), where the commitment of the participants' organizations who are married is higher than participants who are not married.

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation, Demographic Correlation

VARIABLES	Work Life Balance	Islamic Work Ethic	Organizational Commitment
Mean	59.72	62.29	81.83
SD	6.9	5.5	12.9
Age	0.198*	0.014	0.379*
Tenure	0.159*	0.089	0.416*
Gender	-1.682	-3.328*	-1.299
Marital Status	0.980	1.798	3.890*

\*significance at  $p < 0.01$

Table 3 shows the frequency of participants scores on each variable. It can be concluded that the majority of work life balance scores are in the high category (68.7%). The score of Islamic work ethic which is majority is also relatively high (65.1%), while the organizational commitment is mostly moderate (51.8%).

Table 3: Data Categorization

Category	Work Life Balance		Islamic Work Ethic		Organizational Com.	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Very Low	0	0	0	0	0	0
Low	1	0.6	0	0	7	4.2
Moderate	32	19.3	2	1.2	86	51.8
High	114	68.7	108	65.1	65	39.1
Very High	19	11.4	56	33.7	8	4.8

Table 4 shows the correlation between research variables. It appears that the work life balance ( $r = 0.413$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and the Islamic work ethic ( $r = 0.349$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) have a moderate and significant correlation with organizational commitment. Thus, hypotheses H1 and H2 are accepted. In each dimensions of the work life balance variable, only WIPL is not correlated with organizational commitment, whereas PLIW, WEPL, and PLEW correlate with total score of organizational commitment, and with each dimensions of organizational commitment.

Table 4: Correlations between Variables

Variables	Organizational Commitment			
	Total	Affective	Continuance	Normative
Islamic Work Ethic	0.349*	0.392*	0.267*	0.211*
Work Life Balance (total)	0.413*	0.458*	0.211*	0.338*
WIPL (Work Interfere Personal Life)	0.099	0.096	0.065	0.090
PLIW (Personal Life Interfere Work)	0.318*	0.373*	0.135**	0.282*
WEPL (Work Enhance Personal Life)	0.500*	0.540*	0.271*	0.414*
PLEW (Personal Life Enhance Work)	0.327*	0.405*	0.169**	0.241*

\*significance at  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*significance at  $p < 0.05$

Figure 2 shows the results of the structural model test with the Islamic work ethic as a moderating variable. The test results show that the Islamic work ethic does not have a moderating effect on the relationship between work life balance and organizational commitment with  $B = 0.176$ ,  $p = 0.300$  ( $p > 0.05$ ), although Islamic work ethic is able to be a predictor for organizational commitment. Therefore, the H3 hypothesis which states that the Islamic work ethic has a moderating effect on the relationship between work life balance and organizational commitment is rejected. Structural model test results can be seen in Table 5.

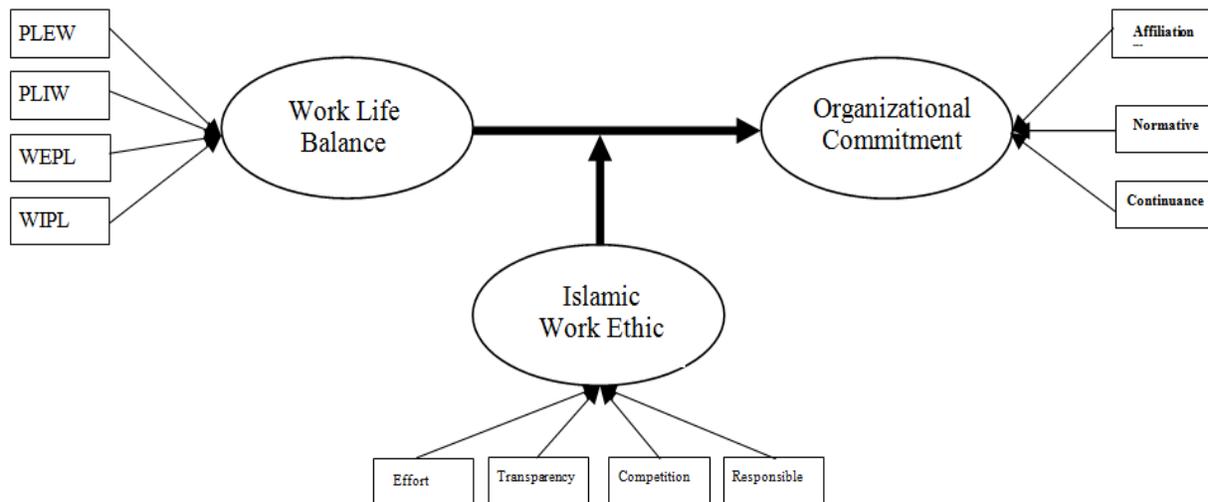


Figure 2: Tested Model

Table 5: Moderating Effect

Variables	B	P values
Work life balance → Organizational commitment	0.544	0.000
Islamic work ethic → Organizational commitment	0.140	0.016
Moderating effect	0.176	0.300

## V. DISCUSSION

The results of this study are in accordance with Scholarios and Marks (2006) who found that work life balance is an important factor in increasing organizational commitment. Work life balance in various roles greatly influences one's emotional state in doing something (Michel, Bosch, & Rexroth, 2014). The balance created in personal and work life will produce the ability within oneself to take full responsibility for work, family, personal life, social life, and make oneself always ready to serve all responsibilities (Lockwood, 2006). This is closely related to personal factors that influence organizational commitment to employees because it relates to individual characteristics in showing a responsible attitude and willingness to work.

Work life balance and organizational commitment are interconnected because employees who have a good balance between work life and personal life work will have higher motivation and higher performance satisfaction which will ultimately have an impact on the emergence of commitment to employees to stay in the organization. Employees with higher work life balance will concentrate more on their work so as to increase productivity. This will make every employee have the awareness to contribute and provide the best service. Aslam, Siddique and Tanveer (2012) found that work life balance has positive impact because productivity and work efficiency will increase, it will bring competitive advantage towards organization.

It can be concluded from the data that majority of the participants had high and very high level of work life balance (total 80,1%). The data was undertaken in one of state owned enterprise. The enterprise is known for offering good salaries to their employee, good opportunity for self-development, maintain their employee engagement and foster integrity to the employee. The questionnaire was collected from employee in several branches. The preliminary study using interview techniques showed that several employees were satisfied with the work-life balance offered by the company. They feel they can maintain their time for work and family time.

Furthermore, the results of this study also show a positive and significant relationship between the Islamic work ethic and organizational commitment. The results of this study are in line with Yousef (2001) who found that the Islamic work ethic is strongly correlated with organizational commitment. Employees with good Islamic work ethic will be more committed to the organization compared to employees with lower Islamic work ethic. Employee with high Islamic work ethic will be better able to survive in their organization (Salahudin, Baharuddin, Abdullah & Osman, 2016) and show greater loyalty to their organization. According to Ali and Al-Kazemy (2007) the Islamic work ethic has a role in organizations because it can create value and loyalty, as an element of organizational commitment. As is known these values are one of the elements of personal factors that influence the emergence of organizational commitment. In other words, the application of an Islamic work ethic in a person can create organizational commitment for employees towards their organization. Anik and Arifuddin (2003) suggest that organizational commitment is influenced by Islamic work ethics in terms of intrinsic ethics such as personal attitudes and individual motivation in work, which is a personal factor that influences organizational commitment.

Islamic work ethic has no significant effect as moderating variable. It can be inferred from the data, the Islamic work ethic among participants almost all of the participants perceived they have very high and high work ethic (98,8%) but only most half of the participants (43,9%) reported that their organization commitment is in high and

very high category. The correlation between Islamic work ethic and organization commitment looks significant but it is weak. Only 1,96% variation in organizational commitment predicted by Islamic work ethic. Because its effect is too small, Islamic work ethic cannot strong enough to affect the relation between work life balance and organizational commitment.

It is interesting to look at the data categorization. Regardless the culture in the company, which is not emphasize Islamic culture, almost all of the participants reported high level in Islamic work ethics. Indonesian people are often perceived themselves as religious and put the religious practice around the workplace. But is also interesting to observe that the balance between work and personal life still being more important than the work ethic. Ethics is not the primary reason to maintain their organization commitment, just as common as in Generation Y.

Additional analysis results in this study indicate a relationship between organizational commitment and tenure. These results are in line with research by Hadiyani, Karmiyati and Ingarianti (2012) and Seniati (2006). Hart (2005) expressed that employees with longer tenure would tend to want to stay in position rather than have to go out and look for other jobs.

Thus, it can be understood that the longer working period will increasingly form a strong organizational commitment.

The analysis also shows the differences in the level of organizational commitment between married and unmarried employees. According to Martono (Sakina, 2009) employees who are married have a higher commitment compared to unmarried employees. This can be related to the responsibilities held by someone who is married compared to those who are not married. So that married employees have a great responsibility for their families, in contrast to unmarried employees who still have the freedom to try various job opportunities and to move around the workplace.

## **VI. CONCLUSION**

The results of this study indicate that there is a positive and significant relationship between work life balance and Islamic work ethic with organizational commitment in generation Y. However, the results of data analysis show that Islamic work ethic does not have a moderating effect on the relationship between work life balance and organizational commitment.

## **VII. IMPLICATIONS**

### **1. For organizations**

To handle Generation Y, organizations need to manage workload for employees so they can have a balanced time for work and personal life. Organizations can also enhance the meaning of work for employees for example by providing opportunities for self-development so employees from Generation Y can feel that work can support their personal lives. Organizations can also internalize religious values, in this case Islamic values, so that the engagement with the organization becomes stronger because it is based on moral responsibility.

## 2. For further research

Future research on work ethics in Generation Y can be focused on two things. The first is to choose a research location that has a background in Islamic values and the research location should be one company or the same background. Another alternative is to examine work ethics using constructs that are not religious based on broader participant criteria.

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