

Profit Management and Islamic Business Ethics

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ABSTRACT

Financial reports are important elements in economics, so that a rule is formed in the financial reporting process called General Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). The aim is to unify financial reporting and financial reporting for each business entity in a country to facilitate the auditing process for fairness in reporting. This study will discuss earnings management in terms of Islamic ethics. The research method uses the literature review method concerning Islam's references and matters relating to profit management and Islamic business ethics. In this study, it can be seen that the behavior of a manager towards profit management by manipulating profit figures on paper is not following what is instructed by Islamic teachings and the basic laws of various types of muamalah are permissible until arguments are found that prohibit them.

Keywords : Islam, Business Ethics, profit management

INTRODUCTION

In practice, profit information can influence users' behavior of financial statement information, particularly investors and creditors. Investors and creditors need this profit information as a basis for decisions on the rate of return on their invested capital (Kurniasih, 2020). Because of financial reports' enormous benefits, a rule was formed in the financial reporting process called Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). GAAP is a framework of guidelines consisting of accounting standards and other sources supported by applying legal (juridical), theoretical, and practical accounting practices (Umam, 2020).

The purpose of establishing PABU as a rule in financial reporting is to uniform the financial reporting process, along with the results in the form of financial reports on every business entity in a country, so that it can simplify the auditing process for the fairness of its reporting (Prasetyanti, 2020). Another objective is to measure the level of comparability between the financial statements of one business entity and another so that it shows the comparability of their financial performance levels (Rachmawati, 2020).

With the application of GAAP by every business entity, it is expected that the resulting financial statements will be of high quality. The high quality of financial reports can be seen from the qualitative characteristics that support them (Mardian, 2015). The Indonesian Institute of Accountants states that there are four main qualitative characteristics of financial statements, namely understandable, relevant, elastic, and comparable. At a normative level, PABU can indeed assure the quality of financial reports issued by business entities. But at a practical level, Accounting Standards (as an aspect of GAAP) have limitations that can make financial statements less (reliable) (Maghfur, 2017).

Limitations of financial reports, in practice, cause problems with for-profit management activities by company management on their financial statements. Profit management aims to maximize managers'

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utility and tends to benefit themselves (managers) by influencing the financial reporting process (Ujiyantho, 2007). Practices carried out to influence profit figures can occur legally or illegally. To make this profit, it often impacts income for management, so that management affects profit figures which causes a decrease in the quality of the company's financial statements (Purnama, 2020).

The decline in the quality of financial reports is the main impact resulting from the absence of profit management and the other effects. A company's progress and reputation must be demonstrated by actual performance, not merely by playing with numbers (Sulistiyanto, 2008). The best way is to publish a series of annual profit and loss reports and not a series of flattened stories. This study discusses earnings management in terms of Islamic ethics, intending to present the Islamic ethical view of profit management (Purnama, 2020). An ethical perspective on an action or business activity is very important because business ethics can be used to align the strategic interests of a business or company with the demands of morality. Business ethics can also change public awareness of a trade by providing a new understanding or perspective, namely that business is not separate from ethics (Yuliza, 2020).

Business ethics concerning Islamic teachings means a thought or reflection on morality that limits its frame of reference to an organization's conception in economics and business based on Islamic teachings. Islamic business ethics regulates good or bad, fair or inappropriate, or permissible or not human behavior in business activities both within the scope of individuals and organizations based on Islamic teachings. In this case, this study will try to look at the morality / normative aspects of profit management, namely whether profit management is an act of good or bad, fair or inappropriate, or allowed or prohibited according to Islamic teachings.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research design used the literature review method. The type of data used in this research is documentary data. At the same time, the source of the data obtained is secondary data. After the data obtained has been collected, the next step is to analyze the data. In conducting this research, the data analysis method used is a qualitative method with the following steps: (1) Reviewing some references from books and scientific journals on profit management and Islamic business ethics; (2) Making interpretations or interpretations; and (3) concluding.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Islamic economics emerged around the 1970s. Then the growth and development in the 21st century are very fast and very phenomenal. Signs of change can be seen easily because the transition is "institutional" or "institutional growth" (Atmaja, 2020). Everywhere, economic institutions appear with the addition of the word "sharia." Call it Sharia Commercial Bank (BUS), Islamic Banking (IB), Sharia Rural Banks (BPRS), Sharia Accounting, Sharia Insurance, Sharia Pawnshops, Sharia Capital Market, Jakarta Islamic Index (JII), Sharia Mutual Funds, Sharia Bonds, Sharia Cooperatives (Kopsyah) and others. He said this indicated the substance of the aim of establishing the institution, namely "Islamization of the economy and financial mechanisms." In reality, the addition of the word "sharia" is inevitable and has become a trend (Kalbuana, 2020).

Regardless of whether this trend is good or bad, it needs to be reminded that such designations should rely on the awareness that the appointment is not a necessity but a trend adjustment. For example, the economic instruments "mudharaba" and "musyarakah" existed long before Islam, but there was no addition "sharia or Islam" to these instruments. The Prophet's Sunnah also never refers to the term "sharia

/ Islamic trading," even though it is known that there is a ribawi type of trade (Putra, 2020). Islamic scholars up to Ibn Khaldun did not use the "additional designation of Islam / sharia" in their knowledge discipline even though the economic concept of Ibn Khaldun was used as the basis for the Islamic economy, which emerged at the end of the 20th century and developed rapidly in the 21st century (Dewangga, 2020).

Indeed, there is a lot of information from the Koran that touches economic problems, explicitly or implicitly. According to Islam, how to buy and sell that is good and legal, borrowing and borrowing with valid contracts to prohibit usury in the economy. Everything is thoroughly discussed in Islamic law and sharia (Said, 2017). In Islam, the role model and role model in applying Islamic economic law is the Prophet Muhammad (Sulistia, 2020). Islamic economic law must adhere to Islamic sharia and will be thick with Islamic creeds. The Sharia/Islamic Economic System allows humans to be able to fulfill their daily needs honestly without overdoing it and helping each other, so it is hoped that by running an Islamic economy, humans can find loyalty and authenticity in Islam, which is expected to provide prosperity for all humans, very right with the goal of Islam, namely Islam was sent down for creatures on this earth to be safe and prosperous (Hassan, 2018).

Therefore, if someone says the term "Sharia Financial Management," then the meaning is a financial managerial activity to achieve goals by paying attention to compliance with sharia principles (Islam, 2020). Furthermore, planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling related to sharia finance is described as including the following: (1) Every effort in obtaining assets should pay attention to methods that are following sharia, such as commerce/sale and purchase, agriculture, industry., services; (2) The object cultivated is not prohibited; (3) Assets obtained are used for things that are not prohibited/changeable, such as buying consumer goods, recreation, and so on—used for items that are recommended/sunnah such as *infaq*, *waqaf*, *sadaqah*—used for things that are required, such as zakat (Abdullahi, 2017). In terms of wanting to invest money, you must also pay attention to the principle of money as a medium of exchange, not as a traded commodity, it can be done directly or through intermediary institutions such as Islamic banks and Islamic mutual funds (Mohammad, 2018).

Ethics in Islamic Financial Management

Discussion of ethics in Islamic financial management cannot be separated from Islamic teachings' values as a whole. Therefore, the following shows a mapping of the position of sharia financial or economic management in the structure of Islamic teachings.

From the Figure 1, it can be seen that financial management or sharia economics is also related to rational economic aspects as the focus of conventional economics. So that Islamic value is not an aspect that is completely separate from the sensible part of economic reality. The two are closely related. Therefore, we understand that Islamic financial or economic management is also said to realize economic motives/principles, namely achieving the maximum profit with the smallest amount of energy, even if it is not absolute, as is the practice of these economic motives reality. The method of economic motives can strongly or even negatively impact and oppress fellow human beings. However, for some people globally, the financial explanation is not a fundamental law in human endeavor because there is a "world view" as Islam has become a living and real force (Kurt, 2020). As a country where most of the population adheres to an Islamic worldview with the tradition of *infaq sadaqah zakat* (as an example of generosity/altruism), the worst impact of that economic motive does not occur (Murphy, 2020).

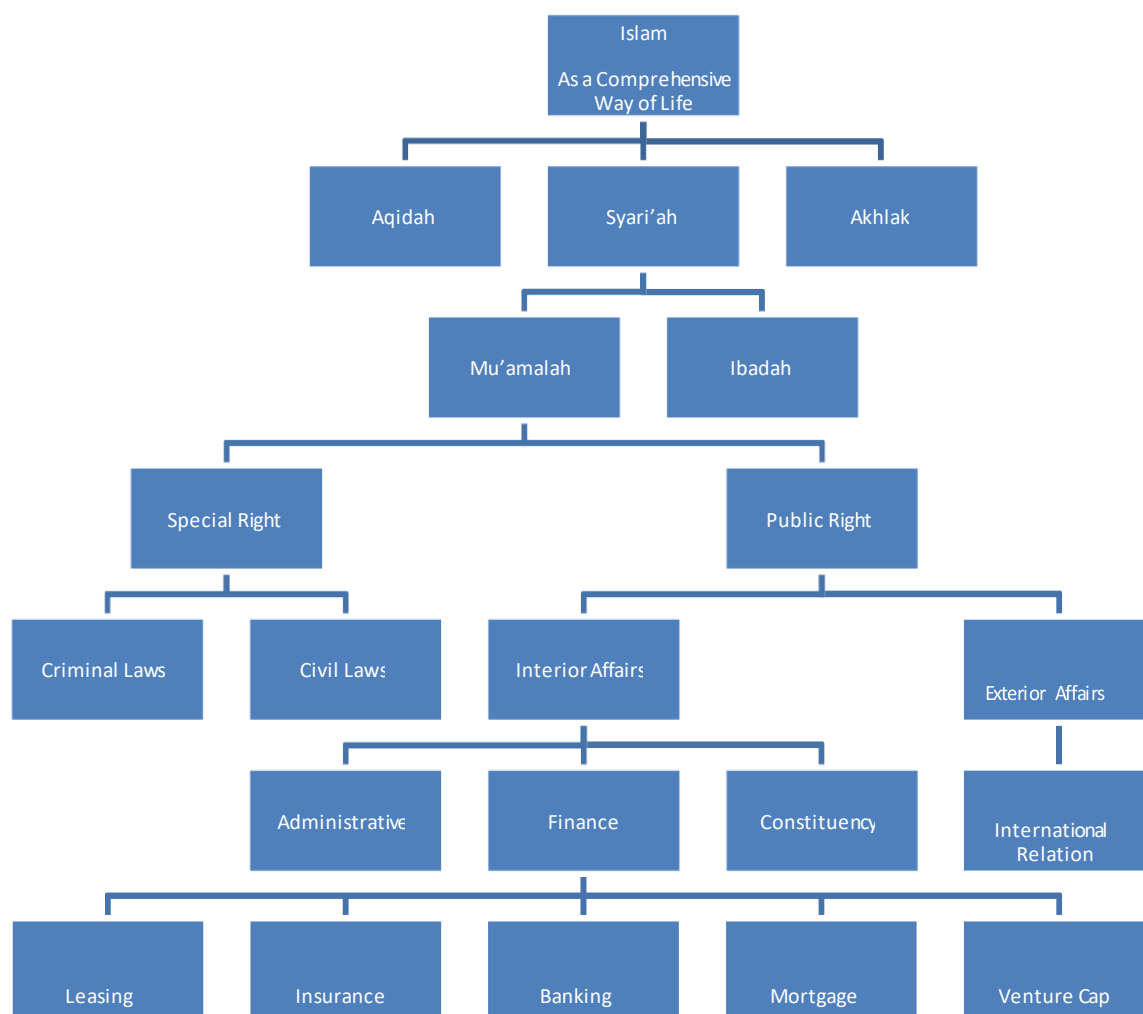


Figure 1: Financial Management in Sharia Economics

Business ethics as a set of values about good, bad, right, and wrong in the business world are based on the principles of morality (Kurt, 2020). In another sense, business ethics means a set of principles and norms which business people must uphold in their transactions, behavior and relationships in order to achieve business goals safely. Ethics in Islamic thought is included in practical philosophy along with politics and economics. Talk about how ethics vs morals should be. Morals are the same as the good and bad values of every human action, ethics is the same as the study of good and bad. In the discipline of philosophy, ethics is often equated with moral philosophy. Islamic ethical theory must be derived from religious principles. Ethical theory which has religious origin will not lose its theoretical substance. Faith determines actions, belief determines behavior.

The core metaphysical perspective is not different from the religious perspective. The main substance of the investigation of ethics in Islam, among others: (1) The nature of right and wrong; (2) The problem of free will and its relationship with God's omnipotence - human responsibility; and (3) God's justice and the reality of His justice in the next day. Various western ethical theories can be seen from an Islamic point of view as follows: theology-utilitarian in Islam: "individual and group rights are important" and "responsibility is an individual" (Hasbi, 2020). Islamic ethics has axioms, namely: (1) Unity; the

concept of monotheism, socio-economic and political aspects and nature, all belong to Allah, the vertical dimension, avoid discrimination in all aspects, avoid unethical activities; (2) Equilibrium; fair concept, horizontal size, honest in transactions, not detrimental and not disadvantaged; (3) Free will; freedom to contract but refuse *laizez-fire*, because the lust of anger tends to encourage violations of the responsibility system, humans must be responsible for their actions; and (4) Benevolence (benefit/kindness); Ihsan or activities must be useful (Zulni, 2020).

Good ethics or noble morals are not acquired and formed by themselves. Still, there are other factors besides the worship factor above, as stated by the Islamic business ethicist from America, Rafiq Issa Berkun, that individual ethical behavior can be influenced by three factors (Suhanda, 2020), namely:

Interpretation of the law

The law will live and be believed to exist if it is beneficial for humans. When the law conflicts with human interests, it can endanger its existence and will not be obeyed. Interpretation of a law will tend to be based on value standards.

Organizational factors

Without a society, the personality of an individual cannot develop. Likewise, with the moral aspect, the moral values that are owned are more of something that is obtained from outside (the environment), it will record every activity that occurs in the background, which will gradually show patterns of behavior for life in the future (Sulaiman, 2020).

Individual factors and situations

Things that fall into the category of individual factors include one's inner experience, which is also a factor for forming ethical behavior. Situation factors contribute significantly to the formation of a person's moral behavior. In simple terms, studying ethics in business means learning about what is good/bad, right/wrong in the business world based on morality's principles. The study of business ethics sometimes refers to management ethics or organizational ethics. Business ethics can mean thinking or reflecting on the character in economics and business. Merging ethics and business can mean implementing religious norms for the business world (Caniago, 2020). An ethical business is a business that has a sincere commitment to maintaining existing social contracts. The social contract is a promise that must be kept.

Morality here, as mentioned above, means good/bad, praiseworthy/despicable, right/wrong, fair/inappropriate, proper/inappropriate aspects of human behavior. In the study of Islamic business ethics, the adjective arrangement above is added with halal-haram, as pointed out by Husein Sahatah, where he describes several ethical business behaviors (akhlaqul al Islamiah) wrapped in Dhawabith Syariah (sharia boundaries) or general guidelines. Islamic business is a series of business activities in various forms that are not limited to the number of ownership (goods/services), including profit, but are limited in obtaining them and using their assets due to halal and haram regulations (Kusuma, 2020).

Profit Management

Managers have the flexibility to choose between several alternative ways of recording transactions while choosing options that exist in the same accounting treatment. This flexibility, which is intended to enable managers to adapt to various economic situations and describe the true economic consequences of

these transactions, can also influence the level of income at a certain time to benefit management and stakeholders. This is the essence of profit management, which is the ability to "manipulate" the available options and make the right choices to achieve the expected profit level.

Schipper sees profit management as a deliberate intervention in the external reporting process to obtain some personal gain. Profit management occurs when managers use judgment in financial reporting and preparation of transactions to modify financial reports, thereby misleading stakeholders about the company's economic performance or to influence contract-related outcomes that depend on the accounting figures reported. Profit management is the selection of accounting policies to achieve specific goals (Perawati, 2020).

Motivations that underlie profit management fall into three groups: first motivation from the capital market as indicated by stock returns, secondly the explanation for contracts which can be in the form of debt contracts and management compensation contracts, and the third is regulatory motivation. Profit management occurs when managers use their judgment in financial reporting and transaction structures to modify financial statements to mislead some stakeholders about the state of the company's economic performance or influence contractual results that depend on reported accounting figures.

The above definition focuses on applying considerations in financial statements (a) to mislead stakeholders who do not or cannot carry out profit management and make financial reports more informative for their users. Therefore, there are both good and bad sides to profit administration; (a) the downside is the cost created by the misallocation of resources, and (b) the bright side is the potential for increased management credibility in communicating personal information to external stakeholders and improving decisions on resource allocation.

There are financial statements that can be targeted for profit management, namely: (1) Accounting Policies. A manager's decision to apply an accounting policy that a company must apply, namely between using to account earlier than the stipulated time or postponing it until the time the procedure takes effect; (2) Income. By accelerating or delaying recognition of income; (3) Costs. Regard as an expense (expense) or consider as an amortize or capitalize of investment.

The reasons for profit management are: (1) Profit management can increase shareholders' trust in managers. Profit management is closely related to the level of profit acquisition or business performance of an organization, and this is because the level of profit or profit is associated with managing the account and also the size of the bonus that the manager will receive; (2) Profit management can improve relations with creditors. Companies that are threatened with a default cannot fulfill their debt payment obligations on time, and companies try to avoid this by making policies that can increase revenue and profit. Thus, it will provide a relatively good bargaining position in negotiations or debt rescheduling between the creditor and the company.

Managers can carry out profit management in the following ways: (1) Managers can determine when to do profit management through their policies. This is usually associated with all activities that can affect cash flow and profit, which is the managers' authority; (2) The manager's decision to apply an accounting policy that a company must apply. Namely, between implementing early or postponing until the policy comes into effect; (3) managers' efforts to change or change a particular accounting method from the many available and recognized accounting methods by existing accounting bodies (GAAP).

The factors that influence profit management include (1) Hypothesis of the Bonus Plan. Simultaneously, companies with bonus plans tend to use accounting methods that will increase current income; (2) Debt To Equity Hypothesis. Whereas in companies with a large debt to equity ratio, the company manager tends to use accounting methods that will increase revenue or profit; (3) Political Cost

Hypothesis. Whereas in large companies, whose operating activities touch most of the public, they tend to reduce reported profits.

Based on certain motivations and interests, profit management through accrual management is not the same as profit manipulation. Earnings management is carried out to fulfill management's interests by exploiting accrual accounting policies' inherent weaknesses and is still within the corridor of generally accepted accounting principles. Meanwhile, earnings manipulation is a violation of generally accepted accounting principles to produce the company's financial performance following the manager or company's interests. Suppose profit management is carried out on the basis of sound managerial considerations or through the selection of accounting methods and procedures within the limits permitted by accounting standards. In that case, profit management is not an act of fraud, even though profit management in these ways can influence stakeholder decisions.

We also assume that humans generally do not agree that the motive is carried out purely and absolutely, regardless of morality. *Homo economicus*, namely humans who always act according to economic reasons, only exist in theory. Economic principles according to normative economics cannot happen absolutely. In this case, the economic rationale in society is the financial motive according to positive economics. In reality, in society, the economic rationale is manifested by various modifications or changes that are often caused by multiple factors or multi-dimensional human beings. So it is necessary to distinguish between economic motives according to normative economics and positive economics. According to positive economics, the financial explanation (*Homo economicus*) is not much different from the economic justification in understanding the mainstream Islamic school (*Homo Islamicus*).

Therefore, here will be reformulated economic motives following sharia to complement the normative economic formulation of mainstream Islamic schools of thought. That in essence, the pursuit of profit is not a foreign business consideration in a strong Islamic society. Because we all accept that the goal of business is to make a profit, so anything that distracts from obtaining a profit, of course, must be avoided. This is a human effort to seek Allah SWT's superiority in the world, as in the Al-Qur'an verse of the letter al-Qashash verse 77.

However, in Islam, business actions based solely on economic principles are highly criticized by honest Muslims. Even if the business is for profit, even if it has been done voluntarily, it is still not justified if it violates rules or general knowledge, including knowledge about general/fair prices; for example, the behavior of increasing the cost of an item to a newcomer and to people who are usually in the area, giving a cheap/reasonable price. The Al-Qur'an states that it is related to the wrong economic motive because it merely pursues material gain and 'worldliness,' Surat Hud verses 15-16.

The economic motive/principal results from a reasonable human understanding in meeting his material needs, not a pure Western capitalism formula. So supposing that the problem is solved by blaming Western capitalism is wrong even though the economic motive is inherent in intelligent human beings. Because the nature of the financial explanation works according to the measures of reason or ratio. Meanwhile, the balance accepts only values that can be measured and weighed "quantitatively." So that the economic principle/motive measures results and costs in terms of "money," that is, by numbers which are prices that can be compared and calculated. The process of the origin of the formulation of economic motives is evident, namely arising from the behavior of a person or a society in meeting the material needs of another person or organization. In that effort, goods or services must be purchased from other people or communities. For this purchase, money is needed as a measuring tool / measuring price and a medium of exchange. There is an understanding of economic principles that use quantitative measures and, in the last process, in the form of money as a tool to measure the value of something, especially assessing it

compared to costs. If the result exceeds the cost, a profit is obtained. If the product is less than the price, there will be a loss.

But there is another fact that we also acknowledge and do; if we walk according to nature, human life's needs cannot always be measured in terms of money. Human beings basically cannot accept/do not allow themselves to be valued in money. So that goods which for someone has a high value when measured in terms of money, for others can have absolutely no price. An example of a seriously ill person is willing to spend any amount of money for his recovery. An art enthusiast can pay any cost or pay any amount of money to get a painting that catches his eye.

Meanwhile, people who do not like art will not be willing to do it, even at a lower price. The habit of stating something cheap or expensive, profit or loss according to the size of money, causes us to forget another fact that the human need for that person is not objective-quantitative but subjective-quantitative. Therefore, money cannot be used to assess and measure human needs. Hungry people cannot be satisfied with foods that are "expensive" but not filling. The criterion is not the price in money but which one can better satisfy needs.

Furthermore, the implementation of economic principles quantitatively experiences difficulties and even fails to have because there is the fact that humans want to be judged and treated according to their personality as subjects. Because the implementation of these economic principles deals with humans who have multi dimensions: psychological, religious, cultural, political, and others and reject treatment if they are considered an object. Also, many economic principles in their implementation fail because they are disturbed and do not or cannot fully achieve their goals because of the prevailing customs or beliefs that prevent them. Often also good plans, which are following economic principles, in practice deviate from their goals and are even the opposite of that good goal, such as the existence of government efforts to protect people's businesses and ensure the running of the law, in practice, civil servants are not protectors, instead became a bully for the people. Instead of being an enforcer, he is a destroyer of the law. Although there have been many violations and deviations from economic principles, this does not diminish the fact that the financial code is to work following human nature as long as humans are intelligent.

The Islamic Economic System occupies an intermediate position between the Liberal Economic System and the Social Economic System. It is clear that while Islam recognizes the profit motive, it also binds the explanation with moral, social, and temperance conditions. The Islamic Economic System (SEI), if followed and implemented, is a harmonious balance (harmonious measure, author) between the interests of individuals and the interests of society. Thus, according to my conclusion, the economic motive following sharia / Islam is to seek material gain efficiently and other right/ethical methods that lead to benefits in the present life and the life after death. So that saving costs in achieving large profits is justified because it is in the form of efficiency.

Meanwhile, Islam does not prohibit efficiency/savings. What Islam forbids is stingy and wastefulness. The correct methods are formulated according to revelation as well as a human experience in their economic life.

Back in the economic life of the company, financial management problems are very complex. Of the many reasons, there are ethical causes, namely those that arise from the company's violation of ethics within certain limits of size and significance concerning financial management. The company is hampered in achieving its business goals; however, this does not mean that full compliance with ethics will automatically increase its profitability. This we admit. However, we also acknowledge that violations of financial management ethics can interfere with achieving a company's financial management goals, even

thwart them. This happens because the company's financial management uses ethical people as one of its production factors. Human needs are not just material needs.

Moreover, human material needs are understood as individual material needs. This theory is wrong. Because in addition to material needs in a narrow and broad sense, humans also have socio-spiritual and cultural needs. However, it should be noted, in practice, no company that pursues profit ignores ethics/morality completely / absolutely. However, the occurrence of economic inequality is due to violations of basic ethics related to social life, such as corruption and breach of promises.

Based on the view of the company's human economy, here are formulated benchmarks/indicators of success in financial management following Islam in the form of processes and results in the embodiment of the values that emerge in the corporate environment. As an initial description, below are mentioned the general importance in the company's business environment (stakeholders and concerned), which are following Islam and must be applied in conjunction with financial management practices and other disciplines.

These values are as follows: first, obtaining profits in the right way and without causing damage, including the market economy system (Hud: 15-16). Second, the balance (equilibrium) between the fulfillment of stakeholders' material and spiritual needs (Surat al-Qashas: 77). Third, high trust, keeping promises, and "adequate" income sharing are well received and not detrimental. The three cannot be separated in the company's financial management (QS. An-Nisa': 58, 59, 84; ash-Shura: 38; Ali-Imran: 159 and about keeping An-Nahl's promise: 92, 94). In fostering stakeholders' and shareholders' trust, the quality of confidence in management can be measured by its attitude in dealing with strategic dilemmas and risky situations. Fourth, generosity towards people who are weak and oppressed economically. (Surah Adz-Dzariyaat: 19; As-Sabaa: 31; Al-Baqarah: 254, 261, 275; Ar-Ruum: 39; At-Taubah: 60).

CONCLUSION

Based on this research, related to Islamic business ethics and profit management, researchers have an interpretation that: (1) The behavior of a manager towards profit management is done by manipulating profit figures on paper; this is not following what is guided by the teachings of Islam; (2) If the financial statements are reported as is and do not deviate from what has been stipulated by the prevailing regulations or Islamic religious teachings, profit management will not generate controversy among several parties; (3) Good profit management can be done utilizing good operations management, for example, production management, financial and investment management, marketing management, or other field management; (4) Whereas the basic law of various types of muamalah is permissible until an argument against it is found.

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