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Work ethic and its relationship with selected demographic characteristics in faculties and employees of Islamic Azad University

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ABSTRACT

The study of work ethic and its relationship with selected demographic characteristics in the faculties and employees of Islamic Azad Universities was aims of this article. The research methodology was descriptive-correlational and the data was collected via field procedure. The population of the study consisted of all the faculties and employees of Islamic Azad Universities (N=60000). The participants of the study were 800 faculties and employees who were selected from among the population based on cluster random sampling. The sample size was determined using Morgan table. 569 posted questionnaires were completed and returned by the participants. To assess work ethic a summarized version of Ali's questionnaire (1998) was used. In order to assure the validity of the questionnaire, it was submitted to some faculties in the department of Theology and Islamic Thoughts as well as some other experts. Subsequently, the experts' opinions regarding all the questionnaire items were applied in moderating the scales. The reliability of the scales in a sample group using Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to be 0.83 and using test-retest method to be 0.76. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. The results showed that, out of the maximum mean score of 5 for work ethic, the participants' mean score was 4.09 with the standard deviation of 0.48. The results of hypothesis tests revealed a meaningful different between work ethic in the faculties and employees and between work ethic in the number of jobs have participants and show a meaningful correlation between work ethic whit age and income of participants.

Key Words: work ethic, faculties, employees, demographic characteristics, Islamic Azad University.

INTRODUCTION

Current society is organizational society. The main part of our daily life is spending in organizations or in relation to them. Every organization, in offering multiple or specialized services, realizes general or specific objectives for the public and society. Therefore, the

management of daily life depends on the organizations, and the development and survival of a society is subject to their efficient performance [1].

One of the manifestations of morality and goodness is for the human to be active and furnish his counterparts with the advantages of his activities. In performing the tasks in which they are competent, every individual serves the humanity. Islam refers to work as good deed. According to the teachings of holy Koran, the precondition for achieving the promised paradise is commitment to the three main characteristics of faith, good deed and piety. Needless to say, good deed is the fruit of faith and piety. As a rule, those who believe in the truth are committed to good deeds which result in the provision of society with gift, welfare and felicity. The deeds will bear no humanitarian good or morality unless they are originated from faith and piety. Islam ascribes virtue to good intentions because they are the building block ideas and positive plans for doing things [2].

Experts refer to work ethic as the value that people ascribe to work. Strong work ethic guarantees that hard work is the key for prosperity. Research has shown that strong work ethic leads to higher efficiency, innovation, need for success and job satisfaction as well as more income and conservative attitudes [3]. In an investigation of the concept of work ethic, we may come across two groups with opposite working tendencies; one that craves for activity, endeavor and effort, does not appreciate stagnation and stillness, and works to flourish their virtues. On the contrary, the second group does not favor work and endeavor and could only be set to work by the application of external forces.

Enquiry into good and evil will lead to the development of ethics. Managing practice enters the domain of ethics when people face contradictions between their organizational interests and social responsibilities. Social ethics and responsibility, defined as moral-philosophical requirements and the criteria used by the individual to assess the adequacy of their behavior toward themselves, others and society, is one of the issues to which the scientists of management have attended over the last two decades. With regard to the increasing complexity of organizations and the increase in unethical, illegal and irresponsible activities in workplaces, the directors and experts have been attracted toward work ethic and ethical management issues. The identification and prioritization of values for directing organizational behaviors will help manage ethics in the workplace. Ethical plans may help organizations maintain their ethical performance under disheveled circumstances [4].

According to the behavioral theory of work ethic, once an individual's ethical work is appreciated by top managers, they may be encouraged to perform further ethical works so that performing ethical works may become an internal virtue in the individual [5]. Some experts assert that work ethic is repressed by some managers in the organizations because, instead of appreciating work ethic, these managers render the employees' endeavors useless by taking measures that repress the hard work motivations. Moreover, based on the equity theory, if rewards or reprimands do not conform to the rules of justice, Justice and meritocracy, employees may not enjoy the sense of satisfaction with their jobs; consequently, they may evade their duties [6].

Disregard for work ethic in the management of organizations may cause serious problems for the organizations, particularly in societies, like Iranian society, which are rooted in rich ethical values. Besides, as social expectations towards the organizations have grown, societies have become more sensitive to such issues as environment; women, children, the disabled and minority rights; and the equity in employment and workforce cutback [7]. The disregard of

organizations for these rights and morals in dealing with outside stakeholders may bring about problems for the organizations and question the legitimacy of the organization and its activities and consequently affect its success and profitability. Low work ethic affects the employees' attitudes toward their jobs, organization and managers, which may eventually influence individual, group and organizational performance.

Work ethic and morals can be reinforced in organizations in conformance to Islamic viewpoint so that a reduction in discrimination, injustice, dissatisfaction as well as an increase in organizational morals, commitment and satisfaction will be fostered in the employees on the one hand, and the growth and development will be nurtured in humans, organizations and society on the other hand [8]. Although achieving mere research and educational goals depends on the efficient use of human, financial and equipment resources, the development of higher education system in universities hinges on several factors including having the faculties and employees with high morals, satisfaction and commitment to the goals so that they may do their best to improve the efficiency of their performance in a dynamic environment. However, it is likely that the lack of an appropriate Justice perception strips the university from these good characteristics and the expected efficiency. Thus, this study is conducted to investigate work ethic and find an answer to the question: is there any significant relationship between work ethic and selected demographic characteristics in the faculties and employees of Islamic Azad universities?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

With regard to the topic and objectives of the study, the research methodology was descriptive-correlational and the data was collected via field procedure. The population of the study consisted of all the faculties and employees of Islamic Azad Universities (N=60000). The participants of the study were 800 faculties and employees who were selected from among the population based on cluster random sampling. The sample size was determined using Morgan table. 569 posted questionnaires were completed and returned by the participants (Table 1). To assess work ethic a summarized version of Ali's questionnaire (1998) was used, respectively [9-10]. Content validity was used to assess the validity of the questionnaires. In this regard, the questionnaire was submitted to some faculties in the department of Theology and Islamic Thoughts as well as some other experts. Subsequently, the experts' opinions regarding all the questionnaire items were applied in moderating the scales. The reliability of the scales in a sample size using Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to be 0.83 and using test-retest method to be 0.76.

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. Qualitative data was described using percentage and frequency counts and quantitative data was illustrated using measures of central tendency and variability. Besides, based on the objectives of the study and data type, t test and Pearson's correlation coefficient were used as inferential statistics.

RESULTS

According to the findings of the study, the faculties ' mean age was 37.36 with the standard deviation of 7.01, and the employees' mean age was 37.98 with the standard deviation of 6.82. The faculties ' mean employment experience was 7.85 years and the employees' was 11.15 years. 84.88% of the participants were married and 15.11% were single. 26.71% had more than one job but 73.28% had just one job. The faculties ' mean income was 9920000 rails and the employees' was 4960000 rails (Table 2).

As shown in Table 3, the participants' mean score of work ethic was 4.09, out of the total score 5, with the standard deviation of 0.48. More specifically, the faculties' mean score was 4.15 with the standard deviation of 0.45 and the employees' was 4.03 with the standard deviation of 0.50. Based on Table 4, there is a meaningful difference between work ethic in the faculties and employees and between work ethic in the number of jobs have participants.

The results of Table 5 show correlation between work ethic with age ($r=0.122$) and income ($r=0.213$) in the faculties and employees of (all participants) Islamic Azad University.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Ethics is closely associated with values and is regarded as an instrument which may put values into practice. Ethics includes such concepts as trust, honesty, and sincerity, conforming to one's promises to others, justice, equality, citizenship values and serving the society. Ethics, as the discrimination of good from evil, has always been a topic of discussion by philosophers and regarded as a subfield of philosophy [11].

According to the findings of this study, the ratio of work ethic in the faculties and employees of Islamic Azad University was above average. This is consistent with the findings of several other studies [12]. The findings of this study and other studies confirm the importance of work ethic as a factor which improves the efficiency of employees' work and eventually improves the efficiency of organizations. Work ethic and morals can be reinforced in organizations in conformance to Islamic viewpoint so that a reduction in discrimination, injustice, dissatisfaction as well as an increase in organizational morals, commitment and satisfaction will be fostered in the employees on the one hand, and the growth and development will be nurtured in humans, organizations and society on the other hand [8].

Ethical issues can be managed according to the teachings of holy Koran. For example, the delineation of general moralistic principles may pave the way for the realization of Koranic morals. Moreover, considering the principles using Koran verses and texts may help discover the foundation of ethical values, which sets the stage for achieving normal ethics or ethical theories based on holy Koran. Besides, cogitating on the moralistic principles of Koran and its associated ethical theories along with drawing on ontology, particularly Koranic anthropology, may help delineate the philosophical foundations of ethics and develop metaethics based on holy Koran.

Conformance to social ethical requirements will result in the increase of profits and added value in the long run. The increase in income and profitability as well as improving competitive advantage and attending to all stakeholders will enhance corporate profits in the long run because these may encourage human abilities, increase good social intention and mutual trust, and decrease fines. The organizations are getting more and more ingrained in the conviction that reinforcement of morals and spiritual culture lead to affluent strategic advantages for them.

Ethics affects human activities considerably and is the precondition for the employees' adequate performance, commitment and responsibility. Managing moral values in the workplace leads to the legitimization of management activities, reinforces the integrity and balance of organizational culture, improves the mutual trust between the individuals and groups, and eventually improves the quality and profits in the organization via conforming to standards. With regard to the role humans play in current organizations, the individuals' attitudes towards the organization and their job areas significantly affect their efficiency and consequently the efficiency of the organization.

Table1. Distribution of examiners

Target population	Number of Population	Number of Sample	Returned Questionnaires
Faculties	30000	400	280
Employees	30000	400	289
Total	60000	800	569

Table 2. Distribution of age, experience and incomes' Examiner

Variable Statistic	Age		Experience		Income	
	faculties	employees	faculties	employees	faculties	employees
Mean	37.36	37.50	7.85	11.15	9920000.50	4960000.92
Std. Deviation	7.01	6.82	5.95	5.97	3920000.64	113000.93
Maximum	60	52	35	25	22000000	8500000
Minimum	23	22	1	2	400000	3000000

Table3. Descriptive statistics of the work ethic data

Statistic Variable	Mean \pm Std. Deviation		
	Faculties	Employees	Total
Work Ethic	4.15 \pm 0.45	4.03 \pm 0.50	4.09 \pm 0.48

Table 4. Comparing work ethic between groups of variables

Variable	group	Mean \pm SD	N	df	t	p
Job	Faculties	4.153 \pm 0.450	280	567	2.965	0.003
	Employees	4.034 \pm 0.504	289			
Sex	women	4.069 \pm 0.466	209	567	0.871	0.384
	men	4.196 \pm 0.490	306			
Marital	married	4.110 \pm 0.413	86	567	0.379	0.705
	single	4.089 \pm 0.493	483			
How many jobs	More jobs	4.010 \pm 0.034	152	567	-2.446	0.014
	one job	4.122 \pm 0.024	417			

Table5. The relationship between work ethic and selected demographic characteristics

	Characteristics		
	Age	Experience	Income
Work Ethic	0.122*	0.0058	0.213*

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

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