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Seyed Mohammad Kalantarkousheh[1*,] Fereshteh Kazemi[2,] Roya Taghadosiniya[2,] Samaneh Ghahramani[2]

[1]Assistant Professor, Department of Counseling, Faculty of psychology and Education, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran
[2]Master in Career Counseling, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran

*Corresponding Author Email: kalantar.counseling@gmail.com

Abstract

This research aimed to examine the relationship between religious orientation and work performance of teachers employed in educational ministry schools in Tehran, Iran. This was a correlational research study conducted on teachers from the 9th district of the educational ministry in Tehran, Iran. In this research 150 female teachers were randomly selected. Data collection was performed through completion of the religious orientation questionnaire by Feagin (1963) and Paterson's work performance questionnaire (1963). All data were analyzed with correlational coefficient and regression correlation. Findings showed that intrinsic religious orientation was a partial predictor of work performance. People with religious orientation had better work performance. According to this research there was no meaningful relationship between extrinsic religious orientation and work performance.

Keywords: Intrinsic religious orientation, Extrinsic religious orientation, Iranian teachers.

Introduction

According to history, religious orientation has existed since ancient times in humans. Studies of archaeology and anthropology have shown that religion is an inalienable component of human life throughout all ages. Even a faithless human may unconsciously think about God and His supernatural power and request His assistance during insecure situations and psychological crises. According to Frankel (1996), the founder of Logotherapy, deep-rooted religious feelings exist in the unconscious mind of each human. Spirituality pertains to self-awareness and joining with others. Spirituality is a combination of the major philosophy of life, values and actions. Humans like to experience spirituality not only in their personal lives but also in their careers and in other levels of life. The existence of spirituality in an organization enables its staff to have a more consolidated view of the organization, society and their family (Rastegar, 1996).

The presence of spirituality at work is a religious link for some people, whereas for others it has less meaning (Neck & Milliman, 1994). Robbins (2003) notes that spirituality at work does not mean the performance of organized religious deeds at work, nor does it pertain to God or divinity. Researchers believe that the encouragement of spirituality at work has numerous benefits. An organization can refine its productivity, financial indexes and increase its efficiency by using these benefits. According to research, corporations that encourage spirituality are 400% to 500% more efficient in increasing their net income, improving their asset return rate, and increasing the value of their stock compared to other similar corporations (Thompson, 2000). Another study has shown a positive relationship between organizational spirituality and creativity, employee satisfaction, team performance, and organizational commitment (Mirvis, 1997). Intuition and creativity, honesty and trust, personal fulfillment and commitment are known as the most important benefits of encouraging spirituality in an organization (Kumar & Neak, 2002).

Although there are several ways to describe the meaning of life, most people attribute religious practice as a source of personal meaning. Many studies have examined religious bigotries as a predictor for mental health; others have examined religious orientations as a predictor for describing the meaning of life. Inner piety and searching are regarded as components that define the aim of life which is defined as acceptance of death, the meaning of the future, existential emptiness, following one's goal, and control of life (Earnshaw, 2000).

In addition to spirituality, another factor that can influence work performance is religious orientation. Allport and Ross (1967) have divided people into two groups according to their religious tendency, intrinsic and extrinsic. In intrinsic religious orientation, faith itself is regarded as a transcendent value which is not based on anything else. Hence it is considered as an extensive motivation commitment and not a mean to reach goals. In external religious orientation, religion is used as an external issue and a means to fulfill personal needs such as job level and security. In other words, piety is to gain security and people who have such an orientation

use religion as a means to fulfill their needs. In their opinion, religion is at one side of the spectrum which has an implemental meaning for some people. On the other side of the spectrum it is a type of meaning-probe and is the main motivation for life. It has an intrinsic value. Intrinsic religion has a motivational aspect for an individual and does not need another stimulus. Numerous other research studies have confirmed Allport's results.

Mokhtari (1990) investigated intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientation with the amount of students' stress levels and determined that students who had intrinsic religious orientation experienced less stress compared to those with extrinsic religious orientation. Thus, religious orientation acted as a modulator and less tenseness was indirectly related to better performance. It can be proposed that good performance will increase organizational productivity and therefore increase a country's national economy (Wright, 2004). Operation has been defined by expected general values of the organization from separate behavioral components performed by people during certain periods of time in their lives (Motowidlo, 2003). Borman and Motowidlo (1993) have separated task performance and contextual performance. Task performance is defined as the part of performance which describes the official job, whereas contextual performance is defined as the component that behaviorally assists the effectiveness of the organization by impacting psychological, social, and organizational fields. One of the major parts of this theory includes the comparison of partial consistency between personal differences, task and contextual performance (Jawahar & Carr, 2007).

Performance means is defined as the state or quality of an operation. The most common definition for performance is presented by Neely et al (2002) as the process of conceptualizing the effectiveness quality and competency of previous actions. According to this definition, performance is divided into two parts: competency and effectiveness. Competency defines how an organization uses the sources in producing services or products, or the relationship between the real and desirable combination of inputs for producing certain outputs. Effectiveness describes to what extent the organization has fulfilled its aims. These aims are usually conceptualized in terms of appropriateness (the degree of consistency between the outputs and clients' needs), accessibility (aspects such as plenitude, presenting to primary groups, and physical distance), and quality (the achievement degree of needed standards) (Dollery & Worthington, 1996).

Work performance is a complex construction where successful employees are identified by certain criteria (ShokrKon, 2001). In other words, all major activities in industrial and organizational psychology are focused on the improvement of work performance (W Borman, 2004).Work performance refers to total behaviors related to work or the amount of the output and products produced as the result of an individual's occupation. Work performance is output according to an individual's legal tasks and includes consequences of manpower activities related to performing tasks assigned to that individual and the client's amount of attempts and success limits in performing work tasks task (Babu, Singh, & Sachdeva, 1997). The importance of work performance has let to additional research in this area (Rotundo & Sackett, 2002).

Within the industrial and psychological organizational history, the relationship between work satisfaction and performance has attracted great attention. Several researchers and most non-specialist people believe there is a cause and effect relationship between work performance and work satisfaction. In recent studies analysts who used meta-analysis inputs have stated that the relationship between work performance and satisfaction is incorrect. These analysts believe the relationship between work performance and satisfaction is unfair, biased, and zealous (Bowling, 2007). Changing the leader-member relationship is positively related to work performance. Work management acts as a mediator and manager of human innovation. Adaptation is also effective among leader-member relationships (Xiaobei, Sanders, & Frenkel, 2012).

An organization that mentally empowers or authorizes its staff can have a positive effect on their behaviors, which positively impacts work performance. Organizational behavior acts as a mediator role in receiving organizational support; work performance acts as a source for mentally authorizing staff (Chiang & Hsieh, 2011). Several studies focused on spirituality in the work environment. According to Jandghi et al (2010), spirituality has a positive effect on organizational commitment by enabling a higher, more precise commitment to work. Armenio and Miguel (2008) stated that people who have higher spirituality were more committed, dependent, and faithful to their organization and had less feelings of uselessness. Casper (2006) has stated that people with a higher spirituality had higher organizational commitment and less work exhaustion. According to Malik and Naeem (2011) a positive relationship exists between spirituality and organizational commitment. Those who have higher spirituality and commitment show more work satisfaction.

Kinjerski and Skrypnek (2008) claim that organizational commitment has a positive, meaningful relationship with spirituality and work satisfaction. Vares and Colleagues (2008) has also concluded that there is a positive, meaningful relationship between organizational commitment and spirituality. The results of several studies have shown a negative relationship between organizational commitment and work exhaustion, however, a positive relationship with organizational spirituality exists. Hamid and Dehghanizadeh (2012) in a study on spirituality, organizational commitment, and general health relation to work performance have determined the most positive meaningful relationship is between spirituality and work performance.

Hamid and Dehghanizadeh (2012) researched the idea that Islamic work morality, defined as intrinsic, was a cause of organizational faith. As a result organizational faith caused a weakness of deflective behaviors in the work environment. Yazdani and Kazemi (2000) concluded that spirituality impacted work satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizen behavior. Akira and Malie (2012) determined that a correlation existed between religious orientation and employees' work behavior. It can be concluded after examining the results of the above mentioned studies that religious orientation is related to work performance. However limited studies have been conducted on the different types of intrinsic and extrinsic orientations and the effects of each on work performance. It is assumed that people have different performance with different religious orientation: therefore it is essential to conduct this type of research. The current study aims to examine the relationship between different types of orientation and work performance to determine if people who have a religious orientation have a higher work performance compared to those who do not.

Methodology

This was a correlational research study in which religious orientation was considered as the predictor variable and work performance as the criterion variable. The population under study included teachers from the 9th district of Tehran Education Ministry schools. There were 150 female teachers chosen to participate. Minimum work experience was 7 years and maximum was 28 years.

Religious Orientation Questionnaire

This religious questionnaire includes 20 questions; 11 pertain to extrinsic religious orientation and 9 refer to intrinsic religious orientation. Feagin (1963) has generated a 21-question questionnaire that includes all the questions from Allport's questionnaire. The extra question has shown high positive correlation (61%) with Allport's extrinsic scale (Donahue, 1985). Feagin's extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation questionnaire has been translated into Farsi and its validity evaluated. The accuracy of the test was confirmed by experts after subsequently reviewing the questionnaire and translating it back into English.

Work Performance Questionnaire

Paterson (1963) developed a questionnaire for measuring work performance. The response scale of this questionnaire is four degrees. Arshadi (1980) translated this questionnaire into Persian and reported the coefficient of Cronbach's alpha to be 79%, which after retesting was determined to be 77%. Shokrkon (2001) have reported Cronbach's alpha of 74% with a validity coefficient of 53%.

Results

Table 1 shows the descriptive findings that result from the study variables. As shown in this table, the higher average and variation was related to work performance. Intrinsic orientation had a minimum average and variation.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics.

	N	Average	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Cronbach alpha	Deviation	Kurtosis
Extrinsic orientation	150	38.3068	8.1	19	58	0.654	0.19	-0.248
Intrinsic orientation	150	33.3133	5.6	13	44	0.560	-0.05	1.14
Work performance	150	48.5067	10.6	21	61	0.93	-0.527	-0.985

Table 2 shows the results of the two primary hypotheses of the current article. According to table 2 there was no meaningful relationship between extrinsic orientation and work performance.

Table 2. Inferential statistics: Independent t-test.

Variable	Total (n.150)	
	r	Sig.
Extrinsic orientation and work performance	0.8	0.310
Intrinsic orientation and work performance	0.475	0.000

According to the results shown in table 2 the first hypothesis, There is a meaningful relationship between extrinsic religious orientation and work performance was not confirmed ($r_{(150)}$=0.8, p>0.050). The presence of extrinsic religious orientation does not influence work performance. According to the results of table 2, there is a positive correlation between intrinsic religious orientation and work performance ($r_{(150)}$=0.47, p>0.05). Therefore the second hypothesis, There is a meaningful relationship between intrinsic religious orientation and work performance was confirmed. Extrinsic religious orientation increased work performance.

The results of regression analysis are shown in table 3. The findings showed that extrinsic religious orientation predicted only 0.07% of work performance. The third hypothesis, extrinsic religious orientation predicts work performance was not confirmed (F=1.03, p >0.05). Intrinsic religious orientation predicted 0.22% of work performance which confirmed the fourth hypothesis, intrinsic religious orientation predicts work performance.

Table 3. Inferential statistics: Regression analysis.

Group	r	F	Sig.
Extrinsic orientation and work performance	0.007	1,038	0.310
Intrinsic orientation and work performance	0.226	43,119	0.000*

Discussion and Conclusion

The main goal of this research was to examine the relationship between religious orientation and work performance. Although several studies have been undertaken in this area, the more detailed goal of this study was to examine the effect of the type of religious orientation on work performance. The relationship between religious orientation (extrinsic and intrinsic) and work performance among teachers of the Educational Ministry were examined in the present research.

The results showed a meaningful positive correlation between intrinsic religious orientation and work performance. This result, along with the findings of other studies (Jandghi et al., 2010), concluded that spirituality has a positive effect on work performance by the creation of precise and increased work commitment. Armenio and Miguel (2008) showed that people who have higher spirituality have higher commitment, dependency, and loyalty to their organization and less feelings of uselessness. Casper (2006) believed that people who have a higher organizational spirituality have a higher organizational commitment and less work exhaustion. Malik and Naeem (2011) have also stated that a positive relationship exists between spirituality and organizational commitment. Those with higher spirituality and commitment have greater work satisfaction. The results of several studies showed that organizational commitment has a negative relationship with work exhaustion and a positive relationship with organizational spirituality. Hamid and Dehghanizadeh (2012) investigated the relationship between spirituality, organizational commitment, and general health to work performance in clinical nurses. They determined that spirituality, organizational commitment and general health could meaningfully examine work performance. Their results showed that the most meaningful positive relationship existed between spirituality and work performance.

Hamid and Dehghanizadeh (2012) found that intrinsic Islamic moral work caused high organizational loyalty. Organizational loyalty weakened deviated behaviors in the work environment. Yazdani and Kazemi (2000) concluded that spirituality affected work satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizen behavior. Akira and Malie (2012) found a correlation between religious orientation and staff behavior at work. People with intrinsic religious orientation considered religion as a goal. The presence of an internal system was a strong value, where its maintenance and enforcement was a strong support for increased work performance. It can be stated that intrinsic religious orientation promotes teachers' commitment, fidelity and internal control in a school environment; it causes increased effort, and results in higher work performance and organizational productivity. Another reason for the relationship between intrinsic religious orientation and work performance can also be attributed to Iran's religious culture. Religious beliefs in Iran consist of acting in accordance to legitimate issues and the prevention of performing unlawful acts, belief in work, income generation and the consideration of work as a virtue in Islam. Therefore, working and work performance is regarded as a means to promote economic, social, and psycho-cognitive interests, which cause the maintenance of social credit, increased welfare, and emphasis on faith.

In contrast, there was no meaningful relationship observed between extrinsic religious orientation and work performance. According to this result, increased extrinsic religious orientation in teachers did not change their work performance. Religious pretention did not negatively affect teacher's work performance. Considering the fact that in extrinsic orientation religion was not internalized in a self's frame and emotional and cognitive structure and have not changed from a belief level to a religious faith, thus, it could not have a meaningful relationship with work performance. The recommendation is to conduct future studies on male employees and in different occupation in order to understand if the conclusions in this study are the same or not. Examining work record variables and age with orientation can be fruitful for future studies.

It is recommended at an operational level to present educational programs for employees to inform them of the effectiveness of thoughts and religious beliefs on promoting work performance. Possibly, the provision of situations in organizations that acquaint the staff with intrinsic orientation will assist employees to take the initiative toward the internalization of religion and to move from an implemental religious belief level to internalization and to change to religion.

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