



# The Effects of Work Conscientiousness in the Organization Efficiency

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## Abstract

The work conscientiousness is a new term that has attracted the attention of the top managers in Iranian organizations. However, no big attempts have been done in order to identify and to use the work conscientiousness governance in society. Work conscientiousness can be defined as real consent and commitment to the determined task for the people. With this condition that if there is no supervisory system, the person fulfills his tasks to his/her best. Work conscientiousness is one of the most important elements of ethics. It is also really important in Iranian culture. Work conscientiousness is rooted in our culture and beliefs. It is also an important category that is among human motivations and inclinations. Motivations and inclinations area is among the most basic existential and perceptual area of the human being. According to this, we can consider work conscientiousness as one of the most basic factors in the individual and social behaviors. The present study tries to assess the work conscientiousness in the organizations and find ways to improve it.

**Keywords:** Management; Commitment; Work Conscientiousness; Organization

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## 1. Introduction

The most critical issue in any organization is the job performance. The importance of job performance has led to many research [1]. The performance is defined based on the values the organization expects of the individuals' behavior in a period of time [2]. Borman and Motowidlo (1993) distinguished the task performance from the contextual performance. The part of the performance that is defined in the job description is called "task performance" and that part of the performance that helps the organization through affecting the psychological, social and organizational issues, is called "contextual performance" [3].

Making a distinction between task performance and contextual performance leads to a theory about individual differences. One important part of this theory includes a comparison between the relative strength of the relationship between individual differences and task performance and the contextual performance [1,4]. "Work

conscientiousness" among the employees has long been one of the most important issues in this area. Scholars believe that conscientiousness is a good predictor for job performance [4]. Chan and Schmitt (2004) pointed out that conscientiousness has a positive relationship with the performance because people who have higher conscientiousness, put more effort and time. Conscientiousness is a personality trait that reflects reliability through exactness and commitment. It also shows the effort, attempt, and motivation of the people to reach the goal in the organization [5]. In many studies, researchers have used "work ethic" or "Protestant work ethic" instead of work conscientiousness [6].

## 2. Work conscientiousness definition

Botelli defines the work conscientiousness as follows:

1. Internalized form of the beliefs, values, and norms at work

2. Total beliefs and psychological qualities of people in the workplace which can be increased or decreased.
3. Loyalty and individual, job and organizational commitment.
4. The tendency to do the right work and tasks without any supervision.
5. The internalized form of society culture about work [7].

In the sociology, social psychology and management books, work conscientiousness has two independent but related meanings. On the one hand, work conscientiousness means the internal tendencies of the person to work, production, diligence, risk-taking and stern satisfaction and in general the positive tendency of the person to the work. On the other hand, work conscientiousness is defined as people's commitment in any organization to the role norms.

According to the factors that affect the conscientiousness, studying the sociology and management resources show that these factors can be assessed from two dimensions: first, the factors that internalize the work, culture, ethics and work conscientiousness before the person joins the organization. Second, the factors that affect that person's behavior, ethics and work conscientiousness after joining the organization. These are the organizational factors that affect work conscientiousness [6].

### **3.The difference between work conscientiousness and work ethic**

Work ethic is part of a social culture that includes the beliefs, values, and norms related to the work; but work conscientiousness is the internalized form of these beliefs, values, and norms [7].

### **4.The difference between work conscientiousness and the faith**

Their people who don't believe in God or the judgment day but when accept a work, without any external and physical control, do their job right. However, this possibility is higher in a faithful person [8].

### **5.The difference between work conscientiousness and discipline**

Work conscientiousness provides the basis for discipline; but it doesn't mean that a disciplined person has work conscientiousness; because it is possible that his discipline is influenced by the external factors [9].

### **6.The difference between work conscientiousness and the motivation**

Motivation comes from "motivating". Motivations define humans' behavior. Motivations that focus on

the goals are conscious or unconscious (1999). Work conscientiousness is a conscious motivation or internal stimuli that makes a person to be motivated from inside and to do an action. Thus, motivation is general and work conscientiousness is specific and their relationship in terms of logical ratio, is absolutely general and specific; because motivation is a product of internal or external factor (conscious or unconscious); but work conscientiousness is only a conscious internal factor that motivates a person to do an action.

### **7. The concept of work conscientiousness in organizations**

Attention to work conscientiousness in the organizations is, in fact, an ethical and humanistic view about work an organization; because ethics in professional behavior leads to commitment without any external control. It also leads to better well-being on the society level, internal satisfaction, and peace of mind. Work conscientiousness in an organization increases the productivity, sustainable development, cultural change of people, sustainable management and economic discipline. Bennet and Durkin (2000), Elizur et al., (2008) and Lemons and Jones (2001) believe that an organization must pay attention to work conscientiousness as the first priority. Singh et al., (2008) points out that studying the work conscientiousness is a necessity because individual factors and social system of an organization affect the work conscientiousness.

There are several factors that affect creation and promotion of work conscientiousness: 1) cultural and social factor such as using cultural tool to spread the work and diligence culture and introduction of work culture in Islam, 2) individual and personality factors such as having goal in life, sufficient attention to planning before starting an action, creativity and capability in presenting new ideas, 3) family and educational factors such as internalization of work conscientiousness from childhood, creation of responsibility, choosing toys and etc. family factors refer to the role of the family in creation of work conscientiousness. Different research has studied the role individual-family and cultural-social factors in the work conscientiousness (8-11).

Nussbaum et al, (2006) believe that social values resulted from culture, politics, ethics and even economy affect the work conscientiousness and social justice. Also, social teachings and authorities emphasize on the punctuality and considering individual and collective rights mean spreading the work culture and work conscientiousness [13]. It finally leads to work conscientiousness promotion among people [9].

## 8. Informing the employees about the organizational objectives

According to the work conscientiousness definition, we can conclude that work conscientiousness is realized when it is conducted carefully. It means that work conscientiousness is not only doing the work, but it is doing the work carefully and informingly. These two features are realized when managers inform the employees about the objectives and work process. If the employees are not informed of the organization vision and the quality of the work, they may work reluctantly and waste a lot of time. This leads to confusion for the person and the organization. That is why Imam Ali (peace be upon him) believes that informing people is one of the most important duties of the managers: "you people! You and I have mutual rights. I must be kind to you and divide the treasury between you justly and teach you the knowledge to know how to live" (12).

## 9. Human nature and the place of work conscientiousness in the Islamic approach

The Islamic approach is different from the abovementioned approaches. The most important difference is the focus of Islam on human nature and his existence dimensions. Islam believes that the human being is created by God (Noor, 45) and he is created as a free creature (11). And we cannot consider a place for him but divine Caliphate (Baghare: 30). He is God's trusty person (Ahzab: 72) (Mesbah, 2009).

Based on the different Quranic verses such as (Hajarat: 13), (Forghan: 54) and (Zakhrif:32), being social is the nature of the human. These verses show that social life is a normal thing for a human being. Because based on the first verse, people are created with different colors, tribes, and families to be able to be distinguished and to facilitate their social relationships. Based on the second verse, the casual and the relative relationships that help people to have ties, are the human beings fate. Based on the third verse, people are created differently to meet each other's needs. Without all these differences, life would be meaningless (Motahari, 1996).

Islam believes that the human being is not a mere material creature without any spiritual values, but it is a creature with two materialistic and spiritual dimensions. But, originality is related to the spiritual dimension (Javadi Amoli, 2002). Using the word "Tavafa" (death in English) by Quran (An'am: 61) refers to the point that the human personality and the real "self" of the human is something more than a physical body which is called "spirit" in Quran. In another word, when the human being compares himself with animals, finds features such as thought, reason, inference, vision, love, and faith. So he will realize that these features are not from

the physical body. Unless there was no difference between him and animals. So the origin of such advantages and differences is "spirit" (Motahari, 1995). Based on the Quran, the "spirit" is something independent (Asra: 85) and many plans of human life are for educating and promoting it.

## 10. Conclusions

Work conscientiousness means a commitment to the task. In other word, when a person accepts a responsibility (with consent or with reluctance), he or she should try to do his or her best. Unfortunately, some people accept a task without any intention to do it. Or they accept the task without commitment. There are also people who think that they have been abused during the task process. The possibility of occurring the abovementioned incidents is likely but there is no logical reason for sabotage. Decent people don't respond badly to bad actions. So, they accept a task and try to do their best.

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