

Model for Measuring the Level of Work Conscientiousness as a Fundamental Component of Professional Ethics and Organizational Factors Affecting It

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Abstract

Introduction: Work conscientiousness is a fundamental component of professional ethics and is a sense of internal commitment to comply with the requirements that have been agreed upon in relation to work. In this regard, the present research, titled the model for measuring the level of work conscientiousness as a fundamental component of professional ethics and organizational factors affecting it.

Material and Methods: The method used in this research is descriptive-analytical and the statistical population in the present study is all employees of the Ilam Province Red Crescent Society, which are 272 people, 160 of whom were selected using the Morgan table and a simple systematic sampling method. The instrument used in this study was a researcher-made questionnaire. Data analysis was carried out using SPSS software and using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation and multivariate regression tests, as well as the structural equation modeling method with Amos software.

Results: Based on the findings of the study, among the individual factors, the variables of age and education level have a significant relationship with work conscientiousness. Also, among the independent factors, there was a significant difference between organizational justice and organizational alienation with work conscientiousness. Also, the results of factor analysis showed that organizational justice, awareness of role ambiguity, organizational alienation, and job satisfaction, respectively, have the greatest impact on explaining the main variable of the study.

Conclusion: A number of factors affecting work conscientiousness, such as an individual's personality, have their own complexities that, if needed, are less likely to be changed and manipulated. However, a number of factors affecting work conscientiousness are acquired and can be inhibited as they have been learned.

Keywords: *Work conscientiousness, Organizational justice, Role ambiguity Awareness, Job satisfaction, Organizational alienation*

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INTRODUCTION

Professional ethics is actually the commitment of individual or group mental, psychological and physical energy to improve the abilities of the group members, which is done in line with the common goal and development of the group.

One of the oldest examples of professional ethics is the Hippocratic Oath, which doctors still swear to commit to today. Some of the components proposed by some professional organizations for professional ethics are: honesty, integrity, transparency, confidentiality, impartiality,

respect, law-abiding, loyalty and responsibility, and conscientiousness [1]. Therefore, conscientiousness is considered as one of the basic components of professional ethics.

Conscientiousness is the force that commits an individual to perform a series of goal-oriented behaviors in the organization and also converges different thoughts and tastes to form a constructive behavior [2]. Work conscience is first and foremost influenced by the belief system that governs the individual, and it can be said that work conscience is a process of three factors: the type of management, the organizational nature of work, and the personality of the individual and motivational systems. Therefore, it is clear that in a systematic approach, the effective and determining factor in the level of work conscience (minus ideological aspects) is the mutual relations between factors or variables of efficiency, mediation, and locality [3].

The most important organizational factors affecting work conscience based on different perspectives are as follows.

In the theory of organizational participation (human relations theory and the theories of Marshall and Fayol), which means the participation of employees in the organization's decision-making, participation is an important factor in work conscience. Based on the human relations perspective, Fayol and Marshall believe that organizational participation increases the dignity of the individual and, in this way, increases the feeling and organizational harmony. This feeling can affect the type of behavior of the manager with his employees and provide the basis for supervision and control in the organization, and ultimately increase the work conscience of the employees [4]. In Collins' theory of organizational role transparency, which means that expectations and obligations for actors in the context of social relations are certain, in other words, job norms are clear, and the last variable is the employee's job position, which can

be effective in an individual's organizational actions and, as a result, reduce or increase work conscientiousness. In Maslow's theory, group orientation and presence in society as social systems are considered human needs; individuals with membership and role in the group demonstrate their value and ability through positive and profitable work. The more value, credibility, and trust individuals receive from the organization, the more their needs for self-identification and recognition are met by participating in organizational affairs [5]. In the theory of organizational justice (Adams), which means equal and fair treatment of employees and receiving rewards commensurate with the individual's work and effort, organizational justice is an important factor in work conscientiousness. It can be stated that, according to Adams' theory, people generally want to be treated equally and fairly and are constantly looking for comparisons between themselves and others. He believed that motivation is influenced by our perception of how we will behave in the workplace based on equality and equity. Adams suggested that we evaluate our past performance in the workplace and perhaps do this unconsciously, mentally comparing our past performance and comparing it to the performance and equity of our colleagues based on our beliefs about it. If the result of the comparison is that we receive less than others, a feeling of tension or inequality will result, which will motivate us to take action to create equality in ourselves. If we perceive that we will receive the same amount of reward as others, then there is a state of equality.

According to Cooper, role ambiguity is when a person does not have sufficient knowledge of the job he has taken on; meaning that his work goals are not as clear as they should be and he cannot establish a proper connection between his work goals and duties and colleagues, the responsibilities he has taken on through this job,

and his role in between. Therefore, according to the definitions of role ambiguity, the lack of clarity of the role and the limits of the individual's responsibilities and the lack of focus on the duties of the role (especially when the individual has entered a new group and has accepted a new role) can be considered an important factor in the level of work conscientiousness [6].

Therefore, according to the above, organizations and institutions can use various methods to increase performance productivity, job satisfaction, work commitment, job motivation, work conscientiousness, and conversely, reduce apathy, job depression, absenteeism, quitting work, and firing employees to keep their employees at a satisfactory level to better perform their duties and responsibilities. Concepts such as work conscience and work commitment gain meaning after an individual enters society and interacts with the surrounding environment; thus, it can be said that despite the fact that the economic, cultural, and political systems of society and the structures related to these systems strengthen or weaken an individual's tendency to work and produce, the tendency to work and satisfy needs through work is embedded in human beings and is inherent in them.

There are various methods for evaluating and measuring the effectiveness of programs offered to departments and institutions. Among these methods is measuring work conscience in government departments and institutions, etc., and private companies, etc. Also, measuring work conscientiousness and the organizational factors affecting it among employees provides the

opportunity for government and corporate planners and policymakers to organize future efforts to strengthen these dimensions by being aware of weak or neglected dimensions. Accordingly, studying work conscientiousness among employees is important because developing a fundamental framework in which effective organizational factors are systematically constructed in a way that clearly describes and evaluates the interwoven relationships between the elements that make up work conscientiousness is a fundamental need. And this fundamental framework will not be formed except through intelligent studies and comparisons among different employees. Most organizations are trying to match employees with their specific goals and programs. It can also be concluded from research that various variables affect employees' work conscientiousness, but since the results of these studies are different. In addition, not many studies have been conducted on work conscientiousness among Ilam Province Red Crescent employees, this lack of studies is one of the motivations of this research. Unless this study is a step in improving the methodology of study and planning in order to improve the work conscience of Iranian employees in general and the employees of the Red Crescent of Ilam Province in particular. Therefore, in the present study, designing a model to measure the level of work conscience as a fundamental component of professional ethics and the organizational factors affecting it (case study: employees of the Red Crescent of Ilam Province) was considered as the main goal.



Figure 1: Theoretical model of the research (within the framework of the research hypotheses)

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The method of conducting this research is a survey. This research is a type of extensive (quantitative) study that can be tested and generalized, and is analytical, descriptive and explanatory, and is also cross-sectional in terms of time, and is applied in terms of the research goal. The statistical population of this research consists of all employees of the Red Crescent Society of Ilam Province, which are 272 people. Sampling has been used in the present research, so in this research, we selected a sample from a population of 272 people (N) to estimate the proportion of different guarantee holders. According to the Morgan table, 160 people are selected from a population of 272 people as the sample size. In the present research, an attempt has been made to use a simple systematic sampling method. In this sampling, a number of people in a list is systematically selected. We can select a sample until the desired sample size is reached.

Demographic characteristics of the sample group in terms of age: under 30 years old 18.1%, 31 to 35 years old 22.5%, 36 to 40 years old 18.1%, 41 to 45 years old 13.1%, 46 to 50 years old 16.9%, and 51 years and above 9.4%, and 1.9% did not specify their age status. The results of the table show that most of the people surveyed are between 31 and 35 years old. In terms of marital status distribution: 73.1% were married, 22.5% were single, and 4.4% did not specify their marital status. The above results show that most of the people surveyed are married. In terms of gender distribution: 71.2% were men and 28.8% were women. The above results show that most of the people surveyed are men. In terms of monthly income distribution: less than 3 million Tomans 5.6%, between 3,100 million and 4 million Tomans 1.8%, between 4,100 million and 5 million Tomans 1.3%, between 5,100 million and 6 million Tomans 34.4%, and more than 6,100

million Tomans 41.9%. Also, 6.9% did not specify their monthly income. The above results show that most of the people surveyed have a monthly income of more than 6 million Tomans. In terms of the distribution of the respondents' education level: Diploma 6.9%, Post-diploma 11.2%, Bachelor's degree 43.8%, and Master's degree and above 36.9%.

The instrument used in this study was a researcher-made questionnaire with a total of 64 questions. It was conducted as an interview of the statistical population on the subject matter. In this study, symbolic or face validity was used to determine the validity of the data collection tool. In this way, standardized items used in other research were used, then the opinions of professors and experts were considered in the questionnaires and the necessary changes were made to the questions. Cronbach's alpha test was used to test the reliability of the questionnaire as a measurement tool. In fact, the purpose of using Cronbach's alpha test is to determine whether all items answer the subject of the research or not. To be more precise, to what extent the respondents' perception of the questions is the same. Based on the results obtained, the reliability coefficient of work conscientiousness is 0.78, organizational justice is 0.76, awareness of role ambiguity is 0.72, job satisfaction is 0.72, and organizational alienation is 0.78.

Based on the alpha test obtained for the dependent and independent variable items, these values are greater than the standard threshold ($\alpha=0.70$) and in fact indicate a good correlation between the dependent and independent variable items. Accordingly, it can be said that the items in question have good reliability and are appropriate tools for measuring the research variables. Data analysis was performed using SPSS26 software in a Windows environment, so that dispersion and centroid indices were used to describe the variables in terms of levels. To explain the

relationships between variables, the correlation coefficient test was used to determine the intensity of the relationship, and to determine the existence of a relationship and to build a regression equation, multivariate regression was used to determine the relationship between the variables.

RESULTS

In this study, considering the value of the parameter of the significance coefficient or decision criterion in relation to the numerical data related to each of the continuous quantitative variables, it can be said: there is no reason to reject the hypothesis that the desired sample is obtained from a normal distribution (null hypothesis, error greater than 0.05). In other words, the numerical data related to each of the continuous quantitative variables of the main

research variables, namely: conscientiousness (Y), organizational justice (V1), awareness of role ambiguity (V2), job satisfaction (V3), organizational alienation (V4), are collinear and have a normal distribution.

Goodness of fit of the theoretical model

The purpose of model fit is to determine the extent to which a model is consistent and agrees with the relevant data. Therefore, in this section, the fit of the assumed research model is evaluated to ensure its consistency with the research data and ultimately the answers to the research questions are deduced. The assessment of the fit of the conceptual model was carried out in two stages: first, assessing the fit of the measurement part of the model and second, assessing the fit of the structural part of the model, which are discussed in detail below.

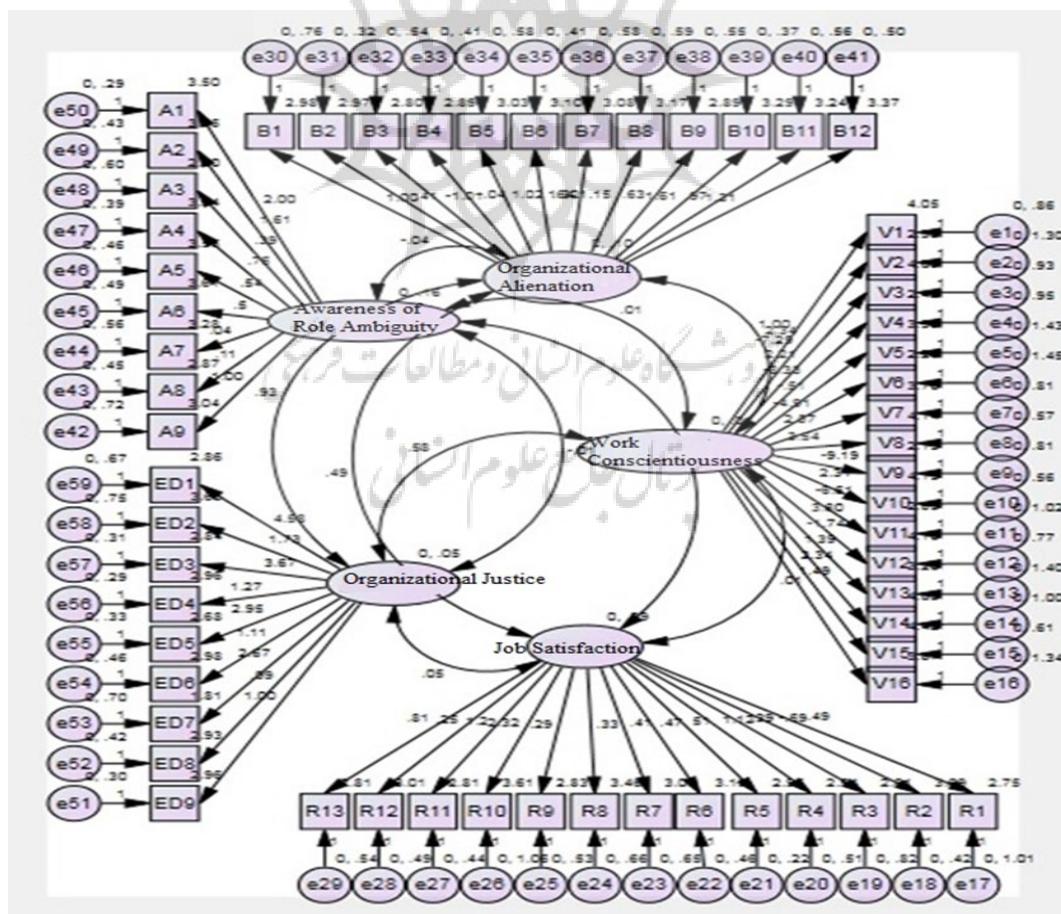
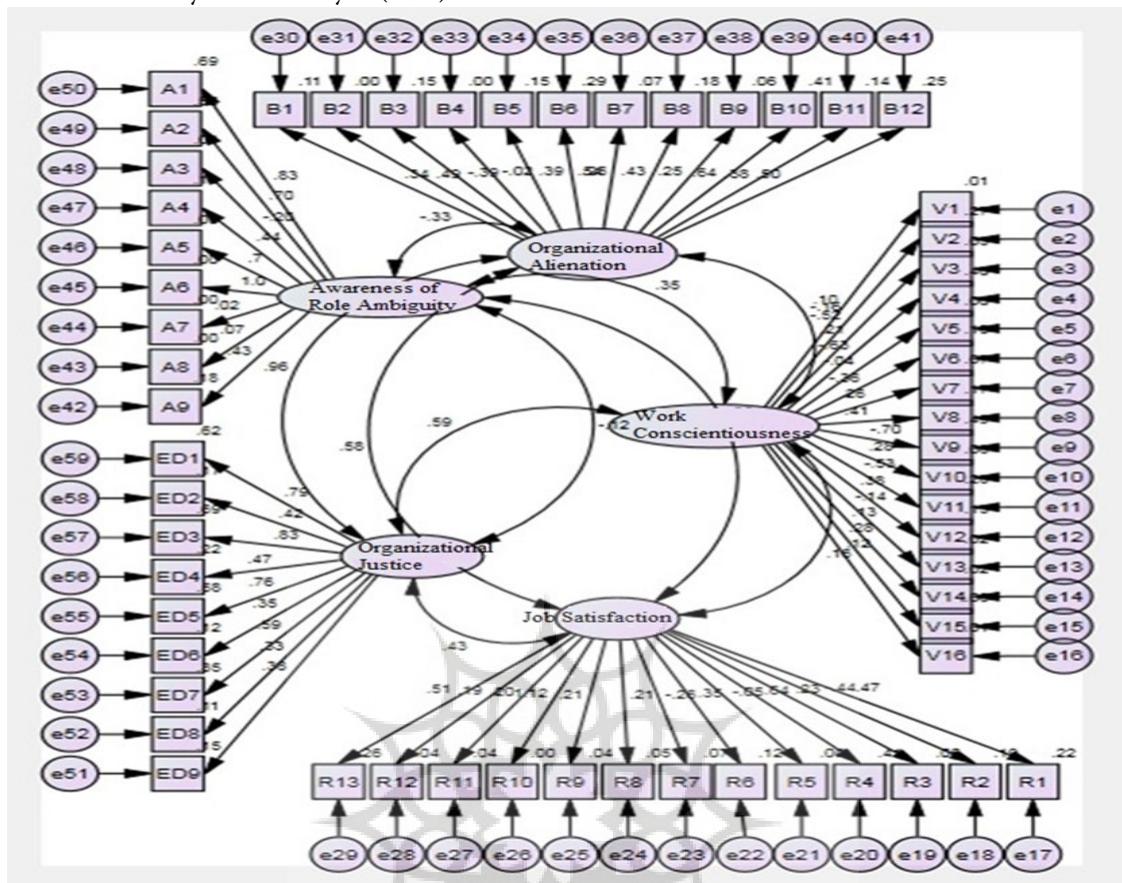


Figure 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Model of Unstandardized Coefficients**Figure 3:** Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Model of Standardized Coefficients

Factor loadings are calculated by calculating the correlation between the indicators of a construct and that construct. If this value is equal to or greater than 0.4, it confirms that the variance between the construct and its indicators is greater than the variance of the measurement error of that construct and the reliability of that

measurement model is acceptable. The important point here is that if the researcher encounters values less than 0.4 after calculating the factor loadings between the construct and its indicators, he should modify those indicators (questions in the questionnaire) or remove them from his research model.

Table 1: Research model fit indices

Index	Chi-square	CMIN/DF	CFI	NFI	RMSRA	GFI
Conceptual model	2.715	1.654	0.941	0.964	0.064	0.945

CFI and NFI are indices that measure the fit of the proposed model to the independent model (which assumes that there is no relationship between the data) and are equal to 0.941 and 0.964 in the model, respectively. Given that values

of 0.9 and above are acceptable, these measures also represent acceptable model fit. RMSEA is the mean of the residuals between the observed correlation/covariance of the sample and the expected model estimated from the

population, which, according to Löhlin, a value less than 0.08 means good fit.

GFI also evaluates the relative number of variances and covariance jointly by the model. The special feature of the GFI index is that it does not depend on the sample size. The range of changes of these two indices is between zero and one, and a value equal to or greater than 0.90 indicates a good fit. As shown in the table, the GFI value is 0.945, which indicates a good fit. As a result, it can be concluded from all the indices that the research model has a good fit.

Based on the path analysis model of factors affecting conscientiousness, it can be said:

1. The level of conscientiousness is only directly affected by organizational justice, organizational alienation, age and education.
2. Organizational justice is directly affected by the job satisfaction variable.
3. Organizational alienation is directly affected by the education variable.

4. Job satisfaction is directly affected by the variables of awareness of role ambiguity and organizational justice.
5. Awareness of role ambiguity is directly affected by the main variables (i.e. job satisfaction) and the contextual variable (i.e. income).

Figures 4 and 5 show the path analysis using AMOS software in two standard and non-standard modes. In the significant part of the table output, the p value is below /05 and the cf value is greater than 1.96. The model is acceptable with ideal conditions. According to the output of the unidimensional discrete model, the direct and indirect effects on work conscientiousness are clearly evident. Also, the main variables of the research, according to the cf value that should be greater than 1.96, based on the output of the table, organizational justice, awareness of role ambiguity, organizational alienation, and job satisfaction, respectively, have the greatest impact in explaining the main variable of the research.

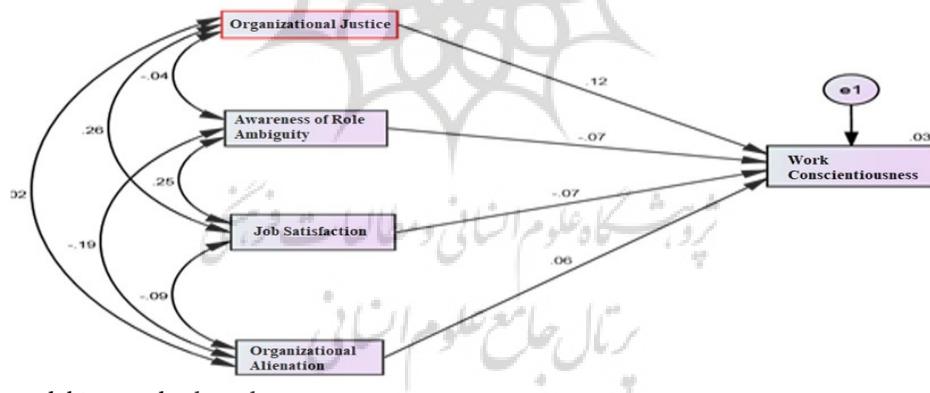


Figure 4: The model in standard mode

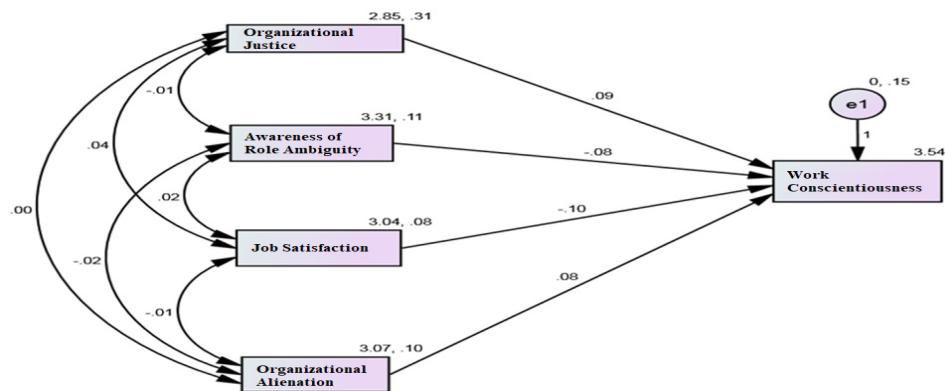


Figure 5: The model in non-standard mode

DISCUSSION

The variable of work conscientiousness as the dependent variable (y) has been analyzed in this study as the main factor. The effect of individual factors, organizational justice, awareness of role ambiguity, job satisfaction, organizational alienation as independent variables (x) and individual factors including: age, marital status, gender, income level, education on the dependent variable of work conscientiousness has been analyzed.

The findings of the study show that there is a significant relationship between organizational justice and work conscientiousness, meaning that the more employees enjoy organizational justice, including (distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice), the higher their work conscientiousness in the organization, which in turn increases their work productivity, and vice versa. The findings of the present study are consistent with the findings of some researchers [7-14].

The findings of the study show that there is no significant difference between the awareness of role ambiguity and the conscientiousness of employees. This means that the lower the awareness of role ambiguity, including responsibility ambiguity, work method ambiguity, priority ambiguity, and behavior ambiguity, the lower their conscientiousness, and vice versa. The findings of the present study are

also consistent with the findings of some researchers [15, 16].

The findings of the study show that job satisfaction is not related to conscientiousness and are not consistent with the findings of previous studies [17, 18], which could be due to research limitations or differences in research communities.

The findings of the study show that there is a significant inverse relationship between organizational alienation and employee conscientiousness, meaning that the less employees experience factors such as lack of motivation, employee underperformance, cumbersome regulations, or concentration of power, the higher their conscientiousness, which in turn increases their conscientiousness, and vice versa. The findings of the present study are consistent with the findings of some researchers in this field [19-21].

Based on these results, it is suggested:

- In order to increase the level of conscientiousness of managers, necessary training should be provided to managers regarding theories, management styles and communication methods, and make them willing to accept new ideas and effective suggestions from employees, as well as consult with them in decision-making. Increasing the responsibility of managers, raising their level of skill and expertise, and

strengthening their flexibility and spirit of critical thinking are also important in this regard.

- The organization supports employees with skills and expertise, giving them points and rewards.
- Using specialist managers in all departments, considering the organization's potential.
- Providing appropriate contexts and creating the necessary space for employees to accept more responsibility is recommended.
- Changing the organizational structure and, consequently, the job classification system and clarifying employees through standardizing activities and jobs and communicating the duties of each employee to them.
- Establishing coordination between the departments in charge of planning and providing services to reduce role pressure.
- Necessary use of employee reports in order to strengthen and expand duties.
- Strengthening the foundations of identity building and resolving the problem of employees who, for undisclosed reasons, do not want to continue working with the center or whose motivation has weakened.
- Strengthening the values and norms accepted by the center by employees in order to strengthen the sense of loyalty and belonging to the organization.
- Review the reward system and review the development of performance evaluation indicators in order to encourage and remove performance barriers for employees
- Create an environment where employees feel that managers support them and that they are not alone in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.
- Since this research was conducted in a limited area, it is recommended that this research be conducted in a larger statistical population that includes other organizations. It is also

suggested to future researchers to examine other potentials and desirable consequences of psychological empowerment such as job security, employee job commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to leave the job.

The limitations of the present study were:

Every research faces limitations, and this research is no exception. Here, too, the problems and limitations can be summarized as follows:

1. The survey method is a method in which the researcher directly approaches the people of the community and asks them for their opinion on the subject under study, but approaching people and getting their opinion is a relatively complicated task. Because people often do not express the facts.
2. Another problem with social research is the respondents' fear of answering such questions, which prevents them from answering clearly and honestly. In fact, the respondents' sense of security regarding social questions is low.

CONCLUSION

Iranian society, like many other developing countries, is a society in transition from a traditional to a modern state. This state has its own characteristics and features. According to Durkheim, a society in the transition from a traditional to a modern period - the transformation of a mechanical society into an organic one - will be involved in special value and moral crises. In this period, society is faced with doubts about previous ways of life on the one hand, and on the other hand, a new and alternative model has not yet been achieved. A number of factors affecting work conscience, such as an individual's personality, have their own complexities that, if necessary, are less likely to be changed and manipulated. However, a number of factors affecting work conscience are acquired and can be inhibited as they have been learned.

Therefore, the state of work conscience should be transformed by interfering with known factors and the necessary tendencies, insights and knowledge about work in society and organizations should be created. In order to transform and promote work conscience, it is recommended to use and pay attention to the index of internal and external work values. Experts' surveys and a few studies conducted in Iran show that work conscience is at a lower level compared to advanced societies. In fact, despite some opinions in society, work is still considered a valuable phenomenon and there is room to use this attitude as an opportunity for change. Work conscience has no meaning without work, and working and work conscience must be institutionalized so that the foundations of work culture can be established and steps can be taken to strengthen it. Work conscience means accepting the principles, patterns, behaviors, and rules of industry and production, which must be created, maintained, and utilized by applying mechanisms. Therefore, it is better to observe organizational justice, especially in the distribution of positions, benefits, and facilities. A fit between expertise, experience, and personality with jobs and responsibilities should be established. Conditions should be provided for employee satisfaction with facilities, income, and benefits in the workplace, and delegative and participatory management methods should be expanded, and jobs and positions should be distributed based on the ability and willingness of employees.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical issues (such as plagiarism, conscious satisfaction, misleading, making and or forging data, publishing or sending to two places, redundancy and etc.) have been fully considered by the writers.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests.

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