

Relationship Between Counterproductive Behaviors and Islamic Work Ethics

Ayşe GÖKÇEN KAPUSUZ¹ Mustafa Fedai ÇAVUŞ²

1. Department of Tourism Management, Beyşehir Ali Akkanat Faculty of Tourism, Selçuk University, Konya, Turkey

2. Department of Management Information Systems, Osmaniye Korkut Ata University, Osmaniye, Turkey

Abstract

The concept of “work” means mentally and physically exerting, endeavoring, and challenging to generate a business challenge and plays an important role in development and improvement of an individual and a society. Religion supports morality and plays an effective role in having a well-balanced life. It is also direct people to the right and virtuous behaviors. In Islamic faith, person is informed about positive, negative, right and wrong behaviors and positives are supported. People are responsible for their roles and behaviors not only in the sight of God, but also in front of all the people. The planned and intentional behaviors against the organizational norm and values are named as “Counterproductive Behaviors” and ordered as follows: favoritism, corruption, individualism, mobbing, absenteeism, alienation, social pressure... etc. In this study, the work ethic in terms of Islam and types of behaviors which impede productivity are considered. Scales from Abbas Ali (IWA-Islamic Work Ethic) and Bennett and Robinson (Workplace Deviance) have been implemented people working in public organizations in Turkey. Under the light of collected data and based on the analysis results on SPSS, the relationship between Islamic Work Ethic and Counterproductive Behaviors have been shown up and suggestions have been made to encourage future studies and project implementers.

Keywords: Counterproductive behaviors, islamic work ethic, work, work ethic.

1. Introduction

The concept of “work” which is the focus of development in people’ private and daily life conditions and demonstrates cultural differences, is a phenomenon as an action and activity upon that various researches and studies had been carried out since the early ages. As Ünal and Çelik (2010:221) emphasized that the concrete product is procured by working and people become happy and gain prestige and position coming with producing. With the emergence of Capitalism which is first began with the Industrial Revolution in England in the 18th century, the concept of work in a modern sense started to develop. As Lordoğlu, Özkaplan and Törüner (1999:5) expressed that work was consisting of activities that need to be renewed everyday to save the day without leaving anything to the next day up to that time.

According to Bozkurt (2000:16) it depends on the temporal, spatial, and cultural conditions if the actions can be counted as a work or not. The concept of work that is one of the basic actions and activities necessary for the people in a society and work ethics which is the values attributed to the “work” (Ünal and Çelik, 2010:220) are the cultural norms and referred to having positive attitudes towards working (Boatwright ve Slate, 2000:509).

Morality is derived from the words in Greek and Latin (Özgener, 2009:5), and can be described as ways of behavior and habit (Hitt, Middlemist and Mathis, 1986:574), consist of unlettered rules behavior (Kolçak, 2012:8). Also, the science which researches the core of moral actions is named as “ethics” and ethics is moral philosophy (Shea, 1988:15).

Despite being close in meaning, work and business concepts should not be confused with each other. As Kincheloe (1999:64) noted that business is described as a personal activity in order to provide for themselves and consume the things that generated while the work is discussed to compete something, reach the results and reveal goods and services to be used in people’ lives by performing repetitive actions. While individuals’ aims and values that are owned during their life are related to the work, they are expressed by the business concept.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Islamic Work Ethics

The phenomenon of religion supports morality and plays an effective role for individual to have right and virtuous behaviors in a balanced life (Kolçak, 2012:68). The basis of research and investigation for the work ethic is based on work from the German sociologist Max Weber published in 1904, "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" (Ünal and Çelik, 2010:223).

Protestant Ethics predicate a structure on working hard, carefully using the resources, preventing the waste and investing products formed by working and regulating activities in this World by continuing this cycle.

On the other hand; Islam has a balanced system to prepare people for the two realms. One of them is the hereafter, other is the real world experienced in.

First, Islam directs people to serve God by forwarding the hearts to the eternal life named hereafter and on the other hand does not prevent taking blessings of the life, on the contrary encourages for that. That goal should be working not only for the World, but also for the Hereafter. In Islam, it is supposed to work to achieve the goal.

Ethical and moral concepts are closest to each other in the concept of “conscience” (Kolçak, 2012:11) which is a specific and personal judgement tool and Islam also advises people to confront their own conscience and always directs to be virtuous.

According to the Islamic faith, individual has knowledge about positive and negative human behavior, and he is always advised for the positive ones and taught to be folded in the results. People are responsible with their behaviors not only in the sight of Allah, but also in front of all the people and other assets (Tunç, 2010:60).

2.2 Counterproductive Behaviors

“Behavior” in Psychology is known as observable and conscious responses against the stimulus in the interaction between human and environment (Tutar, 2006:86). These conscious responses, as may be positive, negative, and can often be intentional.

As noted before that the planned and intentional behaviors against the organizational norm and values negatively affect both work and daily life of employees are named as “Counterproductive Behaviors” (Demirel, 2009:122)

Counterproductive Behaviors which can be described as an anti-social behaviors (Bruk-Lee and Spector, 2006:147) can be analyzed in two ways, on the point of being individual and organizational level (Demirel, 2009:122-123).

Mount, Ilies and Johnson (2006:594) emphasized that interpersonal counterproductive behaviors arising from personal relationships are occurred as poor performance, abusing break time related work, injustice and theft, vituperation, and so on. On the other hand, anti-productive behaviors in an organizational level are aggression, abusing the knowledge and time, discrimination, retaliation, absenteeism, disobedience, and so on (Seçer and Seçer, 2007:148). These types of behaviors appeal to the whole organization and damage organizational goals and values.

Counterproductive behaviors often originate from incomplete and inadequate communication, the lack of organizational policy, and weak organizational culture (Kolçak, 2012:123-124). Frequently encountered counterproductive behaviors can be counted as favoritism, corruption, exploitation (abuse), omission, selfishness, insults and swearing, violence and coercion (bullying), abusing authority, gossip, misleading and prevention (Kolçak, 2012:126-137), mobbing, discrimination, drug addiction / bad habits (Demirel, 2009:124; Kolçak, 2012:126), disobedience (Seçer and Seçer, 2007:148), abusing knowledge, resources, and time, absenteeism, alienation, insecurity, social pressure (Foldes, 2006:231-234; Demirel, 2009:123-126).

3. Research Methodology

Work ethics with regard to Islamic religious and counterproductive behaviors have been examined. From the question of “How is the point of view and approachment of Islamic Work Ethics to the Counterproductive Behaviors?”; questionnaire from Abbas Ali (IWE-Islamic Work Ethic) contains statements about individual reactions to some situations in work places and approaches to the work and work places and questionnaire from Bennet and Robinson from the year of 2000 (Workplace Deviance) were used by translating into Turkish with five point Likert Scale.

Data have been collected from 138 participants who are selected from state institutions and organizations in different cities in Turkey (N=138). Counterproductive Behaviors were categorized in 3 types such as organization-oriented (OCB), personal-oriented (PCB), and work/task-oriented (TCB) and explained with 3 factors by analyzing on SPSS.

48 % of participants are female ($n_1=66$) while 52 % of them are male ($n_2=72$). At the same time 60 % of all these participants are people who are ranging in age from 29 to 39. However, 22 individuals take a part in middle age group while 5 people in above middle age and 30 people build up the age group between 18 and 28 who are named as “young population”. In addition to this, 50 % of participation is originated by people who have an education in graduation level.

4. Results

Based on the analyses results, reliability coefficient of counterproductive behaviors has been found as ,93, and also this value for 3 factors generated by factor analysis as mentined above has been seperately found as ,78 for OCB, ,87 for TCB, and ,84 for PCB. On the other hand, Islamic Work Ethics’ reliability coefficient has been found as ,84. These results show that high reliability values have been found by analyses for both Islamic Work Ethic and Counterproductive behaviors.

Table 1 below shows the average values, standart deviation, and correlation results. According to that

the value of Islamic Work Ethics is above the average. On the other hand, Counterproductive Behaviors have low values as can be seen on the table below. Correlation Analysis shows that there is a significant and negative/avoidant relation between Islamic Work Ethics and Counterproductive behaviors.

Table1. Averages, standart deviation ve correlation

	Averages	S.D.	IWE	OCB	TCB	PCB
IWE	3,7724	,51531	1	-,381**	-,417**	-,305**
OCB	1,4565	,46738		1	,713**	,644**
TCB	1,3755	,46947			1	,703**
PCB	1,5233	,51283				1

In addition to these, regression analyses have been seperately done for each Counterproductive Behaviors factors and Islamic Work Ethics. And calculated R² values have been respectively found as ,145 and ,174 and ,093. Regression Analyses results can be seen on Table 2 below.

Table2. Regression analysis results

	OCB		TCB		PCB	
	Beta	Sig	Beta	Sig	Beta	Sig
IWE	-,381	.000	-,417	.000	-,305	.000
	Adj R ² =.14		Adj R ² =.18		Adj R ² =.09	

As a result of all, 1 unit raise in Islamic Work Ethics will cause a decrease (0,381) in organization-oriented counterproductive behaviors. By the way, same raise in Islamic Work Ethics will show other decreases in task-oriented counterproductive behaviors (0,417), and also in personal-oriented counterproductive behaviors (0,305).

Negative highest relation is between Islamic Work Ethics and task-oriented counterproductive behaviors (TCB) which is -0,417. This results supported the early thesis that “personal efforts related to the tasks should be in the foreground in Islam for productivity”.

5. Conclusion

Individuals have both material and spiritual advantages by working and continue their lives. There are some spiritual benefits of work such as adding respect to the individuals, contributing to personal development, provide a place, value, being satisfied etc. besides economic benefits.

As Ünal and Çelik (2010:221) indited that it is possible to search other ways except working when the belief of individual's desired goals and returns by working is diminished. Ethics abstractly examines “should be” terms while the morality perceptibly examines “existing” terms (Gül and Gökçe, 2008:379). Morality is the case of a long-term business success and the basic structure of the quality of life. On the other hand, it provides empowers such as dignity, justice, honesty, diligence, and reliability to individuals -employee or employer-.

From this point of view, according to Brauchle and Azam (2004:3) work ethics is related to the positive attitudes, values, and habits that are expected. Social foundations of ethical behavior are formed by culture, value and norms. As Ünal and Çelik (2010: 219) emphasized that different cultural characteristics of societies can affect personal values upon the work and work life, in other words it can affect the work ethic. Order and relationships within the organization play an important role whether the anti-social behaviors occur or not. When personal and organizational expectations are matched eachother, it is possible to prevent forming counterproductive behaviors and this accord provide people to like their jobs, dedicate themselves by trusting the work.

Individuals in the Islamic work ethic is instructed to always behave in a positive way that does not hurt others. As previously expressed that the necessity of work and effort based on the aim is always emphasized in Islam. If people in managerial positions provide an environment in which workers with different characteristics work together in accord and prevent factors causing counterproductive behaviors by predetermining, it will be beneficial to the society in terms of an organizational and individual level.

Consequently, it is highlighted that the values and concepts mentioned above are not just intrinsic to a specific religion and individuals who are connected with this religious. Therefore, whichever adjective comes before work ethics, it is the fact that the bases of work ethics are coming from the cultural characteristics of civic society and each culture is not able to host the same values and importance when compared to another culture. That's why the concept of work ethic means attitudes and habits toward work in one society or culture (Ünal and Çelik, 2008:41).

People should be self-denying for their work and work places and should make self-sacrifices when needed. It is a common knowledge that the survival of societies is possible by producing. So, both individuals and organizations should avoid all kinds of counterproductive behaviors, attitudes, and actions. All ways and actions for struggling counterproductive behaviors should be searched and of course the importance of organizational culture should be emphasized.

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