

The Study of Relationship between Teachers' Perceptions of Principals' Islamic Work Ethics and Elementary-School Effectiveness: The Mediating Role of Organizational Culture

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Abstract : This article aimed to examine the mediating role of organizational culture in the relationship between principals' Islamic work ethics and elementary-school effectiveness. The statistical population consisted of all elementary teachers of kerman, Iran (2014-5). A sample of 318 was selected using simple stratified random sampling. Data were collected by three questionnaires: Ali (1992) Islamic Work Ethics Scale, Cameron and Quinn (2006) Organizational Culture Questionnaire, and Alvarado Balbontin (2012) School Effectiveness Scale. After verifying the reliability and validity, the questionnaires were forwarded to the participants. The results showed that mean principals' Islamic work ethics was higher than desirable level. Mean school effectiveness was found to be higher than the acceptable level but lower than the desirable level, the difference is significant. Clan culture had the greatest mean, while the market culture had the lowest. Principals' Islamic work ethics had a positive, significant relationship with different types of clan organizational culture, adhocracy, market, and hierarchical cultures. Principals' Islamic work ethics had a positive, significant relationship with school effectiveness. Islamic work ethics of Kerman principals was found to be a positive, significant predictor of elementary school effectiveness and different types of organizational culture. Hierarchical organizational culture was only found to have a mediating role in the relationship between Islamic work ethics and school effectiveness.

Keywords: Principals' Islamic Work Ethics, School Effectiveness, Organizational Culture, Elementary Schools.

INTRODUCTION

Education is the most important institution for educating human and is considered the driving force for social capital and sociocultural institutions. Not only do schools play a key role in conveying official education but also they are effective in transmitting norms, behavioral patterns, individual attitude growth, and tacit training. In this regard, the role of education, in particular schools and teachers, as socializing agents is considered effective in creating job attitudes and attitudes toward work, and what is called the work ethic in this study (Moedfar, 2007). In this study, principal selection is to understand their work ethics, which is an important step to realize the socialization process of new generation in the realm of job. Studies related to work culture and ethics ultimately focus on individual analysis. The person is the center of manifestation of culture, norms and values. Work ethics can be analyzed as a social issue (Tavasoli and Nahavandi, 2008). Since work ethics are a cultural norm derived from beliefs governing society and human mind, they can be influenced by Islamic teaching in Iran (Rostam Abadi and Batamani, 2012). After the scientific recognition of the factors affecting the work ethics, the significant role one productivity promotion is of great importance. Therefore, principals' Islamic work ethics, who lead the educational centers, are of utmost importance. Since schools take different educational, research, cultural, and social goals, scholars are trained to meet these goals in order to develop the society. It is obvious that schools, like any other organization, need to keep pace with the organizational culture for the survival and continuation in line with the goals. Organizational culture can play a key role in participation, cooperation, etc. As a result, it is effective in the organizational effectiveness. To this end, school organizational culture and its role in effectiveness must be taken into account. This article aimed to examine the relationship between the principals' Islamic work ethics and organizational culture and their effects on school effectiveness. The study can give valuable results for principals' Islamic work ethics and strengthening work ethics dimensions. Schools are one of the most important organizations for transferring work-related values to future generations. Therefore, they are of great importance in cultural studies and work ethics.

Literature Review

Work Ethics

Labor ethics is a cultural norm that gives positive spiritual value to doing good and good work in society. In work ethics, work is believed to have a natural value (Moedfar, 2007; Tavasoli and Najar Nahavandi, 2008). Work ethics is also defined as the general rules governing culture and society (Mashayekhi pour, 2011). Work ethics are the beliefs, values and norms of economic activity, and especially production, which is rooted in society's values and cultural system. These beliefs, values, and norms are heavily influenced by one's socialization process outside of work environment including family, school, media, and personal characteristics and status. A second category of factors lies in the work environment including one's status, type of management, work organization (physical environment, working conditions, HR regulation), and motivation (Tavasoli and Najar Nahavandi, 2008).

Islamic work ethics are ethical features that must be performed by Muslims based in divine rules and guidelines. The first element of Islamic work ethics is to work in order to support the family. This feature is considered valuable by the Shariah law and is considered as equal as obligatory religious practices. At the same time, excessive and exaggerated emphasis on work has been prohibited because it shakes the life balance. Work and work ethics have not been dealt with economic wise in traditional economic Islamic thought but ethical aspect where economy and ethics have been mixed. Economy without ethical considerations is considered an illegitimate activity (Nasr, 2008). Work as the origin of independence is considered a tool to foster individual growth, self-esteem, satisfaction and self-fulfillment. Islamic work ethics are believed to be creative and cooperative work accompanied by happiness and is considered a valuable work. Those who work hard and are committed are believed to be successful (Ali, 1988). More than any other schools, Islamic teaching has emphasized the work ethics. If work ethics are correctly institutionalized in the general culture, significant development is expected in line with the work ethics evolution and national economy growth (Iravani, 2004). Islamic work ethics value the work and consider work virtue and worship. In general, Islamic work ethics are based on four components: Effort, Competition, Transparency, and Ethical Responsiveness. All these components strengthen the business and cause economic progress (Al-Owaihian and Ali, 2008). Islamic work ethics are a set of ethical and spiritual principles in the Islamic texture. They distinguish right and wrong (Rokhman, 2010; Beekun, 1996; Ansari and Ardakani, 2103). Islamic work ethics are Islam's expectations based on one's behavior in the workplace. They consist of individuals and their efforts, sacrifice, cooperation, responsibility, and social relations (Ahmad Razimi and Sidek Baba, 2013; Hayati and Caniogo, 2012). Based on above mentioned issues, Islam pays a special spiritual attention to physical, social, and intellectual activity.

Organizational Culture

The beginning of the serious attention of organizational researchers to culture was in the 1980s. In the 1980s, organizational researchers realized the effect of an important factor on the organizational performance (Cameron and Quinn, 2006). Culture is a set of key values, common beliefs, and perception of employees from the organization (Daft, 1998). Organizational culture is a model of the basic hypothesis discovered or developed by a certain group so that consistency with the external environment and internal coherence are taught. If the model is efficient, it is validated. As a result, the right way of thinking, understanding and feeling of new people is formed (Schein, 2004). Denison believes that organizational culture is referred to fundamental values, beliefs and principles that serve as a solid basis for the management system. These values and principles are durable because they have certain meanings for the employees (Monavarian, 2008). Monavarian et al. (2008) believe that organizational culture is a set of common organizational beliefs and values both forming the attitudes and behaviors of organization's members and controlling the overall organization's performance. The term *organizational culture* is certain values, basic assumptions, expectations, common memories and definitions provided in the organization. The term points out to the common ideology in the public minds. It expresses a feeling of similarity with others, provision of unwritten rules, mental guidance. It also increases the social system stability (Kuchaki et al., 2012). In general, organizational culture is a unique organizational feature leading the employees' behaviors and creates a common treasure of values and beliefs. Robins (1996) points out 10 features. When these features are mixed, the existential philosophy of an organization is formed. These features cover both behavioral and structural dimensions: Individual Innovation, Risk Tolerance, Orientation, Integration and Unity, Management Relationships, Control, Identity, System, Conflict Tolerance, and Communication Patterns. Cameron and Quinn (2006) stated four types of organizational cultures based on 39 main effectiveness indicators provided by Campbell et al. and two main dimensions (Extraversion vs. Introversion, Control, and Stability vs. Flexibility). Cameron and Quinn believe that these effectiveness criteria are of great importance because they show the features valued by the public. Cameron and Quinn recommended that the framework of competitive values can be used to examine the deep structure of organizational culture, fundamental beliefs, motivations, leadership, decision making, effectiveness, values, and other organizational elements. This framework of competitive values consists of four types of culture: Clan, Adhocracy, Market, and Hierarchy (Kuchaki, 2012).

Effectiveness

The first view point on effectiveness was very simple. It was true until the 1950s. Effectiveness is defined as the extent to which an organization has achieved its goals. In the 1960s and early 1970s, extensive research was conducted on organizational effectiveness. A review of these studies shows three criteria. Today, researchers agree that effectiveness requires multiple criteria evaluating various organizational tasks based on different features. Four approaches have been provided for the organizational effectiveness evaluation. Each of these approaches can be beneficial: Goal-Attainment Approach, - System Approach, Strategic Constituencies Approach, and Competing-Values Approach (Robins, 1996).

Toto (1986) defines effectiveness as follows: Organizational effectiveness is a continuous and rotating process beginning with the planning and covers all activities in line with the organizational goals. It also shows to what extent to which the activities have been successful. Seashore (1967) believes that a consistency is found among the balanced-oriented natural system, goals, and decision making in most organizations. According to Toto, organizational effectiveness depends on three factors: Maintaining survival and growth, realizing goals, exercising control and maintaining the organization's direction. Argyris believes that the organizational effectiveness depends on the realization of three factors: Achieving goals, maintaining integrity, and adapting to the environment. Although the main effectiveness indicators are independent from the type of organizations, they differ in terms of performance and goals (Shirazi, 1994). Organizational effectiveness has traditionally defined the extent of achieving goals. Organizational goals are optimal modes. A school is effective when the activities lead to achieving goals (Hui and Miskel, 1996). Organizational effectiveness is the extent to which the goals are achieved. Organizational efficiency is the resources consumed to produce a product (Daft, 1998). To define effectiveness, Robins (1996) considered both tools and facilities (process) and results (goals). Alagheband (2011) also defined the effectiveness as follows: It is the extent to which organizational behavior expresses the organizational expectation. In general, organizational effectiveness is the organizational responsiveness to environment and achievement of goals optimally using the resources and effective processes.

Characteristics of Effective Schools

Initial studies on effective schools were conducted in the mid-1970s. Edmonds stated that all schools can be effective. The second wave of studies was conducted in the mid-1980s and found 12 features for effective schools (Glyceman et al., 2007). Sergiovanni et al. (1992) considered the main spheres of school activities and introduced a master plan for school effectiveness. The model takes four features into account: Achieving organizational goals, maintaining cultural pattern, maintaining internal integrity, and adapting with existing forces in the external environment (Tork Zadeh, 1998). Baldwin (1993) found 11 factors for effective schools: Essential skills, effective teaching leadership, maximum learning outcomes, clear and transparent emphasis, commitment between school and home, safe and secure environment, professional growth, positive school climate, student's high academic expectations, participation in teacher's decision-making, frequency of assessment and success control (Zaki, 2010; Albert-Green, 2005). Balbontin Alvarado (2012) examined the school effectiveness in two deprived areas of Chile in order to obtain a better understanding of effective school features and the effects on social and scientific results. In this regard, he forwarded a 50-item questionnaire in 12 dimensions: School management, perspectives and goals, school atmosphere, education and learning, expectations of student success, professional feedback, assessment of student learning, home and school collaboration, school discipline, school curriculum and planning, teachers' competency, and motivation and responsibility.

METHOD

This article aimed to examine the mediating role of organizational culture in the relationship between principals' Islamic work ethics and elementary-school effectiveness of Kerman schools in 2014-5. This is an applied, descriptive correlational study. The Islamic Work Ethics are considered predicting variable. School Effectiveness and Organizational Culture are criterion and mediating variables, respectively. Since it is natural study, one of the variables is not controlled. The statistical population consisted of all elementary schools of teachers in Kerman, Iran. They all were working in 2014-5. A sample of 318 was selected using simple stratified random sampling.

Ali (1992) Islamic Work Ethics Scale was used to assess the principals' Islamic work ethics. The scale has 17 items. The items are scored on a 1-to-5 Likert scale. It is one of the most widely used questionnaires to measure the Islamic work ethics used by many Iranian and international researchers. The reliability and validity were verified. However, Cronbach's alpha (0.90) was used to verify the reliability again. The scale was found to be valid.

The organizational culture was assessed by the Cameron and Quinn (2006) Organizational Culture Assessment. The questionnaire has 24 scoring items. The items were converted to Likert scale. The questionnaire has six sub scales: Dominant Characteristics (4 items), Organizational Leadership (4 items),

Management of Employees (4 items), Organizational Glue (4 items), Strategic Emphases (4 items), and Criteria of Success (4 items), assessing four types of organizational cultures (Clan (6 items), Adhocracy (6 items), Market (6 items), and Hierarchy (6 items)). In this study, the validity of each of organizational cultures was calculated using item analysis. The correlation with the total scale score showed that all questionnaires are highly valid. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the reliability, showing high reliability of different types of organizational cultures.

Alvarado Ballantine (2012) School Effectiveness Scale was employed to assess the elementary school effectiveness. The scale has 50 items. The items are scored on a 1 (Strongly Disagree)-to-5 (Strongly Agree) scale. There is also a choice as "I do not know". It has 12 sub scales: School management (6 items), perspectives and goals (5 items), school atmosphere (7 items), education and learning (5 items), expectations of student success (4 items), professional feedback (3 items), assessment of student learning (3 items), home and school collaboration (3 items), school discipline (4 items), school curriculum and planning (3 items), teachers' competency (4 items), and motivation and responsibility (3 items). Item analysis was used to assess each of effectiveness dimensions. The questionnaire has high validity. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the reliability. It was reported above 0.95 for each of the dimensions.

Findings

What is the extent of elementary school principals' Islamic work ethics in Kerman, Iran?

According to the results, Islamic work ethics are above the optimal level (4.20). According to the t-value, a significant difference is found between the mean and criterion at 0.0001 significance level and freedom degree of 318.

Table 1. One-Sample t-test Results for comparing mean Islamic work ethics from the perspectives of principals and optimal level (Q3) and Acceptable level (Q2) in elementary schools of Kerman, Iran

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Acceptable Level (Q2)	t-Value	Freedom Degree	Sig. Level	Optimal Level (Q3)	t-Value	Sig. Level
Islamic Work Ethics	4.20	0.48	3	44.59	318	0.0001	4	7.68	0.0001

What is the dominant form of organizational culture in elementary schools of Kerman, Iran?

According to the following table, the results of variance analysis of repeated measures to determine the dominant type of organizational culture showed that Clan Culture was the most frequent (Mean=3.86) and Market Culture was the least frequent type of organizational culture (Mean=3.48). According to F (56.59) and freedom degree of 1 and 318, a significant difference was found among different types of organizational culture.

Table 2. Comparing Different Types of Organizational Culture

Variable	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	df	Sig.
Clan	319	3.86	0.60	56.59	1 and 318	0.0001
Adhocracy		3.60	0.58			
Market		3.48	0.60			
Hierarchy		3.69	0.54			

To examine the difference between the mean, Bonferroni post hoc test was used. The results indicate that a significant difference is found among all types of organizational culture. Table 3 shows the results. According to the results, Clan is the dominant type of organizational culture in elementary schools of Kerman, Iran.

Table 3: Bonferroni post hoc test for comparing different types of organizational culture

Variable	Clan	Adhocracy	Market	Hierarchy
Clan				
Adhocracy	P<0.0001			
Market	P<0.0001	P<0.0001		
Hierarchy	P<0.0001	P<0.0001	P<0.0001	

What is the extent of school effectiveness in Kerman, Iran?

According to the results, the mean effectiveness (3.81) is above the acceptable level. According to the t-value and freedom degree of 318, a significant difference was found between the calculated and criterion mean at 0.0001. However, it was below the optimal level. The difference is significant.

Table 4: One-Sample t-test Results for comparing mean effectiveness and optimal level (Q3) and Acceptable level (Q2) in elementary schools of Kerman, Iran

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Acceptable Level (Q2)	t-Value	Freedom Degree	Sig. Level	Optimal Level (Q3)	t-Value	Sig. Level
Effectiveness	3.81	0.44	3	32.95	318	0.0001	4	7.59	0.0001

Is there a significant relationship among the principals' Islamic work ethics, different types of organizational culture, and school effectiveness in Kerman, Iran?

Table 5 shows that principals' Islamic work ethics had a positive, significant relationship with different types of organizational culture (clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy). Islamic work ethics also had a positive, significant relationship with school effectiveness. Clan Culture had a positive, significant relationship with Adhocracy, Market, and Hierarchy organizational culture. Clan Culture also had a positive, significant relationship with school effectiveness. Adhocracy organizational culture had a positive, significant relationship with Hierarchy organizational culture. Adhocracy organizational culture had a positive, significant relationship with school effectiveness. Market organizational culture had a positive, significant relationship with the hierarchy organizational culture. Market organizational culture had a positive, significant relationship with school effectiveness. Hierarchy organizational culture had a positive, significant relationship with school effectiveness.

Table 5: Correlation Coefficient among Principals' Islamic Work Ethics, Different Types of Organizational Culture, and School Effectiveness of Kerman Elementary School

Variable	Islamic Ethics	Wo Clan	Adhocracy	Market	Hierarchy	Effectiveness
Islamic Work Ethics						
Clan	0.44/0.0001					
Adhocracy	0.40/0.001	0.67/0.0001				
Market	0.32/0.0001	0.46/0.0001	0.72/0.0001			
Hierarchy	0.48/0.0001	0.69/0.0001	0.69/0.0001	0.59/0.0001		
Effectiveness	0.32/0.0001	0.45/0.0001	0.47/0.0001	0.41/0.0001	0.49/0.0001	
			P<0.01			
			P<0.05			

Baron and Kenny (1986) was used for the analysis as follows:

First Step: Examining the relationship between the primary exogenous variable (Islamic work ethics) and final endogenous variable (effectiveness). The results showed that Islamic work ethics of Kerman elementary schools are positive, significant predictors of school effectiveness ($P<0.05$ and $\beta=0.32$).

Second Step: Examining the relationship between the primary exogenous variable (Islamic work ethics) and the mediating variable (different types of organizational culture). The results indicated that Islamic work ethics are a positive, significant predictor of clan culture ($P<0.05$ and $\beta=0.45$), adhocracy culture ($P<0.05$ and $\beta=0.39$), market culture ($P<0.05$ and $\beta=0.32$), hierarchy culture ($P<0.05$ and $\beta=0.49$).

Third Step: Examining the relationship of the mediating variable (different types of organizational culture) and endogenous variable (effectiveness) with the endogenous variable (Islamic work ethics). The results showed that clan culture ($\beta=0.14$ and $p=NS$), adhocracy culture ($\beta=0.14$ and $p=NS$), market culture ($\beta=0.11$ and $p=NS$), and Islamic work ethics ($\beta=0.07$ and $p=NS$) are not a significant predictor; however, hierarchy culture ($\beta=0.20$ and $p=NS$) is a significant predictor of effectiveness.

Fourth Step: Examining the relationship of the primary exogenous variable (Islamic work ethics) and the mediating variable (different types of organizational culture) with the final endogenous variable (effectiveness) and assessing the regression coefficient reduction of exogenous variables from the first to the third steps

- Is there a significant relationship between the Islamic work ethics and school effectiveness with the mediating variable of different types of organizational culture in elementary schools of Kerman, Iran?

Regression coefficient of Islamic work ethics and school effectiveness showed that the former decreased from the first step ($P<0.05$ and $\beta=0.32$) to the third step ($\beta=0.07$ and $p=NS$), indicating that different types of organizational culture had a mediating role in the relationship between the Islamic work ethics and school effectiveness. According to the SEM, Fig. 2 shows that Islamic work ethics are the predictor of school effectiveness and different types of organizational culture had a mediating role.

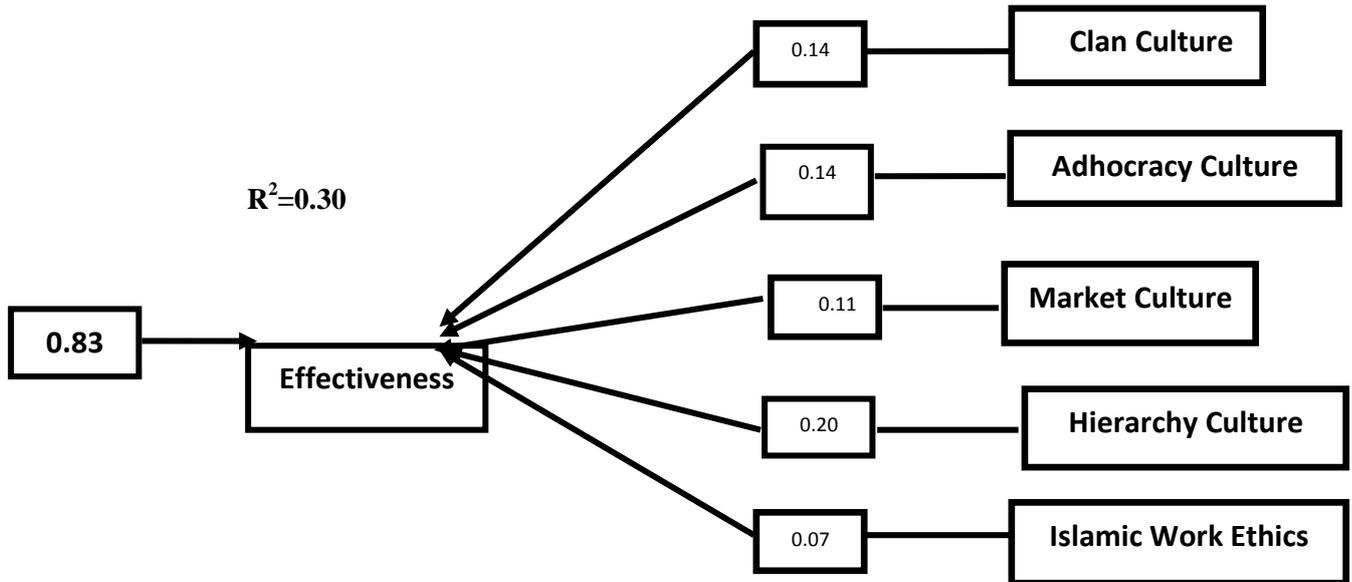


Figure 1: The Relationship of Different Types of Organizational Culture and Islamic Work Ethics with School Effectiveness

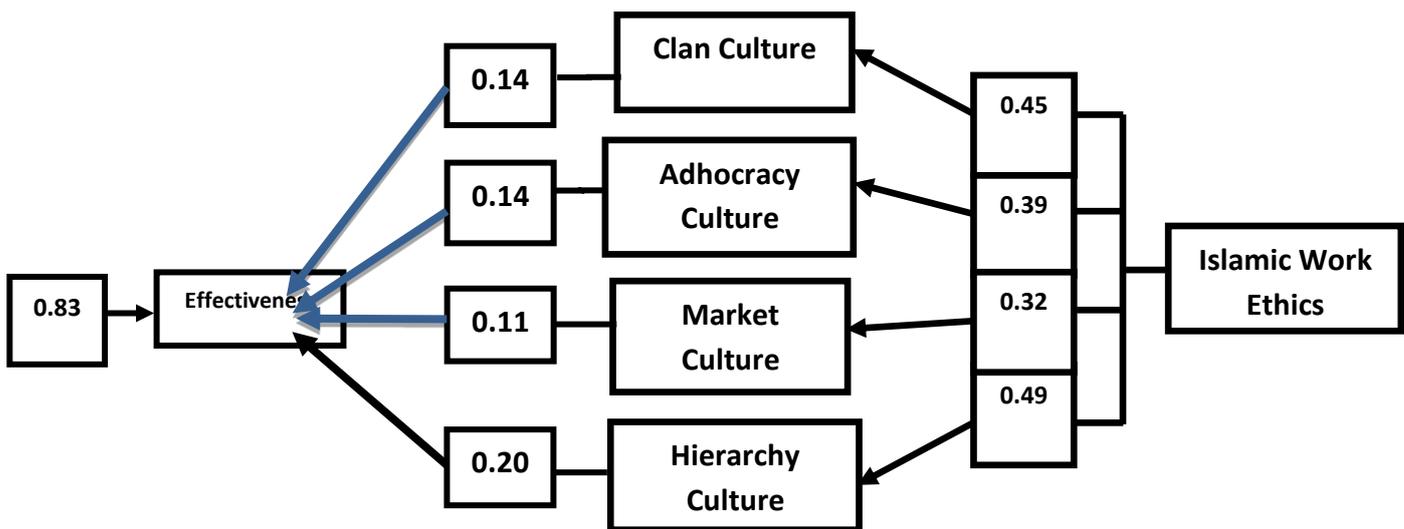


Figure 2: Final Model of Relationship between Islamic Work Ethics and School Effectiveness with the Mediating Role of Different Types of Organizational Culture

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Findings showed that the mean principals' Islamic work ethics is above the optimal level Kerman, Iran. The result is consistent with that of Ansari and Ardakani (2013). The study by Ansari and Ardakani showed a high mean Islamic work ethics. School effectiveness is also below the optimal level. Therefore, the support provided the principals from the Islamic work ethics can be used to increase the school effectiveness to the optimal level.

In general, clam culture is above the average in Kerman, Iran. Market culture is below the average, showing that such leadership is provided in the form of consultations. Schools are managed by team and participatory styles not competitive style. Loyalty and mutual trust are responsible for the bond among the members rather than the goals. The emphasis on trust and participation is greater than success and competition, meaning that the schools define success based on team work, commitment, and interest rather than new achievement and service provision. The result is consistent with the one by Fralinger & Olson (2007). They introduced clan culture as the dominant organizational culture in Roan University from the perspective of health education students.

A significant relationship is found between the principals' Islamic work ethics and different types of organizational culture (clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy). Islamic work ethics had a significant relationship with school effectiveness. Different types of organizational culture (clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy) had a significant relationship with the effectiveness. Principals' Islamic work ethics is a significant predictor of school effectiveness and positive, significant predictor of different types of organizational culture (clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy). Different types of organizational culture have a mediating role in the relationship between the Islamic work ethics and school effectiveness. Hierarchy organizational culture only plays a mediating role in this relationship. In other words, principals' Islamic work ethics is directly and indirectly effective in school effectiveness with the mediating role of organizational culture. A positive correlation indicates the fact that greater Islamic work ethics is responsible for the greater effectiveness and organizational culture. Stronger organizational culture leads to a more effective school. Therefore, strengthening Islamic work ethics criteria among the principals and improving the organizational culture can improve effectiveness dimensions and enhances school effectiveness. Since the relationship was verified, Islamic work ethics must be taken into account. Expanding Islamic work ethics can create positive feature not only in schools but also in other organizations. Note that these findings are consistent with the results of the following studies:

The study by Fakhar Zaman, Khan Marri, Sadozai & Ramay (2012) showed that Islamic work ethics had a positive effect on the Organizational Citizenship Behavior in Pakistan.

The study by Abbasi, Rehman & Bibi (2011) in Pakistan showed that Islamic work ethics is potential for improving business performance in organization. Islamic work ethics are believed to be the treatment for the global economic crisis. They need to be grown in the organizational culture.

The study by Rahman (2010) in Indonesia showed that Islamic work ethics had a positive effect on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. No significant evidence was found in terms of Islamic work ethics on intention to leave.

The study by Yousef (2001) in the UAE showed that Islamic work ethics had a positive effect on organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

The study by Mugli, Seyed Javadin, Ahmadi and Alavi (2013) concluded that Islamic work ethics had a significant effect on the attitudes of employees in order to create optimal behavior.

The study by Ansari and Ardakani (2013) and Rajabi Pour and Dehghani (2012) showed a significant relationship between the Islamic work ethics and organizational commitment.

The study by Moshabaki, Vahdati, and Musavi (2012) showed that task performance was directly and indirectly influenced by Islamic work ethics, positive feeling to work, and work commitment.

The study by Rashidi (2004) showed that principal support from the Islamic work ethics had a positive relationship with their attitudes toward organizational changes.

The study by Ameri Far and Jahani (2012) on the relationship between the organizational culture and school effectiveness from the perspective of high school principals in Shiraz, Iran showed that the organizational culture had a positive, significant relationship with organizational effectiveness.

The study by Arasteh and Salimi (2013) showed that organizational culture had a direct relationship with leadership effectiveness.

The study by Kwantes, and Boglarsky (2007) in six various countries showed that organizational culture elements had a strong relationship with leadership and individual effectiveness.

The study by Tavanaee and Mahram (2010) showed that organizational culture elements had a positive, significant relationship with score of teachers' capabilities.

The study by Yusefi (1997) showed that organizational culture of schools had a significant relationship with the academic progress.

Aside from the statistical results, educational principals are recommended to try to put Islamic work ethics into practice and improve the organizational culture due to the determining role in school effectiveness. To increase the school effectiveness, it is essential to implement the principles of Islamic work ethics more seriously and put justice, chivalry and sacrifice their motto. Increasing the safe space in schools, unity of staff, encouraging teachers for participation in school decision-making, considering the bonus system for teachers successful in achieving school goals and efforts, and rewarding the teachers' efforts and innovation, changing teachers' attitudes for assessing teaching methods and adapting new teaching methods are all effective in educational center effectiveness. Researchers are recommended to study the relationship between the Islamic work ethics and other organizational variables and staff performance using theoretical models and compare the results.

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