

The Role of Ethics in Understand the Relationship between Religious Employees and Corruption

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Abstract: This study aims to shed light on religious of employees and its impact on the possibility of corruption within the organizations of Iraq as one of the epidemic diseases that afflict communities. We consider ethics a mediated variable on that relationship. Data collected by a 600 Muslim employees of the Iraqi universities. We used demographic variables (age and gender) as controlling variables. After testing the hypotheses utilizing the multiple regression techniques with the SPSS and Amos Programs, we found that religious employees have a negative impact on corruption. Ethics associated had a partial mediation relationship between religion and corruption. Furthermore, a high effect of beliefs, rituals and values of employees on corruption in organizations, these variables can focus on ethics for anti-corruption.

Key words: Religious employee's, ethics, corruption, beliefs, rituals, values

INTRODUCTION

Corruption is not a new phenomenon in history but the increasing focus on the shape of the battle with it is a new. Many countries around the world to fight corruption within the country and turn a blind eye on corruption outside than the issue of space law to ethics. The core of corruption characteristics constitutes moral issues. When the obligation to take a specific decision to stand out too many ethical problems, including bribery. More (Johnston, 1996) not the phenomenon of corruption found in the emergence of humans had evolved from them and continued. The origin of corruption in the Latin word (*corruptio*) which refers to moral decay and behavior villain. That means that corruption linked to ancient with ethical standards. Also, Williams and Beare (1999) confirmed formerly it used for a term indicative of the moral conviction and means corrupt.

Religion plays an important role in the individual's lives, its derives them to understand moral and ethical values of their religion Also, it provides interfaith community rules necessary for living employees within organizations, some of which may be a specialist in the fight against corruption (Beyers, 2010). On the other hand, the links between ethics, religion with corruption is not well understood or how the ethics and religious effect to withdrawal individuals from participating in corrupt deals? corruption flourishes if that does not follow ethical rules

(Toleikiene and Satiene, 2007). Ethical virtues develop slowly and take root, since, childhood (Andersen *et al.*, 2015). Older people have a personal relationship with God and that condemns children to be associated with Betadine parents and their participation in the rituals within the religious institutions (Kirkpatrick and Shaver, 1990). Religious guidance within the religious establishment has an important role to keep individuals from malpractice and therefore, the non-religious employees are more likely to fall into the pits of corruption.

This study focused on bridging the gap and expand the study of the relationship between religious of employees and corruption of ethical among Muslim's individuals. We want to find out whether the religious beliefs and participate in the rituals make employees more respectful of the moral laws. As well as we want to know the nature of Muslim's forgiveness and its impact on ethics and corruption. Based on the Marquette (2010) opinion which is considered to be starting in the fight against corruption, the point must be based upon moral values which are evidence in making decisions for individuals. Because of giving a bribe is a rational process and systematic does not fall within the conduct involuntary, making it influenced by intention and behavioral control to increased obstacles and obstructions for corruption participants (Powpaka, 2002). This control may be generated by religious and religious beliefs and ethics displayed by the individual.

The study found the level of corruption is influenced by religious beliefs held by individuals. As well as the participation in religious rituals. For example, the greater participation of individuals in public religious festivals whenever derived their directives and instructions based on religious lines keep them from indulging in suspicious practices. The study confirmed the ethics occupied mediation in the relationship between religious of employees and corruption. Such as when there is a conflict with religious beliefs of individuals resort to decide to exercise more ethical behavior and relying on the support of the religious beliefs of that behavior. We'll display literature in part two. The third part will focus on aimed. Fourth parts methodology, fifth part is findings and discussion. Finally, conclusions.

Literature review: Religion plays an important role in the lives of individuals derives their understanding of moral and ethical values of their religion. Also, religion provides interfaith community needed to live individuals, some of which may be a specialist in anti-corruption rules (Beyers, 2010). On the other hand, the links between ethics, religious with corruption is not well understood or how ethics and religious affect the withdrawal from the individual from participating in corruption within the organization? Robbins (2016) studied confirmation to marginalize the issue of religion's contribution to building the foundations of ethics individuals. Other beliefs such as the Chinese, for example, religion is a cultural variable inalienable (Marshall, 2016). Stahl *et al.* (2016) confirmed the corruption flourishes that have not been following the moral rules and ethics. Moral rules are specialized to evaluate logical beliefs. On the other hand, that is difference to Western cultures, Western individual's beliefs ethical behavior is absolute and it is apply to everyone. While, the orientals believe that moral behavior depends on the situation (Smith and Hume, 2005). Napal (2006) said cultural characteristics contribute to corruption, especially in developing countries which requires the creation of the ethical climate in a positive impact on peopl's thoughts and ethical culture. Values, beliefs and norms have to be strengthened to the existence of an urgent need to have a contribution to reduce the undesirable behaviors and corrupt as well as the priorities identified for the moral foundation (Johnson *et al.*, 2016).

The most important focus of the study is religious has role in the lives of employees within organizations and their ethics derives from it. There is a tendency by using religion and religious employees in the fight against corruption. Because of individuals are the most religious warned not to go into unethical practices. As well as, the

influence of religious employees to the formation of attitudes to corruption. In the other words, to justify or reject corruption through the language of religion. Government alone and without any support from religious institutions (church, mosque, temple, ..., etc.) cannot be anti-corruption. Clerics are working on the prohibition of individuals for theft, breach of trust and abuse of others (Marquette, 2010). Religious institutions that provide community constitutions moral (Torgler, 2006). Beets (2007) found religious guidance do an important role in the proportions of individuals for malpractice and therefore. Individuals who are not religious people are more probably to fall into the pits of corruption. Individuals the most presence in the religious establishment was more social interaction with social networks. This interaction within religious communities provides guidance for individuals increases the positive behavior (Greil *et al.*, 2010). Though mention above our hypothesis will be as follows:

- H_1 : religious employees can decrease corruption
- H_{1a} : religious beliefs of employees can decrease corruption
- H_{1b} : religious rituals of employees can decrease corruption
- H_{1c} : religious values of employees can decrease corruption
- H_2 : religious employees can increase ethics
- H_{2a} : religious beliefs of employees increase ethics
- H_{2b} : religious rituals of employees can increase ethics
- H_{2c} : religious values of employees can increase ethics
- H_3 : ethics can mediate the relationship between religious employees and corruption
- H_{3a} : ethics can mediate the relationship between religious beliefs of employees and corruption
- H_{3b} : ethics can mediate the relationship between religious rituals of employees and corruption
- H_{3c} : ethics can mediate the relationship between religious values of employees and corruption

Aimed and objectives: This study focused on bridging the gap and expand the study on the relationship between religious employees and corruption of ethics among Muslims. Determine if they participate in religious rituals and beliefs of faith in the afterlife and death contributes to the moral support systems and reduces the practice of corrupt individual behaviors. Based on the Marquette (2010) opinion which is considered to be the starting point in the eradication of corruption must be based on ethical values which are evidence for making individual decisions, considering that corrupt practices are rational process and systematic does not fall within the conduct involuntary (Powpaka, 2002).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research design: The current study has been classified as explanatory research because it is aimed to test the cause-and-effect relationships among variables (religious employees, ethics and corruption). This study, also, provides an opportunity to explore whether the individual's faith in the afterlife and the presence of punishment and rewards after death reduces ethical violations and corrupt behaviors in the community, especially within the organizations. According to Paldam (2001), Shadabi (2013), Kim *et al.* (2013) and Juntunen *et al.* (2008) investigators pursued specific procedures that have been called philosophical supposition.

Ethical considerations: It was the approval for the Iraqi Universities in this study and make a pledge to employees the answers are kept confidential and used only for scientific study.

Setting: The study was conducted at the Iraqi Universities. It has been taking the opinion of the employees as if he would like to help us in conducting the study. When obtaining the approval manually distributed questionnaires to employees after presenting a brief idea about the content.

Participants: We have aimed (804) questionnaire randomly and chosen individuals at the universities which was re-ones (644) of the entrants. After that we found (44) questionnaire careless due to lack of right or other reasons. The rate of restoration has been (80%). The subscriber characteristics, the number of male is (391) equivalent (65%). The number of female is (209) equivalent (35%).

Instrumentation: Current study depends on the survey method to take the maximum information in a restricted time frame. The study has been employing Likert scale Quintet slope of (1) strongly agree and (5) strongly disagree.

Religious employee's scale (The dependent variable), we may mix several criterions to measure religious employees, depend on the classification (Mathras *et al.*, 2016) multidimensional religion which beliefs, rituals and values. Religious beliefs were measured through three main dimensions; we set answer choices in (1) always, (2) often, (3) sometimes, (4) rarely and (5) never. First dimension, faith in God, we're asked to respondents to determine the level of their faith, "I believe in God". The

second dimension beliefs in the afterlife of scale (Dezutter *et al.*, 2008; Atkinson and Bourrat, 2011) and includes three items, such as, "I think that there is life after death". The third dimension of death anxiety which includes (11) items derived from the scale (Wong *et al.*, 1994; Dezutter *et al.*, 2008), an example of this "I am not sure what will be after death and I am very worried".

To measure religious participation for employees in the fifth set answer choices (1) daily, (2) weekly, (3) monthly, (4) A few times a year, (5) never. It has been classified into public ritual consists of two items focused on public religious participation the religious establishment (Torgler, 2006). Such as, except at funerals, what is your presence in mosques rate these days". We also have worked to put items in an attempt to bring us to measure the Individual rituals target denomination (Muslims) is composed of four items. Such as "I gave alms to the poor of my own money". It was examined a group of inspired by the religious value's scale by Macaskill (2005), Cohen *et al.* (2005). For example, I think that the corruption of the actions that are forgiven.

Corruption scale (the dependent variable), The adoption of a measurement Shadabi (Stepurko *et al.*, 2013) for examining corruption, whether the amount of cash or in-kind gift was containing (4 items). Ethics scale (the mediating variable), adoptions of a which is divided among three groups are autonomy (4 items), community (4 items) and divinity (4 items) (Walker and Jensen, 2016).

Data analysis techniques: we conducted multiple regressions analyses estimating the linear hypotheses for the mediate effects of ethics between religious employees and corruption in SPSS 20 and ABOS 20.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Confirmatory factor analysis: We used Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to check convergent and discriminant validity. We first examined a three-factor model which included religious employees, ethics and corruption. According to Hu and Bentler (1999) and Bagozzi and Edwards (1998) all of our Chi-square, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) General Fit Index (GFI) and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) were utilized to assess the model fit. Table 1, shown us the three-factor model fit the data well with $\chi^2/df = 1.778$, RMSEA = 0.03, CFI = 0.97, GFI

Table 1: Structural factor results of the focal constructs

Model	Model structure	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	GFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
1	Hypothesized model (3-factor)	183.182	103	1.778	0.96	0.97	0.97	0.03
2	2-factor (combining E and C)	2834.29	986	2.874	0.79	0.89	0.90	0.05
3	2-factor (combining R and E)	2527.64	818	3.090	0.79	0.89	0.89	0.05
4	2-factor (combining R and C)	3386.64	818	4.140	2.00	0.87	0.88	0.07
5	1-factor model	4207.29	819	5.137	3.00	0.82	0.83	0.08

AT, Attitudes; C, Corruption; R, Religious employees ; TLI, Tucker–Lewis Index; CFI, Comparative fit Index; RMSEA, Root Mean Square error of Approximation; RMR, Root Mean Square Residual. All χ^2 difference is significant at $p < 0.001$; $\Delta\chi^2$ is in relation to model 1. N = 600. ** $p < 0.01$

Table 2: Means, standard deviations and correlations for all variables

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Age	0.60	0.48							
Gender	2.57	1.11	-0.070						
Belief	3.91	1.04	-0.010	0.041					
Rituals	4.01	1.14	-0.010	0.004	0.88***				
Values	3.98	0.94	0.020	-0.007	0.77***	0.74***			
Religious employees	3.97	0.97	-0.001	-0.015	0.95***	0.94***	0.89***		
Ethics	3.66	0.86	-0.010	-0.047	0.83***	0.81***	0.74***	0.86***	
Corruption	1.96	1.09	0.060	-0.006	-0.64***	-0.61***	-0.74***	-0.62***	-0.61***

N = 600 *** $p < 0.001$

Table 3: Significant testing results of the multiple regression for main hypothesis

Model	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Dependent variable	(corruption)	(corruption)	(ethics)	(corruption)
Control variables				
Age	0.002	-0.01900	-0.007	-0.052
	0.986	0.78800	0.646	0.380
Gender	0.060	0.04900	-0.050	0.050
	0.159	0.11700	0.177	0.105
Independent variable				
Religious employees	0.000	0.00000	0.000	-0.414***
Mediator				
Ethics	-	-	-	-0.38***
				0.000
R ²	0.030	0.39000	0.74	0.415
Adjusted R ²	0.000	0.38800	0.739	0.411
F-value	0.990	127.84700	566.629	105.348

*** $p < 0.001$ standard error in parentheses, n = 600

= 0.97, that explained we had good convergent validity. Suggestion model proposed by current study was better than all of alternative models (Table 1).

Descriptive statistics: We can see mean, standard deviation and bivariate correlation Table 2. Religious employees and its dimension (beliefs, rituals, values) negatively associated with corruption ($r = -0.49***$, $-0.52***$, $-0.49***$, $-0.30***$) and ($p < 0.001$) and it's positively associated with ethics ($r = 0.78$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, attitude negatively associated with corruption ($r = -0.49$, $p < 0.001$).

Testing of hypothesis: Table 3 shows we can see the outcome of multiple regression analysis to examine the main hypotheses these explain the effect of religious employees on both corruption and ethics, the mediating effects of ethics between religious employees and corruption. All the results support our hypotheses. In the Model (1) analysis appeared that the model statistically insignificant where the F-value 0.99 is less than scheduled values, that mean age and gender has not effect on

corruption the adjusted determination coefficient equal 0.00. The parameters of gender and age (β_1 , β_2) are not significantly effect on corruption. While The second model appeared that religious employees have negatively effect on corruption and significant $p < 0.01$. The adjusted R² 0.39, that means that the religious employees clarify 39 percent of the variation in corruption when F-calculated are 127.85 higher than scheduled values. On average, the model indicates when religion will raise 1%, the corruption lowering 0.70%, the coefficient is negative and significant ((-0.70) t-statistics = -19.50). The outcome is consistent with H₁ that religious employees negatively affected the corruption level in organization.

Third, in the Model (3) the outcome reports that the religious employees explain 0.76% of the variation of the ethics (adjusted R² 73%) when F-value greater than scheduled values. The coefficient is positive and significant ((76%) t-statistics = 41.18) which is consistent with H₂. The ethics have been positively associate with religious employees. The ethics increases by 0.76% when religious employee's increases by 1%. Finally, the Model 4 shows the evidence argues that ethics significantly mediate the negative relation between religious employees and corruption because the mediator variable created changing on the relationship between independent and depended variable which means religious employees effect on corruption minimal than the effect is without mediating effects of ethics (Baron and Kenny, 1986). The model (4) explains 41% of variation of the corruption (adjusted R² 41%). Coefficient (-0.414) is less than in the second Model (-0.70) that indicates statistically the mediator effects of ethics which is consistent with H₃. On the other hand, the corruption lowering 44% when religious employees increases 1% and corruption decrease 33% when ethics increase 1%. The effects of are negative and significant ((-0.41) t-statistics = -4.84) and ((-0.38) t-statistics = -0.614), respectively.

Table 4: Significant testing results of the multiple regression for sub-hypotheses

Model	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient	R	Adjusted R ²	F-values
Model 1 (Dependent variable- corruption)							
Age, gender and belief (H _{1a})	0.044	-0.047	-0.67***	-	0.413	0.410	139.74
	0.155	0.509	0.000	-			
Age, gender and ritual (H _{1b})	0.044	0.000	-0.59***	-	0.381	0.378	122.11
	0.162	0.998	0.000	-			
Age, gender and value (H _{1c})	0.061	0.006-	-0.56***	-	0.230	0.226	59.19
	0.083	0.0938	0.000	-			
Model 2 (Dependent variable- ethics)							
Age, gender and belief (H _{2a})	0.013	-0.023	0.689***	-	0.704	0.702	471.74
	0.468	0.562	0.000	-			
Age, gender and ritual (H _{2b})	0.012	-0.070*	0.613***	-	0.66	0.662	391.82
	0.505	0.093	0.000	-			
Age, gender and value (H _{2c})	-0.006	-0.062	0.686***	-	0.561	0.56	253.39
	0.761	0.192	0.000	-			
Model 3 (Dependent variable- corruption, Mediator variable - ethics)							
Age, gender, belief and ethics (H _{3a})	-0.048	-0.054	-0.44***	-0.33***	0.433	0.429	113.49
	0.114	0.436	0.000	0.000			
Age, gender and ritual and ethics (H _{3b})	-0.05	-0.030	-0.33***	-0.43***	0.419	0.415	107.14
	0.107	0.666	0.000	0.000			
Age, gender, value and ethics (H _{3c})	-0.057*	-0.053	-0.044	-0.747***	0.380	0.376	91.24
	0.075	0.466	0.435	0.000			

*p<0.01; ***p<0.001 standard error in parentheses, n = 600

From above, the religious employees have affected corruption by -0.70% which considers a high role for anti-corruption by adoption social and spiritual tools. Until recently, few articles have been managed to investigate why the corruption phenomenon is not finished and which economies have been high affected the corruption level. While Kalin and Siddiqui (2016) rated the coefficient value of religious employee's sectarian participation on corruption equal -0.38% at the level of significance (p<0.001).

Table 4 explains the regression results for the study three models during the effect of sub-dimensions of religious employees on corruption, ethics and all of them with ethics to corruption. In the first model, we evaluated the effects of belief, ritual and value on corruption as predicted, belief, ritual and value influence negatively and significantly. While the age and gender do not have influence on corruption and they are not available in the exam necessary statistical power. On average, corruption decreases by -0.67, -0.59 and -0.56/1% raise in belief, ritual and value, respectively from (p<0.01). In the model (2), we estimated the effect of sub-dimensions of religious employees on ethics; the coefficients display positive and significant effect. These outcomes are consistent with H_{2a}, H_{2b} and H_{2c} that belief, ritual and value positively have a greater influence on the ethics.

Third models, we can confirm the mediate effects of ethics among belief, ritual, value and corruption. Based on the outcome shown in Table 4. The third model, we looked at both independent variables (belief, ritual and value) and mediator variable (ethics) negatively and significantly influenced the corruption. Corruption associated

negatively with beliefs, rituals and value by lowering 0.44, 0.33 and 0.04, respectively for 1%. On the other hand, ethics have negatively affected to corruption through belief, ritual and value. There was the difference for religious employee's values not enough statistical power of the exam are available as well as the effect of the ethics on corruption across values was -0.74. It means the ethics is full mediation with employees values and greater than beliefs, rituals (Hayes, 2009). The current study has been confirming by Tobin and Slatcher (2016) Religious participation for employees negatively associated with the conflict which conflict is one of the unwanted behaviors. Lang *et al.* (2016) referred religious rituals have a negative effect on unethical behavior by -1.55/ 1%. Periyakoil *et al.* (2016) examined different religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) about the suicide. They showed religious people have negative attitudes towards suicide, observed suicide as bad and immoral acts (corrupt) then, reject the idea of suicide.

The current study discusses religious employees and its dimensions have affected the corruption negatively and positively the ethics, meeting proposition 1. Our study also observed ethics have more associated with adoption of religious employees and its dimensions to corruption, evidenced by the magnitude of beta coefficients and adjusted R² values among models that indicated to each of these values. The religious employees have been beta on corruption by -0.623 in the natural state without any other influences; it also has beta value on the corruption by 0.86 ethics had beta value on corruption by -0.60 when we entered ethics as the mediator variable between religious employees and

corruption, the beta value of religion on corruption has changed to become -0.614 which shows ethics and partial mediator between religious employees and corruption as the significant value for the coefficient generated by the model of Preacher and Hayes specific that in the tables as an effect of meditation and validates our hypothesis (Preacher and Hayes, 2008).

The numerical values are beta weights from the regression results offered the dimensions of religious employees have negatively beta value to the corruption and positively to the ethics, meeting proposition 2. the study also observed the ethics have more associated with adoption religious beliefs, rituals and value for employees on corruption, the magnitudes of beta coefficients in three models statistically were significant and have negatively affected to corruption whereas have positively affected ethics. The employee's beliefs have affected corruption by -0.64 and have affected ethics 0.83, the rituals have affected corruption by -0.614 and have affected ethics 0.814 and finally, employee's religious values have affected corruption by -0.476 and have affected ethics 0.748.

In this study, we explored the relationship between religious employees and corruption by ethics in universities in Iraq. We found that religious employee's is associated negatively with corruption and this is in line with the Stark because he confirmed that individuals' religious people are less likely to engage in delinquent behavior (Stark, 1996). Also, our results support (North *et al.*, 2013) study which confirmed the existence of a significant effect of religion on corruption as the least corrupt countries are Protestant countries. In addition to Bloom and Arikan (2012) the presence of religious homilies in institutions systematically decreases levels of corruption through to motivate the ethical behavior. He confirmed the higher level of ethical behavior of the individual stayed away from corruption. This researchers in the same direction with our results that demonstrate that ethics negatively associated with corruption.

We contrasts with the Paldam (2001) which affirmed that religion is not enough to predict the corruption and the estimated amount of influence by (-0.03). As well as Gatti *et al.* (2003) which stressed that corruption influenced by religion, by a very weak and according to them testing almost (-0.07). Marquette (2012) stressed that we cannot rely on religion and regarded as the magic key to ending the problem of corruption. The current study has confirming by Tobin and Slatcher (2016) religious employees participation negatively associated with the conflict which conflict is one of the unwanted behaviors. Lang *et al.* (2016) referred religious rituals have a negative

effect on unethical behavior by -1.55%. Periyakoil *et al.* (2016) examined different religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) about the suicide. They showed religious people have negative attitudes towards suicide, observed suicide as bad and immoral acts (corrupt) then, reject this idea.

This is a literary contribution as it has been to combine the social curriculum, moral, religious solve the problem faced by the various sectors. But nevertheless we cannot be generalized results as the results may be inadequate to interpret cases of corruption among the clergy. Marquette said there are a lot of cases of corruption between occur within the religious establishment and that should be highlighted in a more focused (Marquette, 2012). We add our results were within the organization and the only Muslim group which makes us need more studies to examine the situation within other sectors and within different religions.

CONCLUSION

The study tries to examine the relationships between religious employee's and corruption by ethics. A sample of employees of Iraqi Universities. These examining are consistent with Powpaka which found that corruption is immoral behavior leads to the destruction of trust; high moral's owners sometimes engaged in corrupt practices as a result of a boost by the authority. When we want to reduce corruption, we must monitor ethics (Juntunen *et al.*, 2008; Eiras, 2003). In other words, the results for this study have revealed that ethics able to mediate among religious employees, beliefs, rituals, values and corruption. Furthermore, a high effect of beliefs, rituals and values on corruption in organizations and these variables can focus on ethics for anti-corruption.

Our findings produce theoretical and empirical contributions in the literature. The first is to unpack the procedure by which religious employees and its dimensions influences on corruption in organizations in Iraq which provides social solutions for the corruption phenomenon. Second, this research extends the literature on behavioral and ethics, understanding how religious employees affects ethics also brings important practical benefits to reduce corruption which have been shown mediation effects of ethics.

LIMITATIONS

As is the nature of an exploratory study, the findings may not be generalized and are also conducted in one country: Iraq and within one Educational organizations. In addition, all of the participants happened to practice the same religion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

However, this study encourages future research to incorporate objective measures of corruption such as religious employees, spiritual, attitudes, ethics, self-issues for anti-corruption.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researchers would like to thank Iraqi cultural attache in China and Iraqi universities for supporting a research about data collecting and their corresponding for our academic goal.

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