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Evaluation of Relationship between Awareness of Islamic Citizenship Rights and Organizational Similar-to-me of Education Managers of Zanjan University of Medical Sciences

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Abstract

Background & Objectives: This research aimed to determine the relationship between awareness of Islamic citizenship rights and organizational similar-to-me of education managers of Zanjan University of Medical Sciences, Zanjan, Iran.

Materials and Methods: This descriptive and correlational research was performed on all education department managers and faculty members with a history of education department management. Convenience sampling was applied to select 117 subjects who had passed online courses on citizenship rights. Moreover, data were collected using a researcher-made questionnaire in the form of a five-point Likert scale. In addition, data analysis was performed applying Lisrel 8.5.

Results: In this study, the results demonstrated that in the direct path, the principle of dignity (path coefficient=-0.20) had the most effect on the dependent variable. However, in the indirect path, the variables of freedom of expression (-0.17), social-political right (-0.15), and freedom of thought (-0.04) had the most impact on the dependent variable of the research (organizational similar-to-me of education department managers) due to the mediating variable of the right to security.

Conclusion: According to the results of the study, all variables exerted impacts on the indirect path through the mediating role of the right to security. In order to better realize Islamic citizenship rights, it is recommended that the right to security (occupational-psychological) be provided so that a decrease could occur in the organizational similar-to-me effect in education department managers.

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Introduction

Currently, Citizenship rights have been discussed in most developed societies and there are many debates on this issue (1). Despite all attempts made to obtain a pervasive and universal definition for this concept, there are differences in some of its basic areas. In such a situation, most Muslim countries believe that citizenship rights should be the subset of religious principles, or at least follow religious principles in terms of indicators and components. The necessity of localization of concepts has led many religious scholars to consider Islamic citizenship rights in parallel with the common law of other societies (2).

The ongoing trend of these efforts and publication of many articles and books on this issue in Iran and the world has been pointed out in several studies. Despite these attempts, limited quantitative and applied research has been conducted on this topic so far. Therefore, this study aimed to evaluate the components of Islamic citizenship rights with one of the scientific and academic concepts of organization management known as organizational similar-to-me at the level of education department managers using the survey method. In general, the similar-to-me effect is one of the challenges that considerably damages managerial stability in the vast majority of organizations. This issue refers to a phenomenon in which a person is recruited based on personal or professional similarities with the selector.

Therefore, this effect seems to decrease in organizations through propagating the concepts of Islamic citizenship rights, which itself leads to the growth of Islamic citizenship rights in organizations, management of which is carried out using domestic and religious values by managers (3, 4). Scholars believe that citizenship rights are the same as human rights and the only element added is liability that generates the total rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Therefore, there are differences (e.g., differences in attitude towards humans, differences in the guarantee of sanctions, and differences in progress evaluation) in comparison of Islamic citizenship rights with non-Islamic citizenship rights (universal or western citizenship rights) regardless of their similarities (5). In Islam, the criterion of progress in citizenship rights is to adhere to religious teachings centered on God's worship, which requires awareness and knowledge of this issue (6).

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However, apart from these formal differences, Islamic human rights are consistent with human rights in many cases. Conversely, many areas of human citizenship rights have been derived from religious teachings. It is extremely difficult to use the Islamic citizenship rights in a set of measurable indicators (7) since similar to Islam, most religions have very general and comprehensive teachings and guidelines, which cannot be easily reduced to some researcher-made indicators. Nonetheless, in order to quantitatively assess some social concepts (e.g., citizenship rights), we must rely on a limited number of extracted indexes. Therefore, some general indicators such as the right to live, freedom of thought, freedom of expression, the principle of dignity, the right to security, and social-political right can be recognized by a comparative look at religious teachings and Islamic writings (8-11). Evidently, Islamic citizenship rights, human citizenship rights, or human rights emphasize the mutual aspects of human rights, and the only difference is the perfectionism of religions. In observing citizenship rights, special attention is paid to religious incentives and extraterritorial motivations, aiming to observe and respect citizenship rights in inner minds and improve it with its perfectionism aspects.

Islam is one of the latest religions and some of its missionaries have been deprived of some human and social rights during their lifetime. Therefore, in all Islamic texts, there have been references to commands that explicitly mark individual citizenship rights, addressing rights that might be correctly named citizenship rights. In this study, the introduced concept of Islamic citizenship rights is comparative citizenship rights with a religious theme or from an Islamic perspective. Observance of these rights is linked to the religious-belief obligation while lack of its observance is associated with religious punishment. Management changes in all organizations often require administrators to select deputies and subordinates who have similar characteristics in some areas, including religion, political faction, level of education, thoughts, and psychological characteristics (12, 13). In addition, observing Islamic citizenship rights in the organization is tied to another organizational concept known as similar-to-me effect. In general, the mentioned effect refers to conditions where individuals choose people with similarities in some of the basic areas of the field in a deliberate attempt. However, this type of recruitment increases

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the possibility of error of similar-to-me or similarity of managers in making complicated decisions (14, 15).

In a research, Cairns et al. suggested that managers (in nonprofit organizations) should avoid biases in the selection process caused by the similar-to-me effect (16). Results of the mentioned scholars demonstrated that the higher utility and more efficient performance could be obtained when managers avoid recruiting employees with characteristics similar or equal to themselves. This is contrary to the intuitive feeling of humans since it is generally believed that the person recruited for performing a specific task must think the same as the manager. Nonetheless, research shows that more benefits can be gained if we select non-similar people (17). Regarding the general relationship between the two variables of citizenship rights and the reduction of organizational similar-to-me in this research, it should be noted that belief in the citizenship rights is interpreted as belief in the social equality of individuals, and Islamic citizenship rights is defined as a belief in the equality of the value of individuals. Therefore, it seems that the tendency to tolerance increases in individuals by improving their knowledge and attitude toward the principles of citizenship rights. In addition, these individuals are motivated to allow the involvement of others with different views in their work field.

With this background in mind, this study aimed to determine the relationship between awareness of Islamic citizenship rights and organizational similar-to-me of managers of education departments in Zanjan University of Medical Sciences (ZUMS), Zanjan, Iran.

Materials and Methods

This descriptive and correlation study was performed on all supervisors and professors of ZUMS with a history of management of education departments. In total, 117 participants (faculty members with a history of education department management and passing an online course of citizenship rights) were selected through convenience sampling. In addition, the data collection tool was a researcher-made questionnaire, 13 and 6 items of which were related to the variables of similar-to-me and Islamic citizenship rights, respectively. In addition, the questionnaire encompassed six subscales of the principle of dignity (seven items), the right to live (five items), freedom of expression (seven items), social-political right (11 terms), freedom of thought (six items), and the right to security (five items). For anonymity, the demographic

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items (gender, marital status, age, occupational status) were placed at the end of the questionnaire. It is notable that the items were scored based on a five-point Likert scale (1=completely disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 4=agree, 5=completely agree).

Furthermore, 50 questionnaires were distributed to confirm the reliability and validity among managers of clinical and basic education departments. This group of individuals also participated in the main test of the research. At first, content validity was carried out to confirm the validity of the questionnaire. In this regard, the mentioned questionnaire was provided to seven experts (including two faculty members of the psychology department, three senior university managers, one professor of statistics and research method, and one professor of Islamic sciences). After conducting a survey and receiving guidance from this group, the necessary corrections were made to the present composite questionnaire using the results of the second questionnaire validation method, namely, the factor analysis method. In addition, the reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, results of which are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Test validity and reliability of questionnaire by Cronbach's alpha coefficient and factor analysis

Significance	Degree of freedom	Bartlett's test of sphericity	Kaiser-Meyer- Elkin value	Cronbach's alpha	Index
0.0000	42	538.211	0.701	0.891	**Similar-to-me**
0.0000	32	627.843	0.619	0.896	**Living right**
0.0000	17	388.709	0.670	0.943	**Freedom of opinion**
0.0000	36	504.327	0.701	0.885	**Freedom of speech**
0.0000	10	571.173	0.734	0.952	**Safety right**
0.0000	13	926.352	0.777	0.845	**Dignity**
0.0000	21	911.405	0.625	0.860	**Political and social right**

Data analysis was performed using the method of structural equation modeling (type 1), the most important advantage of which is the ability to analyze the entire model simultaneously and estimate the effects of the intermediate variable on the components of the model. To use this technique, the missing values were first replaced by the "expectation

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maximization for missing data" method using the expectation maximization technique (18). In the next step, to ensure the normal distribution of data, which is a fundamental condition for the use of parametric tests, data were evaluated using Anderson-Darling test, recognized as the most robust and accurate normal test. According to the results, the variables of organizational similar-to-me, right to live, freedom of expression, the right to security, and the principle of dignity had a normal distribution, and data conversion was exploited for the variables of freedom of thought (P=0.016) and social-political right (P=0.012). The conversion technique employed for these two variables was the Johnson transformation method (19). In addition, the structural equation modeling method was used in Lisrel software to test research hypotheses and evaluate the degree of effect of independent variables. In this method, the criterion of accepting the significance of path coefficients is being at the threshold of the critical value (1.96<T<-1.96).

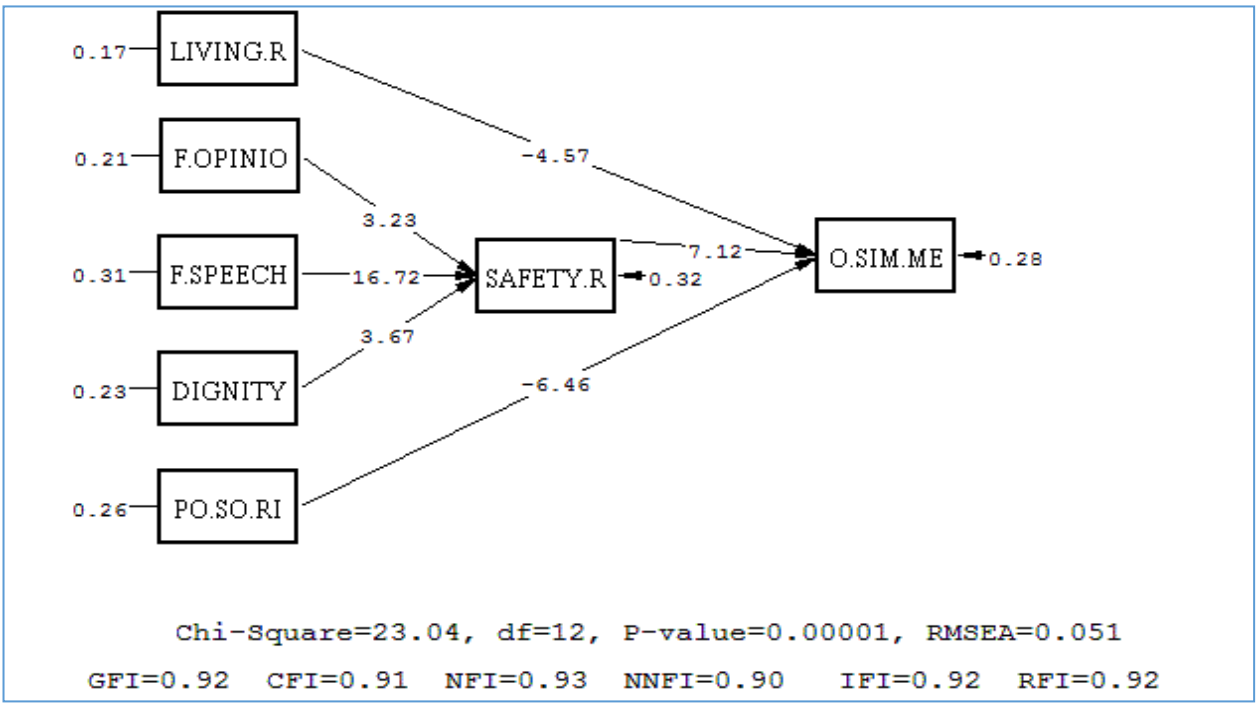
Results

In this study, the number of male subjects (79.5%) was three times higher than female participants (20.5%). In addition, the majority of the subjects were married (89.7%), and only 10.3% of the responders were single. Furthermore, more than half of the participants were in the age range of 41-50 years. Evaluation of demographic characteristics revealed that most of the participants were managers of basic education departments with more than 10 years of work experience. Furthremore, more than half of the education managers had the experience of participating in the citizenship rights courses held by ZUMS during 2016-2017.

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of participants (N=351)

Variable	Sub-group	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	93	79.5
	Female	24	20.5
Marital status	Married	105	89.7
	Single	12	10.3
Age	31 to 40	57	48.7
	41 to 50	53	45.3
	Over 50 years	7	6
Educational department	Clinical sciences	41	11.6
	Basic sciences	76	83.2
Work Experiences	6-10 years	20	17.1
	More than 10 years	97	82.9
Specialized course of citizenship right	Yes	82	70.1
	No	32	29.9

The final model of the research is illustrated in Figure 1, which is developed with regard to the conceptual model of research and supported by theoretical foundations. This model is in t-values mode, which can help confirm or reject research hypotheses. As observed, the t-value of all paths was at the threshold of critical value (1.96<T<-1.96).



Model 1: Structural Equation Model of Research with T-values

The standard state of the assumed model is shown in Figure 2, in which mode it is possible to compare and rank the variables. In this regard, the greater path coefficient means the greater effect, the positive values mean the positive effect and the factor increasing the values of the dependent variable, and the negative value means a negative effect and reduction of the values of the dependent variable.

The first criterion for assessing the fit of models (1) and (2) is the Chi-square value for the degree of freedom (df/χ^2), which is used for one-dimensional structures and its value must always be below three. In the current research, the value of this index for the model was 1.921, which is below three. In addition, the value of RMSEA=0.051 (the root mean square of the approximation) was obtained, which was less than the maximum allowed

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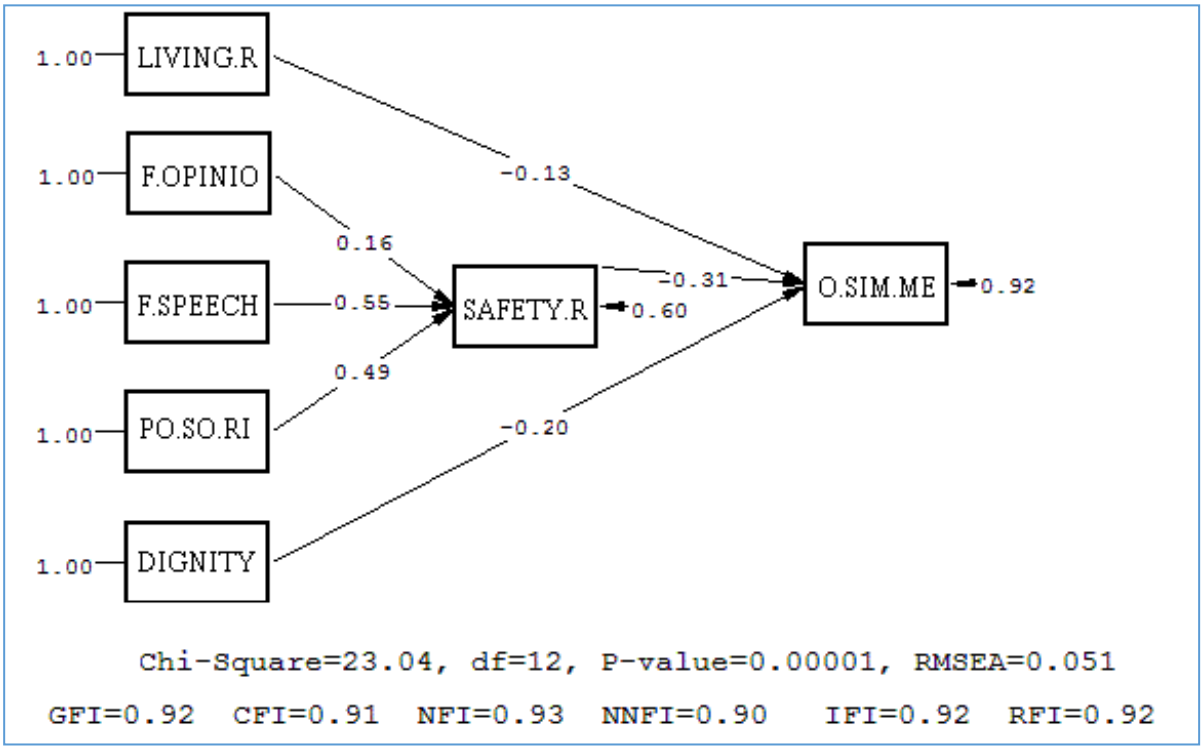
limit of 0.08. According to the information of models (1) and (2), goodness of fit (GFI)=0.92, confirmatory fit index (CFI)=0.91, normed fit index (NFI)=0.993, non-normed fit index (NNFI)=0.90, incremental fit index (IFI)=0.92, and relative fit index (RFI)=0.92 were all at the threshold of allowed values of fitness. Therefore, hypotheses of the research can be tested confidently.



Model 2: Structural Equation Model of Research with standard

Discussion

In the present research, we evaluated the relationship between Islamic citizenship rights and organizational similar-to-me of education department managers of ZUMS and tested their direct and indirect effects on each other and with the criterion variable. Considering the confirmation of all existing hypotheses, the conceptual model of the present study was recognized as a suitable model for predicting the effect of Islamic citizenship rights and its underlying indicators on reducing the organizational similar-to-me of department managers. In addition, our findings indicated the presence of a negative and significant relationship between the managers regarding the variables of the right to live, freedom of thought, freedom of

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expression, political-social right, the principle of dignity, and organizational similar-to-me.

According to the results of the study, the principle of human dignity had the most impact on the reduction of organizational similar-to-me in the direct path. In recent years, the issue of client appreciation has been considerably followed up and adhered to in government organizations, which shows its significant importance for those involved in the affairs. Therefore, it is clear that the principle of dignity is a general but familiar concept in today's organizations of Iran and is among the most effective variables that not only focuses on individuals outside the organization but also pays attention to individuals inside the organization. At higher managerial levels, this concept is associated with a type of tolerance and reduced similar-to-me effect. In this respect, the more education department managers believe the principle of dignity, the more they are willing to interact with and use other forces with various intellectual backgrounds and orientations.

Because of its holistic view of human beings, the principle of human dignity significantly decreases arbitrary recruitment of employees and inefficient managerial styles regardless of the mental context, religion, gender, and language (20). Despite its public acceptance, this principle is extremely fragile. Therefore, evaluation and use of some of its parts in organizations will result in the reduction of organizational similar-to-me, and this attention to the education department managers increases the value of its effectiveness. In this regard, our findings are consistent with the implicit results obtained by Zahra Fooratani and Atiyah Bahrani, who performed a research to analyze the relationship between human dignity and organizational culture, which was confirmed. In other words, the more the status of human dignity is stabilized in the university and the more the staff and managers behave on the basis of indicators of human dignity, the more the dimensions of organizational culture will be improved (21).

The principle of the right to live was the second influential variable, in a way that belief in this principle reduces the organizational similar-to-me and increases interaction with other staff, faculty members and students (22). In addition, the right to live reminds the officials and managers of educational departments that regardless of the organizational status, people are all equal in terms of existence, presence in the organization, and educational structure.

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Numerous similar examples in the Islamic teachings have explicitly emphasized this issue (23). In the indirect path of freedom of expression, which is hidden in Islamic teachings and those extracted from Islamic texts, organizational similar-to-me decreases by the variable of the right to security. It seems that freedom of expression cannot reduce organizational similar-to-me without organizational safety (at least among education department managers). In this respect, our findings are in line with the results obtained by Reza Zare Akbar et al., who conducted a study entitled conceptualization and identification of the dimensions of the indicators of the organizational democracy in the public organization. As reported by these researchers, freedom of expression is among the factors affecting organizational openness.

The social-political right was the second most influential variable, exerting its impacts on the organizational similar-to-me in the form of the right to security. Similar to the freedom of expression, this variable has a higher dependency on security due to sustained organizational sensitivity in itself. The last influential variable is freedom of thought. Similar to the two previous variables, this variable also affects the right to security. The observance of the socio-political rights of individuals and employees depends on the existence of a reasonable level of security in the organization, which is similar to the freedom of expression. Managers with no similar-to-me behavior benefit from more diverse political tendencies in the organization. This is especially important when political relationships are more emphasized at high management levels, where freedom of expression and thought would be unjustified as well. On the other hand, appropriate methods to promote the use of citizenship rights mentioned will significantly reduce organizational similar-to-me and promote tolerance. In this regard, our findings are in congruence with the results obtained by Mohammad Khanbashi and Gholamreza Bostan Mansheh. Researchers of the present study believe that human resources build political, social, and economic institutions. As such, socio-political rights of people are an important factor in the institutionalization of organizational democracy and decreased organizational similar-to-me (24).

Conclusion

According to the results of the current research, awareness of Islamic citizenship rights can reduce organizational similar-to-me

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effects on individuals. This reduction can be realized with the direct intervention of the security variable, in a way that most Islamic citizenship rights lose their effectiveness on the organization without security. The most important limitation of this research was the quantification of the concept of Islamic citizenship rights and the development of a valid questionnaire in this regard. It is recommended that further studies be conducted on the organizational similar-to-me effect on official activities of faculty members and students.

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