

Moral intelligence in the university: non-academic staff

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ABSTRACT

Moral intelligence means the capacity and ability to understand right from wrong, having strong moral beliefs and acting on them and behaving in the right direction. The purpose of the present study is to determine the level of moral intelligence of non-academic staff of Shahid Beheshti University. The mentioned research is a research with a descriptive-analytical quantitative approach. The research community included non-academic staff of Shahid Beheshti University's education units, 87 of whom were randomly sampled and included in the study. The data in question were collected through the Lennick and kiel questionnaire and analyzed using Spss version 16 software. Based on the findings of the research, the level of moral intelligence of the non-academic staff in the education units of Shahid Beheshti University is higher than the average and at a high level from their point of view. Also, the honesty component has the highest average rating, on the other hand, the ability to forgive others' mistakes has the lowest average rating. The desired level of moral intelligence of the staff of education units in the university can lead to the effective role of the university in the moral development of students and, consequently, human resources at the community level.

Keywords: moral intelligence, university, staff, non-academic.

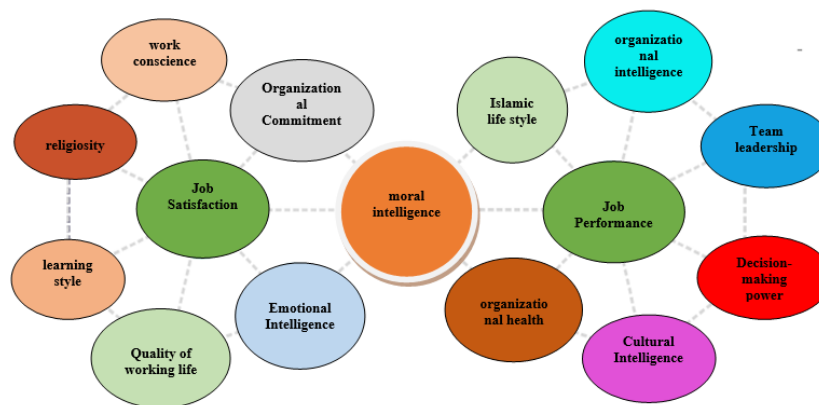
Introduction

The term moral intelligence was first introduced into the field of psychology in 2005 by Borba. Borba considers moral intelligence to be the capacity and ability to understand right from wrong, to put one's behavior in the right direction and to avoid wrong behavior (Mukhtarpour and Siadat, 2013). Moral intelligence has different dimensions. Lennick and Kiel (2005) believe that moral intelligence has four main dimensions and 10 sub-dimensions or competencies. The main dimensions are: 1. Honesty, responsibility, compassion and forgiveness. The importance of paying attention to such intelligence in the context of universities is significant. Since the university has a systemic function (Yamani Dozi Sorkhabi, 2013), compliance with ethics in providing services to the beneficiaries by some components (non-academic staff) in the university system can be done according to the hologramatic principle (the effect of the whole on the part and the effect of the part on the whole) affect academic quality (Yamani Dozi Sorkhabi, 2013). A quality that will shape society in a different way. Normative citizens, committed and compassionate human resources will be the output of the university quality system.

In fact, in most universities of the country; The importance of dealing with moral intelligence is worth considering. According to figure number (1), it has been shown by examining the research background section and the relationship of moral intelligence with multiple components. This requires attention and awareness of the level of moral intelligence of university non-academic staff. To know they in different academic departments; How much moral intelligence do vice-chancellors, faculties and research institutes, research centers, libraries, etc. have? Among the key vice-chancellors of the university, the vice-chancellor of education will play a critical role in dealing with faculty members and students. In addition to technical skills, they must have appropriate mental and emotional characteristics and possess desirable moral values. so that they can be with new and old students and faculty members at various times during the academic year. Therefore, it can be important to know the extent to which the employees of the vice-chancellor of education have moral capabilities.

Figure 1

The effect of the level of moral intelligence of staff in the university on various organizational components (taken from the background of the research)



For this reason, in the present research, an attempt has been made to investigate the level of moral intelligence of the non-academic staff of education in Shahid Beheshti University.

Methodology

The current research is a research with a quantitative approach and a descriptive survey type strategy. The research community was made up of the non-academic staff of different educational units of Shahid Beheshti University, including assistants, heads of departments, responsible experts and experts. The total number of education unit staff of the university are 133. SamplePower software version 3.0.1 was used to determine the sample size required for this test. The number of samples required for 99% accuracy and 95% generalizability in the target population is 75 samples.

Findings

In order to provide a proper perspective on the characteristics of the research sample, in this part, the frequency distribution of the sample according to demographic variables is as follows: More than half of the staff (55 percent) were educated in colleges and research institutes. Also, more than 70% of the staff were women. The frequency distribution of the sample according to age showed that half of the staff were between 41-50 years old, and the frequency distribution of the sample according to work experience showed the highest frequency in staff with 16-20 years and then over twenty years. The studied demographic variable was education, more than half of the sample (57%) had a master's degree and 34% of the sample had a bachelor's degree. However, the organizational position variable was examined as the last variable in the mentioned sample, based on which 65% of the sample was made up of education experts.

The average moral intelligence of non-academic staff in the education units of Shahid Beheshti University is equal to 4.0310 and above the average of 3. In this way, the pattern discovered in the sample indicates that the average moral intelligence of this category of staff is different from the average of 3, and this pattern is also observed in the indicators of this variable. Now it is necessary to go to the values of *t* and Sig (two-domain) to measure the generalizability of this pattern observed in the sample to the target population. For *t* values between 10.121 and 26.391 and the significance level is also reported as 0.00. According to these *t* values and the error level less than 0.05, it can be said that the pattern observed in the sample, which was the difference between the level of moral intelligence and the average, with 99% accuracy to all non-academic staff in education units of Shahid Beheshti University can be generalized. To judge the direction of this difference, one should pay attention to the positive sign of the average, indicating that the moral intelligence of this group of staff is higher than the average.

Conclusion

The findings of the research show that the non-academic staff, especially in the education department of the university, were evaluated in a very good condition in terms of moral intelligence. A situation that can create many benefits for the university and be effective in improving the quality of services provided by the university. There are many evidences that show having good moral intelligence and its undeniable impact on organizational functions (Hashmi, 2022). Including; Organizational commitment (Zarkasi et al., 2023; Shahbazi and Rahgozar, 2016 and Boalhasani, 2001), trust building and organizational trust (Hosseini, 2013; Fazal Elahi Qomshi and Karimian, 2016; Shahbazi and Rahgozar, 2016), organizational health (Nouraldini, 2021 and Azdi, 2022), team leadership (Siyast et al., 2009 and Clarcken, 2009), decision-making power (Liang et al., 2020), citizenship behavior (Ardestani and Rizgi Shireswar, 2017), quality of work life (Qurbani, 2015) is job satisfaction (Islamian and Zare, 2018). Also, moral intelligence often depends on the teaching style of faculty members (Islamian and Zare, 2018; Mohammadi, Yuzbashi and Iskandar, 2015; Marjaei, 2015) and the achievements of academics, including students and faculty members (Hashmi, 2015 and Liang et al. 2020) is effective. Most of the researches reported a favorable and very good situation in terms of the level of moral intelligence of non-academic staff, faculty members and managers, which is in line with the results of the present research.

Research suggestions

The components of moral intelligence can be investigated with a qualitative approach in the academic community. To be able to observe or interview the lived and understood experiences of non-academic staff in different departments of the university, such as vice-chancellor for education, vice-chancellor for research, cultural-social vice-chancellor, information and communication technology, vice-chancellor for support, finance and resource management, vice-chancellor for students. In fact, how will their moral intelligence work in dealing with their clients?

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