

The Mediating Role of Work Values in the Relationship between Islamic Religiosity and Job Performance: Empirical Evidence from Egyptian Public Health Sector

Maha Ahmed Zaki Dajani^{1*} & Mohamad Saad Mohamad²

¹ Department of Business Administration, the British University in Egypt (BUE), Cairo, Egypt

² Department of Psychology, the British University in Egypt (BUE), Cairo, Egypt

* Maha Ahmed Zaki Dajani, E-mail: maha.dajani@bue.edu.eg

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Abstract

This study attempts to empirically examine the job performance of Egyptian employees working in public health sector from the perspective of Islamic religiosity, when work values play a mediating role; based on cognitive dissonance theory. These relationships were tested within a sample of (400) participants working in ten public hospitals located inside greater Cairo area, only (335) responded, with a response rate of 83.75%. Results revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between Islamic religiosity and the four dimensions of work values (instrumental, cognitive, social/altruistic, and prestige), and there is partial mediation between work values and job performance (task and contextual). Findings provided support that instrumental and prestige work values are significantly related to task performance, whilst cognitive and social work values are related to contextual performance. The three-part questionnaire was used to assess the study variables. Moreover, a confirmatory factor analysis, using AMOS20 was conducted to confirm the factor structure of the used scales in the target population. The implication of this finding is that religiosity and values-based management need to be accompanied by socio-economic public reforms to allow the identification of public-sector employees to their national work values and their commitment to the performance goals of their organizations.

Keywords

Islamic religiosity, work values, job performance, public sector, Egypt

1. Introduction

Religion in the Arab middle eastern countries, including Egypt is an integral part of its national identity fabric and plays a pivotal role in all its ancient and contemporary historical epochs. While other religions exist in Egypt, Islam is predominantly the prevailing official religion in this state. According to Wikipedia East and Africa (2011), about 87% of Egyptian population is Sunni Muslim, 10% is Christian, and 3% belongs to other faiths. Islamic law or *Shariah* is endorsed by Egypt's legal system and constitution. According to (Spilka, Hood, Hunsberger, & Gorsuch, 2003) religion plays an indispensable role in all forms of its human interactions. As a comprehensive religion, Islam not only governs all activities in Egyptian civil life, but it also provides an ethical framework and value system that influences Egypt's societal business and administration practices, and accordingly has a significant

impact on its employee's work values, as well as their job performance, expectations, and behavior (Leat & El-Kot, 2007).

Similarly, a number of researchers have referred to and examined the impact of Islam on social sciences and cross-cultural management (Parboteeah, Paik, & Cullen, 2009; Parnell & Hatem, 1999; Rokhman, 2010; Darwish A Yousef, 2001). Results showed that Islamic religiosity promotes business success and enhances hard work (Ali & Al-Owaihan, 2008; Sedikides, 2010).

On the other hand, Hibbard (2006) argued that although Egyptians are innately religious, there exists a seemingly missing link between their religious beliefs that promotes hard work as a facet of God's worship, and their lagging work attitudes and work outcomes. Also Sidani and Jamali (2010) confirmed, that for the past decades, Egypt has been plagued by lack of productivity and has been overwhelmed with administrative and managerial problems that hindered its national reform attempts seeking sustainable development and progress. Previous findings showed that challenging changes in Egyptian work attitudes and commitment have been noticeably modest and more conservative towards progress and improvement (Leat & El-Kot, 2007).

This study unfolds that religiosity has noticeable impact on work values in the workplace, and that these impacts are still extant, worthy of continued research, and are possible to measure. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study that attempts to examine this trio relationship between Islamic religiosity, work values (cognitive, instrumental, social and prestige), and employee job performance (task and contextual). In more depth, this study aspires to provide more insight into the Egyptian Public-sector employees' job performance under the perspective of Islamic religiosity in the workplace, when work values play a mediating role; based on cognitive dissonance theory.

This study enfolds as follows: first the related literature is reviewed. Next, the methodology (empirical procedures and used measures) is discussed. Then, the results and findings of the empirical tests are presented. Finally, the limitations of this research and suggestions for future research are recommended.

1.1 Literature Review

1.1.1 Islamic Religiosity Conceptualized

Primarily, and before exploring the meaning of Islamic religiosity, it is imperative to differentiate between these two concepts: "religion" (the faith) and "religiosity" (the practice of this faith). Defining religion may vary among diverse groups and multiple communities. Also, it can be influenced by complicated and intertwined variables, such as, mixed socio-economic and cultural contexts, complex mindsets of people themselves, and the subjectivity of unlike believers in the comprehension and understanding of the meaning of their religion (Barhem, Younies, & Muhamad, 2009; Zahrah, Hamidb, Ranic, Akmal, & Kamild, 2015). Even within similar religious denominations and traditions, many variations can exist (Barhem et al., 2009; Hage, 2013). This simple fact scarcely needs documentation (Glock, 1962). Koenig, McCullough and Larson (2001) defined "religion" as an organized system of beliefs, practices, rituals, and symbols that are formulated to enable the closeness to the sacred or transcendent and to strengthen an understanding of one's relation and responsibility to others within a given society or community. On the other hand, "religiosity" is defined as the strength of the individual religious convictions and the way these beliefs and values are exercised in real life situations (King & Williamson, 2005). In other words, religiosity is not merely religious affiliation or faith membership. It is the sincere commitment and deep engagement with one's faith and its value system. It is the degree to which one exercises and lives faith full-hearted (Osman-Gani, Hashim, & Ismail, 2013; Zahrah et al.,

2015). Therefore, religion and religiosity may be heavily interwoven, but they are not identical in meaning and each possesses different context.

This study focuses on Islamic religiosity. Recent scholars defined Islamic religiosity as a complex and multidimensional concept (Wahab, Quazi, & Blackman, 2016; Yeganeh, 2015). This is attributed to its interdisciplinary approaches that crosses many academic fields. For example, religious educators and Islamic preachers addressed religiosity from the lens of piety (*Taqwa*), faith/doctrinal belief and the study of scripture. Psychologists focused on the dimensions of piousness, holiness and devotion. Whereas socio-economists emphasized the importance of social interactions and level of bond-creation among faith adherents. For example, they focused on the frequency of mosques' attendance to perform private/public prayers and other ceremonial services, the amounts, and the steady flow of financial contributions (*Zakat and Sadaka*) used to solidify Muslims' solidarity (*Takafel*) and the communal social responsibility inclinations (*Mas'uliyah*) required to foster justice, altruism, and human services to others. Management and business-oriented people linked Islamic religiosity to diligent work performance, not only to achieve material gain, but more importantly to seek the blessing (*Rida*) and mercy (*Rah'maah*) of Allah (Basharat, 2009; Zahrah, Hamid, Rani, & Kamil, 2016). Likewise, Sharabi (2012) affirmed the magnitude of work value as a sacred milestone in the framework of Islamic religiosity.

A comprehension of Egyptian culture, as part and parcel of the Arab middle eastern culture, necessitates an understanding of the dual dimensions of Islam: its internal belief and its external manifestations. Islamic influence permeates—consciously or unconsciously—all walks of life in these societies (Klein & Kuperman, 2008; Sidani, 2006b). Previous empirical research in social psychology has also affirmed the importance of Islam in shaping the individual thinking and cognition of Arab societies. In both studies of (Farah, 1978) and (Farah & Al-Salem, 1980), Islam to students in Arab university and the junior high school ranked higher in importance than family, citizenship, national origin, and political ideology, regardless of the respondents' gender or affiliation. These findings suggested that ignoring Islam as a crucial factor in formulating and shaping work values will result in a clash that may have detrimental effects on performance. A similar vein, Sidani (2006a) confirmed this strong association between work values and work outcomes. He found that employees functioning in an environment that opposes or conflicts with their value systems, will then exhibit negative overall job satisfaction attitudes and display low productivity levels at the workplace.

Numerous Quranic verses (Qur'an is the holy book of Muslims) and Prophet Mohammed's traditions (Hadith)—the two principal channels that provide Muslims with the roadmap—purported work as the highest form of worshipping Allah (Allah is the name given to the Universal God in Islam) (Zahrah et al., 2016). In the same vein, Prophet Mohammed has preached that hard work absolves sins if the person works to the best of his ability, despite all hardships. "God loves a person who learns precisely how to perform his work and does it right" (Osman-Gani et al., 2013; Sharabi, 2012). In addition, Abdullah et al. (2004) commented that Islamic religiosity is measurable, but Yeganeh (2015) claimed that one's true level of religiosity is known only to Allah (Universal God).

It is contended that active followers of certain religious dogmas will exhibit preferred sets of behaviors and work values, that will eventually identify them socially and professionally at workplaces (Ntalianis & Darr, 2005; Valasek, 2009).

A considerable amount of research has been conducted on work values; nevertheless the linkage between Islamic religiosity and work values remains relatively unexplored in contemporary academic literature. According to Sedikides and Gebauer (2010), although over 80 percent of employees

worldwide has reported the importance of religion in their daily routine, much of the research in business and management has considered religion as marginal field of study. They perceived workplace as a religion-free or neutral sphere, in which employees are expected to check their religious convictions at the entrance gate, or at least keep it outside their workplace activities and their public professional persona. As a result, the need to empirically study the impact of Islamic religiosity on work values and its work outcomes may help fill the existing academic gap in the mainstream of management research; especially among Egyptians who are categorized as pious and inclined to be religious-by-nature people.

This study adopts the Islamic religiosity scale used by (Bakar, 2013). This Muslims' Attitudes Towards Religiosity Scale (MARS) was first developed by Wilde and Joseph (1997), then was later modified by Rusnah (2005) and expanded further by Shah and Anuar (2010).

1.1.2 Work Values Conceptualized

Schwartz (1992) defined values as desirable states or normative standards that are applied in specific situations to help in choosing among alternative modes of behavior. By the same logic, work values can be defined as the desirable goals, preferences, priorities, choices and decisions with regard to work (Bu & McKeen, 2001; Yeganeh, 2015). From the employee's perspective, work values may reflect the person's subjective value judgment of work (Jalalkamali, Ali, Hyun, & Nikbin, 2016). Organizational researchers have focused on work values as an important factor influencing motivation and positive behaviors in the workplace (Ueda & Ohzono, 2012b). In short, work values may aid in deciding and prioritizing individual's job selection, work processes and work outcomes (Chen & Choi, 2008; Meglino, Ravlin, & Adkins, 1989).

Previous conceptual and empirical studies attempted to categorize work values using different approaches. One common identification was the intrinsic and extrinsic work value dichotomy (Centers & Bugental, 1966; Hegney, Plank, & Parker, 2006; Hirschi, 2010; Mottaz, 1985; Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman, & Lance, 2010). The intrinsic work values refer to the contents of the work itself, i.e., to the cognitive self-actualization needs and the self-development goals linked to the employee's job (Malka & Chatman, 2003). Extrinsic instrumental work values can be identified as the work outcomes and the pursuit of corporate success by achieving prestige, status, and material gain (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999). Elizur (1984) highlighted three similar types of work values: the cognitive, the instrumental and the affective social work values; the latter are focused on human relations at the workplace.

This study applied (Lyons, Higgins, & Duxbury, 2010) comprehensive work values model. Lyons et al. (2010) model, as previously documented in the study of (Ros, Schwartz, & Surkiss, 1999), has identified four-factor in one-dimensional structure. They are as follows: cognitive (intrinsic), instrumental (extrinsic), social/altruistic, and prestige work values. The cognitive intrinsic work values include: creativity, use abilities, intellectual stimulating, interesting work, variety, continuously learn, challenge, advancement, and freedom. The instrumental extrinsic work values comprise: fairness, supportive supervisor, information, training, feedback, hours of work, competent supervision, balance, recognition, benefits, salary, job security, and independence. The social/altruistic work value encompass: moral values, contribution to society, help people, co-workers, fun, and social interactions. Finally, the prestige work value scover: impact, influence, prestigious and authority.

1.1.3 Job Performance Conceptualized

The concept of job performance has gained considerable scholarly research attention, over the past three decades, especially in the fields of industrial/organizational psychology, human resources management and business studies. Job performance encompasses under control sets of actions and

evaluative behaviors that can be recognized as either positive or negative for individuals or organizational effectiveness (Motowidlo, Borman, & Schmit, 1997). Previous Researchers have distinguished between the behavioral/aspect and the outcome aspect of performance (Campbell, McCloy, Oppler, & Sager, 1993; Roe, 1999; Sonnentag, Volmer, & Spychala, 2008). The behavioral aspect of performance refers to what people do at work to contribute to the goals of the organization. Whilst, the outcome aspect in turn refers to the result of the individual's behavior, and both are empirically related (Sonnentag et al., 2008). According to Jalalkamali et al. (2016), job performance is broadly defined as the combination of efforts, skills, values, results and achievements gained from work. In a more narrow sense, performance was classified into two broad types of employee behaviors, namely, task and contextual performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997; Goodman & Svyantek, 1999; Jalalkamali et al., 2016; Motowidlo et al., 1997; Sonnentag et al., 2008). Task Performance (TP) refers to the employees' in role-behavior and part of the formal job-description (Williams & Karau, 1991). In other words, task performance is the partial fulfillment of employer-employee work contract requirements (Sonnentag et al., 2008). Contextual Performance (CP), which is referred to as organizational citizenship behavior, is the discretionary extra-role behavior, often unrewarded by formal reward system, and supports the organizational social and psychological environment (Motowidlo et al., 1997; Sonnentag et al., 2008).

Borman and Motowidlo (1997) confirmed that job performance should be measured in terms of both its task and contextual domains to fully grasp the holistic concept of the construct. In the same vein, Fisher and Härtel (2004) asserted that in measuring job performance, it is imperative to integrate both items on task, as well as, contextual performance, for they are strongly related and it is difficult to empirically dismantle them apart. This study adopts (Goodman & Svyantek, 1999) task and contextual performance scale.

1.1.4 The Relationship between Islamic Religiosity and Work Values

As reported three-quarters of the world's population belong to a one or another religion (Zuckerman, 2009). Islam is one of the main monotheistic religions in the world. Like Weberian Protestantism, Islam provides the ideological foundation for a variety of personal attributes and promotes work related outputs (Ali, 1992). Thus, it is acceptable to perceive how religion influences people's outlook on work and can be considered as an acceptable influential source of work values (Niles, 1999).

Work values is embedded in the core of Islamic ethics and is perceived as an indispensable factor to accomplish well-being and balanced life (Ali & Al-Owaihnan, 2008; Tiliouine & Belgoumidi, 2009). Additionally, from an Islamic perspective, work values serve as means to further self-interest economically, socially and psychologically, to sustain social prestige, to advance societal welfare, and reaffirm faith (Ahmad, 1960). These reasons for appreciating work and engaging in business activities correspond to contemporary western researchers categorization of work values and the description of work centrality, in particular to Lyons et al. (2010) model that is applied in this study.

Islamic religiosity, as most other religious denominations such as Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism promote virtuous work values and positive attitudes (Ali & Al-Owaihnan, 2008; Harpaz, 1998; Parboteeah et al., 2009). However, values and attitudes are not similar or identical concepts. According to (Roe & Ester, 1999) values are always favorably positive; whereas attitudes can be either favorably positive or unfavorably negative. That explains why some people are reluctant to practice what they preach, or they may know or believe in religious virtues, but not live accordingly (Holdcroft, 2006).

Unless Islamic religiosity is applied and embedded in employees' work values, job performance will fail to meet the required standards.

We propose in this study that Islamic religiosity views positively the four components of work values, as applied in Lyons et al. (2010) model: instrumental/extrinsic, cognitive/intrinsic, social/altruistic, prestige.

Islamic religiosity encourages the involvement of its believers in dedicated and sustainable economic activity through work that secures for them well-being, social conformity, and virtuous living (Al-Goaib, 2003; Krishnakumar & Neck, 2002; Danvish, 2000).

The effects of Islamic religiosity on instrumental/extrinsic work values agrees with the universal principles of the “theory of basic individual values”, by which work values are specific manifestations of general human values (i.e., fairness, job security, salary, independence, hours of work, work-family balance, ... etc.) in a working setting (Ros et al., 1999; Schwartz, 1992; Yeganeh, 2015). These instrumental/extrinsic work values will then function as means towards achieving a rewarding life that will ultimately earn a spiritual end that will be ultimately graced by Allah (Sharabi, 2012; Zahrah et al., 2016).

As reported by Holdcroft (2006), the person who is extrinsically motivated to work will use his religion, whereas the person who is intrinsically motivated to work will live his religion.

Yeganeh (2015), contended that Islamic religiosity tends to discourage the pursuit of knowledge, self-actualization, autonomy, desirability, individualism, and other intrinsic components of work values. As proven otherwise in extant literature, Islamic faith, and religiosity, urged its adherents to be open to learning and to seek knowledge throughout their mortal life on earth; also, to continue to cherish innovation and the spirit of discovery in pursuit of self-realization, growth and success. The term used for knowledge in Arabic is (ilm), which, as Rosenthal (1970) has justifiably pointed out, holds broader and deeper connotation than its synonyms in English and other Western languages. Knowledge in the Western world means tangible or intangible information about something, while (‘ilm) is an all-embracing term that covers theory, practice and education (Akhtar, 1997). In Islamic religiosity, when a knowledgeable person dies, his reward with Allah does not cease, rather it continues to increase so long as people benefit from his knowledge. As narrated by Muslim (1631), the Prophet said: “When a man dies, all his deeds come to an end except for three—an ongoing charity, beneficial knowledge or a righteous son who will pray for him” (Juynboll, 1985). In the same vein, Ali and Schaupp (1992) indicated that work in Islam is considered a virtuous pursue to man’s needs, and that it stands not for life-denial but for life fulfillment.

Moreover, as proposed earlier Islamic religiosity fosters social/altruistic and prestige work values. According to (Bakar, 2013) Islamic religiosity enhanced the social/altruistic concept of the *ummah* (homogeneous people connecting with one another), to embody the universalism of Islam and provide a framework of religious unity, so as to accommodate the cultural diversity of believers at the workplace (Hassan, 2006). In the same token, it has been illustrated in the preaching of Prophet Mohammed (Hadith) that, he elevated people and their work to the highest rank if their deeds benefited people: “The best work is the one that results in benefit” and “The best of people are those who are capable and willing to benefit others” (Ali & Al-Kazemi, 2007).

Lastly, Islamic religiosity endorsed the prestige factor of work value, as a source of social gratification and a reflection of personal influence. In other words, work in Islam is viewed not as an end in itself, but as a means to foster individual advancement and collective benefit (Ali & Al-Owaihnan, 2008; Tayyab & Tariq, 2001).

Thus, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between Islamic religiosity and extrinsic/instrumental work values.

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between Islamic religiosity and intrinsic/cognitive work values.

Hypothesis 3: There is a positive relationship between Islamic religiosity and social/altruistic work values.

Hypothesis 4: There is a positive relationship between Islamic religiosity and prestige work values.

1.1.5 The Relationship between Work Values and Job Performance (Task and Contextual) in the Egyptian Public Health Sector

The concept “performance” conjures the notion of accomplishment, attainment, or the execution of worker’s task within the organizational context (Muchinsky, 2000). We hereby investigate the relationship between work values and employees’ task and contextual performance within the Egyptian public health sector.

There are various reasons to choose the Egyptian public health sector for this study. First, Egypt is a low-income developing country and its triple health care system, comprising: governmental, parastatal, and private healthcare and medical services have failed to meet the required local and international health standards for the past four decades till the present (Gadallah, Zaki, Rady, Anwer, & Sallam, 2003). Second, this sector encounters vital and multiple challenges in improving and ensuring the health and wellbeing of the Egyptian people. Third, it faces the burden of combating illnesses and diseases associated with noticeable population explosion, poverty, and lack of education. It is also required to meet rising demand for services driven by its growing population, and execute entrusted public service roles to the satisfaction of its stakeholders and its customers (Gericke, 2005). Lastly, there is a dearth of research conducted on this rather impoverished and under-researched public sector in Egypt. This research gap has triggered the authors’ interest to conduct their empirical study among its workforce, seeking to find clues or motives that may attribute to public sector employees’ low task and contextual job performance levels in this sector.

Since the mid-1980s, increasing attention has been paid to the role of work values in both business and public administration disciplines. Extant literature has proven that work values are a source of multi-dimensional motivation, and that its intrinsic/extrinsic, social and prestige components can ultimately influence workers’ behaviors, perceptions, and attitudes toward their performance (Froese & Xiao, 2012; Ueda & Ohzono, 2012b). Following the same trend of thought, other researchers supported this linkage among these three constructs: values, attitudes, and outcomes at work-setting. For example, Butler and Vodanovich (1992) examined the relationship between work values and normative and instrumental commitment; Cheung and Scherling (1999) studied job satisfaction work values and sex differences in Taiwan’s organizations; Kalleberg (1977) worked on work values and work rewards (a theory of job satisfaction); Kidron (1978) researched work values and organizational commitment; Gursoy, Maier and Chi (2008) studied work values and generational gaps in the hospitality workforce; Siu (2003) investigated the direct and moderating effects of Chinese work values and organizational commitment on the stress—job performance relationship; Liao, Lu, Huang and Chiang (2012) explored the relations among work values, work attitudes of green employees in Taiwan (including job involvement and organizational commitment) and job performance. Thus, pervious researchers correlating workplace values with performance can be shown to triangulate three areas: faith, motivation, and adaptability.

This integrative relationship was further supported by the motivation theories of Herzberg and Maslow which elaborated the important roles of hygiene factors (instrumental/extrinsic value) and motivators factors (terminal/intrinsic values) in improving individual satisfaction, affective commitment and job involvement and performance, which in turn will enhance organizational effectiveness (Ali & Panatik, 2013; Diefendorff, Brown, Kamin, & Lord, 2002).

In the same vein, public administration theorists, public servants, and practitioners advocated the necessity to integrate work value into its public service apparatus, structures and processes in public sector organizations; so as to improve its work outcomes and allow its employees to act as stewards of the public interest (Kernaghan, 2000, 2003; Van Wart, 1998).

Barzelay (2002), Goodsell, Osborne, and Gaebler (1993), Hood (1995) affirmed, in their paradigm shift towards the New Public Management (NPM), that there is no implicit difference between public and private employees, that “management is management”, regardless of the sector (Lyons, Duxbury, & Higgins, 2006). Moreover, the study of (Karl & Sutton, 1998) showed mixed support that job values of public and private sector workers differ.

On the other hand, Perry has argued differently (Perry, 1996, 1997, 2000; Perry, Brudney, Coursey, & Littlepage, 2008). Similarly, Perry and Wise (1990) coined the theory of “Public Service Motivation (PSM)” to characterize the attraction that some individuals have to public service work; moreover it was suggested that governments need to reframe the motivation question and focus on the unique motivational basis of its public service work values, such as commitment to public interest and civic duty, compassion, and self-sacrifice (Perry, 1997; Perry et al., 2008). In the same vein, other researchers Crewson (1997), Houston (2000), Karl and Sutton (1998) confirmed that public sector workers have to place a higher value on social and prestige work values that evolve around serving the public interest and fulfill high-order needs and altruistic motives (Wright, 2001).

In line with this argument, public sector employees need not only excel in their government jobs (task job performance), but also possess individual public service motivation incentives to serve the public interest, which is a goal greater than oneself (contextual job performance).

Thus, we propose the following hypotheses: -

Hypothesis 5: There is a positive relationship between extrinsic/instrumental work values and task performance among employees working in Egyptian public health sector.

Hypothesis 6: There is a positive relationship between intrinsic/cognitive work values and contextual performance among employees working in Egyptian public health sector.

Hypothesis 7: There is a positive relationship between social/altruistic work values and contextual performance among employees working in Egyptian public health sector.

Hypothesis 8: There is a positive relationship between prestige work values and task performance among employees working in Egyptian public health sector.

1.1.6 The Mediating Role of Work Values in the Egyptian Public Health Sector Based on the Cognitive Dissonance Theory

As discussed earlier, Islamic religiosity conforms with work values as an act of Allah’s worship, and there is a high degree of commitment to Islamic religiosity and work values among Egyptian public employees, however levels of their job performance remain rather poor and lagging. The main reason is that Islamic religiosity is not properly converted to pragmatic work values to affect positively and dramatically job performance levels. Egyptian public-sector employees often disconnect their Islamic religiosity beliefs with their work attitudes and practices. They even sometimes regard these two

concepts as if they exist separately in isolated islands based on their moral justifications that are explained by the cognitive dissonance theory.

This paper explains this faith-work paradox in accordance to Festinger's (1957) cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1962). This theory states that people may hold many cognitions about the world and themselves; when said beliefs, ideas or values contradict one another, a discrepancy or cognitive dissonance occurs which is a state of mental discomfort (psychological stress). As the experience of dissonance is unpleasant and stressful, this theory suggests that people are motivated to reduce or eliminate disharmony (or dissonance), and achieve consonance (i.e., agreement) by adopting various methods and moral justifications.

Egyptian public-sector employees suffer from multiple socio-economic and managerial hardships that hinder their potential and detain their performance. The study of El-Kot and Burke (2014) attributed that controversy to a noticeable dearth of trained leaders and management talents, especially women in both private and public sector organizations, autocratic management styles, bureaucratic policies, rigid governmental structures and ineffective regulations. Similarly, other studies (Ali & Weir, 2005; Hashim, 2010) added further reasons, such as, failure in the Arab education system, lack of a well-established middle-class business segment, and the mismanagement of resources and financial uncertainty at the workplace.

Wage inequality dilemma and weak performance-outcome link in public management have deterred employees' Public Service Motivation and eventually hindered their contextual job performance which is not rewarded in their public organizations.

Based on cognitive dissonance theory, Egyptian public-sector employees justify their significant reduced job performance by multiple cognitive scenarios (Adams & Rosenbaum, 1962). One by "Positional Obedience" that is justifying their actions because instruction has arrived from a person of greater authority ("outside of my control, I have to do it") to adjust their work value in accordance to Islamic preach that recommends the obedience to leaders and higher authority. Two by "Normalization" which is the process of internal justification ("It is unpleasant but all part of the job" "others do it too") to adjust to Islamic rule, which advocates the compliance with the rule of the majority. Third by "Emotional Trading" that is calculating that a future reward for obedience is worth present compromise, which reflects the Islamic virtue of a big goal summons small sacrifices, in other words the means/methods used to attain a goal are justified by the nobility of the goal itself.

Testing the validity of these moral justifications is beyond the scope of this paper, however, they help shed the light on the mediating role of work values and task/contextual job performance in Egyptian public health sector domain.

Based on these cognitive dissonance moral justifications, some argue that Egyptian public servants reciprocate by placing more importance on material/instrumental aspects of task performance, such as: salary, job security & maintenance of order in their lives, in addition to authority and prestige work values over other cognitive "extras" that most employers look for in outstanding employees. There are popular Egyptian sayings, "you get what you pay for", also "we work as little as our pay" which portray the work philosophy in most public domains. Therefore, we hypothesize the following: -

Hypothesis 9: Instrumental/Prestige work values mediate the relationship between Islamic religiosity and task performance.

On the other hand, public servants adhering to Islamic religiosity and practicing its intrinsic work values (that work is another face of Allah's worship) and believing in their abilities and in altruistic societal contributions (conforming to the greater good) are fundamentally motivated to serve public

interest. In addition, they find their cognitive consonance (i.e., agreement) in serving the public in whatever occupation they may be placed in.

Therefore, we offer the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 10: Cognitive/Altruistic work values mediate the relationship between Islamic religiosity and contextual performance.

2. Method

2.1 Conceptual Framework of This Study

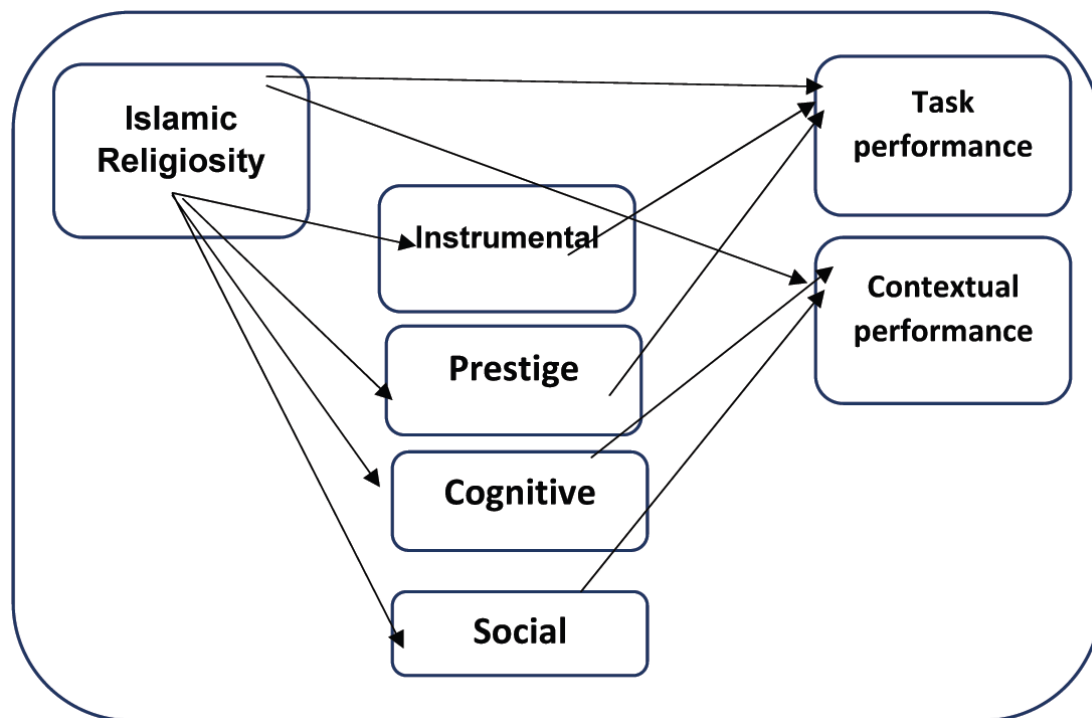


Figure 1. The Relationship between Islamic Religiosity, Work Values, and Job Performance

2.2 Population and Sampling Procedures

The target population in this study was health professionals working in public hospitals and public health facilities in Cairo-Egypt. A quota sampling procedure was used to recruit (400) participants in ten public hospitals working in greater Cairo area. Only (335) of them responded positively with a response rate of (83.75%). Their main characteristics are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Sample Characteristics

Characteristic	Description
Age	M = 39.64 years \pm SD = 7.92 years
Job Experience	M = 13.72 years \pm SD = 5.36 years
Gender	
- Male	

- Female	52%
	48%

Education

- Bachelor Degree	51%
- Master Degree	
- Ph.D.	36%
	13%

These characteristics indicate a reasonable mix of demographic groups represented in the collected data.

2.3 Measures

The three-part questionnaire was used to assess the study variables. *Islamic religiosity* was measured using 16 items scale developed by Bakar (2013) to assess how the individual conform with the instructions of Islamic religiosity. The scale items were measured on a five-point Likert scale. Answers ranged from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly agree*). The *work values* were measured using the 32-item scale adapted from (Lyons et al., 2010) to assess four types of work values, namely, instrumental values, cognitive values, social/altruistic values, and prestige values. The scale items were measured on a five-point Likert scale. Answers ranged from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly agree*). Finally, *job performance* was measured using 16-item scale developed by Goodman and Svyantek (1999) to assess two types of performance, namely, task performance and contextual performance. The scale items were measured on a four-point Likert scale. Answers ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree). Demographic variables including age, gender, educational level, and job experience were also assessed. Descriptive statistics, and reliability coefficient of these measures are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Coefficients of Study Variables

Variable	Mean	SD	Cronbach's Alpha
Islamic religiosity	55.96	5.36	.863
Work values	112.74	9.87	.875
-Instrumental	42.91	3.76	.729
- Cognitive	31.21	2.48	.756
- Social/Altruistic			
- Prestige	23.50	3.17	.818
	14.12	2.67	.822
Job Performance	29.19	5.88	.865

- Task Performance	21.52	2.21	.764
- Contextual Performance	18.22	2.58	.787

Furthermore, to test the validity of the used measures, the three-part questionnaire was revised by a panel of 10 experts who assessed the content of each part and evaluated the appropriateness of this content to the Egyptian culture. The comments of all experts indicated that the used questionnaires are valid and culturally appropriate. Moreover, a confirmatory factor analysis, using AMOS 20, was conducted to confirm the factor structure of the used scales in the target population. The fit indices for these factor structures are shown in Table 3. As can be shown in the previous table, all fit indices were above the recommended level of acceptance. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the factor structures of the used instruments are confirmed in the target population.

2.4 Procedure

Participants were approached in their clinics and health facilities at Egyptian public hospitals and were asked to complete the questionnaire. Before completing the questionnaire, all participants were assured that their participation was voluntary and anonymity was guaranteed. Latin square procedure was used to control the order of presenting the three-part questionnaire and to minimize the common method bias.

Table 3. Fit Indices for the Factor Structures of the Used Instruments

Variable	CMIN/DF	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA
Islamic religiosity	1.782	.975	.962	.981	.973	.044
Instrumental Work values	1.641	.982	.975	.982	.968	.056
Cognitive Work values	1.352	.984	.978	.983	.971	.041
Social/Altruistic Work values	1.651	.983	.977	.975	.973	.048
Prestige Work values	1.888	.962	.958	.961	.961	.055
Task Performance	2.453	.972	.964	.974	.978	.041
Contextual Performance	2.229	.951	.944	.956	.947	.058

2.5 Data Analysis and Results

To test the correlation hypotheses (1 to 8) if there are significant relationships among Islamic religiosity, work values and job performance, Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Correlation among Islamic Religiosity, Work Values and Job Performance

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Islamic religiosity	1						
Instrumental Work values	.388**	1					
Cognitive Work values	.457**	.678**	1				
Social/Altruistic Work values	.452**	.665**	.628**	1			
Prestige Work values	.584**	.598**	.722**	.654**	1		
Task Performance	.514**	.527**	.416**	.308**	.572**	1	
Contextual Performance	.532**	.418**	.651**	.647**	.324**	.647**	1

** Coefficient is significant at .01 level; *** Coefficient is significant at .001 level.

It can be shown from the previous results that there are significant positive correlations between Islamic religiosity, work values and job performance. Moreover, the correlation coefficients between task performance and both of instrumental and prestige values were greater compared with the other two types of work values, namely, cognitive and social work values. A different pattern can be detected with respect to the contextual performance where it has greater correlations with cognitive and social work values compared with its correlations with instrumental and prestige work values. Taking together, these results give support for the first eight hypotheses.

To test the ninth hypothesis if instrumental and prestige work values mediate the relationship between Islamic religiosity and task performance, hierarchical regression analysis was used as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Relationship between Islamic Religiosity and Task Performance

Independent variable(s)	R-square	F	B	T
Islamic religiosity	.27	22.65**	.715	15.42**
Islamic religiosity	.32	27.41**	.582	13.27**
+ Instrumental values			.321	3.56**
Islamic religiosity	.38	33.15**	.498	11.31**
+ Instrumental values			.319	3.44**
+ Prestige values			.274	2.59**

The dependent variable is task performance; ** Regression is significant at .01 level.

To test the tenth hypothesis if cognitive and social work values mediate the relationship between Islamic religiosity and contextual performance, similar hierarchical regression analysis was used as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Relationship between Islamic Religiosity and Contextual Performance

Independent variable(s)	R-square	F	B	T
Islamic religiosity	.29	35.24**	.802	16.81**
Islamic religiosity	.35	39.33**	.655	15.11**
+ cognitive values			.351	4.86**
Islamic religiosity	.41	51.12**	.547	11.32**
+ cognitive values			.333	4.39**
+ social values			.342	4.82**

The dependent variable is contextual performance; ** Regression is significant at .01 level.

It can be shown from the previous tables that work values partially mediate the relationships between Islamic religiosity and both of task performance and contextual performance which support the last two hypotheses.

3. Result

The findings of this study stated that there is significant relationship between Islamic religiosity and employees' job performance in Egyptian public health sector, when work values play a mediating role. This result is in line with numerous theoretical researches (Adib & Muin, 2011; Khan, Abbas, Gul, & Raja, 2015; Rokhman, 2010; Siddiqui, 2014; Syed & Ali, 2010), which emphasized that people with higher religiosity are more inclined to foster effective work performance.

Also, the empirical results showed that work values partially mediate the relationship between Islamic religiosity and job performance. This study has demonstrated that religiosity, does not standalone as the sole trigger for optimal public employees' performance. It is mandatory to be accompanied with cluster of positive work values that are in support of the socio-economic demands that meet the needs of the Egyptian public-sector employee aiming to make significant positive impact in the workplace. Results provided support that Instrumental and prestige work values are significantly related to task performance, whilst, cognitive and social work values are related to contextual performance. This could be attributed to the following reasons. First, it is provided that instrumental and prestige work values correspond to basic human needs, such as pay, job security, prestige, and working conditions; thus, it is argued that employees in economically under developed societies, such as Egypt, focus on their survival and securing their jobs by maintaining task performance levels. Second, the socio-economic challenges and political strings facing the Egyptian public health sector compel some of its health staff to moonlight in other private facilities to compensate their low pay and preserve their material daily existence, as evidenced by the theory of cognitive dissonance and its moral justifications previously discussed. On the other hand, medical public professionals who follow a unique societal call to serve

public interest emphasize cognitive and social work values that are related to public-service motivation and contextual performance. These empirical findings were also supported by other studies (Lyons et al., 2006; Yeganeh, 2015).

4. Discussion

4.1 Implications for Management

Our findings have several practical implications. First, regarding work values, religiosity, which is the core conviction and real practice of one's religion is more important than religious diversities in the same sector other religious denominations (Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism). All religions are similar, despite their apparent differences, they all teach virtuous values, moral beliefs, ethics and righteous practices that sanction immoral and antisocial human conduct (Parboteeah et al., 2009; Yeganeh, 2015). Therefore, management of the organization should accommodate diversity in the workplace and tolerate religious differences by enforcing HR codes of conduct as well as providing well-structured diversity management training and self-development programs to enhance the meaning of "religion of work" as a major value in the individual's life and instill values of tolerance, respect and compassion among its workforce (Harpaz, 1998; Sharabi, 2012). Second, religiosity and work values are not the only standalone or the sole triggers to achieve optimal public employees' performance, but also sustainable socio-economic reforms and culture-driven regeneration procedures need to be present in the working environment to make significant impacts. The Egyptian government needs to implement New Public Management (NPM) strategies (Hood, 1991), that represents the marriage of "administrative reform" with "business-type managerialism" (Pollitt, 1993) to transform and improve the quality of public services within the health sector and in others sectors as well. Finally, our findings confirmed with other studies that work values are likely to vary by job category (medical professionals, nurses, paramedical), in other words people who hold different jobs will have different job values (Ueda & Ohzono, 2012a). Therefore, management needs to conduct different studies and questionnaires to fit each job category within its specific work value realm to ensure the accuracy of results.

4.2 Limitation of the Study and Avenues for Future Research

Due to time and financial limitations, this study did not address all other demographic variables (except religion) regarding employees' performance, such as age, education, income and gender. Another limitation is that this study examined religiosity at the individual level, not at organizational level. Finally, this study has begun to uncover a few key areas for religiosity research in Egypt, however, a further future research is recommended to comprehensively triangulate three areas: Islamic religiosity, work values and job performance cross-sectional, in other working contexts, such as private-sector, multinationals, virtual settings, and cross-national in other developing countries home to Muslim populations.

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