

Full Length Research Paper

Structural Model of the Relationship of Organizational Ethical Climate with Organizational Empathy and Civic Virtue: A Cognitive-Affective-Behavioral Approach to Ethics at Workplace

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Received 6 January 2014; Accepted 21 February 2014

Abstract. Organizational ethical climate components are important factors for employees and organizations. In this regard, this study was administered to investigate the role of organizational ethical climate components for organizational empathy and civic virtue. The research design was correlation one and the sample consisted of 278 employees of railway company, Esfahan, Iran. The research instruments were organizational ethical climate questionnaire, organizational empathy scale and civic virtue questionnaire. The research hypotheses were analyzed by Pearson correlation coefficient and structural equation modeling. Furthermore of simple relationships between organizational ethical climate components with civic virtue and organizational empathy, the results of structural equation modeling indicated that during a series of relationships, caring and independence associate with civic virtue and rules and law along with service associate with organizational empathy. After all, the results of this study indicated that civic virtue and organizational empathy can be considered as variables with ethical based in the workplaces.

Keywords: Civic Virtue, Organizational Empathy, Ethical Climate, Service Organization

1. INTRODUCTION

At personal level, most people have specific ethical beliefs, values, and principles that form their thinking, speech, and behavior. Yet, beyond way of thinking and ethical action at personal level, even those who do not clearly believe in or conform to moral values and principles, when placed in an ethics-oriented working environment, and realize the importance and seriousness of ethical values and principles in that environment, try to observe and respect these values (Loe et al., 2000; Bird et al., 2009; Cohen et al., 2010). There is growing evidence that indicates ethical behavior and action have had increasing importance for industry proprietors and organizations in the past two decades (Sauer and Chao, 2005; Giacalone and Thompson, 2006; Greenfield et al., 2008). Such an attention is worth planning and investigating from different angles. One of the most important reasons in this area is that, ethical principles, rules, and values have a huge potential among people for creating favorable and efficient working environment, and naturally for personal and

organizational efficacy, as well (Elango et al., 2010; Singhapakdi et al., 2010; Khan, 2012).

From a systemic perspective on ethical and human values, it can be argued that dominance of ethical values in the working environment guides them toward such behaviors and experiences that are important, valuable, and useful for themselves and others (Treviño et al., 2006). In other words, governance of ethical principles and rules at collective level, not only is a factor for moral and valuable humane behaviors and actions, it is also considered a factor for favorable coexistence and cooperation (Stewart et al., 2011). Ethics in the workplace and organizational environments is considered as a system of values, based on which, people's actions and behaviors are determined and evaluated (Treviño et al., 2006). Based on all that has been discussed, this study investigated the role of components of organizational ethical climate in organizational empathy and civic virtues in order to widen and expand knowledge associated with role of ethical climate in work environments.

2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION AND LITERATURE REVIEWE

2.1. Organizational ethical climate

Organizational ethical climate is a sub-set of overall organizational climate, and is among macro-situational variable, created by important, meaningful and stable collection of organization's employees perceptions toward ethical manners and behaviors (Golparvar et al., 2012). Research evidence indicates that different personal, positional, and structural factors determine dominant ethical tendencies in an organization (Floyd and Yerby, 2012; DeConinck et al., 2013). So far, many theorists have attempted to identify and introduce a global model for organizations' governing ethical developmental path through inspiration from processes and stages of humans' moral development (Ambrose et al., 2008; Andreoli and Lefkowitz, 2009; Golparvar et al., 2013). So far, worthwhile attempts made in this area have not yielded any clear, comprehensive, or complete outcome (Golparvar et al., 2012). Also, because of distinct cultures and climates of different nations and ethnicities, providing a comprehensive and global perspective on organizational ethical climate, its components and developmental processes has so far been unsuccessful (Golparvar et al., 2013). Despite this difficulty and limitations, some of the views expressed about organizational ethical climate have well-managed to guide and direct research over the recent couple of decades (Malloy and Agarwal, 2010; Laratta, 2011; Borry, 2013).

One of these views, proposed in the 1980's, is Victor & Cullen's perspective on organizational ethical climate and its components (Victor and Cullen, 1987, 1988; Jaramillo et al., 2006; Mulki et al., 2008; Briggs et al., 2012). Irrespective of basis of Victor & Cullen's perspective on components of organizational ethical climate and its developmental path, their perspective is a reductionist view based on components of caring, services, rules, law-orientation, independence, and instrumental tendencies (Shafer, 2009; Simha and Cullen, 2012). Each of these components has a clear practical identity that distinguishes it from other components. Caring component has the function that leads people toward consideration for others and protecting their health. Service, which is in line with component of caring, emphasizes serving others as an ethical value (Parboteeah et al, 2005; Parboteeah et al, 2010). Law-orientation component leads to obeying laws and ethical values accepted by the organization, and by emphasizing group ethical values and goals as reference for personal ethical goals and values, rules make people conform and obey group and

organizational ethical values (Martin and Cullen, 2006; Tsui and Huang, 2008; Schwepker and Good, 2009).

According to some current theoretical formulations, components of service, caring, rules, and law-orientation with content emphasis on consideration for others and collective interests are considered among components of tendency toward collective moral (Brown et al., 2012; Golparvar et al., 2012, 2013). Conversely, ethical independence has such a function that makes people prefer their own personal ethical beliefs over collective ethical beliefs, and follow those (Grant and Patil, 2012). Also, instrumental tendencies, as the last component of organizational ethical climate, lead to following the principle of prioritizing personal interests over collective and group interest, and create seeking personal interest at behavioral level for individuals (Golparvar et al., 2012, 2013). In new theoretical formulations, the focus in two components of independence and instrumental tendencies is on oneself instead of others, and reliance is on personal beliefs instead of on group values, thus, they are considered among components of tendency toward personal ethics (Grant and Patil, 2012). In terms of nature, each one of the components of organizational ethical climate has specific behavioral, cognitive, and emotional outcomes for employees (Woodbine, 2006; Shapira-Lishchinsky and Even-Zohar, 2011; Ünal, 2012; Zehir et al., 2012; Wang and Hsieh, 2012). The two important outcomes of components of organizational ethical climate, focused on in this study, are organizational empathy and civic virtue.

2.2. Organizational empathy and organizational ethical climate

Historically, empathy has attracted the most attention from social psychologists (Galinsky et al., 2011). In simple words, empathy is a cognitive-social identity, and its main feature is the ability and effort to understand experiences, interests, perspectives, and feelings of others, as well as establishing effective and useful relationships with them (Frank, 2003; Noddings, 2003). Despite the rich history of the role of empathy in social relationships in different ages (Hojat, 2009; Macnaughton, 2009; Miller et al., 2012), it has not yet been afforded suitable attention in organization and working environments (Atkins and Parker, 2011). Meanwhile, empathy as a human phenomenon, acts as a sensible and active mechanism in every situation and environment where people have the opportunity to interact and cooperate, and regulates relationships between people (Bearnnes et al., 2010). From this perspective, empathy is a process through which people attempt to understand feelings,

emotions, and affections of others in their social interactions; hence they try to share feelings, emotions and affections of others (Atkins and Parker, 2011). When such a process enters interactions between people in organizational environment, it transforms into a factor known as organizational empathy (Golparvar, 2013).

In line with the definition of empathy at personal level, organizational empathy is dominance of culture of understanding feelings of others and an attempt to perceive the world around from the perspective of others' feelings, emotions and affections (Dong, 2005; Snyder, 2007; Golparvar, 2013). In the first glance, it may appear that in organizational empathy, people have to lose their individuality and submerge in mentality and experience of others. Despite its rational appearance, such a view is not all that right. In fact, organizational empathy is a kind of caring and attention to feelings, emotions, and affections, based on which, people try to create a humane atmosphere for themselves and others and perceive others as humankind in need of attention (Noddings, 2003; Rifkin, 2009). Thus, in an atmosphere of overwhelming empathy, people do not need to lose their individuality and independence. They only need to strengthen the capacity for seeing the world through other people's eyes (Rynes et al., 2012; Golparvar, 2013).

Research evidence shows that empathic relationships between people reduce anxiety and stress and increase feeling of social support and psychological well-being (Frank, 2003; Noddings, 2003; Hojat, 2009; Macnaughton, 2009; Galinsky et al., 2011; Miller et al., 2012). There is also evidence that shows empathy among employees of an organization is able to create a favorable working climate and increase performance at all levels throughout the organization (Dong, 2005; Snyder, 2007; Rynes et al., 2012). In the area of the relationship between components of ethical climate of the organization and organizational empathy, no published study was available, despite frequent attempts. This is because organizational empathy is a totally new construct, which will most probably attract attention of many researchers in the future.

Still, based on contents of components of organizational ethical climate and proposed theories in social psychology, some predictions about the relationship between components of organizational ethical climate and organizational empathy can be suggested. Among components of organizational ethical climate, rules and law together with caring and service, through collective orientation toward ethical values, lead to promotion and reinforcement of cooperation, value conformity, care and attention (Golparvar et al., 2012, 2013). It is forecast that

caring, attention, and conformity, among consequences of components of collective ethics in organizational ethical climate, can reinforce perceived empathy in people and employees of the organization. Conversely, independence and instrumental tendencies as components of personal ethics lead to neglecting care and attention for others (Brown et al., 2012; Grant and Patil, 2012), and thus it is forecast that it will show a negative relationship with organizational empathy which is seriously dependent on care and attention for others.

2.3. Civic virtue and organizational ethical climate

Civic virtue, like other aspects of organizational citizenship behaviors are intentional and voluntary behaviors for which, there are no requirements in the organization's official headings and payment/bonus system, yet make organization's social and cooperative climate pleasant (Butarbutar et al., 2010). In initial formulation, civic virtue has been introduced as responsible participation in political life of the organization (Graham, 2000; Graham and Van Dyne, 2006). In fact civic virtue are considered participation beyond the call of duty in organizational meetings and gatherings with the aim of better and more effective involvement in organizational goals and missions (Graham, 2000; Kidder and Parks, 2001). From a developmental perspective, civic virtue is considered prospective and proactive behaviors that promote and improve personal skills, abilities, and information and knowledge and provide the means for more favorable organizational and personal efficacy (Graham and Van Dyne, 2006). It is for these prominent roles of civic virtue that since past couple of decades, researchers have more seriously sought to identify and introduce factors that strengthen and institutionalize civic virtue in the workplace (Chun, 2005; Leung, 2007; Podsakoff et al., 2009; Ramachandran et al., 2011; Stewart Wherry, 2012). Among different potential factors, this study has focused on the role of components of organizational ethical climate in these behaviors, based on positive behavioral-emotional outcomes approach.

Theoretical association between components of organizational ethical climate and civic virtue is based on theoretical approaches about the relationship between organizational ethical climate and organizational citizenship behaviors (Mo, 2012). Firstly, civic virtue, like other organizational citizenship behaviors have ethical foundations (Golparvar and Rafizadeh, 2009; Al-sharafi and Rajiani, 2013). In other words, the relationship between civic virtue and organizational ethical climate can be explained through processes focused on influence of components of organizational ethical

climate in people's behavioral-ethical decisions in the workplace (Golparvar et al., 2012, 2013). According to research and proposed theories, components of organizational ethical climate form, direct, and control people's behaviors through ethical decision making processes (Talha et al., 2013). More directly, aspects such as caring, service, rules and law will highlight and present caring, participation, and dedication to others as important factors in the organization through influencing functional and behavioral decision making, based on attention to all those influenced by these decisions, policies, and actions (Golparvar et al., 2012, 2013).

Clearly, in an atmosphere based on virtue and importance of caring, attention, service, and cooperation, people commit to and act upon civic virtue more easily (Walumbwa et al., 2010). Conversely, with dominance of personal independence and instrumental tendencies and personal interest in affairs, inconsideration toward others and collective and organizational goals will dominate (Brown et al., 2012; Grant and Patil, 2012). There is much research evidence that support these claims (Golparvar et al., 2012, 2013). Recent meta-analysis by Martin and Cullen (2006) revealed that organizational ethical climate and its components are among predicting variables of attitudinal and behavioral variables such as: organizational commitment, job satisfaction and ineffective

behaviors. These positive outcomes are partially created by positive and emotional processes in response to caring, attention, and service (Weiss and Cropanzano, 1996). Another part of this positive response appears as positive behaviors like civic virtue (Martin and Cullen, 2006; Zehir et al., 2012). Previous studies have shown that when organizational ethical climate tends to personal ethics, organizational citizenship behavior levels, including civic virtue, will decrease (Golparvar et al., 2013).

2.4. Research Conceptual Model

Based on the theoretical and research background provided, and according to the approach of social and citizenship outcomes of components of organizational ethical climate, this study proposes and examines a model for the relationship between components of organizational ethical climate and organizational empathy (as a cognitive-emotional phenomenon that has social and ethical bases) and civic virtue. The model provided in this study, which appears to have been proposed for the first time, seeks an emotional, cognitive, social, and behavioral perspective on consequences of components of organizational ethical climate, and attempts to expand present knowledge about organizational ethical climate consequences. A model presented in figure.1 has been considered for current inquiry.

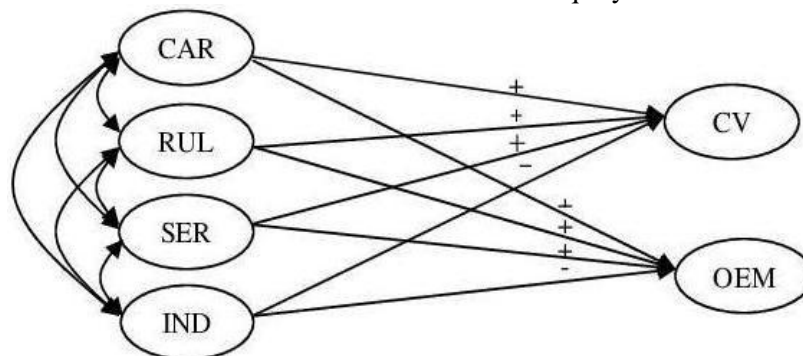


Fig. 1: Research conceptual model

3. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

H1. There is positive significant relationship between caring (CAR), rules and law (RUL) and service (SER) and civic virtue (CV), and there is negative significant relationship between independence (IND) and civic virtue (CV).

H2. There is positive significant relationship between caring (CAR), rules and law (RUL) and service (SER) and organizational empathy (OEM), and there is negative significant relationship between independence (IND) and organizational empathy (OEM).

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Participants and Procedures

In the present research we have used a correlational design. A random sample of two hundred and seventy eight employees (99.2% response rate) from railway company, Isfahan, Iran, participated in the research. The railway company in Iran is a public sector organization which presents tripe services. This company has several departments, such as sailing ticket, reception of customers, railway stations and so on. In current research the employees of this company in Esfahan city were participated to research. The total

number of employees in this company (Winter 2013) in Esfahan city was five hundred and fifty people. Respondents' were 95.3% male and 4.7% female. More than 90% of them were married (93.2%), and others were single (6.8%). With regard to educational level, 50% had secondary studies or diploma, and 50% had university studies. The range of participants' age was 26 to 60 years and the range of participants' organizational tenure was 1 to 30 years. The mean of participants' age was 41.33 (SD=7.35), and their mean of tenure was 18.81 (SD=8.11).

4.2. Measures

4.2.1. Organizational Ethical Climate

The measure of the organizational ethical climate used in this study is taken from Wimbash et al. (1997) (thirty six items), which translated and validated in Iran by Golparvar et al (2013). This instrument in Iranian form measures the following dimensions of organizational ethical climate: caring (15 items), rules and law (8 items), service (4 items), independency (4 items) and instrumental tendencies (5 items). Responses were rated on a 6-point scale, ranging from 1 (completely false) to 7 (completely true). A sample item of this questionnaire is: The most important concern is the good of all the people in the organization (caring subscale). Research suggests that both the items and the scale of the Iranian version of organizational ethical climate questionnaire have good construct and concurrent validity (Golparvar et al., 2013). Exploratory factor analysis in current research showed that, items of instrumental tendencies subscale distributed in another subscales of ethical climate questionnaire and have low internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha). For this, instrumental tendencies subscale excluded from the current research. In present study, we conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with AMOS-16. As a result, goodness of fit index was found as $\chi^2=0$, $\chi^2/df=0$, CFI=1, GFI=1, RMR=0, IFI=1, NFI= 1, and TLI=1. The internal consistencies (Cronbach's alpha) of the other subscales of organizational ethical climate questionnaire including caring, rules and law, service and independency in present study were 0.89, 0.85, 0.79 and 0.76 respectively.

4.2.2. Organizational Empathy

Organizational empathy was measured using eighteen item scale developed by Golparvar (2013). Sample items of this scale include: In our organization all employees try to understand the feelings of others

toward conditions. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement for each statement by using 10 point Likert scale ranging from 1= never to 10=always. The validity of organizational empathy scale has been reported by Golparvar (2013) using face and content validity. In this study also factor analysis (Varimax rotation and factor loading the minimum of 0.4) was carried out to test construct validity of the scale (KMO= 0.8, Bartlett's test of Sphericity= 2998.06, $p<0.001$, factor loadings ranging from 0.5 to 0.83). Also we conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for verifying construct validity of organizational empathy questionnaire. As a result, goodness of fit index was found as $\chi^2=307.86$, $df=104$, $\chi^2/df=2.96$, RMSEA=0.08, CFI=0.88, GFI=0.9, IFI=0.9, NFI=0.84. The Cronbach's alpha of organizational empathy in current study was 0.92.

4.2.3. Civic Virtue

Civic virtue was measured by means of using 4 items questionnaire adapted from Ackfeldt and Coote (2005), which translated and validated in Iran by Golparvar and Rafizadeh (2009). A sample item is: attends functions that are not required, but help the company image. Responses were rated on a 6-point scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 6 (always). Previous researches revealed that civic virtue is regarded as more in role for men (Kidder and Parks, 2001). Since, in current research majority of statistical population (and sample of current research) was men, from dimension of OCBs, we only used civic virtue subscale. The reliability and validity (on the basis of exploratory factor analysis) of the scale have been demonstrated in Iran workplace (Golparvar and Rafizadeh, 2009). In current investigation, we conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with AMOS-16. As a result, goodness of fit index was found as $\chi^2=.055$, $df=1$, $\chi^2/df=.055$, RMSEA=0, CFI=1, GFI=1, RMR=.006, IFI=1, NFI= 1, and TLI=1. These results revealed that the questionnaire fitted the data. The Cronbach's alpha of civic virtue in current study was .7.

5. RESULTS

Data were analyzed with SPSS-18 to compute correlations, descriptive statistics and with AMOS-16 for performing structural equation modeling. Out of the total responses, missing values were less than 0.1 percent, which replaced with the average of each variables mean in database. Means, standard deviations and correlations among all research variables are presented in Table 1.

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Table 1: Means, standard deviation and inter-correlations between research variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
Caring	3.52	0.73	(0.89)					
Rules and law	3.69	0.8	0.66**	(0.85)				
Service	3.97	0.97	0.58**	0.49**	(0.79)			
Independency	3.74	1.01	-0.27**	-0.46**	-0.12*	(0.76)		
Civic virtue	4.69	1.25	0.33**	0.25**	0.21**	-0.19**	(0.7)	
Organizational empathy	5.52	1.36	0.36**	0.4**	0.42**	-0.06	0.03	(0.92)

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

As shown in Table 1, caring ($r = 0.33, p < 0.01$), rules and law ($r = 0.25, p < 0.01$), and service ($r = -0.19, p < 0.01$) related positively to civic virtue, but independency related negatively to civic virtue ($r = -0.21, p < 0.01$). The common variance between caring and civic virtue was %10.89, between rules and law and civic virtue was %6.25, between service and civic virtue was %3.61, and between independency and civic virtue was %4.41. Therefore H1, (there is positive significant relationship between caring (CAR), rules and law (RUL) and service (SER) and civic virtue (CV), and there is negative significant relationship between independency (IND) and civic virtue (CV)) has been supported completely. As shown in Table 1, caring ($r = 0.36, p < 0.01$), rules and law ($r = 0.4, p < 0.01$), and service ($r = 0.42, p < 0.01$) related positively to organizational empathy, but independency not significantly related with organizational empathy ($r = -0.06, p > 0.05$). The common variance between caring and organizational empathy was %12.96, between rules and law and organizational empathy was %14, and between service and organizational empathy was %17.64. Therefore H2, (there is positive significant relationship between caring (CAR), rules and law (RUL) and service (SER) and organizational empathy (OEM), and there is negative significant relationship

between independence (IND) and organizational empathy (OEM)) has been supported partially.

In structural equation modeling (SEM), the various criteria of goodness-of-fit such as the χ^2/df ratio (is recommended to be less than 3), RFI, NFI, CFI, and TLI (the values of these indices are recommended to be greater than .90) and RMR along with RMSEA (are recommended to be up to .05, and acceptable up to .08) were used to evaluate the fit of the research primary conceptual model. The result of structural equation modeling (SEM), showed that there is necessary to modify the research primary conceptual model (Figure 1). ($\chi^2 = 3.97$ (df=1); $\chi^2/df = 3.97$; CFI = 0.99; IFI = 0.99; TLI = 0.9; RMR = 0.04; RMSEA = 0.1). Often, deleting the insignificant paths, among other manners, is a recommended method for revision of structural models and improving the goodness of fit indices (Hair et al., 2008; Bryne, 2010; Bagozzi and Yi, 2012; Hwang et al., 2010). Therefore, to improve goodness of fit indices of the suggested primary conceptual model (Figure 1), two paths have been deleted from rules and law (RUL) and service (SER) to civic virtue (CV), and also two paths have been deleted from caring (CAR) and independency (IND) to organizational empathy (OEM). The results of structural equation modeling (SEM) for final and revised model is shown in table 2.

Table 2: The result of structure equation modeling for final and revised model (Figure 2)

Row	Paths	b	SE	β	R ²
1	Caring (CAR) → Civic virtue (CV)	0.52**	0.1	0.3**	0.123
2	Independency (IND) → Civic virtue (CV)	-0.13*	0.07	-0.11*	
3	Rules and law (RUL) → Organizational empathy (OEM)	0.43**	0.11	0.25**	0.228
4	Service (SER) → Organizational empathy (OEM)	0.42**	0.08	0.3**	

Note: n = 278, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

In table 2, b letter is the un-standardized coefficient of the final and revised structural paths and β letter is the standardized estimates of the final and revised structural paths. Also SE is the standard error of un-standardized coefficients and R² is the amount of explained variances of the criterion variables (civic virtue and organizational empathy) at the final and revised model. As it can be seen in table 2, the results indicate significant paths from (1) Caring (CAR) to

civic virtue (CV) ($\beta = 0.3, p < 0.01$), and from (2) independency (IND) to civic virtue (CV) ($\beta = -0.11, p < 0.05$). Also the results indicate significant paths from (3) rules and law (RUL) to organizational empathy (OEM) ($\beta = 0.25, p < 0.01$), and from (4) service (SER) to organizational empathy (OEM) ($\beta = 0.3, p < 0.01$). The Caring (CAR) and independency (IND) explained 12.3 percent of the variance in civic virtue (CV), and rules and law (RUL) along with

service (SER) explained 22.8 percent of the variance in organizational empathy (OEM). The results of the final and revised model (Figure 2) revealed an appropriate fit to the data (Oke et al., 2012). Fit indices for final and revised model were as follows: Chi-square=8.21 (df=5), the χ^2/df ratio=1.64 (df=1); CFI =

0.99; GFI= 0.99; NFI= 0.98; IFI = 0.99; TLI = 0.98; RMR= 0.04; RMSEA= 0.05. All of the mentioned fit indices are suitable and acceptable for a structural model (Hwang et al., 2010; Oke et al., 2012). Final and revised model is presented in figure 2.

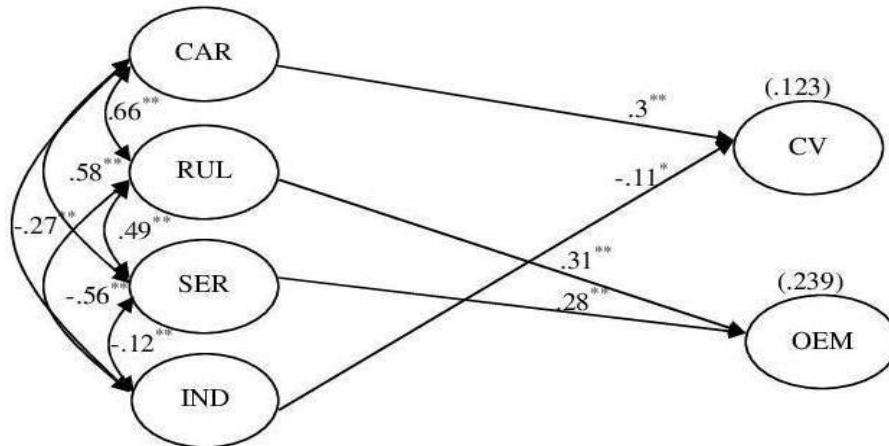


Fig. 2: Final and revised model of current research

6. DISCUSSION

The present study, conducted with the aim to investigate pattern of relationship between components of organizational ethical climate, organizational empathy, and civic virtues. In congruent with findings of other relevant researches (Martin and Cullen, 2006; Andreoli and Lefkowitz, 2009; Briggs et al., 2012; Borry, 2013; DeConinck et al., 2013; Golparvar et al., 2012, 2013) and by predicting the relationship between components of organizational ethical climate and organizational empathy and civic virtue, results showed that dominance of collective ethics (caring, law and rules, and service) has a positive relationship with civic virtue and organizational empathy. Conversely, dominance of personal ethics (independence) has a negative relationship with civic virtue. Organizational empathy showed an insignificant relationship with independence (as a component of dominance of personal ethics in present study). Firstly, findings of this study are in significant agreement with proposed predictions based on cognitive-affective-behavioral approach to outcomes of components of organizational ethical climate in current research.

Beyond above mentioned agreements, at simple correlations level, findings of this study showed that it is logical to consider civic virtue and organizational empathy as variables with clear ethical foundations (Graham, 2000; Kidder and Parks, 2001; Graham and Van Dyne, 2006; Butarbutar et al., 2010). Despite the fact that previous theories and studies propose ideas that organizational citizenship behaviors are ethical (and more particularly about civic virtue) (Ackfeldt

and Cotte, 2005; Chun, 2005; Leung, 2007; Podsakoff et al., 2009; Ramachandran et al., 2011; Stewart Wherry, 2012), yet few studies so far clearly attempted to investigate these ethical foundations . Also, only a few studies have been conducted in relation to organizational empathy so far (Rynes et al., 2012). So that currently, there are no clear or accurate viewpoint and information about organizational empathy antecedents. In this respect, current investigation is among the very first studies that attempt to investigate the role of components of organizational ethical climate in organizational empathy, along with civic virtue.

Some theoretical reasons can be suggested for the relationship between components of organizational ethical climate and civic virtue, as well as organizational empathy. To provide theoretical reasons for role of components of organizational ethical climate in civic virtue and organizational empathy, some worthy and well deserved answers ought to be given that show what components of organizational ethical climate brought for people and organization that would increase or decrease their behavioral, cognitive, and affective experiences. The positive outcome based on the present study background, and then on findings of the present study that can be presented for components of collective ethics of organizational ethical climate (caring, service, law, and rules) is highlighting the importance of altruism, attempt to serve others, and observing ethical and humanitarian principles and rules beneficial to groups and communities (Golparvar et al., 2012, 2013).

This highlighting altruism and humane and ethical serving through social influence provides the grounds for behavioral, cognitive, and affective events in the community and organization (Bird, Smucker and Velasquez, 2009; Cohen et al., 2010). These behavioral, cognitive, and affective events partially emerge in different forms such as commitment, satisfaction, involvement and citizenship behaviors (Walumbwa et al., 2010; Talha et al., 2013), and more specifically in the form of civic virtue and organizational empathy. On the other hand, when people are faced with personal interest and independence in ethical affairs, they expose to the message of inconsideration and indifference toward useful collective humane and ethical rules and principles (Golparvar et al., 2012, 2013). That is why, when personal ethics dominates collective ethics, self-centeredness gradually and subtly overcomes all affairs and slowly, instead of social participation in the form of civic virtue in social and organizational affairs, people tend to seek personal goals and pay no attention to group and collective affairs.

Results of structural equation modeling in the present study highlighted the role of some components of organizational ethical climate in civic virtue and organizational empathy beyond simple relationships. In the final modified model of the present study (figure 2), two components of independence and caring in civic virtue, and two components of law and rules and service in organizational empathy, had direct roles. This finding provides two different ethics-based aspects in civic virtue and organizational empathy, beyond the present knowledge about the role of morality in empathic and civic behaviors. Although definitive conclusion, merely based on findings of this study is early and irrational, this theory can be proposed for future studies. It is likely that organizational empathy is a different ethical profile of civic virtue.

With focus on simple relationships of components of organizational ethical climate (table 1), it is clear that personal and ethical independence has no relationship with organizational empathy. Yet it is related to civic virtue. Two central questions that need to be answered are: why does independence (as a component of personal ethics) with civic virtue, is present in a uniform model of components of organizational ethical climate, but does not exist in organizational empathy? Second, why do civic virtue and organizational empathy have different ethic-based profiles? Although the answer to these questions is not yet fully clear, there are few possibilities in this respect. First, which relates to both first and second questions is that organizational empathy is essentially a service and rule-oriented phenomenon, but civic virtue are caring-based and oppose ethical

independence. Furthermore, organizational empathy, in terms of content, is emotionally and cognitively loaded, but civic virtue has a behavioral and prospective nature. For this reason, caring and civic virtue mutually strengthens one another, and weaken independence.

More accurately, caring activates the feeling of the need to make up for the attention received in a person, and with necessary basis, persuades the person to participate in positive returning of favor with caring and attention factor. From this perspective, civic virtue, beyond being regarded as a dimension of organizational citizenship behaviors, may be compensatory form of organizational citizenship behaviors. This point has frequently been confirmed in other human social behaviors. On the other hand, it is right that there are no official organizational requirements for civic virtue, but it is highly likely that this form of organizational citizenship behaviors (and its other forms) have psychological requirements. According to the findings in this study, despite the positive relationship with caring, empathy shows a more serious association with service and rules and law. It is probable that feelings of empathy, before being provoked by people's pure attention in the form of caring, is associated with a more active phenomenon in the form of serving and dominance of rules focused on ethical and human interest of group and community. This means that people more seriously feel they are the center of attention in a climate of service and rule-orientation, and thus will feel more empathy within the organization.

7. CONCLUSION

In some respects, findings of the present study have theoretical and research implications. First, findings provided initial support for each component of organizational ethical climate from an approach known as distinct cognitive-affective-behavioral outcomes approach. Second implication was that results showed that civic virtue and organizational empathy, in terms of pattern of relationship between components of organizational ethical climate, have different profiles. This difference profiles provides different reinforcing grounds for civic virtue and organizational empathy through components of organizational ethical climate. So that, to strengthen civic virtue, promoting ethical climate, based on caring and weakening ethical independence seem necessary, and to strengthen organizational empathy, promoting law and rules, with focus on group interests and service are required. It is totally logical that more definitive conclusions require repeating the study in different cultures and organizations. Therefore, it is

recommended that researchers from different cultures and geographical regions repeat the study.

This study like the previous studies has some limitations. First, the model was tested in current study is not an exact causal model; therefore cause and effect interpretations of the results are not logical. Second, constructs of current investigation, especially civic virtue and organizational empathy, have been measured as a self-report. This kind of assessment may create the common method variance and after that create the inflation of some obtained associations. Third limitation is that the results of this study are related to a service organization in Esfahan, Iran. Therefore, it is not reasonable to generalize these results to commercial and industrial organizations in Esfahan and other cities in Iran. The model should be tested with employees in commercial and industrial organizations in other cities and provinces in Iran. In addition, the model of current research needs further replication, and critical appraisal in other countries, to provide robust and useful insights. Finally the model of this study only examined the roles of organizational ethical climate components for civic virtue and organizational empathy. Testing the model with other ethical constructs, such as ethical and authentic leadership will promote our understanding about the relationship between moral based variables and civic virtue and organizational empathy.

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