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**ASSESSMENT OF CORRELATION BETWEEN THE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND  
PROFESSIONAL ETHICS IN LIBRARIANS**

**SEYEDEH AMENEH HOSSEINI TABAR<sup>1</sup>, SEDIGHEH MOHAMMADESMAIL<sup>2\*</sup>, DARIUSH  
MATLABI<sup>3</sup>**

**1, 2:** Department of information and knowledge science, Science and Research branch, Islamic Azad  
University, Tehran, Iran

**3:** Department of information and knowledge science, Islamic Azad University, shahr rey (yadgar e  
Emam Khomeini) Branch, Shahr rey, Iran

**\*Corresponding Author: E Mail: [m.esmaeili2@gmail.com](mailto:m.esmaeili2@gmail.com)**

**ABSTRACT**

The study aims to assess the correlation between the religious beliefs and professional ethics in librarians. The research has survey-analytical and correlative method. The statistical population consists of all 826 librarians at state universities of Tehran City. The sample size is obtained equal to 265 by Morgan Table. This research has simple random sampling method. The researcher-made questionnaire is the data collection tool and has face and content validity; the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.70 indicates the reliability of questionnaire. The descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, Spearman and Pearson correlation, regression, and z test are utilized for data analysis. The results of religious test indicate that the faithfulness dimension of religious beliefs explains about 0.07%, its behavioral dimension about 0.12%, and the consequential dimension about 0.26% of variance in librarians' professional ethics. Furthermore, the results of correlation test indicate that there is a significant correlation between the age, educational level, income and professional ethics; and this correlation is positive in terms of direction, but weak in terms of intensity. However, there is no significant correlation between these variables and religious beliefs in librarians.

**Keywords: Religious beliefs, professional ethics, librarian**

**INTRODUCTION**

Smith believes that "As professionals, we well as ourselves; and as the citizens we are responsible for those we serve for as have duties to use our own knowledge for

benefit of community, and as the members of global humanity family, we are responsible for preserving the human dignity". [10], The sustainability of any profession depends on various factors one of which is the professional ethics which plays an important role in professional competence and sustainability. The professional ethic is not only for some professions, not all professions have a kind of working principles. The librarianship as a profession also has these principles and ethics, and the librarian is committed to respect for ethical principles for users, collections, community and his profession.

It seems that this concept is a relatively new phenomenon, but historically, all professions, which have chance and stability, have had a set, written or implied, of professional principles and ethics. The professional ethic strengthens any profession from two perspectives: Intra-professional aspect (professionals) and extra-professional aspect of community [8].

The ethic is defined as a set of principles which are often utilized as a charter for guidance. This set of principles provides a framework for action. The poor ethics not only lead to the lack of professional internal coherence, but also lead to the lower communications and more losses in the organizations, and thus the management will rely more on the retrospective control.

As the believers' behavior and lifestyle with religious scriptures indicate their religious content and as the Muslims' behavior is derived from Quran and the book which has created a unit moral among his followers and has involved in all aspects of their lives and has a specific program for them, any profession has its own behavior and obligations which are derived from the constitution of that profession. In terms of sensitivity and responsibility in serving the community, different professions have different ethical criteria and specify ethical criteria of common principles, the properties of values competencies which link the members of an organization. The ethical criteria are like the guidance maps which help the members to play their roles perfectly in an organization. These criteria are resulted from the today's local and civic culture and influenced by Islam in our country. The term, ethic, refers to those positive traits which are consistent with community norms. Basically, the ethics cover the material issues in addition to the spiritual dimension of job classes which have common goals and interests. This kind of ethics is called the professional ethics now [11].

Here, it should be noted that the foundation of ethics is religion in our society, and thus the individual faith and commitment to religion can have undeniable influence on

the individual adherence to ethical principles. Durkheim, the prominent sociologist, says that the rites of religion for proper functioning of our moral life are as essential as the food for our physical life [3]. The religious human is a moral man. According to Motahari, the religion is the best protector of moral principles and virtues and the safest way for its implementation because the ethic, which is a great life capital, has no proper basis without faith and belief. The belief in God is the basis of all morality and legitimacy and guarantees them [7].

The dignity, honor, piety, chastity, integrity, truth, honesty, sacrifice, charity, peace, friendship and tolerance towards people, justice and other moral values especially the respect for human rights are only manifested in the light of religious divine teachings and only those who implement them are the true religious ones; they do the self-purification, train themselves and flourish their human capacities and talents by religious teachings and orders (ibid, 222). According to the secret of religion for validating the ethics and the moral legitimacy of ethical affairs, leaving the vices and finding the moral virtues or in other words the self-purification and training will lead to intense austerity and deprivations and only those, who are patient enough in life in the light of belief and religious faith, can tolerate these

spiritual and material hardships and deprivations, so that they believe in compensating these hardships and the immense rewarding in the life hereafter as well as believing in promises of God in Quran. Therefore, the claim, under which the human can be committed to the morality without religion and worship of God, is far from the reality.

Considering the role and influence of religion and people religiosity in complying the ethical criteria in this study, we investigate the correlation between the people religiosity and professional ethics in librarians.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research method has the survey and analytical type. The statistical population consists of all 826 librarians at state universities of Tehran City. The sample size is obtained equal to 265 by Morgan Table. This research has simple random sampling method. The researcher-made questionnaire is the data collection tool and has face and content validity; the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.70 indicates the reliability of questionnaire. The descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, Spearman and Pearson correlation, regression, and z test are utilized for data analysis.

## RESULTS

### First hypothesis

There is a correlation between the faithfulness dimension of religious beliefs and the adherence to professional ethics in librarians at state universities of Tehran city. The table 1 above shows the regression coefficient for the faithfulness dimension of religious beliefs and adherence to professional ethics among the librarians. The correlation coefficient between these two variables is equal to 0.264 which is significant at the level of 0.05 ( $P=0.000$ ). Therefore, the first hypothesis indicating the correlation between these two variables is accepted. Given the value of coefficient of determination ( $R^2= 0.07$ ), it can be concluded that about 0.07 percent of variance in librarians' professional ethics can be explained by the faithfulness dimension of religious beliefs.

The following regression equation can be designed for predicting the impact of faithfulness dimension of religious beliefs on librarians' professional ethics: Faithfulness dimension of religious beliefs (0.085)+23.788 = Librarians' professional ethics.

The above equation indicates that the score of librarians' professional ethics is equal to 23.788 in the case of controlling the faithfulness dimension of religious beliefs. Furthermore, for one unit change in faithfulness dimension of religious beliefs, 0.085 unit of change is created in librarians'

professional ethics. This research hypothesis is confirmed by implying the positive correlation between the faithfulness dimension of religious beliefs and librarians' professional ethics.

### Second hypothesis

There is a correlation between the behavioral dimension of religious beliefs and the adherence to professional ethics in librarians at state universities of Tehran city. The table 3 shows the regression coefficient for the behavioral dimension of religious beliefs and adherence to professional ethics among the librarians. The correlation coefficient between these two variables is equal to 0.358 which is significant at the level of 0.05 ( $P=0.000$ ). Therefore, the first hypothesis indicating the correlation between these two variables is accepted. Given the value of coefficient of determination ( $R^2= 0.128$ ), it can be concluded that about 0.12 percent of variance in librarians' professional ethics can be explained by the behavioral dimension of religious beliefs. The following regression equation can be designed for predicting the impact of behavioral dimension of religious beliefs on librarians' professional ethics: Behavioral dimension of religious beliefs (0.118)+7.971 = Librarians' professional ethics.

The above equation indicates that the score of librarians' professional ethics is equal to

7.971 in the case of controlling the behavioral dimension of religious beliefs. Furthermore, for one unit change in behavioral dimension of religious beliefs, 0.118 unit of change is created in librarians' professional ethics. This research hypothesis is confirmed by implying the positive correlation between the behavioral dimension of religious beliefs and librarians' professional ethics.

**Third hypothesis**

There is a correlation between the consequential dimension of religious beliefs and the adherence to professional ethics in librarians at state universities of Tehran city. The table 5 shows the regression coefficient for the consequential dimension of religious

beliefs and adherence to professional ethics among the librarians. The correlation coefficient between these two variables is equal to 0.510 which is significant at the level of 0.05 (P=0.000). Therefore, the first hypothesis indicating the correlation between these two variables is accepted. Given the value of coefficient of determination ( $R^2= 0.260$ ), it can be concluded that about 0.26 percent of variance in librarians' professional ethics can be explained by the consequential dimension of religious beliefs.

Table 1: General determiners of regression analysis for faithfulness dimension of religious beliefs on professional ethics

Statistical index Regression model	Correlation coefficient (R)	$R^2$	Adjusted $R^2$	F	Significance level
Faithfulness dimension of religious beliefs	0.264	0.070	0.568	19.717	0.000

Table 2: The regression coefficient for the faithfulness dimension of religious beliefs and librarians' professional ethics

Statistical index Model	Regression coefficients	Standard error	Standard Beta	T	Significance level
Constant coefficient	23.788	2.411	-	9.866	0.000
Professional ethics	0.085	0.019	0.264	4.440	0.000

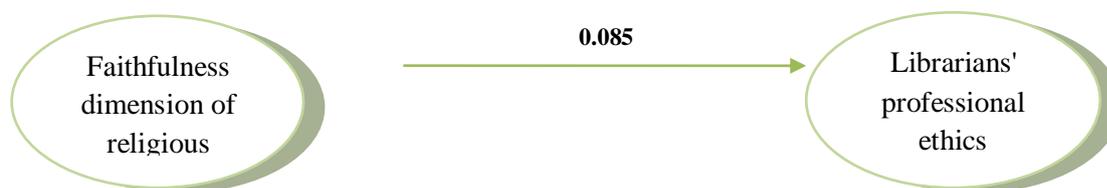


Figure 1: Regression effect for faithfulness dimension of religious beliefs and librarians' professional ethics

Table 3: General determiners of regression analysis for behavioral dimension of religious beliefs on professional ethics

Statistical index Regression model	Correlation coefficient (R)	$R^2$	Adjusted $R^2$	F	Significance level
Behavioral dimension of religious beliefs	0.358	0.128	0.125	38.627	0.000

Table 4: The regression coefficient for the behavioral dimension of religious beliefs and librarians' professional ethics

Statistical index Model	Regression coefficients	Standard error	Standard Beta	T	Significance level
Constant coefficient	7.971	2.391	-	9.866	0.000
Professional ethics	0.118	0.019	0.358	6.215	0.000

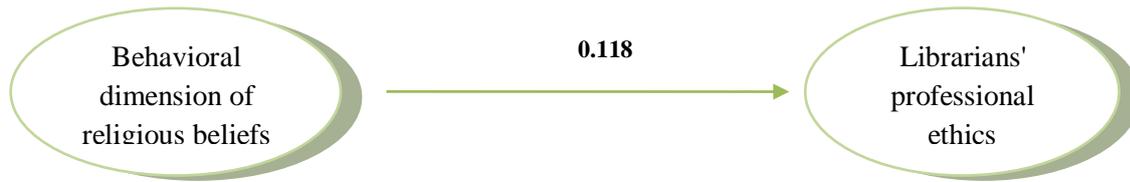


Figure 2: Regression effect for behavioral dimension of religious beliefs and librarians' professional ethics  
 Table 5: General determiners of regression analysis for consequential dimension of religious beliefs on professional ethics

Statistical index Regression model	Correlation coefficient (R)	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F	Significance level
Consequential dimension of religious beliefs	0.510	0.260	0.125	92.384	0.000

Table 6: The regression coefficient for the consequential dimension of religious beliefs and librarians' professional ethics

Statistical index Model	Regression coefficients	Standard error	Standard Beta	T	Significance level
Constant coefficient	13.784	2.047	-	6.733	0.000
Professional ethics	0.157	0.016	0.510	9.612	0.000

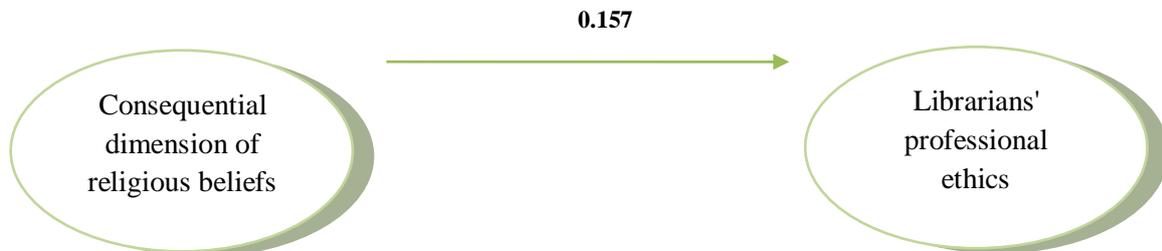


Figure 3: Regression effect for consequential dimension of religious beliefs and librarians' professional ethics in consequential dimension of religious beliefs, 0.157 unit of change is created in librarians' professional ethics. This research hypothesis is confirmed by implying the positive correlation between the consequential dimension of religious beliefs and librarians' professional ethics.

**Fourth hypothesis**

There is a correlation between the level of religious beliefs and the adherence to professional ethics in librarians at state universities of Tehran city.

The following regression equation can be designed for predicting the impact of consequential dimension of religious beliefs on librarians' professional ethics:  
 Consequential dimension of religious beliefs (0.157)+13.784 = Librarians' professional ethics

The above equation indicates that the score of librarians' professional ethics is equal to 13.784 in the case of controlling the consequential dimension of religious beliefs. Furthermore, for one unit change

Table 7: General determiners of regression analysis for level of religious beliefs on professional ethics

Statistical index Regression model	Correlation coefficient (R)	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F	Significance level
Level of religious beliefs	0.424	0.180	0.125	57.674	0.000

Table 8: The regression coefficient for the level of religious beliefs and librarians' professional ethics

Statistical index Model	Regression coefficients	Standard error	Standard Beta	T	Significance level
Constant coefficient	45.543	5.958	-	7.644	0.000
Professional ethics	0.360	0.047	0.424	7.594	0.000



Figure 4: Regression effect for level of religious beliefs and librarians' professional ethics

The table 7 above shows the regression coefficient for the level of religious beliefs and adherence to professional ethics among the librarians. The correlation coefficient between these two variables is equal to 0.424 which is significant at the level of 0.05 (P=0.000). Therefore, the first hypothesis indicating the correlation between these two variables is accepted. Given the value of coefficient of determination ( $R^2= 0.180$ ), it can be concluded that about 0.18 percent of variance in librarians' professional ethics can be explained by the religious beliefs. The following regression equation can be designed for predicting the impact of level of religious beliefs on the librarians' professional ethics:

$$\text{Level of religious beliefs } (0.360) + 45.543 = \text{Librarians' professional ethics}$$

The above equation indicates that the score of librarians' professional ethics is equal to 45.543 in the case of controlling the level of religious beliefs. Furthermore, for one unit change at the level of religious beliefs, 0.360 unit of change is created in librarians' professional ethics. This research hypothesis is confirmed by implying the positive correlation between the level of religious beliefs and librarians' professional ethics.

**Fifth hypothesis**

There is a correlation between the librarians' professional ethics and gender at state universities of Tehran City.

Table 9: Investigating the correlation between the professional ethics and gender

Professional ethics		Gender		
		Men	Women	Total
Weak	Frequency	22	66	88
	Percentage	40.0	31.4	33.2
Medium	Frequency	26	67	93
	Percentage	47.3	31.9	35.1
Strong	Frequency	7	77	84
	Percentage	12.7	36.7	31.7
Total	Frequency	55	210	265
	Percentage	20.8	79.2	100.0

Cramer's V Phi	Sig	d.f	Chi-Square
0.211	0.001	2	11.777

The results of chi-square test (Chi-Square=11.777), which is significant at the level of 0.05 (sig=0.001), indicate that the first research hypothesis about the significant correlation between these two variables is approved. Based on the frequency distribution table, it can be concluded that 40 percent of men have weak professional ethics, while 31.4 percent of women have weak professional ethics. 47.3 percent of men have medium professional ethics, while 31.9 percent of women have medium professional ethics. 12.7 percent of men have strong professional ethics, while 36.7 percent of women have strong professional ethics. Therefore, the women have stronger professional ethics.

Furthermore, the results of Cramer's V test (Cramer's V Phi = 0.211) indicate that this correlation is weak.

### Sixth hypothesis

There is a correlation between the librarians' professional ethics and marital status at state universities of Tehran City.

The results of chi-square test (Chi-Square=11.797), which is significant at the level of 0.05 (sig=0.407), indicate that there is no significant correlation between these two variables, thus the null research hypothesis is confirmed.

### Seventh hypothesis

There is a correlation between the librarians' religious beliefs and gender at state universities of Tehran City.

**Table 10: Investigating the correlation between the professional ethics and marital status**

Professional ethics \ Marital status		Single	Married	Total
		Weak	27 30.3	61 34.7
Medium	29 32.6	64 36.4	93 35.1	
Strong	33 37.1	51 29.0	84 31.7	
Total	89 33.6	176 66.4	265 100.0	
Sig		d.f	Chi-Square	
0.407		2	11.797	

**Table 11: Investigating the correlation between the religious beliefs and gender**

Religious beliefs \ Gender		Men	Women	Total
		Weak	18 32.7	73 34.8
Medium	25 45.5	67 31.9	92 34.7	
Strong	12 21.8	70 33.3	82 30.9	
Total	55 20.8	210 79.2	265 100.0	
Sig		d.f	Chi-Square	
0.121		2	4.225	

Table 12: Investigating the correlation between the religious beliefs and marital status

Marital status Religious beliefs		Single	Married	Total
		Weak	Frequency Percentage	30 30.3
Medium	Frequency Percentage	27 30.3	65 36.9	92 34.7
Strong	Frequency Percentage	32 36.0	50 28.4	82 34.7
Total	Frequency Percentage	89 33.6	176 66.4	265 100.0
Sig		d.f		Chi-Square
0.398		2		1.844

The results (Table 11) of chi-square test (Chi-Square=4.225), which is significant at the level of 0.05 (sig=0.121), indicate that there is no correlation between these two variables, thus the null research hypothesis is confirmed.

**Eighth hypothesis**

There is a correlation between the librarians' religious beliefs and marital status at state universities of Tehran City.

The results (Table 12) of chi-square test (Chi-Square=1.844), which is significant at the level of 0.05 (sig=0.398), indicate that there is no significant correlation between

these two variables, thus the null research hypothesis is confirmed.

**Ninth hypothesis**

There is a difference between the belief in consequential dimension of religious beliefs and professional ethics in librarians at universities affiliated to the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology and universities affiliated to the Ministry of Health and Medical Education.

Fisher's Z-test is utilized to test this hypothesis; its results are as follows (Table 13).

Table 13: Results of Fisher's Z-test for the difference between the consequential dimension of religious beliefs and librarians' professional ethics at universities affiliated to the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology and universities affiliated to the Ministry of Health and Medical Education

Variable	Professional ethics		Fisher's Z-test	P-value
	Health and Medical Education	Science, Research and Technology		
Consequential dimension	0.087	0.228**	1.42	0.155

\* Significant at the level of 0.05, \*\* Significant at the level of 0.01

The results of Fisher's Z-test indicate that there is no significant difference between the consequential dimension of religious beliefs and librarians' professional at universities affiliated to the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology and the Ministry of Health and Medical Education,

thus the null hypothesis, which indicates the lack difference, is confirmed.

**CONCLUSION**

We have sought to investigate the correlation between the religious beliefs and professional ethics in this research.

The research results indicate that the librarians' religious belief is the variable

influencing the professional ethics; and there is a direct and medium correlation between the religious beliefs and professional ethics. In other words, a one unit increase in librarians' religious belief will lead to the medium increase in librarians' professional ethics.

After explaining the correlation between dimensions of religious beliefs and professional ethics, we have sought to investigate the effect of these variables on each other; hence, the research results indicate that about 0.07% of variance in librarians' professional ethics can be explained by faithfulness dimension of religious beliefs. For the impact of behavioral dimension of religious beliefs and the rate of adherence to professional ethics among the librarians at state universities of Tehran City, the research results indicate that about 0.12 percent of variance in librarians' professional ethics can be explained by behavioral dimension of religious beliefs. For the consequential dimension of religious beliefs and the rate of adherence to professional ethics among the librarians at state universities of Tehran City, the research results are consistent with most of the domestic and foreign studies. Kazemi-Kani et al [4], have found that the prayer as one of the religious practices will lead to the development in professional ethics and improvement of job among the

staff. In an article entitled "The religiosity outcome from the perspective of William James", Azarbaijani [1], has argued that the promotion of ethics is one of the consequences of religion and religiosity. Khadem Abolfazli and Ataei (2012) have also considered the positive and significant impact of religious teachings on utilizing the public and professional ethics in medical students. Concluding in a thesis, Rahimi [9], has also found that the religiosity will lead to the morality in people.

The foreign studies also indicate the positive correlation between the religiosity and professional ethics. Butler et al [2], have concluded that the worship and prayer strengthen the sense of responsibility which is one of the components of professional ethics.

According to another research finding, the librarians' demographic characteristics have not made any changes in religious beliefs, and the librarians at state universities of Tehran are the same in terms of religious beliefs at any group of age and level of education. Furthermore, this variable has not made any difference at the level and rate of religious beliefs despite the income differences among the librarians. On the other hand, there has been no correlation between the librarians' religious beliefs with gender and marital status.

Another finding of this research is about the correlation between the librarians' demographic variables such as the age, education, income, gender and marital status with dimensions of professional ethics. The research findings indicate that there is a direct weak correlation between the age and professional ethics. The increase at the librarians' ages will lead to the weak increase in their professional ethics. There is also a positive and weak correlation between the librarians' income and professional ethics, so that the increase in librarians' income rates will lead to the weak increase in their professional ethics. Furthermore, the research results indicate that there is a positive weak correlation between the librarians' educational levels and professional ethics, so that the higher levels of education will lead to the weak increase in their professional ethics.

The other finding of research refers to the correlation between the gender and professional ethics. The gender has made difference in adherence to professional ethics, thus the women have stronger professional ethics in this regard. It is noteworthy that this correlation is weak. However, the research findings suggest that there is no correlation between the marital status and professional ethics. Zare (2011) has found that the higher level of education in librarians will lead to the higher

familiarity and respect for professional ethics in them. Unlike the results of this research, Kazempour et al [5], have found that there is a negative correlation between the level of education and professional ethics; and there is no significant correlation between the gender, field of study, type of employment, rate of salary, and type of job with the rate of respect for principles of professional ethics.

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