

**THE EFFECT OF WORK VALUES AND HUMOR ON
JOB PERFORMANCE IN INTERNATIONAL JOINT
VENTURES IN IRAN: COMMUNICATION
SATISFACTION AS A MEDIATOR**

BY

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**KESAN NILAI KERJA DAN HUMOR KE ATAS
PRESTASI KERJA DALAM USAHASAMA-
USAHASAMA ANTARABANGSA DI IRAN: KEPUASAN
KOMUNIKASI SEBAGAI PENGANTARA**

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini telah dijalankan di kalangan pekerja Iran yang bekerja dalam usahasama-usahasama antarabangsa (IJV) untuk mengkaji kesan nilai-nilai kerja dan humor terhadap prestasi kerja dengan kepuasan komunikasi sebagai pengantara. Teori pertukaran social telah digunakan sebagai rujukan. Sebanyak 375 borang soal selidik yang boleh digunakan telah dikumpulkan. Data tersebut telah dianalisis dengan perisian (SPSS) dan kaedah analisis regresi berganda.

Hasil kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa nilai kerja mempunyai kesan yang besar ke atas prestasi kerja. Ia menekankan bahawa penggunaan kerap lucu mempunyai kesan yang ketara terhadap prestasi kerja. Ia mendedahkan bahawa dua dimensi nilai kerja (instrumental dan kognitif) mempunyai kesan yang besar ke atas kepuasan komunikasi maklumat. Di samping itu, hubungan antara nilai-nilai kerja dan kepuasan komunikasi hubungan disokong. Ia juga mendapati bahawa terdapat hubungan yang positif antara kekerapan lucu dan kepuasan komunikasi. Ia juga menunjukkan bahawa kepuasan komunikasi mempunyai hubungan yang positif dengan prestasi kerja. Penemuan menekankan bahawa sebahagian daripada kepuasan komunikasi maklumat menjadi pengantara hubungan antara kedua-dua nilai kerja instrumental dan nilai kerja kognitif ke atas prestasi kontekstual. Sementara itu, ia menunjukkan bahawa kepuasan komunikasi maklumat sepenuhnya menjadi pengantara hubungan antara nilai instrumental dan prestasi tugas. Sebahagian

daripada kepuasan komunikasi maklumat menjadi pengantara hubungan antara nilai kognitif dan prestasi tugas. Di samping itu, ia menunjukkan bahawa kepuasan komunikasi hubungan menjadi pengantara hubungan antara nilai kerja dan prestasi kerja. Ia menunjukkan bahawa sebahagian daripada kepuasan komunikasi maklumat menjadi pengantara hubungan antara kekerapan humor dan prestasi kontekstual. Keputusan kajian ini menegaskan bahawa sebahagian daripada kepuasan komunikasi hubungan menjadi pengantara hubungan antara kekerapan humor dan prestasi kontekstual. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa sebahagian daripada kepuasan komunikasi hubungan menjadi pengantara hubungan antara kekerapan humor dan tugas prestasi.

Hasil kajian ini memberikan maklumat yang berguna untuk usahasama-usahasama antarabangsa, terutamanya di Iran. Untuk usahasama-usahasama antarabangsa Iran yang ingin meningkatkan sumbangan pekerja mereka terhadap prestasi kerja, jabatan sumber manusia IJV Iran disyorkan mengambil pandangan yang serius dan meningkatkan nilai kerja, humor, dan kepuasan komunikasi.

THE EFFECT OF WORK VALUES AND HUMOR ON JOB PERFORMANCE IN INTERNATIONAL JOINT VENTURES IN IRAN: COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION AS A MEDIATOR

ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted among Iranian employees who work in international joint ventures (IJVs) to study the effect of work values and humor on job performance with communication satisfaction as a mediator. Social exchange theory was used as a reference. A total of 375 usable questionnaires were collected. The data was analyzed by SPSS software and multiple regression analysis method was used.

Findings of the present study revealed that work value has a significant impact on job performance. It is highlighted that frequent use of humor has a significant impact on job performance. It is shown that two dimensions of work value (instrumental and cognitive) have significant impact on informational communication satisfaction. In addition, relationships between work values and relational communication satisfaction were supported. It is also found that there is a positive relationship between frequency of humor and communication satisfaction. It is also made known that communication satisfaction has a positive relationship with job performance. The findings enunciate that informational communication satisfaction partly mediates the relationship between both instrumental work value and cognitive work value on contextual performance. Meanwhile, it is indicated that informational communication satisfaction entirely mediates the relationship between instrumental value and task performance. Informational communication satisfaction partially

mediates the relationship between cognitive value and task performance. In addition, it is demonstrated that relational communication satisfaction mediates the relationship between work value and job performance. It is pointed out that informational communication satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between frequency of humor and contextual performance. The results of the present study emphasized that relational communication satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between frequency of humor and contextual performance. The findings noted that relational communication satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between frequency of humor and task performance.

The findings of the present study provide useful information for the IJVs, especially in Iran. For Iranian IJVs that wish to improve their employees' contribution on job performance, human resource department of the Iranian IJVs are recommended to take serious observations and enhance work values, humor and communication satisfaction.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The main goal of all companies is definitely to achieve the best performance in sales and productivity. Among all important dependent variables in industrial and organizational psychology, job performance is the most important one. Moreover, improving job performance is considered to be almost the main focus of most applications of this branch of psychology, such as employee training and job redesigning(Borman, 2004; Kahya, 2007). Campbell (1990) revealed that job performance is an important part of human resource management. Besides Scullen, Mount and Goff (2000) stated that “job performance is a fundamentally important construct in organizational practice and research. From a practical perspective, it plays a central role in most personnel decisions, such as merit-based compensation, promotion, and retention. It is also used as an important source of development feedback.” Deadrick and Gardner (2008) stated that almost all human resource practices consider employees’ job performance as a main objective. Moreover these human resource management practices aim to boost and enhance employees’ job performance. As all companies are having a quick shift towards the competitive advantage in the marketplace and achieve their goals, the importance of effective job performance as a key to success should be highly considered.

Previous research mentions that work values have a relationship with job performance. Goris (2006) stated that employees’ job performance is one of the main components of organizational performance. In the other words, job performance is a subset of organizational performance. Moreover it is declared by Farooqui and Nagendra (2014) that employees’ job performance is a crucial factor for determining

the performance of an organization. It is obvious that the main objective of all organizations is the improvement of their organizational performance. Because betterment of organizational performance can result in better productivity, all companies plan to reach to a satisfactory level of production and achieve their goals.

To attain a favorable situation, multinational companies always should be active and careful about their employees' performance. It is a continuous process which successful organizations should pay serious attention to it. Successful organizations always care about their employees' performance because reaching in high level of employees' performance result high level of organizational performance. IJVs also aim to have better organizational performance so organizations in joint venture have put more emphasis on factors (like employees' motivation, employees' work values, employees' communication and...) that impact employees' performance. Reaching to satisfactory level of employees' job performance in IJVs results in higher level of organizational performance. Then IJVs by reaching to high level of organizational performance can reach to satisfactory level of production, better quality and achieve their main goals.

Monitoring and improving employees' performance is function of a supervisor (YukI, 1989). Becker, Billings, Eveleth and Gilbert (1996) revealed that a supervisor will be more likely to create and promote performance as a norm rather than creating such desired situations just within work groups. As stated by Shem and Itzhak (1991) work values are defined as seeing qualities that persons need from their job. Siu (2003) mentioned that work values impacts performance of employees. This includes a positive relationship on career outcome variables such as organizational commitment, career planning and wages (Mannheim, Baruch & Tal, 1997), the hours spent on work (Snir & Harpaz, 2006) and, attitudes and job performance (Peterson

&Quintanilla, 2003). Many researchers stated that work values have direct effect on employee's performance in their job.

The other recent variable that is going to capture researchers' interest in organizational background is humor. Gallagher (2001) as cited in Lee and Kleiner (2005) noted that work is serious for some group of people. However, people at work should not to be serious continually. An enjoyable place of work is able to set up a powerful group spirit and therefore boost productivity. Gallagher (2001) further added, "Seriousness pushes people away, yet humor can bring people closer." As a conclusion, humor brings color to people's life and creates the work more significant and beautiful meaning to work. The sense of meaningfulness of work will aid employees to have a more helpful attitude in the direction of their job (Liu, Fu& Zhang, 2008).

Positive attitude makes employees to carry out things that make them experience good feelings (Liu, Fu& Zhang, 2008). It has been mentioned by some scholars that work values is related to communication satisfaction. As stated by Downs, Archer, McGrath and Stafford (1988) organizational communication satisfaction obviously has important implications for research on work values, in the line with the existing research, Raile (2007) found that communication satisfaction is maximized when work values is fulfilled.

Previous literature represents a significant relationship between communication satisfaction and job performance. Communication satisfaction is presented as a predictor of job performance as stated by Goris (2006) in which communication satisfaction has significant influence on job performance. Pearce and Segal (2004) stated that communication satisfaction levels which are positively related to actual job performance are considered as a tool among their employees to improve job

performance. Also employing effective communication strategies is critical for international joint ventures operating in economic transition (Zeybek, Brien & Griffith, 2003). Communication satisfaction has significant influence on job performance and job satisfaction. Communication satisfaction was significantly related to two of the three dimensions of performance: quality of performance and overall job performance (Goris, 2006). Fierce domestic and world competition in most industries calls for business owners and managers to seek ways to improve communication satisfaction levels among their employees as a way to improve job performance and thus competitiveness (Pearce & Segal, 2004).

Satisfaction in organizational communication is positively related to actual job performance and productivity (e.g., number of clients served and cost of operation per employee) (Lemay, 2006). Satisfaction with communication is correlated with high levels of both job performance and job satisfaction (Chien, 2004; Requena, 2003; Coopman, 2001). Communication satisfaction has a significant influence on job performance. Overall, the significance of communication satisfaction within important organizational constructs such as job performance and job satisfaction has been recognized (Kirkman, Rosen, Tesluk & Gibson, 2004; Chien, 2004; Clampitt & Downs, 1993; Goris, 2006).

Several researchers, books and articles, have recently asserted that having fun in work place is an excellent advantage for groups, companies and organizations. These sources declare that fun and humor in work place will guide to increased productivity, performance, better morale and less human resource difficulties. There is evidence which shows that having fun at work environment in the organizations will raise the levels of creativity, communications and satisfaction, between workers

and brings better feeling of group cohesiveness, zeal and enthusiasm (Ford, Newstrom & McLaughlin, 2004).

In the light of globalization, international joint ventures appear to offer an opportunity to capitalize on the particularities of localized skills, knowledge and capabilities within the international arena. Moreover, the internationalization of markets offers an increased scope to innovate, develop and market new products which may benefit from the advantages offered by international collaborations (Avny & Anderson, 2007). International joint ventures have become an essential tool for Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) to expand internationally (Beamish & Delios, 1997). According to Alexander and Mohr (2007) the basic logic of international joint ventures has been originated from the thought that each party needs to share something that is crucial for other party to have successful business.

Therefore, the present study looks into the relationship between work values, humor, communication satisfaction and job performance in international joint ventures in Iran. This study also investigates the mediating role of communication satisfaction in the relationship between work values, humor and job performance in international joint venture companies in Iran. Because communication satisfaction has significant influence on job performance so this is the first condition that CS must have, to be taken as a mediator. Second reason is that both work values and humor have a positive relationship with communication satisfaction. Third reason is that, the focus of the present study is looking at CS as a mediator between independent variables and dependent variable.

Eventually the final reason is that work values and humor both are attitudes. Then the researcher considered communication satisfaction as a mediator between two mentioned independent variables (work values and humor) and dependent

variable (job performance). Ali and Kandlusi (2010) considered communication satisfaction as a mediating variable between communication and organizational citizenship behavior. Carriere and Bourque (2009) also considered communication satisfaction as a mediating variable.

There are many interesting studies in international joint ventures which have found problems that are related to these alliances, mostly in co-operating with a partner from a different culture. It is reported that 37% to some 70% of international joint ventures suffer from performance problems (Pothukuchi, Damanpour, Choi, Chen & Park, 2002; Meschi & Riccio, 2008). Barkema and Vermeulen (1997) found that issues about cultural differences may impact performance of international joint ventures. They mentioned that international joint ventures normally face many challenges, for examples, low performance, staffing, communication, lack of proper human resource management strategy system and cultural issues. Khorassani (2012) researched about the factors contributing to the performance of international joint venture in Iran. He found that there has been a high rate of failure in international joint venture companies in Iran. Many factors contribute to this high rate of failure among international joint ventures in Iran. Among the factors are; organizations suffer from lack of positive human relations, trust, expectation of employees and employees' concerns inside the organizations. These findings of Khorasani (2012) have created researchers' interest to examine the dimensions related to human factors such as work values, humor, communication satisfaction and job performance.

Another interesting research conducted in Iran regarding international joint ventures was by Namazie and Frame (2007). They reported that Iranian managers and supervisors commented that multinational companies, especially international joint ventures suffer from low productivity and low performance. Namazie (2006)

studied international joint ventures (IJVs) in Iran and found that the Iranian partners' perception of HRM was very different from that of their MNC partners. The biggest HRM challenge in Iran is retaining employees. Some companies have been using corrective action and giving rewards to people who have demonstrated an ability to further advance the goal of the organization. Furthermore, one of the managers remarked: We have all the different HRM functions, but they all operate like different islands, we do not know how to bring them together and unify them for one purpose. Moreover, all over the world, MNCs view HRM as a strategic function. This is reflected in the structure and unity of the HRM policies and practices in MNCs. In contrast, Iranian companies do not yet see HRM as a strategic function and have not yet made the link between different HR functions in order to increase individual performance. The other crucial issue that faced Iranian with lots of problems was, not having a suitable and stable reward system.

Nazemie's (2006) research also has sparked the researcher's interest to study the IJVs in Iran, especially when Nazemie (2006) mentioned about low performance. In present study, the researcher will take into account human factors in the IJV. The researcher is looking for work values and humor as independent variable in the present study.

Firstly, the present study emphasizes on work values in order to understand Iranian employees' work values which in turn would help employers and managers to create efficient human resource policies encounter employees' needs and achieve satisfactory work outcomes (Chu, 2007). Furthermore, the present study pays attention to the dissimilarities and similarities in work values of employees that should possibly permit for the design and implementation of practices. This may mitigate some of the potential negative effects in association with demographic

diversity (Dose & Klimoski, 1999). In addition, exploration into the methods by which values are obtained and changed should have positive implications for organizational practice. Moreover, one of the greatest challenges for organizations especially international joint ventures, in the following years will be the retirement of older employees. These retired employees will be replaced by a number of young people who enter the workforce. To effectively attract and manage the new cohort of employees, organizations will need a vivid understanding of work values of these new generation (Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman & Lance, 2010) since the new generation's values might differ from the previous ones.

Secondly, the researcher is interested in the work values of Iranian people. The common value system of Iran is Islam, meaning that the Iranians are following the Islamic values in their daily activities which is mirrored in their working place. Based on Islam, work and national foundations have certain places. Work is equal to Jihad in God's way in its value system (Zarei & Matin, 2008). Therefore, Iranian national and religious cultures inspire workers to do the best they can. One part of work values in the present study (intrinsic dimension) refers to employees' demands and requirements at work. Work values are influential on employees' work attitudes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment and loyalty. Therefore, a clear understanding of employees' work value structure will help employers and managers to apply effective HR policies that meet employees' needs and gains satisfactory work results in areas that employees desire most (Chu, 2008). Therefore, this study has been run in order to investigate work values, as an independent variable.

In addition it should be mentioned that most Iranian people are not only friendly but also humorous, however, in their working place they are serious (Ali & Kandlusi, 2010; Kandlusi, Ali & Abdollahi, 2010). Furthermore, there are few

studies of humor in the context of organizations in Iran (Kandlusi, Ali & Abdollahi, 2010; Sheikh & Tavakoli, 2000). For the mentioned reasons, in the present study humor is considered as the other independent variable in which may boost employees' job performance in international joint ventures in Iran.

The researcher is interested in conducting a research on this topic because the failed international joint ventures had problems in their employees' job performance which was revealed by the interviews that the researcher had with three Iranian HR managers. The focus of the present study is IJV in the car industry; thus, having three big failures of IJV in Iran is a big proof that grants the researcher to conduct a study in this topic. Zagros Khodro is a good example of a failed IJV operating in Iran. The IJV between Zagros Khodro from Iran and Proton from Malaysia started in 2003 but ended in 2007. This was a serious matter since it involved a lot of money and the JV lasted only for 4 years. The second example of failed IJV is Kerman Khodro.

Kerman khodro was an IJV between Iran and Daewoo from South Korea. Another failed IJV was among Iran Khodro from Iran, Mercedes from Germany and Samsung from South Korea that produced Musso, a car which was sold in Iran from 2000 to 2006. Nonetheless, barely any scientific research has been conducted on these IJVs to examine the reasons of their failures.

There are many problems concerning the failure of IJVs, but the present study would focus on work values, humor, communication satisfaction and employees' job performance. Likewise, in Zagros Khodro's case, there seemed to be differences in working values of Iranian and Malaysian employees at the IJV, which may affect their attitudes towards humor in the working place and communication styles allowed in the IJV. Consequently, the employees' job performance will be affected.

1.2 Problem Statement

Nowadays there are numerous international joint venture companies all over the world that are looking for better and higher profit like Penske Truck Leasing Company. Nonetheless, some of these international joint ventures failed and many did not achieve satisfactory performance (Fuji-Xerox, Benz-Chrysler and Sony-Ericson). It is reported that 37 to some 70percent of international joint ventures suffer from performance problems (Pothukuchi, Damanpour, Choi, Chen& Park, 2002).

According to the present study, one of the most important factors affecting the failures in Iran is employees' job performance. It is revealed by the managers of three big international joint ventures in Iran that one of the most important factors that cause the failure was problem in employees' job performance. Khalaj (2010) revealed that the lack of employees' job performance is the main issue in Iranian joint ventures. As it is mentioned by some researchers (Goris, 2006; Farooqui & Nagendra, 2014) employees' job performance is one of the main dimensions of organizational performance. In the other words, job performance is a subset of organizational performance and since many of joint venture companies have problems in their performance, it should be taken into account.

The present study will focus on employee's performance in international joint ventures in Iran. The researcher at first would like to recognize real challenges that have been faced by the international joint ventures in Iran. Hence, a number of interviews among skilled managers who were working in the previous international joint ventures in Iran were conducted. The three interviewers were managers of Zagros Khodro and Kerman Khodro (that names were not allowed to be revealed in this thesis). The outcomes of the interviews showed that the well known international

joint venture companies practicing in Iran did not have a proper performance. The interviews pointed out that the managers were not happy concerning a number of facets of the international joint venture. They declared that “quantity” and “quality” of goods produced in the international joint ventures were not so good and definitely could be better.

Moreover, it was declared by Naderi (2009) that the Iranian international joint ventures did not have enough amounts of “competitive advantages” compared to other competitors; which means that the Iranian IJVs had capability to be better in manufacturing and enhancing the quality and quantity of the end products, importantly the competitive advantages as it is desired. Naderi (2009) asserted that the lower rate of sale and increasing customers’ complaints was the clear signs of decreasing amount of competitive advantage in Iranian IJVs.

The managers and supervisors hoped to improve the effectiveness of IJVs because they believed that IJVs’ effectiveness is actually required to be enhanced; so that they can compensate for the lack of effectiveness they were confronted with. The executives shared the similar view that the IJV’s in Iran had the ability to be better in manufacturing and to enhance the quality and quantity of end products. Importantly they (IJV’s) had the capability to increase the competitive advantages as it was desired. Therefore, to reach the favored situation, IJV’s need to enhance their employees’ job performance.

The managers of former IJVs asserted that the end products with low quality were the sign of problem in production which is related to organizational performance. To realize the causes of these shortages and failures influenced on employees’ job performance in IJV’s in Iran, the researcher endeavors to present the related literatures and theories. The researcher is now more interested to know more

about job performance and has found that low performance in the international joint ventures is a very crucial issue in many international joint ventures (Mohr & Puck, 2007). As it is mentioned by Goris (2006) employees' job performance is one of the dimensions of organizational performance. In the other words, job performance is a subset of organizational performance and many of joint venture companies have problems in their performance. Besides, the other researchers stated that common personnel problems among international joint ventures are in the areas of staffing, loyalty, promotion, decision-making, performance management and compensation (Rao, 2001). Foreign employees must be able to work with local employees to realize the advantages of international business (Evangelista & Hau, 2009). Furthermore, it is declared that the lack of high-performing individuals at job results in poor job performance and therefore the manufactured goods not meeting worldwide-rank class standards, which are the obvious sign of the importance of work performance (Rovai, 2010). Present study would only focuses on the issue of employees' performance in international joint ventures and relates it to work values, humor and communication satisfaction.

Every country has its special culture and its characteristics. Iranian IJV's has problem in employees' job performance. Therefore, the researcher conducts the present research to find out the best solution to solve the problem. Satisfying work values, making positive use of humor and a satisfactory level of communication satisfaction in IJV's in Iran are different from the other countries. Because Iran has Islamic value system and also benefits from its ancient culture. The similar research in the other countries can be proposed for future research.

Despite their growing popularity, international joint ventures have proven notoriously that they are difficult to manage. Much of this difficulty has been

attributed to the cultural differences between the partners (Brannen & Salk, 2000). The basis for this attribution is that cultural differences are associated with increased difficulties in communication and coordination; the areas that are essential for cooperation between the companies (Glaister & Buckley, 1999). There are some IJVs in Iran which have encountered problem of low level of employees' job performance and there are some failures in IJV's in Iran. This is a symptom that shows a real need to solve the problem in Iran (Tehran capital city and Kerman).

According to Iranian statistics mentioned by Fathipoor (2010) and Naderi (2009), operation of three out of six IJVs in car industry has been suspended. Based on the provided information by Fathipoor (2010) and Naderi (2009), among the reported reasons (e.g., low profit margin, lack of employees' job performance, competitive pressures in the car manufacturing sector and poor supply chain management system) which led to such failures in IJV's of Iran, lack of employees' job performance was highlighted as one of the major reasons of failure. Therefore, the present study aims to conduct a study particularly on IJV's that are still active in car industry including KHB and KHR.

Examples of collapsed international joint ventures in Iran are Zagros Khodro and Kerman khodro. Zagros Khodro was international joint ventures between Zaghros Khodro in Iran and Proton from Malaysia and Kerman Khodro IJV was between Kerman Khodro from Iran and Daewoo from South Korea. As the researcher interviewed the previous HR managers of these previous international joint ventures, international joint ventures had serious problems in many elements, one of which was job performance. It was one of the most important problems in Zagros Khodro and Kerman Khodro. The result of the interviews among these HR managers in the previous international joint ventures of Zagros Khodro and Kerman

Khodro gives the warrant to the researcher to examine this issue, especially looks into the problems of employees' job performance in international joint ventures in Iran.

The researcher first contacted via telephone calls to a few HRM managers that had experience in working with failed international JV companies in Iran. Out of these, three were willing to be interviewed and they had tendency towards being helpful in giving information in order to enhance knowledge for the future of IJV in Iran. These interviews were conducted July, 2010. The first one was conducted on 10.7.2010 with Mr. A at his new office. The second interview was conducted on 15.7.2010 with Mr. B and the third one was 18.7.2010 with Mr. C. All of them were corporative and gave answers in open-ended questions.

The interviewees were conducted among three Human Resource Management managers in the failed international joint ventures in Iran. The interviews were in formal settings and were conducted in Persian language. Each of the three interview lasted for about one hour. The 3 interviewed managers were top level managers (former HR managers) in many IJVs in Iran. The researcher also telephoned 3 top level managers (former HR managers). They had worked several years in IJVs (in car industry) and they had faced problems (employees' low performance, unsatisfactory communication level) over years. Each interview manifested the obstacles they encountered over the years. To assure that the interviews are really in depth and informative, the questions were designed carefully to be comprehensive, self-consistent, non-redundant and easy to understand. Then, they were edited and refined by the researcher's supervisor. Based on these questions, six interviews were done (three oral interviews and three phone interviews).

During the interviews, questions such as, “What was the main problem relating to the failure of the JV?”, “Did the JV had problems regarding staffing issues?”, “Did it had anything to do with employees’ satisfaction?” and, “How was the communication among the employees?” The summary of the answers given by the managers are listed below. From the answers that the researcher received from the managers, all of them indicated that the failed IJVs had serious problems regarding employees’ job performance. The problem is crucial because three main IJVs have been broken down. The problems in Iranian IJVs mostly refer to the low employees’ performance and unsatisfactory employees’ communication that cause the low organizations’ performance.

Previous literature represents a significant relationship between communication satisfaction and job performance. Communication satisfaction is presented as a predictor of job performance as stated by Goris (2006) in which communication satisfaction has significant influence on job performance. Pearce and Segal (2004) stated that communication satisfaction levels which are positively related to actual job performance are considered as a tool among their employees to improve job performance. Also employing effective communication strategies is critical for international joint ventures operating in economic transition (Zeybek, Brien & Griffith, 2003). Communication satisfaction has significant influence on job performance and job satisfaction. Communication satisfaction was significantly related to two of the three dimensions of performance: quality of performance and overall job performance (Goris, 2006). Fierce domestic and world competition in most industries calls for business owners and managers to seek ways to improve communication satisfaction levels among their employees as a way to improve job performance and thus competitiveness (Pearce & Segal, 2004).

It is asserted by managers that employees' communication is not satisfactory. According to the above literature high level of communication can increase the level of employees' job performance. By the same token, unsatisfactory communication can cause low employees' job performance. Low employees' performance and unsatisfactory level of communication is mentioned by managers as it is reported in Table 1.1. There were six international joint ventures at work in car industry in Iran. Nowadays, there are only three IJVs in car industry in Iran.

The staffing issues which the managers pointed were more about the employees' communication, punctuality and working values. Although the staffing policies could be as distracting factors, they were not reported as influencing factors based on the managers' reports. Based on some researchers like Nieves and Mujtaba (2011) lack of congruence among various work values may create resistance to change and conflict in international joint ventures.

The researcher first went to the Ministry of Industries and Mines. The employees working in the research and development of the Ministry spoke to the researcher. As they were aware of the problems (financial, human resource and marketing) occurring in the industry they found the suitable managers for researcher. The managers of IJVs had informed the ministry about the failures and problems (financial, human resource, marketing and they are looking for solutions for all problems). The employees were working in research and development section had known the managers as the most responsible and reliable managers to help the researcher. The answers that the managers gave to the researchers' questions and the interview were in the line with Iranian local news about these issues. The answers that the managers gave to the researchers' questions and the interview were in the

line with Iranian local news (Iranian Channel II TV talk shows) about these problems (financial, marketing and especially human resource management) (Mohseni, 2010).

Three interviews were performed with the managers who had the experience of more than 15 years experience in their job. They had been worked in many IJVs, so the researcher could benefit from their knowledge and useful information. The questions that the researcher asked them were designed accordingly by his supervisor to investigate the IJVs' problem in Iran. The questions that the researcher asked them can reflect his research objectives. The HR managers have the experiences of working with failure IJVs and in the time of interview were working with the different companies.

Table 1.1
Interview of Iranian Managers

Questions	Mr. A	Mr. B	Mr. C
What was the main problem relating to the failure of the JV?	Not good corporation and some communication problems with the other party.	Unsatisfactory employees' productivity and performance. Financial problems.	Not having enough money and support from the government and having problems in performance.
Did the JV have problems regarding staffing issues?	Yes, the former IJV had some problems in the staffing issues especially with young and old employees.	Yes, some problems regarding staffing like punctuality, respect to each other and...	Yes staffing issues was considered as one of the main issues in the IJV.
Did it have anything to do with employees' satisfaction?	I think so	Absolutely. Employees, satisfaction could boost the level of productivity and their performance	Yes, employees' satisfaction was not considered as one of the important policies of the company.
How was the communication among the employees?	There was no friendly communication space between employees. This is most probably because the international company did not have "people-oriented" policy in which employees	The level of communication between the employees was just OK.	They had only formal communication relationships in the former IJV. Top to down communicator seldom made appropriate situation for a two ways communication.

	were asked to be serious at work. Employees were scared to make fun.		
How was the communication between employees and their supervisors?	There were very formal communication relationships between employees and their supervisors.	In the former IJV there was not a friendly relationship between supervisors and their subordinates.	The level of communication between employees and their supervisors was not good.
How was the organizational climate?	The organization just asked employees to work hard.	The managers were serious people and they aimed to monitor the employees as well as they could, so there was a serious environment in the former IJV	There was a formal space which governed the IJV.
Have the IJV practiced humor in its working environment?	Not at all. The practicing humor in the IJV was not practiced at that time.	Rarely. It was not the policy of the organization to use humor in the working place.	Never. Practicing humor in job place was not the IJV's policy.
Do you believe that employees could perform better?	Sure, they could enhance the level of their performance.	Yes, I think they could boost the level of their productivity and their performance	Absolutely, they could do.
How was employees' job performance of the failed IJV compared to the other Iranian normal organizations?	Compared to the other competitors, their performance (low level of employees' job performance) was not good.	Compared to the other competitors their performance (low level of employees' job performance) was not satisfactory.	Compared to the other competitors their performance (low level of employees' job performance) was not at all acceptable and could be better.
Have the IJVs paid attention in terms of monetary to the employees' work values?	Sometimes, in some occasions the IJV gave them some loans, or rewards.	Rarely. The former IJVspaid them some money twice a year.	Seldom, only in difficult situations the HR part of the IJV paid attention to the employees to support them.

*Note: Names of respondents who participated in the interview were kept anonymous in order to maintain privacy and confidentiality of the respondents.

Table 1.2
Telephoned managers

Questions	Mr. D	Mr. E	Mr. F
What was the main problem relating to the failure of the JV?	Some financial problems.	Having problems in production, especially low quality of products.	Not good communication and many communication problems inside the

			organization.
Did the JV have problems regarding staffing issues?	Yes.	Yes, staffing issue was one of the main considerations of the company.	Yes, former IJV faced many staffing issues, especially cultural issues.
Did it have anything to do with employees' satisfaction?	Yes, the satisfaction of employees is the issue that should be considered more.	Yes.	Yes.
How was the communication among the employees?	There was formal communication inside the company.	There were mostly formal relationships between employees.	The level of communication between the employees was not acceptable.
How was the communication between employees and their supervisors?	The relationship between employees and their supervisors was hardly OK.	There was a formal communication relationship between them.	A formal relationship was governed between employees and their supervisors.
How was the organizational climate?	Formal communication space existed in the organization.	Formal space was governed there.	Managers asked employees for hard work.
Have the IJV practiced humor in its working environment?	No.	No	No
Do you believe that employees could perform better?	Yes, they did not do their best.	I think yes.	Yes.
How was employees' job performance of the failed IJV compared to the other Iranian normal organizations?	I think that it was not acceptable.	Compared to the other competitors it was not good.	Compared to the other competitors their performance was low.
Have the IJVs paid attention in terms of monetary to the employees' work values?	Rarely.	Sometimes when some employees did important tasks very well.	Yes when the employees in difficult situations helped their colleagues and organization had an outstanding achievement.

The managers, whom were interviewed by the researcher, were experienced and expert managers. They have worked in many IJV's in Iran and have been aware of real problems. As the Iranian news reflects there are many failures in IJV's in car industry. The signs of failures of former IJVs consist of a considerable drop in stock values, expelling employees followed by a continuous reduction of the quality of

their products. The three managers of former IJV's and present IJV's whom were interviewed, faced directly the problems (unacceptable level of employees performance and unsatisfactory communication level). This is obvious that the information of managers is the most valid evidence about the internal organizations' problems.

The answers are obvious and clear because the questions are designed professionally without any ambiguity or irony. The managers reflected their useful and appropriate information. Also they were informed about the research and later they were asked to answer the questions. A clarification was made whenever there was any misunderstanding. If they did not understand the question they asked about it. Explaining the content and purpose of the query, the researcher tried to make the questions clear. The interview took one hour. The researcher explained the academic terms like "organizational climate" for them. For example, by "serious environment" it means a not joking or pretending environment.

The researcher believes that if IJVs could be able to practice humor positively, their employees can perform more effectively in their working environment. As a matter of fact, it seems that there is barely any significant difference between these questions. As the managers asserted, there were some problems in employees' job performance and also in employees' communications. The questions and their answers were reflecting the problem in employees' job performance and communication issues.

From the aforementioned answers given by the three managers, the researcher can conclude that there were problems related to staff issues with the failed-IJV companies in Iran. It is obvious that employees were facing problems related to communication, work values and job performance.

The researcher interviewed 3 top level managers of IJVs who faced failure and also telephoned 3 top level managers of IJVs in Iran. The researcher first telephoned three top level managers in 19/7/2010 from the research. The results are reflected in Table 1.2. The problems were highlighted by 6 managers who were experienced experts and knowledgeable managers in Iran. Also local Iranian news (Iranian public radio programs) which reflected IJVs' issues, highlights the mentioned problems (problems about communication and employees' performance) reported by managers.

Development of recent economic and some changes in international business relations have increased the number of international joint ventures. This trend has created a need for a greater understanding of the interaction and effect of values, culture and technology in a multicultural environment on the likelihood of success and the performance of international joint ventures. Generally, a lack of congruence among various work values, such as, power distance, individualism, collectivism and uncertainty avoidance, as experienced by Nieves and Mujtaba (2011) may create resistance to change and conflict in international joint ventures. The development of international joint venture management practices by the venture managers and a value-adding functional structure may contribute to the success of the international joint ventures (Nieves & Mujtaba, 2011). Notwithstanding the key role that management plays in international joint ventures, Nieves and Mujtaba (2011) mentioned that more research is needed to examine the management of international joint ventures, manager's cultural values and orientations and the effects that they have on the success of the international joint ventures. It is declared that the lack of high-performing individuals at job results in poor job performance and manufactured

goods which do not meet worldwide-rank class standards, which are the obvious signs of the importance of work performance (Rovai, 2010).

Some researchers like Pearce and Segal (1998) recommended that relationships between communication and job performance need a deeper study since there are only a few research available in this area. It is a very important concept that plays a major role in the context of management of any organizations especially in the international joint ventures which face many challenges such as the differences in cultures of different international organizations. Some scholars like Pearce and Segal (1998) believed that the relationship between job performance and communication satisfaction remains relatively uncertain. Somehow few researches have been done to uncover the relationship between organizational communication and job performance. Nevertheless, this effort does not seem to be enough and a more comprehensive investigation is needed.

The results of the investigation of the relationship between organizational communication and job performance indicate a need for further research. Thus, the present study takes up the challenge in conducting an empirical study to examine the relationship between organizational communication and job performance. Fuji-Xerox, Benz-Cryler and Sony-Ericsson are the most famous examples of the break down in international joint ventures. In Sony-Ericsson joint venture, some communication problems arose. Sony originally from Japan with high power distance and high in masculinity and Ericsson from Sweden with low in both power distance and masculinity may have some communication challenges which were not reported in the media.

In formal relationships Iranian are meticulous people; regarding to the situation they think about every single word that they aim to say. Iranian people are very

formal in their working place. Therefore, their communications is limited to only formal communication. This is very important to study this aspect because Iranian have problem within their communication in their working place.

Study of communication satisfaction should be considered as an important part of job, as communication plays a major role in the organization and its role will be highlighted when international joint ventures is discussed. There is no doubt that communication is an important aspect of organizations (Daft, 2002; Rodwell, Kienzle & Shadur, 1998). Organizations cannot exist without communication (Keyton, 2005) or even that communication is the organization (Taylor &Every, 2000). It is clear that communication has strong ties to the very core of organizational existence. Through communication, information is shared to provide a fundamental understanding of the tasks that are to be performed as well as the goals to which the organization is striving. Good communication may help to sharpen the view of the things that an organization value (Vuuren, Menno, Jong & Seydel, 2006). When business partners emanate from different cultures (national and organizational), the underlying cultural inconsistencies in communication partners create hardness to the development of effective business relationships (Mohr & Nevin, 1990). Thus, communication satisfaction is an important element that needs to be studied in international joint venture organizations. The present study aims to treat communication satisfaction as the mediator in the relationship between work values, humor and job performance of employees in international joint ventures.

“Work values”, which is tested as the IV in the present study, are thought to be critical elements of organizational culture which may ultimately serve to enhance individual and organizational performance (Schein, 1985). Work values at various levels of the organization have been associated with a variety of individual and

organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job choice, judgments of person-organization fit and performance (Adkins, Ravlin & Meglino, 1992; Adkins, Russell & Werbel, 1994; Chatman, 1991; Judge & Bretz, 1992; Meglino, Ravlin & Adkins, 1989), however the relationship between work values and work outcomes needs additional study. In particular, the relationship between work values and job performance in terms of job performance that needs additional study (Meglino, Ravlin & Adkins, 1989) which the present study is going to do it.

An important trend in business in the twenty-first century is the focus on employee spirituality in the workplace (Shellenbarger, 2000). It is important to note that in modern societies work values are typically considered as salient, basic and influential. This is clearly demonstrated by research on “work centrality” carried out in the context of the Meaning of Working Project (England, 1991; MOW International Research Team, 1987), as well as the work importance study (see Sverko, in this special issue). The importance of work role in many cultures makes work values into core values that take a cardinal position in the overall pattern of values (Roe, 1999). Thus, there is an urgent need to gather empirical data on work values as suggested by Robertson (1993) and their relationship to behavior for many under researched countries (Robertson, 1993). Therefore the present study intended to study about the relationship between work values, humor, communication satisfaction and job performance among employees in international joint ventures in Iran. Such data will be valuable to researchers, practitioners and policy makers as suggested by Viswesvaran, Deshpande and Joseph (1998).

It is worthy of note to consider the various dyad positions within the organization hierarchy and their resultant possible effects on communication