

The Role of Educational Institutes in Promoting Work Ethics

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Abstract

Work ethics is one of the subjects that have gained great importance by scholars and researchers regarding its importance in promoting positive ethical behaviour and its impact on the institutional performance. However, because of the behaviour offenses, mismanagement practices, and administrative corruption like bribery, forgery, and pinching, there is the search for concepts, practices, and tools to eliminate or mitigate these practices. Developing the moral concepts is the most important tools that lead to the elimination of all these forms of administrative corruption. The ethics of business relation cannot be ignored in the presence of threats towards the enterprise or that is expected to occur after a while. Whatever its size effect and duration, the ethics of the profession appear obvious and clear at all levels of the institutions and its various kinds. Morality can capture the hearts of others, make the nation to prevail, and raise the people up as the prince of poets, Ahmed Shawki, said: "Nations are exists as long as morality exists, and if they lost their morals, they will be lost as well". Another poet, Hafiz Ibrahim, said: "Education is useless without morals". Every person influences one another based on his or her work ethics and profession. Hence, the researcher's choice of institutions and scientific centers are clear and obvious beacons in establishing awareness and creating understanding of the ethics of the profession. This subject is considered with a great interest when dealing with issues related to development.

Keywords: Work ethics, educational institutes, Palestine, development, profession.

Introduction

Studies have clearly shown that work ethics are a source of concern for employers, and this is evident when it is needed to employ the required skills for success and continuity at work. Educators in all areas should find various ways and means to include the subject of work ethics within the educational program (Roger & Petty, 1995).

There is no doubt that religious teachings are one of the important sources where values and ethics are derived. The Noble Sunnah is an interpretation of some values and ethics that has been mentioned in the Islamic Constitution, the Holy Quran (Qariouti, 2009).

Ethics is defined as the set of values, customs and traditions that are agreed upon or recognized by the members of the society for what is good, right, and fair in organizing their affairs in this society. The sources of ethics for what is true and what is wrong include the following: the monotheistic books revealed by God in The Holy Qur'an and Sunnah for Muslims, the Torah and the Gospel for Jews, Christians and others; the human conscience, which often determines human behaviour and governs the individual's moral behaviour; individuals and groups surrounding the person such as parents, friends, relatives and colleagues who influence his or her behaviour; laws and regulations issued by governments that prohibit certain behaviours and consider them immoral; professional organizations, trade unions and associations, which define many ethical behaviours that respect the profession and they also ask members or employees to make commitment to these morals to protect the profession morally (Husseini, 2006; Halawah & Saleh, 2010).

*Ethics varies from society to another regarding its importance. Ethical practices that are rights based on the point of view of a society might be wrong in another one. Professional ethics is the system of values that governs the administrative area, which is derived mainly from religious beliefs. Here, it is noticeable that the monotheistic religions were pointed out to strengthen the positive moral behaviour and to avoid the negative ones. God said in the holy Quran: “Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing” (The Holy Quran, Surah An-Nisa: 58). By the same token, the Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) said: “Excellence is to worship Allah as if you see Him, for you do not see Him but He certainly sees you”. He also stated: **“Bring yourself to account before you are taken to account”**.*

The Islamic religion strengthens the concept of self-censorship of the Muslim individual to stay away from behavioural deviations and make him committed to the provisions of God and his law in his administrative work. In this regard, the civil service systems in most countries of the world provide legal texts, aimed at controlling the ethical behaviour in the society and the conduct of career in administrative organizations. Also, the governments ensure these texts should be derived from religious and social beliefs (Yaghi, 1994: 35; Halawah & Saleh, 2010).

Consequently, there are many examples of the existence of legal texts in some societies aimed at controlling human behaviour. In Japan, the employee must perform the office oath

before starting the job. It is also important to comply with the discipline of the job, obey the orders of the superior, and refrain from negative behaviours. Moreover, in the United States of America, the ethics of the public job contains many behavioural controls aimed at preventing corruption and employee delinquency. Therefore, the most important of these standards are: loyalty to the ideals and the homeland; respect for the Constitution and laws; sincerity at work so he deserves the money he takes; looking for the most economical ways of doing business; and providing services to citizens without favouritism and without accepting gifts (Abdel Hamid & Hayari, 1984).

Purpose and Scope

The objective of the study was to identify the role assigned by educational institutions to promote the work ethics. The study, considered to be the first and leading of its kind, revealed that it is the responsibility of the institutions and the educational centres to spread the culture of work ethics among all individuals, students, and employees. The study adopted the analytical theoretical approach in addressing the study statement of the problem.

Background

An Ethical Framework

The ethical framework reflects the set of principles, rules, traditions, and social cultures that enable employees and management to prepare the work requirements and decisions related to it. The following steps can be taken by the project manager to formulate and develop the ethical frameworks of the business: determine the ethical dimensions that frame the situation, the case and the decision required to be taken; determine the real stakeholders of the project and determine the mechanism and how decisions taken are affecting them; the need to find suitable and varied alternative solutions and distinguish between ethical and unethical responses, that requires a continuous ethical evaluation of the consequences of any decision or any treatment of any situation; and to choose the best ethical response and work on its implementation or application, taking into consideration the fact that this choice should be suitable to a large extent with the objectives of the project, the value system and culture prevailing in the environment, as well as the values and beliefs of decision makers (Abdel Hamid & Hayari, 1984).

To sum up, positive ethics and behaviours play a prominent role in the following matters: fighting administrative corruption; administrative, political, economic and social reforms; method of dealing and work relations; promote and respect the values, customs and traditions of society; respect leadership, responsibility and obedience; respect people and time; preserving state property; save the organisation strategy secrets; and working to develop the loyalty factor and belonging to these organizations (Ministry of Administrative Development, 1995).

As for business ethics, they are set of corporate values and behavioural standards that business people draw during their day-to-day activities within the framework of decision-making and in solving problems related to their effectiveness and activities, the repercussions of those decisions, and solutions to problems and obstacles to the surrounding environment. Here, the nature of problem of morals that are contrary to ethical rules and standards and the rules of conduct that arise in organizations are investigated (Ferrell et al., 2010: 7).

Managerial Transparency and Work Ethics

1. Administrative Transparency Concept and Its Importance

Many scholars and researchers mentioned the administrative transparency concept regarding its importance and they searched for a specific definition for it. Nazih Barqawi, in his definition for transparency, spoke about clarity, rationality, and compliance with the requirements or terms of reference for work and equality of opportunity for all, ease of procedures, and reduction in corruption. He added that the transparency of the laws means clarity, simplicity of formulation, and easy understanding, in addition to the ease of the executive procedures, its simplicity, and preventing permitting circumvention, unjustified prolongation, and integrity during their implementation (Lozi, 2002).

Another scholar, Abed-Karabsha, defined it as "The clarity of legislation, its ease of understanding, its stability, its harmony with each other, its objectivity, the clarity of its language, its flexibility and its development in accordance with the economic, social and administrative changes and in accordance with the spirit of the times. In addition, it entails the following steps: simplify the procedures, spread the information, disclose it, and make it easy to access by everyone (Lozi, 2002: 141).

Moreover, managerial Transparency is the subject of this era, and it is one of the most important requirements of modern management and its advanced concepts that the conscious departments need to consider regarding its importance in achieving successful administrative development. However, this is in addition to its contributions to the development of administrative organizations and reaching well-developed organizational structure which is capable of facing new challenges. The pioneers of the administrative idea call for making more efforts to address administrative problems and identify the obstacles facing administrative development, such as administrative corruption, routine, boredom, and ambiguity based on work methods and procedures. Implementing transparency in the administrative processes is one of the most important things to be observed in administrative practices at the public administrative bodies.

Basically, the existence of administrative transparency is one of the most important requirements for fighting administrative corruption. It is one of the most important strategies adopted by countries to fight corruption in its various forms. The increase in transparency contributes greatly in increasing the degree of confidence granted by citizens to individual workers at the government sector. Transparency and clarity in administrative processes means clarity at work procedures, being away from the routine, and complexity of procedures. Furthermore, it helps the citizens to access the services they want, resulting in the satisfaction of their needs and in increasing their productivity (Halawah & Saleh, 2010).

This concept has been further enhanced by the success of some governments worldwide in applying this new management concept and obtaining positive results that have led to a low level of corruption and administrative slackness as well as increased efficiency and effectiveness. Besides, administrative transparency plays a prominent role in achieving many benefits, fighting corruption, and facilitating the process of achieving successful administrative development. However, administrative transparency will not contribute in achieving these objectives unless some necessary requirements are in existence. One of these requirements is applying the concept of business *reengineering* (Lozi, 2002).

2. The Relationship between Administrative Transparency and Comprehensive Administrative Development

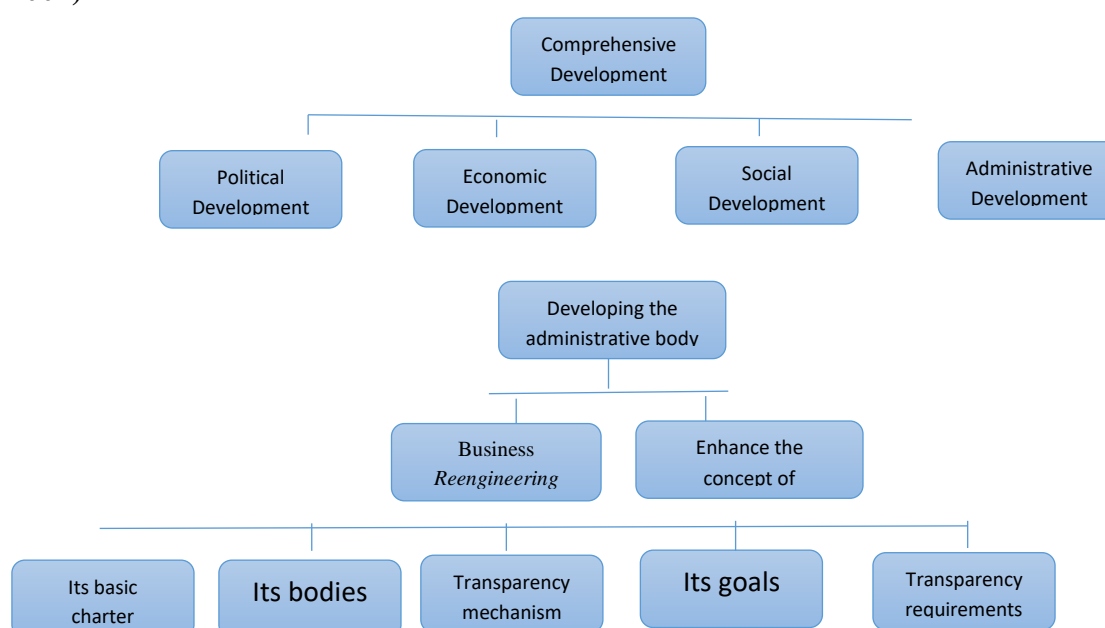
Successful and targeted management development, the availability of appropriate levels, and the need for organizational development are both prerequisites for the success of administrative transparency at public administration bodies.

Total Quality Management means managing the organization as a whole so that it is excellent in all aspects of its activities and business, especially the products and services that interest the consumer (Harrison et al., 2002).

Business Reengineering is a new administrative concept created by Michael Hammer and James Champ in 1992. It means initial and basic rethinking, and radically redesigning management processes in the goal of achieving substantial, rather than marginal, improvements in critical performance standards such as cost, quality, service, and speed.

Total Quality Management and *Business Reengineering* are among the necessary concepts that must be in the public administration bodies to achieve success in the administrative transparency process and to reach its goals smoothly and easily. Therefore, this relationship and the overlap between transparency and modern administrative concepts are illustrated as shown below:

Figure 1. Relationship between Transparency & Comprehensive Development (Lozi, 2002)



3. Unethical Career Practices

Some projects sometimes face enormous pressures to achieve their goals, even if it affects the public interest of the community negatively. These projects are accused of violating professional ethics or work ethic, and it might happen despite the manager's conviction or even by his full knowledge and acceptance.

Unethical practices may include such things as bribery, dishonesty, dishonest advertising, general administrative corruption or environmental damage, such as the disposal of industrial waste in water sewers, lakes and rivers, or wasting national resources such as producing bad manufactured or poor-quality goods that may put the lives of individuals and society in danger. Here are some unethical practices:

- 1- The governments of some countries such as China, Taiwan, and Thailand are under international pressure because their industries are often stolen from industries in other countries and they violate their rights by imitating the brands of leading companies, falsifying them, and placing them on poor quality goods. This issue has been raised at the international level in international conferences and meetings. They reflect the deviation from the traditions and ethics of management as a creative human activity.
- 2- You are a manager at work and the subordinate comes to complain about his lack of income and then you promise him incentives and rewards if he proves his efficiency at work while you do not intend to reward him or know that you cannot do it. Morally speaking, you are a liar and a very deceitful person. From an administrative perspective, this person will no longer have trust in the manager or the administrative committee. Moreover, he will share this impression with others and this will lead to a decline in the performance of the employees and unwillingness to make any unusual or mandatory effort.
- 3- You are a manager and you have been asked to write a report to your boss on the progress of your work. You asked your subordinates to prepare the report, but when the report came to you, you found out that there were some problems that you did not want to present to your superiors, then, you asked your subordinates to make simple changes to the numbers which changes some of the facts and present it in an unclear way. In terms of moral morality, you are a liar, a cheater, and a fraud. In terms of management, you have become a bad role model for your subordinates. It is most likely that they will do the same thing with you since the bad role model extends to

your fellow managers who may find out that your style made you appear to the bosses as a great hero. As a result, they start imitating you and afterwards, all the reports became cheats, lies, and false facts. It is no secret that this would lead to the failure of the administration and the work process.

- 4- You are a manager - in a company you do not own - and a job was advertised, and many candidates submitted their applications to you. Then you tested them and identified the qualified candidates and you decided to choose them as well. When you make your final decision, you remembered that one of the less efficient candidates had come with a recommendation of a relative or a friend to you; then you ruled out one of the most efficient candidates and you chose this recommended person.

Is this not a betrayal of the trust you have borne? What would you say if you were the owner of the company and you knew that? Will you not say that the manager is not honest? It does not stop at frustrating the most efficient person, but it goes beyond that to other peers who are aware of what has happened to him. As a result, they will begin to lose confidence in the community they live in. Moreover, younger people feel that there is no point in trying hard to learn because this will have nothing to do with their employment. Are you not involved in all of this?

In terms of management, your decision negatively affects the performance of the institution and it makes the employees feel that the recommendations will control their promotions and evaluation that reduces their enthusiasm to provide the best performance (Alaq, 2008: 51).

It is necessary to mention the fact that the modern administration has become aware of the dangers of administrative corruption. In some projects, voluntary departments and bodies have been established to monitor professional ethics and administrative excesses, as they prevent the project from reaching its rational objectives. Individuals, sales management, marketing management, and projects that cheat the consumer are liable to be judged by the law. Furthermore, it may become bankrupt especially if we realize that the consumer in the market economy societies is the master of the market. Nevertheless, it is beneficial for the projects to apply the ethical and behavioral management to remain in a safe situation and in a conducive environment based on creativity.

4. Transparency International Organization

Transparency International Organization has published its annual report for 2010, which monitors the level of corruption in the world. This was done based on assessments and opinion polls conducted by specialized and independent organizations. According to the report, 75% of the countries are classified as highly corrupt. Qatar is on the top of the list of the transparent countries that practice anti-corruption in the Arab world. It is 19 from 180 countries around the world. Denmark, New Zealand, and Singapore were on the top list of the most transparent countries in the world, while Afghanistan and two Arab countries, Iraq and Somalia, were at the bottom list of the most corrupt countries. However, this explains the impact of wars and security problems on the transparency of these countries.

This year's report highlighted the decline of some countries beyond the 20 on the list such as the United States which is ranked 22nd this year due to the instability against the backdrop of financial and political scandals that hit it in 2009 and since the disclosure of the Bernard Madoff scandal. All Arab countries are affected by the spread of corruption - except Qatar, Oman, which has obtained an index of more than or equal to the average-which led the Transparency International Organization to warn the concerned countries of the impact of corruption on its development process. Hence, this impedes the efforts of these countries to fight poverty and improve their financial markets and Limit of indebtedness (Transparency International, 2010).

5. Corporate Social Responsibility

Recently, the importance of social responsibility has become increasingly important after the decline of the role of many governments in playing their roles in offering service and development, especially considering the increasing role of the private sector and the growth of its social and development responsibilities.

There is no comprehensive definition for firm's social responsibility, but it can be said that firm's social responsibility includes the idea that the project is in a race in relation with a group of social forces and in doing more than just trying to avoid violating ethical rules. A key example of firm's social responsibility in practice is the company's involvement in community service. This concept also implies that the motivation for commercial business

goes beyond self-interest, but is an attempt to elevate the institution's self-interest to achieve the public interest of society (Ficker, 2014: 178).

The concept of firm's social responsibility has long been part of the business management strategy, and the key elements of the firm's social responsibility are not a new phenomenon nor the total business practices associated to it (Halawah & Saleh, 2010).

Most organizations contribute in serving the society in which they live because they realize that a strong society helps them to become stronger organizations. In addition, the employees in these organizations are more satisfied if they live in a desirable society. Moreover, better staff can be attracted to these organizations (Abdel Hamid & Hayari, 1984).

The participation of the Organization in the society would be preferable to be followed and acceptable by it. In 1993, a survey showed that more than 90% of the large firms in the United States had a community participation program, and more than one-third of that rate was allowed to take an off time while working to participate in a voluntary work. About 63% of these firms have a special finance to participate in the society. Only 44% of those companies allowed an off time for voluntary activities, while less than two thirds provided financial support. In 1996, Market & Opinion Research International (MORI), the second-largest survey organization in Britain, conducted a survey which showed that 82% of British people believed that the activities of companies within the community is important in shaping public opinion around them (Hancock, 2005).

It is known that the form of the company consists of the outcome of the beliefs, cultural values, and the long history of the organization. As a result, this leads to the philosophy and the message that seeks to publish as well as its strategic plans. All of which are recognized through the work team of that organization, its structural systems, and the provided products (Ficker, 2014: 254).

Although there are those who rejected any idea related to the social responsibility of the organization as the American economist Milton Friedman who granted Nobel Prize in 1976, he still justifies his approach towards the free market. He opined that business organizations have valuable resources that can be used to solve social problems and they should be used for this purpose. For example, the business sector has a range of talent, managerial skills, and capital resources that can be devoted in solving social problems (Alaq, 2008).

Furthermore, there are different real examples of the institutions' corporate social responsibility, locally and internationally, as follows:

- 1- The Palestinian Communications Group won the second place in the category of large institutions in the Arab Award for Corporate Social Responsibility, organized by the Arab Network for Corporate Social Responsibility and the Emirates Development Work Group, and it is the third year in the Arab world. The competition witnessed the participation of 62 companies from 12 Arab countries seeking excellence in achieving Sustainable Development in the Arab Region. The Communication Group has implemented development projects targeting marginalized areas, students, youth, education, health and others.
- 2- The Arab Bank allocates part of its annual profits to support outstanding and disadvantaged university students especially in the Palestinian occupied territories by providing them with university scholarships that help them to enroll in the university and continue their university education.
- 3- At the international level, Bill Gates, the world's richest man who owns the biggest PC software company, plans to save 10 million dollars each for his children, out of his 60 billion dollars. He has pledged to donate all his wealth to charity after his death. He led a campaign with his fellow, Warren Buffett, the world's second-richest man, to invite wealthy Americans to donate at least half of their wealth after their death to charity. 57 billionaires responded to this invitation at the time of writing this paper (Halawah & Saleh, 2010).

Findings

Educational Institutes and Work Ethics

1. The Teacher, The Role Model

The educational institutions based on its different types and levels took a considerable responsibility in establishing the concept of ethical culture in general and the concept of work ethics in particular. In the Islamic world, the educational message derives its ethics from the guidance of the Islamic law and the principles of its civilization. Therefore, those who perform it should be faithful in their work as part of being faithful to the religious roles. They

also have to be true with themselves and the others. In addition, their effort should be ongoing to disseminate science and its virtues.

The teacher represents the intellectual who belongs to his religion, morals, and country. This requires him to expand his knowledge and its sources so that he can form a thoughtful opinion based on science, knowledge, and experience. This base presents the role of the educational institutions in building ethics among students through the following points: the existence of a general moral charter; activate a moral charter for graduates; ensuring the transparency in dealing; guaranteeing freedom of expression; considering the ethical dimensions in serving the society; provide rules to ensure individual grievances and equity in opportunities (Mourah, 2010).

Furthermore, some studies indicate that the direction of the teacher and his behavior determine his character to his students. This affects the learners' success and development. Moreover, the teacher who respects his tasks has more students that are successful since he is their role model based on his point of view of the material he taught as well as education in general.

Additionally, increasing the attention and the positive thinking of the teacher towards the profession leads to an increase in the individual mastery. Trends towards the teaching profession are the key to predict the social atmosphere's model that will be confirmed by the teacher in the classroom or lecture hall. In addition, the teacher's positive thinking toward his profession helps to conduct the educational process properly according to its four areas which are: behaviorism (democracy, justice, sincerity, citizenship, commitment ...); emotional (dream, friendliness, humanity, optimism, encouragement ...); behavioral emotional (Lessons and role models inside and outside the institution); cognitive (acquiring a professional, administrative, organizational and relational cultures). Subsequently, these are the teacher's specific ethical characteristics while the negative trends remain without achieving the goals and objectives.

2. Manners then Education

Many people forget that manners come before education. Most ministries concerned with this field are called the Ministry of Education and here education stands for both manners and

knowledge. There are many opinions and suggestions concerning the change in curriculum and the development of education, but not manners at schools.

All children in Japanese schools from elementary to high school have a quarter of an hour daily to clean their own school. Every class has a cleaning wardrobe. They have a system in which they move the tables and clean the floors and lobbies. Also, the teachers help them in doing so; but why? It is neither that the Japanese schools are poor, nor they want to save money, but they see that this refine the children on several principles including:

- A. Modesty: Students cleaning schools themselves and with their teachers teaches them the principle that all people are equal no matter are young they are, son of the rich, son of the poor, son of a minister, or son of a merchant, All of them clean together.
- B. Cleanliness: A person who is practically raised to clean the school daily will not throw paper on the ground and this is noticeable when we see the wonderful cleanliness of the Japanese cities.
- C. Teamwork: Children from a young age have been taught to cooperate, work together, and distribute tasks among themselves every day.

Education for them means work not memorization, for example, a student in our communities may memorize the prophet's speech "the removal of harmful object from the road is charity", and then he will be tested by being asked some questions like "Who is the narrator of the speech? When was he born? What is the meaning of the word the "removal"? What is the meaning of the word "harmful"? Then the students provide answers to the questions and get a full degree in the test. Later when he leaves the school, he throws the text paper on the ground. This gap between memorization and application is the problem. It is better if the student receives this speech while cleaning his school daily. Thus, emphasis on the concept of cleanliness during work and application can turn the theoretical speech into a daily practical life. As a result, it is a must to educate students on the principles of humility, cleanliness, respect, and teamwork.

Besides, everyone should cooperate to have such a thing in practise. The Ministry, as it supervises the educational institutions, should work to make students and teachers aware of the importance of cooperation. This work should be considered as a core of our ethics, values, customs, and traditions so that parents do not think this an insult to their children. There is a

difference between insult and education. An excellent example is the prophet (peace be upon him) who was well known for doing all the work himself without embarrassment.

Therefore, manners come before education. The society will not benefit from a scientist without morals and it will not benefit much from a person who holds a doctorate and, at the same time, throws a tissue from the window of the car (Shukairy, 2009).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Work ethics is one of the most important and sensitive topics at work regarding its positive or negative reflection on the administrative work process in the organizations. Moreover, work ethics is the basis for the individuals' behaviours who work in different organizations where the areas of efficiency and effectiveness for these workers are determined. Educational institutions at all levels have the biggest duty of spreading the culture of work ethics among the employees and the students by focusing on the principle of manners before education. Therefore, there is a close link between work ethics on one side and administrative development and administrative transparency on the other side. Beliefs, values, customs, and traditions are the basic pillars of work ethics in all organizations. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Oblige educational institutions at all levels to consolidate the concept of work ethics among the students.
2. There is a need to address the Palestinian curriculum with work ethics.
3. There is the need for all private and public institutions to clarify the administrative transparency principle.
4. There is a need to hold conferences, seminars, and intensive meetings with individual workers in institutions at their various types to encourage them to have a good work ethics.
5. There is the need to have a national award that embodies work ethics to create a competitive spirit among the workers for this noble feature.

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