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The Role of Security Departments in Crime Prevention

Reza. Nasr Esfahani[1], Masoud. Heidari[2*], Mahmood. Ashrafy[3]

[1] PhD Student in Criminal Law and Criminology, Department of Law, Institute of Islamic Governance, Isf.C., Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
[2] Associate Professor, Department Law, Institute of Islamic Governance, Isf.C., Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
[3] Assistant Professor, Department of Law, Institute of Islamic Governance, Isf.C., Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

*** Corresponding author email address**: heidari5525@iau.ac.ir

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Security departments act as the watchdogs of an administrative entity, identifying vulnerable and high-risk points in its operations. Their role in organizational dynamics is crucial. The primary duty of security departments is to safeguard the health of the organization. The approach of security is not primarily security-focused; rather, it is preventive and interaction-oriented, aiming to enhance the organization's service and well-being. Combating crime is one of the rightful demands of the public, and security departments bear a heavy responsibility in this regard, as administrative health and public satisfaction depend on the proper functioning of these departments. The mindset of security departments should be rooted in the importance of human dignity and its protection, ensuring that they foster a professional and ethical atmosphere that promotes a healthy and vibrant work environment. The three main principles of security work are prediction, prevention, and follow-up. By re-engineering supervisory and security mechanisms, it is possible to enhance the vitality, coordination, and strengthening of supervisory organizations to promote administrative health. In general, the role of security is to ensure the health and security of the organization from the perspectives of personnel, physical assets, and documents. In terms of addressing misconduct, the goal of security is not to detect crimes and apprehend criminals but rather to provide a safe and secure environment for the staff, both mentally and physically. It is evident that the presence of social, ethical, and behavioral problems in any society leads to numerous challenges. Therefore, an organization such as a security department is essential and necessary to address these issues. Given the importance of this topic, the present research examines the role of security departments in crime prevention.

Keywords: *Administrative structures, organizational management, organizational security, organizational safety, crimes, prevention.*

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1. Introduction

Security departments are one of the subordinate units under the highest authority in administrative bodies, including ministries, organizations, and government institutions, as well as public non-governmental organizations and Islamic Revolutionary institutions. They were established after the Islamic Revolution with the goals of safeguarding the achievements of the revolution, protecting human resources, securing classified information, documents, and records, taking preventive measures against potential threats, and countering conspiracies and infiltrations by counter-revolutionary and foreign agents.

Due to the nature of their duties and missions, security departments are governed by laws and regulations that place them under the Ministry of Intelligence. This ministry is responsible for setting policies, guiding, and overseeing their performance, with these duties being executed through the National Security Department (Iranshahi & Moazami, 2011; Mortazaei, 2011).

In terms of oversight responsibilities, one of the persistent concerns of the National Security Department has been the protection of the managers and staff employed in security departments. This is because security departments, due to the critical nature of their responsibilities, employ individuals who must not only meet the general employment conditions of public organizations such as municipalities, certain banks, and social security and pension organizations, but also fulfill specific criteria related to working in security services.

Moreover, special access is granted to individuals working in security departments due to the nature of their jobs, including: access to valuable organizational information and classified documents, which are restricted within any organization. Additionally, there is access to private employee data, contractor information, and personal records held in the employee protection files and databases of the security department. Other provisions include access to assets, equipment, and facilities under their purview, along with the authority granted to them. If preventive and protective measures are not implemented, it could lead to potential corruption and misconduct within these individuals.

In general, it can be said that crime prevention through security departments requires organizational foundations that are well-structured, and timely preventive actions to avoid exposing the organization to risks. Organizational dysfunctions, root causes, and unresolved issues can lead to crises and environments conducive to crime, which in turn will hinder the healthy growth of the organization and increase criminal activity.

In light of the principles and goals of the Islamic Revolution and the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the nature and performance of the system over more than three decades—during which it has successfully challenged imperialist powers across all domains—it is clear that the system's enemies and adversaries have persistently conspired and launched comprehensive hostilities against it.

Given the role and influence of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the international stage and the awakening of Islamic movements in some countries in the region and North Africa, which have exposed the vulnerability of imperialist interests, it seems that this adversarial stance will continue to escalate with the development and progress of the Islamic Republic. Various plots and conspiracies are underway to counter this progress, including actions aimed at slowing down the country's growth and development, intensifying sanctions, sabotaging scientific and technological infrastructure, and targeting influential scholars and scientists in the peaceful nuclear industry. Soft war tactics are being employed in administrative and executive environments, exacerbating deficiencies and issues in governmental agencies, fueling discontent among workers, and disrupting services to the public.

Maintaining and protecting the Islamic Republic of Iran is one of the most important duties. One of the best ways to ensure its preservation is through the protection and safeguarding of Muslim employees and officials within the system, so they do not stray from their duties or commit mistakes and deviations. Islam provides a comprehensive system, strategy, and standards for controlling social quality. This system of social quality control encompasses all processes related to supervision, evaluation, and feedback to preserve and improve the social system, ensuring cohesion, stability, and the continuous enhancement of the Islamic system (Erfanian, 2014; Noor Baha, 2001). The processes of protecting and securing the nation's officials are a central element of the social quality control system in Islam. Maintaining the continuity and strength of the Islamic system requires competent employees who meet both technical and ethical standards and are qualified to serve in organizations affiliated with the Islamic system.

In general, the security department of an organization is responsible for the well-being of all its members. This department performs critical tasks related to maintaining a healthy work environment, controlling the quality and quantity of personnel, addressing administrative and financial misconduct, securing facilities and locations, and protecting documents and records. Additionally, the existence of internal factors and opportunities for influence, manipulation, and misuse of resources and assets within the executive agencies of the country—along with the vulnerabilities in personnel, classified documents, physical assets, and information data in governmental, public, and non-governmental entities—further underscores the critical role of the security department in safeguarding the integrity of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the current context.

Thus, the present research aims to answer the following questions:

- Do security departments, with proper training, prevent crimes and deviations?
- Is the type of crime prevention employed by security departments criminal or non-criminal?
- Does the presence of a security department help achieve organizational goals?
- Does organizational security help address the causes and factors of crime?

2. Formation of the Security Institution in the Islamic Republic of Iran

After the Islamic Revolution, there were several challenges in establishing security activities. One of these challenges was the negative mental associations and personal perceptions regarding security-related matters among the public, especially employees in ministries, organizations, and state-owned companies before the revolution, who had been exposed to the security units and offices affiliated with the National Intelligence and Security Organization (SAVAK).

The vulnerabilities and security threats related to the documents and premises of government organizations before the revolution led to the establishment of the National Intelligence and Security Organization, which was responsible for creating and designing new security regulations and structures within ministries and government organizations. According to Hussein Fardoost, one of the founders of SAVAK, the sources and frameworks for the security regulations and structures were a blend of laws from the CIA and FBI, which were created by American advisers (Ahmadi-Nasab, 2013; Cessen, 2006; Mozaffari Zadeh & Mozaffari Zadeh, 2011).

Historical records indicate that, until 1956 (1335), there were no codified laws, regulations, or defined roles related to security matters and units named "security" or "protection" within the country's administrative bodies. The expansion of administrative activities, the growth of international relations, and the involvement of countries in each other's affairs, as well as the increased competition among colonial powers to plunder Third World countries and the expansion of bureaucracy, led governments, including Iran, to establish regulations in order to better protect their documents, information, premises, and personnel.

In 1956 (1335), by order of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, a commission called the "Permanent Protection Commission" was tasked with drafting regulations related to security matters. In November of that year, the first set of security regulations was issued to all ministries, organizations, and public institutions. From 1956 (1335) to 1979 (1357), in addition to the approval of security regulations by the government and the Permanent Protection Commission, other laws were also passed by the National Consultative Assembly (Majlis), including the Penal Code for the Publication and Disclosure of Confidential and Classified Documents, the Penal Code for Disrupting the Oil Industry in Iran, the Law for the Formation of the Oil Industry Guard, and so on. These laws assigned specific duties to ministries, organizations, and public institutions, and these bodies defined these duties and placed them under the responsibility of security departments (Yathrebi, 2018).

In 1958 (1337), after the formation of SAVAK (the National Intelligence and Security Organization), the Fourth Directorate of SAVAK became responsible for the protection of ministries and government organizations. By appointing a head of security for each ministry or organization, the qualifications of all individuals wishing to be hired were verified. During their service, whenever individuals were appointed to higher positions or management roles, the approval of the SAVAK representative, as the head of security, was required. The planning, training, and development of security matters, including the protection of personnel, premises, and documents, were carried out by SAVAK's Training Directorate. Under the Pahlavi regime, SAVAK's oversight of government organizations was performed through security units stationed within those organizations (Ahmadi-Nasab, 2013; Noor Baha, 2001).

After the victory of the Islamic Revolution, the establishment of security departments became necessary due to its importance. In 1979 (1357), a security office began operating within the Office of Revolutionary Affairs, and several months later, in 1980

(1358), the Security Department was formally established within the Ministry of Information and Research of the Prime Minister's Office (Ahmadi-Nasab, 2013).

Soon after the formation of the office, the then Prime Minister appointed Mr. Hejazi, who was the head of the national police force ("Central Office of Security"), as the head of the new Security Department. In fact, the national security department operated directly under the Prime Minister's office. This arrangement continued for a year and a half until the approval of the decree of 19 June 1980 (29/03/1359) by the Islamic Revolutionary Council, which was then issued to all government agencies on 21 July 1980 (02/04/1359).

3. The Necessity of Security Departments

One of the most important and sensitive issues is the protection of officials, managers, and employees of various governmental, judicial, administrative, executive, legislative, military, and police institutions. This protection involves monitoring and inspecting their actions to prevent deviations, potential corruption, and addressing possible misconduct while maintaining a healthy work environment, administrative relations, and healthy interactions with the public (Ahmadi-Nasab, 2013; Gessen, 1991; Pica, 1991).

This issue, which is both critical and instructive, has always been of significant importance, particularly in guarding against infiltration, embezzlement, bribery, corruption, and abuse of wealth, power, and resources. The importance of this issue has never escaped the sharp and insightful gaze of Imam Ali (PBUH), who emphasized it profoundly and instructively. As we approach the power structures of the people, with increasing responsibilities and more limited public access, the risks grow, and the ability to counter or expose them diminishes, sometimes becoming more dangerous.

The health of the government and society necessitates that rulers always monitor their officials, particularly senior managers and their close associates, with vigilance and insight. They should employ special inspectors and trustworthy eyes to oversee their actions to ensure that problematic, powerful individuals, or the ruler's close associates, do not abuse their power or establish relationships outside of established norms, thus preventing corruption from filtering down to society. In the political culture of Islam, as officials rise through the ranks of power, they must be subject to greater scrutiny.

The importance of this issue is underscored by the Quranic phrase *"Wa tahaffuz min al-'awan"*, which refers to the protection of information and personnel. Although this phrase is more closely related to personnel security, both aspects—protection of information and protection of personnel—are so closely intertwined that they were discussed together.

Furthermore, this protection also relates to efforts to prevent enemy infiltration into the country's officials. The relationship and closeness between officials and foreign enemies or spies is a major threat to the system. The Islamic mandate to distance from enemies, which is mentioned in various forms in the Quran, highlights the significance of this matter.

4. Security Tools Required for Protection

The security tools required for the protection of organizations can vary significantly, depending on the type of organization, its size, geographical location, and the types of threats it faces. Below are some common security tools that may be used by the protection departments of organizations (Ahmadi-Nasab, 2013; Erfanian, 2011; Iranshahi & Moazami, 2011; Mortazaei, 2011; Mozaffari Zadeh & Mozaffari Zadeh, 2011; Shirazi, 2013):

- **Surveillance Systems (CCTV):** Security cameras used for monitoring and recording activities around and inside the organization.
- **Access Control Gates:** These gates are used to manage access to various areas of the organization. They can include electronic gates activated by access cards, fingerprints, facial recognition, or other biometric methods. These gates can physically prevent unauthorized entry and also record the entry and exit times of individuals, which can be used for security investigations if needed.
- **Access Control Gates** can be installed at the main entrances of the organization, parking lots, entrances to sensitive areas such as server rooms, laboratories, and other areas requiring enhanced protection. The use of these gates helps increase access control and strengthens the overall security of the organization.

- **Access Control Systems:** These systems can include access cards, biometric scanners, PIN codes, and other identity verification technologies.
- **Alert Systems:** Fire alarm systems, burglar alarms, and other alert systems designed for quick notifications in emergency situations.
- **Cybersecurity Systems:** Firewalls, antivirus software, intrusion detection systems, and other tools for protecting networks and data.
- **Communication Systems:** Communication equipment such as mobile phones, two-way radios, and internal communication systems to coordinate between security teams and communicate with staff.
- **Security Lighting Equipment:** Security lights, motion-sensor lights, and emergency lighting systems.
- **Centralized Security Management Systems:** Platforms that allow the management and analysis of security data from all systems and devices.
- **Hazardous Material Detection Systems:** Devices for detecting explosives, chemicals, and other threats.
- **Personal Protective Equipment:** Personal protection items such as bulletproof vests, helmets, and defensive tools like tear gas.
- **Inspection Tools:** X-ray machines for inspecting packages and goods, metal detectors for screening individuals.
- **Incident Response Management Systems:** Tools for coordinating security and crisis responses, including incident management software and resource planning.

These tools should be selected in accordance with the specific needs of the organization and relevant legal standards. Additionally, they must be continuously reviewed and updated to ensure their effectiveness and efficiency.

5. Security Standards and Regulations

The standards and regulations that must be adhered to by protection departments in an organization depend on national laws, industry regulations, and internal organizational policies. Below are some of these standards and regulations:

1. **Data Protection Laws:** The protection department must ensure that personal and sensitive data within the organization is protected in compliance with data protection laws such as the GDPR in the European Union or similar laws in other countries.
2. **Labor Laws:** The protection department must ensure compliance with labor laws, including working hours, employee rights, and working conditions.
3. **Security Standards:** The department must adhere to national and international security standards related to physical and cybersecurity, such as ISO/IEC 27001.
4. **Anti-Corruption and Anti-Bribery Laws:** The department must ensure the enforcement of anti-corruption and anti-bribery policies and comply with laws such as the FCPA (Foreign Corrupt Practices Act of the United States) or the UK Bribery Act.
5. **Industry-Specific Laws:** In specific industries such as banking, healthcare, or defense, the protection department must ensure that the organization complies with the laws and regulations unique to that industry.
6. **Environmental Standards:** The department must ensure compliance with environmental laws and regulations such as waste disposal laws, chemical discharge rules, and carbon emission reduction standards.
7. **Intellectual Property Laws:** The department must ensure the protection of the organization's intellectual property rights and compliance with the intellectual property rights of others.
8. **Health and Safety Standards:** The department must ensure compliance with occupational health and safety standards such as OSHA in the United States or similar regulations in other countries.
9. **Confidentiality and Trade Secret Laws:** The department must ensure the protection of confidential information and trade secrets in accordance with relevant laws.
10. **Export Control Laws:** If the organization engages in export activities, the protection

department must ensure compliance with export control laws and sanctions.

The protection department must continuously monitor legal updates and ensure that the organization complies with all relevant laws and regulations in every aspect of its operations. Additionally, it should implement and oversee the organization's internal policies, which are based on these laws and regulations.

6. Conclusion

It is evident that in an administrative system, the more sensitive the jobs become and the more critical the responsibilities of those in charge, the greater the threats and risks they face from sworn enemies of the country, rivals, and even from individuals who may abuse their administrative positions. This issue certainly applies to protection jobs, as these are part of the governing occupations and, in addition, come with special powers and access rights. Consequently, understanding the professional risks faced by protection staff, along with preventive and counteractive measures, helps managers, officials, and employees in the protection departments to not only fully carry out their duties but also increase the efficiency of the protection department as a whole. By maintaining necessary safeguards and being mindful of the professional risks to which they and their positions are exposed, protection staff can avoid inadvertently causing harm or damage to themselves, the organization, the public, and the nation.

The factors contributing to the occurrence of administrative crimes and corruption can be broadly divided into internal (individual) and external factors. External factors can further be categorized into economic, familial, social, and cultural environments. Some criminal-inducing factors arise from both internal and external elements, which create the conditions for crime in the administrative environment. Due to brevity, these factors are not elaborated upon here.

6.1. Key Methods for Preventing Administrative Crimes and Corruption:

- Establishing and implementing regulations, and formulating and approving necessary internal guidelines, with effective enforcement mechanisms.
- Eliminating conditions conducive to crime or misconduct, such as appointing the right individuals, preventing employee unemployment, increasing supervision, etc.
- Educating and strengthening awareness programs for employees.
- Appointing qualified management for key positions.
- Strengthening a culture of self-control and religious faith among employees.
- Providing financial support to low-income employees and addressing their hardships.
- Creating relative fairness in salary distribution between employees and managers.
- Strengthening organizational commitment among employees.
- Sending addicted employees to treatment and rehabilitation centers.
- Being more cautious during initial employee hiring processes.
- Imposing appropriate sanctions on offenders and criminals.
- Explaining the significance and position of enjoining good and forbidding evil, and making it applicable within the organization.

6.1.1. Suggestions

- Reviving spirituality, ethics, and religious values.
- Promoting a culture of fighting corruption and crime.
- Strengthening external and environmental factors.
- Enacting clear and unambiguous laws, reinforcing oversight institutions, protection departments, and providing necessary training.
- Ensuring transparency, deregulation, and implementing sound privatization practices, further strengthening organizational discipline.

6.2. Practical Recommendations

- Given the presence of organizational crimes, it is advisable to focus on the proper use of information within each organization.

- Educational strategies and creating a healthy environment in organizations, offices, etc., should be considered to prevent crimes and to identify the factors leading to crimes, including financial, organizational, and personal ones.

Authors' Contributions

Authors contributed equally to this article.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

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Ethical Considerations

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