

*Original Article****Spiritual Leadership and Job Involvement of Employees in Selected Hospitals of Isfahan: 2010***

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***Abstract***

***Background and purpose:*** The movement of spiritual leadership is a special kind of service-centered leadership which looks forward to progress and staff control. Job involvement also emphasizes timely attendance of staff, feeling successful at work, and sense of optimism and success about the future of the organization. Therefore, this study investigated the relation between spiritual leadership and job involvement of employees in the selected hospitals located in Isfahan.

***Materials and Methods:*** This study was descriptive-analytical and was conducted in 7 hospitals of Isfahan in 2010. The instrument used was a valid and reliable questionnaire consisting of three parts of demographic data, spiritual leadership questionnaire, and job involvement. Data was analyzed by SPSS .18 and analytical and descriptive statistics (t-test, ANOVA and Pearson correlation) were performed.

***Results:*** Results showed that the average score of spiritual leadership and job involvement in entire hospital cases were more than 3. There was a direct correlation between spiritual leadership and job involvement. Also there was a significant relation between the staff work experience and the two studied components.

***Conclusion:*** According to the results, it is recommended that organizations authorities involved in health issue provide conditions in addition to focusing on various aspects of spiritual leadership so that the health community rights and especially the staff of this sector be respected and have a sense of job security so that more improvement of job commitment and job involvement be provided for people by enjoying social supports. [Jafari H. \*Shaarbafchizadeh N. Yaghoubi M. Zahmatkesh H. Azami R. **Spiritual leadership and job involvement of employees in selected hospitals of Isfahan: 2010. IJHS 2013; 1(2):35-42** <http://jhs.mazums.ac.ir>

***Key words:*** Job Involvement, Spiritual Leadership, Hospital

## **1. Introduction**

In the current era, economic activities and technological changes are increasing. Organizations have the capacity to deal with these changes since they feel the need for fundamental changes and creativity inside themselves. Hence the attempt to create a favorable environment to attract, maintain, enhance, and motivate employees seems necessary (1). Meanwhile the existence of the right person in the role of leadership in order to create these conditions is inevitable since leadership has an important role in the effectiveness of individual and group employees and as most of the experts argue, it is called organizational differentiation factor (2). So comprehensive leadership position has been blended in four basic areas of the body, mind, heart, and soul and defines the necessity of human nature and existence (3). Spiritual leadership stems from servant leadership style which according to Spears is an evolutionary approach to life and work, and generally, it is a being method that has the potential to create positive change in society (4). Based on the philosophy of servant leadership, spiritual leadership includes empowering and participation of employees and service leadership models (5). Spiritual leadership by research, thinking, perception, valuation, and one's action in the society with team spirit not the individual one provides opportunities to recognize a superior power by the person who requires a deeper intuitive and emotional activity, and in order to do so, he/she makes important priorities such as self-discovery and meaningful life alignment, which eventually leads to organizational and individual health (6). In order to further accept spiritual leaders in the fields of education, trust, reliability and inspiring promoting spirit of cooperation, trust, mutual concern, system commitment, and effectiveness of the system through the inspiration views and the mission of the organization seem necessary (7). In a study by Fry et al., spiritual leadership model was expressed as a new and effective theory in the field

of leadership operation research in a such a manner that developed and blended charismatic and transformative theory like moral values, so more attention was paid to spiritual needs of the employees that has positive impact on individual and organizational results, and on the other hand, a proper barrier was made in order to avoid measurement errors (8). Also, in another study by Dooshene and Ploman, staff working environment was described as an inner and internal issue that can be strengthened through meaningful work in the organization (9). On the other hand, the most important factors of productivity in hospitals and society in general are human resources. There is no doubt that the prosperity of any society lies in improving and developing its human resources (10). In recent decades, researchers in the field of industrial and organizational psychology and management have focused on different feedbacks of staff about work and behaviors related to this feedback. The concept of job involvement is one of the feedbacks associated with work studied from different points of view (11). Job involvement refers to the extent of identifying individuals with their jobs (12). Job involvement as an attitude is an important variable that helps to increase the effectiveness of the organization. The higher the level of staff job involvement is in an organization, the more its effectiveness will increase (13). People with high job involvement rarely think about quitting the job and they are expected to create a foreseeable future for their respective organization (14). Apparently, the job of staff with high job involvement has a close relationship with most of their identities, interests and goals of their love, and is very important to them (15). A meta-analysis conducted on a sample of 27,925 individuals from 87 studies revealed that job involvement has a positive relationship with variables such as organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, motivation and performance

and is negatively associated with absenteeism and turnover (16). In fact, it can be said that high job involvement is a desirable characteristic, and those with high job involvement are satisfied with their jobs, show positive attitude at work, and are highly committed to the organization and their colleagues (17) and such people rarely think to quit their jobs and are expected to create a foreseeable future for their respective organization (18). Therefore, considering the above mentioned factors as well as the importance of hospital environment for society and different specializations there, evaluating the relation between spiritual leadership and staff job involvement seems critical, and since such a study hasn't been conducted yet in this environment in our society, the researchers have tried to study the relation between spiritual leadership and job involvement in hospitals' staff of health education chosen from Isfahan University of Medical Sciences and the selected private hospitals of Isfahan. Therefore, spiritual leadership model was examined based on intrinsic motivation. This model includes the characteristics of the organizational landscape, loving humanism, believing in work, meaningful work, membership in organization, organizational commitment and performance feedback (7). We hope that by evaluating and expressing the role of spiritual leadership in healthcare organizations and investigating its possible association with job involvement of hospital staffs, this study make a favorable contribution to further attention to staff's needs and skills and spiritual survival improvement and enhancement of their capabilities.

## **2. Materials and Methods**

This study was descriptive-analytical conducted in 2010. The study population consisted of all supervisors of the selected state hospitals (4 hospitals including Kashani, Noor and Ali Asqar, and Massih and Al-Zahra) and Isfahan-located private hospitals (3 hospitals including Sina, Saadi, and Baharestan). Being employed as a supervisor was considered as an inclusion criteria. The sample size was determined to be 195 based on sampling formula. In estimating sample, size the parameters were determined as  $N$  (population number),  $n$  (samples number),  $S^2$  (variance pre-estimation),  $t$  (confidence level),  $d$  (potential efficiency). Data collection tools included three parts: demographic information (age, gender, work experience, and occupational group), spiritual leadership and job involvement. In order to evaluate the concept of spiritual leadership, Fry standard questionnaire (7) was used, which Nargesian (19) in her research project assessed its reliability in Iran by means of alpha - Cronbach obtained as 0.893. Also in order to determine its validity, both content and factorial validity were used that during this step validity and reliability were verified by different interviews and by asking business experts', academia's' and the other experts' opinions. This questionnaire consisted of 25 questions in the areas of organizational landscape, loving humanism, believing in work, meaningful work, organizational membership, organizational commitment and performance feedback and was established in the form of 5-point Likert scale.

Also to check the status of job involvement ,a standard questionnaire was used including 20 questions based on 5-point Likert scale that Qolipoor (20) assessed its validity and reliability ( $\alpha = 84\%$ ) in his research.

After legal procedures and obtaining necessary permits, the researchers referred to the surveyed hospitals and distributed the questionnaires among the employed staff in different sectors of the hospital and provided sufficient and necessary explanations on how to respond to the

questionnaire. Data analysis was performed using descriptive statistics (frequency, mean, and standard deviation), inferential statistics (correlation coefficient test, t-test and ANOVA) and SPSS.18.

### 3. Results

The mean and standard deviation of spiritual leadership and job involvement in all hospitals were  $3.51 \pm 0.63$  and  $3.62 \pm 0.43$ , respectively.

**Table 1.** The mean and standard deviation of spiritual leadership and job involvement components in the surveyed hospitals

Hospital	Component	Significance level	correlation coefficient	standard deviation	Mean	Frequency
Hospital 1	Spiritual leadership	0.003	0.544	0.79	3.31	27
	job involvement			0.51	3.43	27
Hospital 2	Spiritual leadership	0.025	0.440	0.56	3.64	26
	job involvement			0.31	3.63	26
Hospital 3	Spiritual leadership	0.056	0.396	0.58	3.63	24
	job involvement			0.44	3.55	24
Hospital 4	Spiritual leadership	0.005	0.831	0.53	3.66	25
	job involvement			0.40	3.88	25
Hospital 5	Spiritual leadership	0.056	0.728	0.51	3.73	30
	job involvement			0.30	3.92	30
Hospital 6	Spiritual leadership	0.064	0.368	0.70	3.45	26
	job involvement			0.41	3.50	26
Hospital 7	Spiritual leadership	0.004	0.535	0.55	3.13	27
	job involvement			0.35	3.40	27
Sum	Spiritual leadership	0.000	0.572	0.63	3.51	185
	job involvement			0.43	3.62	185

The highest and lowest mean and standard deviation in spiritual leadership were related to hospital No. 5 ( $3.73 \pm 0.51$ ) and hospital No. 1 ( $3.31 \pm 0.79$ ), respectively. Also this level for job involvement was related to hospital No. 5 ( $3.92 \pm 0.30$ ) and hospital No. 7 ( $3.40 \pm 0.35$ ). Given that the mean score for spiritual leadership and job involvement in all surveyed hospitals were more than 3; these hospitals were of high spiritual leadership and job involvement (Table 1). Based on Pearson correlation test in all hospitals (excluding hospitals 3 and 6), a significant relation was found between the two components of spiritual leadership and job involvement ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 2:** The relation between spiritual leadership and job involvement components t with demographic variables of the employees

Variable	Components	significance level	Test value
Gender	Spiritual leadership	0.252	1.319
	Job involvement	0.046	4.034
Work Experience	Spiritual leadership	0.05	1.447
	Job involvement	0.30	1.918
Age	Spiritual leadership	0.545	0.969
	Job involvement	0.63	1.716
Occupational group	Spiritual leadership	0.372	1.074
	Job involvement	0.616	0.913

Based on T-test, there was no significant relation between spiritual leadership and gender of the employees, although this relation was significant between job involvement and gender. ANOVA test didn't show any significant relation between the variables of age and occupational group with the two factors of spiritual leadership and job involvement, either, although this test showed a significant relation between work experience of employees and these two factors (Table 2).

#### 4. Discussion

The results confirm the positive correlation between spiritual leadership and job involvement and state that spiritual leadership in the organization shapes the spiritual beliefs and commitment to work, which as an interior stimuli results in their development and performing their tasks in the best way and also increases accountability inside the employees. These results are consistent with the results of Fry et al., (7) and Karadag (21) that focused on the important role of believing in work in the organization; this belief is merely more than wishing something and is based on values, attitudes and favorable behaviors which are expected to be fulfilled. Considering the importance of faith to work, McArthur (22) also defines hope and believing in job as two important resources for fulfilling organizational goals and vision.

On the other hand, in addition to emphasis on such a significant relation, Gibbons (23) states that spiritual leadership causes the employees to truly understand their jobs and be concerned for their job. Dushon & Plowman (9) also, in their study, described spirituality in work environment as a work environment where employees have an inner life that would lead to their growth and can be reinforced by performing a meaningful task occurring within the society. Also Nargesian et al., (19) believes that the significance of job from the employees' points of view makes them have a greater recognition of their job, that can increase the power of the analysis of the current and future organization's conditions, and finally be more prepared to accept higher responsibilities. Pfeiffer also considers the feeling of meaningfulness in work as a defined feature of a career and believes that peoples' career is valuable and even necessary to them through which they are proud of themselves as a member of society (24). Focusing on this issue, Ashomos & Duchons (25) also stated that staffs always want to have meaningful and inner working life that spirituality in work involves this issue. Furthermore, the spiritual leadership in the organization induces this feeling inside the staff whose job from the organization and other colleagues' point of view is considered to be important. In Pfeiffer's view (24), being recognized as a member involves cultural /social structure where we are and through it we look for something called the most basic human need, i.e. being understood and praised.

Nargesian et al., (19) in their research focused on this issue and stated that the sense of having an important job in terms of organization and the other partners motivates the employees to reinforce and develop trust and intimacy between themselves and others and thus the relation between leaders and colleagues is facilitated, and finally the employees know themselves responsible for decision-making process of the organization. The results of Fray et al (7) and Daft and Lengel (26) are also consistent with the above results and note that being known as a member and knowing the character of a person inside a working network of social communications causes him/her to grow more, live longer, and find him/herself in communication with a larger society. Finally, according to Fray et al., spiritual leadership by creating organizational commitment in the staff makes them loyal and dependent on the organization and creates a sense inside the person that he/she would know the organization as his/her own representative and would be willing to stay there.

Nargesian et al.,(19) also support it and note that organizational commitment makes the employees consider the problems of the organization as their own problems and try to solve them, and if the managers trust the employees, their participation in the organization will increase. The results of the study correspond with the findings of this research.

Fray et al. also showed that there is a positive relation between spiritual leadership, spiritual survival, organizational productivity and organizational commitment that the leader should focus more on the spiritual needs of individuals in the workplace that would yield useful individual and organizational outcomes. Spiritual leadership providing informal daily performance of the staff as well as periodical official visits provides them with performance feedback. This research, like the other studies, emphasizes on the fact that performance feedback causes the employees to become aware of the details of their jobs on a regular basis, to be aware of the weakness of their performance, to reinforce their strong points, to pay attention to the quality of their job, and finally to try to improve organization through the obtained data. Moreover, the relation between the individuals can facilitate transmission of employees' ideas in order to improve the processes and organizational changes and meanwhile, it can increase the sense of involvement in the employees and guide them to observe their job and performance feedback of their own activities.

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