The Relationship between Spiritual Well-being and Organizational Virtuousness with Performance of Secondary School Teachers in Bandar Lengeh City, 2017

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Abstract

Background: Job performance is one of the most important variables in industrial and organizational psychology and its importance is clear to both individuals and organizations. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between spiritual well-being and organizational virtuousness with the performance of high school teachers in Bandar Lengeh, Hormozgan Province.
Methods: This was a cross sectional study conducted on all secondary teachers in Bandar Lengeh city, Hormozgan Province. 127 individuals were determined by using Morgan table. Measurement tools were 40-item Spiritual Well-being Questionnaire, 15-item of Organizational Virtuousness Questionnaire, and the 12-item Job Performance Questionnaire. Level of statistical significance was set at P<0.05.
Results: The majority of respondents (77%) were men. 71% (n=90) of the respondents had a bachelor's degree. The findings of this study showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between spiritual well-being and its dimensions (relationship with God, self-relationship, relationship with others, and relationship with nature) with the performance of high school teachers (P<0.001). Also, there was a positive and significant relationship between organizational virtuousness and its dimensions (optimism, trust, sympathy, cohesion, and forgiveness) with the performance of high school teachers (P<0.05).
Conclusion: Based on the findings of this study, it can be said that enhancing spiritual well-being and organizational virtuousness can enhance the performance of secondary school teachers.

Keywords: Spirituality; School teachers; Job performance; Iran

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1. Introduction

Job performance is one of the consequences of being strong in the workplace and evaluates whether a person is doing a job well. Job performance is one of the most important variables in industrial and organizational psychology and its importance is clear to both individuals and organizations. In other words, all major activities in industrial and organizational psychology focus on improving job performance (1). Job performance in management is an important factor in the development and advancement of organizational goals and it is the cognition that measures how the goals of an organization or institution are met (2).

Virtuousness in organizations means to create, promote, support and nurture transcendent behaviors, habits, practices, and desires such as humanity,

honesty, forgiveness, trust, and loyalty at the individual and collective level. Thus, any individual practices, collective activities, cultural characteristics, or any process that promotes and sustains virtuousness in an organization may lead to organizational virtuousness (3). Any individual practices, collective activities, cultural attributes, or any process that promotes and perpetuates virtuousness in an organization can lead to organizational virtuousness. According to some theorists, organizational virtuousness has the following dimensions: 1. Optimism, which means that members of the organization believe in achieving success, despite major problems, 2. Trust, in the sense of being polite and kindness, respectful, and considering others in the organization, 3. Empathy, the common practice of caring for one another, worrying about each other in the organization, 4. Coherence, that is, the prevalence of honesty, trust, and integrity in the organization and

5. Forgiveness means forgiving mistakes (3). Indeed, one of the transcendent aspects of an organization is organizational virtuousness. Virtuousness in the organization means to create, promote, support and nurture transcendent behaviors, habits, practices and desires such as humanity, honesty, forgiveness, trust, and loyalty at the individual and collective level (4).

Today, it seems that wherever they work, employees are looking for more than material rewards in the workplace (5). They are looking for a meaningful and promising job and want to balance their lives. Spirituality at work is a description of the experience of employees whose work is satisfying, meaningful, and purposeful (6-8). Also, the experience of spirituality at work is linked to increased creativity, honesty, confidence, commitment at work, and an increased sense of personal development of employees (9,10). The introduction of spirituality into the organization enables employees to gain a more integrated perspective on their organization, family, and community. Work, family, and spiritual life are often separated from each other in employees. Socially, 50 to 70 hours of work time per week consist of hours for praying, worship and meditation; remaining hours of family life are necessary for this separation (11). Spirituality in the organization is an emerging phenomenon that has attracted many management scholars as well as managers at different levels. Accordingly, many have viewed spirituality as a sustainable resource for organizations that can help them in turbulent times (12). In management studies, there is a belief that spirituality in the workplace is the answer and a solution to reduce organizational misconduct and enhance organizational health. Spirituality in the workplace involves trying to find the ultimate goal of a person for work life in order to establish a strong connection between the individual and their colleagues and others involved in the work, as well as the consistency or unity between one's fundamental beliefs and organization values (13).

The research of Abedi and colleagues indicated that the concept of spirituality at work is the 21st century challenge that organizations are encountering with. The word spirituality in organizations that was never considered important today is slowly bursting into business. As such, the growing trend of spiritual entry into business and organization, with all the doubts and criticisms that come to it, is inevitable (14).

Increasing research in the field of spirituality has dramatic impact on improving individual and organizational performance. Evidence also shows that spiritual exercises increase awareness and insight into new levels of consciousness (meditation) and have a positive impact on one's performance to make it the focus of their work and career plans in order to achieve good performance (15,16). In this case, Behzadi and colleagues showed that organizational virtuousness and its dimensions have a significant positive correlation with organizational civic behavior, spiritual well-being, and organizational loyalty. The findings of these researchers indicated the role and importance of organizational virtuousness in predicting organizational outcomes (17). Moshbaki Isfahani and Rezai also found in a study that there is a significant and positive relationship between organizational virtuousness and work attachment (18). King also examined the effect of spiritual intelligence on employee loyalty in a study and concluded that applying spiritual intelligence in daily work life can increase employee adaptability and loyalty (19). Marques and colleagues considered workplace spirituality as a framework of organizational values that increasingly extends employees across work processes and increases the level of work efficiency and effectiveness (11). Rego and colleagues also examined the relationship between organizational virtuousness and organizational commitment and performance (4). In light of the above, the main question of the present study is related to the relationship between spiritual well-being and organizational virtuousness with the performance of high school teachers in Bandar Lengeh city.

2. Methods

This was a cross sectional study conducted on all high school teachers in Bandar Lengeh city, Hormozgan Province with 200 population. Sample size was calculated using Morgan table and 127 samples were selected by random sampling. Data gathering tools included organizational virtuousness, job performance, and spiritual well-being questionnaire. The study design was approved by the Ethics Committee of Islamic Azad University of Bandar Lengeh Branch (code: 269206349522019). Before recruitment in the study, the participants received a thorough explanation of the design and objectives of the study and those willing to participate provided written informed consent.

(A) Organizational Virtuousness Questionnaire: The Organizational Virtuousness Questionnaire was designed by Cameron and colleagues (3). The scale is a self-report instrument that measures 15 items and measures different dimensions of organizational virtuousness, namely optimism, trust, empathy, coherence, and forgiveness. The respondent answered

each item on a six-point scale ranging from one (completely false) to six (completely true). On the whole scale, the maximum score is 90 and at least 15. The validity of this Persian questionnaire at the beginning and after the initial design was determined through a review by 5 faculty members and their comments were applied in the questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire were evaluated using Cronbach's alpha; Cronbach's alpha was 86%.

B) Job Performance Questionnaire: This questionnaire was developed by Paterson (20). This test has 12 questions. This questionnaire is rated on a 5-point Likert scale (very low=1 to very high=5). Arshadi translated and prepared this questionnaire in Iran and reported Cronbach's alpha coefficients and retest coefficients of 0.79 and 0.77, respectively (21).

C) Spiritual Well-being Questionnaire: This questionnaire was developed by Dehshiri and colleagues and based on the proposed model of the National Association of Religions among Tehran University students (22). The questionnaire consisted of 40 questions with a 5-point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. This questionnaire has three subscales: 1- Relation to God, 2- Relation to self, 2- Self relation, 4- Relation to others. Each subscale has 10 questions. The questions are scored from 1 to 5. That is, complete disagree and complete agree with the score of 1 and 5, respectively, completely agree with the score of 1. By summing the score of 40 questions, the total score of spiritual well-being was achieved. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the whole questionnaire were 0.94 and alpha coefficients of the subscales were 0.93, 0.92, 0.91, and 0.85, respectively. The test-retest reliability coefficient of the whole questionnaire was 0.86 and its subscales were 0.81, 0.89, 0.81, and 0.80, respectively. Positive and significant correlations of the questionnaire scores with spiritual well-being, life satisfaction scale, and religiosity test indicated convergent validity of the questionnaire. Also, a negative and significant correlation between the scores of the questionnaire and the scores of mental disorder indicated divergent validity of the questionnaire. Also

the results of exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis indicated the validity of the questionnaire construct (22). Descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used to analyze the data. At the level of descriptive statistics, characteristics of the respondents, and at the inferential level, the Pearson correlation test was used to test the hypotheses. Data were analyzed by SPSS software version 20.

3. Results

The majority of the respondents (77%) were men. The majority of respondents (92%) were married and also most of them (39%) were in the age group of 31 to 40 years. Most of the respondents (71%) had a bachelor's degree and most of the respondents (41%) had 11-20 years of work experience.

Pearson correlation coefficient test was used to investigate the relationship between spiritual well-being and its four dimensions with teachers' job performance. Significance level of test showed that there is a significant relationship between spiritual well-being and its four dimensions relationship with God, self-relationship, relationship with others, and relationship with nature) with teachers' performance at 95% confidence level ($P < 0.001$). In other words, it can be said that the spiritual well-being of teachers had a significant impact on their job performance. The correlation coefficient was positive for all dimensions. Therefore, the higher the level of spiritual well-being of teachers, the more likely they are to increase their job performance (Table 1).

Pearson correlation coefficient test was used to examine the relationship between organizational virtuousness and its five dimensions with teachers' job performance. Significance level of the test showed that there is a significant relationship between organizational virtuousness and its five dimensions (optimism, trust, sympathy, cohesion, and forgiveness) with teachers' performance at 95% confidence level ($P < 0.05$). The correlation coefficient was positive for all dimensions. Thus, as organizational virtuousness

Table 1: Relationship between spiritual well-being and teachers' job performance

The dependent variables	Job Performance	Mean±SD*	P value
Relationship with God	0.536	30.62±5.76	<0.001
Self-relationship	0.401	29.65±5.90	<0.001
Relationship with others	0.479	31.07±4.89	<0.001
Relationship with nature	0.392	31.66±5.43	<0.001
Total spiritual well-being score	0.539	30.75±5.49	<0.001

*Standard Deviation

Table 2: The relationship between organizational virtuousness and job performance of teachers

The dependent variables	Job Performance	Mean±SD*	P value
Optimism	0.320	8.92±3.04	0.001>
Trust	0.386	8.49±3.28	0.001>
Sympathy	0.179	9.06±3.25	0.045
Cohesion	0.220	8.82±3.34	0.013
Forgiveness	0.219	8.78±3.21	0.011
Total organizational Virtuousness score	0.353	8.81±3.22	0.001>

*Standard Deviation

increases, it is likely that teachers' job performance will increase (Table 2).

4. Discussion

Job performance is one of the consequences of being strong in the workplace. It is defined as the expected value of organizations from individual behavioral events that perform over a given period of time (23). Job performance is one of the most important variables in industrial and organizational psychology and its importance is clear to both individuals and organizations. In other words, all major activities in industrial and organizational psychology focus on improving job performance (24,25). Employee performance can be influenced by many variables (26,27). In this study, the effect of variables of spiritual well-being and organizational virtuousness on job performance of teachers was investigated. The results of the analysis of research hypotheses also showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between spiritual well-being and its dimensions (relationship with God, self-relationship, relationship with others, and relationship with nature) with teachers' job performance. In other words, spiritual well-being and its different dimensions had a positive effect on teachers' job performance. The results of this hypothesis are consistent with the results of Farhangi and colleagues (28), Abedi and colleagues (29), Asharlous and colleagues (30), Aqa Babaii and colleagues (31), Houshyari and colleagues (32), McKee and colleagues (33), King and colleagues (19), and Marques and colleagues (11). In explaining the findings of the study, it should be said that humans have different needs in life. One of these needs is spiritual needs, which usually manifest themselves when faced with problems, challenges, and crises (34,35). Researchers consider needs such as need for purpose, meaning, and hope in life, need to transcend existing situations, need to tolerate lack, need for religion, need for companionship and assistance, need for positive outlook in life, including spiritual needs (36). Having a spiritual orientation in life avoids inappropriate and socially inappropriate behaviors (37,38). The tendency toward

the fundamental concepts of religion and life leads to a purposeful experience, a sense of satisfaction, and unity of character (39). Spiritual well-being in individuals' lives creates orientation, purpose, and meaning, and also creates a sense of oneness, positivity, and inclusiveness (40,41). According to the aforementioned, the higher the level of spirituality in the lives of individuals, the better their performance in daily life (9,42). The results also showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between organizational virtuousness and its dimensions (optimism, trust, empathy, cohesion and forgiveness) with teachers' job performance. In other words, organizational virtuousness and its different dimensions have had a positive effect on teachers' job performance. The results of this hypothesis are consistent with the results of Behzadi and colleagues (17), Moshabaki Isfahan and colleagues (18), Cameron and colleagues (3) and Rego and colleagues (4). In explaining the result of the study, it should be said that virtuousness is the force that forces one to do better, pleasurable, and avoid unpleasant practices (43) and any individual practices, collective activities, cultural characteristics, or any process, which promote and sustain virtuousness in an organization can lead to organizational virtuousness. Indeed, one of the transcendent aspects of an organization is organizational virtuousness. Virtuousness in the organization means to create, promote, support, and nurture transcendent behaviors, habits, practices, and desires such as humanity, honesty, forgiveness, trust, and loyalty at the individual and collective level (4). The application of virtue in organizations has also implications. The feeling of working in a virtuous organization may encourage employees to do not just for material rewards or career advancement, but for personal satisfaction or to do a good job. Overall, highly creative individuals with high social connections find greater ability and willingness to accept behaviors with insight and spontaneity. According to research, three important effects of virtuousness on leaders are identifiable; they include ethical behavior, happiness experiences, and performance enhancement (44). Undoubtedly, every research has a number of problems

and obstacles. Therefore, the present study was not an exception to these drawbacks and obstacles. One of the most important limitations and difficulties of this research can be stated as follows: the studied sample included high school teachers in Bandar Lengeh city, so the findings of this study cannot be generalized to other classes and communities. Also, the class status of the subjects and their lack of control can be an important factor in increasing the impact of factors beyond control on the results of the research.

5. Conclusion

It can be said that enhancing all kinds of ethical virtues in organizations, especially in schools, can have positive results, which is one of the improvements in teachers' job performance. Therefore, since the management of education is the highest authority for addressing issues related to the education of children and adolescents in Iran, the managers of this organization can better understand the status of spiritual well-being and organizational virtue and find ways to enhance it.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

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