



Studying the status of spiritual leadership, resilience and excellence and prioritize this aspect from the viewpoint of faculty members of Islamic Azad University, Khorasan Razavi

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Abstract

Purpose: This research was done to study the status of spiritual leadership dimensions, resilience, and organizational excellence and prioritize these dimensions from the viewpoints of faculty members in Islamic Azad University of Khorasan Razavi. **Methodology:** The research is an applied one in terms of the purpose and reference type in terms of descriptive method. The statistical population consisted of 1200 faculty members in Islamic Azad University of Khorasan Razavi. 291 ones were selected as stratified random sampling method using the Kerjenci and Morgan formula. Validity of the questionnaires was confirmed by content validity. Also, regarding the prioritization of the dimensions of the variables, the difference among the ranks is significant, so that in the case of spiritual leadership, faith aspect has the highest rank and then there are aspects of perspective, meaningfulness, performance feedback, membership, and love for friendship. **Findings:** In the case of resilience, the aspect of positive acceptance of change and the secure relationships have the highest rank and then, respectively, there are aspects of the dimensions of the perception of individual competence, control, trust in individual instincts, and spiritual influences. **Discussion:** In the case of organizational excellence, the leadership dimension has the highest rank, followed by the dimensions of customer outcomes, community results, policy and strategy, key performance outcomes, processes, employees, results of employees and business partners.

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1. Introduction

One of the main and important tasks in the educational system of each country is the training of specialized and efficient human resources for the growth and development of the country. The university, as the most important scientific base and center for the training of knowledgeable specialist, plays a very important role (Yazdani, 2012). Therefore, the faculty members should be well utilized because the lack of attention to their capabilities and effectiveness can overcome the efficiency of the organization (Bakhshi, 2004). Today, faculty members, as one of the main pillars of higher education, play a crucial role in the training of specialist and their efforts are for the growth and development of human societies. In fact, whatever faculty members from different academic disciplines in each country can offer their services in a better quality, the development and progress of the country will accelerate (Safi, FallahiKhoshkenab, Rasel & Rahgozar, 2013).

2. literature Review

One of the issues that should be considered in most organizations, especially those directly concerned with humans, is the discussion of the individuals' power of tolerance (Brooks, 2003). Resistance is one of the fundamental issues that has been created in response to the difficult situations and problems of working life of people, so that humans can empower themselves (Campbell, Laura, & Murray, 2007). If people with high level of tolerance become managers within the organization, there will be sure to observe more success in the workplace, spirituality (Malekian, 2009). The researches shows that there is a significant relationship between resilience dimensions and dimensions of engagement with the occupation (Al Hussein al-Madrasi and Firoozkoobi Berenjabadi, 2017). The components of resilience and the components of spiritual intelligence can positively and significantly predict the academic self-efficacy (Mashayekhi Dolatabadi and Mohammadi, 2014). Also, there is a positive and significant relationship between resiliency components with spiritual intelligence, so that the higher the resilience of individuals, actually more optimistic and more hopeful to the future (Lynse, 2012).

On the other hand, it should be noted that the spirituality in the workplace is considered as a set of organizational values, which its significant sign is cultural. It can be argued that spiritual leadership can be practically applied to the changes and developments of the organization and the creation of a successful and self-evident system (Fry, Vitucci, Cedillo, 2005). Spiritual leadership leads to hope, endurance and resilience of employees to achieve goals. Accordingly, organizations with spiritual leadership have high efficacy and move towards success (Freeman, 2011). Spiritual leadership is not only a process that provides organizational benefits by increasing employee empowerment, commitment and learning, but rather provides a positive and psychological health for people; therefore, with striking a balance in the development of the company, organization and its staff, it serves to satisfy the interests of the organization and the employees (Materli, 2005). The spiritual leadership has considered the spirituality in organizations as the basis of work, which is based on the values of the employees, their beliefs and the necessary behaviors due to the incitement of individuals internally (Flores, 2016).

The studies show that the altruistic love of the leader has a direct and positive effect on hope / belief and his perspective and the membership of followers. The leader's perspective also has a direct and positive impact on the commitment / mission of the followers. Finally, spiritual leadership has a positive effect on the employees' spiritual well-being and the employees' spiritual wellbeing has a positive effect on the exchange

relationship between directors and subordinates (Khorshid and Gholizadeh, 2016). There is a positive and significant relationship between dimensions of spiritual leadership including (perspective, faith and hope, altruistic love, meaningfulness, membership, organizational commitment and performance feedback) and empowerment of employees (Serfi, 2014). Also, the dimensions of spirituality-based leadership in the organization can resolve many tensions and problems and attract the satisfaction of the others, and empower employees in the long time. Also, dimensions of spiritual leadership have a positive relationship with the others (Krishnan, 2017). Finally, there is a significant relationship between the dimensions of spiritual leadership with the dimensions of organizational commitment and employee performance (Lewis et al., 2011).

On the other hand, given the effective role of spiritual leadership and residence in the system of each organization and the successes that they can achieve, each organization uses its full potential to achieve excellence and to make the progress (Williams, Bertsch, Lawarden, Dale, 2006 quoted by Nodehi, 2015).

Organizational excellence is a system approach for a set of prominent management measures based on the principles of comprehensive quality management and basic concepts such as customer-orientation, leadership and goal stability, management by process and facts, individuals' development and participation, continuous learning, innovation and improvement, partner development and public accountability emphasizing the ethical thrust, so that the balanced satisfaction of the stakeholders is provided and consequently, it improves the quality of the services (Nodehi, 2015). Leading organizations, based on an organizational excellence model, persuade their staffs to look at their organization and the individual capabilities beyond today need (Abdul Fam and Ibrahimpour, 2009). This model is based on three basic principles, which are basic concepts, evaluation and criteria. The basic concepts include enhancing the creativity, developing partnerships, commitment to the future, success based on employee activity, process-based management, idealized leadership and value creation for the company's customers. The criteria are divided into two broad categories: enablers i.e. what the organization is doing and the results are what the organization will achieve. Enablers that work to achieve results such as strategy, staff, resources and partnerships, processes, and leadership. The results refer to issues such as employee outcomes, customer outcomes, community-related outcomes, and outcomes related to the functions of individuals, and ultimately the feedback from the results (Totonso, 2006). Studies show that dimensions of excellence in the organization have different priorities, so that the achieve organizational excellence, the establishment of modern management systems, leadership in the organization, strategic planning, promotion and employee satisfaction, the optimal use of resources, and the development and implementation of processes are the factors that the design and deployment of the associated improvement programs can lead organizations to excellence (Mirfakhreddini et al, 2009). Spirituality and the application of spiritual principles within the organization increase the productivity and achieve the organizational excellence so that the spirituality is related to all dimensions of organizational excellence and dimensions of excellence are well applied within the organization (Shugan, 2011). Also, spirituality and morality influenced all aspects of organizational excellence and played an important role in increasing the organization's efficiency (Al-Qutop, 2014).

The leading organization from this perspective is an organization that pledges social commitments and is committed to the community in the performance of all its duties and functions properly (Najmi & Hosseini, 2009). According to the abovementioned issues on the research variables, the main concern of the researcher is to address the question of how the status of the dimensions of resilience, spiritual leadership and organizational excellence and the prioritization of these dimensions from the point of view of faculty members, will be.

3. Methodology

The research is an applied one in terms of the purpose and reference type in terms of descriptive method. The statistical population consisted of 1200 faculty members in Islamic Azad University of Khorasan Razavi. 291 ones were selected as stratified random sampling method using the Kerjeki and Morgan formula. A random stratified sampling method was used to select the sample. In this method, information was first obtained from the faculty members and classified according to the university. Then, they were randomly selected based on the sample size and proportion to the number of members of each university that should answer the questionnaires. Data obtained in this study were analyzed based on descriptive statistics (mean, frequency, diagrams, etc.) and inferential statistics (T test and Friedman test). Analysis of statistical data in this study was done based on SPSS software .

The data were collected based on three standard questionnaire of Fry et al. Spiritual Leadership Questionnaire (2005), Corner and Davidson Resilience Questionnaire (2003) and Mueller Organizational Excellence Questionnaire (2000). Validity of the questionnaires was confirmed on the basis of content validity, in the way that questions were given to the experts and asked them to rate the relevance, clearness, and simplicity of each item based on a four-part Likert Spectrum. Given fact that there was a consensus among the experts who were given the questionnaire regarding the validity of the test, and since the content validity was calculated based on the CVI index for the items of each questionnaire and the obtained validity was higher than the software. Therefore, all of the above questionnaires have content validity. The reliability of the tools was calculated as the Spiritual Leadership Questionnaire (0.94), Resilience (0.87) and Organizational Excellence (0.83) with Cronbach's Alpha method.

4. Finding

The results

First question: What is the status of the spiritual leadership dimensions and the prioritization of these dimensions?

In order to examine the dimensions of spiritual leadership, from the viewpoint of the research sample, a single sample t test was compared with the theoretical mean 3 with the experimental mean obtained in table 1.

Table1. The results of single-sample t test on the dimensions of spiritual leadership

	Theoretical mean	Experimental mean	standard deviation	mean difference	Level t	Significance level
prospective	3	4.42	0.42	1.42	34.114	0.000
Love for kindness	3	4.24	0.35	1.24	35.589	0.000
faith	3	4.52	0.32	1.52	47.995	0.000
meaningfulness	3	4.43	0.35	1.43	40.941	0.000
membership	3	4.32	0.42	1.31	31.376	0.000
Organizational Commitment	3	4.31	0.39	1.31	33.244	0.000
Performance feedback	3	4.28	0.52	1.28	24.642	0.000

With emphasis on the t level and the significance level, there is a significant difference between the theoretical mean and the experiential mean of spiritual leadership dimensions. Therefore, the mean obtained in all dimensions is higher than the average.

Friedman test, which is considered in table 2, is a nonparametric test that is used to rank variables and also prioritize them based on the highest impact on the dependent variable and the study of the equivalence of the ranking of the variables (Momeni and Qayumi, 2012).

Table2. Friedman test results for ranking spiritual leadership dimensions

	Mean of ranking	Statistics value	Significance level
perspective	4.49	53.292	0.000
Love for kindness	3.19		
faith	4.86		
meaningfulness	4.43		
membership	3.78		
Organizational Commitment	3.46		
Performance feedback	3.80		

Since the significance level is less than 0.05, it can be concluded that the difference between the ranks is significant and therefore the dimension of faith has the highest rank and then, respectively, the dimensions of perspective, meaningfulness, performance feedback, membership, and love of kindness.

Second question: What is the status of resilience dimensions and prioritization of these dimensions?

In order to examine the dimensions of resilience, from the viewpoint of the research samples, a single sample t test was compared with the theoretical mean 3 with the experimental mean obtained in table 3.

Table3. The results of single-sample t test on the dimensions of resilience

	Theoretical mean	Experimental mean	Difference mean	t level	Significance level
Imagination of individual competence	3	4.38	1.38	49.137	0.000
Confidence in individual instincts	3	4.22	1.22	27.671	0.000
Positive acceptance of change and safe relationships	3	4.40	1.40	44.194	0.000
control	3	4.28	1.28	26.193	0.000
Spiritual impacts	3	3.66	0.66	7.911	0.000

With emphasis on the t level and the significance level, there is a significant difference between the theoretical mean and the experiential mean of resilience dimensions. Therefore, the mean obtained in all dimensions is higher than the average.

Friedman test, which is considered in table 4, is a nonparametric test that is used to rank variables and also prioritize them based on the highest impact on the dependent variable and the study of the equivalence of the ranking of the variables (Momeni and Qayumi, 2012).

Table4. Friedman test results for ranking resilience dimensions

	Mean of ranking	Statistics value	Significance level
Imagination of individual competence	3.43	46.811	0.000
Confidence in individual instincts	2.85		
Positive acceptance of change and safe relationships	3.46		
control	3.11		
Spiritual impacts	2.15		

Since the significance level is less than 0.05, it can be concluded that the difference between the ranks is significant and therefore the dimension of positive acceptance of change and safe relationships has the highest

rank and then, respectively, the dimensions of imagination of individual competence, control, and spiritual impacts.

Third question: What is the status of the organizational excellence dimensions and the prioritization of these dimensions?

In order to examine the dimensions of organizational excellence, from the viewpoint of the research samples, a single sample t test was compared with the theoretical mean 3 with the experimental mean obtained in table 5.

Table5. The results of single-sample t test on the dimensions of organizational excellence

	Theoretical mean	Experimental mean	mean difference	Statistics t	Significance level
leadership	3	4.40	1.40	43.115	0.000
Policy and strategy	3	4.30	1.30	38.925	0.000
staff	3	4.24	1.24	31.197	0.000
Business Partners	3	4.20	1.20	27.513	0.000
processes	3	4.22	1.22	24.961	0.000
Customer outcomes	3	4.32	1.32	41.227	0.000
staff outcomes	3	4.14	1.14	24.535	0.000
community outcomes	3	4.25	1.25	29.194	0.000
Key performance results	3	4.25	1.25	30.784	0.000

With emphasis on the t level and the significance level, there is a significant difference between the theoretical mean and the experiential mean of organizational excellence dimensions. Therefore, the mean obtained in all dimensions is higher than the average.

Friedman test, which is considered in table 6, is a nonparametric test that is used to rank variables and also prioritize them based on the highest impact on the dependent variable and the study of the equivalence of the ranking of the variables (Momeni and Qayumi, 2012).

Table6. Friedman test results for ranking organizational excellence dimensions

	Mean of ranking	Statistics value	Significance level
leadership	5.97	29.214	0.000
Policy and strategy	5.08		
staff	4.84		
Business Partners	4.32		
processes	4.91		
Customer outcomes	5.40		
staff outcomes	4.32		
community outcomes	5.15		
Key performance results	5.01		

Since the significance level is less than 0.05, it can be concluded that the difference between the ranks is significant and therefore the dimension of leadership has the highest rank and then, respectively, the dimensions of customer outcomes, community outcomes, policy and strategy, key performance results, processes, staff, staff outcomes and business partners.

5. Discussion

According to the findings of the research, the status and position of each dimension of spiritual leadership and resilience as well as organizational excellence were determined and based on the results of the analyzes conducted on each question, the following issues are significant.

The first question is to study the status of spiritual leadership dimensions and their prioritization. The results show that the average score obtained in all dimensions is higher than the average, and the difference among the ranks is significant and these differences differentiate the impact of each dimension of spiritual leadership. The dimensions of spiritual leadership have not the same significance in terms of faculty members and there is a significant difference in their significance. Since the significance level is less than 0.05, it can be concluded that the difference among the ranks is significant and therefore, faith dimension has the highest rank and then the dimensions of perspective, meaningfulness, performance feedback, membership, and love for kindness are arranged in sequence, respectively. The findings of this research question were consistent with the results of the researches done by Krishnan (2017), Davoodi et al. (2014), Lewis et al. (2011), Khorshid and Gulizadeh (2016), Hedayatifar (2014), Serfi (2014), Taleghani et al. (2013), which emphasize the key role of each aspect of spiritual leadership.

The second question is to study the state of resilience dimensions and their prioritization, which the results show that the average score obtained in all dimensions is greater than the average. Also, resiliency dimensions do not have the same significance in terms of faculty members in the university and there is a significant difference in their significance since the significance level is less than 0.05. It can be concluded that the difference among the ranks is significant, and therefore, the positive acceptance of change and the secure relationships have the highest rank and then the dimensions of the concept of individual competence, control, trust in individual instincts and spiritual influences, respectively. These findings are in line with the results of researches done by Al Hussein al-Madrasi and Firoozkoobi Berenjabadi (2017), Mashayekhi Dolatabadi and Mohammadi (2014), Ebrahimnia (2014), Lins (2012), and Harland et al. (2005).

The third question is to study the state of organizational excellence dimensions and their prioritization, which the results show that the average score obtained in all dimensions is greater than the average. Also, organizational excellence dimensions do not have the same significance in terms of faculty members in the university and there is a significant difference in their significance since the significance level is less than 0.05. It can be concluded that the difference among the ranks is significant, and therefore, the leadership dimension have the highest rank and then the dimensions of customer outcomes, community outcomes, policy and strategy, key performance outcomes, processes, employees, results of employees and business partners, respectively. These findings are in line with the results of researches done by Alcotop (2014), Shogun (2011), Ebrahimnia (2014), Lins (2012), and Harland et al. (2009).

In a general conclusion, based on the research questions, we can point to these issues. For the first question of the research, the status of the dimensions of spiritual leadership is in a high position and all faculty members have a positive outlook on these dimensions so that, if in an organization such as the university, the faith and spirituality are at the highest level of the organization, the material and spiritual success of the organization will be greatly increased. Providing the critical factors (such as religion and spirituality) can be effective in increasing the success and efficiency of the organization. In fact, these values all create prosperity in the workplace and provide a better working environment. If in a large organization such as a university, faith leadership would take the lead, regarding the spiritual look towards the affairs and employees, values such as harmony, love and affection, compassion and kindness, unity, peace and tranquility, honesty and trust are usually considered and undoubtedly, following the same faith that is at the top, prospective, meaningfulness, performance feedback, membership, and love for kindness will also emerge within the organization and we will see a change in the system of the university. Members are more inclined to accept the responsibility, which facilitates leadership and, ultimately, the organization moves towards success and

progress; while promoting faith in the workplace is a tool that insures the survival of organizations against the current uncertain environments and undoubtedly creates vitality and hope in the organization. In the second question of the research, it was also showed that the status of resilient dimensions has a high position among the faculty members and the organization's view is positive about these dimensions. As it was found, accepting changes and safe relationships that actually reflect the organization's view towards change and progress with respect to reliant relationships, was at the head of the resilience dimensions to the faculty members. Therefore, promoting resilience and looking at changes in the light of secure relationships leads to the growth of individuals in thinking and self-management skills and knowledge and, as a consequence of acceptance of change, the notion of individual competence, control and spiritual influences also appear. Resilience through the supporting roles that it creates, can actually be effective for individuals in the face of problems that may be present in the organization and even life. Therefore, it is recommended that in the college campus be the basis for the development of positive and effective working relations between faculty staff so that they will welcome changes in the organization rather than resistance to changes. In addition, the importance of controlling the conditions and spiritual influences in the resilience category should not be ignored because the organizations that are recognized as the resilient organizations, have dimensions such as effective social relations, power build-up, acceptance of the facts within the organization, favorable relationships, and acceptance of changes; as it can be expanded throughout the organization and ultimately made effectiveness in the organization. The resilience of all the employees within the organization get them to overcome the difficulties ahead and to live easily.

As the findings of the research in the third question of the research show, the status of organizational excellence dimensions is also high, so that the difference between the ranks is significant and these differences differentiate the impact of each dimension of organizational excellence. The organization's social responsibilities are clearly defined in the values of the supranational organizations and are consistent with the other activities, so that leadership is at the head of the excellence dimensions in the view of faculty members. It can be said that the success of the organization depends on the presence of a successful leadership in it. Therefore, along with attention to the results related to staff, customers, community demands and frameworks related to orientations and intentions, leadership is an essential element of all these activities. Achieving the organizational excellence, deploying modern management systems, leadership in the organization, strategic planning, promotion and employee satisfaction, proper use of resources within the organization, and the proper use of processes are among the factors that if the improvement plans are related to them, the organization progresses. Therefore, it is recommended that the excellence and growth of the organization be managed by the manager in the organization who will be able to lead and direct the activities. Ultimately, organizational excellence and organizational progress in the college campus, as a result of this study, are aligned with spiritual leadership and resilience, which, looking at the components of these three variables, can lead the way to the progress of the organization.

Finally, with regard to the research questions and the results obtained, it is suggested that according to the first question, the study of spirituality and doctrinal teachings for faculty members is expected to provide them with better, more powerful religious motives. According to the second question, faculty members should learn to have a positive attitude towards the organization and staff and to keep pace with changes, while taking the crucial part of engagement and cooperation into action seriously. In relation to the third question, the research suggests that, given the important role of leadership in organizational excellence, powerful managers with ethics and belief in human relationships and knowledge of leadership and management techniques, be employed at the university management positions to achieve significant success in the campus.

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