The Relationship Between Creativity and Empowerment in Faculty Members at Islamic Azad University

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Background: This research has a descriptive method with correlational-survey type. The statistical population of this study includes all 200 faculty members at Islamic Azad University of Roudehen during the academic years of 2010-11 and 136 ones are selected as the sample size through simple random sampling and according to Morgan Table. Torrance test of creative thinking (2001) and Short and Rinehart's empowerment questionnaire (1995) are utilized for data collection. For data analysis, the statistical methods of mean and standard deviation are applied at the level of descriptive statistics, and also Pearson correlation coefficient and Multiple Regression at the inferential statistics.

Results: The obtained results are as follows: There is a significant positive relationship between creativity and empowerment in faculty members at Islamic University.

Conclusion: There is a significant positive relationship between dimensions of flexibility, originality, and elaboration with empowerment. The elaboration component can predict the empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

The acceleration of environmental changes has created an intense competition space. The organizations are forced to achieve a high level of knowledge and information and employ the knowledge-oriented employees with decision-making power in order to survive in this field. These empowered employees should play the effective roles in increasing the productivity of organization by their efficiency through the sense of responsibility, creativity, initiative, self-confidence, sense of belonging to organization and capability to participate in team working. On the other hand, the senior managers and authorities should make the infrastructure for organization to create the employees’ empowerment and promote these capabilities according to the organizational need and status as well as the type of structure and governing culture.

An environment, wherein the ideas and thoughts are shared, should be created in order to people think there. The deliberation is one of the most important and attractive ways of encouraging the creativity and innovation and even the social development. Unlike the classic unidirectional or hierarchical communication system, the participative communication system enhances the possibility for creativity development because it enables the people to participate in problem solving and thus leads to the developed intellectual power in them.

The empowerment refers to removing the barriers to growth, encouraging the risk-taking, creativity and innovation, enabling the individuals to solve problems, increasing the accountability and eliminating the fear. In short, the empowerment means putting an end to anything which prevents the growth, freedom of action, confidence, participation and cooperation among people [1].

Most of the experts believe that the empowerment creates the sense of personal adequacy both in employees and managers and makes the space for their freedom of actions and enables them to improve their skills and efficiency.

Therefore, there is a need for empowerment and considering it as an efficient measure of organizational success as well as creating a favorable organizational climate and environment for employee creativity.
This research can lead to the further understanding of concept, dimensions and other factors associated with the creativity and empowerment. Furthermore, the applied framework and research findings can be utilized to overcome numerous difficulties and problems which are solved in this competitive and turbulent era only by creativity for achieving the empowerment as the competitive advantage in modern organizations.

Based on the importance of mentioned contents, the researcher investigates and studies the relationship between the empowerment and creativity in faculty members.

This research can lead to the further understanding of the concept, dimensions and other factors associated with spiritual intelligence and empowerment. Furthermore, the applied framework and research findings can be utilized to overcome numerous difficulties and problems which can be solved in current competitive and turbulent era only by spiritual intelligence as the capacity to achieve competitive advantages in new organization.

Therefore, given the importance of spiritual intelligence and its impact on their empowerment, and according to the weakness of previous studies and since no similar study was conducted on faculty members, the researcher intends to investigates the "relationship between the spiritual intelligence and empowerment in faculty members at Islamic Azad University of Marvdasht".

Previous studies:
In a survey by Fattahi [4], he has concluded that the spirituality in the workplace leads to benefits such as increased creativity, loyalty and trust, evolutionary sense, organizational commitment, improved employees’ job attitudes as well as increased job satisfaction and reduced intentions to leave the workplace, enhanced work ethic, enhanced motivation and performance. In another study by Fairholm [3], on middle managers, it is found that the spiritual rewards are as important as the financial rewards in the workplace.

In a study by Fry [5], on spiritual leadership, it is concluded that the human being is consisted of four basic dimensions: physical body, mental thoughts, emotions and soul; and the leaders should recognize their basic values for motivating their followers and show them through the eyes, size and personal actions in order to create the sense of membership and spiritual mission in them.

In a study by Strack and Fottler [10], it is argued that the leaders with high spiritual intelligence take five measures of effective leaders more than others: Challenging, shared vision, enabling others, being the work models, and encouragement.

Fabricatore et al [2], have concluded in their research that the spirituality has an impact on the overall life satisfaction. The personal spirituality reliably predicts the higher life satisfaction. Furthermore, it is evaluated as a mechanism for compatibility and helps them to control the stressors easier and better than those with lower levels of personal spirituality.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research hypotheses:
- There is a relationship between the spiritual intelligence and empowerment in faculty members at University.
- There is a relationship between dimensions of spiritual intelligence and empowerment.
- Dimensions of spiritual intelligence can predict the empowerment.

Research Methodology:
The study has a descriptive-correlative method. The statistical population of this study consists of all 211 faculty members at Islamic Azad University of Roudehen during 2010-11. A stratified random sampling is performed because of the target population consists of various classes and the sample is obtained equal to 136 subjects according to Morgan Table.

Research Tool:
Two questionnaires are applied in this study for data collection:

A- Spiritual Intelligence:
This questionnaire is designed by Badie et al. Two methods of Cronbach's alpha and split-half method are utilized for determining the reliability of spiritual intelligence questionnaire and they are equal to 0.85 and 0.78 for the whole questionnaire and this indicates the acceptable reliability of target questionnaire.

Furthermore, the score of questionnaire is correlated with the score of criterion question for determining the validity of questionnaire and thus a significant positive correlation is found between them (P=0.0001 and r=0.05). This indicates that the spiritual intelligence questionnaire has the sufficient validity.

For scoring this 42-item scale, the scores of 4, 3, 2, 1, and 5 are considered respectively for each of five options: "strongly agree", "agree", "partially agree", "disagree", and "strongly disagree".
B- Empowerment:
Empowering the professors is measured through the school members' empowerment questionnaire which is designed by Short and Rinehart in 1995. This tool has 38 items and consists of six dimensions including the basis, professional development, self-efficacy, effectiveness, decision making, and self-determination. The empowerment questionnaire is designed based on a 5-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, no opinion, disagree, strongly disagree) and ranges from 1-5.
The obtained reliability coefficient through Cronbach's alpha method is obtained equal to 0.90 and the validity of tool is confirmed by professors and professionals.

Statistical Method:
The descriptive statistics indexes of mean, standard deviation and inferential statistical methods of Pearson correlation coefficient, multiple regression, and one-way analysis of variance are utilized in this regard.

Results:
First hypothesis: There is a significant correlation between the spiritual intelligence and empowerment.
The statistical method of Pearson correlation coefficient is utilized for this hypothesis.

Table 1: Correlation coefficient between spiritual intelligence and empowerment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spiritual Intelligence</th>
<th>Empowerment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correlation coefficient</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance level</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the table above, it can be concluded that the correlation coefficients are obtained as the significance level (0.0001) and since these levels are less than the acceptable level (0.05) and ($P \leq 0.05$), these values become significant and thus there is a significant correlation between spiritual intelligence and empowerment.

Second hypothesis: There is a significant correlation between dimensions of spiritual intelligence and empowerment.
The statistical method of Pearson correlation coefficient is utilized in this regard.

Table 2: Correlation coefficient between dimensions of spiritual intelligence and empowerment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prerdictive variables</th>
<th>Empowerment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correlation coefficient</td>
<td>Significance level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General thinking and trust</td>
<td>0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ability to cope and interact with problems</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral traits</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self awareness and love and interest</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the table above, it can be concluded that all correlation coefficients are obtained less than 0.05 at the significant levels, thus these coefficients are significant and there is a meaningful correlation between all dimensions of spiritual intelligence and empowerment.

Third hypothesis: Dimensions of spiritual intelligence can predict the empowerment.
The multiple regression is utilized for investigating this hypothesis, thus the correlation between these variables are examined in the second hypothesis and then the analysis of variance and coefficient of determination are utilized for determining the prediction of variable (empowerment criterion) by predictive variables (dimensions of spiritual intelligence). The results are presented in the following table.

Table 3: Analysis of variance and regression statistical characteristics between dimensions of spiritual intelligence and empowerment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictive variables</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>&gt; P</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>&gt; P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General thinking and trust</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>4.115</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.447</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ability to cope and interact with problems</td>
<td>0.401</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral traits</td>
<td>0.418</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self awareness and love and interest</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>-1.6</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown, the $F$ value equal to 13.9 becomes significant ($P>0.05$), thus it is concluded that at least one of the predictive variables (dimensions of spiritual intelligence) can predict the criterion variable (empowerment). Given the significant levels at the last column, it can be concluded that basic values of dimensions of general thinking and trust and the ability to cope and interact with problems are significant ($P>0.05$); in other words, these dimensions can predict the empowerment.
Discussion and Conclusion:

The importance of spirituality and spiritual development in human beings has increasingly attracted the psychologists and mental health professionals' attention during the past few decades. Due to the development of psychology on the one hand, and the dynamic and complex nature of modern societies on the other hand, the human spiritual needs have raised against the material needs and demands and have become more important, so that the World Health Organization has paid attention to physical, psychological, social and spiritual dimensions in defining the dimensions of human existence and also raises the spiritual dimension in human evolution and development.

The statistical correlation coefficient method is utilized in the first hypothesis, under which there is a significant correlation between the spiritual and organizational intelligence, and thus it can be concluded according to the table and correlation that:

Those with high spiritual intelligence have high capacity of development and high desire to awareness. They have the capacity to assign the parts of daily activities to spiritual practices and show the virtues such as the forgiveness, gratitude, humility, compassion and wisdom. Furthermore, it can be concluded that the spiritual intelligence facilitates the understanding of religious issues and right juridical inferences. The spiritual intelligence can also help the individuals in understanding the ethical issues and their values. Those with high spiritual intelligence have the following characteristics: Understanding the sublime presence in life, understanding the sublime presence messages which guide each person inside and outside. Sense of wonder while facing with sacred matter, a sense of humility and modesty while facing with greatness of sublime presence, the ability to listen to divine inspiration, maintaining the calmness in chaos, contradiction and duality, commitment, dedication, faith, the rational understanding of deep meaning of divine word and harmony, and understanding the divine command and cognitive and emotional understanding of them, understanding the unity in plurality, understanding the passion despite the defects in relationships, understanding the justice in action, understanding the meaning in suffering, hardships and difficulties, and the ability to operate independently. Therefore, it can be concluded that those with high spiritual intelligence work more empowered and easier in an organization.

According to the second hypothesis, there is a significant correlation between dimensions of spiritual intelligence and empowerment. Pearson correlation coefficient method is applied in this regard and its can be concluded according to the table that those with higher level of spiritual intelligence have the characteristics such as thinking about existential questions like the existence of life after death, searching for meaning in life, interest in prayer and effective contemplation, developing the sense of purposefulness in life, development of self-relationship, coordination with superior power, and its role in their lives.

The second component of spiritual intelligence refers to the correlation between the spirituality and solving the problems or in other words, the relationship between the religion and spirituality with problem-solving skills. Most of the people benefit from the religious beliefs in giving meaning to different phenomena of life which may be hard and difficult for them. This can greatly help them to be consistent. For instance, Pargament argues that the religion can certainly reduce the negative effects of stress in your life. In this regard, it is written in Quran that:

"We will most certainly try you with somewhat of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits; and give good news to the patient” (AL-BAQARA (THE COW) Sura, Verse 155). Undoubtedly, those who have this belief, God test them in harsh conditions and thus they have higher tolerance to the stresses of life. The third component of spiritual intelligence refers to the righteousness traits. Those with higher spiritual intelligence, have the types of behavior such as forgiveness, gratitude, sacrifice, truth, justice, and compassion in their work. According to the last component, the more the people have higher spiritual intelligence, the more they have higher self-awareness and greater love and passion for life.

The Multiple Analysis of Variance is applied in the third hypothesis based on which dimensions of spiritual intelligence can predict the empowerment. According to the table, it can be concluded that those with high spiritual intelligence are positive and constructive, welcome the creativity and new ideas, benefit from the changes and thus create the alive, active organization ready to use any situation and moment. He employees in such an organization have firmer and more effective communications, they have different desires, attitudes and views, but progress their team working by discussion on differences. In group, all members are ready to listen to the others' opinions and think about them without bias in order to make the best decisions. The manager, who has high spiritual intelligence, does not arbitrary orders his staff, but he welcomes their views and opinions and utilizes them to make the best decision. Given that all employees are aware of their characteristics, talents and demands, they have proper post, and thus they have high efficiency without too much effort. In such this organization, despite the arguments about the thoughts and demands, there is a high sense of self-respect among people. Furthermore, everyone is ready to help others if necessary. Such an organization progresses for respond to rapid and changing business world along with the changes and makes the use of changes and events. In fact, since the employees are working in jobs appropriate with their talents and demands, they enjoy their jobs and have high efficiency. Obviously, such an organization goes directly to success which not only results in
shareholders' benefits, but also all individuals benefit from it as they contribute to success. In such an organization, the managers do not think only about the success of organization, but also they chose the successors for leading the organization towards the success. The vision and values of such an organization are coordinated with human spirit in all staff and all of them have accepted to insist for reaching them because they are allowed to question about everything in this organization. The employees in any class can question about the vision, values, strategies and macro decisions of organization. When they see a problem with them, they will affect and change them and when they receive the answer to their questions, they will accept and try to fulfill them. In such an organization, the employees are working regardless of the race, color, religion, social class and gender and it is even sought to gather those with completely different and even contradictory believes and opinions in different groups for cooperation because it is believed that the conflict in team works cause the creativity and new ideas in the organization. Besides, the employees with high spiritual intelligence have higher boldness and creativity. In such an organization, despite the extensive efforts by every individual, no one believes that the success is the result of his efforts because they know that the success is resulted from the team effort. If any failure occurs, they search for reason rather than the culprit because they know that any failure determines one of the factors for their success. They learn what to do or what not to do to be successful. The managers in such an organization are not alone the major decision makers because they know that there is no human being who knows the response to all questions, the solution of all problems and the better way of all practices. They believe in collective wisdom and know that the better responses always can be found or the better work methods be achieved if all members of group are able to debate and offer suggestions for solving the problems or determining the best way of working. They know that if the work problems are discussed among the members of group, they can investigate the issue according to different views and offer different suggestions, and finally find the solution reached by examining various aspects. Furthermore, since all employees are involved in solving this problem, they take all efforts to achieve the result in this direction. In such an organization, the employees are self critical, thus they not only do not uncomfortable with other individuals' criticisms, but also listen to them, think about them and utilize them to solve the problems.

REFERENCES