

Investigating the effect of spiritual leadership on the empowerment of employees in the petroleum engineering and development company

Ramin Rasoolzadeh Dorabad¹ & Farshad Haj Alian^{2*}

<p>Keywords: <i>Spiritual leadership, empowerment, engineering and oil development company</i></p> <p>Article Type: Research Article</p> <p>Corresponding author's Email: fhajalian@gmail.com</p>	<p>Abstract</p> <p>Background and purpose: spirituality is one of the main forces of human existence and nature. Therefore, if the organization can encourage and improve spirituality in its employees, it can encourage people to use their whole being at work. Therefore, this research aims to investigate spiritual leadership's effect on employees' empowerment in petroleum engineering and development companies. Methodology: In terms of the nature of data collection, this research is a descriptive survey, and based on the purpose, it is of an applied type. The statistical population in the current research is the petroleum engineering and development company, which has 400 people. Using Cochran's formula, the statistical sample size of 195 people was determined, and 185 questionnaires were returned. This research used Spritzer and Mishra's psychological empowerment questionnaire and an 18-question spiritual leadership questionnaire. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to check normality in the step after regression. Results: The findings showed that spiritual leadership significantly affects employees' empowerment in the engineering and oil development company (P=0.05). Conclusion: Managers should strengthen their employees' ability, spirituality, and social security by learning and implementing the components of spiritual leadership in their work environment. Also, depicting goals and visions for employees creates a positive image of the future, a sense of competence, and the effectiveness of their efforts in reaching the goals.</p> <p>This article has been published as open access according to CC BY-NC 4.0. All rights to publish this article belong to the author.</p>
---	---



How to Cite:

Rasoolzadeh Dorabad, R., & Haj Alian, F. (2021). Investigating the effect of spiritual leadership on the empowerment of employees in the petroleum engineering and development company. *International Journal of Innovation in Management and Organizational Behavior*, 1(3), 30-40.

1. Master's degree, Department of Management, Firouzkoh branch, Islamic Azad University, Firouzkoh, Iran.
2. *Corresponding Author: Faculty member, Department of Management, Firouzkoh branch, Islamic Azad University, Firouzkoh, Iran.

Introduction

Spirituality in the workplace has recently attracted the attention of many organizational researchers. Spirituality is known as one of the main forces of human existence and nature. Therefore, if the organization can encourage and improve spirituality in its employees, it can encourage people to use their whole being at work. This means meeting the individual needs of employees as much as possible, which in turn leads to a more satisfying work environment and thus creates multiple benefits for the organization (Azadeh, 2016). Most organizations have focused on organizational leaders in today's competitive and turbulent environment. They are trying to create fundamental organizational changes with special courage and boldness because leadership deals with creating change. Therefore, there is a need for a more sacred leadership that integrates the four basic areas of human nature, i.e. body, mind, nature (emotions and feelings), and spirit. This need has led to the emergence of spiritual leaders. People in such organizations are capable and have the authority to visibly achieve a clear organizational vision, so spiritual leadership in organizations seems essential. In general, the importance and necessity of spirituality in the organization is such that it can bring humanity to organizations, activity to the community, and responsibility to the environment (Nargesian, 2007).

Spiritual leadership is a type of leadership that emphasizes service to others, a holistic view of work, individual development, and joint decision-making. In fact, spiritual leaders show their faith, passion and work results (Sepahvand et al., 2013). A spiritual leader can improve employees' performance and effectiveness by increasing motivation in the most important capital of organizations, i.e. human power (Sepahvand et al., 2013). By using indicators of spirituality in the organization or group, leaders provide both a type of internal motivation for themselves and a context for the external motivation of their followers. Spiritual and value-oriented leaders give meaning to the works and activities of followers in the organization or group by connecting them to their deep inner values (Rastegar et al., 2012). According to Maxwell (2003), spiritual leadership is a process in which leaders and followers influence each other as communication evolves over time. Also, spiritual leadership is a process that has the power to change social systems and reform institutions. The purpose of spiritual leadership is to pay attention to the basic needs of the followers to ensure their spiritual survival. Such spiritual leadership makes employees understand their job's true meaning and care about it (Sepahvand et al., 2013).

One of the main challenges of managers in current organizations is the need for optimal use of spiritual resources and mental powers of human resources in a potential way (Jaafari, 2013). Empowering employees is an essential management tool that can be used to guide human resources to increase productivity and includes five significant emotional dimensions: a sense of competence, self-determination, trust, and influence (Dasgard et al., 2010). empowerment refers to the process by which the manager helps employees to

acquire the necessary ability to make independent decisions. This process is effective not only in people's performance but also in their personalities. The most important concept of empowerment is delegating authority to the lowest levels of the organization. The decision-making process should have a high degree of decentralization, and individuals or work groups should be responsible for a complete part of the work processes (Lawler, 1994). Robbins and colleagues (2002) used factors such as: internal motivation, perception and commitment, job structure, transfer of power or authority, and sharing of resources and information in the definition of empowerment. In fact, empowerment is a continuous and permanent process and is analyzed at different levels in a dynamic environment (Robbins et al., 2002). Carter (2001) states that empowering employees is a set of systems, methods, and measures that are used to improve and increase the productivity, growth, and prosperity of the organization and human resources through the development of the capabilities and competence of people according to the goals of the organization. (Kamalian, 2010). Petroleum Engineering and Development Company intends to empower employees by focusing on their spirituality. Similar research has yet to be done in this field, and the organization is unaware of the results, consequences, and work execution method. Therefore, this research aims to investigate the effect of spiritual leadership on empowering employees of petroleum engineering and development companies.

Methodology

The method of the current research is correlational. Using this method, the distribution and relationships between predictor variables and research criteria will be investigated in society. Finally, the multivariate regression method will be used to predict the criterion variable. The statistical population in the current research is the oil engineering and development company, which has 400 people. Since the number of the statistical population of this research is accessible, a simple random sampling method was used to conduct the research. Using Cochran's formula, the statistical sample size was determined to be 195 people. In the current research, data collection and demographic variables were analyzed using descriptive statistics. According to the used statistical method and reliability test, the Cronbach test, the data analysis tool is SPSS software, which is used to increase the accuracy, accuracy, and speed of the tests.

Materials

1- Cognitive Empowerment Questionnaire. This questionnaire was prepared and compiled for the first time in 1995 by Spritzer and Mishra. This scale has 15 items and is set on a five-point Likert scale with five subscales of competence, autonomy, effectiveness, meaningfulness and trust. The grading method is completely disagree (1), disagree (2), have no opinion (3), agree (4) and completely agree. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used

to determine the reliability of the questionnaire, and the value obtained was 0.84, which indicates the good reliability of this questionnaire.

2- Spiritual Leadership Questionnaire. This questionnaire was first used by Fry in 2003 and has 20 questions; For each item, it uses a five-point Likert scale, which is assigned points from 1 to 5, respectively. This questionnaire includes five subscales: vision, altruistic love, piety, organizational commitment, and performance feedback. In this research, the validity of this questionnaire was obtained by Cronbach's alpha method of 0.83, which means its good reliability.

Results

The information collected from the subjects was analyzed by psychological empowerment and spiritual leadership questionnaires using appropriate statistical tests, and the research hypotheses were tested. For this purpose, descriptive statistics indices were used to describe and classify the data collected from the sample; multivariate regression was used to test and analyze the hypotheses. The statistical sample of this research consisted of 96 men (51.89%) and 89 women (48.11%). Also, 71.89% had a bachelor's degree, 27.2% had a master's degree, and 1.08% had a doctoral degree.

Table 1: Kolmogorov-Smirnov test

Variable	Z	Sig	Alpha	Result
vision	.843	.476	0.05	Normal
altruistic love	.949	.329	0.05	Normal
piety	.855	.457	0.05	Normal
Meaningfulness impact	.972	.302	0.05	Normal
Membership	.935	.346	0.05	Normal
Empowering employees	.838	.464	0.05	Normal

According to the above table, the significance level of all variables is greater than the test or error level (0.05), so the distribution of all variables is normal. Therefore, regression tests can be used.

To investigate the first hypothesis of the research, the null hypothesis, "perspective on employee empowerment does not have a significant effect," and the substitute hypothesis, "perspective on employee empowerment has a significant effect," was considered. The tables related to testing this hypothesis are as follows.

Table 2: Summary of the first hypothesis model

Model	Correlation coefficient	The square of the correlation coefficient	The value of the adjusted correlation coefficient	Standard error of estimate
1	.771 ^a	.594	.549	.43567

Table 3: Analysis of variance of the first hypothesis

Model		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	Fisher's value	Sig
1	Regression	2.463	1	2.463	12.257	.006a
	Residual	1.615	183	.202		
	Total	4.100	184			

Table 4: Table of coefficients of the first hypothesis

Model		Unstandardized coefficients of significance		Standardized coefficients of significance	T	Sig
		B	Standard error	Beta		
1	Constant	2.135	.634		3.366	.010
	vision	.528	.151	.771	3.503	.008

The R-value (regression coefficient) shows a very strong correlation between the two variables ($R = 0.771$). R2 values generally fluctuate between zero and one. Here it is equal to 594, which shows how much of the dependent variable, employee empowerment, can be explained by the independent variable, perspective. In this research, the independent variable can explain 59.4% of the changes in the dependent variable. The analysis of the variance table shows that considering that the obtained value is less than 0.05, we conclude that the used model is a good predictor for the dependent variable. That is, considering that the significance level is less than 0.05. Therefore, the independent variable affects the dependent variable.

To investigate the second hypothesis of the research, the null hypothesis, "altruistic love does not have a significant effect on employee empowerment," and the substitute hypothesis, "altruistic love has a significant effect on employee empowerment," was considered. The tables related to testing this hypothesis are as follows.

Table 5: Summary of the second hypothesis model

Model	Correlation coefficient	The square of the correlation coefficient	The value of the adjusted correlation coefficient	Standard error of estimate
1	.537a	.288	.246	.58312

Table 6: Analysis of variance of the second hypothesis

Model		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	Fisher's value	Sig
1	Regression	1.713	1	1.713	5.835	.029a
	Residual	4.404	183	.294		
	Total	6.118	184			

Table 7: Table of coefficients of the second hypothesis

Model		Unstandardized coefficients of significance		Standardized coefficients of significance	T	Sig
		B	Standard error	Beta		

	B	Standard error	Beta		
1	2.745	.703		3.907	.001
Altruistic love	.394	.163	.537	2.416	.028

The R-value (regression coefficient) shows a moderate correlation between the two variables. ($.537 = R$). R² values generally fluctuate between zero and one. Here it is equal to .288, which shows how much of the dependent variable, employee empowerment, can be explained by the independent variable, love of altruism. In this research, the independent variable can explain 28.8% of the changes in the dependent variable. The analysis of the variance table shows that considering that the obtained value is less than 0.05, we conclude that the used model is a good predictor for the dependent variable. That is, considering that the significance level is less than 0.05. Therefore, the independent variable affects the dependent variable.

To examine the third hypothesis of the research, the null hypothesis, "piety has no significant effect on employee empowerment," and the substitute hypothesis, "piety has a significant effect on employee empowerment," was considered. The tables related to testing this hypothesis are as follows.

Table 8: Summary of the third hypothesis model

Model	Correlation coefficient	The square of the correlation coefficient	The value of the adjusted correlation coefficient	Standard error of estimate
1	.747a	.558	.533	.47546

Table 9: Analysis of variance

Model		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	Fisher's value	Sig
1	Regression	9.818	1	9.818	41.211	.000a
	Residual	7.623	183	.238		
	Total	17.441	184			

Table 10: Table of coefficients

Model		Unstandardized coefficients of significance		Standardized coefficients of significance	T	Sig
		B	Standard error	Beta		
1	piety	2.223	.329		6.756	.000
		.507	.076	.747	6.671	.000

The R-value (regression coefficient) shows a moderate correlation between the two variables ($R = 0.747$). R² values generally fluctuate between zero and one. Here, it is equal to 0.558, which shows how much of the dependent variable, employee empowerment, can be explained by the independent variable, piety. In this research, the independent variable can explain 55.8% of the changes in the dependent variable. The analysis of the variance table shows that considering that the obtained value is less than 0.05, we conclude that the

used model is a good predictor for the dependent variable. That is, considering that the significance level is less than 0.05. Therefore, the independent variable affects the dependent variable.

To investigate the fourth hypothesis, the null hypothesis, "meaningfulness does not have a significant effect on employee empowerment," and the substitute hypothesis, "meaningfulness has a significant effect on employee empowerment," was considered. The tables related to testing this hypothesis are as follows.

Table 11: Summary of the fourth hypothesis model

Model	Correlation coefficient	The square of the correlation coefficient	The value of the adjusted correlation coefficient	Standard error of estimate
1	.583a	.339	.319	.60001

Table 12: Analysis of variance

Model		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	Fisher's value	Sig
1	Regression	5.921	1	5.921	16.446	.000a
	Residual	11.520	183	.360		
	Total	17.441	184			

Table 13: Table of coefficients

Model		Unstandardized coefficients of significance		Standardized coefficients of significance	T	Sig
		B	Standard error	Beta		
1	Meaningfulness	2.745	.703		3.907	.001
		.394	.163	.569	2.416	.026

The R-value (regression coefficient) shows a moderate correlation between the two variables. (R = 0.583). R2 values generally fluctuate between zero and one. Here it is equal to 0.339, which shows how much of the dependent variable (employee empowerment), can be explained by the independent variable. In this research, the independent variable can explain 33.9% of the changes in the dependent variable. The analysis of the variance table shows that considering that the obtained value is less than 0.05, we conclude that the used model is a good predictor for the dependent variable. That is, considering that the significance level is less than 0.05. Therefore, the independent variable affects the dependent variable.

To examine the fifth hypothesis of the research, the null hypothesis, "membership does not have a significant effect on employee empowerment," and the substitute hypothesis, "membership has a significant effect on employee empowerment," was considered. The tables related to testing this hypothesis are as follows.

Table 14: Summary of the fifth hypothesis model

Model	Correlation coefficient	The square of the correlation coefficient	The value of the adjusted correlation coefficient	Standard error of estimate
1	.893a	.797	.791	.33254

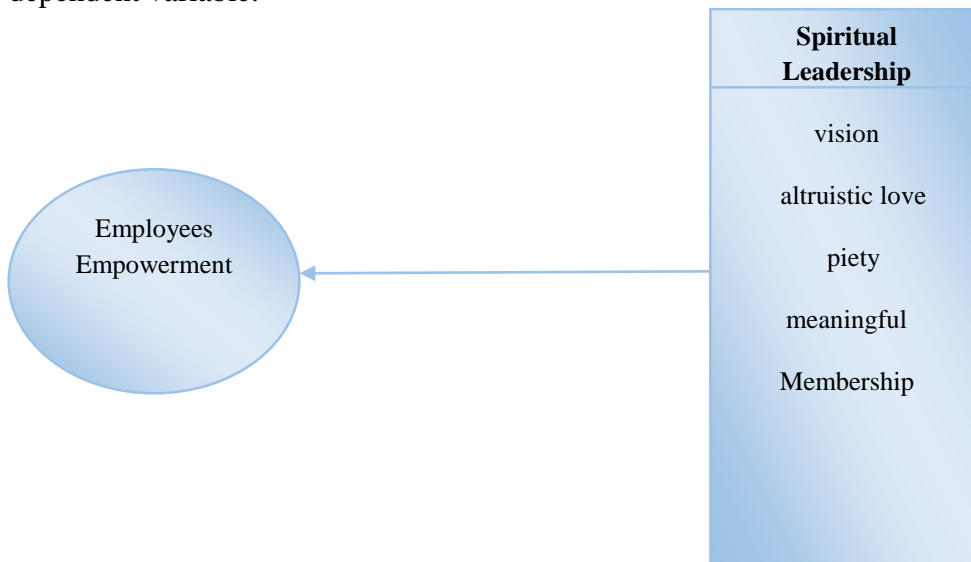
Table 15: Variance analysis of the fifth hypothesis

Model		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	Fisher's value	Sig
1	Regression	13.902	1	13.902	125.718	.000a
	Residual	3.539	183	.111		
	Total	17.441	184			

Table 16: Table of coefficients of the fifth hypothesis

Model		Unstandardized coefficients of significance		Standardized coefficients of significance	T	Sig
		B	Standard error			
1	Constant	1.133	.474		2.393	.032
	Membership	.750	.115	.893	6.543	.000

The R-value (regression coefficient) shows a very strong correlation between the two variables. ($R = 0.893$). R2 values generally fluctuate between zero and one. Here it is equal to 0.797, which shows how much of the dependent variable, employee empowerment, can be explained by the independent variable, membership. In this research, the independent variable can explain 79.7% of the changes in the dependent variable. The analysis of the variance table shows that considering that the obtained value is less than 0.05, we conclude that the used model is a good predictor for the dependent variable. That is, considering that the significance level is less than 0.05. Therefore, the independent variable affects the dependent variable.



Discussion and Conclusion

This research aims to investigate spiritual leadership's effect on employees' empowerment in petroleum engineering and development company. Mohammadi et al. (2016) investigated the effect of spirituality in empowering employees by considering the mediating variable of organizational trust. This research explains spirituality from three points of view, including psychology, philosophy, and mysticism. It has examined the role of spirituality in the work environment and its impact on employee empowerment and organizational trust. After collecting the data, the hypothesis of this study was developed, and it was found that the effect of spirituality in empowering employees is obvious and organizational trust has a mediating role in empowering employees.

Azadeh (2016) studied the impact of spirituality in the work environment and job satisfaction on the reduction of anti-productivity behaviors of employees (case study: Pasargad Energy Development Company). In this research, an attempt has been made to investigate the effect of spirituality in the work environment and job satisfaction on reducing anti-productive behaviors of Pasargad Energy Development Company employees. This research is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive survey in nature. In order to test the research hypotheses and obtain the results, Lisrel software and the structural equation model have been used. The results obtained from the hypothesis test of this research showed that spirituality in the work environment and job satisfaction have a negative and inverse effect on the anti-productivity behaviors of Pasargad Energy Development Company employees. Spirituality in the work environment has a positive and direct effect on the job satisfaction of Pasargad Energy Development Company employees. Also, spirituality in the work environment through job satisfaction reduces the anti-productivity behaviors of Pasargad Energy Development Company employees.

Based on the confirmation of the first sub-hypothesis, it is suggested that employees commit to the organization's vision; By strengthening its vision, the organization makes employees work better; Draw an organizational perspective for all employees. Based on the confirmation of the second sub-hypothesis, it is suggested that the manager cares about his employees; The manager should be kind to the employees when they are suffering; The organization is confidential and loyal to its employees; The organization does not consider punishment for inadvertent mistakes; Leaders in the organization should be honest and not arrogant; A person should choose challenging goals for employees.

Based on the confirmation of the third sub-hypothesis, it is suggested that employees show their faith in the organization by doing everything for the success of the organization; Employees put in extra effort to help the organization succeed because it is a sign of faith in the organization; to do something very important to them.

Based on the confirmation of the fourth sub-hypothesis, it is suggested that the work duties of employees become personally meaningful for them; Make them feel that the organization understands them.

Based on the confirmation of the fifth sub-hypothesis, it is suggested that the organization praises the person and his work; The employee feels that the leaders are completely attentive to the employees; The employee should feel like a member of a family in the organization.

Ethics

This research observed ethical standards, including obtaining informed consent and ensuring privacy and confidentiality. Also, while completing the questionnaires while emphasizing completing all the questions, the participants were free to withdraw from the research at any time and provide individual information. They were assured that the information would remain confidential, which was strictly adhered to.

Acknowledgement

The cooperation of all participants in the research is thanked and appreciated.

Conflict of Interest

According to the authors, this article has no financial sponsor or conflict of interest.

References

- D'Annunzio-Gree, N. & Macandrew, J. (1999). "Re-empowering the empowered - the ultimate challenge?"; *personnel Review*; Vol.28; No.3; PP.258-278.
- Dastgerdi, K., Goudarzi, M., Asadi, H., & Dastgerdi, M. (2010). To Determine the Relationship between Employees' Empowerment and Organizational Learning in Physical Education Organization. *Sport Management Journal*, 2(7).
- Drucker, Petter. 1994, *post capitalist society*, Harper business, a division of Harper Collins publishing, New York.
- Honald Linda (1997); "Areview of literature of employee empowerment "; *Empowerment in Organization*; Vol.5, No.4, P.202.
- Jafari, A. (2013). The effect of psychological empowerment, job satisfaction and job stress on organizational commitment (case study: employees of the police headquarters of West Azarbaijan province). *NAJA*, 18(6), 1-31.
- Kamalian, A. (2010). Psychological empowerment, a new approach in human resource management. *national conference on management and leadership challenges*.
- Kazemi, A. (2012). Examining the effect of spiritual leadership on organizational citizenship behavior, master's thesis, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, field of educational management
- Lawler, E 1994, *Total quality management & employee involvement: are they compatible*, Academy of Management Executive.

- Rastegar, A., Jangholi, M., Heidari, F., & Heidari, H. (2012). (2012). The Role of Spiritual Leadership in Organizational Identification. *Public Management Researches*, 5(16), 39-63.
- Sepahvand, R., Nasr Esfahani, A., Arefnejad, M., & Sobhani, M. (2013). Public Administration Perspective, 4(1).
- Spritzer, G. M. (1997). A dimensional Analysis of the Relationship between Psychological Empowerment and Effectiveness. *Journal of Management*.vol.23, no5.
- Spritzer, Gretchen M. (1995). Psychological Empowerment in Work Place, Dimensions, Measurement
- Taheri, Sh. (1999). Productivity & analysis on organizations (Total Productivity Management), Tehran,1st Edition.
- Thomas, Kenneth W. Betty, A. Velthous. (1990). Cognitive Element of Empowerment: An Interpretive Model of Intrinsic Task Motivation.*Academy of Management Journal*, vol.15, No.4
- Vaziri, S., Mansouri, H., Adiban, A. (2010). Identification & Prioritize the Factors Affecting the Productivity of Human Resources With MADM Technique. *journal of Civility & Training*. No 100.