A study on challenges of spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors in Rasht Municipality

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the relationship between spirituality and organizational citizenship behavior. Spirituality consist of sense of community, alignment with values and meaningful work. The statistical population consisted of 320 employees of municipality offices in Rasht .the statistical sample was reduced to 175 subjects, using Morgan table. The data were collected, using questionnaire. SPSS and correlation were used to analyze the data. The results show that there is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behaviors and spirituality.

KEY WORDS: spiritual behaviors, organizational citizenship behavior, sense of community, alignment with values, meaningful work

1. INTRODUCTION

Human behavior has been a focus of research carried out by the scholars of social sciences. As a construct of multiple dimensions, behavior has been studied in different contexts including psychology, sociology and management. These studies have sought to measure, direct and predict the behavior through examining the variables such as motivation, values and attitudes, perception, personality etc. Taking on a particular role in a context, one's behavior becomes subject to rules. These roles entails accepting some responsibilities and relevant behaviors. For example, as a citizen, one should avoid violating other people's rights. In this context, the rules and regulations developed for controlling these types of behaviors have set some red lines which should not be violated. In addition to the behaviors shaped by the rules, some behaviors originate from culture, history, and religion of a community (Wang.& pallis, 2014). Today, ethics is considered as one of the most challenging topics in the context of business.in an organization so that the individual might have different and sometimes antithetical behaviors. It is important to identify these behaviors and to highlight the commonalities of behaviors. Consequently, the organizations have focused on the individual's internal virtues to reform the behaviors. Considered as a new paradigm, this approach to human behavior is called spirituality that has recently drawn the attention of the researchers. It seems spirituality influences various organizational variables one of which is organizational citizenship behaviors (Hysted & Mearns, 2014).Similarly, this study aims to investigate the challenges concerning spiritual behaviors and organizational citizenship behaviors. This paper will consist of the following parts: a brief review of related literature, the methodology and finally discussion and conclusion.

Theoretical background

Some behaviors are voluntary and inspired by the communicate values (e.g. respecting the elderly). Being beyond one' duties and responsibilities these behaviors are called organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB). Staff in organization don't expect to be rewarded for carrying out organizational citizenship behaviors. However, the effect of these behaviors on the efficacy of organization is a matter of research interest. Some examples of these behaviors are as follows: helping with training programs for the newly employed staff, using off-time (resting time) for completing one's tasks, proposing solutions for improving the performance, working on the organization's projects at home. The OCB contribute significantly to the achievement of organizations' goals as these types of behaviors deter the difficulties OCB are rarely done publicly and are kept hidden (Khoal, 2013).Organ and Beetman (1998) coined the term" Organizational Citizenship Behavior" for the first time. They initially defined OCB as "those voluntary behaviors of staff, among other, that are not considered as their formal responsibilities

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and for which there will be not directly reward by the organization. Yet, these behaviors increase the organizational efficacy. There is no yet consensus on the dimensions of OCB among the researches. For example, some studies have considered the following dimensions as examples of OCB: helping others, self-sacrifice, organizational loyalty, obeying the orders, individual creativity, conscientiousness, individual development, being considerate and courteous, civil behaviors, altruism (Reynolds et al., 2014) .Organ believes that OCB improves the productivity, sense of community, and the stability of working place. Only a sub-group of employees in an organization do OCB that is not considered as their responsibility. He maintains that OCB is voluntary and done individually and it is not expected to be rewarded and it is not expected to be rewarded. Yet, it improves organizational efficacy and performance.

The above-mentioned highlights three main characteristics of OCB:

1-the behavior should be voluntary.

2-the behavior should result in organizational behavior.

3-Organizational Citizenship behavior has multiple dimensions. (Mahdiuonet al., 2010)

As already mentioned, there is no consensus over the dimensions of OCB among the scholars and researchers. The studies have examined some dimensions of OCB including helping others, self-sacrifice, organizational loyalty, organizational compliance, individual creativity, conscientiousness, individual development, being considerate and courteous, civil behaviors and altruism. Podsakoff (2000) has classified OCB into the following 7 groups:

1-helping behavior

2-sportmanship

3-civiv virtue

4-induviudual creativity

5-organizational commitment

6-satisfaction

7-self-development

Bolino et al(2003) introduced the following as the components of PCB:

1-loyaly

2-accounatblity

3-participation and engagement   (social, supportive, civic)

4-respect

5-self-sacrifce

6-sportmanship. (Futa, (2013)

There is a consensus over the following Five dimensions among researchers:

1-altruisam

2-consciousness

3-courtesy

4-sportsmanship

5-civic virtue

These five components were initially introduced by Oregan and were used by other researchers.

Altruism is concerned with helping others with their solving their problems in the organization.(e.g. helping the newly employed staff or those whose skills are underdeveloped). Consciousness is defined as those voluntary behaviors that are beyond the minimum requirements and obligations.(e.g. an individual who stay at work longer than the prescribed time or a worker whose resting time is very short).self-sacrifice is concerned with exercising self-constraint and tolerance in unpleasant conditions of the organization. Civicvirtues is defined as having desire to participant and to have accountability in organizational life.(Kacmaret al., 2012).there are many organizational factors influencing OCB. One of these factor is spirituality which is considered as a feature of today organization. This is because it increases organizational efficacy. There are many. Spirituality in working place is positively correlated with creativity, honesty and confidence, increases self-satisfaction, organizational commitment, job attitudes such a, job engagement, decreased desire for quitting and self-respect. Given the personal nature of spirituality, many definitions and viewpoints have been presented in this regard. Spirituality in working place is concerned with perceiving and identifying the dimensions of staff's internal life which can be nurtured and can be enhanced through doing meaningful acts. (Palomino& canas, 2014) a workplace can be considered as a spiritual and friendly place in which the inner life of the workers are take into account. This inner life can be enhanced and developed through conducting spiritual acts. Some scholars have given definitions of spirituality in references. To deal with spirituality and organizational life in a proper workplace, one needs to define work spirituality accurately. Many definitions concerning work spirituality include impressions, directions and finding meaning

for purpose of guiding other individuals. Valli defined spirituality as an obligation for a human research group that seeks to find meaning and that those who take their own job more seriously are more Gilacanone (Richardson & Bradley, 2014) defined spirituality as a framework for organizational values through which the affective relationship between the staff and others is facilitated and become enjoyable. (Guangling, 2011) In today, world, the organizational efficacy can be increased through enhancing spiritual behaviors in organizations. Thus, people can engage in both spirituality and sociability within an organizational environment.it can be implied that staff may find meaning in a truth which can secure their job.at the same times.(Mammanet al., 2012)Despite many challenges posed by modern workplace, the organizations seek to makes life meaningful for their staff in a place where they spend most of their time. (Guangling, 2011) Given the increased attention to spirituality in workplace, the main question is what do we mean when we say there is spirituality in workplace. Spirituality has different meanings for different people. Reviewing the literature, one comes up with different definitions which are derived from different approaches. A review of literature reveals that "to a catholic clergy, spirituality is a means through which he approaches God; To a physician in Harvard medical school, spirituality is a means which makes life meaningful. To a sociologist, spirituality is an individual search for perceiving the values that might or might not represent the existence of God (Asghariet al., 2012) To others, being spiritual means living a life knowing that life is more than what we see. Spiritual life provides a basis for the social, intra-personal, inter-personal and even global transformation. This results in a life in which we see the omnipresence of God. Work spirituality has been topic of research during last five years. Most of these studies have dealt with the impacts and implications of work spirituality in organizations. Yet, a wide range of definitions have been proposed by these studies, making it difficult to derive a commonly held definition. Eshamas and Ducken define spirituality as knowledge of one's inner life, which reinforces and is reinforced by a meaningful work of social nature. (Khoal, 2013). A review of literature reveals that work spirituality has 3 elements: internal life, meaningful work, sociability. Spirituality is believed to serve as a chance whereby one can demonstrate many of positive dimensions of his/her own personality. The studies show that meaningful work actually occur when staff perceive their work to be meaningful or they find the purpose of their life. . (Bixter& Luhmann, 2014)

This study classified spirituality into three general groups:

1-sense of community in work place

2-alighment with values in workplace

3-meanginful work in workplace
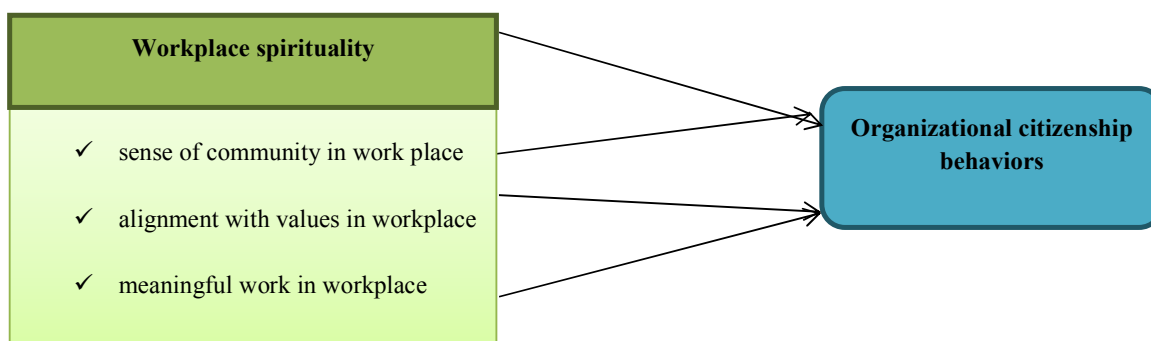
The conceptual model is shown in figure 1

Figure 1. Conceptual model

Given the foregoing discussion, the hypotheses of this study are as follows:

Main hypothesis

There is significant relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behavior.

Sub-hypotheses

There is a significant relationship between perceived sense of community in workplace and organizational citizenship behavior.

There is a significant relationship between value alignment with values in workplace and organizational citizenship behavior.

There is a significant relationship between meaningful work in workplace and organizational citizenship behavior.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Bixter & Luhmann, (2014) conducted a study on " reducing the risk and sensitivity: a case study on spirituality". They believe that spirituality occur when individuals want to make decisions that are associated with consciousness. This study has investigated the impact of spiritual behaviors on the quality of work. The findings showed that when people share their concerns and demonstrated spiritual behavior, the risk at work would decrease.

Hysted et al, (2014) conducted a study called "spiritual engagement as a mechanism for relationship between organizational justice and work behaviors". This study aimed to examine the impact of spiritual behaviors on organizational justice, satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviors. 340 Norwegian workers participated in the study. The findings showed that spiritual behaviors impact the staff's perception of organizational justice and job satisfaction.

Kacmar et al, (2012) conducted a study on the effect of supervisor' trust on the relationship between competing sources and citizenship behavior. The researchers developed a model dealing with social exchanges as well as examining the organizational citizenship behavior. The variables in this study were organizational citizenship behavior, conflict and supervisors' trust. A questionnaire was administered to 160 corporate employees in U.S.A. The data were analyzed using structural equation model .findings showed that conflict results in decreased citizenship behavior as well as decreased trust.

Mohammadi et al, (2013) carried out a study on the relationship between workplace spirituality and staff's perceptions of servant leadership. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between spirituality in workplace and staff's perception of their managers on the basis of 4 components of servant leadership (serving, humility, trusts, and agapao love).

126 questionnaires were distributed among the subjects of the study. Findings showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between the staff's perceptions of organization atmosphere with regards to spirituality components in workplace and the managers' perception with regards to serving componentnts.it follows that the improved spirituality in workplace is not expected to improve serving values of managers.

METHOD

This study is of applied sort and the data were collected, using descriptive-correlational method. The study aims to examine the relationship between spirituality and the components of organizational citizenship behavior.to this end, the staff working I offices affiliated to Rasht municipality were selected as the subjects of the study. two standard questionnaire (Millimean et al's questionaire,2003 and Podaskof et al's questionnaire and Orgean Model) were used to devise the a questionnaire with acceptable reliability and validity. To collect information on theoretical background, the related journals, books and sources were searched, using library method. The statistical population of the study consisted of 320 managers and employees in the municipality offices in district 1, 2,and 3 in Rasht. The samples was reduced to 188 subjects, using Morgan table. Relative classification method was used to select the sample.

Two methods namely, library and survey were used to collect the data. English sources such as journals and books were consulted in the case of library and questionnaire was used in the case of surveying. Alpha Cronbach was used to verify the reliability of the questionnaire. To this end, a preliminary sample of the questionnaire was distributed among 30 subjects the results showed that the questionnaire enjoy high reliability (table 1)

Table 1. Cronbach Alpha Research Variables

Research Variables	Cronbach Alpha
Meaningful Work	90/7
Sense of community	77/5
Alignment with values	89/9
Spirituality	93/3
Organizational citizenship behavior	95/4

RESULTS

The data were analyzed, using SPSS 18. The hypotheses were examined using inferential techniques as well. Correlational analysis was used to investigate the sub-hypotheses. The Pearson test was used to verify the status of the correlational relationship between the variables. Kolmogorov-smirnov test was used to ensure the normality of the data and t-Test was used to

determine if there were any significant difference between the two groups in terms of spirituality components and organizational citizenship behavior across demographic features.

Hypotheses Test
Main hypothesis: H1: there is a significant relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors.

As sig = 0/000<0/05, therefore H0 is rejected and H1 is conformed. That is, there is significant relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors. The coefficient of correlation between spirituality in workplace and organizational citizenship behavior is +63/9. This shows a direct relationship between these two variables. Thus, the determination coefficient between the two variables equals 0/40.8. This shows that prediction of OCB by spirituality in workplace is 4/8 percent.

Sub-hypothesis1: there is a significant relationship between the perceived sense of community in workplace and organizational citizenship behavior.

As sig = 0/000<0/05, therefore H0 is rejected and H1 is conformed. That is, there is significant relationship between the perceived sense of community and organizational citizenship behaviors. The coefficient of correlation between the perceived sense of community and organizational citizenship behavior is +50/6. This shows a direct relationship between these two variables. Thus, the determination coefficient between the two variables equals 0/256. This shows that prediction of OCB by the perceived sense of community in workplace is 25/6 percent.

Sub-hypothesis 2: there is a significant relationship between alignment with values and organizational citizenship behavior.

As sig = 0/000<0/05, therefore H0 is rejected and H1 is conformed. That is, there is significant relationship between alignment with values and organizational citizenship behaviors. The coefficient of correlation between alignment with values and organizational citizenship behavior is +55/8. This shows a direct relationship between these two variables. Thus, the determination coefficient between the two variables equals 0/311. This shows that prediction of OCB by the alignment with values in workplace is 31/1 percent.

Sub-hypothesis 3: there is a significant relationship between meaningful work in workplace and organizational citizenship behavior.

As sig = 0/000<0/05, therefore H0 is rejected and H1 is conformed. That is, there is significant relationship between meaningful work in workplace and organizational citizenship behaviors. The coefficient of correlation between meaningful work in workplace and organizational citizenship behavior is +57/2. This shows a direct relationship between these two variables. Thus, the determination coefficient between the two variables equals 0/327. This shows that prediction of OCB by the meaningful work in workplace in workplace is 32/7 percent.

Table2.coefficient Correlational& Hypotheses Test

Hypothesis	Correlational coefficient	Determination coefficient	Test result
Main Hypothesis: there is a significant relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors.	+63/9	0/408	confirmed
Sub-hypothesis 1: there is a significant relationship between the perceived sense of community in workplace and organizational citizenship behavior.	+5./6	0/256	confirmed
Sub-hypothesis 2: there is a significant relationship between alignment with values and organizational citizenship behavior.	+55/8	0/311	confirmed
Sub-hypothesis 3: there is a significant relationship between meaningful work in workplace and organizational citizenship behavior.	+57/2	0/327	confirmed

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to examine the relationship between spirituality and organizational citizenship behavior. The construct of spirituality in workplace is made up of several dimensions including meaningfulness, sense of community and alignment with values. Thus we have excluded the religious aspects in this study. This is because people usually don't tend to reveal their religion or faith orientations. The inclusion of such topics can be a matter of controversy and hence no authentic reply will be given.

An analysis of the data showed that there is a significant relationship between spirituality and organizational citizenship behavior. There is also a significant relationship between components of spirituality, namely sense of community, alignment with values, and meaningful work on the one hand and organizational citizenship behavior on the other hand. Put it other way, spirituality in workplace increases sense of community among the municipality staff in Rasht. An increase in alignment with values will results in an increase in organizational citizenship behavior. Meaningful work brings about virtues such sportsmanship and altruism. In conclusion, spirituality in workplace results in more organizational citizenship behavior.

The coefficient of correlations between the components of spirituality and organizational citizenship behavior are 50/6 (sense of community),55/8(alignment with values), 57/2(meaningful work).given the results of the study, it follows that meaningful work has the highest correlation with organizational citizenship behavior. That is, the more meaningful the staff 'work is, the more OCB they will show in workplace. The organizational citizenship behaviors can be improved through spirituality in workplace.

Conclusion

Although all the hypotheses were confirmed some components of spirituality had low means. This shows that spiritualty has been given little attention among the staff in Rasht municipality. For example, as for subcategories of sense of community, alignment with values and meaningful work, staff' sympathy, motivating work, perceived freedom of expression and opinions were the lowest, respectively. The managers are generally recommended to encourage spirituality among their staff. They can enhance the staff's perceived meaningful work through job rotation, job enrichment, staff empowerment, and making work more enjoyable. Creating a friendly atmosphere on the basis of cooperation instead of competition can lead to decreased stress among the staff. The transparent statement of organizational mission and vision for staff as well as surveying them can lead to their acceptance of the organizational values and purposes. Thus, managers need to take the spiritual needs of staff into account and at the same time they should create a dynamic and motivating atmosphere in the organization. This will make duties more enjoyable, and the employees will be more satisfies and will more likely to do organizational citizenship behaviors.

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