

The relationship between spiritual leadership and vertical organizational trust

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Abstract: In many countries of the world, the vertical trust of the staff of the public sector to their organizations is decreasing and one of the mechanisms causing the promotion of vertical trust in this organization is to apply spiritual leadership. To investigate this issue, the present study, in line with adopted objectives including identifying the relationship between spiritual leadership in organization and organizational vertical trust, and to access this objective, presents this question that what is the relationship between spiritual leadership and organizational vertical trust? To answer this question, the researchers developed a model and using a survey study and a correlational method of investigation, tested the research hypotheses. Each of the concepts of the research were operationalized and using questionnaires, the data were collected. The results of analyzing data indicated the confirmation of hypotheses and showed that there is a significant correlation between the dimensions of spiritual leadership and creating organizational vertical trust in the Social Security Administration city of Saveh.

Key words: Spiritual leadership; Organizational vertical trust; Trust; Intra-organizational trust; Leadership

1. Introduction

The word "spirituality" has attracted a lot of attention in recent decade. A lot of scholars have investigated and studied about the issue of spirituality in the science of leadership. The issue of spirituality has been changing into a public issue in organizations and in organizational sciences (Fry and Matherly, 2006).

Giacalone and Jurkiewicz believe that spirituality facilitates the attainment of productivity and suitability and by providing moral features prevents stress and turnover in organizations (Aydin and Sillan, 2009). They define this issue in their scientific investigations on spirituality in workplaces as: the framework of organizational values takes place in a culture which causes the promotion of staff's experiences via the process of working, and facilitates a communication sense, provides the sense of cooperation and happiness as well as enjoyment of working (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003).

Strack et al. state that the leadership method of managers who have more tendency toward spirituality is more effective than that of managers who have no tendency toward it. Therefore, they believe that there is a positive relationship between spirituality and leadership (Strack et al. 2008). Therefore, spiritual leadership should expand inspired views and task manifestations which reinforce the promotion of the spirit of cooperation,

trust, mutual concern, team commitment and organizational effectiveness in order that be accepted in the four fields of follower-training, trust, reliability and inspiration. In addition, trust is one of the most important elements of effective relations and enjoys basic importance in organizations. Due to the fact that trust to executive organizations require the creation of trust among the staff and managers of executive departments; therefore, paying attention to intra-organizational trust seems very important. For an optimal management, it is required to create trust as one of the most important social capitals in organizations and this issue causes the linkage and empathy among staff and managers of executive departments. Trust as a facilitating phenomenon causes more productivity in organizations (Salimi, 2010). In addition, one of the issues and problems of organizations of today is the lack of trust between staff and managers. In state organizations, there is an outstanding gap between staff and management and the wants of these two. As the result of this gap, decisions usually encounter executive problems because the staff may be stubbornness in executing decisions and managers in turn may not trust the staff and not share the staff with participation and these all causes creating an atmosphere of mistrust in organizations. The result of mistrust is engendering behaviors such as rumors, conflict, politicization and inefficiency in organizations which decrease the energy of organizations and increase costs. In such an organization, speaking of issues such as self-management and self-control, coordination, the occurrence of creativity,

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comprehensive quality management and etc. is useless and most of efforts for increasing productivity fail to reach the desired results because the realization of organizational objectives requires coordination of its members with each other and the most important way of facilitating coordination is mutual trust of the staff to each other and also trust among the staff and managers of organizations (Khanifar et al. 2009).

Joseph and Winston (2005), in their research investigated the relationship between the perception of the staff and servant leadership and trust to supervisors and concluded that the perception of servant leadership depends on organizational trust (Joseph and Winston, 2005).

Gholipour et al. (2009), in their research concluded that there is a strong relationship between servant leadership, organizational trust, and empowerment in state organizations (Farhang, 2010).

Nak and Xac (2001), in their own research titled as "building trust: public policy, trust between individuals and economic development" found out that the existence of trust-building relationship among individuals, to a great extent, is effective on economic growth and for economic development it is necessary that a certain level of trust be established

among individuals in a society. These researchers, to investigate the ability of managers of public departments in promoting trust levels, introduced a model in which a set of policies effective on trust-building are introduced to indicate economic growth as secure. These policies include the increase in freedom for establishing different associations and groups; culture building for civil life, reinforcing agreement guarantees, reducing income inequalities, and increasing educational levels (Khodaparast Mashhadi, 2011).

2. Research methodology

2.1. Research method

The present study is an applied one in terms of objective and it is a survey research in terms of collecting data.

In this model, spiritual leadership is the independent variable including sub-scales of visions, love and altruism, faith and hope, meaningfulness, membership, organizational commitment, and feedback. In addition, organizational trust is the dependent variable.

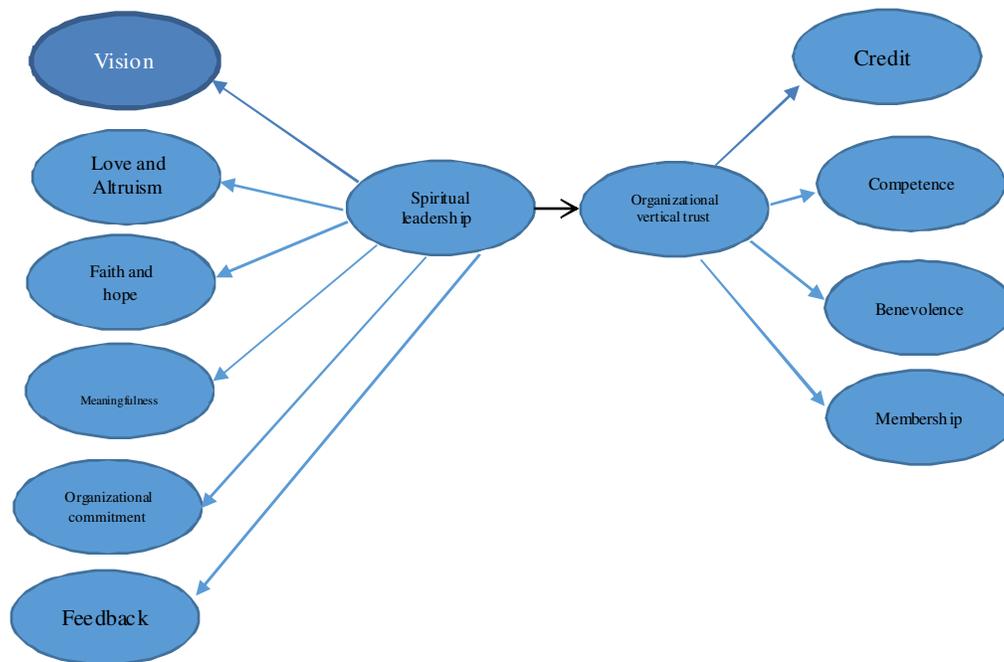


Fig. 1: Research conceptual model

2.2. Population and sampling

The population of the present study includes all staff and managers of Social Security Administration of Saveh Township. They were 120 individuals. Therefore, to determine the sample size, Morgan's table was used and the sample size covers 92 participants. In addition, sampling method was conducted using stratified random sampling with

regard to the features of the selected sample. In this case, regarding variables such as the name of the company, gender, and the organizational rank of the staff, the sampling was conducted and the researchers exerted all their efforts to ensure that the selected sample enjoys all features of the population.

2.3. Methods and instruments of collecting data

In the present study, firstly, to collect data of theoretical basics and developing review of literature and operational definitions, library research including studying books, articles, newspapers, theses, and scientific resources available in universities and scientific centers were used and regarding collecting data for answering research questions, field study and questionnaires were used:

1. The Spiritual Leadership questionnaire including 38 questions ranked with 5-point Likert Scale, which is extracted from the Spiritual Leadership Scale of Fry et al. (2005).
2. The Organizational Vertical Trust Questionnaire which is a researcher-made one.

2.4. Validity

In the present study, to determine the validity, because standardized questionnaires previously used in similar researches, therefore, it can be said that the present questionnaire enjoys favorable validity. But, the researcher, to ensure completely the content validity of the questionnaire, submitted some copies of the questionnaire to some professors and professionals expert in management issues in order that they could comment for the reformation of and completion of each of the related statement scientifically.

2.5. Reliability

To measure the reliability, Cronbach’s alpha were used. Accordingly, to measure the internal consistency among questions and components, Cronbach’s alpha was used in a pre-test was administered and 92 participants were selected randomly as the sample size, then the different copies of the questionnaire were distributed among them and using the data obtained from these questionnaires, and employing SPSS, the value of Cronbach’s alpha was calculated.

Table 1: calculating Cronbach’s alpha

Variable name	The number of questions	Cronbach’s alpha coefficient
visions	5	0.701
love and altruism	6	0.851
faith and hope,	9	0.841
membership,	6	0.705
organizational commitment	4	0.851
feedback	5	0.789
Meaningfulness	3	
Spiritual leadership	38	0.915
Organizational vertical trust	16	0.871

2.6. Data analysis method

To analyze data, descriptive and inferential statistics were used. In descriptive statistics, indicators such as tables of frequency distribution, mean, and variable were used for describing data. In inferential data analysis, the following items were considered: the normality test of research components

In this section, the normality of research components is investigated. The hypothesis of this test is as follows:

H₀: normally distributed

H₁: non-normally distributed

If at the significant level, its value is bigger than 0.05, the null hypothesis is confirmed and the normality will be confirmed. Otherwise, the research hypothesis is confirmed and the non-normality of research components are confirmed. The results obtained from the data analysis are presented in table 2. In this table, to investigate the normality of each of the investigated variables, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used. The test statistic and significance of each of the variables indicate that since the significance level of the test is bigger than 0.05, with a confidence coefficient of 95% it can be claim that all variables are normally distributed.

Table 2: the results of statistical test of investigating the normality of research components

Research comments	visions	Altruism	faith	Membershi p	Organization al commitment	Feedbac k	Meaningfulness	Vertical trust
Statistic k-s	1.125	1.347	1.159	1.147	1.421	1.159	1.911	1.731
Sig.	.159	.053	.136	.144	.131	.136	.611	.412

2.7. Testing research hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: there is a significant correlation between organizational commitment and organizational vertical trust.

$H_0 = \rho = 0$ There is no significant correlation between the two components

$H_1 = \rho \neq 0$ (Claim) there is a significant correlation between the two components.

Regarding the obtained results, since the significant level is less than 0.05, therefore, H₀ is rejected. It means that there is a significant

correlation between the two components. As a result, the hypothesis presented by researchers is

not rejected at significance level 95%.

Table 3: correlation coefficient between organizational commitment and organizational vertical trust

Pearson Correlation coefficient	0.407	According to the obtained results, the null hypothesis is rejected
(Sig. (2-tailed))	0.00	
Member (N)	92	

Hypothesis 2: there is a significant correlation between the feedback of performance and organizational vertical trust.

$H_0 = \rho = 0$ There is no significant correlation between the two components

$H_1 = \rho \neq 0$ (Claim) there is a significant correlation between the two components

Table 4: correlation coefficient between the feedback of performance and organizational vertical trust

Pearson Correlation coefficient	0.659	According to the obtained results, the null hypothesis is rejected.
(Sig. (2-tailed))	0.00	
Member (N)	92	

Regarding the obtained results, since the significant level is less than 0.05, therefore, H0 is rejected. It means that there is a significant correlation between the two components. As a result, the hypothesis presented by researchers is not rejected at significance level 95%.

Hypothesis 3: there is a significant correlation between altruism and organizational vertical trust.

$H_0 = \rho = 0$ There is no significant correlation between the two components

$H_1 = \rho \neq 0$ (Claim) there is a significant correlation between the two components.

Table 5: correlation coefficient between altruism and organizational vertical trust

Pearson Correlation coefficient	0.775	According to the obtained results, the null hypothesis is rejected.
(Sig. (2-tailed))	0.00	
Member (N)	92	

Regarding the obtained results, since the significant level is less than 0.05, therefore, H0 is rejected. It means that there is a significant correlation between the two components. As a result, the hypothesis presented by researchers is not rejected at significance level 95%.

Hypothesis 4: there is a significant correlation between faith to tasks and organizational vertical trust

$H_0 = \rho = 0$ There is no significant correlation between the two components

$H_1 = \rho \neq 0$ (Claim) there is a significant correlation between the two components.

Table 6: correlation coefficient between faith to tasks and organizational vertical trust

Pearson Correlation coefficient	0.896	According to the obtained results, the null hypothesis is rejected.
(Sig. (2-tailed))	0.00	
Member (N)	92	

Regarding the obtained results, since the significant level is less than 0.05, therefore, H0 is rejected. It means that there is a significant correlation between the two components. As a result, the hypothesis presented by researchers is not rejected at significance level 95%.

$H_0 = \rho = 0$ There is no significant correlation between the two components

$H_1 = \rho \neq 0$ (Claim) there is a significant correlation between the two components.

Hypothesis 5: there is a significant correlation between membership and organizational vertical trust

Table 7: correlation coefficient between membership and organizational vertical trust

Pearson Correlation coefficient	0.603	According to the obtained results, the null hypothesis is rejected.
(Sig. (2-tailed))	0.00	
Member (N)	92	

Regarding the obtained results, since the significant level is less than 0.05, therefore, H0 is rejected. It means that there is a significant correlation between the two components. As a

result, the hypothesis presented by researchers is not rejected at significance level 95%.

Hypothesis 6: there is a significant correlation between vision and organizational vertical trust.

$H_0 = \rho = 0$ There is no significant correlation between the two components

$H_1 = \rho \neq 0$ (Claim) there is a significant correlation between the two components.

Table 8: correlation coefficient between vision and organizational vertical trust

Pearson Correlation coefficient	0.195	According to the obtained results, the null hypothesis is not rejected.
(Sig. (2-tailed))	0.00	
Member (N)	92	

Regarding the obtained results, since the significant level is more than 0.05, therefore, H0 is not rejected. It means that there is no significant correlation between the two components. As a result, the hypothesis presented by researchers is rejected at significance level 95%.

$H_0 = \rho = 0$ There is no significant correlation between the two components

$H_1 = \rho \neq 0$ (Claim) there is a significant correlation between the two components.

Hypothesis 7: there is a significant correlation between meaningfulness and organizational vertical trust

Table 9: correlation coefficient between meaningfulness and organizational vertical trust

Pearson Correlation coefficient	0.084	According to the obtained results, the null hypothesis is not rejected.
(Sig. (2-tailed))	0.00	
Member (N)	92	

Regarding the obtained results, since the significant level is more than 0.05, therefore, H0 is not rejected. It means that there is no significant correlation between the two components. As a result, the hypothesis presented by researchers is rejected at significance level 95%.

of spiritual leadership as 4.765 was related to the feedback of spiritual leadership and the least mean score as 3.4457 was related to meaningfulness.

Regarding the main hypothesis of the research stating that there is a significant correlation between spiritual leadership with organizational vertical trust, the results of analyzing correlation coefficient indicate that it is significant. In other words, it can be said that according to the attitudes of the staff of Social Security Administration, there is a significant correlation between the five abilities of spiritual leadership and organizational vertical trust. Therefore, the research hypothesis is confirmed and the null hypothesis is rejected.

3. Conclusion

With the expansion of globalization phenomenon, the significance of vertical trust in social, economic, political and organizational has been outstandingly paid attention to in such a way that most of the scholar of different sciences have pointed out the importance of the role of vertical trust in organizations. The study of organizational literature has emphasized the importance of vertical trust as the forerunner of organizational efficacy. Vertical trust is very vital for organizational success, conducting continuous changed in roles and technologies, and also designing jobs and responsibilities. Therefore, the present study was conducted with the aim of identifying the correlation between spiritual leadership and organizational trust. The results of the study in the form of findings indicated that the highest frequency of gender includes 78 individuals or 85% of the participants were men and 11 individuals or 14% of them were women. The highest frequency of the years of service was 35 participants or 38.4% related to the staff with years of services less than 5 years and 8 participants or 7.80% were employees with more than 20 years of services. The highest frequency for educational level was 45 participants or 48.91% who held BA and the least frequency was 10 participants or 10.87% who held diploma or lesser degrees. The highest frequency of age included 45 participants or 48.91% who were employees 30-40 years old and the least frequency was related to 5 participants or 5.43% of the participants aged more than 50 years old. The highest mean score among the dimensions

Regarding the second hypothesis stating that there is a significant correlation between feedback of performance and organizational vertical trust, the results of correlation coefficient indicated that the coefficient is significant. In other words, it can be said that according to the attitudes of the staff of Social Security Administration, there is a significant correlation between feedback of performance and organizational vertical trust. Therefore, the research hypothesis is confirmed and the null hypothesis is rejected.

Regarding the third hypothesis stating that there is a significant correlation between altruism and organizational vertical trust, the results of correlation coefficient indicated that the coefficient is significant. In other words, it can be said that according to the attitudes of the staff of Social Security Administration, there is a significant correlation between altruism and organizational vertical trust. Therefore, the research hypothesis is confirmed and the null hypothesis is rejected.

Regarding the fourth hypothesis stating that there is a significant correlation between faith in tasks and organizational vertical trust, the results of correlation coefficient indicated that the coefficient is significant. In other words, it can be said that according to the attitudes of the staff of Social

Security Administration, there is a significant correlation between faith in tasks and organizational vertical trust. Therefore, the research hypothesis is confirmed and the null hypothesis is rejected.

Regarding the fifth hypothesis stating that there is a significant correlation between membership and organizational vertical trust, the results of correlation coefficient indicated that the coefficient is significant. In other words, it can be said that according to the attitudes of the staff of Social Security Administration, there is a significant correlation between membership and organizational vertical trust. Therefore, the research hypothesis is confirmed and the null hypothesis is rejected.

3.1. Limitations and research difficulties

- Limitation in instrument of collecting data in such a way that in this research, instruments such as documentary study and questionnaires were used.
- The impossibility of controlling the degree of accuracy and honesty of respondents.

3.2. Suggestions

- Regarding that in the present study, it was identified that there is a significant correlation between the five abilities of spiritual leadership of Fry et al. and organizational vertical trust; therefore, it is suggested that state and non-state organizations hold specific training courses based on the importance and application of seven abilities of spiritual leadership and intra-organizational vertical trust.
- It is suggested that managers of Iran pay more attention to spiritual leadership as one of the factors considered for selecting efficient staff. It seems that this suggestion is investigable in other organizations and particularly service ones.

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