Factors Affecting the Spiritual Capital of Employees in Non-Governmental Organizations in Tehran

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Abstract

Spiritual capital is the main driver of dynamism and energy production in organizations, making them have abilities leading to their excellence and sustainable development. Accordingly, the present study aimed to detect factors affecting spiritual capital in non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Tehran. The study adopted a descriptive (non-experimental) method, and the research design was correlational using structural equation analysis. The statistical population of the study encompassed all NGO employees in Tehran. According to Cochran's formula, 384 persons were selected as the statistical sample of the study by the simple random sampling method. A researcher-made questionnaire was used to evaluate the research variables. Descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, and structural equation analysis were adopted to analyze the collected data. Findings revealed that the positive and significant effect of causal conditions "organizational and group factors" on the main category "axial value" at $P < 0.01$. Moreover, the findings showed the positive and significant effect of "community culture, family environment, religious environment, and social environment" on the strategy of "workplace culture" and the main category of "value-orientedness" at $P < 0.01$. Further, the effect of workplace culture and value-orientedness on the outcomes of "sustainability, job satisfaction, media feedback, increased interest, employee's efficiency, organizational commitment, satisfaction and peace of mind" was significant at $P < 0.01$.

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Introduction

In the present era, there are extensive and continuous changes, which make the institutions and social organizations' responsibilities and duties heavier day by day, and rapid changes in the external environment and limited resources have made organizations constantly strive and compete with each other. In this regard, human resources play a major role in the development of societies. Manpower is the most fundamental infrastructure in any organization (1). Man as the main element of management can bring about development or act as a major obstacle to development. Human resources are the most valuable resources of organizations, the exploitation of which and the other components of the organization makes organizational goals be achieved (2). These resources have potential capabilities, which are actualized in the organizational environment. Human resources play a more prominent role in maintaining and expanding the organization's performance and completing its mission. Moreover, improving quality and productivity depends on the human factors involved in the process of organizational growth and development (3).

During the last decade, there have been many changes in the workplace of employees, which have raised anxiety, worry, and in some cases fear among these individuals. Turbulence, complexity, environmental changes, making more profit for organizations, integration and downsizing, uncertainty and instability of the environment have made organizations deal with these instabilities and changes differently. Since the 1980s, their change and improvement programs have focused on re-engineering, downsizing, group dynamism, and harder and longer work and encouraging employees to dedicate themselves to work (4); however, since these changes are often based on mechanical paradigms, they have not yielded promising and serious results, or at least it must be acknowledged that these interventions are not responsive at the present era and require new approaches to respond to today's environment. Meeting the transcendent needs of employees and nurturing their talents require newer and more transcendent discussions of employees' behaviors. To meet such a need, management researchers propose the concept "spirituality" and believe that spirituality in an organization has a direct relationship with employees' behavior in achieving individual and organizational goals (5).

Theories of management and organization, especially in the fields and studies at a micro-level, i.e. human resource management and management of organizational behaviors, would face serious challenges if they ignore the spiritual dimension of employees (6). Although the employees' physical and physiological dimensions at workplace have been extensively investigated, the spiritual dimension has received less serious attention. Understanding the significance of an organization's spiritual capital requires an understanding of individual spirituality and organizational spirituality and their consequences. This provides a new insight into the critical role that spirituality and spiritual capital play in the work environment (7).

With the advent of ethical and identity crises worldwide, there has been more emphasis on spirituality. It seems that today's human need for spirituality is more highlighted than ever (8). Spirituality in the workplace can bring humanity to organizations, activity to society, and responsibility to the environment. If so, this is the main task facing our society in the first decades of the new millennium (4).

Today's organizations pay a lot of attention to their employees as they have found that the more their material needs are met, the more their psychological needs are met. Failure to meet such needs significantly decreases individuals' performance and efficiency and makes employees be less willing to do their tasks. In this way, the organization's goals cannot be achieved.

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Organizational output is the result of performing organizations' tasks. This term is the main element of an organization. Some of the reasons regarding the significance and necessity of spiritual capital, especially workplace spirituality are as follows:

1. The introduction of spirituality into the organization and work environments gives employees the ability and power to achieve a more integrated vision of their organization, family, and community (8).

2. Employees, wherever they work, now look for something beyond material rewards at work. They are looking for a meaningful and encouraging job and want to balance their lives (5).

3. Uncertainty in the existing places has made organizations use spirituality as a rich source of sustainability and resolve the contradiction between order and disorder in the organization. Organizations need to balance the two modes of change and stability to have continuous activity in various fields. On the one hand, the organizations' order and stability is linked to rationality (left hemisphere), and on the other hand, organizations' disorder and change can be justified by spirituality (right hemisphere). Productivity is made possible by integrating the two categories of rationality and spirituality in organizations.

4. Today's intelligent employees choose organizations to help them find their full self at work. It can be said that employees in the organization are looking for something more than satisfying their material needs (9).

The introduction of concepts such as ethics, truth, belief in God or the supreme power, honesty, conscience, trust, forgiveness, feelings, kindness, meaning seeking at work, encouragement of colleagues, feeling of peace and harmony, altruism, etc. to research and management and business actions indicates the emergence of a new paradigm, called spiritual capital. Spiritual capital is not of money and material type; however, in terms of meaning, it is much more valuable and significant than material things since, in addition to enhancing individuals' material wealth, it also promotes their spiritual wealth. Spiritual capital is the driver of movement and energy production in organizations and makes them have capabilities leading to their excellence and sustainable development. Spiritual capital refers to being

aware of one's abilities, recognizing the potentials in the environment, being able to observe issues and problems from different perspectives, understanding high human values, feeling empathy, understanding other human beings, respecting the differences in human beings by believing that such differences are purposeful, there is an ability to exploit them, and individuals have the ability to turn threats into opportunities to reach a win-win attitude at all levels of their lives (10). Different NGOs are being established in Iran, the scope of whose activities is more diverse and complex. By having appropriate management and using these capabilities, we can expand these organizations as an opportunity and means to develop the social, political, economic, and cultural fields across the country. The health sector is one of these important fields, in which NGOs have long been active and has played a key and significant role. For example, in Iran, Mahak Charity Institute can be considered a successful sample active in the fields of counseling, research, and treatment of cancer children in Iran. Internationally, in most countries (such as the Philippines, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Turkey), NGOs have also had a positive effect on health promotion. In India and Bangladesh, the concept of health volunteers was first introduced. The alignment of NGOs and government departments in this field has not only caused synergy but also promoted the welfare and excellence of society (11).

Considering the effect of spiritual capital and its impacts on employees 'attitudes and behaviors, it is of great importance to study employees' behaviors in organizations, especially in non-governmental organizations (12). An investigation of existing resources and previous research indicates that intellectual capital and its consequences in non-governmental organizations have been disregarded. Gaps in previous resources and the importance of spiritual capital necessitates filling in the existing research gap to some extent. Accordingly, a review of the theoretical foundations revealed that most studies have dealt with spirituality in workplace and organizations, and less attention has been paid to spiritual capital than social, human and economic capitals. Given that spiritual capital is a capability for organizations, factors affecting this variable

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must be detected to implement it. Effective factors are the ones that may prevent the formation of spiritual capital or contribute to its formation in organizations. Considering the aforementioned discussion and the shortage of research dealing with the spiritual capital model in organizations, the present research mainly was to answer the following question: What factor affect the spiritual capital of NGOs?

Research Methodology

The present study was descriptive (non-experimental) and used correlational research design with structural equation with least squares method. Moreover, it was an applied study with regard to the objectives of this research.

The statistical population of the study encompassed all employees of NGos in Tehran, who were selected using a simple random sampling method. Cochran's formula estimated the sample size to be 384.

Table 1. Number of participants by gender and education

N	Gender
204	Male
180	Female
	Level of education
84	BA
206	MA
94	PhD

A researcher-made questionnaire (45 items) was used to collect data, the items of which were extracted from the research findings and research background. Using a Likert scale, the items were responded from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high). First, face validity was used to assess the validity of the questionnaire, and it was accepted. Then Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to assess its reliability, and it was estimated to be 91%, indicating acceptable reliability.

Descriptive analysis, correlational analysis, and structural equation analysis (second-order confirmatory factor analysis) with the least partial squares approach (regarding its superiority to covariance-based approaches) were used to analyze the data. SPSS and LISREL software were used to analyze the data.

Table 2. Confirmatory factor analysis of research variables

Variables	Alpha	χ^2/df	RMSEA	GFI	CFI	NFI
Allegiance	0.87	1.78	0.045	0.98	1	0.96
Core value	0.91	1.56	0.044	0.99	0.96	1
Sense of meaningfulness and purpose	0.82	2.25	0.022	1	0.95	0.95
Feeling of solidarity among employees	0.79	1.85	0.051	0.93	0.96	1
Employees' support from each other	0.90	2.36	0.063	0.95	0.97	0.97
common goals	0.85	1.87	0.074	1	0.98	0.92
Managerial	0.93	2.52	0.015	0.93	1	1
Educational	0.89	1.69	0.018	0.95	0.96	0.96
Structural	0.91	2.34	0.046	0.98	0.92	0.98
Linking to organizational goals	0.86	1.74	0.052	0.99	0.98	0.99
work culture	0.82	1.53	0.066	0.95	1	1
grounds of a phenomenon	0.80	1.58	0.054	0.94	0.97	0.95
consequences	0.91	1.47	0.036	0.93	0.95	1

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Findings

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics, including the mean and standard deviation, for the research variables.

Table3. Descriptive statistics of research variables

standard deviation	Mean	N	Variables
0.89	3.54	384	Organizational factors
0.93	3.21	384	Group factors
1.02	3.93	384	Core value
0.82	4.04	384	work culture
0.87	3.61	384	Social environment
0.96	3.47	384	society culture
0.93	3.82	384	family environment
0.88	3.47	384	Religious environment
0.80	3.15	384	consequences

As it can be observed, the descriptive statistics of the research variables are shown by mean and standard deviation. Table 4 shows the findings from the correlation coefficient of the research variables.

Table 4. Correlation matrix between attachment and resilience styles

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Allegiance	1												
Value-orientedness	**0.29	1											
Sense of meaningfulness	**0.31	**0.35	1										
Feeling of solidarity among employees	**0.42	**0.35	**0.43	1									
Staff support	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	1								
common goal	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	1							
Managerial	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	1						
Educational	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	1					
Structural	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	1				
Linking to goals	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	1			
work culture	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	1		
grounds	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	1	
consequences	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	**0.42	1

As shown in Table 4, there are significant relationship between allegiance, value-orientedness, sense of meaningfulness and purpose, sense of solidarity among employees, employees' support from each other, common goal, managerial, educational, structural, linking to organizational goals, work culture, and ground with consequences (Sustainability, job satisfaction, media feedback, increased interest, employees' efficiency, organizational commitment, satisfaction, and peace of mind) in all cases at *p*=0.01.

Figure 4 presents the tested model along with standardized values on each of the paths. Accordingly, the effect of all factors on the outcomes of the mentioned path coefficients is significant**.**

Data show that T-coefficients to evaluate the significance of the path coefficients. T> ±1.96 to ±2.58 are significant at *p*=0.05, and T> ±2.58 are significant at *p*=0.01. Furthermore, the direction of factor loads and T-coefficients are positive in all factors, representing the positive and significant effect of these factors. As shown in Figure 1, the direct effect of causal conditions of "organizational factors and group factors" on the main category of "core value" is positive and significant

at P <0.01. Further, the direct effect of "community culture, family environment, religious environment, and social environment" on "work culture" and the main category of "value-orientedness" is positive and significant at P <0.01. Moreover, the effect of work culture and value-orientedness on sustainability, job satisfaction, media feedback, increased interest, employees' efficiency, organizational commitment, satisfaction, and peace of mind is significant at P <0.01.

Discussion

The present study mainly aimed to detect factors affecting spiritual capital in NGOs in Tehran. Spiritual capital in the NGOs in Tehran encompasses 13 main factors: allegiance, value-orientedness, sense of meaningfulness and purpose, sense of solidarity among employees, employees' support from each other, common goal, managerial, educational, structural, linking to organizational goals, work culture, consequences, and ground of a phenomenon. The findings revealed significant relationship between allegiance, value-orientedness, sense of meaningfulness and purpose, sense of solidarity among employees, employees' support from each other, common goal, managerial, educational, structural, linking to organizational goals, work culture, and ground with consequences (Sustainability, job satisfaction, media feedback, increased interest, employees' efficiency, organizational commitment, satisfaction, and peace of mind) in all cases at the 99% confidence level. The findings of this study are consistent with the findings by Smith [22], Newbert et al. [13], Sparroe et al. [24], Alipour Sarabi [25], and Mis-Machuka and Marimon [26].

Distrust and lack of adherence to ethical values played the role of intervening factors in the research model. They are obstacles to the promotion of spiritual capital in NGOs. Trust is one of the major issues in human relations and organizational life. In general, although it is of paramount importance to observe administrative and structural rules of organizations and administrative relations, trust among organizations' staff is significant as well. Trust provides the basis of success in personal life and work relations, and all organizational relations are based on trust. The important point is that managers and employees must care for the importance of trust and detect how to create, promote, and develop it in the organization. Trust plays a critical role in improving and growing organizational efficiency and effectiveness, especially in NGOs. Moreover, organizations equipped with a healthy administrative system can do their tasks properly. One of the manifestations of a healthy organization is its employees' adherence to ethical principles in the workplace. Nowadays, health services in any society underpin individuals' physical and mental health of and are a prerequisite for sustainable development, the achievement of which requires skilled and knowledgeable staff.

The variables of religious environment, social environment, family environment, and social culture specifically affect spiritual capital strategies in NGOs and are mostly correlated with the internal environment and factors affected by spiritual capital in NGOs. It seems that today's human demand for spirituality is more highlighted than ever. Man can not only bring peace, joy and happiness in his personal life by stepping on the spirituality path, but also he can bring peace and happiness in his professional and work life. These are considered as the fruits and consequences of spirituality. In this regard, the realm of management and organization, both theoretically and practically, has been affected by a powerful force. If properly managed and directed, it seems to have the capacity to lead to the deepest collaboration, not only in professional grounds but also in the emergence of full-fledged humanity. Although it was widely believed that this huge force was not suitable for the management and business world, it is now the subject of serious academic and practical research investigations.

The fit indices obtained for the tested model indicate that the RMSEA index in the estimated model (= 0.021) has an acceptable level, and the other fit indices, namely CFI, GFI, NFI, and AGFI, are 0.96, 0.95, 0.92 and 0.94, respectively. Accordingly, they are at an acceptable level. Moreover, the goodness of fit indices show that the study data is well-fitted with the factorial structure of this model.

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Workplace spirituality can have a positive effect on job engagement, creativity, productivity, honesty, and trust, as well as a sense of empowerment in the workplace. Williams et al. (27) showed that workplace spirituality has a direct and significant effect on the employees' honesty and trust. Workplace spirituality leads to a sense of connection, power sharing, flexibility, and trust among employees, and also motivates individuals to use their abilities and talents, which have not previously been flourished. In other words, employees having a deep sense of meaningfulness in their work believe that individuals are connected to each other, feel solidarity with others in the workplace, and perceive their values and goals in line with those of the organization. They believe that the organization care for them and their problems, and they are more likely to exhibit organizational citizenship behaviors in their workplace. Conversely, if these feelings do not emerge, anti-citizenship behaviors among employees are exhibited and thereby distort the external image of the organization and damage its credibility. Job satisfaction is an important factor in promoting organizations' productivity and employees' organizational commitment. Numerous studies have revealed that absenteeism is associated with job dissatisfaction. Quitting job as a result of absenteeism as well as employees' complaints reveal job dissatisfaction. Job dissatisfaction has a detrimental effect on individuals' mental health and is a source of stress. Such stress also leads to physical diseases. Ataei Daryaei (28) concluded that management, communication, personal, cultural and awareness factors affected spiritual capital in Qom province's broadcasting, respectively. Smith (23) in his study noticed that managers' strategic thoughts had a significant impact on spiritual capital, and that decision-making styles (rational and intuitive) played a moderating role in the relationship between managers' strategic thoughts and spiritual capital. In their study entitled "The role of organizational spirituality in job stress and job satisfaction among administrative staff of Baqiyatallah Hospital and strategies to promote their spirituality," Azad Marzabadi et al. (29) revealed that spirituality can be used to mobilize the staff in promoting spirituality and decreasing job stress. Newbert et al. (13) in a study "Role of intellectual capital in innovation and performance: Evidence from developing economies" detected a significant relationship between entrepreneurs' intellectual capital and business innovation and performance, even after accounting for other forms of capital.

Some research problems and limitations are as follows: The way the research participants answered to the interview questions is a kind of self-reporting and is greatly influenced by their views and attitudes. Accordingly, considerations and individual differences may have overshadowed honesty in response, and this limitation was not under the control of the researcher. Moreover, lack of sufficient Persian articles in the field of factors affecting the dispersion of payment and the limited number of English references were another limitation for the researcher. Finally, the complexity of this field can be considered as a limitation. According to the previous studies and inconsistent and contradictory findings in this field and the impossibility of comparing the research findings with those of the previous research has been one of the research difficulties.

Conclusion

One of the main variables playing a critical role in the spiritual capital of the NGOs is organizational factor. Organizational factors encompass managerial, educational, and structural factors and linking to organizational goals. In each organization, there are a variety of factors, which are either extracted from the organization (i.e., due to the existence and type of governing function, management structure, and management culture, the organization reaches a series of characteristic factors) or affect the organization. The latter factors are external factors and originate from the cultural, social, economic, and political environment of the society where the organization develops. In this category, more attention has been paid to the inter-organizational factors, i.e. the first type of factors extracted from the existence of an organization.

Group factors are the second variable considered in the spiritual capital model of NGOs. Findings revealed that group factors included a sense of solidarity among employees, employees' support from each other, and a common goal. Individuals like to be treated as they treat others. If the supervisor treats his employee fairly, the employees also spare their efforts to improve their performance in response. It should be noted that the concept of reciprocal dealing would improve the employees' thoughts, their behavior, and their job performance and thus also affects the organization's performance. This highlights the significance of reciprocal dealing that has given rise to the social exchange phenomenon.

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