Investigating the Mediating Role of Organizational Spirituality in the Relationship of Ethical Leadership and Employees’ Self-efficacy (Case of Study: The Staff of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad)

Ghadir Yousofpour Avandari
M.Sc. in Department of Governmental Management, Mashhad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Mashhad, Iran

Gholamreza Malekzadeh 1
Assistant Professor in Organizational Behavior Management, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran

Hamid Erfanian Khanzadeh
Assistant Professor, Department of Governmental Management, Mashhad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Mashhad, Iran

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction
Given the prominence of self-confidence and self-efficacy in performing organizational activities, identifying and enforcing the factors affecting them with the aim of improving the self-confidence of employees in the organization is vital. There are different components that play a role in building self-efficacy in individuals. The most important of such elements are ethical leadership and spirituality in work place. Given the need to examine this problem in the context of educational organizations as a social phenomenon, in this research, the mediating role of spirituality in the relationship between the ethical leadership of the organization and the employees' self-efficacy of the staff of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad was studied as a case. Hence, this study attempts to answer this question: what is the role of spiritual organization in the relationship between ethical leadership and employees’ self-efficacy?

2. Theoretical Framework
Leadership, as an issue that has attracted the attention of researchers and the general public for so long, is defined as the process of influencing and directing individuals to achieve organizational goals. Perhaps the reason for the interest in leadership issues is that it is very mysterious and it influences the lives of all

1 Corresponding author, malekzadeh@um.ac.ir
people (Yukl, 2002). Many social science and organization experts believe that leadership is the most important factor in the continuity and sustainability of organizations and it has a fundamental role in the growth, development and advancement of organizations, and to rely on management and leadership issues and being successful in fulfilling its duties and responsibilities it requires three skills of knowledge, skill and moral responsibility.

The research includes four major hypotheses which investigate the relationship between ethical leadership and employee self-efficacy, ethical leadership and organizational spirituality, organizational spirituality and self-efficacy, and the mediating role of organizational spirituality in the relationship between ethical leadership and self-efficacy.

3. Research Methodology

In terms of goal, this is an applied research because its expected findings can be employed to enhance the self-efficacy and spirituality of the employees of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad. Since survey research investigates the characteristics and features of individuals in the community and examines the present situations of the statistical society in terms of trait or variable, the present study is of survey type because besides describing the existing situation, it tests the hypotheses based on prediction and use of inferential statistics method to determine the effect of variables. The statistical population of this research is the staff of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad. 1000 people were selected using simple random sampling method.

A questionnaire was used to collect the data. To analyze the data, various statistical methods such as Pearson correlation analysis and structural equation modeling were used respectively for calculating zero-order correlation coefficients and for the study of fitting the structural equation model with the collected data.

4. Research Findings

In the fitted model, all the effects between variables - the effect of ethical leadership on self-efficacy, impact of ethical leadership on organizational spirituality and the effect of organizational spirituality on self-efficacy - were statistically significant. Accordingly, hypotheses one to three were confirmed. Also, in this model, the strongest coefficient of effect is related to the coefficient of ethical leadership and organizational spirituality ($\beta = 0.67$) and the weakest coefficient was the coefficient of ethical leadership effect on self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.31$) which is, of course, significant. Considering the confirmation of the effect of ethical leadership on organizational spirituality as well as the effect of organizational spirituality on self-efficacy, organizational spirituality mediates the relationship between ethical leadership and self-efficacy. Accordingly, the indirect
effect of ethical leadership on self-efficacy is 0.355, which is estimated by multiplying the coefficients of ethical leadership direction on organizational spirituality and organizational spirituality on self-efficacy.

5. Discussion and Conclusion
In this research, demonstration of the first hypothesis showed that there is a significant relationship between ethical leadership and employees’ self-efficacy. This result is in harmony with studies done by De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2008), Brown, Treviño and Harrison (2005), Walumbwa (2011), Soltani and Rezaei (2015). The result of second hypothesis shows that there is a significant relationship between creative leadership and organizational spirituality, and it can be said that using ethical leadership style can improve spirituality among the staff of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad. The results of this hypothesis are consistent with the research done by Mahdad, Asadi, and Golparvar (2015), Milliman, Czaplewski and Ferguson (2003), McGhee and Grant (2008), and Corner (2009). The third hypothesis proves that a significant relationship exists between spirituality and self-efficacy of employees, and the higher the level of spirituality in the workplace, the higher the self-efficacy of employees. This finding is also consistent with studies by Smith (2010), Adjobula (2007), and Golchin and Sanjari (2012).

The fourth hypothesis shows that organizational spirituality mediates the relationship between ethical leadership and self-efficacy. In fact, ethical leadership can improve spirituality in the workplace by reinforcing spiritual beliefs in the workplace, such as enhancing the sense of meaningfulness of work, feeling solidarity with colleagues, and aligning with the values of the organization. Spirituality can also increase self-esteem and self-confidence in employees.

Keywords: Leadership, Ethical leadership, Spirituality, Self-efficacy, University

References (in Persian)


References (in English)


