Research Article

THE STUDY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP AND LMX IN ISLAMIC AZAD UNIVERSITY

Ahmad Charmian*[1], Mohammad Nikravan[2], Naser Javaheri Zadeh[1] and Saeed Safa Kish[1]
[1]*Department of Management, Boroujerd Branch, Islamic Azad University, Boroujerd, Iran*
[2]*Department of Physical Education, Boroujerd Branch, Islamic Azad University, Boroujerd, Iran*
*Author of Correspondence

ABSTRACT

Vision, commitment, membership, altruistic love, faith, and calling feedback all appear to be relevant for effective leadership, but nobody has examined how all seven variables are jointly related to leader-member exchange quality (LMX). The purpose of this study is to examine these relationships and test a proposed model describing them. Data were collected with a questionnaire from subordinates of leaders in Lorestan Azad Universities, and analysis factor and Pearson test were used to test alternative models. The results indicated that a leader's relations-oriented behavior fully mediated the relationship between leader empathy on LMX and partially mediated the relationship between ethical leadership and LMX (vision and commitment). Recommendations for future research to verify and extend the results were provided. This is the first empirical study to simultaneously examine the complex relationships among these seven different aspects of leadership (i.e. Vision, commitment, membership, altruistic love, faith, and calling, feedback). The practical results indicate that ethic is leadership and LMX relationships are very important in leader selection.

Keywords: Vision, Commitment, Membership, Altruistic Love, Faith, Calling, Feedback

INTRODUCTION

World's competitive world has made the organizations to change their established roles that have been selected for many years and choose the new ones. It is in a way there is no flexibility in their procedure. To be in the circle of these competitive challenges, they have to choose the leaders who are bold and dare to change the fixed routine. In fact, concepts like morality, truth, belief in God or a higher power, meaning savings, altruism, and etc. have their place in the research and management actions and business which are all indicative and refer to the emergence of a new paradigm. According to many researchers, this new paradigm at work, which is derived from quantum physics, science, cybernetics, chaos theory, cognitive science, religions and traditions of East and West, is considered as a response to the paradigm of modern mechanical world and is known as Spiritual paradigm.

The LMX theory provides such as notion that a leader must be the provider of a mutual relationship between his subordinates and himself. The social interaction theory and role theory is the provider of the gradual improvement of such a relationship during time and this process should be in a mutual manner. In a perfect example of this relationship, a high degree of mutual trust, love, and respect exist. Leader of the subjects of providing subordinates desires such as interest, additional responsibilities, and greater rewards and in the other subjects they are also expected to take responsibility, and are required to be faithful to their mutual relations at a low level. The subjects were expected to perform the formal requirements for their jobs and in turn also have additional benefits.

Leader-member exchange (LMX) theory indicates that a leader will expand an exchange association over time with each subordinate (Dienesch and Liden, 1986). Social exchange theory and role theory afford the basis for explaining how the exchange relationship develops gradually over time as a leader interacts with each subordinate and the role of the subordinate is negotiated. The nature of a pioneer's trade associations with subordinates has vital ramifications for initiative viability. A pioneer who has the capacity to grow associations with most or all subordinates is liable to be more successful than a pioneer who is not able to grow excellent connections. A leader who is able to develop high quality relationships with most or all subordinates is likely to be more effective than a leader who is unable to develop high quality

Research Article

relationships (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). Empirical studies have found a positive correlation between LMX quality and several indicators of leadership effectiveness (Graen and Scandura, 1987).

The development of LMX may also be affected by contextual variables (Liden *et al.,* 1997). It might be more troublesome for the pioneer to create good trade connections when the work unit or group has numerous individuals, when the individuals are just briefly relegated to the group, when the individuals are generally scattered and at times communicate with the pioneer, when the pioneer is over-burden with obligations and has little time for cooperation with individual individuals, or when the pioneer has little power to give remunerates and profits fancied by individuals.

Literature Review

LMX: From the gates of history, one could be able to talk through the eyes of ethics. Different religions have given different sources for spirituality. Actually half of Europe in 19th century considered the issue of spirituality because they are spiritually sharing. However, historically it tended to spirituality as Christians referring back to the various schools of spirituality, such as Spain or Flemish mystical spirituality, or the Russian Orthodox. In fact, some Western writers mistakenly believe that the term spirituality is used only in recent decades, but it is something more than a simple definition. The leader-member exchange theory of leadership spotlights on the two-way relationship (dyadic connections) in the middle of administrators and subordinates. The hypothesis expects that pioneers build up a trade with each of their subordinates, and that the nature of these leader-member exchange relationships influences "subordinates' responsibility, decision influence, access to resources and performance" (Deluga, 1998). This hypothesis advances positive livelihood encounters furthermore expands authoritative effectiveness (Liden *et al.,* 1997). Also known as LMX, it concentrates on expanding hierarchical accomplishment by making positive relations between the pioneers and subordinates.
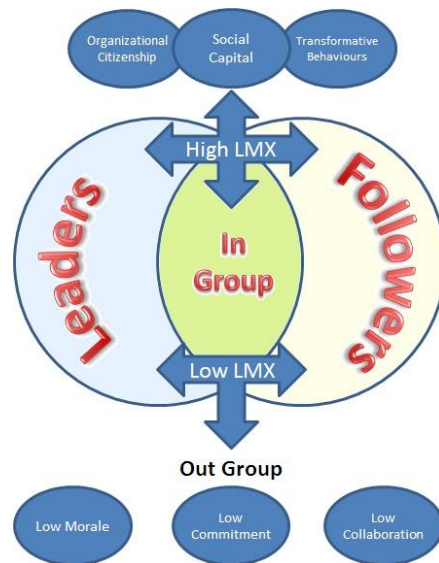

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for LMX

Spiritual Leadership: Despite intensive studies in the field of leadership, yet this concept because of its complex nature remains elusive. Ah great of leaders in the first place seems to emerge among the followers as Max Dee Perry, in his book entitled "Leadership as an Art" stated. He also added that the first responsibility of a leader, is to describe the full extent of the fact and the last is to thank the followers. In fact, the movement of spiritual leadership includes serving models of leadership, participation and empowerment of employees based on the philosophy of servant leadership. A leader is the one who serves others, has a holistic view of work, and supports personal development and decision making. At the point when one hears the expression "spiritual leadership," it normally relates to one advancing or supporting for a religious confidence through a particular church or religious association.

Research Article

Then again, being a spiritual pioneer is much deeper. It's utilizing your individual qualities to lead individuals of all societies and convictions with integrity, balance and focus. It is essential for a pioneer to keep up an offset of comprehension and acknowledgement when driving a group of inhabitants and partners with assorted ethnic and social foundations (McCann, 2012).

Therefore, Spiritual leadership is a developing standard inside the more extensive connection of working environment spirituality intended to make an inherently inspired, learning organization. Spiritual leadership embodies the qualities, demeanor, and practices important to inherently propel one's self and fulfill crucial requirements for spiritual prosperity through calling and enrollment, which emphatically impacts worker prosperity, manageability and corporate social obligation, and money related execution.

Spiritual Leadership Dimensions are shown in figure 2. Therefore, the most important ones are (in this research) vision, commitment, membership, altruistic love, faith, calling and feedback.
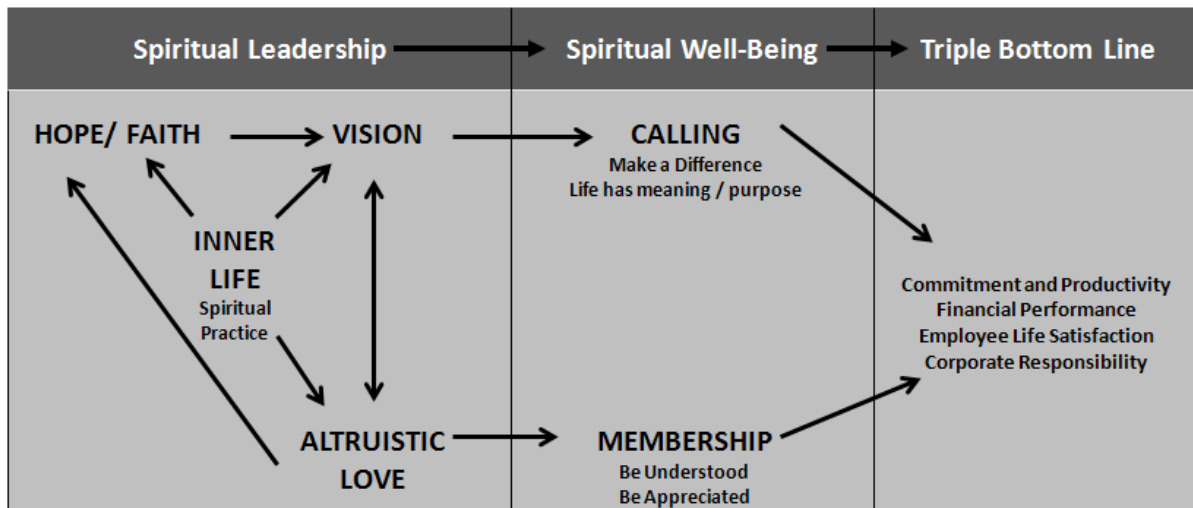

Figure 2: Spiritual Leadership Dimensions

Hope/Faith: Hope is a longing with desire of satisfaction. Faith adds assurance to hope. Taken together, Hope/Faith is a firm belief in something for which there is no proof. It is taking into account qualities, disposition, and practices that show outright conviction and trust that what is sought and anticipated that will come would pass. People with Hope/Faith have a vision of where they are set, and how to get there. They are ready to face restriction and persist hardships and enduring to attain to their objectives. Hope/Faith is likewise the hotspot for the conviction that the vision, either individual or hierarchical, will be satisfied. In real life Hope/Faith is similar to a race that has two vital components—the triumph (vision) and the delight planning for the race itself. Both segments are essential and key components of Hope/Faith to produce the important push to seek after the vision.

Vision: Vision alludes to a picture without bounds with some implied or express editorial on why individuals ought to strive to make that future. In inspiring change, vision serves three critical capacities by clearing up the general heading of progress, streamlining hundreds or a large number of more gritty choices, and serving to rapidly and effectively facilitate the activities of gathering individuals. In addition, a convincing vision empowers specialists, offers intending to work, and earns responsibility, and builds a standard of perfection. In preparing individuals a vision must have expansive claim, characterize the associations' destination and adventure, reflect high standards, and support hope and faith.

Altruistic Love: For spiritual leadership, unselfish affection is characterized as a feeling of wholeness, amicability, and prosperity created through consideration, concern, and gratefulness for both self as well as other people. There are awesome enthusiastic and mental profits from dividing love, or administer to others, from need, which is the embodiment of giving and accepting genuinely. Both medication and the field of positive brain science have started to study and affirm that adoration has the ability to conquer the

Research Article

negative impact of damaging feelings, for example, hatred, outrage, stress, and trepidation. Benevolent affection characterizes the set of key qualities, presumptions, understandings and methods for intuition thought to be ethically right that are imparted by gathering individuals and taught to new individuals. Spiritual pioneers encapsulate and live in these qualities through their regular demeanor and conduct.

Calling: Calling alludes to the experience of greatness or how one has any kind of effect through administration to others and, in doing as such, discovers importance and reason in life. Numerous individuals look for not just fitness and dominance to understand their maximum capacity through their work additionally a feeling that work has some social importance or quality. The term calling has long been utilized as one of the characterizing qualities of an expert. Experts when all is said in done have aptitude in a specific assemblage of learning, morals fixated on sacrificial administration to customers/clients, a commitment to keep up quality principles inside the calling, a pledge or calling to their professional field, a devotion to their work, and a solid responsibility to their professions. They accept their picked calling is significant, even vital to society, and they are glad to be an individual from it. The test for hierarchical pioneers, which is tended to through the spiritual leadership model, is the way to add to this same feeling of calling in its laborers through undertaking contribution and objective distinguishing proof.

Membership: Membership envelops a feeling of having a place and group; the social and social structures we are inundated in and through which we look for, what William James, the founder of advanced psychology called man's most crucial need – to be comprehended and increased in value. Having a feeling of being comprehended and acknowledged is to a great extent a matter of interrelationships and association through social connection and along these lines membership. At work, individuals esteem their affiliations and being interconnected to feel piece of a bigger group. As we give ourselves to social gatherings, membership amplifies the significance of our identity by snaring it in a system of social associations that goes out the extent that the gathering has impact and control, and regressively and advances in relations to its history. At last, we develop more noteworthy, longer lived, more important in extent as we recognize ourselves with the bigger social life that encompasses us.

Commitment: In the circle organizational behavior and modern and organizational psychology, organizational commitment is the individual's mental connection to the organization. The premise behind a large number of these studies was to discover approaches to enhance how specialists feel about their occupations so that these laborers would get to be more dedicated to their organizations. Organizational commitment predicts work variables, for example, turnover, organizational citizenship conduct, and occupation execution. A portion of the components, for example, part stretch, strengthening, employment unreliability and employability, and circulation of leadership have been indicated to be associated with a specialist's feeling of organizational responsibility.

Relations-Oriented Behavior and LMX

As specified prior, LMX hypothesis does not give an acceptable clarification of the causal connections between LMX and particular sorts of leadership behaviors. Some examination on behavioral relates of LMX has been directed; however diverse practices and measures of them were utilized starting with one study then onto the next, making it hard to think about results and reach inferences. The early conduct exploration found that relations-arranged practices can be separated from assignment situated practices, and later research discovered proof for change-situated leadership as a third conduct meta-classification. Labels such as "consideration" and "supportive leadership" were used to describe the relations-oriented behaviors in much of the early research.

Empathy, Behavioral Relations, and LMX

The interpersonal abilities of pioneers can impact their decision of pertinent practices and their successful utilization of these practices with subordinates. Pioneers with high sympathy are more ready to perceive when distinctive relations practices are applicable. Case in point, a pioneer ought to be supportive, empowering, and helpful when a subordinate is on edge around a troublesome errand or overemphasized by the weights of the occupation. Understanding a subordinate's mentality about the work is important for deciding the amount of strengthening is proper for each one subordinate. Sympathy likewise make it less

---

Research Article

demanding for the pioneer to see how fulfilled a subordinate is with the trade relationship and to distinguish any hidden sentiments of unfairness and hatred about assignments, compensates, and help from the pioneer.

Therefore, based on the concepts discussed in this paper, the following assumptions are presented:

Hypothesis 1: The spiritual leader has a direct relationship with LMX.

Hypothesis 2: The dimensions of spiritual leadership are positively correlated with LMX.

Hypothesis 3: The dimensions of Spiritual leadership have the same value and share in creating spiritual leadership.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
Methodology

This study demonstrates the target application and the nature of the cross-correlation study. The population of the study includes all faculty members of Islamic Azad University of Boroujerd, Khorramabad, Aligudarz and Doroud in the first semester of 2011-2012, and the number is 334. The sample size was determined to be 178 according to the formula Cochran.

Data collection tool was a questionnaire. A questionnaire consisting of 38 questions on a Likert scale was prepared with regard to the integration factor. The range of options is considered to be as very high, high, medium, low and very low. To ensure that the sample subjects receive all 178 questionnaires, 190 questionnaires were distributed and to the efforts of researchers, 180 questionnaires were completed and were used for analysis. To estimate the reliability of the instrument, a questionnaire was developed, implemented over 30 faculty members with alpha coefficient of 0.81for the variable of spiritual leadership and for the LMX variable it was 0.83. In order to evaluate the validity and reliability of questionnaire, questionnaires were distributed among 20 faculty members and all have agreed that the total amount of 83% was obtained. Also, with any necessary modifications to ensure the validity of the questions, some questions related to spiritual leadership and LMX variable can be expressed in the following table:

Table 1: LMX and Spiritual Leadership Questions

Variables	Question
LMX	How much does your boss understand your talents and hidden potential?
	How much does your boss trust abilities?
	How much are you willing to help your boss at the time of crisis?
	How would you describe the relationship between you and your boss?
Spiritual Leadership	I am committed to the vision of spiritual leadership.
	Organizational visions make me work better.
	I believe the organizational vision for employees.
	My organization cares about the employees.
	My organization is kind when employees are disturbed.
	My organization is reliable and loyal to its employees.
	My organization does not punish honest mistakes.

The data obtained from the questionnaires are analyzed using the percentage distribution, Pearson correlation, multiple regressions, and factor analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Findings

These findings indicate that 92.8 percent of respondents are male and 39.8 percent of them were aged 49 years and more. 79.5 percent were M A students and 41 percent were studying in humanities, 69.9 were faculty members and 87.95 were teaching somewhere else. Also 4303 percent had 6-10 years background of the research.

Research Article

Hypothesis 1: The spiritual leader has a direct relationship with LMX.
The first hypothesis of the study was analyzed by Pearson's correlation coefficient and the results are as follows:

Table 2: Correlation Coefficient for LMX and Spiritual Leadership

Correlation	N	r	Significancy
LMX and Spiritual Leadership	180	0.706	0.0005

The results above show that there is significant high correlation between spiritual leadership and LMX. In other words, by changing the dimensions of spiritual leadership, there is the development for LMX.
Hypothesis 2: The dimensions of spiritual leadership are positively correlated with LMX.
To determine the impact of spiritual leadership on LMX, the researchers use multiple regressions in simultaneous (Enter) method and the results are given in the tables below:

Table 3: Variables influencing LMX

Main Variable	Predictable Variable	Model Significancy	R2	β	Significancy
	Vision	**F**		0.006	0.91
	Commitment	**35.524**	**0.51**	0.003	0.954
LMX	**Membership**			0.827	0.0005
	Altruism	**Significancy**		0.227	0.001
	Faith	**0.0005**		0.118	0.013
	Calling			0.135	0.021
	Feedback			0.341	0.003

Among all seven variable of spiritual leadership and its impact on LMX, vision and commitment have no significant influence and other different aspects of spiritual leadership were significant and identified to be have 51% of significant changes.
Hypothesis 3: The dimensions of Spiritual leadership have the same value and share in creating spiritual leadership.
To analyze hypothesis 3, factor analysis test was performed and results are given in table 4. Before factor analysis, *kmo* test and *Bartlet* were used which were equal to 0.642 and 409.743 respectively and were significant at 0.0005.

Table 4: Factor Analysis Results

Factor	Total factor Factor Loading	Variance percent	Frequency distribution	Factor Loading more than 1 Factor Loading	Variance percent	Frequency distribution
Membership	4/508	23/725	23/725	4/508	23/725	23/725
Altruism	1/718	9/042	32/767	1/718	9/042	32/767
Feedback	1/570	8/262	41/029	1/570	8/262	41/029
Faith	1/330	7/002	48/031	1/330	7/002	48/031
Significancy	1/179	6/206	54/237	1/179	6/206	54/237
Vision	0/62	1/895	56/132			
Commitment	/067	1/618	57/750			

As it is shown, among all variables, the factors that have more than load-factor more than one are 54.23 percent of the total variance and they are mentioned from 1 to 5 in the table. Also, the most significant

Research Article

factor is related to membership as the first variable and the least significant one is organizational commitment. Based on the results, it is concluded that between membership, altruism, feedback, faith, calling and LMX, there is a direct relationship; and between vision and commitment, there is an indirect relationship.

Conclusion

According to the results of the study, there can be such a conclusion that there is a significant relationship between spiritual leadership dimensions (altruism, faith, calling, feedback and membership and LMX, and there is no significant relationship between commitment and vision and LMX. The results indicate that spiritual leadership leads to LMX and the universities that have spiritual leadership can improve better by promoting employees and faculty members. In other words, the spiritual leadership by providing good environment shows the staff that how they can with efforts and realization of the goal reveal their potential. Therefore it can be concluded that each organization needs an LMX method of leadership by which it can improve its frameworks and remain in the circle of challenge and competition with other organizations.

REFERENCES

Deluga RJ (1998). Leader-member exchange quality and effectiveness ratings: The role of subordinate-supervisor conscientiousness similarity. *Group and Organization Management* **23**(2) 189–216.

Dienesch RM and Liden RC (1986). Leader-member exchange model of leadership: a critique and further development. *The Academy of Management Review* **11**(3) 618-34.

Graen GP and Scandura TA (1987). Toward a psychology of dyadic organizing. *Research in Organizational Behavior* **9** 175-208.

Graen GP and Uhl-Bien M (1995). Relationship-based approach to leadership, development of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory of leadership over 25 years: applying a multilevel multi-domain perspective. *Leadership Quarterly* **25** 219-47.

Liden RC, Sparrowe RT and Wayne SJ (1997). Leader-Member Exchange Theory: The Past and Potential for the Future. *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management* **15** 47–119.

McCann M (2012). Spiritual Leadership for Management and Activities. *Issue of Mcknight's Long Term Care News.*