

The impact of workplace spirituality on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) with the mediating role of organizational commitment in nurses of Rasht Hospitals, Iran

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ABSTRACT

The attitude and behavior of the nurses transmit the services that big health organizations and hospitals wish their patients to receive. Thus, the significance of citizenship behaviors is considered as one of the most critical resources of the organization. Among the factors affecting OCB is the sense of meaningfulness and the deep understanding of the work by employees. Furthermore, the presence of commitment, affective attachment, and normative commitment, given the existence of workplace spirituality play a significant role in promotion of citizenship behavior. Thus, this study was conducted to “explain the mediating role of organizational commitment in the effect of workplace spirituality on OCB” in 13 public and private hospitals in Rasht city (Guilan province, Iran). The study is applied considering the purpose, and descriptive with correlational design in terms of data collection. Data collection tool is questionnaire. In this regard, the questionnaires of workplace spirituality of Millman et al. (2003) and Ashmos and Duchon (2000), citizenship behavior of Rego and Ribeiro (2009), and organizational commitment Allen & Meyer, (1990) were distributed among 305 nurses of these hospitals the sample. The data was analyzed using the structural equation model (Lisrel). The results indicated that workplace spirituality has an effect on the organizational citizenship behavior of nurses in hospitals in Rasht, and organizational commitment plays a mediating role in the effect of workplace spirituality on OCB enhancing the severity of these two variables effects on each other.

Keywords: Workplace spirituality, OCB, organizational commitment.

Introduction

In today's world, human resource is considered to be the most important factor for growth and survival and the most important competitive advantage of the organizations. Today's organizations make efforts to find the best to win the war of talents, and they always try to attract the best and most committed people to use them in the realization of their goals^[1]. Hence, at the present age, the importance of organization

citizens is perceived as one of the most important sources of the organization and their behavior can be perceived as very important too^[2]. Moreover, most management systems encourage some of the great behaviors called OCB in line with increasing effectiveness of the organization. In fact, OCB is a collection of conscious behaviors of individuals; and although without an executive obligation and not subject to official reward system, it has a significant effect on organizational performance^[3]. Organizations are not capable of developing their effectiveness and efficiency without the willingness of their employees to cooperate. The difference between spontaneous co-operation and the mandated one is very important because in the mandated form, the individual performs his duties in line with established organizational rules, regulations and standards, whereas in spontaneous and informed one, people employ their energy and insight to flourish personal abilities and even for the benefit of the organization. In the modern management literature, spontaneous and informed performing of duties and extralegal duties is called “OCB”^[4].

Among the factors affecting OCB is workplace spirituality. Workplace spirituality means behaving in a way that the

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individual tries to consider the work standards in all respects, and a kind of mental attachment is established between the individual and his work. The employees with a sense of integrity towards the organization and their coworkers have spontaneous and free of others' control efforts at work, feel high empathy and solidarity with the employees and the client, so that they consider the work as the ultimate goal of life, making it an effort to satisfy the inner need that is spirituality^[5]. In other words, work spirituality is the concept of understanding the totality and being interwoven with the work and understanding the deep values of work. Thus, the present organizations will succeed if they are fully accountable towards biological, social, psychological and spiritual needs of their employees^[6]. Organizations in favor of workplace spirituality create an environment at work where individual and professional aspects of individuals are integrated, in which case the person is fully involved with the work process^[7]. The existence of workplace spirituality brings about happiness and satisfaction in the workplace, and happy and satisfied employees have helpful and respectful behaviors towards others and are more likely to perform OCBs. The study of workplace spirituality is a new phenomenon that can be a powerful positive force for people's lives because helping people to integrate their work and spiritual life may give meaning and direction to nearly a hundred thousand hours of work of these people and creates a more enjoyable, balanced and meaningful work and foster their spirits^[2]. Studies have also shown that the existence of workplace spirituality leads to an increase in the employees' affective and normative commitment towards the organization. The existence of a spiritual environment in the workplace makes the employees be at the service of the organization with their whole being (body, mind, feeling and spirit) and assume work as a mission beyond the job. This makes them affectively dependent on their organization and normatively committed to the organization^[8].

On the other hand, the commitment of the employees to the organization can be connected to the emergence of various types of OCB. In other words, one can say that one of the most important factors related to the occurrence of OCB is the level of organizational commitment of employees^[4].

As the front line of health care providers, nurses have the most interaction with the patients. The value of services that large health organizations and hospitals hope to present to their patients is transmitted by the attitude and behavior of their nurses. Nurses are the largest group providing health care services and, given burnout of the labor force in this job, attention to creating a work environment retaining the newly recruited workforce is critical for maintaining and exploiting the future nursing labor force. Cases related to workplace empower the employees to optimize their performance, and can also enhance health and employee retention. The mental health of the staff, including the staff of health centers and hospitals, especially physicians and nurses, is of great importance as their physical and mental health directly affects patients' health. In this regard, attention to the spirituality and

spiritual health of nurses can positively affect the commitment and engagement of the nurses.

According to the above, most studies on OCB have focused on predicting the factors triggering OCBs. In this regard, variables such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational identity, organizational justice, trust, types of leadership, the relationship between the leader and follower and so on have been considered as the factor creating OCB^[9]. Many people believe that one of the variables neglected so far in this regard is workplace spirituality with a great potential for affecting organizational variables and possibly OCB. Thus, the present study is an effort to answer to the following question: Is there a relationship between workplace spirituality and OCB with the mediating role of organizational commitment?

Theoretical framework and literature review

OCB

OCB is an individual and voluntary behavior that is not designed directly with formal reward systems in the organization but promotes the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization^[10, 11]

- **Dimensions of OCB**

1. Altruism: Smith, Organ and Near (1993) define altruism as voluntary behaviors whose goal is to assist other people in the organization considering their duties or organizational relationships. Altruism is linked voluntarily aid to specific people in the workplace and associated with a task or organizational problem^[12].

2. Conscientiousness: Conscientiousness shows that a specific person is organized, accountable, and hard working.^[13] defined this concept as "Dedicating oneself to work more than the work requirements: long working hours and doing chores voluntarily beyond the role." Conscientious includes behaviors allowing the person to perform his duties beyond the expectations^[12].

3. Sportsmanship: It generally involves enduring inappropriate working conditions and situations causing troubles without showing any dissatisfaction. Among these behaviors can be not seeing problems as huge and enduring the organization's strict conditions^[14].

4. Civic Virtue: This concept refers to the accountability of coworkers to participate in work life; such participation can be like participating in meetings not mandated by the organization but preserve developments in the organization^[13]. In this case, the employee's attitudes reflect this perception that they see themselves as part of the organization and perform the responsibilities assigned to them well^[9].

5. Courtesy: This aspect reflects the quality of individuals' behavior with their colleagues, supervisors and audience. The ones behaving with courtesy in the organizations have a developed citizenship behavior. After mentioning these aspects, Oregon reminds that not all five aspects of citizenship behavior may emerge simultaneously^[15].

Workplace spirituality

In a comprehensive definition, spirituality is considered as an effort to find the sensitivity towards oneself, others, the natural environment, and God that is within and beyond this generality^[5]. The scholars of the idea of workplace spirituality mention integrity in the workplace. The integrity links the individual's psychological, spiritual and personal life to the nature of his work and provides the mental needs of the employees^[6]. In this study, workplace spirituality includes the following:

- **Meaningful work:**

A fundamental aspect of workplace spirituality is a profound sense of meaning and purpose at work. The expression of workplace spirituality involves the assumption that each individual has an incentive to engage in activities that give more meaning to his and others' lives^[16].

- **Inner life:**

this means the domination of emotions and spiritual values on the moral and individual life of individuals, involving cases such as: feeling of hope in life, the effect of spiritual values on personal choices, spirituality of the person, worship, and attention to others' spiritual health^[17].

- **A sense of community:**

this involves some kind of link and a deep sense of solidarity with others. This level of workplace spirituality involves mental, affective and spiritual connections between employees in work groups.

- **Alignment with the organization values:**

this is the experience of a strong sense of alignment between the individual values of employees with the mission, and values of the organization. This aspect of workplace spirituality involves employees with a larger organizational goal^[18].

Organizational commitment

Organizational commitment as a personality mindset with various forms connects the individual to functions related to a specific goal^[19] and refers to the belief of employees in organizational values and goals, the tendency to maintain membership in the organization, and loyalty to it. Moreover, organizational commitment can be defined as a strong connection between the identity of individuals as their participation in the organization^[20]. In this study, affective and normative commitments are considered as the organizational commitment.

- **Affective commitment**

Affective commitment refers to identification, affective attachment, the rate of participation^[19] and involvement in the organization^[21]. The employees with an affective commitment wish to remain in the organization^[19]; in other words, employees want to continue their careers with the organization^[22]. Affective commitment points to the fact that the organization gives identity, affiliation, and attachment to its personnel, so that they enjoy their membership in the

organization^[20]. By determining the fact that people are proud of their organization, see its problems as their own problems and see themselves as family members in the organization, whether affectively they are interested in the organization, the organization is personally important to them, and have a sense of belonging to it, or can easily be attached to another organization, one can determine the person's interest in staying in the organization for the remaining years of service.^[23] have stated a correlation between affective commitment and a wide range of outcomes such as leaving job, absenteeism, job performance, and OCB^[24].

- **Normative commitment:**

This means that employees have a sense of duty to continue their work with the organization^[25]. In other words, people feel that they do not leave this organization as they are obligated and committed to the organization^[20]. Indeed, it is shown that normative commitment can indicate the degree of compliance of employees with organizational goals. The importance of normative commitment is due to its relevance to recognizing withdrawing and organizational citizenship behaviors^[19].

The relationship between variables

- **Workplace spirituality and OCB**

Employees who feel a deeply meaning in their work give high importance to doing their work properly. It is likely that such employees will have a lot of consciousness and will act spontaneously and in a self-control manner; for example, even when no one oversees them, they will comply with the rules. Such employees try to do their best and always keep their information, knowledge and skills updated. Given the deep sense they feel in their work, these employees endure difficult situations, and help their colleagues, including low-skilled workers, to do their work better.

Another point about the relationship between workplace spirituality and OCB is that in the previous studies, it has been determined that workplace spirituality is of the factors creating job attitudes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job participation, and reduction of intentions to leave service^[16]. Thus, it can be concluded that workplace spirituality is among the factors influencing the increase of OCBs of employees.

So the first hypothesis is as follows:

- Workplace spirituality affects the OCB of hospital nurses in Rasht.

- **Workplace spirituality and organizational commitment**

When individuals experience workplace spirituality, they feel they are effectively connected to their organization, feel a sense of interest and loyalty to their organization, and the feeling that the organization looks at them only as an instrument reduces. According to Rego and Cunha, workplace spirituality has an important role in creating affective commitment^[26]. A study conducted by Khifar, Jandaghi, and Shojaee (2010) entitled

“The relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational commitment” showed a relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational commitment. Moreover, a study by [27] entitled “Investigating the relationship between organizational spirituality and organizational commitment of the employees of Razi University of Kermanshah” indicated a relationship between the dimensions of spirituality and organizational commitment of employees [27]. In a study conducted by Rhizadin and Prabhavati on the effect of spirituality on the work environment and attitude, they concluded that workplace spirituality is very important in creating a job attitude along an important effect on job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job engagement, and OCB. Furthermore, the results of the study by [28] entitled “Individual spirituality, workplace spirituality and work attitudes” indicated that workplace spirituality affects the organizational commitment of employees.

So the second hypothesis is as follows:

- Workplace spirituality affects organizational commitment of hospitals nurses in Rasht.

• Organizational commitment and OCB

The level of commitment of employees to the organization can be associated with the type of OCB. In other words, one can state that one of the most important factors related to the occurrence of OCB is the level of organizational commitment of the employees [4].

A person with high organizational commitment remains in the organization, accepts its goals, and shows great efforts for achieving them. Thus, it is expected that the increase in organizational commitment increases the incidence of OCBs. Experimental findings also confirm this [29].

Meyer et al. (2001) stated that from among the components of organizational commitment, first affective commitments then normative commitment have the greatest effect on OCB and no relationship between continuous commitments. [30] examined the relationship between job satisfaction, perceived justice and organizational commitment on OCBs, and concluded that only organizational commitment is related to OCB. Gatam et al. (2006), however, believe that the relationship between types of organizational commitment is not identical with OCB, so that a higher level of affective and normative commitment will lead to higher OCBs [31,32] studied 166 employees in a government organization in northern China that organizational commitment was heavily influenced by OCB. The results of the study by Antonia et al. (2011) with a sample of 101 senior executives in Spain indicated a positive and significant relationship between normative commitment and affective commitment with OCB [4]. In a study entitled “Modeling the relationship between knowledge sharing, OCB, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment among Botswana teachers,” [33] stated that organizational commitment can significantly predict citizenship behavior, so the third hypothesis is as follows:

- organizational commitment affects OCB of hospital nurses in Rasht.

As stated, the conceptual model is proposed in Figure 1.

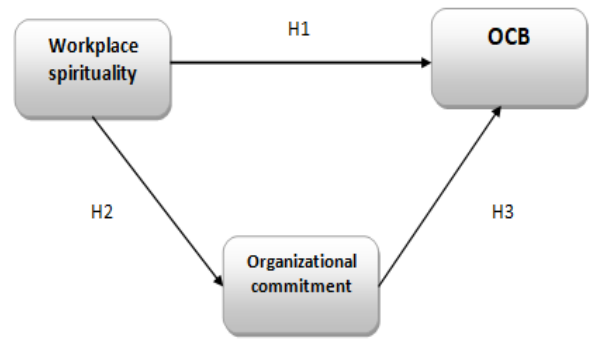


Figure 1: Research Conceptual Model

Research Method

The present study is applied regarding the purpose, descriptive (non-experimental) in terms of research design and data collection, and a questionnaire was used for data collection, so it can be considered among field studies.

Statistical population and sampling method

The population of the study was all nurses of public and private hospitals in Rasht¹ city, who were 2446 people. Using Cochran’s formula, 305 of them were studied in a proportional manner as a statistical sample. Table 1 shows the quality of allocation of samples based on proportional stratified sampling.

$$n = \frac{N * (\frac{Z_{\alpha}}{2})^2 * s^2}{\epsilon^2(N - 1) + (\frac{Z_{\alpha}}{2})^2 * s^2}$$

$$n = \frac{(2446)(1.96)^2 * (0.667)^2}{(2445)(0.07)^2 + (1.96)^2 * (0.667)^2}$$

n=305

Table 1: Distribution of population and sample

Hospital	Population	Sample
Razi	231	29
17th Shahrivar	115	14
Al Zahra	161	20
Pursina	254	32
Shafa	101	13
Heshmat	123	15
Amir Almomenin	128	16
Rasoul Akram	238	30
Aria	356	45
Famili	108	13
Gil	321	40
Ghaem	219	27
Tutunkaran	91	11
Total	2446	305

Measurement

¹ Rasht is the capital city of Gilan Province, Iran

Workplace spirituality questionnaire consists of 24 items developed by [17]: Meaningful work (6 items), sense of community (6 items), alignment with values (8 items), and inner life with the organization values (5 items).

OCB questionnaire has 17 questions developed by [34]: altruism (4 items) conscientiousness altruism (3 items), sportsmanship (4 items), civic virtue (3 items), and courtesy (3 items) [34].

Organizational commitment questionnaire includes 16 items developed by [35]: Affective commitment (8 items) and normative commitment (8 items).

Findings

In order to examine the fit of the measurement model and to study the research model to test the hypotheses, the model was investigated by SEM method.

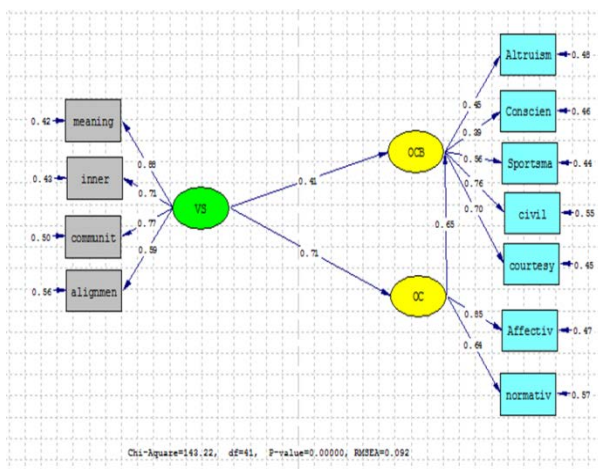


Figure 2: Calculations of factor loadings and error factors

Table 2 shows the most important fitness indices for measuring models. As is seen, all of the indices of the study model have good fitness.

Fit indices	Proposed value	Factor Model
χ^2/df	1-5	3.49
NFI	$0.85 \leq$	0.87
GFI	$0.90 \leq$	0.90
NNFI	$0.90 \leq$	0.95
RMSEA	$x \leq 0.1$	0.092

According to the results, since $RMSEA = 0.092$, the model fitness is evaluated as good.

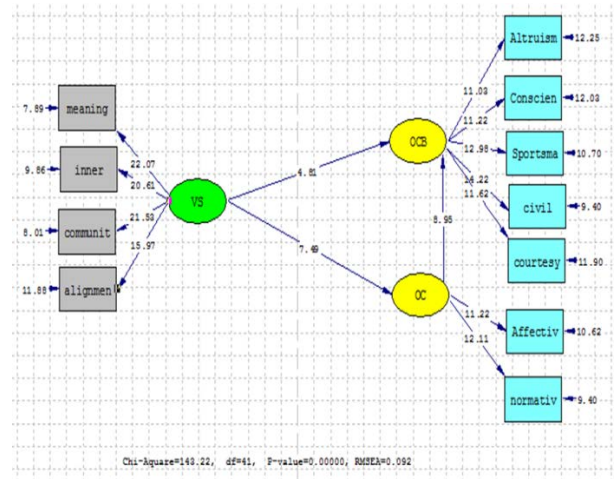


Figure 3: T statistic model

As is seen, all values of the t statistic have a value greater than 1.96, which indicates that all values of path coefficients are significant at 95% confidence level.

Hypothesis	Sig.	T Statistics	β	Confirmation or rejection
First (The effect of workplace spirituality on OCB)	$Sig < 0.05$	4.81	0.41	Confirmed
Second (The effect of workplace spirituality on organizational commitment)	$Sig < 0.05$	7.49	0.71	Confirmed
Third (The effect of organizational commitment on OCB)	$Sig < 0.05$	8.95	0.65	Confirmed

- In the first hypothesis, the value of path coefficient was 0.41, showing the positive effect of workplace spirituality on OCB. As is seen, the value of the t statistic is about 4.81, which is greater than the 1.96 threshold value. Thus, with a minimum of 95% confidence, one can conclude a significant relationship between workplace spirituality and OCB in the hospitals nurses of Rasht, so the hypothesis is confirmed.
- In the second hypothesis, the value of path coefficient was 0.71, showing the positive effect of workplace spirituality on organizational commitment. As is seen, the value of the t statistic is about 7.49, which is greater than the 1.96 threshold value. Thus, with a minimum of 95% confidence, one can conclude a significant relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational commitment in the hospitals nurses of Rasht, so the hypothesis is confirmed.
- In the third hypothesis, the value of path coefficient was 0.65, showing the positive effect of organizational commitment on OCB. As is seen, the value of the t statistic is about 8.95, which is greater than the 1.96 threshold value. Thus, with a minimum of 95%

confidence, one can conclude a significant relationship between organizational commitment and OCB in the hospitals nurses of Rasht, so the hypothesis is confirmed.

Conclusions and Discussion

The results indicated that the value of path coefficient for the direct effect of workplace spirituality on OCB was 0.41 and for indirect effect (through mediation of organizational commitment) this coefficient was 0.46. Now, as the indirect effect of workplace spirituality on OCB is more than the path coefficient of the direct effect, the mediation of organizational commitment in the relationship between workplace spirituality and OCB is confirmed.

The results indicate that the higher the workplace spirituality in the nurses' work environment, the higher the affective and normative commitment of the nurses will be. This will end in an increase in the positive attitude towards work. The presence of spiritual atmosphere in the workplace makes employees be at the service of the organization with all their existence (body, mind, feeling and spirit) and consider the job as a mission beyond career. This makes them affectively dependent on their organization and normatively committed to the organization^[8]. Thus, loyal nursing staff consistent with organizational goals and values and willing to maintain organizational membership that is ready to go beyond the prescribed duties can be an important factor in the effectiveness of the hospital. Due to love of their work environment, such employees do not hesitate to work beyond their duties and help to improve the image of their organization and their colleagues. The results of this study are in line with the results of Pauer^[28]. Pauer indicated that the employees who feel a sense of meaningfulness of work in their work have a better relationship with their colleagues and will have more behaviors beyond their job description and will not magnify small problems. Instead of focusing on the mistakes of the organization and others, they will focus on positive points to make the organization friendlier and improve performance. In fact, the employees who feel a deep meaningfulness in their work believe that people are linked to one another, they feel solidarity with others in the workplace, see their values and goals in line with the organizational values, and believe that the organization cares about them and their problems such as the welfare of all employees of the organization, and they are likely to show OCBs in the workplace.

Moreover, the results indicated that workplace spirituality affects the organizational commitment of nurses, which is consistent with the findings of^[28], Rggo and Canha (2008)^[36], Kazemipour et al. (2012). The nurses who feel meaningfulness in their work and see their personal goals in line with the organizational goals will have a greater sense of emotion and commitment to their organization (hospital). Therefore, nurses with a high level of affective and normative commitment will have a better relationship with their colleagues and the context will be provided to conduct behaviors beyond the roles and OCB.

Thus, the results indicated that organizational commitment has a mediator role in the effect of spirituality in the work environment and OCB. In addition to the direct effect of workplace spirituality on OCB, workplace spirituality through the creation of commitment, attachment and affective belonging among nurses could lead to behaviors beyond the roles and OCB.

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