



UNTANGLING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPIRITUALITY AND LEADERSHIP STYLES

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Abstract

In the present study researchers tried to contribute to the research on spirituality and leadership by considering graduating students (MBA & Engineering). A sample of 106 students consisted of 62 males contributed 58.49% to the total sample and 44 females contributed 41.51% of the total sample. Simple random sampling technique was used by the researchers to select the sample. The authors in this study by considering the management concepts leadership styles (transformational & transactional) and spirituality. Authors in the present study used questionnaire for leadership styles as well as spirituality. Researchers empirically test the model and assess the relationship between spirituality and leadership. To test whether there is a relationship among the two or not researchers employed correlation technique and to find out the difference between male and female leadership and spiritual characteristics *t* – test was employed. It was found that a relationship was found between leadership and spirituality and also results showed that males have more of these two characteristics than females.

Key words: Spirituality, Leadership styles, Transformational & Transactional.

Modern man is surrounded by many abstract concepts like spirituality, leadership behavior, multiple intelligence, emotional intelligence, cognitive behavior and relationship among themselves. However, though rigorous study has been done in these areas still some gaps remain for further study. The authors of the present study focused on filling these gaps by considering the relationship between leadership style and spirituality among the graduating students of professional courses. Spirituality and leadership could go side by side? Could spirituality and leadership both produce good results in organizations? The present study argues on these concepts that spirituality can. Though spirituality and leadership both are complex concepts to understand but still a number of researches have been done on these and a relationship among them. An understanding of these concepts is required especially in academics for sustainable development (Sadeghifar et al., 2014). Therefore, spirituality in leadership is required to create a spiritual environment. Henceforth, working conditions for workers improve resulting in effective and efficient output.

SPIRITUALITY, LEADERSHIP STYLES AND HYPOTHESIS

Spirituality word comes from the word ‘spirit’, an inner side of a human which is unseen and we can feel only. Spirituality is the guiding principle of oneself that affects our identity, beliefs, cognitive values and relationships. Some authors relate religiosity with spirituality but later on researches differentiate spirituality from religiosity in terms of religiosity is confined only within the ritual beliefs and worship while, on the other hand spirituality is what which deals with the personal values of a person and guiding principles of oneself. Spirituality is the subject of interest among academics, researchers, practitioners and even organizations since the last two or three decades. Spirituality could not be disentangle from the organizational life, and, hence requires attention as a management concept like others do (Hart and Brady, 2005). However spirituality means different meanings to different people (Hart and Brady, 2005; Burke, 2006). Spirituality is what that involves a permanent divine being. Scholars defined religion as a system of rules and specific applications that may differ for different religions, whilst, spirituality has consistent purpose throughout the all religions (Ayranci & Semercion, 2011). According to them spirituality refers to listening to all, following the self with or without the help of a guru and working for self – evolution. They stressed on infusing spirituality into leadership by using spirituality in transforming the self to achieve meaningfulness in life. However, researchers examined in the past the spirituality is confined only to the leaders namely Buddha, Jesus, Dalai Lama and many more. But spirituality is not confined only to spiritual leaders but its roots are spreading in organizations also. It will be right to say what affects a performance of organization and hence workers are leader’s spirituality. Moreover, spirituality is not a thing that is injected into a leader but is an attribute of the leader. Furthermore, it is the inherent and disentangle part of an individual behavior, therefore plays part in organizational life. Spirituality has been defined in a number of ways.

Hart and Brady (2005) defined it...as self awareness regarding one’s basic psychological nature...pp (411). While Sadeghifar et al (2014) defined spirituality as: Spirituality is an attitude or a lifestyle that recognizes the dimensions associated with spirituality.....pp (146). The present study focused on three spiritual dimensions of an individual. These are (a) Religiosity – though spirituality is considered to be different by many researchers in the last few decades. But roots of spirituality are found in religiousness (Sendjaya, 2007). According to him there is a power that guides all of us. In the present study researchers tried to know the faith of individuals in the existence of god through a set of questions like faith in god,



follow god, and do spiritual activities; (b) Spiritual awareness – It means individuals consider themselves as a part of the supernatural power and also aware of it. To know it researchers used questions like individual is a part of universe; (c) Immateriality – It means individual consider that their inner self is connected with the supernatural world. Individuals listen to their inner self before taking important decisions.

Leadership style is a series of characteristic and skills like behaviors, managerial skill and organizational values of an individual in normal as well as critical situation. However, it is difficult to say one leadership style would be ideal in every situation as behavior as well as style vary in different situations. In the present study researchers discussed the two styles of leadership namely: Transformational and Transactional. Transformational leadership has been studied in a number of context and in relation to various contexts as according to Kataria and Baroda (2015) worker's productivity, job satisfaction and turnover ratio depends more on transformational leadership characteristic instead of other leadership styles. Examples are effective transformational leadership behaviors for managing change (Vinger & Cilliers, 2006)' leader's warmth, transformational leadership and effectiveness (Prochazka & Vaculik, 2015); leadership & spirituality (Burke, 2006); research and development in transformational leadership (Bass, 1999); relationship between gender and leadership (Rhee & Sigler, 2015). Transformational leadership style dominate the other styles of leadership as in this style leader motivate the followers to do more than they were expected to perform and also follower's feel trust towards their leaders (Bass, 1985; Vinger & Cilliers, 2006). According to them it includes (A) Idealized influence or charismatic behavior makes a transformational leader to be both a charismatic personality and one that the followers trust. In this the leader provides space for suggestions and discussions to the followers and also engages the flower in problem-solving activities (Prochazka et al., 2015; Bass, 1999). (B) Inspirational motivation – In this leaders communicate to the followers what are the goals to be achieved. (C) Intellectual stimulation – In this type leaders work in collaboration with the followers and motivate them to have creative ideas. (D) Individualized consideration – leader act as a mentor or motivator and also pays attention what are the requirements of followers. However transformational leadership has been criticized in a number of ways. Whilst, on the other hand transactional leadership concerns with the exchange between leader and followers in which followers' are expected to do what their role requirements are and in turn leaders will provide them reward after receiving the requirements (Vinger & Cilliers, 2006).). It is of two types (Bass, 1985; Judge and Bono, 2000 and Vinger & Cilliers, 2006). These are (A) Contingent reward – Rewards are given on achievement of leader's set goals by the followers. (B) Management – by – exception – Leaders interfere only when problem is not solved by the followers.

The purpose of this study is to untangle relationship between spirituality and leadership styles, the two management concepts and also to see who has more of these characteristics among male and female. Hence, the following hypothesis arises:

H1: Spirituality has a significant relationship with the leadership.

H2: Males shows more spiritual and leadership characteristics than females.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is designed to establish a relationship between spirituality and leadership (transformational and transactional) and also to see whether males show more of these characteristics than females or not.

In the present study researchers selected a sample of graduating students – MBA & Engineering using the simple random sampling technique. A sample of 106 students consisted of 62 males contributed 58.49% to the total sample and 44 females contributed 41.51% of the total sample. The questionnaire was filled by the students in the class room. A complete instruction was provided by the researchers to fill the questionnaire.

Instrument

Researchers in the present study used the multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ – 6S). The MLQ form 6S was developed by Bass (1985, 1999) and later used by Vinger and Cilliers (2006) and also structural validity was measured by Muenjohn & Armstrong (2008). It is a most frequently and well researched and also validated instrument to measure the three leadership (transactional, transformational and laissez-faire). It has 21 items out of which 12 items measures transformational, 6 items measures transactional and remaining three items measures laissez-faire styles. But researchers in this studied only the two styles namely: transformational and transactional.

Spirituality was measured using a questionnaire whose reliability is .864 and have 20 items out of which 9 items measure immateriality, 6 measure spiritual awareness and remaining 5 items measures religiosity of a respondent.

RESULT ANALYSIS

Researchers in the present study assess whether there is a relationship between spirituality and leadership exists or not. For the same, correlation was used by researchers on a sample of 106 (males = 62, females = 44) respondents. As correlation is used to find out the extent up to which the two variables are related to each other (Ho, 2006).

Table I,(Correlation showing relationship between leadership and spirituality)N = 106

Leadership style	Immateriality		Religiosity		Spiritual awareness	
	P – value	rho	P - value	rho	P - value	rho
Transformational	.000	.412	.143	.143	.003	.287
Transactional	.001	.316	.283	.105	.027	.214

From the Table I it is clear that there exist a relationship between spirituality and leadership. The correlation between immateriality and transformational is positive and statistically significant ($\rho = .412$ & $p < .001$). It means that as the transformational leadership qualities of an individual enhance, so do their immateriality qualities. But not in case of others was found. Hence it proved H1.

Table II,(Independent t-test showing difference in leadership and spirituality among gender)N = 106

Leadership						
Transformational	Gender	Mean	Standard deviation	T value	Levene statistics	
	Male	2.66	.568		F	Sig.
	Female	2.38	.570	2.515	.373	.543
Spirituality						
Immateriality	Male	2.82	.634	1.793	1.277	.261
	Female	2.58	.713			
Religiosity	Male	2.77	.99	-492	.538	.465
	Female	2.86	.87			
Spiritual awareness	Male	2.69	.566	1.025	1.776	.186
	Female	2.57	.628			

Researchers in this study to test whether males and females in leadership and spirituality differ from each other or not implied independent sample t – test. Table II shows that as t – test can be used in this study because levene statistics in case of transformational is $F = .373, .543$ ($p > .05$) and $F = 1.277, 2.61$ ($p > .05$); $F = .538, .465$ ($p > .05$); $F = 1.776, .186$ ($p > .05$) in case of immateriality, religiosity and spiritual awareness respectively. Hence, t – test statistics can be used to test the hypothesis of equal means (Ho, 2006). Table II shows that there is a significant difference between the male and female respondents in case of two dimensions (leadership and spirituality), as t ($df = 106$) = 2.515; 1.793; -.492 & 1.025 in case of transformational, immateriality, religiosity and spiritual awareness respectively. It indicates $p < .01$. This means that males have more leadership as well as spirituality characteristics than females except in case of religiosity in which females are more religious than males. Hence H2 is proved. It means males have more spirituality and leadership characteristic than females.

DISCUSSION

Focus of the present study was on the relationship between spirituality and leadership and also whether males have more of these characteristics than females or not. It was found that there exists a relationship between immateriality dimension of spirituality and only transformational leadership but not with the other. It means leaders who are motivated, take care of their followers, discuss with the followers their goals to be achieved and pay attention towards the requirement of the followers are high in the characteristics of immateriality. It means they consider themselves as connected with the supernatural world. On the other hand it was also found that males have more of these characteristics than females except in case of religiosity in which females are religious than males. It means females have more faith in the existence of god than males.

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