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## INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPIRITUAL GROWTH WITH ACCOUNTABILITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT OF THE OFFICIAL STAFF OF IRAN OIL & GAS PIPELINES AND TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES

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### ABSTRACT

*The research aimed to investigate the relationship between employees' spiritual growth with their accountability and organizational commitment in the official staff of the Iranian Oil and Gas Pipelines and Telecommunications Companies (Southeast Region center) in the summer of 2017. The research method is descriptive-correlation; the statistical population of this research is the official staff of the Iranian Oil and Gas Pipelines and telecommunication companies and they are 120 people that the sample size is 92 people who have been selected randomly. To collect data, the questionnaire about spiritual growth with a 0.86 validity and 0.701 reliability, accountability questionnaire with the validity of 0.95 and reliability of 0.93, and organizational commitment questionnaire with the validity of 0.97 and reliability of 0.902 were used. Data analysis was done by using SPSS20 software and descriptive and inferential statistics of Pearson and Spearman correlation coefficients were used. The results of the research showed that there is a direct and significant relationship between the spiritual growth of employees with their accountability and organizational commitment. The results of regression showed that, among the components of spiritual growth, the most important predictors of organizational commitment of employees are dimensions of awareness and perceive management, and the most important predictors of employee accountability are dimensions of awareness, real acceptance, magnification, and perceive management.*

**Keywords:** *Spiritual Growth, Accountability, Organizational Commitment.*

### INTRODUCTION

According to Argyris, organizational commitment is a concept of human relations. According to him, run any new program or idea is hard to do without the commitment. Human resources in the organization can have two kinds of commitment: External Commitment and Internal Commitment. An external commitment is, in fact, a contractual agreement that all working conditions and its objectives are determined by others, and employees are expected to perform the organization's activities in the best way. Internal commitment is a commitment from inside. Individuals are committed to the organization by their intrinsic motives and play a large role in determining their organizational activities and objectives. Because, they are busy to determine the activities of the organization personally. They commit within themselves to carry out the activities of the organization in a desirable manner (Dolatkhah, 2001: 78). One of the most comprehensive models is Meyer and Allen's three-part model. Meyer and Allen presented a model of three parts on the commitment in 1991 that goes beyond the distinction between commitment and behavior. The researchers have argued that commitment as a psychological

state has at least three distinct features that are a kind of desire, necessity, and requirement to continue employment in an organization. It seems that all represented definitions in the field of commitment include the following three general issues: emotional dependence to the organization as the emotional commitment, the implicit cost due to leaving the organization as a continuous commitment (rational) and the obligation to remain in the organization as the normative commitment (Atashpour et al., 2008: 94).

Based on research, many factors affect organizational commitment, such as ethics and spirituality in the organization (Greenfield 2008: 52). Therefore, one of the effective factors on the organizational commitment of the employees is the ethical and spiritual atmosphere in the organization. The foundation of all values in the organization is ethical and moral values; these values help to establish and maintain standards that can influence people's lead toward actions that are desirable for the organization, especially when standards or organizational ethical values are widespread among members, organizational success increases. (Baharifar and Javaheri Kamal, 2010: 49).

Spiritual growth is not a way to escape from responsibility, behave abnormally and becoming an inactive person. It's a way to grow stronger, happier, and more responsive. One can take the path of spiritual growth and, at the same time, live like ordinary people. A balanced life requires that not only the physical, emotional and mental needs are met, but also the individual's mental needs are considered, and this is the goal of spiritual growth. Individuals with a high spiritual growth have a capacity for excellence and have a high tendency to be alert. They have the capacity to devote a part of their daily activities to spiritual and ethereal exercises and to show some kind of forgiveness, gratitude, humility, compassion, and wisdom. In addition, spiritual growth can help people to understand their ethical issues and their value (Vaughan, 2003: 56).

People can take the path of spiritual growth and, at the same time, live like ordinary people. They do not have to go far and just live for themselves. They can make a family, they can work and run a trade for themselves, and at the same time participate in activities that lead to internal growth and development. A balanced life requires that we not only meet our physical, emotional and mental needs but also take into account their spiritual needs and this goal is spiritual growth (Noroozi, 2011: 2). Accountability is one of the key requirements of state management in the current situation, and it is one of the best models of democratic governance and as long as that cannot hold power accountable to citizens, it is considered to be completely inefficient and vulnerable. In fact, accountability is one of the main principles of governmental management that brings a picture of justice, equality, trust and fairness in mind and it can be used to improve the conditions and effectiveness of public administration (Bovens, 2005: 1).

Anyone who studies the concept of accountability correctly finds that accountability has different meanings for different people (Mulgan, 2003: 555). For example, in recent writings on conceptual responsiveness, under the concept of accountability crisis has been suggested, on one hand, implies the diversity and plurality of concepts presented in the scientific and academic field, and on the other hand, observes that the agents and government officials also emphasize the various aspects of the concept that they are faced with it in practice. In fact, the plurality and conceptual diversity of accountability are also evident in practice (Dowdle, 2006: 10).

On this basis, it can be stated that the disagreement on the concept of accountability has led to the formation of a very broad conceptual framework which practically does not have a general



agreement on the concepts contained therein (Ebrahim & Weisband, 2007: 3). This conceptual extension is to the extent that the Mulgan considers accountability to be any mechanism that to the agent or lawyer responds against the principle (Mulgan, 2003: 3).

The results of this research are important in several respects. Organizations' attention to increasing accountability and organizational commitment and the importance of this issue cause to increase the productivity and growth of the organization, and paying attention to this issue will direct the organization in a way that provides an environment for increasing employee performance and it cause to increase people's motivation and luck and will bring about improvements in the organization. Studies show that with increasing spiritual growth of employees, increases their readiness to perform their duties, and those who have high spiritual growth have an appropriate spirit of work in the workplace and with the knowledge that is related to God and trusting to God, pass the difficulties and easily combat against them. Also, the results of this study are important for the researcher that the level of spiritual growth and accountability and organizational commitment in Iran Oil Pipelines and Telecommunication Company is determined and it is examined whether there is a relationship between spiritual growth and the level of accountability and organizational commitment of the staff or no. If there is a relationship, because of the importance and promotion of accountability and organizational commitment, managers need to enhance the spiritual growth of employees in the workplace as an effective factor.

## **METHOD**

This research is a descriptive study in which correlational method has been used. The research statistic population consists of 120 official staff members of the oil and gas pipelines and telecommunication company (Southeast Center), which according to the Morgan table, 92 people sampling randomly. In this research, three spiritual growth questionnaire based on Hall and Edwards (1996) with 35 questions with components about knowledge, real acceptance, despair, magnification, instability, perceive management with a validity of 0.86 and reliability of 0.701, accountability questionnaire according to the jurisprudential model (2006), with 33 questions with legal, political, financial and general accountability components with validity of 0.95 and reliability of 0.93, and organizational commitment questionnaire based on Ellen and Meyer (1996) model with 24 questions with the components of emotional commitment, continuous commitment and normative commitment, with a validity of 0.97 and a reliability of 0.902 were used. The collected data were analyzed by using SPSS software, Pearson and Spearman correlation coefficient and multivariate regression.

## **FINDINGS**

The results of the study showed that out of 92 employees were considered, 64 people (69.66%) had high spiritual growth. 47 people (51.8%) had high accountability. 52 people (56.52%) had high organizational commitment.



**Table 1: Pearson-Spearman correlation test statistics between spiritual growth and accountability and organizational commitment of employees**

variable	Spiritual growth				Existence of relationship	Type of relationship
	Pearson's Correlational Coefficient	Significance	Spearman's Correlation Coefficient	Significance		
Accountability	0/21	0/02	0/198	0/027	have	Direct
Organizational commitment	0/37	0/001	0/34	0/001	have	Direct

Data analysis showed that Pearson and Spearman's correlation coefficients between spiritual growth with accountability and organizational commitment of employees were equal to 0.214, 0.198 and 0.37, 0.34 with p-value (significant) is less than the significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ , and therefore, there is a significant and direct relationship between spiritual growth with accountability and organizational commitment of employees (Table 1).

**Table 2: The coefficients of the regression model of the relationships of spiritual growth components with organizational commitment of employees**

Variable	Estimated B	Standard error	Estimated standard $\beta$	Level of t	Amount of p
Stability	47/119	7/683	-	6/133	0/001
conceive management	1/511	0/751	0/219	2/012	0/046
Actual Acceptance	0/905	0/665	0/170	1/361	0/176
Magnify	0/082	0/556	0/02	0/148	0/883
Frustration	0/524	0/538	0/127	0/973	0/332
Awareness	1/207	0/574	0/230	2/105	0/037
Instability	0/146	0/498	0/027	0/293	0/770

**Table 3: The coefficients of the regression model of the relationship between spiritual growth components and employee accountability**

Variable	Estimated B	Standard error	Estimated standard $\beta$	Level of t	Amount of p
Stability	35/897	5/681	-	6/319	0/001
conceive management	1/113	0/412	0/392	2/838	0/006
Actual Acceptance	1/607	0/492	0/351	3/267	0/001
Magnify	1/144	0/411	0/327	2/786	0/006
Frustration	0/480	0/398	0/135	1/207	0/230
Awareness	1/208	0/404	0/345	2/992	0/003
Instability	0/485	0/368	0/103	1/319	0/190

The results of multivariable regression analysis showed that the components of spiritual growth simultaneously predict organizational commitment and accountability of employees. Therefore, based on the value of  $\beta$  obtained from Table 2, it can be said that among the components of spiritual growth, the most important predictors are organizational commitment of employees, the dimensions of knowledge and perception management of employees, and based on the value of  $\beta$  obtained from Table 3, we can say that among the components of spiritual growth, the most

important predictors are employee accountability and the dimensions of awareness, real acceptance, magnification, and employee management.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of the research show that there is a direct and significant relationship between the spiritual growth of the employees and their responsiveness, and these results are consistent with the findings of Rastegar (2014) that there is a direct and significant relationship between spiritual growth and employee responsiveness. And Clad's findings (2014) showed that the spiritual workplace has a direct impact on the organization's success, enhances empowerment, employees' accountability and, consequently, reduced staff turnover, fatigue, and absenteeism, and it is accordance with McVicar's findings (2009) which showed that there is a positive relationship between spirituality with increasing employee satisfaction, effort, participation and cooperation, accountability and performance. Therefore, based on the results of the research, it can be stated that spiritual growth is not the way to escape from responsibility, behave abnormally and becoming an inactive person. It's a way to grow stronger, happier, and more responsive. One can take the path of spiritual growth and, at the same time, live like ordinary people. Individuals with a high spiritual growth have a capacity for excellence and have a high tendency to be alert. They have the capacity to devote a part of their daily activities to spiritual and ethereal exercises and to show some kind of forgiveness, gratitude, humility, compassion, and wisdom. In addition, spiritual growth can help people to understand their ethical issues and their value. Other results of the research indicate that there is a direct and significant relationship between the spiritual growth of employees and their organizational commitment and these results are consistent with the Shabestarinejad's findings (2014), which showed that there is a positive, direct and significant relationship between spiritual growth and organizational commitment of employees. Hamidi's (2013) findings show that there is a direct and significant relationship between spiritual growth and organizational commitment of employees. And they are accordance with the findings of Najmeh (2011), Malik and Naeem (2011), Arminio and Miguel (2008), and Miliman (2003), which showed that there is a positive relationship between spirituality and organizational commitment. Therefore, based on the results of the research, can be said that individuals can progress in the way of spiritual growth and, at the same time, they can live like ordinary people. They do not have to go far and just go ahead in their life. They can form a family, they can work and trade for themselves and at the same time, and they can participate in activities that lead to internal growth and development. Individuals who are concerned with spiritual matters and who feel the existence of God in everyday life, and who believe in their work of trusting in divine power, they have high self-esteem and can deal with problems, failures, and shortage in a better and more effective way and they can resolve the lack of facilities in their work environment and perform their duties and responsibilities by using their spirituality and power of faith. Finally, suggestions are made to organizational managers to increase their responsiveness and organizational commitment to their spiritual growth. Employees feel the presence of God in their lives and work so that their commitment to the organization is strengthened.



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