

Original Article

Implementing cultural policies in universities of medical sciences: a model with mediating role of spirituality

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Abstract

Introduction: The aim of this study was to present a model for the implementation of cultural policies in relation to organizational culture with an emphasis on the mediating role of spirituality and mental health in universities of medical sciences.

Methods: The present study was descriptive-correlational research. The data collection method was a combination of library and field studies and the data collection instruments included a review of documents, interviews and a researcher-made Cultural Policy Questionnaire, Workplace Spirituality Questionnaire, and Organizational Culture Questionnaire. The statistical population included 21496 hospital staffs and managers of medical sciences hospitals. Since structural equation modeling approach was used in this study, finally 472 people were statistically analyzed. The samples were determined using a stratified sampling method. In the present study, SPSS-23 and AMOS-24 software was used to analyze the data.

Results: The research results confirmed the proposed research model and indicated a significant relationship between cultural policies and spirituality in university hospitals. Given the positive path coefficient, this relationship is direct. Based on the coefficient of determination (R^2), 44% of spirituality changes in the hospital are explained by cultural policies. In addition to having a direct effect, cultural policies indirectly affect organizational culture through workplace spirituality. The level of direct impact was equal to 0.129 and the level of indirect impact through workplace spirituality was equal to 0.204.

Conclusion: A direct relationship was between cultural policies and organizational culture and an indirect relationship between spirituality in university hospitals and organizational culture.

Keywords: Culture; Mental Health; Policy; Organizational Culture; Spirituality.

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Introduction

Culture is considered as the greatest need of human society and the main factor of dynamism, vitality and continuity of life of societies. Nowadays, issues in the realm of culture as the most important factor in the economic, social, political, human and moral development of the country has been considered by experts, scholars and elites. Culture is a context for redefining, recovering and developing all

human abilities, values, identities, beliefs, norms, traditions, myths and symbols (1).

Organizational culture is defined as a set of common beliefs and values, which influence behavior and thinking of members of the organization and can be a starting point for movement and dynamism or a barrier to progress (2). However, the most accepted definition of organizational culture is a pattern of shared values and beliefs that help people understand organizational functions and thus provide

them with norms for behavior in the organization (3). Following new theories and studies in management, organizational culture has increasingly become important and has become one of the main and key topics of hospital management. Demographers, sociologists, and recently psychologists and even economists have paid special attention to this new and important issue in hospital management. They have developed several theories and studies on identifying its role and importance, and used it to solve hospital management problems. Based on an investigation conducted by a group of hospital management scholars, organizational culture is considered as one of the most effective factors in the development of organizations (4).

Given what was stated above, one of the influential groups in the community is the professors in the Universities of medical sciences and related hospitals, which can be exposed to more dangers and injuries. Continuation of the health programs and growth in health indices is not possible without implementing an effective cultural policy and presenting a practical and executive model in this regard (5). Thus, given what was stated above, the aim of this study was to present a model for the implementing of cultural policies based on organizational culture with an emphasis on the role of spirituality and mental health in medical sciences hospitals.

Methods

This research was a descriptive-correlational research terms of method and developmental-applied in terms of aim. It used library and field methods to collect the data. The statistical population included 21496 hospital staffs and managers of medical sciences hospitals. Since structural equation modeling approach was used in this study, finally 472 people were statistically analyzed. The samples were determined using a stratified sampling method. In the present study, SPSS-23 and

AMOS-24 software was used to analyze the data.

The statistical population of this study consists of two groups:

Group 1: Experts aware of the subject:

The statistical population in the process of developing model was experts who were of the research subject. The experts of the present study were hospital professors and specialists in the area of hospital management and decision-making participated in development of model through Delphi technique.

The method of determining the sample size of experts has been judgmental, meaning that the researcher personally estimated the sample size or determined a certain percentage of the population taking into account the factors. The sample size of experts was estimated at 20 people.

Group 2: Staffs and managers of medical sciences hospitals:

The statistical population of this research in the model implementation process included all 21496 hospital staffs and managers of medical sciences hospitals. Since in structural equation modeling approach is used in this study, the sample size was considered 5 to 10 times more that the number of questions in the questionnaire. This number varies from 295 to 590 depending on the value mentioned. Accordingly, 472 people were used as the basis for statistical analysis.

To define the variables of cultural policies, spirituality and mental health in university hospitals and organizational culture, first the dimensions, components and relationship between cultural policies, spirituality in hospitals and organizational culture of university hospitals were identified through library studies (referring to written documents such as books, magazines, etc.). Simultaneously with identifying the dimensions and components of each variable, interviews were performed with relevant experts (including

hospital professors and specialists aware of the issue of public hospital management, decision-making and policy-making). Expert interviews were mainly semi-structured. The expert interview was conducted for two goals: the first was presenting the dimensions and components extracted from library studies and survey of experts about the extracted dimensions and components and identifying those have not been considered in library studies. Second goal of expert interview was better understanding of the variables to define them operationally, extracting measures and classifying them appropriately. Then, to finalize the list of dimensions and components, the method of surveying experts (including university hospital professors and specialists in the area of hospital management and decision-making and policy-making) was used by Delphi method. In order to survey the experts, a special type of open and closed questionnaire was used. The validity of the Delphi method does not depend on the number of participants in the research but on the scientific validity of the participating experts. For validation and applicability of the model in the target population, the designed model was tested in the target population. Accordingly, this study tried to explore the relationship between cultural policies, spirituality and mental health in university hospitals and organizational culture of university hospitals and modeling.

The research data collection tool was the cultural policy, workplace spirituality and organizational culture questionnaires.

Cultural Policy Questionnaire: It was a researcher-made questionnaire and had 20 questions. In the Cultural Policy Questionnaire, a 5-point Likert scale has been used. The items used in this questionnaire were designed as very low, low, moderate, high and very high, which receive values of 1 to 5, respectively. This questionnaire included 6 dimensions. Development and elimination of

deprivation dimension with 4 items, cultural discourse and networking dimension with 3 items, empowerment of cultural activists in virtual and real areas dimension with 3 items, fundamental and outcome-oriented transformation dimension with 3 items, retraining values of the Islamic Revolution dimension with 3 items, national unity and cohesion dimension with 4 items.

Workplace Spirituality Questionnaire: It was a researcher-made questionnaire and had 20 questions. The items of Workplace Spirituality Questionnaire were scored on a 5-point Likert scale. The items used in this questionnaire were designed as very low, low, moderate, high and very high, which received values of 1 to 5, respectively. This questionnaire included 6 dimensions, including meaningful life dimension with 3 items, sense of solidarity and cohesion dimension with 5 items, alignment with organizational values dimension with 3 items, effective communication with coworkers with 3 items, perfectionism dimension with 3 items and sense of unity with everything dimension with 3 items.

Organizational Culture Questionnaire: It was a researcher-made questionnaire and had 59 questions. Items of Organizational Culture Questionnaire were scored on a 5-point Likert scale. The items used in this questionnaire were designed as strongly agree, agree, no idea, disagree and strongly disagree, which receive values of 1 to 5, respectively. This questionnaire includes 8 dimensions. The first dimension was engagement in work with three components of capability development, team building and empowerment. This dimension included 10 items. The second dimension was compatibility, which includes the three components of harmony and coherence, agreement and fundamental values. This dimension included 8 items. The third dimension was adaptability, which includes the three components of organizational learning, customer orientation, and change. It included eight items. The fourth

dimension was mission, which included three components of strategic orientation, goals and objectives and vision. This dimension included 8 items. The fifth dimension was organizational cohesion, which included three components of adherence to job performance, strategic behavior and group thinking. This dimension included 8 items. The sixth dimension was attention to team, which included the three components of collaboration and coherence, the spirit of cooperation and exchange of information. This dimension included 7 items. The seventh dimension was ambition, which included the three components of feeling independent, willingness to solve problems and self-reliance of hospital staffs. This dimension included 6 items. The eighth dimension was sustainability, which included two components of organizational growth and maintaining the existing status. This dimension included 4 items.

To analyzes the data, descriptive statistics (types of indicators, statistical tables and diagrams) and inferential statistics (one-sample t-test and structural equation modeling) were used. SPSS-23 and AMOS-24 software was used to analyze the data.

Results

According to the data analysis, 307 (65.0%) of the respondents were female and 165 (35.0%) were male. According to the data analysis, 39 (8.3%) had a diploma, 72 (15.3) had a master's degree, 207 (43.9%) had a bachelor's degree, 113 (23.9%) had a master's degree and 41 (8.7%) had a PhD. Also, 178 people (37.7%) of the respondents were 20-30 years old, 155 people (32.8%) were 31-40 years old, 109 people (23.1%) were 41-50 years old and 30 people (6.4%) were 50 years and older Table 1.

Using the structural equation modeling approach, the proposed research model was examined. Data screening includes detection and modification of missing data and outliers, For this purpose,

questionnaires with many unanswered items can be excluded from the sample and univariate outliers can be identified by measuring the standard score (z scores).

Table 1. Determining and Comparing Respondents' demographic information

	Variables	Number	Percent
Gender	Female	307	65
	Male	165	35
Education (Degree)	Diploma	72	15.3
	Master	207	43.9
	Bachelor	113	23.9
	Master	41	8.7
Age (years)	PhD	178	37.7
	20-30	178	37.7
	31-40	155	32.8
	41-50	109	23.1
	50 and more	30	6.4

Mahalanobis statistic was used to study multivariate outliers. In the proposed model, the assumption of multivariate outliers was examined using the mentioned statistic and there was no data to be deleted. In data analysis, when predictor variables are correlated with each other, it is stated that there is multicollinearity between them. Multicollinearity occurs when two or more predictor variables have a high correlation with each other. Correlation here means a linear relationship between predictor variables. In statistics, the variance inflation factor evaluates the multicollinearity in egression analysis of ordinary least squares. If the research variables have a variance inflation factor of less than 10, the assumption of lackof collinearity between the variables is observed. In the proposed model, according to the values obtained in Table 2, it can be stated that there is no multicollinearitybetween the research variables, so this assumption is established in the presented model.

Table 2. Investigating multicollinearity among research variables

Variable	Inflation variance factor	Variable	Inflation variance factor
Development and elimination of deprivation	2.484	Perfectionism	3.185
Cultural discourse and networking	5.776	Sense of unity with everything	3.375
Empowerment of cultural activists in virtual and real fields	4.640	Engagement in work	5.201
Fundamental and outcome-oriented transformation	4.652	Compatibility	5.391
Retraining the values of the Islamic Revolution	4.152	Adaptability	3.073
National unity and cohesion	2.911	Mission	7.567
Meaningful work	2.553	Organizational cohesion	5.501
Sense of solidarity and coherence	3.055	Attention to team	6.421
Alignment with the values of organization	3.432	Ambition	3.296
Effective communication with coworkers	2.372	Sustainability	3.169

One of the ways to examine the distribution of data is to use the skewness and Kurtosis coefficients of research variables. In this assumption, those data are normal that their critical ratio is in the interval of -2.58-2.58.

As shown in Table 3, most of the obtained coefficients are in the interval of -2.58-

2.58. In this section, in addition to examining the univariate normality of data, the multivariate normality of data was investigated and according to Table 4, this assumption is observed for univariate data and the data of the present study are normal.

Table 3. Examining the normality of research variables

Variable	Skewness	Critical ratio	Kurtosis	Critical ratio
Development and elimination of deprivation	-0.23	-2.03	0.30	1.35
Cultural discourse and networking	-1.27	-2.42	0.55	2.46
Empowerment of cultural activists in virtual and real fields	-0.19	-1.65	0.38	1.69
Fundamental and outcome-oriented transformation	-0.28	-2.53	0.13	0.59
Retraining the values of the Islamic Revolution	-0.34	-2.99	-0.02	-0.11
National unity and cohesion	-0.30	-2.67	0.58	2.57
Meaningful work	-0.26	-2.33	0.55	2.46
sense of solidarity and coherence	-0.27	-2.41	0.50	2.23
Alignment with the values of the organization	-0.25	-2.27	0.58	2.59
Effective communication with coworkers	-0.25	-2.25	0.11	0.48
Perfectionism	-0.27	-2.44	0.52	2.30
Sense of unity with everything	-0.30	-2.66	0.53	2.34
Engagement in work	0.21	1.83	-0.41	-1.81
Compatibility	0.30	2.66	-0.31	-1.39
Adaptability	0.28	2.48	0.54	2.42
Mission	0.01	0.09	-0.51	-2.29
Organizational cohesion	0.04	0.38	-0.53	-2.35

Table 4. Examining the normality of research variables

Variable	Skewness	Critical ratio	Kurtosis	Critical ratio
Attention to team	0.00	0.01	-0.61	-2.71
Ambition	0.11	1.00	-0.36	-1.62
sustainability	0.21	1.85	-0.04	-0.18

The model errors (the difference between the real values and the values predicted by the prediction equation) must be independent of each other. Durbin-Watson test is used to examine the independence of errors from each other. If this statistic is between 1.5 and 2.5, it means that there is no autocorrelation among residuals. Considering the statistic values of Durbin-Watson statistic for all three variables, it can be stated that the errors are non-correlated Table 5.

In the present study, all variables that were included in the model to investigate their effects have an interval measurement scale. The software output indicates the appropriateness of the proposed research model, so that the root mean square of the estimation error (RMSEA) is equal to 0.071, the normalized chi-square value (CMIN / DF) is equal to 3.380 goodness of fit index (GFI) value is equal to 0.899. Other indices to fit the proposed research model are given in Table 6.

In the structural model, 25 covariance relations were used to improve the fit indices. Critical ratio has been used to investigate the significance of research hypotheses. If the critical ratio is greater than 1.96 or less than -1.96 (less than 5%

Table 5. Examining the independence of errors

Variable	Durbin-Watson statistic
Cultural policies	1.755
Workplace spirituality	1.857
Organizational Culture	1.727

error level) or more than 1.64 or less than -1.64 (less than 10% error level), hypothesis is confirmed and a significant relationship between the two variables is obtained. The presented results indicate a significant relationship between cultural policies and workplace spirituality ($p = 0.001$, $\beta = 0.662$). Given the positive path coefficient, this relationship is direct. In other words, with an improvement in implementation of cultural policies, the conditions for increasing workplace spirituality are provided. Based on the coefficient of determination (R^2), 44% of the changes in workplace spirituality are explained by cultural policies. The results also show a direct relationship between cultural policies and organizational culture ($p = 0.043$, $\beta = 0.129$) and between workplace spirituality and organizational culture ($p = 0.001$, $\beta = 0.309$).

The results of Table 7 show that cultural policies, in addition to having a direct effect, also indirectly affect organizational culture through workplace spirituality. The value of direct impact is equal to 0.129 and the value of indirect effect through workplace spirituality is equal to 0.204. Also, based on the calculations, a significant confidence interval to investigate the mediating role of the spirituality variable in the workplace using the bootstrap method was obtained at (0.301, 0.114) that if the confidence interval does not include zero, it is assumed that the indirect effect is significant. Accordingly, the mediating effect of workplace spirituality on the relationship between cultural policies and organizational culture is confirmed Table 8 and Diagram 1.

Table 6. Fit indices of the proposed model of the main research question

Index	Acceptable value	Reported value
CMIN/DF	≤ 3	3.380
GFI	≥ 0.9	0.899
AGFI	≥ 0.9	0.880
NFI	≥ 0.9	0.898
IFI	≥ 0.9	0.926
TLI	≥ 0.9	0.914
CFI	≥ 0.9	0.926
RMSEA	≤ 0.08	0.071

The mean opinions of the experts participating in the Delphi method about the effective indicators were compared with the theoretical value (3.00) by t-test. If the considered dimension score is greater than the theoretical value (3.00), the proposed dimension will remain in the model and if the dimension score is less than the theoretical value (3.00), the proposed dimension will be excluded from the model. The results obtained from experts' opinion in Table 9 indicate that all 6 proposed dimensions are approved and are considered as dimensions of cultural

policies (p-value <0.05). The composite reliability values of each questionnaire were calculated in the third chapter and the results for each questionnaire were as follows: cultural policy questionnaire = 0.970, workplace spirituality questionnaire = 0.958, organizational culture = 0.981. Also, the mean values of variance extracted for each questionnaire were calculated as follows: cultural policy questionnaire = 0.846, workplace spirituality questionnaire = 0.792, organizational culture questionnaire = 0.867.

Table 7. Investigating the relationship between variables in the main research question

Hypothesis	Path coefficient	Statistic t	p-value
Cultural policies → workplace spirituality	0.662	13.989	0.001
Cultural policies → organizational culture	0.129	2.5021	0.043
workplace spirituality → organizational culture	0.309	4.636	0.001

Table 8. Investigating the type of effects in the main research question

Hypothesis	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Total effect
Cultural policies → workplace spirituality	0.662	-	0.662
Cultural policies → organizational culture	0.129	0.204	0.333
workplace spirituality → organizational culture	0.309	-	0.309

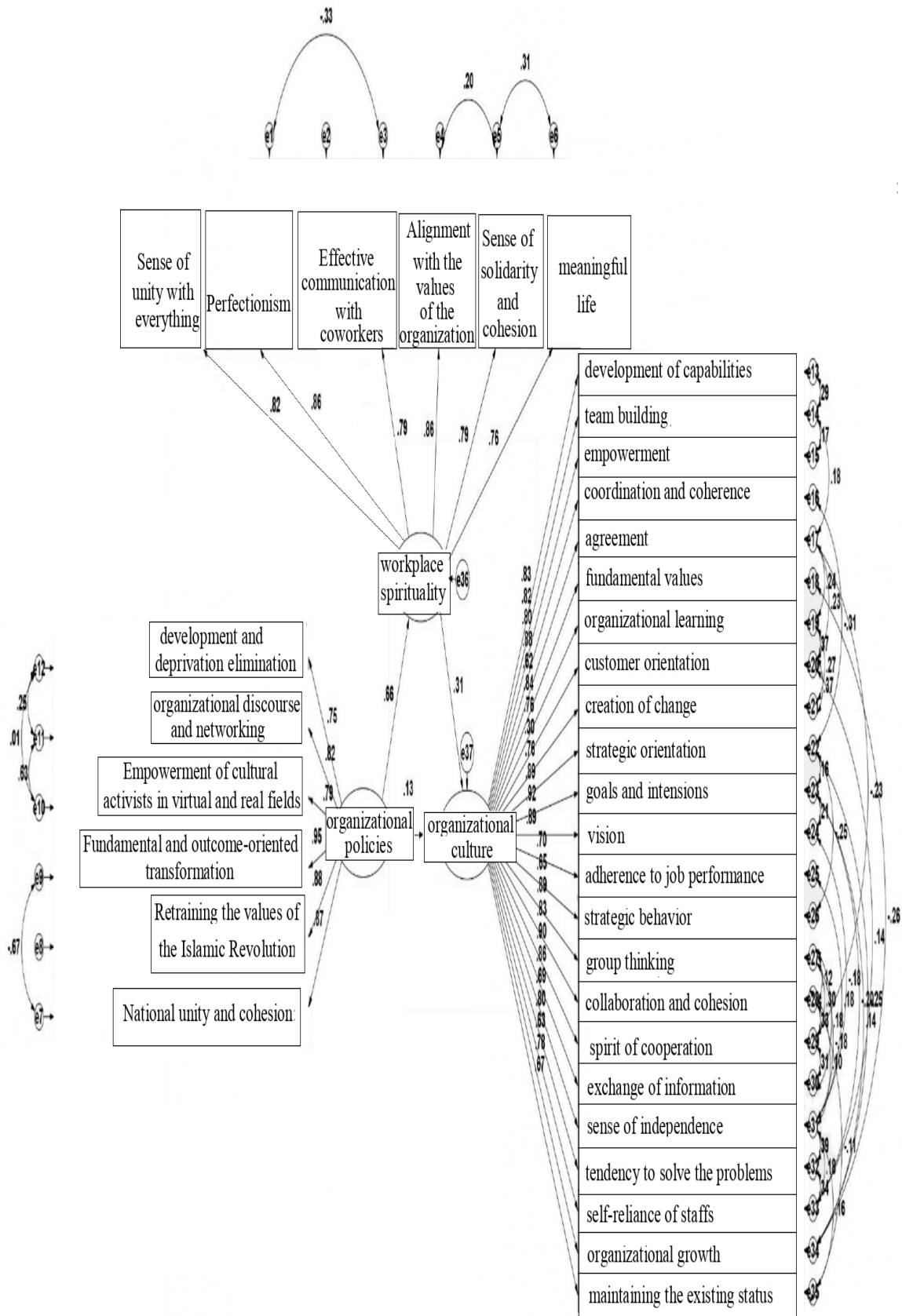


Diagram 1. Results of structural equations to investigate the main research question**Table 9.** Investigating mean dimensions of cultural policies from the experts' views (N = 20)

Dimension	Mean	SD	Statistics t	p-value
Development and elimination of deprivation	3.50	1.15	1.95	0.033
Cultural discourse and networking	3.85	1.04	3.66	0.001
Empowerment of cultural activists in virtual and real areas	3.75	1.02	3.29	0.002
Fundamental and outcome-oriented transformation	3.55	0.94	2.60	0.009
Retraining the values of the Islamic Revolution	3.60	1.39	1.93	0.034
National unity and cohesion	3.50	1.00	2.24	0.019

Discussion

The effect of the variables of alignment with the values of the organization and the feeling of oneness with everything on the organizational culture is significant at the level of 5% based on the research results. These structures have an additive (direct) effect on organizational culture due to the positive path coefficients. In addition, the effect of meaningful work variables, sense of solidarity, effective communication with colleagues, and perfection on organizational culture was insignificant at the 5% level. It is concluded that the effect of the feeling of oneness with everything on the organizational culture has been more than other dimensions according to the calculated path coefficients.

One of the most prominent scientists of organizational believes that organizational culture includes customs, traditions, and ethics to explain and justify this question. Organizational culture includes values that have been announced publicly. Throughout history, organizational culture has been an accumulation of common learning that refers to the structural strength, modeling, and evolution of the organization. Therefore, people in the organization feel meaningful and empowered due to the

customs and spirituality accepted in the organization.

The existence of a culture will be effective and useful to achieve organizational spirituality if it supports the issue of employee spirituality in the organization. Having a strong culture in the organization can lead to both high spirituality and the achievement of organizational goals. According to Serajzadeh, research, there is a positive and significant relationship between the dimensions of spirituality at work and involvement in work. To increase employee involvement in work, it is necessary to implement spirituality in the workplace and learn how to use it (6). Salimi and Ghalujah, stated that spirituality in the workplace significantly helps to create a particular environment so that the environment is an important element in organizational culture (7). Based on Hosseini, research, it is crucial to address spirituality in organizational culture, perspective on the desired organizational culture, and its beliefs (8). These study results are consistent with the findings of Marques, Hoy and Feldman, Serajzadeh, Salimi and Ghalujah, krishnakumar and Neck, conducted a study on organizational behavior in which they have argued that

organizational culture leads to group commitment (9).

Sulaiman and Bhatti, showed in their results of statistical analysis of research that there is a positive and effective relationship between organizational culture and the tendency to spirituality. In addition, they showed that there is a significant relationship between the dimensions of organizational culture and spirituality in the workplace (10).

Researchers, managers, and organizations pay much attention to the spirituality of the work environment. Today, Organizations tend to use independent team-based work structures instead of formal and dry hierarchies. This issue has increased the innovation and solidarity of employees. Many managers and researchers always focus on the job values of employees that have a great impact on the performance and effectiveness of the organization. A framework of organizational values crystallized in the culture is known as spirituality in the organization. To provide a sense of perfection and satisfaction, spirituality in the organization promotes the experience of excellence and a sense of connection with others through work processes. Employees who have a deep sense of meaning in their work believe that people are connected, feel solidarity with others in the workplace, see their values and goals in line with the values of the organization.

Milliman et al., found that there is a positive and significant relationship between spirituality in the workplace and the professional ethics of employees and corruption (11). Some experts have concluded that it is possible to manage

spirituality in the workplace; it is one of the most important and basic tasks of managers.

Some researchers consider spirituality as a dimension of understanding and identification of employees' lives that is internal, esoteric, and cultivable. It can be developed through doing meaningful things in life. People can expand their awareness and increase their productivity through spirituality. Referring to the pioneer, a strong and authoritative culture is required to achieve the goals and ideals of the Islamic system in any field, such as political, economic, and military. A culture that saves the country from potential dangers and facilitates the way for the proper use of opportunities. In this case, Mobilization is a worthy institution that has showed its role in the imposed war, the construction of the country, and providing security.

Shojaei Fard, research showed that organizational factors, individual factors, and environmental factors were effective in creating a spiritualistic organization through the spiritual atmosphere of the organization (12).

Gatling et al., conducted a study to investigate the impact of spirituality in the workplace on team effectiveness. He concluded that one of the important components of organizational culture that has a great impact on team effectiveness is spirituality at work (13).

Spirituality in the workplace has a direct and significant effect on honesty and trust among employees, according to Milliman et al., results (14).

Wong, stated that organizational culture has a mediating role in the impact of spirituality

at work on the achievement of organizational goals (15).

Foo, identified seven dimensions of workplace spirituality in his study. He used the factor analysis method to create a standard scale for each of these dimensions. These dimensions were expressed based on measuring spirituality in the workplace at the individual, group, and organizational levels (16).

The study shows that there is a positive and significant relationship between spirituality in the workplace and organizational culture. It can be concluded that employees who experience spirituality in the workplace are more loyal to the organization. In addition, they are more responsible and more committed to their duties. Spirituality at work makes the work-life meaningful and lets a person consider his work valuable and consider his work to have a higher goal. Spirituality at work is an experience of communication and mutual trust between people who participate in a work process. Optimism and individual goodwill create a spirituality that creates a motivational, organizational culture and increases overall performance. Spirituality leads to sustainable organizational excellence ultimately.

Conclusion

In This research we used to present a model for the implementation of cultural policies in relation to organizational culture with an emphasis on the mediating role of spirituality and mental health in university. The results indicate a significant relationship between cultural policies and spirituality and mental health in the hospital. Due to positive path coefficient, this relationship is direct. It means that with improving the implementation of cultural policies, the conditions for increasing workplace spirituality are provided. The

results also show a direct relationship between cultural policies and organizational culture and between workplace spirituality and organizational culture. Managers and policy makers are expected to improve the current situation and infrastructure in the fields of culture, spirituality and mental health in the workplace in order to improve the current situation and the activities of employees with honesty and a positive and efficient relationship, according to the results of the present study.

Author's contribution

Eraj Amirmohammadi and Alireza Manzari Tavakoli developed the study concept and design. Sanjar Salajegheh acquired the data. Samaneh Mehdizadeh and Alireza Manzari Tavakoli analyzed and interpreted the data, and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. All authors contributed to the intellectual content, manuscript editing and read and approved the final manuscript.

Informed consent

Questionnaires were filled with the participants' satisfaction and written consent was obtained from the participants in this study.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

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