



The Relationship between Religiosity and Secondary School Principals' Management Effectiveness

Akram Keykhaei¹ | Vali Mehdinezhad^{2*}

1. Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Education and Psychology, University of Sistan and Baluchestan, Zahedan, Iran. Email: kaekhaeiakram@yahoo.com

2. Corresponding Author, Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Education and Psychology, University of Sistan and Baluchestan, Zahedan, Iran. Email: valmeh@ped.usb.ac.ir

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ABSTRACT

The research objective was to explain the relationship between religiosity and secondary school principals' management effectiveness. The descriptive-correlation research method was used for this research, and the target population was all principals of secondary schools in Zahedan, with 141 subjects (72 male and 69 female). Based on Singh and Masuku's sample size table, 103 principals (52 male and 51 female) who formed the study sample were examined. A stratified and simple random sampling method was used. Data was collected using the religiosity questionnaire developed by Khodayarifard et al., as well as the school principals' effectiveness questionnaire developed by Houghton and Neck. Pearson's correlation coefficient and stepwise regression analysis methods were employed for the statistical analysis of the data. Research findings showed a positive significant relationship between religiosity and all its dimensions (i.e., religious understanding and belief, religious emotions, commitment to religious duties, and social pretense) and the effectiveness of principals. Results from the regression analysis also indicated that social pretense and adherence to religious duties explain 40.3% of the variation of principals' effectiveness.

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Introduction

The success of institutions and organizations largely depends on management effectiveness (Mir Kamali, 1999: 16). Effective management is a characteristic of development in the global system. Practical and powerful management can create sustainable and comprehensive development using an organization's potential and facilities (Sharif, 2006: 2-26). Educational and leadership duties should be assigned to qualified, competent individuals (Alaqband, 2001: 49). If managers of educational institutions of society have adequate knowledge and skill, the educational system will offer secondary effectiveness, efficiency, and validity (Mir Kamali, 1999:19). If a manager works effectively, they will be successful, and success is a combination of such factors as planning, goal setting, creative thinking, accountability, self-confidence, and self-esteem.

In recent decades, the effectiveness of school principals has attracted the attention of experts, staff, and executive managers in the educational system. The effectiveness of an education unit can be studied at different levels. Still, the core of educational effectiveness is more significant, more excellent, more incredible, and more remarkable progress and success of a school compared to its counterparts. Moreover, one of the factors contributing to effectiveness seems to be the professional and effective leadership of an education unit. As Smith believes, leadership is a critical factor in the effectiveness of schools and is led by school principals (Bakhtiari, 2012: 154-176). The effectiveness of educational components is defined as their belief in their ability to affect the motivation and achievement of students. (Tschannen-Moran, 2007: 944-956)

It seems that the effective management of schools has a significant relationship with their ability to communicate with administrators and educational actors such as teachers and students so that the school's goals can be achieved in this way. In this regard, Anuna, Chiawolam, Zaifada, Kpee & Onyemaechi (2019: 312-325) state that effectiveness includes appropriate communication, personal and professional knowledge, and access to resources.

According to Khosravanian, Shafiyi Rudposhti, and Tavakoli (2012: 127-146), religiosity can play a role in the success and effectiveness of managers. Religion is a social phenomenon and is the origin of all social activities and institutions, such as human understanding and the identity of human society. Religion is one of the most substantial institutions of every human society. In other words, humans have never lived without this phenomenon and hashumans have never lived without it or overlooked it. There is no old culture without a touch of religion, and no one thinks a different culture will emerge. Analysis of humans allows us to understand that the need for a shared system, orientation, belief reference, and faith is deeply rooted in humans' biological.

According to Giddens, religion is a source of traditional power, the basis for experiencing, defining, and interpreting life (Ismaili, 2001: 2). Jung suggests that religion meets several human needs and fills inner voids. It also reinforces confidence, hope, and power in individuals and their moral and spiritual characteristics and those of communities. Religion also protects against problems, difficulties, and deprivations. (Manzari Tavakoli, 2010: 43)

Hackney and Sanders (2003: 43-55) state that religion is like a source of meaning and stability in an unreliable world. Koenig and Larson (2001) systemically reviewed 850 studies and found that 80% of respondents referred to a positive relationship between religiosity and the performance of employees in organizational environments.

According to some researchers, religiosity can be a more powerful predictor of values than any other predictor. For instance, consider a teacher who sees teaching as a religious mission or profession versus a teacher who believes teaching a job or career. In this regard, religious theorists and recent educational investigations have proved that religiosity is an intuitive concept, because it influences human behavior and beliefs. (Hartwick, 2004: 51; Pals, 2006: 117; Scott, 2005: 175-181)

The following definitions and theories of religiosity have been proposed so far:

- Religiosity is defined as an institutionalized system or a personal system of beliefs, values, and divine activities, which is considered a level of reality or power acting as a source or outcome beyond human knowledge and intuition. (Worden, 2005: 221)
- Religiosity is an estimate of humans' religious knowledge, faith, fundamentalism, belief, piety, righteousness, religiousness, sacredness, self-sacrifice, their compliance with religion, and utilization of religion to attain goals. (Holdcroft, 2006:89-103)

- Researchers have proved that educational actors' thinking procedures, decision-making, personal theorizing, and teaching approaches are influenced by the values and beliefs they bring to classrooms. (Campbell, 2003: 18; Hartwick, 2004: 53; Richards, 2005: 73)

Due to the mutual relationship between internal religiosity and daily life elements (including profession), internal religiosity can play a significant role in thinking, decision-making, attitudes, beliefs, motivations, and ultimately, the effectiveness of educational environments. The thesis by Fernando and Jackson (2006: 23-39) and Emerson and McKinney (2010: 1-15) found a positive relationship between religiosity based on and moral decision-making in the work environment. McCleary and Barro (2006: 49-72) also argue that religion affects personal beliefs (reinforcing) and attributes such as professional ethics, trust, and honesty.

Other researchers, for example, Osman-Gani, Hashim, and Ismail (2013: 360-376), concluded that religiosity and spirituality positively affect personal performance. In fact, findings suggest that religion is a moderator variable of employees' performance. These findings confirm the results of previous studies, and indicate that there is a positive significant relationship between religion and performance (Kwilecki, 2009: 40-41) as well as religion and effective management leadership (Hyson, 2013: 109-115). Karakas (2009:89-106) reviewed approximately 140 articles on workplace spirituality and introduced three different viewpoints on the utility of spirituality for employees and organizational performance: a) spirituality improves employees' welfare and quality of life; b) spirituality brings professional meaning and objective to employees; c) spirituality creates a sense of mutual relationship and coexistence in employees.

King and Crowther (2004: 83-101) argue that religiosity and spirituality positively affect people, attitudes, behaviors, and employers. King (2008: 214-224) states, "the time has arrived to apply expertise to evaluate the convergence of religion and work in the field of management." Studies on religiosity have revealed the relationship between religiosity and other variables. Religious persons show a secondary tendency to participate in positive activities (Bridges, 2002: 19). McGhee and Grant (2008:61-69) realized the existence of a relationship between personal behavior and values. Religiosity and organizational commitment are two of the essential qualities of employees and are related to the values, beliefs, and attitudes of corporate members. (Allameh, 2011: 360-368)

As one of the essential components of effectiveness, organizational commitment is affected by three significant factors, namely personal characteristics, structural characteristics, and professional experience and features, which were discussed by Mowday and Porter (1982: 48). Religiosity belong to the category of personal traits or personal tendencies because previous research has indicated that religious beliefs form part of the person's personality (Chusmir, 1988: 251-262) and can positively affect different aspects such as professional ethics and commitment, source of control, and performance. Hence, religiosity mainly influences emotional commitment. Thus, it can be easily studied based on its effect on professional experience, including organizational goals, perceived values, and employee membership. (Allen, 1996: 61-89)

Concerning the relationship between religiosity and job performance, King and Williamson (2005: 173-198) stated that religiosity influences employees' requirements regarding a workplace and job performance. In addition, the mutual relationship between organizational status and an employee's requirements regarding the religious aspect of the workplace has the most significant effect on job performance. Sikorska-Simmons (2005: 65-82) found a positive relationship between religiosity and performance on the one hand and organizational commitment on the other. Results of the study by Kutcher, Bragger, Rodriguez-Sredinicki, and Masco (2010: 319-337) also showed the positive effect of religiosity on organizational commitment and several other related components to effectiveness. Martinson and Wilkening (1983: 347) explained the impact of religiosity on effectiveness. Kutcher et al. (2010: 319-337) also indicated the direct effect of religiosity on organizational job performance.

The first factor expected to be related to perceived leadership ability is religiosity. Religion and religiosity refer to an institutionalized or personal system of divine beliefs, values, and methods. It is considered a level of reality or power acting as a source or outcome beyond human knowledge and intuition (Worden, 2005: 221). Researchers have recently verified the significance of religiosity as a variable in the study of organizational behavior (Weaver, 2002: 77-97). More studies are being conducted on religiosity in the workplace. Still of them are theoretical, and very few experimental studies have been carried out on this issue. (e.g., Heaton, 2004: 62-82)

Researchers who have advocated the positive relationship between religiosity and influential leadership enumerated the qualities of effective leaders, which are most probably related to religiosity or spirituality (Burack, 1999: 280-291). For instance, it is stated that influential leadership calls for developing personal values, and respect for such matters, and religiosity is most probably related to such qualities (Strack, 2002: 3-19). Other characteristics of effective leadership are expected to be related to religiosity or spirituality. Some of these qualities include listening to employees' needs and creating a joint perspective, which reflects the union of educational actors and the organization (Ibid). It is also stated that there is a relationship between the degree of power leaders exercise to benefit others and their religiosity and spirituality (Ibid). Moreover, implicit or explicit values originating from religiosity can be influenced similarly to leadership values. (Worden, 2005: 221-239)

Hence, it is concluded that religiosity and spirituality have a considerably positive effect on employees' performance and effectiveness, while employees' spiritual condition enhances their performance. Therefore, the objective of this research was to explain the predictive power of secondary school principals' management effectiveness based on the religiosity dimension. Hence, the following questions were assessed.

- Is there a significant relationship between religiosity and principals' management effectiveness?
- Are dimensions of religiosity enable to predict principals' management effectiveness?

Methods

The descriptive-correlation research method was used for this research. The target population, which included all principals of secondary schools in Zahedan City, adding up to 141 subjects (72 male and 69 female). The sample size was estimated to be 103 using Singh and Masuku's (2014: 12-13) sample size table, and of the participants, 52 were male and 51 were female. A simple stratified random sampling method by gender was used. Table (1) displays the characteristics of the sample population.

Table 1. Characteristics of the sample (n=103)

Variables	G.	F	%
Gender	Male	52	50.5
	Female	51	49.5
Age	<35	27	26.2
	36-40	22	21.4
	41-45	32	31.1
	>45	22	21.4
Teaching Experience	≤10	38	36.9
	11-20	35	34.0
	≥20	30	29.1
Management Experience	≤5	39	37.9
	6-10	29	28.2
	≥10	35	34.0

Two questionnaires were used for data collection.

Religiosity Questionnaire: This questionnaire is an adaptation of Khodayarifard et al. (2009: 1-5) which, examines the religiosity of respondents using 30 statements and four dimensions, namely religious understanding and belief (9 statements), commitment to religious duties (8 statements), religious emotions (8 statements), and social presence (5 statements). This questionnaire is formulated based on the five-point Likert scale with options ranging from completely disagreed to completely agree. The statements are ranked from 1 (completely disagreed) to 5 (completely agreed). The calculated Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this questionnaire is 0.91.

Managers Effectiveness Questionnaire: Houghton and Neck's (2002: 672-691) school principals' effectiveness questionnaire was used to examine principals' effectiveness. This questionnaire consists of 32 statements and seven dimensions, namely organizational commitment (7 items), social sense of belonging (4 items), efficiency (3 items), job satisfaction (6 items), employees' spirit (4 items), tendency to resign (5 items), and leadership (3 items). This questionnaire is formulated based on the five-point Likert scale with options ranging from never to always, ranked from 1 (never) to always (5). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this questionnaire is 0.88.

Pearson's correlation coefficient and stepwise regression analysis methods were used to analyze the data.

Results

- Is there a significant relationship between religiosity and principals' management effectiveness?

Table 2. The coefficient of correlation between dimensions of religiosity and components of Principals' management effectiveness (n=103)

		Organizational Commitment	Sense of community	Efficiency	Job Satisfaction	Staff morale	To leave a job	Leadership	Effectiveness (Total)
Religious belief	r	.268**	.400**	.318**	.340**	.121	.138	.305**	.397**
Fulfilling religious duties	r	.456**	.379**	.417**	.427**	.293**	.212*	.317**	.534**
Religious emotions	r	.381**	.291**	.385**	.375**	.291**	.243*	.270**	.473**
Social pretend	r	.650**	.474**	.296**	.507**	.217*	.085	.281**	.575**
Religiosity (Total)	r	.540**	.474**	.442**	.508**	.289**	.213*	.363**	.612**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

According to the findings of the above table, there is a positive and significant relationship between religiosity and some of its dimensions, such as religious knowledge and belief, commitment and practice of religious duties, religious emotions, and social pretense with the effectiveness of school principals and some of its components ($r = .212$ to $.650$). At the same time, there was no statistically significant relationship between religious cognition and belief with the two dimensions of employee morale and the tendency of managers to leave the service, as well as the social pretense dimension with the tendency to leave the job. Considering the information presented in the above table, it is concluded that, with an increase in principals' religious understandings and beliefs, commitment to religious duties, religious emotions, participation in social groups, and social presence, their effectiveness is expected to increase.

- Are dimensions of religiosity able to predict principals' management effectiveness?

Table 3. Results of regression to predict the secondary school principals' management effectiveness in terms of religiosity (N=103)

	R	R ²	ADJ.R ²	Std.E	B	β	F	df	Sig.
1a	.575 ^a	.330	.324	11.48	2.55	.575	49.79	1, 101	.001
2b	.635 ^b	.403	.391	10.89	1.80	.405	12.23	1, 102	.001
					1.80	.319			

1a. Predictors: (Constant), Social pretend

2b. Predictors: (Constant), Social pretend + Fulfilling religious duties

Based on the regression model, social presence was introduced into the regression equation in the first step with an explanation coefficient (R^2) of 0.33, which suggests that social presence explains 33% of the variation of principals' effectiveness. Commitment to religious duties was introduced into the regression equation in the second step it increased the explanation coefficient (R^2) from 0.33 to 0.403, which indicates that social presence and commitment to religious duties explain 40.3% of the variation of principals' effectiveness. Findings also indicate that two dimensions, namely social company with a $\beta = 0.405$ and commitment to religious duties with a $\beta = 0.319$, are capable of predicting principals' effectiveness ($p < 0.001$).

Discussion

Organizational effectiveness is one of the topics that organizations and related agencies have always valued because an increase in organizational effectiveness is equivalent to progress in attaining goals. Educational institutions are undoubtedly among the most important, influential, and prominent organizations in charge of formal training of society's members and supplying human forces to other organizations. As the backbone of proper training and education, institutes and schools try to attain educational goals. Like other organizations, educational institutes in each society try to actualize their organizational goals by prioritizing them, allowing for investigations into the effectiveness of schools. Hence, the present research was carried out to examine the relationship between religiosity and the realization of principals' effectiveness in secondary schools. Research findings revealed that principals' effectiveness is positively and significantly related to religiosity and its dimensions. This finding is verified by results reported by Koenig and Larson (2001), McCleary and Barro (2006: 49-72), Osman-Gani, Hashim, and Ismail (2013: 360-367), Bridges and Moore (2002: 19), Roundy (2009: 311-317), Allameh, Amiri, and Asadi (2011: 360-368), Sikorska-Simons (2005: 65-82), and Kutcher et al. (2010: 319-337). Results also indicated that social presence explains 33% of the variation in the effectiveness of school principals, which aligns with the findings by Osman-Gani, Hashim, and Ismail. (2013: 360-376)

Conclusion

Accordingly, it could be concluded that the existence of religiosity characteristics such as religious understanding and belief, commitment to religious duties, religious emotions, and social presence can increase the effectiveness and efficiency of persons in fulfilling their obligations. Hence, institutions and organizations, especially educational organizations, are recommended to value the reinforcement of their human forces' spirituality and religious beliefs and commitment to religious teachings due to the sensitivity of their jobs. Such a concern for human troops is more important in management and operation. To attain this goal, it is recommended to hold in-service training courses, form cultural and value formations, organize social gatherings, continuously communicate with religious and cultural centers, and invite religious and moral personalities to lectures and conferences (because of their spiritual influence over the audience).

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