

Explaining the Role of Spiritual Leadership in Envy Management of Faculty Members through the Role of Professional Mediator

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Abstract Nowadays, professional development in organizations, particularly educational settings, has led to highest productivity, so that it is considered as one of the organizational empowerment competencies. The present study was conducted to explain the share of spiritual leadership in envy management of faculty members of Islamic Azad Universities of East Azerbaijan province through the role of professional mediator. This study was a descriptive and correlational study that was conducted using structural equation modeling. The sample of this study consisted of all faculty members, with the rank of assistant professor or higher, in academic year of 2014-2015 and 316 subjects were selected by Cochran formula. The results showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between spiritual leadership and envy management of faculty members and professional development, so that in investigating the direct and indirect relationship between variables, spiritual management has been effective on organizational envy management. The proposed model enjoyed from good fitness. As a result, faculty members, with suitable professional development and the atmosphere of managers' spiritual leadership can prevent envy and these goals will be achieved when the professional development of faculty members in avoiding envy is seriously considered.

Keywords: organizational envy management, spiritual leadership, faculty members, university

Introduction

Nowadays, envy among staff is one of the issues that has gripped most government agencies, universities and higher education centers; so that this has led to decreased staff motivation. According to this challenge, it can be stated that jealous staff have lower organizational commitment and as a result, they cause direct and negative effect on organizational performance. Those who are involved in this context, do not care about future, because based on their view, past and future are the same (Danaeifar, 2011). However, envy is a known issue in inter-personal relationships. Almost everybody has experienced envy in his or her life.

Social psychologists consider envy as a bad mental experience that arises in

response to social comparisons where others are at higher ranks in the context of interest. Psychologically, envy is the result of comparison (Smith and Kim, 2007: 47). Also, feeling of envy is a combination of several excitements that only the person can feel it and other cannot (Nendedkar, 2011: 54). In terms of religion, envy is a bad trait that indicates a kind of psychological and mental distress in human and can overshadow other positive and valuable features, weaken and destroy them.

Despite the literature regarding organizational envy and its consequences (the effect of envy on tendency to leave job by nurses by Abedi et al. 2014; the weak relationship between nurses and high envy among staff by Khalife, 2012; the effect of organizational envy on

organizational atmosphere by Ozkoc and Caliskan, 2014; the effect of envy on job enthusiasm by Erdila and Muceldini, 2014; envy as a dilemma by Tai et al. 2012), it should be stated that the issue has motivated the researcher to investigate this topic is that in Iranian organizations, particularly educational institutes, envy has not been considered and it is often observed that the role of organizational envy in most of the cases is neglected its consequences are not considered.

But, with the existence of the concept “envy”, it should be investigated that how envy is defined in organization and how is the relationship of staff with this concept. It should be stated that staff envy is a kind of reflective, feeling and behavioral pattern that is the result of lack of self-esteem or lack of consequences related to work relationships (Vecchio, 1995). If this destructive phenomenon is managed in the organization, the satisfaction level of staff will be decreased and the professional development and growth of staff will face difficulties. In order to explain this issue, one of the strategies to prevent envy in organization is the existence of desired atmosphere through spiritual management that can provide the context for individual and organizational creativity among staff. Avolio and Gardner (2004) present evidences that state staff development is related to spiritual leadership and leads to job satisfaction and commitment. Therefore, if the manager functions as a spiritual leader, he can prevent envy in organization or at least, decrease its levels. Spiritual leadership has been established based on the philosophy of servant leadership. Nowadays, spirituality is one of the main components of work environments in organizations. There are numerous effective reasons for the relationship between spirituality and management. This spirituality affects

management behavior. The leadership method of those managers who indicate more tendency towards spirituality is more effective than those managers who do not indicate any tendency toward spirituality (Strack et al., 2008). The role of spiritual leaders is to motivate staff through applying spiritual perspective and creating cultural contexts based on human values to nurture competent staff with high productivity, committed and motivated. Spiritual leadership emphasizes the sense of purpose and meaning in life, the ability to effectively manage surroundings, the ability to follow inner beliefs and the sense of growth and continuous self-perception. This theory has been developed from an endogenous motivational model and is based on features such as hope, faith, and altruism (Fernando, et al., 2009). Leaders generally show values such as harmony, love, compassion, unity, peace, honesty, and integrity.

Staff development is referred to a process where the manager helps staff to obtain necessary ability regarding independent decision-making. This process, not only affects individuals’ performance, but is effective on the personality. In the development context we can consider personal, professional and organizational developments that can be implemented under programs in organizations and need management infrastructures (Moradi and Seyyed Kalan, 2015). By professional development capacity, it means creating changes in required professional development activities in various conditions to improve performance. According to Sallee (2011), the professional development capacity of teachers includes knowledge, development capacity in classroom, ability to communicate, identifying the intended expectations from students, and interaction and close relationship with the parents of students. The basic logic is that the quality

of teachers can lead to improved teaching practices that leads to higher levels of students' success (Antoniou and Kyriakides, 2012). Professional development of staff creates creativity and innovation that are achievable under organizational internal and external factors (Baraki et al., 2013).

There are a limited numbers of empirical studies on the effect of organizational factors on professional development. The previous studies were almost about the role of personal factors such as cognitive and motivational factors (Kwakaman, 2003). However, in the literature regarding management of human resources and development, we can find numerous structural variables that probably lead to improved professional development of staff. The organizational factors include organizational facilities and necessary requirements (Van der Heijden, 2003). Taheri (2012) presents a comprehensive model regarding teachers' professional development that indicates causative reasons (external and internal incentives), focal issues (participation in professional learning), professional development strategies (individual, collective, and educational), context (time duration and focus on content), interfering conditions (organizational and psychological factors), and consequences (failure in meeting expectations, change in knowledge, attitude, and learning) reflect teachers' professional development process in teacher training centers as well as their interaction. Patoleaa and Toma (2015) in investigating multi-dimensional professional development of teachers, prefer organizational structure; so that they have considered success in teachers' professional development in facilitating good communicative condition and multi-dimensional coordination of organizational structure.

Sadeghi, Vahed Chodke and Kazampour

(2015) indicated that spiritual leadership variables are important in empowering staff, so that spiritual leadership has a direct and significant relationship with empowering staff. Ja'fari et al. (2013) indicated that staff envy will not affect the tendency to leave job and by increasing envy level in the individual, the tendency to leave job will not be affected. Staff envy has indicated direct and positive effect on informal behaviors, meaning envy affects emotional balance and the desire to leave job.

Khalife (2012) investigated the role of envy mediation in the relationship between leader-member interactions and showed that those staff who have weak relationship with their supervisors, have higher levels of envy compared to those who have better job quality. The results also showed that staff envy does not have a direct relationship with job satisfaction and probably, other factors are effective in job satisfaction.

According to Ozkoc and Caliskan (2014), staff positive or negative feelings affect organizational atmosphere. The regression analysis results showed that organizational envy can justify 9.1% of change in organizational atmosphere.

Odle (2014) investigated the effect of general envy and relationships in organizations and showed that general envy is significantly related to the quality of leader-member relationship. Also, psychological distance can balance the relationship between leader and member, Thai et al., (2012) focused on rethinking in the nature of envy and its effects on staff and organizations. They concluded that the effectiveness of envy on individual behaviors and job performance is significant.

Nendedkar (2011) showed that the interaction between leader and member has a negative effect on staff knowledge sharing. Moreover, envy has a positive

effect on the behavior of staff and their tendency to leave job. In another study, Kim et al. (2010) investigated the effect of interaction between staff and supervisor and showed that those staff who have weaker relationship with their supervisors indicate higher degrees of envy compared to those who have better relationships. Finally, higher levels of envy decrease voluntary help behavior of staff to their colleagues.

Duffy et al. (2000) investigated the effect of envy on group variables such as integrity, ability, performance, satisfaction, waste of time, and absence. The results of this study indicated that envy affects group satisfaction through ability, integrity and waste of time and affects absence through integrity and waste of time.

Vecchio (1995) showed that there is a positive relationship between staff envy and the tendency to leave job. Also, there is a positive relationship between staff envy and job dissatisfaction.

Nir and Bogler (1995) considered job

factors as a suitable predictive for teachers' tendency in professional development, so that job commitment, awareness of agreement between job demands and staff abilities and teachers' attitudes towards management support are important. They considered these factors in teachers' job satisfaction where teachers' professional development indicated increasing role in the continuity of job satisfaction.

Despite rich scientific and research background, to investigate the main research question, the hypotheses of this study will be as follows:

Hypothesis 1: spiritual leadership has a direct effect on envy management of faculty members.

Hypothesis 2: spiritual leadership has a direct effect on professional development of faculty members.

Hypothesis 3: spiritual leadership has an indirect effect on envy management through the professional development of faculty members.

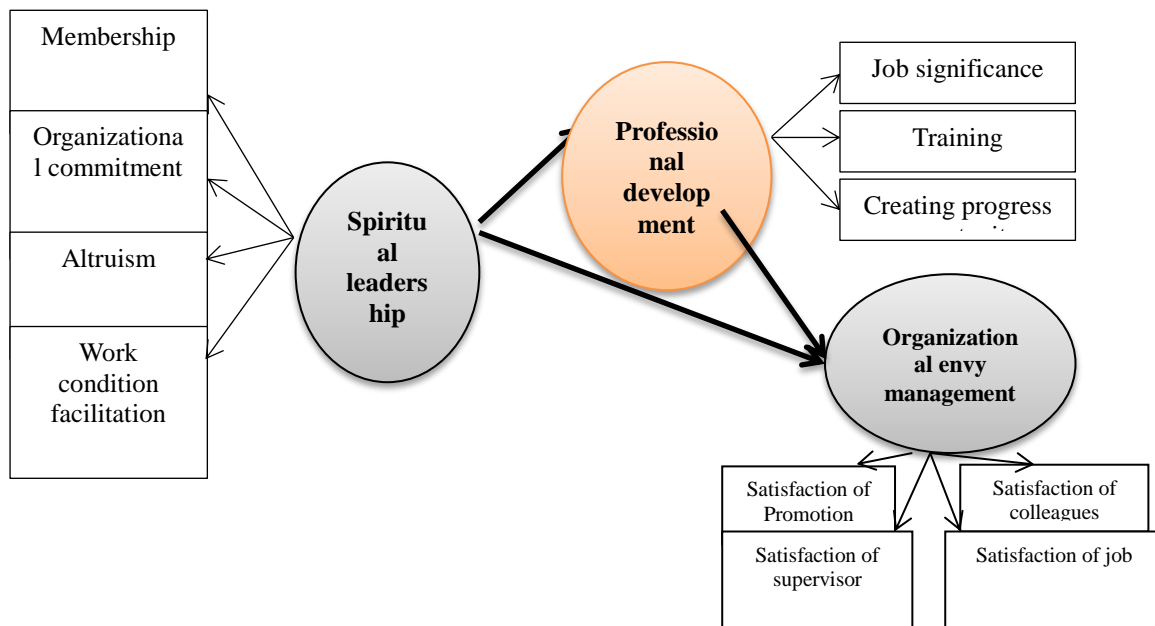


Figure 1. The conceptual model of the study

Methodology

The purpose of the present study is to investigate the effect of spiritual leadership on envy management of Islamic Azad Universities of west Azerbaijan province through professional development and job satisfaction of faculty members and is considered among descriptive and correlational studies using structural equation modelling. Structural equation modelling is a general multivariate analysis from multivariate regression family. In other words, it is the extension of general linear model that lets researchers to test a collection of regression equations synchronously (Houman, 2009). The sample of this study consisted of 685 faculty members through Morgan Jersey formula, a number of 316 individuals were selected randomly.

Procedure

The instruments used in this study consisted of researcher made questionnaire inspired by Delphi Technique (in 4 levels) in qualitative stage that were identified under variables such as professional development of professors, spiritual leadership, and envy management with Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.744, 0.904 and 0.864, respectively. Also, the reliability and validity of this questionnaire were confirmed.

Data collection tools

Spiritual leadership scale: to investigate spiritual leadership, 13 items were used. These four-dimensional tool evaluates spiritual leadership: membership, organizational commitment, altruism and facilitating job conditions for staff. The intended tool was designed based on five-point Likert scale (from absolutely agree to absolutely disagree) and its reliability was confirmed based on Cronbach's alpha (0.904).

A) Professors' professional development scale: this scale consists of 9 items and was designed based on five-point Likert scale (from absolutely agree to absolutely disagree) that evaluates the significance of job, education and creating development opportunity, with Cronbach's alpha of 0.774.

B) Envy management scale: this scale consisted of 4 items including satisfaction of job, satisfaction of the supervisor, satisfaction of colleagues and satisfaction of promotions. This scale includes 21 items that are designed based on five-point Likert scale (from absolutely agree to absolutely disagree) with Cronbach's alpha of 0.864.

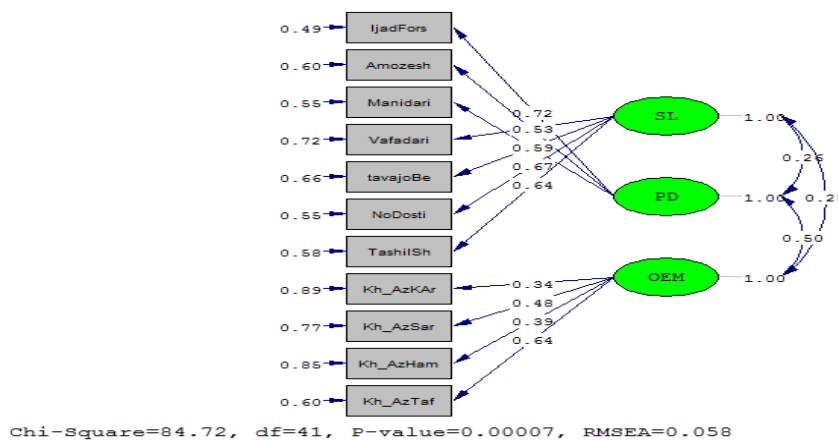


Figure 2. The analysis of the confirmatory factor of the primary model

Results

Data analysis method: all data in this study were analyzed using SPSS (22) and Lisrel 8.5. In the table 2, the direct and total

effects between perceived spiritual leadership and envy management of faculty members have been estimated.

Table 1. Correlation matrix between all study variables

	Spiritual leadership	Professional development	Job satisfaction	Envy management
Spiritual leadership	1	0.24	0.73	.58
Professional development		1	0.97	0.46
Envy management				1

Table 2. Direct and total effects between perceived spiritual leadership and envy management of faculty members

Course		Total effect	Indirect effect	Total effect
From variable	Towards variable			
Perceived spiritual leadership	Organizational envy management	0.13	0	0.13

Hypotheses testing

Hypothesis 1: spiritual leadership has a direct effect on envy management of faculty members.

According to the results of structural equations in figures 2 and 3, the significance level between perceived spiritual leadership and organizational envy management equals (0.29) and its t-value is smaller than (1.96) and it shows that the relationship between perceived spiritual leadership and organizational envy management is not significant at the level of (95%). According to path

coefficient between these two variables (0.29), it is concluded that the perceived spiritual management by faculty members did not significantly affected their envy management. Therefore, the first hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 2: spiritual leadership has a direct effect on professional development of faculty members.

In the following table, the direct and total effects between perceived spiritual leadership and professional development of faculty members have been estimated.

Table 2. The direct and total effects between research variables

Course		Total effect	Indirect effect	Total effect
From variable	Towards variable			
Perceived spiritual leadership	Organizational envy management	0.26	.	0.26

According to the outputs of structural equations in figures 2 and 3, the significance level between perceived spiritual leadership and organizational envy management is 0.26 that its t value is larger than 1.96. This indicates that the relationship between perceived spiritual leadership and professional development

of faculty members is significant at the confidence level of 95%. Also, according to the coefficient between these two variables (0.26), it is concluded that the perceived spiritual leadership has positively affected the professional development. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 3: spiritual leadership has an indirect effect on envy management

through professional development and job satisfaction of faculty members.

Table 3. Direct, indirect and total effects between study variables

Path		Direct effect	Indirect effect	Total effect
From variable	To variable			
Perceived spiritual leadership	Organizational envy management	0.13	0.122	0.252

As can be seen from Table (3) and Figure (2), the direct effect of perceived spiritual leadership on envy management is 0.13 (t-value=1.41). Also, the indirect effect of perceived spiritual leadership on organizational envy management with the effect of job satisfaction and professional development is 0.122. Since the indirect effect of perceived spiritual leadership on organizational envy management (0.122) is significant and its total effect (0.252) indicates 25% of two variable of interest. As a result, the role of professional development mediator on the relationship between perceived spiritual leadership and organizational envy management will be confirmed. Therefore, the third hypothesis is confirmed.

Testing the conceptual model goodness of fit

The purpose of testing the general fit of

this model is to clarify how much the model is consistent with empirical data. There is a large numbers of goodness of fit criteria that can be used to measure the general goodness of fit. Unfortunately, none of these cases is superior in all dimensions. Because, a special goodness of fit criteria, due to sample size, estimation method, model complexity, hypotheses related to normality or a combination of these cases act differently. Therefore, different individuals are evaluated using various goodness of fit methods. A completely structural equation model expresses a combination of path curve and confirmatory factorial analysis. In figures 2 and 3, we can see standard estimation coefficients and significance numbers of structural model. Some of the goodness of fit criteria can be seen at the end of these figures.

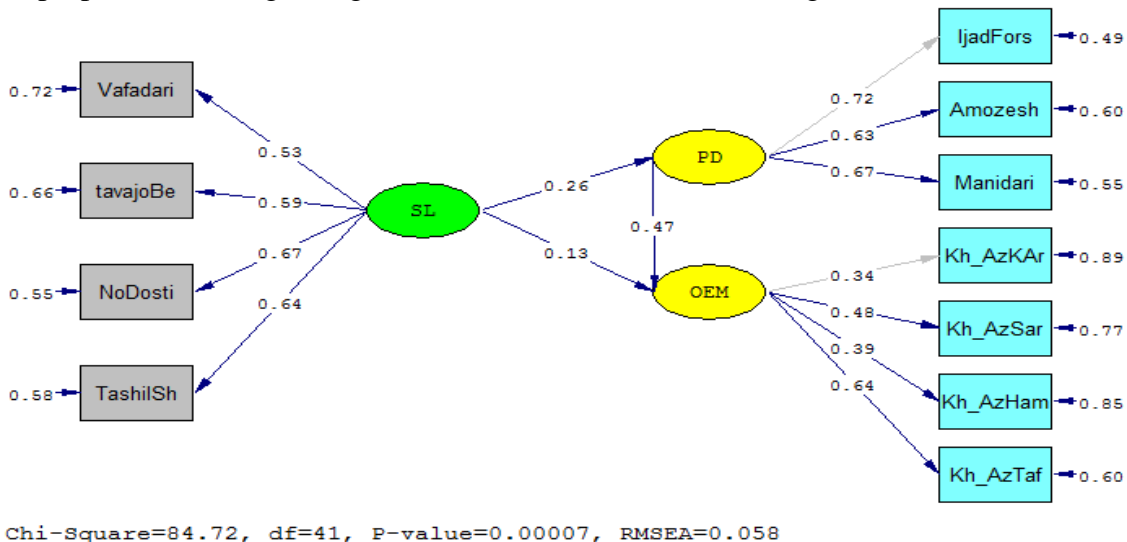
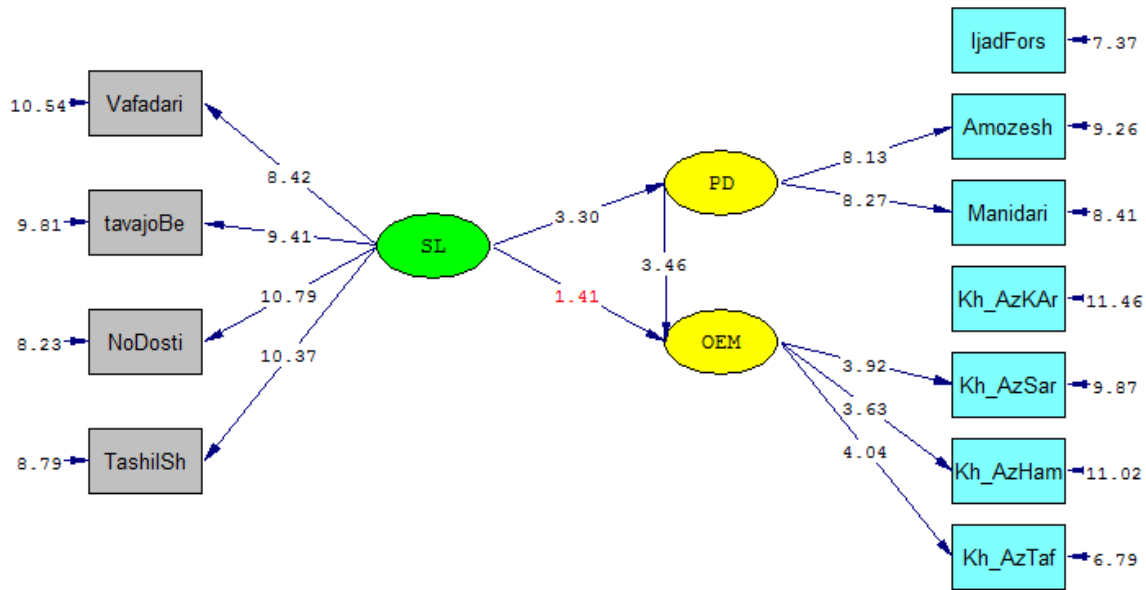


Figure 2. Standard estimation coefficients of the structural model



Chi-Square=84.72, df=41, P-value=0.00007, RMSEA=0.058

Figure 3. Significant numbers of the structural model

Before discussion and conclusion, it should be noted that one of the best goodness of fit criteria of the structural equations is root means square error of approximation (RMSEA). This value should be smaller than 0/08 for models with acceptable goodness of fit. The value of this index for the conceptual model of study has been obtained as 0.058 that is acceptable.

Another index of goodness of fit is the result of chi-square divided by degree of freedom. This value should not be smaller

than 3. In this measurement model, chi-square value (84.72) and degree of freedom (41) are estimated. Therefore, the result of dividing chi-square on degree of freedom for the conceptual model of the study is 2.07 that is an acceptable value. In standard estimation state, the results indicate the appropriateness of model. The appropriateness of two proposed indices indicates difference between the conceptual model and the observed data. Also, the rest of the goodness of fit indices has appropriate values.

Table 4. The summary statistical indexes of research model fitness

RMR	NFI	CFI	AGFI	GFI	RMSEA	X ² /df	df	X ²
0.019	0.89	0.94	0.92	0.95	0.058	2.066	41	84.72

Discussion and Conclusion

This study was conducted to investigate the effect of perceived spiritual leadership on organizational envy management through professional mediator role. In explaining the direct effect of perceived spiritual leadership on organizational envy management of faculty members, it should

be stated that there is a significant relationship between these variables, but due to explaining its direct effect, the hypothesis was rejected. This is not consistent with Sadeghi et al. (2015), because spiritual leadership is more effective in empowering staff and according to the results, it is proved that

spiritual leadership can prevent envy to some extent or at least decrease it. Because, spiritual leadership has been founded on servant leader philosophy.

In explaining the effect of spiritual leadership on professional development of faculty members, due to the standard estimation of spiritual leadership on professional development, it can be concluded that the effect of spiritual leadership on professional development of faculty members was significant. This was consistent with the result of study by Odel (2014), Sadeghi et al. (2015), and Nasr Esfahani et al. (2015). It should be stated that spiritual leadership forms spiritual beliefs and this can function as an internal driver in staff and leads to their professional progress and increased accountability. Staff will understand the real concept of their job and care about it. While acknowledging this, they consider significance in job as one of the defined features of a profession and believe that peoples' jobs are important for them by which they are proud as a member of their scientific community and are always learning.

Also, in explaining the effect of spiritual leadership on envy management through professional development, it should be stated that nowadays, the role of spiritual leaders is to motivate staff and create cultural contexts based on human values to nurture competent staff with high efficiency, commitment and motivated. These findings are consistent with Sadeghi et al. (2015), Erdil and Muchelini (2014), Khalife (2012), Odel (2014), Nendedkar (2011). This variable decreases the envy level of staff with high professional development and job satisfaction. Therefore, spiritual leadership theory is considered as an internal motivational model based on features such as hope, belief and altruism (Fernando et al., 2009). In the university, managers as spiritual

leaders, express values such as harmony, love, passion, unity, peace, honesty, and integration to let us observe prevention of envy among faculty members. Olivio et al. (2004) stated that staff development is related to spiritual leadership and leads to commitment. Also, professional development of faculty members creates the possibility for innovation and creativity (Shaemi et al., 2013). Because, envy depends on comparison and that person concludes others have benefited more. Second, the benefits that others have obtained seem unattainable (Smith and Kim, 2007). According to Hider, when the person considers himself at the same level of another person, there is a strong tendency for him to believe they must have equal opportunities and benefits and this can be that strong to be considered as envy or a "must" (Weltreid, 2014). Therefore, when faculty members consider university management as compassionate leaders who attempt regarding development and job satisfaction, envy will be decreased.

In sum, the results obtained from the study model indicate that the direct effect of perceived leadership from the faculty members on envy management was not effective, but other relationships and effects between variables are significant and it can be stated that there is a significant relationship between spiritual leadership and organizational envy management. Also, one of the concepts that has been proposed regarding human resource development is staff job satisfaction. When staff work eagerly, they will find their skills and abilities in organizational atmosphere that needs spiritual leadership. Good staff look for opportunities to promote their personal job and performance. When an organization has a plan regarding its staff development, the staff intend to provide more opportunities for their own progress (Abolalaei, 2015). However, if university

leadership is not desired for the staff, envy will replace empathy and finally, hostility increases among people and their desire regarding friendship decreases (Salovey and Rodin, 1984). More importantly, in this atmosphere, the faculty members participate in their professional development and help managers to decrease the envy level among them.

Implications of the Study

According to the findings of this study, it can be stated that envy has a detrimental effect on the growth, development and scientific spirit of faculty members. Therefore, offering a model for envy management in Islamic Azad University can significantly affect commitment. Although numerous variables could be involved in faculty members' envy management, the followings points can be drawn by the present study:

- To provide a desired organizational atmosphere accompanied by spiritual leadership. Since university is the symbol of culture away from moral vices such as envy, professional development workshops should be held regarding organizational envy management among key staff.

Regarding direct and indirect relationship between spiritual leadership and envy management, the university managers can directly or indirectly prevent or decrease organizational envy through professional development variables. Therefore, it is suggested to select managers who have appropriate spiritual leadership features.

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