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# SURVEYING THE EFFECT OF SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE ON EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT

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**Abstract**

The main goal of this research is to survey the effect of spiritual intelligence on employee empowerment. Spiritual intelligence is independent variable and employee empowerment is dependent variable. Research is solidarity from the view of descriptive and applicable from the view of aim that is according to library and field researches. Statistical society of this research is Payam Noor University employees of Kermanshah province that is 195 persons and the statistical sample is determined via 130 individuals. Sampling method is simple random and data are gathered via standard questionnaires. Spiritual intelligence variable is established from Moghimi's book (1390) and employee empowerment variable is established from Spritzer's book and et al (1995). Cronbach's alpha of total questionnaire is equal to 0.942. For surveying the gathered data, SPSS13, LISREL8 software is used and results of data analysis are: spiritual intelligence has significant and positive effect on employees' empowerment. Sense of competence has no significant and positive effect on spiritual intelligence. Sense of authority has significant and positive effect on spiritual intelligence. Sense of being effective has significant and positive effect on spiritual intelligence. Sense of meaningfulness has significant and positive effect on spiritual intelligence.

**Keywords:** spiritual intelligence, empowerment, sense of competence, sense of authority, sense of being effective, sense of meaningfulness

## Introduction

Intelligence is a concept that human has been interested in to research about its dimensions, specifications and types. Several descriptions are provided for intelligence. Each definition is limited to the time period and cultural context. The meaning of intelligence is differed within the past decades. According to the current values in each era, different vies are provided about intelligence. The instrument for measuring it is always changing, too (Shelekton and Felcher, 1978; translator: Karimi and Jomehri, 1376). Zoher and Marshal (2000) in their book define it at spiritual intelligence. From the view of Delman (2001), spiritual intelligence is human capacity for asking questions about life meaning as well as experience the linked bond between each of us and the world we live in. Amaram (2007) defines spiritual intelligence as a set of capabilities for applying tools and resources, values and spiritual specifications for increase and well-being of daily life. As an overall definition, Pich and Kroba state that empowerment is a multi-dimensional social process that help people to have control over their lives, a process that empower persons to understand the meaning of empowerment. It is necessary to attention to several points: empowerment is multi-dimensional and processes. It is multi-dimensional since it occurs inside the dimensions of sociology, psychology, economics and other dimensions. Empowerment is a process like a path or travels for improvement the work. Other dimensions of empowerment may have a lot of coordination with a special filed or other persons (Pich and Kroba, 1999, p 70). Employees' empowerment is considered as an important and fundamental variable from the side of organizational researchers and managers. Researchers always identify the situation and related matters to employees' empowerment.

**Research background**

Theorist definition of spiritual intelligence is intelligence though it related matters to meaning and values are measured. This intelligence puts our activities and lives in wider, richer and more meaningful fields. An intelligence that helps us to find what process or path is more meaningful than the other (Zoher and Marshal, 2000). Spiritual intelligence relates clear mind with available infrastructure basis and help person to recognize reality from imagination. This definition is provided in different cultures as love, wisdom and service (Vegan, 2003). Spiritual intelligence is human capacity for asking final question about life meaning as well as experience the linked bond between each of us and the world we live in (Velman, 2001). Groo (1971) mentions to the general definitions of dictionaries from empowerment that includes delegation of legislative power, delegation of authority, the providing mission and power. In 1990 Gandz defined empowerment with delegating decisions to employees. But Zayerman (1990) points to having a simple and impossible definition of it and believes when providing a definition for empowerment is easy that we consider it without paying attention to some terms like helplessness, powerlessness and alienation. If we want to define it according to different persons, it is too hard. Empowerment means providing more freedom, work independency, being responsible for decision-making and self-control in doing affairs for the organization's employees (Moliness, 1999). Empowerment means entrusting to persons that are not manager for making important organizational decisions that employees are grouping in it in teams and then for their managerial activities like hiring, firing, individual education, determining the goals and evaluating the results' quality, a full responsibility is given to a team (Vagner and Hlonberg, 1995). Kevin and Spritzer (1997), Tomas and Velthos (1990), Ford and Folkor (1995) and Veten Kameron (1998) acknowledge that empowerment is a multi-dimensional concept and differ for different persons. Kevin and Spritzer (1997) name this kind of vision ad an organic process. According to the definition of Spritzer (1997), four dimensions of empowerment include:

1- Being effective
2- Having a choice
3- Eligibility
4- Significant

**Dimensions of employees' empowerment from various cognitive and motivational aspects**

| Empowerment dimensions | Theorists |
|---|---|
| Feelings of self-efficacy and self-efficacy | "Kanger and Kanngoo" (1988) [19, p 471-482] |
| Sense of efficacy, sense of choice, a sense of competence, sense of meaningful | "Tomas and Velthos" (1990) [36, p 6-7] |
| To be effective, having choice, competence, meaningfulness | "Spritzer" (1995) [37, p 1442-1465] |
| Sense of competence, sense of choice, sense of usefulness, sense of meaning, sense of trust in others | "Mishra" (1992) [82, 0 567-588] |

**Identity of empowerment components**

**Being effective:** effectiveness is the degree to which individual can influence on administrative, operational and strategic outcomes of the work (Spritzer, 1995)

**Having a choice:** it refers to self-authority or having a choice means individual freedom and independency in necessary determination of job's duty performance (Tomas and Velthos, 1990)

**A sense of competence**: It refers to how a person can do the job tasks skillfully and successfully (Tomas and Velthos, 1990). Effectiveness of suitability is a personal belief that individual feels that he can successfully performs the assigned duties (Bandora, 1997).

**A sense of meaningfulness:** An opportunity that people feel following a valuable and important job's aims, they feel they move in a road that their time and power is valuable (Hongoo, 1998). Meaningfulness means having valuable job aims and internal interest of the person toward his job (Tomas and Velthos, 1990). Meaningfulness is fitness between job requirements and beliefs, values and behaviors (Spritzer, 1995).

Berach (2003) surveys different approaches about empowerment and analyzes this approach according to two dimensions of fairness and belief to it. Base on this matter, he identifies and provides 4 kinds of attitudes towards empowerment.

Signal and Gardner (2007) in a research entitled "study the relation between empowerment and field elements" surveys the relation between field elements include relationship with superiors, public relations with the company, team work and willingness to practice with empowerment. The result is that the elements of relationship with superiors and public relations with the company have significant relationship with significant aspects of the job, effect and self-determination but have no relation with competency.

Feray (2003) in a research entitled "the impact of spiritual intelligence on leadership" refers to the relation of spiritual intelligence and holistic Leadership that relates four main dimensions of human: physical body, mental thoughts, emotions, and soul. Moreover, leaders should know their own values for motivating their followers and show them via their actions and views to create the sense of membership and spiritual mission.

**Research method**

The current research is applicable from the view of aim and descriptive-correlation form the view of gathering information. This research describes the current situation for spiritual intelligence and empowers employees as we ass inferences about possible causal relationship between variables. It means that it surveys the relation between spiritual intelligence with employee empowerment as well as their impact on others. Therefore, this research is descriptive-correlation and studies the possible casual relation between dependent and independent variables with using the available data. Two methods of library and field are used in this research for data gathering. The used scale to answer the questions of questionnaire is 5-option-range of Likert Scale that the rates of very high, high, medium, low and very low (that given scores to them are 5,4,3,2 and 1, respectively). The used questionnaires in this research are standard. The spiritual intelligence variable is adopted from Moghimi book (1390) and employee empowerment variable is adopted from Spitzer's article and et al (1995). In this research Cronbach's alpha method is used for determining the reliability. Therefore, a primary sample including 30 questionnaires was pre-test. Then, using the gained data from these questionnaires and SPSS software for each independent and dependent variables, we prepare the following table.

**Table 2-3: Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the research's variables**

| Cronbach's alpha coefficient | Variable |
|---|---|
| 0/953 | Spiritual intelligence |
| 0/846 | Employee empowerment |
| 0/942 | Total questions |

The gained number from this test is significant if it is between 0.7 and 1. Whatever the gained percentage is close to 100% indicates more reliability of the questionnaire. According to the above table, we know the used questionnaire in this research has high stability with Cronback' alpha 0.944. In this research we consider the Payam Noor University employees of Kermanshah province. LISREL8, SPSS 13 software is used for data analysis. This research is performed in Iran for the first time. Model of Spitzer article and et al (1995) is used for this research.

**This conceptual model of the research**

**Data analysis**

In this section the average test of a society for surveying the situation of the research's variables, confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling is used for determining the amount and significant relationships between variables.

**4-2-1- The average test of a society**

Using the average test of statistical society we survey this matter that how is the situation of the research's variables in the under-surveyed society. Indeed, the situation of each question and variable in the society is determined. Design of its hypothesis is as followed:

Zero hypothesis: the average of the related variable ≤ 3 ($H_0 : \mu \leq 3$)

Opposite hypothesis: the average of the related variable ≥ 3 ($H_1 : \mu > 3$)

In the following table, the significant number, freedom degree of the test (the amount of samples minus 1), significant level of sig, and high and Upper and lower levels of averages are shown. If sig < 0.05 and high and Upper and lower levels are positive, the opposite hypothesis is accepted.

**Table 4-5: The average test of a society**

| **Inferential statistics** | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Description | 95% confidence interval for the difference | | Sig | Freedom degree | T | **Variables** |
| | High level | Low level | | | | |
| High | 0.733 | 0.405 | 0.000 | 129.000 | 6.857 | **Sense of effective** |
| Average | 0.256 | -0.116 | 0.459 | 129.000 | 0.742 | **Sense of choice** |
| High | 0.462 | 0.028 | 0.027 | 129.000 | 2.233 | **Sense of eligibility** |
| High | 0.832 | 0.506 | 0.000 | 129.000 | 8.117 | **Sense of being significant** |
| Low | -0.334 | -0.585 | 0.000 | 129.000 | -7.243 | **Spiritual intelligence** |

**Average Comparison test of two societies for comparing spiritual intelligence of men and women**

Zero hypothesis: spiritual intelligence of men and women are equal.

Opposite hypothesis: spiritual intelligence of men and women are not equal.

| High level | Low level | Sig | df | t | Sig. | F | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0.216 | -0.333 | 0.674 | 128.000 | -0.421 | 0.254 | 1.310 | Assuming equal variances |
| 0.188 | -0.305 | 0.638 | 94.714 | -0.471 | | | Lack of assuming equal variances |

As it is cleared the hypothesis of equal variance is accepted because sig > 0.05 and we should use the data of the first line for describing the test results. Therefore, zero hypothesis is accepted because of higher sig of average equality of two societies from 0.05. It means that spiritual intelligence has no significant difference between men and women.

**4-3- Test of the research's model**

Here according to the model, we test the following hypothesizes:

1. Spiritual intelligence has positive and significant effect on the sense of competence (com).
2. Spiritual intelligence has positive and significant effect on the sense of authority (Auo).

3. Spiritual intelligence has positive and significant effect on the sense of effectiveness (Eff).
4. Spiritual intelligence has positive and significant effect on the sense of being meaningful (Mean).

**4-3-1- Correlation between the dependent and independent variables**

Before surveying the model from structural equation model, the correlation between model variables is tested using Pearson's test. The correlations between variables listed in the following table. The hypothesis test is as:

Zero hypothesis: there is no significant relation between two variables of i and j

Opposite hypothesis: there is a significant relation between two variables of i and j

As you can see in the following table (in this table r shows the correlation coefficient, sig shows significant level), since s> 0.05 (error level), zero hypothesis is rejected and the relation between two variables are significant. It means that there is a positive and significant relation between the research's variables.

| Spiritual intelligence | meaningfulness | effectiveness | authority | competence | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | r | |
| | | | | | sig | competence |
| | | | | | N | |
| | | | | 0.343 | r | |
| | | | | 0.000 | sig | authority |
| | | | | 130.000 | N | |
| | | | 0.659 | 0.378 | r | |
| | | | 0.000 | 0.000 | sig | effectiveness |
| | | | 130.000 | 130.000 | N | |
| | | 0.466 | 0.379 | 0.596 | r | |
| | | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | sig | meaningfulness |
| | | 130.000 | 130.000 | 130.000 | N | |
| | 0.254 | 0.215 | 0.198 | 0.390 | r | |
| | 0.004 | 0.014 | 0.024 | 0.000 | sig | Spiritual intelligence |
| | 130.000 | 130.000 | 130.000 | 130.000 | N | |

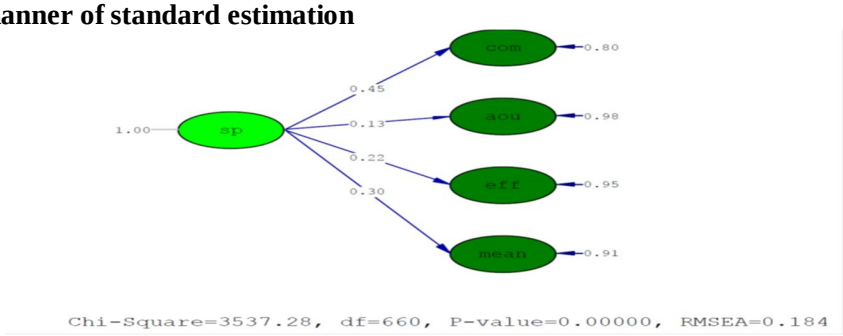
**4-3-2- Test the structural model (path analysis of the conceptual model)**

Path analysis (structural model) is a technique that shows the relationships between variables (dependent and independent) simultaneously. Here, conceptual model using structural equation and Lisrel software is tested. The results of assumptions are summarized in the table below.

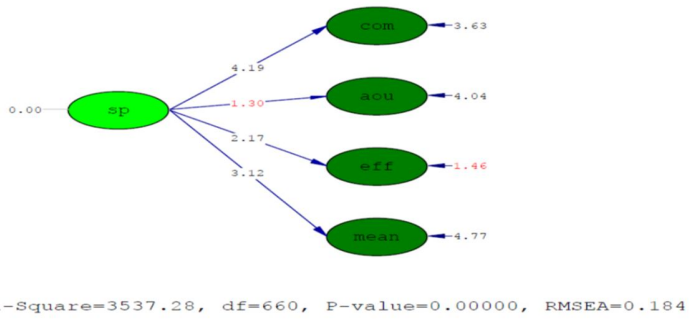
| description | The emount of effectiveness | Significant numbers | Assumptions |
|---|---|---|---|
| confirmed | 0.45 | 4.19 | **1. Spiritual intelligence has positive and significant effect on the sense of competence (com).** |
| Not confirmed | 0.13 | 1.30 | **2. Spiritual intelligence has positive and significant effect on the sense of authority (Auo).** |
| confirmed | 0.22 | 2.17 | **3. Spiritual intelligence has positive and significant effect on the sense of effectiveness (Eff).** |
| confirmed | 0.30 | 3.12 | **4. Spiritual intelligence has positive and significant effect on the sense of being meaningful (Mean).** |

Hypothesis that its significant numbers are more than the absolute critical values of 1.96, are confirmed and others that are less than the absolute critical values of 1.96, are not confirmed. Therefore, hypothesis 2, 1 and 4 are confirmed and 3 is not confirmed.
Model is inappropriate from suitability index since the amount of RMSEA is equal to 0.184 that is more than the allowed amount of 0.08 and the amount of chi-square divided by freedom degree is 5.35 that are more than allowed amount.

**Model in the manner of standard estimation**




**Model in the manner of significant numbers**

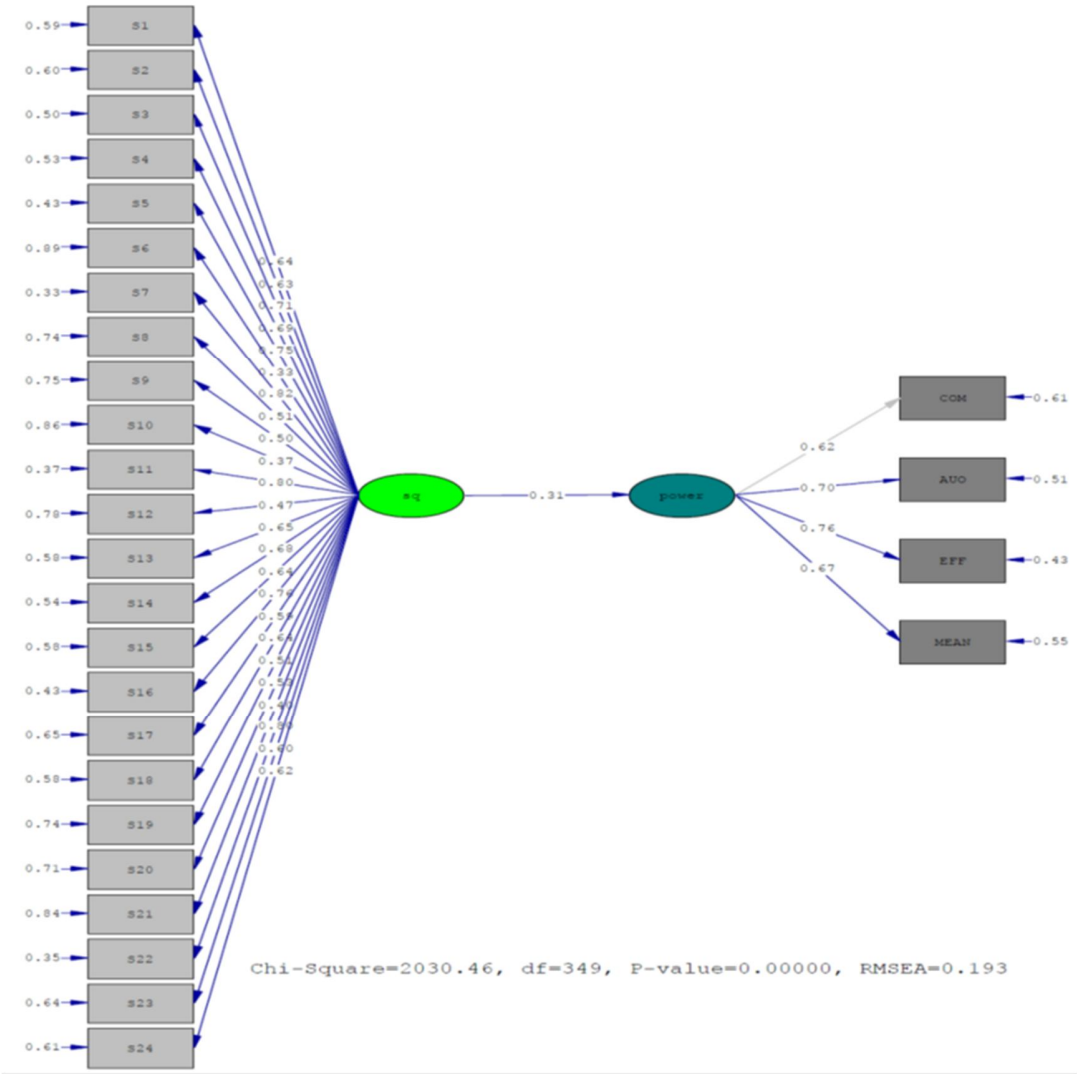


**The main hypothesis testing**

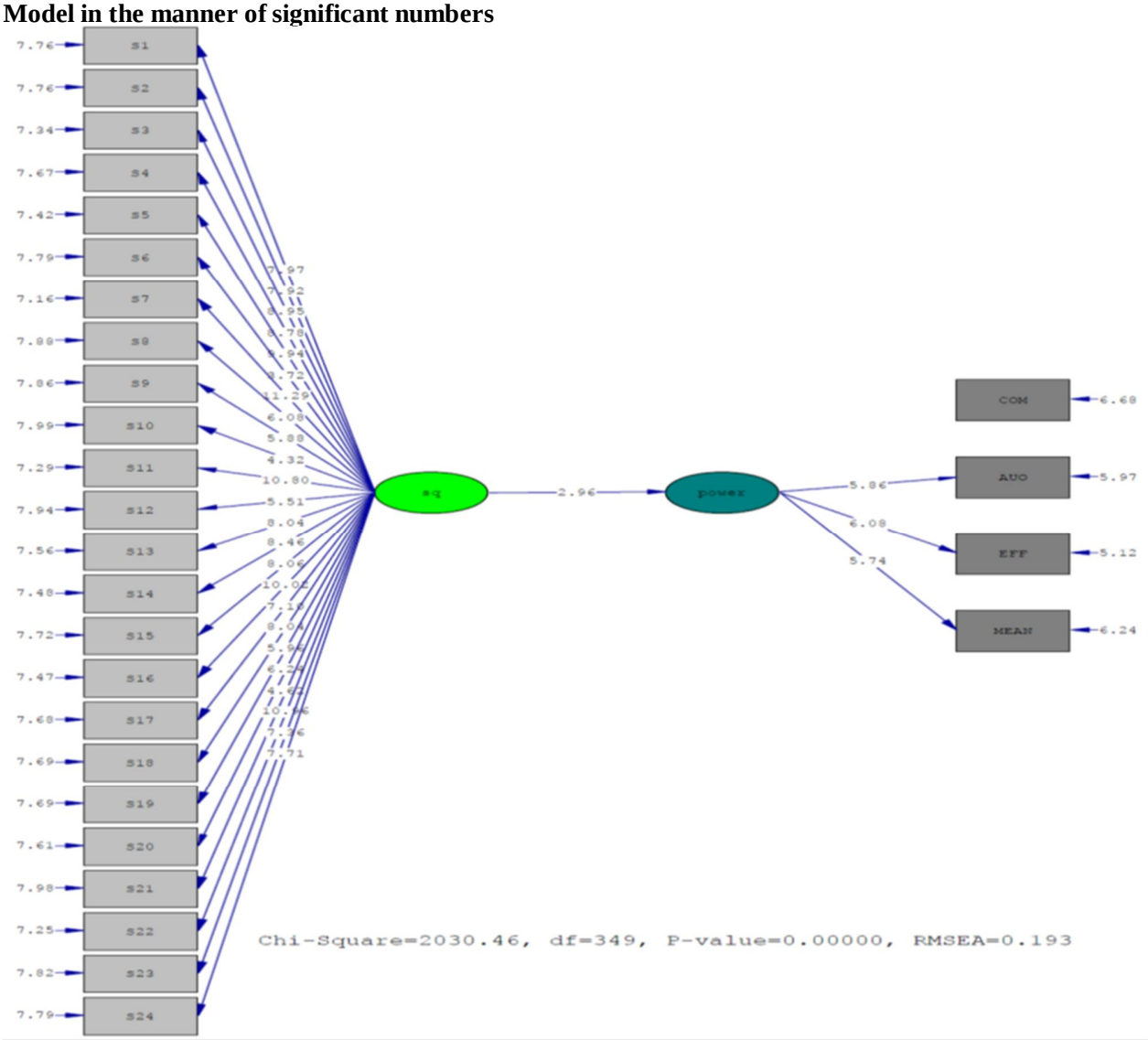
- Spiritual intelligence has a positive and significant effect on empowerment.

As it is determined in the following picture, the significant number is equal to 3.01 that are higher than critical amount of 1.96. Therefore, the main hypothesis of the research is accepted. The effect amount is equal to 0.31. Model is inappropriate from suitability index since the amount of RMSEA is equal to 0.193 that is more than the allowed amount of 0.08 and the amount of chi-square divided by freedom degree is more than allowed amount of 3.

**The model in the manner of standard estimation**



**Model in the manner of significant numbers**




**Total conclusion**

The main goal of the study is the study of spiritual intelligence effect on employee empowerment. Statistical society of this research includes Payam Noor University employees of Kermanshah province. The gained results are as followed:

Spiritual intelligence has positive and significant effect on employee empowerment.

1. Spiritual intelligence has positive and significant effect on the sense of competence.
2. Spiritual intelligence has no positive and significant effect on the sense of authority.
3. Spiritual intelligence has positive and significant effect on the sense of effectiveness.
4. Spiritual intelligence has positive and significant effect on the sense of being meaningful.

**5-2- Discussion and conclusion**

**5-2-1- Conclusion according to** the average test of a society

According to the average test of a statistical society we survey the situation of the research's variables in the society. According to the gained results the dimension of being effective is in the high level in statistical society, have a choice is in the average level, having competence is in the high level, sense of meaningfulness is in the high level and independent variable of spiritual intelligence is in the low level

between Payam Noor University employees of Kermanshah. According to the above statements, employee empowerment is done in a good way at the university but spiritual intelligence is too week within them.

**5-2-2- Conclusion according to the average Comparison test of two societies for comparing spiritual intelligence of men and women**

Totally we can say that the hypothesis of equal variance is accepted because sig > 0.05 and we should use the data of the first line for describing the test results. Therefore, zero hypothesis is accepted because of higher sig of average equality of two societies from 0.05. It means that spiritual intelligence has no significant difference between men and women.

**5-2-3- Conclusions based on the research model test**

Correlation between the dependent and independent variables

Correlation between the model's variables is tested using Pearson test. Since s> 0.05 (error level), zero hypothesis is rejected and the relation between two variables are significant. It means that there is a positive and significant relation between the research's variables.

- 1 Sub-hypothesis testing: Spiritual intelligence has positive and significant effect on the sense of competence.

  According to the structural equation and Lisrel software we conclude that this hypothesis is confirmed. It means that the spiritual intelligence of Payam Noor University employees of Kermanshah has a positive and significant effect on their sense of competence. Indeed higher spiritual intelligence of the employees causes more feeling of competence.

- 2 Sub-hypothesis testing: Spiritual intelligence has no positive and significant effect on the sense of authority.

According to the structural equation and Lisrel software we conclude that this hypothesis is confirmed. It means that the spiritual intelligence of Payam Noor University employees of Kermanshah has no positive and significant effect on their sense of authority. Indeed higher spiritual intelligence of the employees causes no more feeling of competence.

- 3 Sub-hypothesis testing: Spiritual intelligence has positive and significant effect on the sense of effectiveness.

According to the structural equation and Lisrel software we conclude that this hypothesis is confirmed. It means that the spiritual intelligence of Payam Noor University employees of Kermanshah has a positive and significant effect on their sense of effectiveness. Indeed higher spiritual intelligence of the employees causes more feeling of effectiveness.

- 4 Sub-hypothesis testing: Spiritual intelligence has positive and significant effect on the sense of meaningfulness.

According to the structural equation and Lisrel software we conclude that this hypothesis is confirmed. It means that the spiritual intelligence of Payam Noor University employees of Kermanshah has a positive and significant effect on their sense of meaningfulness. Indeed higher spiritual intelligence of the employees causes more feeling of meaningfulness.

- The main hypothesis testing: Spiritual intelligence has a positive and significant effect on empowerment.

As it is clear from the test, the significant number is equal to 3.01 and is more than critical values of 1.96. Therefore, the main hypothesis of the test is accepted. The effect amount is equal to 0.31. Model is inappropriate from suitability index and the amount of chi-square divided by freedom degree is more than allowed amount of 3. Therefore, more capability of the organization's employees can increase their spiritual intelligence and vice versa.

**Resources**

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