

# The Effect of Perceived Spiritual Leadership on Envy Management of Faculty Members through the Role of Professional Development Mediation and Job Satisfaction

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** the present study aimed to investigate the effect of perceived spiritual leadership on envy management of faculty members of Islamic Azad Universities of East Azerbaijan province through the role of professional development mediation and job satisfaction.

**Methodology:** 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 the academic year of 2014-2015. In qualitative stage, 20 individuals were selected to design the primary model and questionnaire and to model the sample; some 316 faculty members were used.

**Findings:** the results of this study indicated that there is a significant and positive relationship between the variables so that in investigating the direct and indirect relationship, the effect of perceived leadership on envy management was not directly significant. But through professional development mediation and job satisfaction of faculty members, the spiritual management was effective in organizational jealousy management. Also, the model enjoys from the goodness of fit.

**Conclusion:** According to the results, it was concluded that through providing the context for spiritual leadership and envy management, creating professional development and job satisfaction, the university administrators could prepare faculty members for more effective roles away from envy and towards educational, research and service efficiencies.

**Keywords:** organizational envy management, spiritual leadership, job satisfaction, professional development

## 1. Introduction

Nowadays, envy among staff is one of the issues that have gripped most government agencies, universities, and higher education centers; so that this has decreased the motivation of staff. According to this challenge, it can be stated that jealous team has lower commitment to the organization and as a result, implement direct and adverse effect on organizational performance. Those who involve 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 jealousy in his or her life. Social psychologists consider jealousy as a severe 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 the comparison (Smith and Kim, 2007). Also, feeling of jealousy is a combination of several excitements that only the person can feel it and other cannot. Regarding religion, envy is a bad trait that indicates a psychological and mental distress in human and can overshadow other active and valuable features, weaken and destroy them.

Despite the conducted studies regarding organizational envy and its consequences (Khalife, 2012; Ozkoc et al., 2012). The issue that has motivated the researcher to investigate this topic is that in Iranian organizations, mainly educational institutes, envy has not been considered. 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 the organization and how is the relationship of staff with this idea. It should be stated that staff envy is a 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. To explain this issue, one of the strategies to prevent envy in the organization is the existence of the desired atmosphere through spiritual management that can provide the context for individual and organizational creativity among staff. Avolio and Gardner (2004) present evidence 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 the 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 useful reasons for the relationship between spirituality and management. This spirituality affects management behavior. The leadership method of those managers who indicate more tendencies towards spirituality is more efficient than those managers who do not show 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 capacity to follow personal 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 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 useful 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. 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 capabilities in the 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 result in higher levels of students' success (Antonioni & Kyriakides, 2012). Professional development of staff creates creativity and innovation that are achievable under organizational internal and external factors.

There are 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 the management of human resources and development, we can find numerous structural variables that probably lead to the improved professional development of staff. The organizational factors include corporate 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 the 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.

In addition to professional development, job satisfaction has been useful as a variable on organizational envy management where people experience emotions, cognitions, and positive behaviors through their job that is pleasant for them. In a simple definition, it can be stated that job satisfaction includes positive emotional states that the person experiences through his or her employment duties. High job satisfaction shows an organization that is well managed. Managers should care about the job satisfaction of their staff due to three reasons. First, unsatisfied people will be absent more than others, resign and leave the workplace. Second, satisfied staff enjoys better physical and mental health. Third, through increased job satisfaction, work commitment (organizational commitment) increases. Studies have shown that corporate loyalty and job satisfaction have an active relationship with organizational and job performance while indicating a negative correlation with staff absences and transportations. A Dutch psychiatrist has presented strange statistics. According to him, the reason that 45% of employees are caught up in envy comes from dissatisfaction with their job and environment compared to the

position of others.

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. Khalife (2012) indicated that staff envy would not affect the tendency to leave the job and by increasing jealousy level in the individual, the tendency to leave the job will not be affected. Staff envy has indicated the direct and positive effect on informal behaviors, meaning jealousy affects emotional balance and the desire to leave the job. Khalife (2012) investigated the role of envy mediation in the relationship between leader-member interactions and showed that those staffs who have the weak relationship with their supervisors have higher levels of bitterness compared to those who have better job quality. The results also revealed that staff envy does not have a direct relationship with job satisfaction and probably, other factors are useful in job satisfaction.

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

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

Odle (2014) showed that the interaction between leader and member has an adverse effect on staff knowledge sharing. Moreover, envy has a positive effect on the behavior of staff and their tendency to leave the job. In another study, Kim et al. (2010) investigated the effect of interaction between staff and supervisor and showed that those staffs who have a 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. (2008) 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 jealousy affects team satisfaction through ability, integrity, and a 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 the job. Also, there is a positive correlation between staff resentment and job dissatisfaction.

Nir and Bogler (2008) 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 necessary. They considered these factors in teachers' job satisfaction where teachers' professional development indicated increasing role in the continuity of employment satisfaction.

Despite abundant 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 an indirect effect on envy management through job satisfaction of faculty members.

Hypothesis 3: spiritual leadership has an indirect effect on jealousy management through the professional development and job satisfaction of teachers.

Despite personal investigation of variables as separate studies, the proposed hypotheses in this study have been unified as a conceptual model (Figure 1). In the following, we will investigate the proposed hypotheses and model based on the collected data.

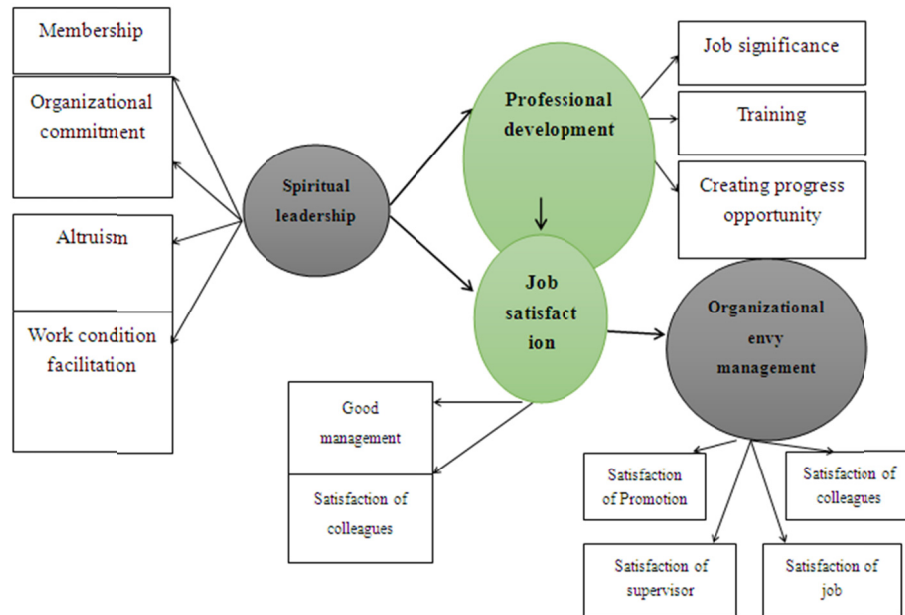


Figure 1. The initial model based on previous studies

### 1.1 Methodology

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

### 1.2 Procedure

The instruments used in this study consisted of researcher made questionnaire inspired by Delphi Technique (in 4 levels) in a qualitative stage that were identified under variables such as the professional development of professors, job satisfaction, spiritual leadership, and envy management with Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0/744, 0/797, 0/904 and 0/864, respectively. Also, the reliability and validity of this questionnaire were confirmed.

### 1.3 Data Collection Tools

A) Spiritual leadership scale: to investigate spiritual leadership, 13 items were used. This four-dimensional tool evaluates spiritual leadership: membership, organizational commitment, altruism and facilitating job conditions for staff. The intended device was designed based on five-point Likert scale (from absolutely agree to disagree), and its reliability was confirmed based on Cronbach's alpha (0/904).

B) Professors' professional development level: this scale consisted of 9 items and was designed based on five-point Likert scale (from absolutely agree to disagree) that evaluates the significance of job, education and creating development opportunity, with Cronbach's alpha of 0/774.

C) Job satisfaction scale: this magnitude has consisted of satisfaction of colleague and competent management. This scale consists of 6 items that are designed based on five-point Likert scale (from absolutely agree to disagree) with Cronbach's alpha of 0/797.

D) Envy management level: this scale consisted of 4 items including satisfaction of the job, the 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 disagree) with Cronbach's alpha of 0/864.

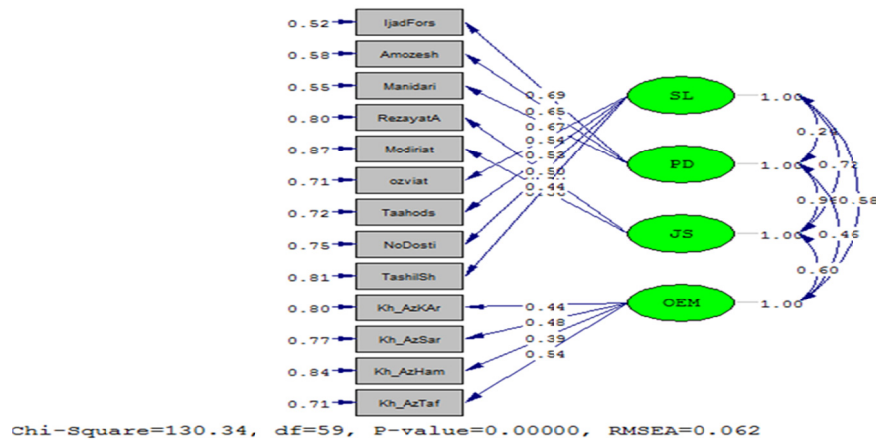


Figure 2. The analysis of the confirmatory factor of the primary model

## 2. Findings

In the analysis of the relationship between hypotheses, according to Table 1, there is a positive and significant association between all variables.

Table 1. Correlation matrix between all study variables

	Spiritual leadership	Professional development	Job satisfaction	Envy management
Spiritual leadership	1	0/24	0/73	0/58
Professional development		1	0/97	0/46
Job satisfaction			1	0/62
Envy management				1

### 2.1 Hypotheses Testing

#### 2.1.1 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). Its t-value is smaller than (1/96), and it shows that the relationship between perceived spiritual leadership and organizational jealousy 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 affect their envy management. Therefore, the first hypothesis is rejected.

#### 2.1.2 Hypothesis 2: Spiritual Leadership Has an Indirect Effect on Envy Management through Job Satisfaction of Faculty Members

To investigate the mediation role of job satisfaction, the results of structural equations were used. In examining the relationship between variables, despite the existence of medications, direct and indirect effects as well as the total effect should be considered. The overall effect will be obtained from the sum of direct and indirect effects. If the indirect effect is higher than the immediate effect, the mediation role of the variable is confirmed.

The following table, direct, indirect and total effects of perceived spiritual leadership and organizational envy management are estimated.

Table 2. Direct, indirect and total effects between study variables

Total effect	Indirect effect	Direct effect	Path	
			To variable	From variable
0/507	0/217	0/29	Organizational envy management	Perceived spiritual leadership

As can be seen from Table 2 and Figure 2, the direct effect of perceived spiritual leadership on envy management is 0/29 (t-value=1/95). Also, the indirect effect of perceived spiritual leadership on organizational jealousy management with the effect of job satisfaction is 0/22. Since the indirect effect of the perceived spiritual leadership on corporate jealousy management (0/22) is smaller than its direct effect (/029), then the role of job satisfaction in the relationship between perceived spiritual leadership and organizational management will not be confirmed. Therefore, the second hypothesis is rejected.

2.1.3 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

Total effect	Indirect effect	Direct effect	Path	
			To variable	From variable
0/64	0/35	0/29	Organizational envy management	Perceived spiritual leadership

As can be seen from Table 3 and Figure 2, the direct effect of perceived spiritual leadership on envy management is 0/29 (t-value=1/95). Also, the indirect effect of perceived spiritual leadership on organizational jealousy management with the influence of job satisfaction and professional development is 0/35. Since the indirect effect of perceived spiritual leadership on corporate envy management (0/35) is smaller than its direct effect (0/29), then the role of professional development and job satisfaction in the relationship between perceived spiritual leadership and organizational management will be confirmed. Therefore, the third hypothesis is rejected.

2.1.4 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 are scores of the 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 unique 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 the various goodness of fit methods. An entirely structural equation model expresses a combination of path curve and confirmatory factorial analysis. In figures3 and 4, we can see standard estimation coefficients and significance numbers of the structural model. Some of the goodness of fit criteria can be seen at the end of these figures.

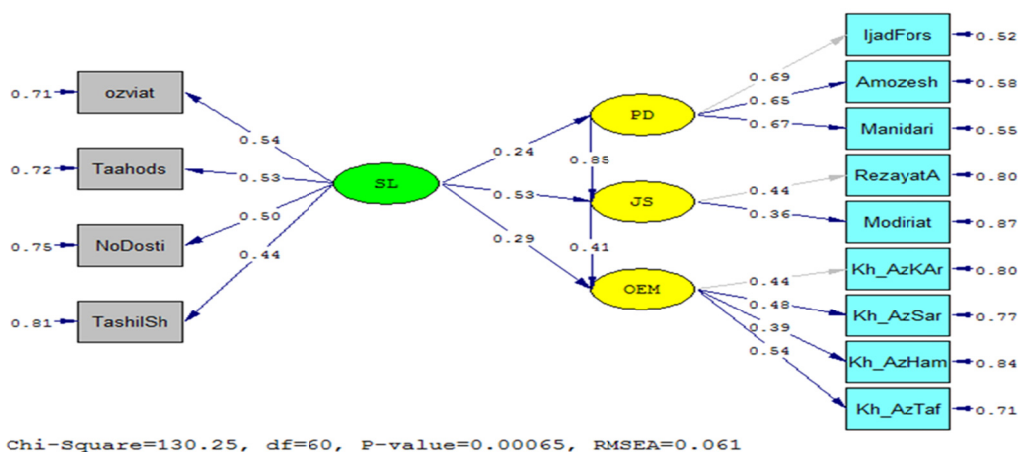


Figure 3. Standard estimation coefficients of the structural model

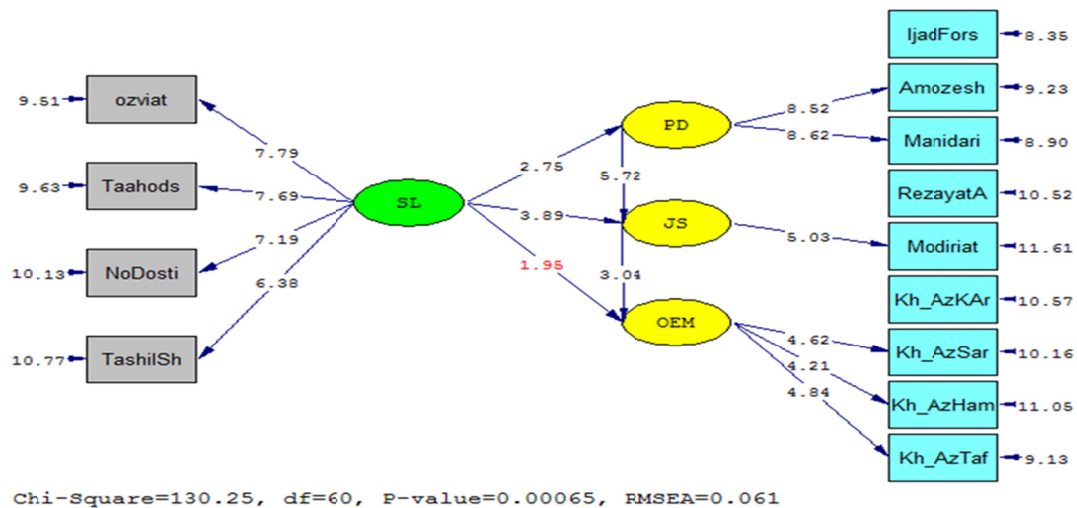


Figure 4. Significant numbers of the structural model

According to the final model, it is clear that the relationships between all factors are positive and significant. Therefore, the study model is confirmed.

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 the acceptable goodness of fit. The value of this index for the conceptual design of the study has been obtained as 0/061 that is acceptable.

Another index of the 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 (130/25) and degree of freedom (60) are estimated. Therefore, the result of dividing chi-square on the level of freedom for the conceptual model of the study is 2/170 that is an acceptable value. In standard estimation state, the results indicate the appropriateness of design. The relevance of two proposed indices shows the difference between the conceptual model and the observed data. Also, the rest of the goodness of fit indices have appropriate values.

Table 4. The summary of goodness of fit statistical indexes

RMR	NFI	CFI	AGFI	GFI	RMSEA	X <sup>2</sup> /df	df	X <sup>2</sup>
0.018	0.86	0.92	0.91	0.94	0.061	2.170	60	130.25

### 3. Discussion and Conclusion

In hypotheses generation, 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 influence of spiritual leadership on professional development of teachers was significant. This was consistent with the result of the study by Odel (2014), Sadeghi et al. (2015), and Nasr-Esfahani et al. (2015). It should be stated that spiritual leadership forms religious 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 the job as one of the defined features of a profession and believe that peoples' jobs are important to them of which they are proud as a member of their scientific community and are always learning.

In another investigation of research hypotheses, professional development has a significant effect on job satisfaction of faculty members. This is consistent with the results of studies by Khalife (2012). Investigations have shown that with increased job satisfaction, creativity, innovation, motivations, and organizational commitment increase. Furthermore, the lack of job satisfaction and organizational commitment leads to decreased corporate performance. It can be stated that professional development among faculty members can be active on their job satisfaction.

Another study indicated that job satisfaction has a significant effect on envy management. Therefore, it can be concluded that job satisfaction has a significant impact on jealousy management of faculty members. These results were consistent with Cohen et al. (2007), Vecchio (2010), Erdil and Muchelidi (2014). However, it can be stated that when faculty members are satisfied, there is no room for envy or decreased bitterness in university, because job satisfaction included positive emotional states that the person experiences through his employment roles.

The results obtained from the study model indicate that the direct effect of perceived leadership from the faculty members on envy management was not sufficient, but other relationships and effects between variables are significant and it can be stated that there is a significant association between spiritual leadership and organizational envy management. Also, one of the concepts that have been proposed regarding human resource development is staff job satisfaction. When staff works eagerly, they will find their skills and abilities in an organizational atmosphere that needs spiritual leadership. Excellent staff looks for opportunities to promote their private job and performance. When an organization has a plan regarding its staff development, the staff intend to provide more opportunities for their progress. 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). But, according to the research findings, if there is a friendly organizational atmosphere, it ensures that through effective interactions, satisfaction and commitment have been created between them and these will be useful in their development and decreased envy between managements.

Also, 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). 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). It is possible to have managers as spiritual leaders to 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., 2014). 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 someone else, there is a strong tendency for him to believe they must have equal opportunities and benefits and this can be that high to be considered as envy or a “must” (Weltreid, 2014). Therefore, when faculty members think university management as compassionate leaders who attempt regarding development and job satisfaction, envy will be decreased.

### 3.1 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 jealousy management in Islamic Azad University can significantly affect commitment. Although numerous variables could be involved in faculty members' jealousy management, the followings can be offered by the present study:

It is suggested to provide a desired organizational atmosphere accompanied by spiritual leadership. Since the university is the symbol of culture away from moral vices such as envy, professional development workshops should be held regarding corporate jealousy management between the chief staff.

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