

Spiritual Leadership and Meaningful Work: Implications for Employee Engagement and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

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ABSTRACT

Leadership research increasingly recognizes meaning, values, and connectedness as critical sources of positive employee behavior. This article develops a conceptual framework explaining the relationships among spiritual leadership, meaningful work, work engagement, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Drawing on organizational behavior literature, spiritual leadership is positioned as a leadership approach that cultivates shared vision, hope/faith, altruistic love, calling, and membership. Meaningful work is proposed as the psychological mechanism translating spiritual leadership into work engagement, whereas engagement is conceptualized as the cognitive, emotional, and physical energy that enables extra-role behavior. The framework offers seven propositions for future empirical testing, including a serial mediation path from spiritual leadership to meaningful work, engagement, and OCB. The article contributes by integrating spiritual leadership theory, meaningful work, psychological conditions of engagement, job demands-resources theory, and social exchange theory into a parsimonious organizational behavior model. It also provides practical implications for leadership development, meaningful job design, and organizational cultures that foster citizenship behavior.

INTRODUCTION

Modern organizations face challenges that are not only technical but also existential in nature. Rapid technological advancements, increasing performance pressures, the demand for continuous adaptation, and the emergence of new workforce generations require organizations to understand not merely how employees perform their work, but why they are willing to devote their energy, attention, and discretionary behaviors beyond formal job requirements. In this context, leadership can no longer be understood solely as the ability to direct tasks and control employee behavior. Instead, leadership should be viewed as a social process that shapes employees' sense of meaning, values, identity, and connectedness to both their work and the organizational community.

One leadership approach that addresses these challenges is spiritual leadership. Spiritual leadership theory proposes that leaders can intrinsically motivate themselves and others through vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love, thereby fostering employees' sense of calling and sense of membership (Fry, 2003; Fry et al., 2005). This concept is not synonymous with adherence to a particular religion; rather, it emphasizes values, purpose, compassion, and meaningfulness in the workplace. Consequently, spiritual leadership occupies an important position within leadership and organizational behavior research because it directly addresses individuals' fundamental need to experience meaningful work and to feel connected to their organizational community.

At the same time, meaningful work has emerged as a central construct in organizational behavior research because employees who perceive their work as meaningful tend to demonstrate stronger motivation, role identification, and attachment to their jobs. Rosso et al. (2010) argue that work meaningfulness can originate from the self, other people, the work context, and spiritual life, and is developed through mechanisms such as authenticity, self-efficacy, purpose, and belongingness. Within Kahn's (1990) framework of the psychological conditions of engagement, meaningfulness is likewise considered one of the essential conditions that enable individuals to fully express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally in their work. Therefore, meaningful work provides a robust conceptual mechanism for explaining how value-based leadership can foster employee engagement.

Work engagement itself is defined as a positive work-related state characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Engaged employees do not merely fulfill administrative responsibilities; they invest substantial physical energy, cognitive attention, and positive emotions in carrying out their work roles. Both conceptual and empirical evidence suggests that work engagement is positively associated with task performance and contextual performance, including organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Christian et al., 2011; Rich et al., 2010). OCB is particularly important because organizational effectiveness depends not only on employees' in-role performance but also on voluntary behaviors such as assisting colleagues, safeguarding organizational interests, demonstrating civic virtue, and exceeding minimum job requirements (Organ, 1988, 2018; Podsakoff et al., 2000).

Although spiritual leadership, meaningful work, work engagement, and OCB have been extensively examined as independent constructs, the underlying mechanisms connecting these variables have not always been explained in an integrated manner. Some studies have linked spiritual leadership to work engagement through spiritual well-being (Samul, 2024), whereas others have associated spiritual leadership with OCB through quality of work life, job satisfaction, workplace spirituality, or thriving at work (Pio & Tampi, 2018; Utama et al., 2023). Nevertheless, there remains a need for a comprehensive conceptual model that explicitly positions meaningful work as the primary psychological mechanism linking spiritual leadership to work engagement, while conceptualizing engagement as the

psychological energy that ultimately promotes OCB. Such an integrative perspective is essential to understanding spiritual leadership not merely as a normative leadership style, but as an organizational behavior process that can be theoretically explained and empirically tested.

Based on this background, this article aims to develop a conceptual framework that explains the relationships among spiritual leadership, meaningful work, work engagement, and organizational citizenship behavior. Specifically, the study addresses the following research questions: (1) How does spiritual leadership foster meaningful work? (2) How does meaningful work enhance employee engagement? (3) How does work engagement contribute to organizational citizenship behavior? and (4) How can these four constructs be integrated into a conceptual organizational behavior model suitable for empirical investigation in future research?

This article offers three primary contributions. First, it clarifies the role of spiritual leadership as a source of work meaningfulness through the development of vision, calling, membership, and altruistic love. Second, it positions meaningful work as the central psychological mechanism that connects value-based leadership with employee engagement. Third, it extends the understanding of organizational citizenship behavior by demonstrating that extra-role behaviors may emerge not only from job satisfaction or organizational commitment, but also from employees' experiences of meaningful work and their strong psychological engagement with their work.

RESEARCH METHODS

This article was developed as a conceptual paper employing an integrative literature synthesis approach. This approach was selected because the primary objective of the study is not to examine new empirical data but rather to develop a theoretical model that integrates spiritual leadership, meaningful work, work engagement, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Accordingly, the paper does not present respondent data, statistical findings, coefficient estimates, or empirical conclusions. Instead, the relationships among the proposed constructs are formulated as theoretical propositions that may be empirically tested in future studies.

The literature synthesis focuses on seminal and influential works in the fields of leadership and organizational behavior. The core references include the theory of spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003; Fry et al., 2005), the meaningful work literature (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Rosso et al., 2010; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997), work engagement theory (Kahn, 1990; Schaufeli et al., 2002), the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001), Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), and the organizational citizenship behavior literature (Organ, 1988, 2018; Podsakoff et al., 2000). Contemporary empirical studies are incorporated selectively to demonstrate the relevance and applicability of the proposed framework rather than to support empirical claims derived from this article.

The synthesis process was conducted in three stages. First, the study identified the definitions, dimensions, and theoretical assumptions underlying each construct. Second, it mapped the conceptual intersections among the theories, with particular emphasis on the role of meaningful work in fostering work engagement and the role of work engagement in promoting extra-role behaviors. Third, the study developed a series of logical, parsimonious, and empirically testable propositions. The formulation of these propositions was guided by three primary criteria: strong conceptual coherence, adequate theoretical support from the existing literature, and alignment with the overall objectives of the study.

As a conceptual paper, the value of this article lies in the coherence of its theoretical arguments, the appropriate integration and positioning of relevant theories, and the clarity of its proposed research agenda rather than in statistical significance or empirical validation. Should this work be extended into an empirical investigation, the methodology section should be replaced with a quantitative or mixed-method research design that includes a clearly defined population and sample, measurement instruments, data collection procedures, validity and reliability assessments, and analytical techniques such as covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM) or partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Development of the Conceptual Model and Propositions

The conceptual model proposed in this article is developed based on the assumption that value-based leadership can transform how employees interpret their work, and that these interpretations subsequently influence their psychological energy and social behavior in the workplace. Spiritual leadership is positioned as the primary antecedent, meaningful work as the underlying psychological mechanism, work engagement as the motivational-behavioral mechanism, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) as the extra-role behavioral outcome.

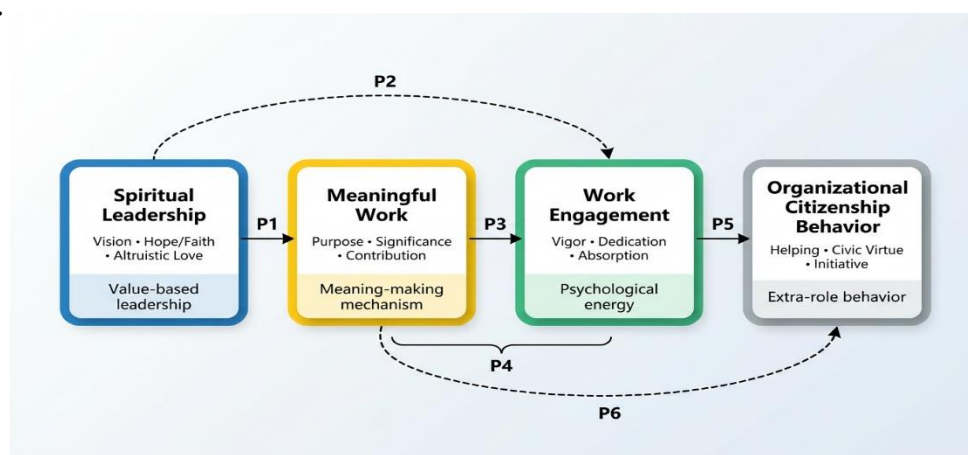


Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Spiritual Leadership, Meaningful Work, Work Engagement, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

Spiritual Leadership and Meaningful Work

Spiritual leadership is expected to contribute positively to meaningful work because spiritual leaders help employees connect their daily tasks with a broader organizational purpose. Vision provides direction, hope/faith instills confidence, and altruistic love fosters a relational climate in which employees feel valued and respected. When employees perceive their work as part of a meaningful organizational mission, they no longer view it merely as a series of administrative tasks but rather as a significant contribution to a greater purpose.

This relationship can be explained through two complementary mechanisms. First, the cognitive mechanism, whereby leaders frame work as an activity associated with purpose, service, and meaningful contribution. Second, the relational mechanism, whereby leaders treat employees as valued members of a community, enabling work to become a context for social connectedness and belonging. These mechanisms are consistent with the sources of meaningful work identified by Rosso et al. (2010), particularly those related to work context, others, and spiritual life.

Proposition 1: Spiritual leadership is positively associated with meaningful work.

Spiritual Leadership and Work Engagement

Spiritual leadership may also have a direct positive relationship with work engagement because spiritual leaders provide the social and emotional resources employees need to perform their work with enthusiasm and positive energy. A clear vision reduces ambiguity, hope/faith strengthens optimism, and altruistic love enhances employees' sense of psychological safety and organizational support. Within the framework of Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Theory, these leadership characteristics function as valuable job resources that foster employee motivation and engagement.

Nevertheless, the direct influence of spiritual leadership on work engagement alone may not sufficiently explain the underlying psychological process. Employees may indeed be inspired by their leaders, but engagement is likely to become stronger when that inspiration is translated into the perception that their work is genuinely meaningful. Therefore, while this article acknowledges the possibility of a direct relationship, it emphasizes that meaningful work represents a critical psychological mechanism that deserves closer examination.

Proposition 2: Spiritual leadership is positively associated with work engagement.

Meaningful Work and Work Engagement

Meaningful work is expected to serve as a strong antecedent of work engagement. When employees perceive their work as meaningful, they develop intrinsic motivation to invest themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally in their work. The experience of meaningful work enables employees to derive energy not merely from external obligations or supervision, but from the belief that their work is valuable and worthy of sustained commitment.

Kahn (1990) identified psychological meaningfulness as one of the fundamental conditions for employee engagement. Similarly, May et al. (2004) demonstrated that

meaningfulness has a strong positive relationship with engagement. Within the context of spiritual leadership, meaningful work serves as the connecting mechanism between employees' personal values and their work-related behaviors. Employees who perceive their work as a calling are more likely to exhibit dedication, whereas those who recognize the positive impact of their work are more likely to demonstrate vigor and absorption.

Proposition 3: Meaningful work is positively associated with work engagement.

Meaningful Work as a Mediator Between Spiritual Leadership and Work Engagement

The central argument of this article is that spiritual leadership enhances work engagement primarily because it cultivates meaningful work. Spiritual leaders provide a compelling sense of purpose, establish relationships that honor human dignity, and foster a work community that strengthens employees' sense of membership and belonging. When employees interpret these experiences as meaningful aspects of their work, they develop the psychological foundation necessary to become more fully engaged in their roles.

In other words, meaningful work explains both why and how spiritual leadership leads to higher levels of work engagement. Without meaningful work, spiritual leadership risks becoming little more than a symbolic expression of organizational values or moral rhetoric. However, when employees experience their work as meaningful, the values promoted by spiritual leadership are translated into authentic work experiences that inspire motivation, commitment, and engagement.

Proposition 4: Meaningful work mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and work engagement.

Work Engagement and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Work engagement is expected to foster organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) because engaged employees possess higher levels of energy, dedication, and role identification. They not only fulfill their formal job responsibilities but are also more willing to assist colleagues, safeguard organizational interests, participate in organizational activities, and demonstrate proactive initiatives. Engagement provides the psychological capacity for employees to contribute beyond prescribed job requirements, as they feel emotionally connected to both their work and the organization.

Rich et al. (2010) found that work engagement is positively associated with both task performance and OCB. Likewise, Christian et al. (2011) confirmed that engagement is strongly related to contextual performance. Within the proposed framework, work engagement serves as the psychological mechanism that transforms the experience of meaningful work into observable behaviors. Employees who perceive their work as meaningful but lack sufficient energy or involvement may not necessarily exhibit OCB. Conversely, employees who experience both meaningful work and high levels of engagement are more likely to demonstrate extra-role behaviors that benefit the organization.

Proposition 5: Work engagement is positively associated with organizational citizenship behavior.

Meaningful Work and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Meaningful work may also exert a direct influence on organizational citizenship behavior. When employees perceive their work as a valuable contribution, they are more likely to regard helping behaviors and personal initiative as integral components of their professional identity. Consequently, OCB is performed not merely because it is requested or rewarded, but because such behaviors are consistent with employees' personal values and their perception of meaningful work.

This relationship is particularly relevant in organizations whose missions emphasize service, education, healthcare, or other forms of social contribution. In such contexts, employees who perceive their work as meaningful are more likely to exceed formal job requirements in order to maintain service quality and support others. Nevertheless, this direct relationship warrants further empirical investigation, as OCB may also be influenced by other factors, including organizational justice, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and team norms.

Proposition 6: Meaningful work is positively associated with organizational citizenship behavior.

Sequential Mediation: Spiritual Leadership → Meaningful Work → Work Engagement → Organizational Citizenship Behavior

The integrative framework proposed in this study culminates in a sequential mediation model. Spiritual leadership cultivates meaningful work by fostering a compelling vision, a sense of calling, membership, and altruistic love. Meaningful work subsequently enhances work engagement as employees perceive their work to be important, purposeful, and valuable. Higher levels of engagement then encourage employees to engage in organizational citizenship behaviors because they possess the psychological energy and motivation to contribute beyond formal job expectations. Accordingly, OCB is conceptualized as the ultimate behavioral outcome of a process through which employees derive meaning from their work and become deeply engaged in their roles.

This sequential mediation model offers important theoretical contributions by avoiding an overly simplistic direct explanation of the relationship between spiritual leadership and OCB. Spiritual leadership does not automatically produce citizenship behavior; rather, its influence is more likely to emerge when employees first experience their work as meaningful and subsequently become highly engaged. The proposed model also provides a clear direction for future empirical research by suggesting that meaningful work and work engagement function as key psychological pathways linking spiritual leadership to organizational citizenship behavior.

Proposition 7: Spiritual leadership is positively associated with organizational citizenship behavior through the sequential mediating roles of meaningful work and work engagement.

Table 2. Summary of Research Propositions

Code	Proposition	Theoretical Rationale
P1	Spiritual leadership is positively associated with meaningful work.	Leadership characterized by vision, calling, membership, and altruistic love fosters employees' perceptions of meaningful work.
P2	Spiritual leadership is positively associated with work engagement.	Spiritual leadership serves as a valuable social and psychological resource that enhances employees' work engagement.
P3	Meaningful work is positively associated with work engagement.	Employees who perceive their work as meaningful are more willing to invest their physical, cognitive, and emotional energy in their work.
P4	Meaningful work mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and work engagement.	Spiritual leadership enhances employees' work engagement by creating meaningful work experiences.
P5	Work engagement is positively associated with organizational citizenship behavior (OCB).	Employees with higher levels of work engagement are more likely to demonstrate extra-role behaviors that benefit the organization.
P6	Meaningful work is positively associated with organizational citizenship behavior (OCB).	Employees who perceive their work as meaningful are more inclined to voluntarily contribute beyond their formal job responsibilities.
P7	Spiritual leadership is positively associated with organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) through the sequential mediating roles of meaningful work and work engagement.	Organizational citizenship behavior emerges through a process in which spiritual leadership fosters meaningful work, which subsequently enhances psychological energy and work engagement.

Discussion

This article develops a conceptual framework explaining how spiritual leadership influences employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) through meaningful work. The central argument is that spiritual leadership affects employee behavior not merely through normative inspiration but through psychological processes that enable employees to perceive their work as meaningful. Meaningful work subsequently enhances employee engagement, which in turn encourages employees to exhibit extra-role behaviors that contribute to organizational effectiveness.

The first contribution of this article is clarifying the role of spiritual leadership as a mechanism for creating meaningful work. In many discussions, spiritual leadership is primarily viewed as a value-based leadership approach. This article extends that perspective by arguing that such values become organizationally relevant only when they are translated into employees' experiences of meaningful work. Spiritual leaders are therefore expected not only to articulate organizational visions and values but also to help employees understand the connection between their tasks, organizational purpose, individual contributions, and professional identity.

The second contribution lies in positioning meaningful work as the psychological bridge between leadership and employee engagement. Existing engagement research has largely emphasized job resources, organizational support, and job characteristics as primary antecedents. This article proposes that meaningful work represents a powerful psychological resource because it provides employees with intrinsic reasons to invest themselves fully in their work. Consequently, engagement should not only be understood as a response to favorable working conditions but also as a response to work that is perceived as meaningful.

The third contribution extends the explanation of organizational citizenship behavior. The OCB literature has traditionally highlighted job satisfaction, organizational justice, organizational commitment, and social exchange as key antecedents. This article proposes that OCB can also be understood as an expression of meaningful work and employee engagement. Employees who perceive their work as meaningful and experience high levels of engagement are more likely to perform voluntary behaviors that support organizational goals because such behaviors are consistent with their work-related values and professional identity.

The proposed framework also provides methodological implications for future research. The sequential mediation model—spiritual leadership → meaningful work → employee engagement → organizational citizenship behavior—can be empirically examined using quantitative survey designs, longitudinal studies, or multi-source research approaches. Future studies may collect employees' perceptions of spiritual leadership, meaningful work, and engagement while measuring OCB through supervisor or peer evaluations to minimize common method bias. Structural equation modeling (SEM), including both covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) and partial least squares SEM (PLS-SEM), can be employed depending on the research objectives and the characteristics of the data.

Theoretical Implications

From a theoretical perspective, this article strengthens the position of spiritual leadership within organizational behavior research by linking it to more operational psychological constructs. Spiritual leadership has frequently been criticized for its normative and abstract nature. By incorporating meaningful work and employee engagement, this article proposes a more explicit mechanism through which leadership values are translated into positive workplace behaviors.

This article also enriches the literature on meaningful work by demonstrating that leadership serves as a significant source of meaning creation. Meaningful work emerges not only from the characteristics of the job itself but also from the ways leaders frame organizational purpose, acknowledge employees' contributions, and foster a sense of belonging. This perspective reinforces the view that meaningful work is a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by individual characteristics, social relationships, organizational contexts, and value orientations.

Furthermore, this article advances engagement theory by positioning meaningful work as a psychological source of energy that precedes employee engagement. Engagement is not solely stimulated by structural resources such as autonomy or supervisory support but also by employees' interpretations of the significance and purpose of their work. Therefore, engagement theory should place greater emphasis on sensemaking processes and leadership narratives as important antecedents of employee engagement.

Finally, this article contributes to the organizational citizenship behavior literature by suggesting that citizenship behavior may emerge from meaningful motivation rather than exclusively from social exchange processes. Although social exchange theory remains highly relevant, this framework proposes that when employees perceive their work as a calling and experience a strong sense of belonging within their work community, voluntary behaviors naturally emerge as expressions of their personal values and professional identity.

Practical Implications

For organizations, the proposed model suggests that enhancing employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior requires more than short-term motivational programs. Organizations should cultivate leadership practices that enable employees to experience meaningful work. Leadership development initiatives should therefore extend beyond technical competencies, communication skills, and decision-making abilities to include the capacity to articulate an inspiring vision, demonstrate genuine care, recognize employee contributions, and connect individual roles with broader organizational objectives.

For managers, spiritual leadership can be implemented through simple yet consistent behaviors, such as explaining the significance of employees' work, recognizing individual contributions, fostering respectful workplace relationships, providing opportunities for reflection on work purpose, and demonstrating integrity by aligning personal actions with organizational values. Such practices can strengthen employees' perceptions of meaningful work without transforming the organization into a formally religious environment.

For human resource management, the proposed framework highlights the importance of designing jobs that promote meaningfulness. Human resource professionals should evaluate whether job designs provide task significance, autonomy, constructive feedback, and opportunities for meaningful contribution. Furthermore, employee engagement surveys should incorporate measures of meaningful work so that organizations can assess not only

employees' levels of engagement but also whether they perceive their work as personally meaningful.

For organizations seeking to strengthen organizational citizenship behavior, it is essential to cultivate a work climate that values helping behaviors and active participation without exploiting employees. Healthy organizational citizenship behavior emerges from genuine engagement and meaningful work rather than from informal pressures to consistently exceed formal job expectations. Therefore, organizations should maintain an appropriate balance between encouraging voluntary contributions and safeguarding employee well-being.

Future Research Agenda

Future research should empirically examine the proposed conceptual model using a quantitative research design. Relevant populations may include employees working in the service sector, higher education institutions, healthcare organizations, nonprofit organizations, public sector institutions, or value-based organizations. Spiritual leadership may be measured using the instrument developed by Fry et al. (2005), while meaningful work can be assessed using validated meaningful work scales available in the literature. Work engagement may be measured using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) may be assessed using instruments based on Organ or Podsakoff et al.

To enhance the robustness of the proposed model, future studies are encouraged to adopt a multi-source research design. Measures of spiritual leadership, meaningful work, and work engagement may be collected from employees, whereas OCB should preferably be evaluated by supervisors or coworkers. In addition, a longitudinal design would provide stronger evidence of causal relationships by measuring spiritual leadership at Time 1, meaningful work at Time 2, work engagement at Time 3, and OCB at Time 4.

Future research may also investigate potential moderating variables. For instance, spiritual climate, perceived organizational support, person–organization fit, and collectivist organizational culture may strengthen the relationship between spiritual leadership and meaningful work. Conversely, role overload, employee cynicism, and perceived organizational injustice may weaken the positive influence of meaningful work on work engagement. Incorporating moderating variables would enable future studies to identify the conditions under which the proposed model operates more strongly or more weakly.

Within the Indonesian context, research on spiritual leadership is particularly relevant because many organizations operate within social environments characterized by strong communal values and value-oriented cultures. Nevertheless, researchers should carefully distinguish spiritual leadership from religiosity or specific religious practices. Measurement instruments should remain inclusive to ensure that spiritual leadership is conceptualized as leadership grounded in meaning, values, purpose, and genuine concern for others rather than affiliation with any particular religion.

Table 3. Recommendations for Future Empirical Research Design

Aspect	Recommendation
Research Design	Employ a quantitative survey design, preferably using a longitudinal or multi-source approach.
Unit of Analysis	Individual employees; the analysis may be extended to the team level when aggregated data are available.
Key Variables	Spiritual leadership, meaningful work, work engagement, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB).
Analytical Technique	Structural equation modeling (SEM), partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM), sequential mediation analysis, or multilevel modeling for nested data structures.
Methodological Controls	Measure OCB using supervisor or coworker ratings, separate the measurement of variables across different time points, and assess common method bias.
Potential Moderators	Spiritual climate, perceived organizational support, person–organization fit, role overload, and organizational justice.

Limitations

As a conceptual paper, this study has several limitations. First, the proposed framework has not been empirically tested; therefore, the propositions presented should not be interpreted as empirical findings. Second, the conceptual model primarily emphasizes meaningful work and work engagement as the key mediating mechanisms, while other potentially relevant variables, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, psychological capital, and workplace spirituality, are not discussed in depth. Third, the implementation and effectiveness of spiritual leadership may vary across cultural contexts and organizational settings, indicating that the generalizability of the proposed model requires careful empirical validation.

Another limitation concerns the potential conceptual overlap among spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality, calling, and meaningful work. Future empirical studies should establish adequate discriminant validity among these constructs to avoid conceptual redundancy. Furthermore, the measurement of spiritual leadership should be sufficiently sensitive to religious and cultural diversity, particularly within pluralistic organizations. Otherwise, spiritual leadership may be mistakenly perceived as an exclusive religious approach, whereas its conceptual foundation emphasizes meaning, values, purpose, connectedness, and genuine concern for others.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This article develops a conceptual model explaining the relationships among spiritual leadership, meaningful work, work engagement, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). The central argument is that spiritual leadership enhances employees' sense of

meaningful work through the dimensions of vision, hope/faith, altruistic love, calling, and membership. In turn, meaningful work strengthens work engagement by providing employees with intrinsic motivation to invest their physical, cognitive, and emotional energies in their work. Higher levels of work engagement subsequently foster OCB, encouraging employees to perform extra-role behaviors that contribute to organizational effectiveness.

By integrating Spiritual Leadership Theory, the concept of meaningful work, the Psychological Conditions of Engagement framework, Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Theory, and Social Exchange Theory, this article offers a more comprehensive framework for understanding how values-based leadership promotes positive organizational behavior. The proposed framework provides a strong foundation for future empirical research, particularly through testing the sequential mediating mechanism of spiritual leadership → meaningful work → work engagement → organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). From a practical perspective, the article highlights the importance of fostering leadership practices and job designs that not only enhance productivity but also create meaningful, humane, and supportive work environments that encourage employees' voluntary contributions beyond their formal job responsibilities.

Future research is encouraged to empirically validate the proposed conceptual framework across different organizational settings and cultural contexts. Specifically, scholars should examine the sequential mediating roles of meaningful work and work engagement in the relationship between spiritual leadership and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) using robust quantitative methods, such as structural equation modeling. Furthermore, organizations are recommended to strengthen leadership practices that emphasize vision, hope/faith, altruistic love, calling, and membership while designing meaningful work experiences that enhance employee engagement and encourage voluntary behaviors that contribute to long-term organizational effectiveness.

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