

# Antecedents of Service Innovative Behavior: The Role of Spiritual Leadership and Workplace Spirituality

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**Background:** Managers in labor-intensive industries are facing challenges on how to encourage innovation, as services are mostly offered by employees and not machines. Intense competition in the service and hospitality industry calls for more innovative work behavior exhibition among employees, and the question on how enterprises can nurture innovative behavior remains unanswered. The objective of the research is to clarify the inter-relationship between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality and how their collective effect can nurture employee service innovative behavior in the hospitality industry by drawing on relational energy theory.

**Methodology:** Data were obtained using a survey quantitative research method based on a convenience sampling technique from (n = 867) employees working in four- and five-star Jordanian hotels. A partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) technique was applied to assess the proposed research model and hypotheses.

**Results:** Findings from PLS-SEM show that spiritual leadership impacts and increases the level of workplace spirituality and service innovative behavior among employees. Workplace spirituality increases the level of service innovative behavior and mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and service innovative behavior.

**Conclusion:** Spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality initiatives and practices can be beneficial for hospitality enterprises in terms of service innovative behavior. Moreover, the key point is that hospitality HR practitioners should not only focus on selecting, training, and appointing leaders with spiritual characteristics, but also on creating a spiritual work atmosphere to enable employees to exhibit service innovative behaviors. The results did not only advance our knowledge concerning the nexus and importance of spirituality in the workplace, but also validates and reveals the importance of spirituality on innovative behavior in the Arabian context.

**Keywords:** Behavior, Innovation, Jordan, Service, Spiritual leadership, Workplace spirituality

## 1 Introduction

The present-day business environment is characterized as having intense competition and uncertainties, which increases work pressure and anxiety among employees. Work pressure, stress, and anxiety have been associated with negative work outcomes (Abubakar, 2018; Tabor et al., 2019). Hence, the need for leaders who can motivate, share, and energize employees to deal with these problems has never been this great before (Ghaedi et al., 2020; Tabor et al., 2019). Unlike other traditional leadership traits, spiritual leadership is a value-based and spirit-centered

style to leadership that stresses workers' perception of meaningful work by fulfilling their need for otherworldly survival (Fry, 2003). Many studies have linked spiritual leadership to increased workplace spirituality (Afsar et al., 2016; Fry & Slocum, 2008). Spirituality in the workplace is distinct from spirituality in general, as it relates with individual spiritual well-being within the context of employment.

Workplace spirituality has been defined as "a framework of organizational values evidenced in the culture that promote employees' experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected to others in a way that provides feelings of complete-

ness and joy” (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). At work, employees are typically insecure and fearful, which is why they rely on workplaces and peers for social support and courage and identity (Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2004). Specifically, workplace spirituality aims to empower workers to discover the purpose of life, develop bonds with peers, and enhance work atmosphere (Fry & Slocum, 2008). Tentatively, spirituality in the workplace is not limited to practices such as cultural diversity, fairness, ethics, support, and development programs, but also covers facets of innovation, as individuals work in harmony, have shared goals, are encouraged to share knowledge and allowed to express their opinions.

Innovative behavior is seen as employees’ response and generation of solutions to ongoing business problems (Cozzarin, 2017; Scott & Bruce, 1994). Because of the tremendous rivalry among businesses in today’s economic climate, exhibition of innovative behavior is extremely important. Basically, spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality have many beneficial effects on employees, such as high levels of life satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, and in-role performance (Houghton et al., 2016; Krishnakumar et al., 2015), organizational commitments (Fry & Slocum, 2008), and group innovativeness (Ghaedi et al., 2020). Existing works on spiritual leadership are mainly focused on employee well-being and outcomes, the question as to the benefit of how spiritual leadership affects performance remains elusive as shown in a meta-analytical study (Oh & Wang, 2020). To this end, this study aims to make pivotal contributions to spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality research streams. Since only a few studies have linked the concepts to innovative outcomes in the hospitality industry (Oh & Wang, 2020), our work will add to the body of knowledge.

Second, by incorporating service innovative behavior, we unveil the mechanism by which spiritual leadership practices result in desired organizational outcomes. Specifically, this paper draws on the theory of relational energy (McDaniel, 2011) to investigate the relationship between spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality, and service innovative behavior. Third, although, it is acknowledged that spiritual care does not equate only to religious care (Weathers, 2018), there is almost an inseparable link between spiritual and religious practices in a Middle Eastern and Muslim context. Because most practices and teachings such as connection, peace, transcendence are drawn from the Holy Quran and Hadiths (Cruz et al., 2017). Thus, the hospitality and Arabian context of this study provides a relevant domain for additional investigation, as past works were mostly in advanced nations such as the US and Far East context such as China. This study expands on the Afsar et al. (2016) theoretical model of spirituality in terms of organization and leadership by adopting an innovative perspective and investigating the associations in a different contextual setting, specifically, the hospitality industry.

Similar calls for additional studies in the hospitality industry context were issued by Milliman et al. (2018).

## 2 Literature review and hypotheses development

A positive sensation and sense of enhanced resourcefulness due direct psycho-social interaction with others is known as relational energy. According to relational energy theory, some individuals appear to boost our energy, optimism, and wit, while others appear to have no effect or drain such vitality or energy. More specifically, energy emanating from colleagues can impact the work motivations of individuals as a result of ‘contagious effects’ (McDaniel, 2011; Owens et al., 2016). Research also found that the level of relational energy among members of a team equates to their performance (Borgatti & Cross, 2003). Employee service innovative behavior denotes “the production or adoption of useful ideas and idea implementation and begins with problem recognition and the generation of ideas or solutions” (Scott & Bruce, 1994, p. 581). These behaviors have been shown to boost organizational growth, agility, productivity, and competitiveness (Hu et al., 2009; Shih & Susanto, 2016). Work behaviors are essential inputs for value creation, due to their role in how businesses innovate. Several studies have linked leadership style (Ghaedi et al., 2020; Afsar et al., 2016) and organizational culture (Kaya et al., 2020; Likoum et al., 2020) to enhanced firm innovation.

Spiritual leadership is defined as “the values, attitudes, and behaviors that one must adopt in intrinsically motivating oneself and others so that both have a positive increase in the sense of spiritual well-being through calling and membership, that is, they experience meaning in their lives, have a sense of making a difference, and feel understood and appreciated” (Fry et al., 2005, p. 836). This leadership style is tripartite where the (1) vision dimension reflects a picture of the future with implicit or explicit outcomes on why people should try to make that picture come to reality; (2) hope and faith dimension reflects the belief that the goals/mission/vision of the hiring firm can be attained; and (3) altruistic love dimension reflects a sense of completeness, harmony, and well-being achieved via self-care, love, and appreciation by others (Fry et al., 2005; Yang et al., 2019).

The employee’s experience of spirituality in the workplace is called workplace spirituality (Pawar, 2009). Workplace spirituality is comprised of three dimensions, namely: at employee level – meaningful work; at team level or group level – sense of community; and alignment to organizational values at organizational level. Workplace spirituality embodies a sensation of belongingness and employee interconnectedness. Such experiences and feelings strengthen the social bond and compassion toward others,

which foster community and/or group harmony (Milliman et al., 2003). This sense of community encourages workers to help and exhibit good Samaritan attitudes through work support, citizenship, and innovative behaviors that align with the organization's goals and values. Spirituality supports the spirit of the employees by enhancing work meaning and employee engagement (Gotsis & Grimani, 2017; Helmy et al., 2020).

Managers and leaders "have a responsibility for nurturing the spirit by helping their subordinates be open to their inner lives, by helping them find meaning in their work, and by strengthening a sense of community in the workplace" (Duchon & Plowman, 2005, p. 828). Spiritual leaders are known and portrayed as having humility; research shows that such traits can foster creativity in workplaces (Wang et al., 2017). All in all, spirituality can be viewed as a facilitator and life-giving energy that encourage employees to take part in helping others as well as generation of creative work ideas. Previous findings show that spiritual leadership is an antecedent for workplace spirituality (Afsar et al., 2016). Spiritual leadership together with workplace spirituality are antecedents for greater levels of life satisfaction and in-role performance (Houghton et al., 2016; Krishnakumar et al., 2015), organizational commitment (Fry & Slocum, 2008), and group innovativeness (Ghaedi et al., 2020). In a nutshell, spiritual leaders are able to lead with calmness and strength, show some level of mindfulness, and also maintain person-centered relationships with subordinates.

Accordingly, research noted that spirituality can foster higher levels of prosocial attitudes and behavior among individuals (Rezapouraghdam et al., 2018; Wierzbicki & Zawadzka, 2016). Some scholars have linked spiritual leadership to higher job performance (Yang et al., 2019) and group innovativeness (Ghaedi et al., 2020). Workplace spirituality has to do with the conception of connectedness and amalgamation of self-values with those of the hiring firms; when there is a fit between these two, service innovative behavior is likely to emerge. Past findings have also linked workplace spirituality with innovative and creative outcomes (Afsar & Badir, 2017). Building on past literature, we draw on relational energy theory to suggest that spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality can spread contagious energy that could spur innovation within the hotel context. The following hypotheses are proposed:

*H1: Spiritual leadership has a positive and significant impact on workplace spirituality.*

*H2: Spiritual leadership has a positive and significant impact on service innovative behavior.*

*H3: Workplace spirituality has a positive and significant impact on service innovative behavior.*

*H4: Workplace spirituality will mediate the relationship between spiritual leadership and service innovative behavior.*

### 3 Methodology

#### 3.1 Research data collection procedures

The study variables were used in past studies and mostly in non-Arabic speaking countries. The authors used back-translation approach with two translators to translate the survey items. Additionally, the survey was tested with five people and few changes were conducted to reduce ambiguities and enhance communication. The data of the study was collected from cities, namely: Amman and Aqaba, and tourist regions, namely: Petra and the Dead Sea. Based on the report from MoTA, Statistics Department (2019), there are 42 five-star hotels and 44 four-star hotels in the mentioned cities and regions with more than 14,000 employees. We contacted the top management of the hotels for permission to conduct the study. Using a convenience sampling technique, data was obtained from employees working in a total of thirty (30) four- and five-star rated hotels who agreed to take part in the current investigation. This sampling technique was utilized to encourage participation due to the long working days and anti-social hours in the industry. We asked the employees to fill out the survey voluntarily, and we also told them they can choose to stop at any time; consequently, we assured them that the responses they gave will be used only for research purposes and will not be disclosed to third parties or the hotel management to mitigate the tendency of social desirability bias and alteration of responses (MacKenzie & Podsakoff, 2012).

#### 3.2 Variables and measurements

Spiritual Leadership has been abstracted as a trichotomic construct with the following subsets: (1) vision – which "describes the organization's journey and why we are taking it; defines who we are and what we do"; (2) hope/faith – which describes "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction that the organization's vision/purpose/mission will be fulfilled"; and (3) altruistic love – which describes "a sense of wholeness, harmony, and well-being produced through care, concern, and appreciation for both self and others" (Fry et al., 2005). In this study, the dimensions of spiritual leadership were measured using borrowed 5-items for vision, 5-items for hope/faith, and 7-items for altruistic love, totaling 17 items (Fry et al., 2005). Sample of items include: "My organization's vision is clear and compelling to me" (vision dimension), "I demonstrate my faith in my organization and its mission by doing everything I can to help us succeed" (hope/faith dimension), "The leaders in my organization have the courage to stand up for their people" (altruistic love dimension). This scale has been shown to work well in the hospitality context (Afsar et al., 2016) and also fits in with

the conceptualization in this study.

Workplace Spirituality has been abstracted as a tri-chotomic construct with the following subsets: (1) meaningful work – at individual level, has to do with employee's perception of joy, energy, and personal meaning in carrying out assigned duties; (2) sense of community – at group level, is interested in employee's sense of connectedness with peers and superiors, supportive atmosphere, and having a shared goal; and (3) alignment of values – at organizational level, is interested in how employee's goals, norms, and values align with those of the hiring organization (Milliman et al., 2003). In this study, the dimensions of workplace spirituality were measured using borrowed 6-items for meaningful work, 7-items for sense of community, and 8-items for alignment of values, totaling 21 items (Milliman et al., 2003). Sample of items include: "I see a connection between work and social good" (meaningful work dimension), "Working cooperatively with others is valued" (sense of community dimension), and "Our organization cares about all its employees" (alignment of values dimension). This scale has been shown to work well in the hospitality context (Milliman et al., 2018) and also fits in with the conceptualization in this study.

Service Innovative Behavior was measured with a first-order construct consisting of 6-items adapted from past studies in the hospitality industry (Hu et al., 2009; Scott & Bruce, 1994). The items were designed to capture employee's inclination to innovative and creative work behaviors. The research measures were docked on a 5-point Likert scale such that strongly disagree was represented by (1) upward to strongly agree represented by (5). Sample of items include: "At work, I seek new service techniques, methods, or techniques." This scale has been shown to

work well in the hospitality context (Hu et al., 2009) and also fits in with the conceptualization in this study.

Demographic features of the employees and the hiring hospitality enterprises under investigation were obtained to help provide a general industrial outlook and the representativeness of the sample. Captured information includes employee educational level, age, gender, hotel classification (e.g., four- or five-star), and yearly revenue of the enterprises. A complete list of the scale items alongside descriptive statistics is presented in the Appendix section.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Participant's profile

Out of the 1,000 questionnaires distributed, in total, 867 complete answers were retrieved. To compare and comprehend the profile of the research participants, we ran frequency analysis in SPSS software, and the demographic characteristics of the respondents is presented in Table 1. Briefly, information about participating employees' educational level, age groups, gender, type of hiring organization (four- or five-star hotel), and monthly income level. Although a number of hotels did not take part in the study, population ecology theory argues that hotels operating in a common marketplace begin to resemble one another over time. The resemblance is associated with the demographics and/or classification of organizational species (Hannan & Freeman, 1977). Such that the hotels operating in a common marketplace tend to have employees with similar demographical features, such as education, age, income, etc.

Table 1: Hotel classification according to employee numbers

Hotel type	1-stars	2-stars	3-stars	4-stars	5-stars	Total
Number of employees	343	787	1,880	3,127	10,643	16,780
Source (MOTA, 2019),						

According to the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MOTA), there are approximately 13,770 employees working in five- and four-star hotels out of the entire 16,780 employees in the industry (MOTA, 2019), suggesting that 82% of the employees in the industry are working in four and five-star hotels (See Table 1 for details). Consequently, in comparison to the hospitality industrial reality, the industry's actual employees' structure and distributions are reflected in the study demographic makeup. Building on the breakdown in Table 2, we concluded that the obtained sample appears to be representable.

### 4.2 Measurement model

This research expended a structural equation modeling technique by drawing on the partial least squares (PLS-SEM) algorithm. The main aspiration of PLS-SEM algorithms and techniques are to maximize the explained variance in the response variable and also to diminish the presence of estimation errors in the response variable (Khaddam et al., 2021; Mert et al., 2021). PLS-SEM operates on composite-grounds and is causal-predictive in terms of estimations (Hair et al., 2019; Yakubu et al.,

2020). PLS-SEM is superior especially when addressing models with multiple direct, indirect, and moderating associations. These features make PLS-SEM superior over the traditional covariance-based SEM. Research variables spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality are operationalized as higher-order constructs. According to Sarstedt et al. (2016), the two-stage approach is useful when a research model has a combination of first-order (e.g., service innovative behavior) and second-order constructs (e.g., spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality) in terms of normalizing the relationships. Specifically, the two-stage approach shows a “better parameter recovery of paths pointing (1) from exogenous constructs to

the higher-order construct, and (2) from the higher-order construct to an endogenous construct in the path model” (Sarstedt et al., 2019, p. 199). Following expert recommendations (Sarstedt et al., 2016; 2019), we employed the two-stage approach where the latent scores of the first-order constructs (vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love) were calculated and utilized as indicators for the second-order construct (spiritual leadership). The same approach was applied to workplace spirituality first-order constructs (meaningful work, sense of community, and alignment of values). Although, model fit indices are not necessary in PLS-SEM analysis, we perused the results, which all appear to be sufficient, suggesting a fit between the data

Table 2: Demographic breakdown

Educational Level	Frequency	Percentage
High school	399	46.0%
Diploma	162	18.7%
Bachelor's degree	277	31.9%
Graduate degree	29	3.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Age</b>		
Less than 20 years	101	11.6%
21-30 years	369	42.6%
31-40 years	244	28.1%
41-50 years	122	14.1%
Above 51 years	31	3.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	152	17.5%
Male	715	82.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Hotel classification</b>		
Four stars	333	38.4%
Five stars	534	61.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Less than 499 Dinars <sup>1</sup>	549	63.3%
Between 500 and 999 Dinars	223	25.7%
Between 1,000 and 1,499 Dinars	61	7.0%
Between 1,500 and 1,999 Dinars	18	2.1%
Above 2,000 Dinars	16	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Current exchange rate: 1 Dinar equals 1,23 Euro



and the model. Indicators and their respective values for model fit are reported in Table 3. We therefore expended SmartPLS software version 3 to operationalize the measurement model. In doing so, we perused the values of Cronbach's alpha ( $C\alpha$ ), composite reliability (CR), and Rho to establish construct reliability. In Table 3, all the values were above the 0.70 thresholds (Hair et al., 2019;

Henseler et al., 2009). Consequently, we perused the research indicators using each construct's average variance extracted (AVE), each item's standardized factor loadings, and t-values to establish convergent validity. In Tables 3, the AVE values were above the 0.50 threshold; In Tables 4 the factor loadings and t-values were also above the 0.70 and 1.96 thresholds.

Table 3: Reliability of constructs

	Variables	$C\alpha$	Rho	CR	AVE
1	Spiritual leadership	0.906	0.906	0.941	0.841
2	Workplace spirituality	0.907	0.907	0.941	0.843
3	Service innovative behavior	0.927	0.929	0.943	0.735
<b>Model fit:</b> $NFI = 0.908$ ; $SRMR = 0.042$ ; $d\_ULS = 0.138$ ; $d\_G = 0.162$ ; $Chi-Square = 844.519$					

Table 4: Factor loadings, t- and p-statistics for the scale items

Measures	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T-Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P-Values
<b>Spiritual leadership</b>					
Vision	0.924	0.924	0.007	126.313	0.000
Altruistic love	0.908	0.908	0.008	118.388	0.000
Hope/faith	0.919	0.919	0.007	134.541	0.000
<b>Workplace spirituality</b>					
Sense of community	0.928	0.928	0.006	142.771	0.000
Alignment of values	0.925	0.925	0.006	158.178	0.000
Meaningful work	0.901	0.901	0.009	102.304	0.000
<b>Service innovative behavior</b>					
SIB item1	0.860	0.860	0.011	81.032	0.000
SIB item2	0.888	0.888	0.010	87.510	0.000
SIB item3	0.884	0.884	0.010	87.052	0.000
SIB item4	0.866	0.866	0.011	76.635	0.000
SIB item5	0.796	0.796	0.017	46.636	0.000
SIB item6	0.845	0.844	0.013	63.485	0.000
<b>Notes:</b> Original Sample = standardized factor loadings; SIB = service innovative behavior					

Table 5: Discriminant validity

	Variables	1	2	3
1	Spiritual leadership	<b>0.917</b>	.912	0.679
2	Workplace spirituality	0.828	<b>0.918</b>	0.773
3	Service innovative behavior	0.623	0.709	<b>0.857</b>

Finally, we establish discriminant validity by perusing the square root of each construct's AVE based on the Fornell-Larcker Criterion. All the square roots of the AVE values are above any other inter-construct correlations establishing discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT) appears to be below the 0.90 threshold with one exception (Henseler et al., 2015). Nevertheless, by combining the results from the Fornell-Larcker Criterion and HTMT in Table 5, we conclude that discriminant validity of the constructs has been established.

### 4.3 Structural model

We tested the study hypotheses through a structural model based on a biased-corrected bootstrapping approach that ran with 5,000 sub-samples. The hypotheses were assessed using the traditional beta, t- and p-values. To evaluate whether a statistically significant effect also has a practical relevance, we perused the f-squared ( $f^2$ ) values, also known as effect size, following expert guidelines (Cohen, 2013) where (large effect = 0.35), (moderate effect = 0.15), and (small effect = 0.02). The structural model presented in Figure 1 generated four distinct outcomes as follows: First, the results show that spiritual leadership has a significant and positive effect on workplace spirituality ( $\beta = 0.828$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This suggests that a 100% increase in spiritual leadership can result in an 82.8% increase in the level of workplace spirituality. Furthermore, spiritual lead-

ership also explained 68.6% of the variance in workplace spirituality ( $R$ -squared = 0.686), and effect size is deemed to be very large ( $f$ -squared = 2.180). Based on these results, hypothesis 1 received empirical support. Details are available in Table 6.

*Second*, the results show that spiritual leadership has a significant and positive effect on service innovative behavior ( $\beta = 0.114$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This suggests that a 100% increase in spiritual leadership can result in an 11.4% increase in the level of service innovative behavior. The effect size is deemed to be very small ( $f$ -squared = 0.008). Based on these results, hypothesis 2 received empirical support. Details are available in Table 6.

*Third*, the results show that workplace spirituality has a significant and positive effect on service innovative behavior ( $\beta = 0.615$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This suggests that a 100% increase in workplace spirituality can result in a 61.5% increase in the level of service innovative behavior. The effect size is deemed to be moderate ( $f$ -squared = 0.24). Based on these results, hypothesis 3 received empirical support. Details are available in Table 6.

*Fourth*, spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality jointly explained 50.7% of the variance in service innovative behavior ( $R$ -squared = 0.507). Finally, the mediating role of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and service innovative behavior holds ( $\beta = 0.509$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Based on these results, hypothesis 4 received empirical support. Details are available in Table 6.

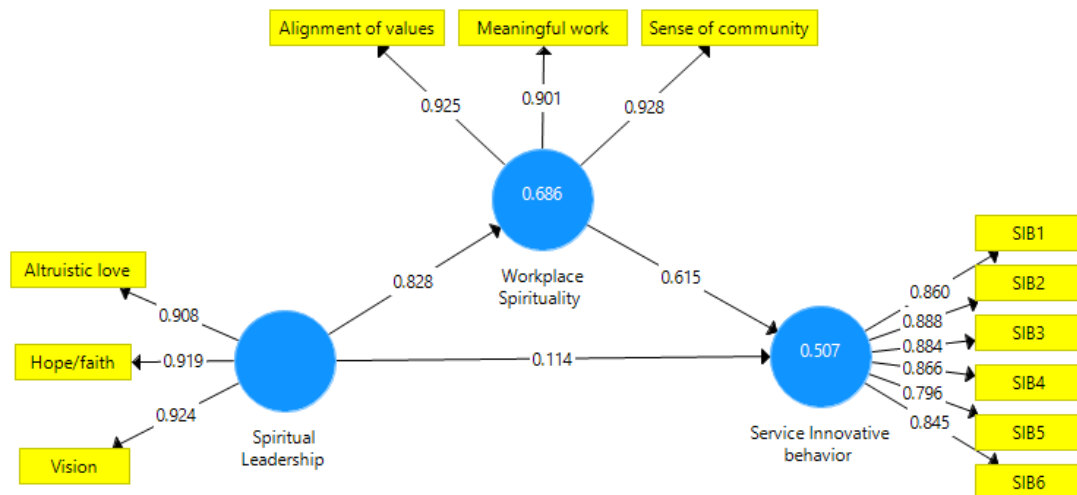


Figure 1: Structural model

Table 6: Direct and indirect effects

Panels		<i>Endogenous variables</i>	
Panel A – Direct effects			
<i>Exogeneous variables</i>		Workplace spirituality	Service innovative behavior
Spiritual leadership		0.828**	0.114*
Workplace spirituality		-	0.615*
Panel B – Effect sizes (F-squared)			
Spiritual leadership		2.180	0.008
Workplace spirituality		NA	0.241
Panel C – Specific indirect effect (Mediation)			
<i>Exogeneous variables</i>	<i>Mediator variables</i>		Service innovative behavior
Spiritual leadership	Workplace spirituality	-	0.509**
Notes: *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; NA= Not Applicable			

## 5 Discussion

### 5.1 Findings

Drawing on relational energy theory, we examined the association among spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality, and service innovative behavior. Results show that spiritual leadership increases the level of workplace spirituality, which makes sense as spiritual leaders have a specific desire and focus to energize the connection between the leaders, the organization, and their employees (Afsar et al., 2016). We also show that spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality can enact higher levels of service innovative behavior among employees (Afsar & Badir, 2017). Employees see spiritual experience as a personal bond to work activities and other entities who are touched by it, which goes beyond self-interest. We extend past work by unveiling the potentials of spiritual leadership to foster service innovative behavior and also show that spiritual work cultures are vital for innovative outcomes. In other words, workplace spirituality mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and service innovative behavior.

Employees are mostly under stress, and sometimes even alienated from their organizations. Spiritual leaderships create a work atmosphere and culture of support, meaningful work life, community of support and achieving goals, which may reduce employees' fear and insecurity; these, we show, can enhance their confidence and sense of sharing that could further result in innovative ideas and ways of dealing with business problems. Although, spirituality in the Middle East has religious roots (Abu-El-Noor & Abu-El-Noor, 2019), the mainstream attributes such as connection, peace, transcendence, and seeking meaning and purpose are like those of the Western context (Weath-

ers, 2018). There is a fine line between spirituality and religion in the Jordanian society because individuals live in a way that religious beliefs are reflected in all aspects of their lives, including work life.

In lieu of this, this study denotes that spiritual beliefs and practices are excellent sources of support, comfort, and coping mechanisms that can be built upon to create positive a work atmosphere for innovative activities in the Jordanian tourism and hospitality context. Past research noted that in Muslim perspectives, spirituality practices were mainly derived from the Holy Quran and the Hadiths (Cruz et al., 2017). Given that the Jordanian population is predominantly from the Sunni sect, the applicability of the current findings in other Arabian or Middle Eastern contexts is contingent upon the Islamic sect. In sum, the findings are in congruence with existing assertions in the literature on the effects of spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality on work outcomes such as performance (Duchon & Plowman, 2005; Yang et al., 2019), innovativeness (Afsar et al., 2016; Ghaedi et al., 2020), positive attitudes, and prosocial behaviors (Rezapouraghdam et al., 2018; Wierzbicki & Zawadzka, 2016). Although four- and five-star hotels employs a large portion of approximately 82% of the hotel industry workforce in Jordan (MOTA, 2019). It is also important to caution readers about the generalizability and interpretations of the current findings. The fact that the study sample was drawn from four- and five-star hotels limits our ability to generalize and draw inference on the applicability of the findings in other hotel settings such as one-, two- and three-star hotels that are mainly family owned and managed.



## 5.2 Theoretical and practical implications

The results of the current study delineate that spiritual leadership impacts and increases the level of workplace spirituality and service innovative behavior. Consequently, workplace spirituality increases the level of service innovative behavior and mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and service innovative behavior. This paper's theoretical contributions and originality does not only lie in uncovering how and when spiritual leadership influences service innovative behavior, but also on the mediating mechanisms of workplace spirituality. Understanding how spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality predict service innovative behavior theoretically enriches the hospitality management literature. Logically, this is a viable way to understand a spectrum of leader actions and environmental forces that are productive and beneficial. Afsar et al. (2016) and Milliman et al. (2018) previously suggested more empirical evidence on these interdependences. This paper addresses this research call by showing the mediating role of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and service innovative behavior in the tourism and hospitality context. The current study also extends the scope by drawing on relational energy as a theoretical framework. By taking this lens, this work unveils the black box between spiritual leadership and service innovative behavior. Specifically, spiritual leaders are social innovators of good and positive energy that reinforces a sense of community membership, transcendence, meaning, and shared values among employees, which reflected and/or reciprocated in their work behavior in form increased service innovative behavior.

Besides theoretical contributions, the findings in this paper have a few industrial implications. We recommend that hospitality enterprises in Jordan should take spirituality into consideration when selecting and training supervisors or unit chiefs. In other words, HR professionals should promote spirituality to ensure that potential managers or supervisors fully recognize the benefits of spirituality leadership and its outcomes. For instance, organizing social activities and counseling sessions to help both leaders and employees build a positive understanding of workplace spirituality. Hospitality enterprises often place emphasis on technical training and compensations as predictors of innovation, this work suggests that hospitality enterprises in Jordan should include the soft side of management, in terms of creating a workplace culture with spirituality and placing individuals with spiritual awareness in supervisory positions. The findings assert that having spiritual leaders and working in a spiritual environment where individuals are cared for, loved, appreciated, and supported by leaders and co-workers can encourage employees to carry out service innovative behavior and/or activities.

## 5.3 Limitations and future research

This research has several clampdowns that should be mentioned, starting with the design; the cross-sectional design may affect causal claims. Although, the study utilized a large sample size, the exclusion of one-, two- and three-star hotels reduce the generalizability of the findings in the Jordanian hotel industry. The observed variables data were obtained through self-assessment and as such may be susceptible to social desirability bias. Future works are encouraged to use multi-source or secondary data sources and longitudinal design to mitigate these problems. Consequently, the usage of non-probability sampling technique: convenience has the tendency to omit certain species in the population, thus, upcoming works are encouraged to utilize random sampling techniques for a more representable sample. Also, this paper did not consider the role of mindfulness, justice, organizational, and co-worker support on the scrutinized associations. Spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality have been shown to play a moderating role on the association between antecedents of burnout; what remains unclear is the role spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality play in the link between antecedents and burnout, the opposite of burnout. Another fruitful research avenue could be knowledge-related outcomes, such as individual sharing, hiding, sabotage, and the like. Finally, the model could be tested in other industries and countries as spirituality varies across countries and cultures.

## 5.4 Conclusion

The present research provides a new direction for underexplored spirituality and service innovative outcomes. Building on the relational energy theoretical framework, this study explores the influence of spiritual leadership on workplace spirituality and service innovative behavior, and the mediating role of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and service innovative behavior. We contribute to literature theoretically and empirically by proving the presence of the path between spirituality and innovative work outcomes in a non-Western context. We found that spiritual leadership enhances workplace spirituality and service innovative behavior; workplace spirituality enhances service innovative behavior and also mediated the relationship between spiritual leadership and service innovative behavior.

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### **Predhodniki inovativnega vedenja v storitveni dejavnosti: vloga poduhovljenega vodenja in duhovnosti na delovnem mestu**

**Ozadje/namen:** Vodje v delovno intenzivnih panogah se soočajo z izzivi, kako spodbujati inovacije, saj storitve večinoma opravljajo zaposleni in ne stroji. Močna konkurenca na področju storitev in gostinstva zahteva bolj inovativno delovno vedenje zaposlenih; vprašanje, kako lahko podjetja negujejo inovativno vedenje, pa ostaja neodgovorjeno. Cilj raziskave je z uporabo teorije relacijske energije pojasniti medsebojno razmerje med poduhovljenim vodenjem in duhovnostjo na delovnem mestu ter kako lahko njun skupni učinek vpliva na inovativno vedenje zaposlenih v gostinstvu.

**Metodologija:** Podatke smo zbrali z anketiranjem  $n = 867$  zaposlenih v jordanskih hotelih s štirimi ali petimi zvezdicami. Za oceno predlaganega raziskovalnega modela in preverjanje hipotez je bila uporabljena tehnika modeliranja strukturnih enačb z delnimi najmanjšimi kvadrati (PLS-SEM).

**Rezultati:** Poduhovljeno vodenje vpliva na in povečuje raven duhovnosti na delovnem mestu in služi inovativnemu vedenju med zaposlenimi. Duhovnost na delovnem mestu povečuje raven storitvenega inovativnega vedenja in posredno vpliva na povezavo med poduhovljenim vodenjem in inovativnim vedenjem na delovnem mestu.

**Zaključek:** Pobude in prakse poduhovljenega vodenja in duhovnosti na delovnem mestu so lahko koristne za gostinska podjetja v smislu inovativnega obnašanja storitev. Poleg tega je ključna točka, da se strokovnjaki za kadrovske zadeve v gostinstvu ne osredotočajo le na izbiro, usposabljanje in imenovanje voditeljev z duhovnimi lastnostmi, temveč tudi na ustvarjanje duhovnega delovnega ozračja, ki zaposlenim omogoča, da pokažejo inovativno vedenje pri storitvah. Rezultati niso samo dopolnili našega znanja o povezanosti in pomenu duhovnosti na delovnem mestu, ampak tudi potrjujejo in razkrivajo pomen duhovnosti za inovativno vedenje v arabskem kontekstu.

**Ključne besede:** Vedenje, Inovativnost, Jordan, Služba, Duhovno vodstvo, Duhovnost na delovnem mestu

## Appendix I: Measurement Items

<b>Spiritual Leadership</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b><i>Vision</i></b>		
1. "I understand and am committed to my organization's vision".	3.84	1.14
2. "My workgroup has a vision statement that brings out the best in me".	3.96	1.06
3. "My organization's vision inspires my best performance".	3.84	1.09
4. "I have faith in my organization's vision for its employees".	3.83	1.06
5. "My organization's vision is clear and compelling to me".	3.88	1.10
<b><i>Hope/faith</i></b>		
1. "I have faith in my organization, and I am willing to do whatever it takes to ensure that it accomplishes its mission"	3.96	1.09
2. "I persevere and exert extra effort to help my organization succeed because I have faith in what it stands for"	4.02	1.03
3. "I always do my best in my work because I have faith in my organization and its leaders"	4.00	1.02
4. "I set challenging goals for my work because I have faith in my organization and want us to succeed"	3.67	1.18
5. "I demonstrate my faith in my organization and its mission by doing everything I can to help us succeed"	4.03	1.02
<b><i>Altruistic love</i></b>		
1. "My organization really cares about its people"	3.67	1.18
2. "My organization is kind & considerate toward its workers, and when they are suffering, wants to do something about it"	3.73	1.11
3. "The leaders in my organization walk the walk as well as talk the talk"	3.74	1.15
4. "My organization is trustworthy and loyal to its employees"	3.66	1.19
5. "My organization does not punish honest mistakes"	3.62	1.18
6. "The leaders in my organization are honest and without false pride"	3.76	1.10
7. "The leaders in my organization have the courage to stand up for their people"	3.69	1.18
<b><i>Workplace Spirituality</i></b>		
<b><i>Meaningful work</i></b>		
1. "I experience joy in work"	3.82	1.14
2. "Spirit is energized by work"	3.85	1.03
3. "Work is connected to what I think is important in life"	3.90	1.02
4. "I look forward to coming to work"	3.81	1.05
5. "I see a connection between work and social good"	3.83	1.03
6. "I understand what gives my work personal meaning"	4.00	0.96
<b><i>Sense of community</i></b>		
1. "Working cooperatively with others is valued"	4.04	1.11
2. "I feel part of a community"	4.05	1.01
3. "I believe people support each other"	3.80	1.06
4. "I feel free to express opinions"	3.80	1.10
5. "I think employees are linked with a common purpose"	3.74	1.07
6. "I believe employees genuinely care about each other"	3.70	1.09



## Appendix I: Measurement Items (continues)

7. "I feel there is a sense of being a part of a family"	3.75	1.12
<b>Alignment of values</b>		
1. "I feel positive about the values of the organization"	3.81	1.12
2. "Our organization is concerned about the poor"	3.64	1.15
3. "Our organization cares about all its employees"	3.60	1.16
4. "Our organization has a conscience"	3.78	1.08
5. "I feel connected with the organization's goals"	3.76	1.04
6. "Our organization is concerned about health of employees"	3.77	1.08
7. "I feel connected with the mission of the organization"	3.81	1.01
8. "Our organization cares about whether my spirit is energized"	3.75	1.09
<b>Service Innovative Behavior</b>		
1. "At work, I come up with innovative and creative notions"	3.87	1.04
2. "At work, I try to propose my own creative ideas and convince others"	3.92	0.96
3. "At work, I seek new service techniques, methods, or techniques"	3.97	0.93
4. "At work, I provide a suitable plan for developing new ideas"	3.93	0.96
5. "At work, I try to secure the funding and resources needed to implement innovations"	3.90	0.98
6. "Overall, I consider myself a creative member of my team"	4.01	1.01