

## SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR: EXAMINING MEDIATION OF WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY AND QUALITY OF WORK LIFE IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the association between spiritual leadership (SL) and individual organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) by introducing novel mediating factors i.e., quality of work life (QWL) and workplace spirituality (WS). Data were collected through survey-type questionnaire from 260 faculty members working in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa higher educational institutions. The study variables and items were measured using the five-point Likert scale. SPSS version-24 was applied to conduct regression analysis. The outcomes of the study revealed that Spiritual Leadership positively and significantly promotes OCB in staff members. Moreover, results of mediating variables supported the study proposed mediating framework and founded that quality of work life and workplace spirituality partially mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. The results of the study are consistent with the proposed mediation framework. The concept of spiritual leadership in modern-age developments implies that, instead of treating workplace spirituality as an inevitable relapse into doubts, educational institution progress is envisioned and prescribed as an indicator of spiritual integrity.

**Keywords:** Spiritual leadership, organizational citizenship behavior, quality of work life, workplace spirituality, educational institutions

### INTRODUCTION

The corporate sector is facing a leadership issue during the twenty-first century, particularly in fulfilling the need for talented, honest, and ethical leaders. According to Karsono, Suraji, & Sastrodiharjo (2022), spiritual leadership is an approach of organizational growth and change that has the power to influence the development of organizations in a more positive direction and use the kindness of humanity within the organization as a foundation to achieve outstanding results. This theory replaces earlier theories of leadership, which are considered to be unsuccessful to train managers

of corporate organizations (Munroe, 2008). A way to react to the diminishing and even complete loss of the fundamental principles of workers' trust in the workplace is spirituality in the workplace (Ma et al., 2023). Researchers are becoming progressively more interested in writing on spirituality in the workplace, enterprise, and leadership (Zhao et al., 2022; Huang, 2022; Saleh et al., 2022; Amran, 2019). Presently, the first among five popular principles for managing to fast change is spirituality (Marques, 2011).

The value of quality of work life (QWL) to organizations and their employees has increased

(Ghani et al., 2022; Li and Yeo, 2011). In addition to impacting job satisfaction, QWL also has an impact on an employee's life outside of work, including their family, other interests, and social requirements (Gain, 2023; Shojaee, 2023; Gallie, 2005). Scholars have always been interested in the association between responsibilities in the home and at work (Gregory & Milner, 2009). Pro-socially behavior, also known as organizational citizenship behavior or OCB, or engagement with an organization, is one of the key components of an effective organization.

According to Pham et al. (2023) OCB is referred to as individual behavior that is allowed to select, not directly or openly controlled by formal reward systems, and gradually supports effective organizational function. Integrating spiritual leadership ideas within educational institutions can motivate staff and students to behave in ways that promote a feeling of community and belonging in classes. Educational leaders can improve the well-being and academic achievement of their students by highlighting virtues like charity and collaboration. Leaders are better able to create spiritually enriched learning environments when they recognize the important role that workplace spirituality plays as a mediator between spiritual leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. In besides encouraging employee's engagement, fostering a climate of respect and shared values helps administrators go above and beyond the call of duty in order to enhance individuals' achievement and overall wellbeing. In the end, adopting spiritual leadership concepts in educational settings fosters an environment that is supportive of both personal development and academic success. Organization that provides services needs effective management to serve public interest. Leadership plays an important role in organizational transformation and management (Mehmood et al., 2022). Notably, higher educational institutions have complex management system and the fact that the universities must be provided skilled employees and all-encompassing human resources.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Spiritual leadership**

Since leadership is regarded as one of the most challenging social processes, it is a topic that is frequently debated, whether in an academic or non-academic context. Around ten thousand books and

articles have been written regarding this subject (Fry and Kriger, 2009). Spiritual leadership is a fairly recent concept that was introduced by Fry (2003). According to Fry, in order to motivate oneself or others intrinsically and create a sense of belonging that is based on personal desire, one must possess a set of values, attitudes, and behaviors. Spiritual leadership need two things: first, developing a vision that will enable each organization member to find their calling a profound feeling linked to their work or duty to feel something unique and important in life. Second, fostering a social/organizational culture where leaders and members show genuine concern, attention, and admiration for one another, without any hidden agendas. This fosters a sense of belonging and mutual understanding and respect (Fry, 2003). With the objective to help higher development of something good from employee, organizational commitment, financial performance, and social responsibility, spiritual leadership aims to implement the basic needs of a leader and a follower for good spirituality through participation and membership, to create vision and values traversing all individuals, team empowerment, and organizational level (Fry and Cohen, 2009).

#### **Organizational citizenship behavior**

The classical management theory and the participants are the sources of the initial study on OCB (Zubair et al., 2024; Molines, 2022; Cheng Chen and Fen Chiu, 2008). LePine et al. (2002) developed few of the OCB forms that are in use now. The values and behaviors that make up pro-social and organizational conduct are linked to OCB. Since its introduction 20 years ago, this concept in organizational behavior has gained widespread recognition. Its foundation is the theory of disposition/personality and work attitude (Luthans, 2006). OCB is a specific individual behavior that indirectly supports an organization's ability to perform its tasks effectively through formal reward systems (Organ et al., 2006). Apart from an additional function or function outside of duty, another fundamental aspect of OCB is autonomy, unencumbered by an organization's official incentive structure (Ebener, & Jalšenjak, 2021; Luthans, 2006). Although OCB may appear in many different forms, Luthans (2006) identified the following as the primary manifestations: civic virtue, conscientiousness, kindness, sportsmanship, and politeness (Luthans, 2006). According to Whitman,

Van Rooy, and Viswesvaran's (2010) study, there is a moderate relationship between OCB and performance, and there are substantial relationships between OCB and job satisfaction. According to an additional study, a leader's encouragement influences workers' OCB performance (Chen and Chiu, 2008). A study including OCB and a number of other variables indicates that OCB is influenced by job satisfaction (Arfah, 2009).

#### ***Quality of work life***

In higher education institutions, the term "quality of work life" (QWL) describes the collective experiences of administrators, staff, and academics in their respective responsibilities. It comprises employment satisfaction, work-life balance, career growth possibilities, and corporate culture. Fostering a positive QWL entails developing supportive work environments that prioritize employee welfare and engagement. In the end, improving QWL in postsecondary educational establishments benefits the academic community's general performance and efficacy.

As work performed by individuals is an essential component of happiness, QWL aims to boost an employee's trust, involvement, and problem solving to increase job satisfaction and organizational effectiveness (Gain, 2023; Ivancevich et al., 2007). To put it clearly, QWL integrates employee work satisfaction with the successful accomplishment of organizational goals. In Koonmee and Virakul (2009), quality of work life encourages a work environment that benefits and meets the demands of employees (Nauman, Zheng, & Basit, 2021). QWL requires different things, like activities, resources, and achievements from involvement in the workplace (Riyono, Hartati, & Fatdina, 2022). The term "quality of work life refers to how people feel about each other at work, particularly when it comes to an individual's job satisfaction and mental health (Singh & Miani, 2021; Hermawati, 2021). According to few researches, job satisfaction and QWL are interrelated (Agustina et al., 2024).

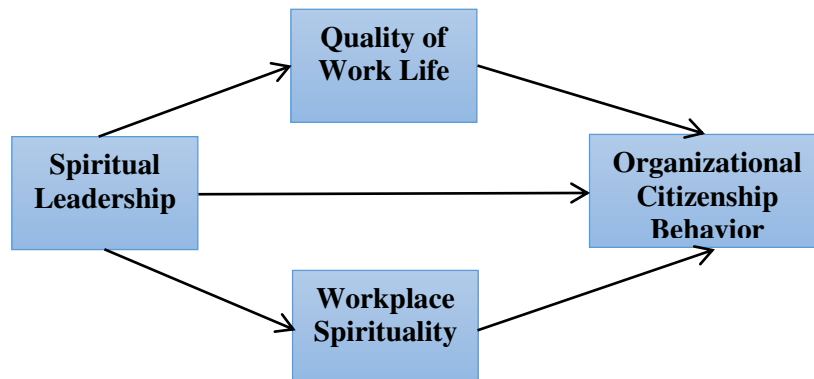
#### ***Workplace spirituality***

The three main components of workplace spirituality connection to nature and all living things, interpersonal relationships, and relationship to a higher power are essential factors in inspiring employees to engage in OCB (Liu and Robertson, 2011). Individuals are linked when they expand their individual self to include other people and go beyond the categories of "us" and "them" in order to achieve equilibrium. Individuals are linked when they expand their individual self to include other people and transcend the categories of "us" and "them" with the goal to achieve unity. This is in addition to when they interact with themselves through reflective thinking and a deep awareness of their inner selves and when they combine different parts of themselves into a coherent whole (Bayani and Serajzadeh, 2022). According to this the description, positive behavior that is, the willingness to help, defends, or advance the welfare of others is more likely to be displayed by workers who have a strong transcendental self-identity (Garg et al., 2022). Workplace spirituality has been defined as the spiritual experiences of employees in the workplace (Hassan et al., 2022; Manzoor et al., 2024). It is possible to suggest that employees have a great working experience when lecturers are able to communicate their desire for others to feel cared for and compassionate, experience inner consciousness in the pursuit of meaningful work, and attain transcendence. This will motivate people to take pleasure in their work and surpass their responsibilities (as stated in the job description) at work (Khan et al., 2022; Margaretha et al., 2021). Accordingly, studies show that a more spiritual workplace leads to better organizational citizenship.

#### ***Framework of the study***

There are four variables used in this study i.e., spiritual leadership (SL), quality of work life (QWL), organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and Workplace spirituality.

Figure: Theoretical framework



**Study Hypotheses**

**H1:** There is positive and significant relationship between spiritual leadership and organizational citizenship behavior.

**H2:** Quality of work life mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and Organizational citizenship Behavior.

**H3:** Workplace spirituality mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and Organizational citizenship Behavior.

**Methods**

**Population and sample size**

To collect data for this study, the method of surveys was used to give questionnaires to all those (Table 1)

Table 1 Participant demographic information

Demographic	Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)	N
Gender	Male	239	91.9	260
	Female	21	8.1	
Age	16 – 26	53	20.4	260
	27 – 36	127	48.8	
	Above 36	80	30.8	
Work experience	5 – 10	65	25.0	260
	11 – 15	147	56.5	
	Above 15	48	18.5	

employees who work in eight public sector higher educational institutions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. Questionnaires are distributed using a purposive sample technique. 330 employees were given questionnaires as part of this study based on these criteria. A 91.06% response rate was recorded from the 260 employees who correctly filled their survey questionnaires. There were 239 male among the participants, accounting 91.9% of the total. The majority of the employees (48.8%) was between the ages of 27 and 36, and 56.5% of the employee had 11 to 15 years working experience.

**Measurement**

All the four variables of this study were measured through five point scale.

**Spiritual leadership**

The 21 items that together made up the spiritual leadership questionnaire were taken from earlier research (Fry & Cohen, Citation, 2009). Five factors are used to measure spiritual leadership: meaning or calling (4 statements), altruistic love (5 statements),

vision (4 statements), hope/faith (4 statements), and membership (4 statements). A five-point Likert scale was used to score the participants' answers, with 1 representing strongly disagree and 5 representing strongly agree.

**Organizational citizenship Behavior**

10-item scale was adapted to assess organizational citizenship behavior (Bachrach et al., 2007). A five-point Likert scale was used to score the participants' answers, 1 representing strongly disagree and 5 representing strongly agree.

**Quality of work life**

Quality of work life was examined through 12 elements, adapted from the past study of (Cascio

2019; Horst et al., 2014). A five-point Likert scale was used to score the participants' answers, 1 representing strongly disagree and 5 representing strongly agree.

**Workplace spirituality**

The 21 components that collectively make up the workplace spirituality variable were taken from Ashmos and Duchon's research (Citation 2000). Three categories of factors were included in the questionnaire: a feeling of inner life (five statements), meaningful job (seven statements), and a sense of community (nine statements). A five-point Likert scale was used to score the participants' answers, 1 representing strongly disagree and 5 representing strongly agree.

**Table 2 Reliability**

Description	Variable Name	Elements	Cronbach alpha
Independent variable	Spiritual leadership (SL)	21	.813
Dependent variable	Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB)	10	.891
Mediating variables	Quality of work life (QWL)	12	.734
	Workplace spirituality (WS)	21	.856

Using the statistical tool SPSS, the alpha value was calculated to assess the reliability of the instruments. Cronbach's Alpha was used to examine the reliability, which shows how frequently items in a scale are closely associated with one another (Sekaran, 2003). Past research by Sekaran indicates

that items with a Cronbach's alpha of .7 or higher seem reliable and should be retained in the study. Thus, the table above shows that the scale items' alpha values are above .7 confirmed that the items are reliable. (Table 2)

**Table 3 Sample adequacy**

	SL Independent variable	OCB Dependent variable	QWL Mediating variable	WS Mediating variable
KMO	.886	.860	.790	.830
BTS	$\chi^2$ (937.910)	$\chi^2$ (673.251)	$\chi^2$ (306.640)	$\chi^2$ (469.026)
Value of p	.000	.000	.000	.000

In the table 3, considering that the study's variables have KMO values more than .5, the sample meets the requirements (SAMPLE adequacy) based on the aforementioned findings. According to this, the BTS

values of the study's variables are significant, indicating that the alternative hypothesis is accepted. (Table 3)

Table 4 Hypothesis testing

	Relationship	Beta	T	P	Decision
(H1)	SL → OCB	.578	11.583	.000	Supported
(ANOVA: 134.168, P < .05)					

This research hypothesis is illustrated in table 4. Based on finding, hypothesis 1 (Beta= .578, T=11.583, P< .05) suggest that spiritual leadership has a positive and significant relationship with organizational citizenship behavior. Hence, H4 was supported.

Furthermore, the value of b shows that a change of one unit in the predictor (spiritual leadership) would result in a change of 57% units in the outcome variable (organizational citizenship behavior). Thus, a high value of F and a significant value of P indicated the overall fitness of the model. (Table 4)

Table 5 Mediation test-1

SL -> QWL -> OCB					
Model Pathways	Beta	T	P	LLCI	ULCI
SL -> QWL	.5634	13.0684	.000	.4784	.6484
QWL -> OCB	.6056	8.3674	.000	.4628	.7484
Total effect	.5783	11.5831	.000	.4798	.6768
Direct effect	.2371	4.0172	.000	.1207	.3535
Indirect effect	.3412			.2553	.4252
Sobel test	<b>7.045</b>				<b>Partial Mediation</b>

Table 6 Mediation test-2

SL -> WS -> OCB					
Model Pathways	Beta	T	P	LLCI	ULCI
SL -> WS	.7868	15.3723	.000	.6858	.8877
WS -> OCB	.3426	5.5531	.000	.2210	.4643
Total effect	.6291	13.4449	.000	.7214	.6893
Direct effect	.3596	5.5185	.000	.2310	.4881
Indirect effect	.2696			.1664	.3897
Sobel test	<b>5.222</b>				<b>Partial Mediation</b>

In this study, the influence of work-life quality, and workplace spirituality as mediators between spiritual leadership and organizational citizenship behavior was investigated. This research assumes H2 and H3 for empirical investigation purposes.

According to Mediation test-1, Quality of work life mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. The results of H2 (Z=7.045, P=.000) suggest that quality of work life positively mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. Thus, H2 hypothesis of this research is accepted. (Table 5)

Likewise, Mediation test-2, workplace spirituality mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. The results of H3 (Z=5.222, P=.000) suggest that workplace spirituality positively mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. Thus, H3 hypothesis of this research is accepted. (Table 6)

### Discussions

This research finding contributes to the theory of spiritual leadership, by examining the association between spiritual leadership and organizational citizenship behavior in higher educational institutions located in the province of Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa. The research started with establishing a conceptual framework based on past researches on spiritual leadership, quality of work life, workplace spirituality, and organizational citizenship behavior, with a special focus on educational institution where feasible.

The results of the research revealed that organizational citizenship perform in higher education institutions are positively influenced by spiritual leadership. Spiritual leadership promotes an immense feeling of fulfillment by encouraging workers to identify meaning and purpose in their job. Trust, empathy, and honesty are given first priority, which fosters a workplace where workers feel appreciated and empowered. Decision-making inside the company is guided by ethical principles that promote integrity, responsibility, and equity. The results of this study also showed that workplace spirituality and quality of work life significantly mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. The current study's findings are consistent with other research confirming the positive and important effects of spiritual leadership on employees' organizational citizenship behavior (Subhaktiyasa et al., 2023; Harmeka, Asmony, & Nurmawanti, 2023; Sholikhan, Wang, & Li, 2019; Pio & Tampi, 2018).

### **Practical Implications**

This study offers valuable knowledge that could influence management and leadership development in similar institutions about the important role of Spiritual Leadership in enhancing OCB and related facets in higher education institutions. Establishing an association between an individual's religious values and good company behavior is an essential element of spiritual leadership. Practicing spirituality at work is encouraging since it improves the efficiency of the institution as a whole as well as the performance of those working there. By reflecting these principles in their choices and actions, leadership provides an example for others to follow, encouraging them to adopt the same mindsets. Institutions can foster a sense of purpose and unity among their community members, inspiring them to make constructive contributions to the organization and its wider mission, by coordinating organizational practices and policies with basic spiritual values. The concept of spiritual leadership reveals that education institution progress is conceived and ordained as matters of spiritual integrity, as opposed to

considering workplace spirituality as a retreat into confusion against contemporary changes.

### **Limitations and future research recommendations**

The study was conducted through Pakistani higher education institutions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This type of institution is classified different in various countries as well as in various sectors. To validate the findings of this study, it is recommended for next study, to gather data from others sectors (e.g., healthcare center, insurance, services providers etc.). The study focused on Pakistani higher education institutions, and the correlations that were investigated may have been influenced by cultural variables. The assessments of spiritual leadership, quality of work life, workplace spirituality, and organizational citizenship behavior can be influenced by different cultural values, customs, and expectations. In order to gain an in-depth understanding of how these components perform in various cultural contexts, future study could examine cross-cultural differences. The outcome variable of the study was organizational citizenship behavior. Thus, organizational citizenship behavior, can take many other forms, including efficiency, innovation, quality, and overall performance. To have a better knowledge of the particular facets of organizational citizenship behavior influenced by SL and other variables, future research could examine these dimensions separately.

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