Does Person-Organization Spirituality Fit Stimulate Ethical and Spiritual Leaders:

An Empirical Study in Jordan

Abstract

Purpose: This paper emphasizes the theoretical relevance that workplace spirituality may add to the person-organization (P-O) fit theory through the examination of a framework which comprises how workplace and self-spirituality fit enhances the perceived P-O spirituality fit. A related aim is to test how the perceived P-O spirituality fit enhances both employees' ethical and spiritual leadership behavior.

Design/methodology/approach: Data were collected using a quantitative study of 132 employees across various organizations in Jordan. Data were firstly checked by the use of exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and reliability tests. Hypotheses have been tested by the use of hierarchical multiple regression analysis.

Findings: In line with the hypotheses, the study's results exhibited that workplace and self-spirituality fit positively enhances the perceived P-O spirituality fit. The results also show that the perceived P-O spirituality fit enhances both employees' ethical and spiritual leadership behaviors.

Practical implications: The present study warrants several practices for human resource management (HRM), policy and development. It suggests that HRM practices should encourage a more "spiritual- and ethical-friendly" environment by ensuring that staffing and other HRM responsibilities are clearly committed to ethics and supportive of spirituality. Specifically, within performance appraisal policies, HR managers may include specific policies and ethical action targets to promote more ethical behaviors. There may be regular monitoring to track the trajectory of the HRM practices in this regard.

Originality/value: The contribution of this paper extends beyond the vast literature on P-O fit with the generation of a new concept (i.e. P-O spirituality fit) to the literature in a Muslim-majority country. This offers reinvigorated awareness of the topic under study and suggests specific future research directions.

Keywords: Ethics, Leadership, Person-Organization fit, Spirituality

Introduction

With the increasing interest in and growing demand for ethical behaviors and standards in the workplaces, the topic of ethics and spirituality has been under increasingly more focus (e.g., Al Halbusi *et al.,* 2020). A key question asked by practitioners and academics is that what are the implications of workplace spirituality for workers' ethical and spiritual behavior? One common but broad answer is that spirituality has a demonstrable impact on some organizational outcomes (Mitroff and Denton, 1999; Pawar, 2009), and it may help people maintain ethical and spiritual behavior (McGhee and Grant, 2008). However, from a theoretical viewpoint, "the role of spirituality and religion in the workplace (SRW) is a relatively new area of inquiry" (Benefiel *et al.,* 2014, p. 175). Drawing on the P-O fit framework, the present study seeks to offer a fresh understanding through examining how the P-O spirituality fit may enhance employees' ethical behaviors (i.e., humanism and truthfulness) and spiritual leadership behaviors. This study is theoretically framed through the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory (Bakker and Demerouti, 2014) and the Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) theory (Schneider, 1987).

The extant literature pays attention to the linkages between the P-O fit in terms of tangible job elements (e.g., pay, and job stability) and some behavioral (Hoffman and Woehr, 2006) and attitudinal (Verquer *et al.*, 2003) outcomes. Prior studies directed their attention to explore how the P-O fit is linked with some organizational outcomes such as social responsibility and company's reputation (Carroll and Buchholtz, 2000) as well as ethical expectations and retention (Coldwell *et al.*, 2008). The lack of study regarding P-O spirituality fit leaves essential gaps and "many important questions about the nature of person–organization congruence remain unanswered" (Hoffman and Woehr, 2006, p. 390). Specifically, as Verquer *et al.* (2003) note, there are many questions yet to be rationalized in relation to the impact of P-O spirituality fit on workers'

ethical and spiritual behaviors. Hence, this paper seeks to address this gap in the literature through addressing the following objectives: (1) examine how workplace and self-spirituality fit enhances the perceived P-O spirituality fit, and (2) examine how the perceived P-O spirituality fit enhances employees' ethical behaviors (i.e., humanism and truthfulness) and spiritual leadership behaviors in a Muslim-majority country. Achieving these objectives will offer reinvigorated awareness of the implications of spirituality for workers' ethical and spiritual behaviors and suggest specific practices for HRM and employers.

The novelty of this paper lies in (1) generating beyond the classical concepts of goal, value, needs and personality-climate fit, to bring a new dimension to the P-O fit literature (i.e., spirituality fit), and (2) beyond scrutinizing how the P-O fit relates to some behavioral and attitudinal outcomes, this paper examines how the perceived P-O spirituality fit enhances employees' ethical behaviors (i.e., humanism and truthfulness) and spiritual leadership behaviors in Jordan.

The paper is organized as follows. First, a theoretical discussion is offered to identify and explain the variables under study. Second, the emerged framework is presented. Third, the research methodology and analysis techniques are explained. Finally, we present the results, discussion, and implications for practice and research.

Literature review

Theoretical underpinning

Concepts such as spirituality, ethics and P-O fit can be subscribe to several definitions and viewed in different ways. To handle this, this study adopts the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory (Bakker and Demerouti, 2014) and the Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) theory (Schneider, 1987) to theoretically underpin the emerged framework and the hypotheses formulated.

JD-R theory proposes that the existence of excessive job demands and the lack of job (or personal) resources will negatively impact certain job-related outcomes (Bakker and Demerouti, 2014). Job demands may include physical, social, psychological or organizational aspects of the job that need sustained and continuous efforts/skills that are linked with certain physiological or psychological costs (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008). Job resources may include physical, psychological, social, or organizational resources that are functional in accomplishing work tasks and goals. Xanthopoulou *et al.* (2007) extended this theory by highlighting specific personal resources including employees' skills and abilities to succeed in their work (Hobfoll *et al.,* 2003). In the present study, workplace spirituality is considered as a job resource, employees' self-spirituality is considered as a personal resource, and ethical and spiritual behaviors are considered as job-related outcomes. This theory lends support for our hypotheses.

In addition to the JD-R theory, the P-O fit paradigm used in this study is contextualized through the Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) theory (Schneider, 1987). In the ASA cycle, people are attracted to organizations that they perceive to be congruent with their personalities (Salter, 2006). This theory proposes that (1) people are attracted to organizations whose members share similar personality, values, interests, and other attributes; (2) organizations select individuals who have similar skills and abilities to their existing employees; and (3) over time, employees who do not fit well are more likely to leave.

Congruence between people and organizations

P-O fit addresses the outcomes of the link between workers and their organizations (Kristof, 1996). This framework concerns how people flourish in a workplace which is congruent with their values and traits (Afsar and Rehman, 2015). This paradigm includes dimensions such as: values, goals,

personalities, and climate of the organization. Another related paradigm, suggested by Verquer *et al.* (2003), is the needs-structure paradigm, which suggests a fit between people's needs and organizational processes (such as promotion and pay plans). These paradigms and frameworks can be contextualized through the Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) theory as proposed by Schneider (1987). In the ASA process, people are attracted to organizations that they perceive to be congruent with their personalities (Salter, 2006).

According to prior research, there are three procedures to measure the P-O fit: (1) objective, (2) subjective and (3) perceived fit procedure (Hoffman and Woehr, 2006). Objective P-O fit includes an objective comparison between a person's and their organization's characteristics by referring to someone else's opinions and insights about the organization. The subjective fit is based on the judgment of how well an individual believes he or she fits with an organization (Cable and Judge, 1996, Cable and Parsons, 2001). This type of fit is used when individuals are required to rate how they fit in with their organizations through a straightforward question. In relation to the third type (i.e., perceived fit), this assessment incorporates a comparison between two sets of scores (i.e., two separated variables) as evaluated by the same person (Verquer *et al.*, 2003).

Because assessing workplace spirituality needs a perception-based evaluation tool, we will use the perceived fit technique to evaluate and compare spirituality between people and their organizations. The justification for using the perceived fit is mandated as this allows researchers to test the value match at a perceptual level (Afsar and Rehman, 2015). Furthermore, the subjective fit procedure will be utilised by asking participants to rate how they fit with the organization directly.

Spirituality at organizational and individual levels

McGhee and Grant (2015, p. 13) define spirituality as "an inseparable dimension of a person that

provides an integrative factor evidenced in certain experiential and behavioral characteristics". To avoid viewing spiritualty from a single lens, McGhee and Grant (2015) highlight specific components of spirituality such as, exceed the limits of both psychic and physical conditions, connectedness with others, understand the wider meaning of one's actions, and develop one's inner self holistically in relationship to some absolute values. Authors such as Fry and Nisiewicz (2013) and Kutcher *et al*. (2010), posit that spirituality enhances both ethical praxis and management conduct, particularly if they are encouraged in organisations (McGhee and Grant, 2015). Previous literature defines spirituality at two main levels: organizational level (workplace spirituality) and individual level (individual spirituality).

At an organizational level, workplace spirituality highlights "the more intangible human experience of work" (e.g., fulfilling deeply personal and spiritual needs for growth) (Milliman *et al.,* 2017, p. 2). Jurkiewicz and Giacalone (2004) develop a framework of workplace spirituality which includes humanism, benevolence, justice mutuality, integrity, respect, receptivity, responsibility and trust. As suggested by Gupta *et al.* (2014), there are four dimensions of spirituality within the workplace; compassion, meaningful work, sense of community and organizational values. This is in light of Zhang's (2020) study which proposes similar components of workplace spirituality such as meaningful work, sense of community and alignment of values.

From another point of view, workplace spirituality "is a particular kind of psychological climate in which people view themselves as having an inner life that is nourished by meaningful work and takes place in the context of a community" (Duchon and Plowman, 2005, p. 816). In this study, workplace spirituality can be defined as "a framework of organizational values evidenced in the culture that promotes employees' experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected to others in a way that provides feelings of completeness

and joy" (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003, p. 13).

In Muslim-majority countries, Stephenson (2014) presents an established framework for spirituality at workplaces which includes several spiritual facilities and services, including prayer time provision, availability of ablution facilities, prayer mats, copies of the Quran and reformatted working hours for Muslim staff during Ramadan. In a more focused approach, Lips-Wiersma and Mills (2014) define workplace spirituality by focusing on certain values, such as a whole person, self-reflexivity, and deeper meanings of existence.

In relation to spirituality at an individual level, this concept is "mostly described as an idiosyncratic, multifaceted, elusive concept: difficult to be captured in a common definition" (Karakas, 2010, p. 91). The literature offers some feasible measures to develop and increase spirituality for individuals inside organizations. For example, Delaney (2005) suggests various approaches that can be used to offer spiritual care for individuals. One approach can be supported through prayer, meditation, and referrals to religion's scholars when needed. Miller and Ewest (2015) propose an organizational framework which includes four distinct approaches to addressing spirituality for people at work (i.e. faith-avoiding, faith-based, faith-safe, and faith-friendly).

Fetzer (1999) suggests certain approaches to understand spirituality at an individual level, such as asking to what extent one enjoys reading about religion or spending time in private thought and prayer. The present study considers Roof's (2015) view of individual spirituality. Roof (2015) suggests that spirituality may include prayer, meditation, reading scripture, or religious practices. Therefore, because this study will be conducted in a Muslim-majority country (Jordan), we follow the notion that individual spirituality is linked to religion based on (1) faith in the existence of Allah (Creator) and, (2) practicing religion (e.g., praying, fasting and reciting the holy books).

P-O spirituality fit

The P-O spirituality fit concept is supported by a recent article seeking to (1) illustrate commonalities between workplace spirituality and Person-Environment (PE) fit and, (2) highlight the unique contribution that workplace spirituality can add to traditional PE fit theory (Milliman *et al.*, 2017). Their study shows that the conventional P-O fit framework has been viewed as a psychological process linked to spirituality, which focuses on people's cognitive functioning and perceptual values (Milliman *et al.*, 2017).

Empirical research shows that P-O fit is significantly linked with employees' commitment and job performance (Kristof *et al.*, 2014) and also with work satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and intention to quit (Kristof *et al.*, 2005). Similarly, Kolodinsky *et al.* (2008) attempt to explore workplace spirituality outcomes, finding that organizational spirituality is positively related to job involvement, organizational identification, and work rewards satisfaction, and negatively linked to organizational frustration. Another interesting result, as reported by Pawar (2009), is that there is a relationship between workplace spirituality and work attitudes, yet there is no relationship between individual spirituality and work attitudes.

As shown in Afsar and Badir's (2017) study, workplace spirituality is positively linked with P-O fit. Further, Milliman *et al.* (2017) suggest that workplace spirituality is essential to improving the perceived P-O fit. In addition, Singhal and Chatterjee (2006) present a heuristic framework which identifies spiritual needs for workers inside the workplace, and provides guidance for organizations to implement them. The framework suggests that the congruence in individual and organizational spirituality will positively enhance the perceived P-O fit. Following these arguments and in light of the Attraction-Selection-Attrition (Schneider, 1987) theory, this paper posits:

Hypothesis 1. The congruence between participants' perceptions of workplace spirituality and their perceptions of self-spirituality positively enhances the perceived P–O spirituality fit.

Implications of spirituality for ethical and spiritual leadership behaviors

While the positive outcomes arising out of workplace spirituality have been demonstrated - such as job involvement and organizational identification (Kolodinsky *et al.,* 2008) - it remains to be understood how the fit in individual and workplace spirituality relates to both ethical and spiritual behaviors.

Ethical behaviors (i.e., humanism and truthfulness) are seen as frequent activities that stress integrity, loyalty to values, and ethical competence (Wang and Wan Wart, 2007). McGhee and Grant (2008) conducted a study on the linkages between workplace spirituality and individuals' ethical performance. They advance that "allowing and encouraging spirituality in the workplace leads to improved ethical behaviour at a personal level" (McGhee and Grant, 2008, p. 61). In addition, Duchon and Plowman (2005) note that individual spirituality contributes to the workplace spirituality and support ethical behaviors. Based on data collected from 51 branches of a retail organisation in the United Kingdom, Otaye-Ebede *et al.* (2019) show that spirituality in the workplace enhances indicators of one's ethical behaviors such as climate, prosocial motivation, and moral judgment. In addition, as noted by Kim *et al.* (2012, p. 208), religious discourses "continually highlight the ethical aspects of nearly every decision we make." Within similar lines, as noted by Al Halbusi *et al.* (2020), a high level of the P-O fit is related with multiple organizational outcomes including employees' ethical behavior.

In essence, literature on workplace spirituality and existing management research has afforded particular attention to individuals in terms of their personal, social and emotional aspects

(Milliman *et al.,* 2017). However, a full understanding of employees' ethical behaviors is lacking and sporadic. Based on the foregoing discussion and in light of the JD-R theory, the following hypotheses were proposed:

Hypothesis 2. There is a significant positive relationship between the perceived P–O spirituality fit and employees' ethical behavior.

Hypothesis 2(a). There is a significant positive relationship between the perceived P–O spirituality fit and employees' humanism.

Hypothesis 2(b). There is a significant positive relationship between the perceived P–O spirituality fit and employees' truthfulness and honesty.

Moving to the second construct, spiritual leadership is concerned with an intrinsic motivation model which incorporates vision, hope, faith, and altruistic love (Fry, 2003). Moreover, Fry (2003, p. 711) defines spiritual leadership as "comprising the values, attitudes, and behaviors that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one's self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership". Because spiritual employees are less fearful, more committed and more ethical, organizations such as Big Six accounting's Deloitte and Touche, Taco Bell, Pizza Hut and BioGenenex, are conducting spiritual practices held in mosques, churches and temples (Mitroff and Denton, 1999, cited in Fry, 2003).

Pawar (2014) conducted an empirical examination on the relationship between individual and organizational spirituality and leadership spiritual behavior (LSB). Pawar (2014) found that a leader's individual spirituality accounted for significant variance in LSB. Furthermore, workplace spirituality was found to be significantly linked with LSB. Similarly, Hashemi *et al.* (2019, p. 8) found that "engagement in religious activities, and belief in [Allah] provide individuals with a

sense of significance, positive emotions, self-esteem, positive relations, sense of meaning, and purpose in life", as indicators of one's spiritual behaviors. Chowdhury (2018) examined the relationship between religiosity and voluntary simplicity (a sense of spiritual life.) The findings suggest that religiosity leads to a higher level of voluntary simplicity. From the Islamic lens, the Quran offers the idea of voluntary simplicity in following verse: Those who, when they spend, are not extravagant and not miserly, but hold a just (balance) between those (extremes) (Al-Furqan 25:67). Based on the aforementioned and in light of the basic notion of the JD-R theory, the following hypothesis was proposed:

Hypothesis 3. There is a significant positive relationship between the perceived P–O spirituality fit and spiritual leadership behavior.

Figure 1 maps all the hypotheses formulated.

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Methodology

The following sections illustrate the instruments, sampling procedure, analysis and results.

Measures

The following sub-sections illustrate all instrumentations used in this current study.

Workplace spirituality

This study uses Workplace Spirituality Scale (WSS) developed by Sheng and Chen (2012) to examine the extent to which the workplace values and offers spiritual beliefs and practices. In total, 13 relevant items were used which best reflect the conception of spirituality in Jordan. Some

examples are as follows: at work, I'm willing to influence others with a positive attitude and care; at work, I know how to meditate on my sense of self; my workplace provides a diverse and spiritual environment. For full access to the scale, see Sheng and Chen (2012). The items were anchored into a 5-point Likert scale.

Self-spirituality (self-evaluation)

This study adopts two measures: (a) Multidimensional Measure of Religiousness/Spirituality (MMRS) developed by Fetzer (1999) and (b) Intrinsic/Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scales developed by Allport and Ross (1967). As noted by Koenig (2008), the MMRS measure is the standard measure of religiousness and spirituality (as quoted in Feeman, 2011). This measure includes statements relevant to spiritual beliefs, experiences and coping domain on the one hand, and spiritual practices on the other (Freeman, 2011). It also contains overall self-ranking statements.

In light of the present study's objectives, Fetzer's (1999) subsets of spiritual practices and overall self-ranking were selected. Some examples are as follows: how often do you pray privately in places other than a mosque, church or synagogue; within your religious or spiritual tradition, how often do you meditate. See Fetzer (1999) for a full access to the scale. The items were anchored into a 5-point Likert scale.

Moving to the Intrinsic/Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale, as adopted from Allport and Ross (1967), the following questions were used to measure self-spirituality: I enjoy reading about religion; it is important for me to spend time in private thought and prayer; I try hard to live my life according to my religious beliefs; although I am religious, I don't let it affect my daily life; my whole approach to life is based on my religion.

In relation to extrinsic religion, the following items were used: I go to religious services

because it helps me to make friends; I go to religious services mostly to spend time with my friends; I go to religious services mainly because I enjoy seeing people I know there. The rationale for using the extrinsic religious scale is to evaluate the extent to which the participants carefully read and completed the questionnaire, given that this scale implies reversed questions. All items were anchored into a 5-point Likert scale.

Person-Organization spirituality fit

To measure the P-O spirituality fit, the subjective P-O fit scale was used as adopted from Cable and Judge (1996). Participants' subjective perceptions of the fit between their spirituality and workplace spirituality was measured with questions designed to test participants' agreement with the following statements: 'The spirituality and religious facilities of your organization satisfy your own spiritual and religious needs; My personal religiosity and spirituality match my organization's values and culture; My organization's values and culture provide a good fit with the things that I value in life in terms of religion and spirituality.' Responses were anchored on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree.) Judge and Cable (1997) reported an internal reliability of this scale at the level of .80. In addition, the validity of this scale has been also supported by Cable and DeRue's (2002) study which reports a reliability of .91 in a single-firm sample and .92 in a multiple-firm sample.

Ethical behaviors: humanism and truthfulness (self-evaluation)

This study uses the Administrative Ethical Behavior Scale (AEBS) developed by Öztürk (2012). The scale reaches 0.98 in Chronbach Alpha's test. This scale includes five subscales which are truthfulness and honesty, liabilities and supremacy of laws, rights and freedom, good human relationships and humanism, justice and equality. In this study, given that we seek to test how the

P-O spirituality fit enhances humanism and truthfulness, two subscales were used which are (a) humanism and (b) truthfulness and honesty.

In particular, 8 items were used to measure humanism, while 5 items were used to measure truthfulness and honesty. These items were used due to their high-factor loading values. Some examples of items to measure humanism are: listens to criticisms directed towards myself and deals with them constructively; do my best to get to know colleagues individually. The subscale of truthfulness and honesty includes items such as: do not abuse resources of the organization; do not disregard forgery and frauds. A 5-point Likert scale was applied. For full access to the scale, see Öztürk (2012).

Spiritual leadership behaviors (self-evaluation)

The Spiritual Leadership Behavior Scale (SLB) developed by Pawar (2014) was used for this study. Nine items were developed and used in this scale to describe leaders' behaviors towards subordinates in terms of spiritual values and practices (Pawar, 2014).

Responses were anchored on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree.) Participants were asked the extent to which they agree with certain statements. Some examples are: through my behaviors toward my subordinates, I express my respect for my subordinates' values. A 5-point Likert scale was applied. See Pawar (2014) for the full scale.

Procedure and demographic facts

Drawing on a convenience sampling procedure, and using online questionnaires, respondents were approached through personalized email invitations as well as social network posts. This is justified since the aim of this paper is to test the framework drawing on a sample of workers who are working in either private or public sector in Jordan. To maintain ethical standards in the data

collection process, participation was fully explained along with the right of withdrawal at any time. The participants were also informed that their identities and their specific work information will be kept anonymized. All identified scale items from the literature review are in the English language, while our survey covered a sample in an Arabic-speaking country (Jordan.) In this study, to ensure that the translation process has been undertaken appropriately, a translation-back-translation procedure was used.

Once the questionnaire was prepared, it was made available and distributed to employees online. In total, 132 questionnaires were received. The majority of the employees who participated in the survey work in the private sector (71.4%) and hold bachelor degrees (75%). In total, 49.2% of the respondents are aged between 25-34. Half are male (50.8%) while females constitute 49.2%. 99.2% of participants were identified as Muslims.

Self-report evaluation and common method bias

To address the common method bias, one technique is to control variables which are not considered as focal variables (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986). In this regard, we ran the analysis by controlling for different demographic data to decrease any methodological bias. In particular, we controlled for both religion and gender variables due to their natural linkages with the topic under study (see Multiple regression section.) Finally, after collecting data, we computed Cronbach's Alpha for all variables to confirm their reliability as demonstrated in the next section.

Presentation of the results

Due to the nature of research, and based on the above methodology, the presentation of the results is divided into five main parts: validity and reliability, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), correlation and multiple regression.

Validity and reliability

As shown in Table I, a reliability test was undertaken by computing Cronbach's Alpha to confirm the internal consistency of the scales:

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In validity terms, content, internal and external tests were established to ensure the reliability of instruments. Following comments, which mainly concentrated upon the relatedness of items and language consistency, the questionnaire was further developed. Internal validity "refers to the confidence we place in the cause-and-effect relationship" (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010, p. 233). This type of validity was recognized by relying on the P-O fit theory, in which the cause and effect relationships between variables were supported. In terms of external validity (i.e., the extent to which the results can be generalized) (Sekarean and Bougie, 2010), there is a generalizability concern given that the sample is limited in religious and geographical scope (99.2% Muslim population).

Construct validity: exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

The exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is suitable to categorize the items underlying a set of data (O'Rourke and Hatcher, 2013). EFA can be used to identify and categorize the items for each aforementioned variable. The following indicators should be measured to achieve the goal of this test: (1) Bartlett's test (p< 0.001, Saffari *et al.*, 2013), (2) KMO (greater than 0.50%, Kuegah 2006), (3) factor loading (greater than 0.3%, Lan 2009) and (4) percentage of variance (greater than 0.5%, Sinkovics and Ghauri, 2009). Table II shows the statistical values of Bartlett's test, KMO, factor loading and percentage of variance.

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In addition to the EFA test, both convergent and discriminant validity tests were used to further emphasize the construct validity (Pallant, 2016). Convergent validity examines whether the items that are expected to be related are indeed related, while discriminant validity tests whether the items that are supposed to be unrelated are not related (Dmitrienko *et al.,* 2007). As a rule of thumb, convergent validity can be established by looking at the average variance explained (AVE). AVE values should exceed 0.5 to verify whether or not the items are indeed related (Martínez, 2010). In the present study, AVE for all variables ranged between .34 and .73.

To assess the discriminant validity, we compared AVE values with the correlations between all variables. When the square root of the AVE value is greater than the correlation, a discriminant validity is established. Table III shows these values.

Correlation

Descriptive statistics, correlations and the square root of the AVE values are provided in Table III.

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Given that the correlation test is recursive (Sharma, 2005), a regression analysis was applied to further confirm or reject the proposed hypotheses.

Multiple regression

To test how the match in workplace spirituality and employees' self-spirituality may enhance the perceived P-O spirituality fit (H1), we first calculated the interaction between workplace and

employees' self-spirituality variables (*W-S * Self-S*). To limit the effect of multicollinearity, we followed Aiken and West's (1991) recommendation in which both variables (i.e., self-spirituality and workplace spirituality) were standardized.

According to Ro (2012, p. 954), "the interaction term represents a joint effect of the two independent variables and this effect accounts for additional variance in the outcome variable beyond that which is explained by either single variable alone". For testing the impact of the interaction term, one can use a hierarchical multiple regression in which the interaction term is entered in its own block, while the original variables are inserted in another block.

Following this procedure, a direct relationship was tested between the interaction term (*W-S * Self-S*) and the perceived P-O spirituality fit variable. The result does not lend support for H1 by showing that the interaction between participants' perceptions of the workplace spirituality and their perceptions of their own spirituality has a non-significant (+) impact on the perceived P–O spirituality fit ($\beta = .130, P = .129$).

In relation to H2, this paper concerns two dimensions under ethical behavior variables which are "humanism" and "truthfulness" (see Measures section). Hence, two regression tests were conducted to examine H2(a) and H2(b) which hypothesize a significant positive relationship between P-O spirituality fit and humanism H2(a) as well as truthfulness H2(b).

We found support for H2(a) by showing a positive and significant relationship between the perceived P–O spirituality fit and humanism of employees ($\beta = .222, P = .010$). Nevertheless, H2(b) was not supported since the relationship between perceived P-O spirituality fit and employees' truthfulness is not significant ($\beta = .115, P = .187$).

Moving to H3, as posited, the regression test shows a positive and significant relationship between P-O spirituality fit and employees' spiritual leadership behavior (SLB) (β = *.248, P = .004),* providing support for H3. Table IV summarizes the results.

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While not specifically hypothesized, further examinations were conducted by applying a multiple regression test to determine the most influential factor/variable that improves (and increases) the outcome variables (humanism, truthfulness and SLB).

In particular, this test aimed to ascertain whether workplace spirituality or employees' spirituality had more (and significant) impact on the outcome variables while controlling for gender and religion constructs. The results show that when combining the two independent variables together, and controlling for gender and religion, workplace spirituality has more impact on humanism (β = *.435, P = .000*) and truthfulness (β = *.276, P = .003*) than employees' self-spirituality (β = *.091, P = .311, β = .077, P = .418*). Likewise, in relation to SLB, workplace spirituality is of higher importance than employees' self-spirituality (β = *.425, P = .000, β = .117, P = .186*).

Discussion

Because the most frequently used definition of the P-O fit concerns the congruence between individuals and their organizations in terms of values, goals and climate (Kristof, 1996), this study aims to (1) study the congruence between individuals and their organizations in terms of spirituality and, (2) extend the work of Hoffman and Woehr (2006) and Verquer *et al.* (2003) which focus on how the P-O fit is related to behavioral (e.g., commitment and job performance) and attitudinal (e.g., work satisfaction and intention to quit) outcomes through a determination of

how the P-O spirituality fit is linked with ethical and spiritual outcomes.

In testing hypothesis one, our results show that the interaction between workplace spirituality and self-spirituality has a positive (non-significant) impact on the perceived P-O spirituality fit, and this offers a contrary view to Milliman *et al*.'s (2017) study. We justify this result claiming that, according to the participants, self-spirituality was rated at a lower value (M = 3.59, SD = .487) in comparison to workplace spirituality (M = 3.71, SD = .564). While not specifically hypothesized, this difference between these scores indicates a significant variation (p = .026). This means that due to the incongruity between workplace spirituality and employees' self-spirituality, the interaction term has a non-significant impact on the perceived P-O spirituality fit.

Moving to the relationship between the the perceived P–O spirituality fit and employees' self-assessment of their ethical behaviour (i.e., humanism and truthfulness), the results demonstrate that the relationship between the perceived P-O spirituality fit and employees' self-assessment of their humanism (H2a) is significant (β = .222, P = .010), while the relationship between the perceived P–O spirituality fit and employees' self-assessment of their truthfulness and honesty (H2b) is not significant (β = .115, P = .187). This can be justified by defining spiritual humanism as "a divergence from views in the supernatural to explain phenomena or morality in favour of reason and rationality" (Havens, 2013, p. 34). The positive relationship with humanism is part of Islamic cultural expectations in Muslim majority countries. As defined by Kraemer (1984, p. 146), Islam is related to "brotherhood of believers, the values of fidelity, justice, honor, mutual assistance, charity, respect for parents and protection of orphans." In this hypothesis, it can be concluded that Islam is very influential on spiritual humanism and provides assurance to employees towards ethical behavior.

From another point of view, the insignificant relationship with truthfulness and honesty is justified as an internal and personal factor which depends chiefly upon individuals' ability to justify acts or behaviors based on various interpretations of Islamic religion (Koburtay *et al.*, 2018).

In support of the hypothesis which predicts that the perceived P-O spirituality fit is positively related to spiritual leadership behavior (H3), our results confirm this prediction (β = *.248, P = .004).* These findings help to establish that spirituality at both individual and organizational levels is essential to cultivate more ethical employees and spiritual leaders. Klenke (2005) suggests that leadership has a critical role in workplace spirituality; leaders who focus on organizational spirituality as well as self-spiritual values and practices can contribute to workplace spirituality facilitation (Pawar, 2009). Our results lend support for prior studies (e.g., Al Halbusi *et al.,* 2020; Duchon and Plowman, 2005; McGhee and Grant, 2008; Otaye-Ebede *et al.,* 2019) which show that in workplaces, people try to maintain good relationships, truthfulness and honesty by integrating and practicing spirituality.

Theoretical implications

A clear conflict between both managerial and theoretical contributions has been detailed as a relevant gap in spirituality literature. The importance of this study was mandated through a theory shortage and other practical concerns. Specifically, the study presents a contextual and novel framework to understand the linkages between spirituality and employees' ethical and spiritual behaviors at work in a Middle Eastern context; a Muslim-majority country. This offers a fresh and nuanced understanding of the linkages between workplace spirituality and employees' ethical and spiritual behaviors.

From a theoretical viewpoint, as demonstrated in the literature, much is left to be

understood about the linkages between workplace spirituality and P-O fit. Therefore, a number of contributions have been offered to the P-O fit's conceptual repertoire, with typologies of ethical and spiritual leadership. This has been conducted by extending the existing theoretical development of the P-O fit framework through generating a new dimension, i.e. spirituality fit, and further examining its linkages with employees' ethical behaviors and spiritual leadership behaviors. Additionally, this study extends preceding literature which is concerned with distinguishing spirituality from religiosity, without addressing some organizational and individual outcomes, which this study has focused upon.

Furthermore, although there is awareness among practitioners and academics about the importance of spirituality and ethical practices (e.g., Coldwell *et al.,* 2019), there is a lack of debate, with the exception of some recent work (e.g., Armitage, 2018), around such practices of much HRM research and literature (Winstanley and Woodall, 2000). Therefore, towards the consolidation of existing theory of the linkages between spirituality and HRM, this study offers a fresh and nuanced understanding by highlighting how spirituality may be particularly relevant in topical areas of HRM.

Practical implications

This study has important practical implications. First, it recommends HR managers to consider employees' participation in programmes and trainings highlighting the relevance and importance of spirituality at workplace. They are encouraged to consider workers in recruitment, selection, and other HR divisions for such trainings and programmes. More specifically, policymakers and HR managers are advised to support workplace spirituality and include specific spiritual practices as a component of their quality checklist and performance appraisals. Second, HR managers may pay further attention to enhancing the congruence between employees and their workplaces in

terms of spirituality, given that the realisation of such may push employees beyond conventional obligations to achieve organizational objectives ethically. This can be fostered through embedding the spirituality in HR policies, conducting spiritual meetings, or by offering programmes specific to spirituality and ethical development.

More broadly, this study argues that HRM practices should encourage a more "spiritual-friendly" environment by formulating strict policies and regulations to prevent all types of discrimination and prejudice against spiritual or religious workers. This can be implemented through following a specific code of ethics and applying discipline procedures. One further suggestion for HRM and policymakers is that they may establish a specific collaboration with governmental and private sector committee to prevent, or at least reform unethical behaviors by ensuring that staffing and other HRM responsibilities are clearly committed to ethics and morals. These committees may conduct a regular monitoring to track the trajectory of the HRM practices in this regard.

Thus to conclude, we argue that the study of spirituality and ethics at work is relevant specifically to the field of human resource management (Armitage, 2018; Petchsawang and Duchon, 2009) because it focuses not only on conventional spiritual practices, but rather may address specific approaches to individuals' selection, development and growth.

Limitations and future research

The exclusive reliance on self-report measures for all focal variables coupled with the usage of cross-sectional design raises concerns about potential common method bias. This key limitation can be addressed through employing a longitudinal design which may enable meaningful inferences about the causal ordering of the focal variables. Another limitation is the focus on a Muslim-majority country, and the response base comprising more than 99% who were Muslim.

The replication of this study in another non-Muslim majority country may offer an opportunity for future research.

Because spiritual theories were generally grounded in Western religious theology (e.g., Hegemen *et al.*, 2011), more studies are encouraged to incorporate in-depth analysis on religiosity and workplace spirituality in non-Western/Muslim majority countries (Fry, 2003). Therefore, this paper may be used as a heuristic approach to examine the match or mismatch between 'workplace spirituality' and 'individual spirituality' in certain regions such as the Middle East and South Asia. In particular, because Islam shows "that one's role on earth is to be a trustee of Allah and all activities should be an act of worship" (Sidek *et al.*, 2018, p. 700), it now becomes an empirical subject question to testable hypotheses concerning the differences between the conventional Western theories on spirituality and work with the Arab/Muslim approaches to spirituality. Moreover, for the HRM field, further empirical studies are encouraged to determine if spirituality is linked to other work-related outcomes such as job satisfaction, worker well-being and worker development. These suggestions may be addressed by future researchers through various approaches and study sites.

Conclusion

A number of key contributions to literature has expanded the P-O fit's repertoire, particularly bodies which focus on behavioral and attitudinal outcomes. Notwithstanding, with few notable exceptions, much is left to be grasped about the linkages between the P-O spirituality fit and spiritual and ethical behaviors. To address this gap in the literature, this paper takes a step towards consolidating the theoretical development of P-O fit and spirituality in a Muslim majority country. Specifically, this paper emphasizes the theoretical relevance that workplace spirituality may add to the P-O fit theory through examining how the P-O spirituality fit enhances both employees'

ethical and spiritual leadership behaviors. The study's results exhibited that the perceived P-O spirituality fit positively enhances both employees' ethical and spiritual leadership behaviors.

In light of this study's results, and towards a more "spiritual- and ethical-friendly" environment, we encourage HR managers and policymakers to consider a precautionary approach to enable full utilization and development of spirituality and ethics in workplaces. This study carries substantial theoretical and practical implications for scholars and practitioners.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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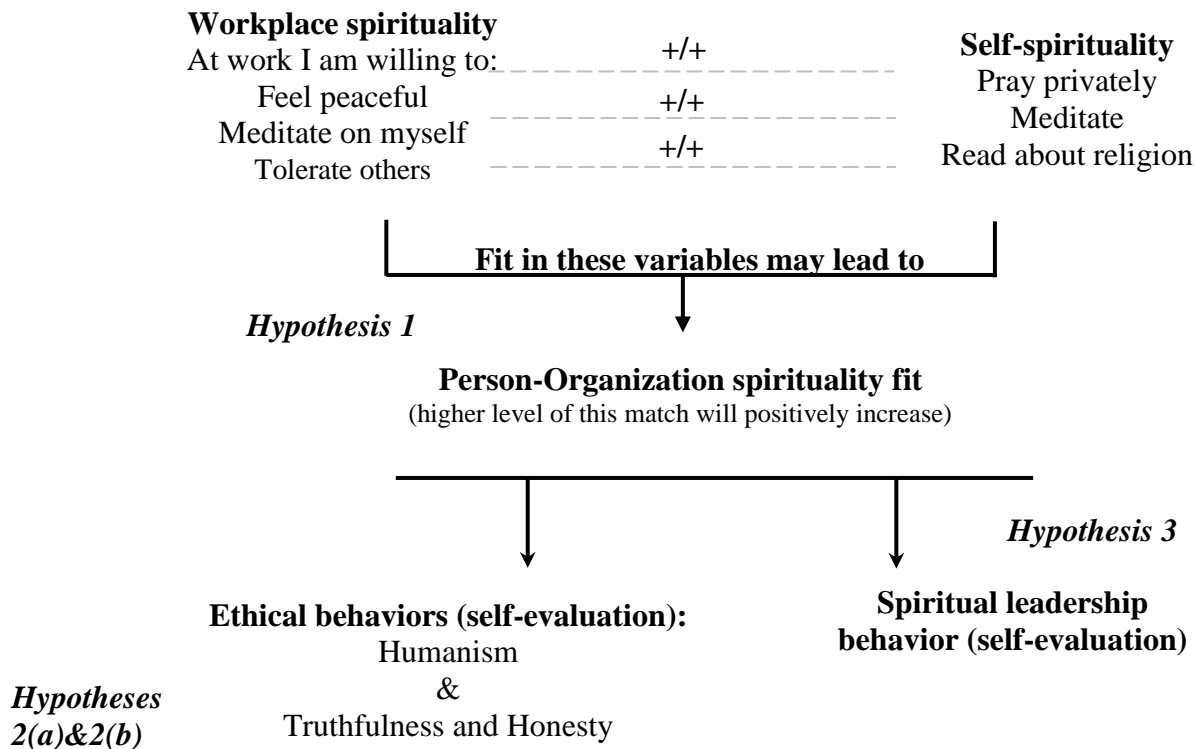
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Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

Workplace spirituality
At work I am willing to: $\quad$ +/+ $\quad$ **Self-spirituality**
Feel peaceful $\quad$ +/+ $\quad$ Pray privately
Meditate on myself $\quad$ +/+ $\quad$ Meditate
Tolerate others $\quad\quad\quad\quad\quad$ Read about religion

Fit in these variables may lead to

Hypothesis 1

Person-Organization spirituality fit
(higher level of this match will positively increase)

Hypothesis 3

Ethical behaviors (self-evaluation):
Humanism
&
Truthfulness and Honesty

**Spiritual leadership
behavior (self-evaluation)**

*Hypotheses
2(a)&2(b)*

Notes: P-O spirituality fit was assessed following subjective fit procedure

Table I. Reliability Test - Internal Consistency of the Scales

Number	Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Workplace spirituality	.832
2	Self-spirituality	.642
3	Person-organization fit	.806
4	Ethical behavior	.818
4.1	*Humanism*	.814
4.2	*Truthfulness and Honesty*	.763
5	Spiritual leadership behavior	.881

Table II. Factor Loading for all Variables

No. of items	Workplace-Spirituality	Self-Spirituality	Perceived P-O Spirituality Fit	Ethical Behaviors (Humanism)	Ethical Behaviors (Truthfulness)	Spiritual Leadership Behavior
			Factor Loading			
1	.444	.493	.720	.522	.583	.749
2	.269	.390	.907	.652	.637	.824
3	.687	.595	.931	.795	.806	.768
4	.540	.691		.798	.728	.762
5	.663	.719		.649	.825	.805
6	.498	.648		.610		.655
7	.415	.200		.612		.742
8	.392	.724		.619		.736
9	.656	-.575				.463
10	.750	-.606				
11	.764	-.594				
12	.669	.689				
13	.754	.485				
POV	35.683	34.533	73.571	43.967	52.120	53.277
KMO	.792	.789	.617	.781	.748	.859
BTS	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Note: Percentage of variance=POV; Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin=KMO; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity= BTS

Table III. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

| Focal variables | Scale | | Inter-correlation | | | | | | | |
	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 **Self-spirituality**	3.59	0.48	**0.58**							
2 **Workplace spirituality**	3.71	0.56	.363**	**0.59**						
3 **P-O fit**	3.09	0.99	.252**	.383**	**0.85**					
4 **Humanism**	4.06	0.58	.262**	.455**	.222*	**0.65**				
5 **Truthfulness and honesty**	4.66	0.50	.197*	.326**	.115	.325**	**0.72**			
6 **Spiritual leadership behavior**	4.38	0.55	.322**	.472**	.248**	.598**	.501**	**0.72**		
Control variables										
7 **Gender**	1.49	0.50	-151	.019	-.033	.066	.215*	.153		
8 **Religion**	1.01	0.17	-.304**	-.028	-.155	-.140	.059	-.164	-.088	

*M= mean; SD= standard deviation; * correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)*

Table IV. Regression Analysis

Independent variables	Dependent variables			
	Perceived P-O fit	*Humanism*	*Truthfulness*	*SLB*
	Regression test (β; P-Value; R^2; F)			
Self-spirituality (Self-S)	*β = .148, P = .091*			
Workplace spirituality (W-S)	*β = .370, P = .000*			
Interaction effect (W-S * Self-S)	*β = .130, P = .129* R^2=.177, F=2.34 *(H1) Not supported*			
Perceived P-O fit		*β=.222, P=.010* R^2=.049 *F=6.75* *(H2a) Supported*	*β=.115, P=.187* R^2=.013 *F=1.75* *(H2b) Not supported*	*β=.248, P=.004* R^2=.061 *F=8.48* *(H3) Supported*