The Impact of Organizational Spirituality on Employee Well-Being and Organizational Performance in Multicultural Workplaces

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Abstract

This research employs a unique qualitative strategy, utilizing a phenomenological approach to explore the influence of spiritual leadership on organizational well-being and employee experiences. By using in vivo coding, the study captures participants' authentic voices, offering detailed, firsthand accounts of how spiritual leaders foster creativity, trust, and motivation through genuine interpersonal interactions (RQ1/IQ1). The findings indicate that leaders' empathy and kindness, as demonstrated through effective communication, significantly enhance employee well-being and positively contribute to the organization's overall health (RQ2/IQ2). The study highlights that spiritual leaders' focus on listening to God's Word, along with their respect and empathy for followers, creates a supportive environment that links individual well-being with organizational success (RQ3/IQ3). This research offers unique insights into the connection between spiritual values and leadership practices, demonstrating that spiritual leadership fosters emotional bonds and enhances organizational performance. The results emphasize the importance of developing leadership programs that prioritize emotional intelligence, active listening, and spiritual inclusivity. Future research should investigate the long-term effects of spiritual leadership across diverse cultural contexts, with a focus on its adaptability to global workplace challenges and its role in promoting cross-cultural collaboration. The findings underscore the significant impact of spiritual leadership within modern organizational structures.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, empathy and kindness, interpersonal communication, spiritual leadership, organizational well-being

Karakas (2010) asserts the potential impact of integrating religious beliefs in organizations on productivity or profitability is a complex and controversial issue. Benefiel et al. (2014) note that some companies adopt a value-free approach by suppressing all forms of religious or spiritual expression. Hicks (2003) points out that a strict secularist stance, which prohibits any display of religion or spirituality in the

workplace, also imposes a values-laden perspective on its employees. Despite extensive research in these areas, gaps remain in understanding the cumulative impact of these factors on job satisfaction, particularly within a large-scale framework encompassing multiple sectors (Jo & Shin, 2025). Conversely, many scholars argue that spirituality can significantly enhance organizational performance (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Fry, 2005). This study provides preliminary evidence that integrating spiritual practices into the workplace can promote diversity and inclusivity, foster greater employee commitment, and help reduce stress and burnout, offering an optimistic outlook for the future.

Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2015) explored the implications of fostering a sense of spirituality within an organization, especially its impact on employee well-being across different cultural backgrounds and its influence on overall organizational performance. Their analysis emphasized the importance of inclusive spiritual practices, the challenges of integrating spirituality in a multicultural environment, and the potential benefits for both employees and the organization. Karakas (2010) proposes that cultivating and expressing the spirit at work could help address stress and burnout while promoting positive outcomes for employee well-being. Burack (1999) contends that many employers are encouraging workplace spirituality to enhance staff satisfaction, dedication, and effectiveness. Villani et al. (2019) observed that spirituality and religiosity are connected to positive subjective well-being. Lee et al. (2018) conducted a comprehensive meta-analysis of research on multicultural work groups to evaluate existing literature on cultural diversity within teams. Their study aimed to reconcile differing perspectives and previous findings while clarifying the mechanisms and contextual factors that influence how diversity impacts team outcomes. Lee et al. assert that cultural diversity does not directly affect team performance; instead, process factors such as creativity and cohesion mediate its effects.

Recent studies (Haly-Ministries, 2020; Laker, 2025; Miner, 2017) emphasize the vital role of spiritual leadership in fostering creativity, trust, and motivation through authentic interpersonal communication. Research shows that spiritual leaders who practice genuine communication can strengthen team unity and encourage innovation (Miner, 2017). The importance of empathy and kindness in leadership is highlighted, as these qualities are essential for employee well-being, stress reduction, and job satisfaction, ultimately improving organizational health (Laker, 2025). Spiritual leaders who focus on listening to God's Word and empathizing with their followers create a supportive environment that promotes individual and organizational well-being (Haly Ministries, 2020). These leaders cultivate a sense of purpose and belonging, which boosts employee engagement and overall organizational effectiveness while providing reassurance and confidence in their leadership.

It is essential to deepen our understanding of organizational spirituality, empowerment, diversity, empathy, motivation, and how leaders can foster a positive

work environment, boost morale, and enhance overall productivity. In this context, spiritual leadership plays a crucial role. The current study logically builds on Phase 2 of the research, using the data gathered in Phase 1. The aims are achieved by thoroughly examining various principles, literature, concepts, and theories to address the research questions (RQs) fully. This focus on spiritual leadership provides reassurance and confidence in its ability to improve employee well-being, encouraging further exploration and application.

> (RQ1): How do you experience and make meaning of spiritual leadership practices—specifically when leaders seek to hear God's Word while attentively empathizing with and respecting you—and how do those experiences relate to your personal well-being and your perceptions of organizational health?

> (RQ2): How does your organization demonstrate that spiritual leaders foster creativity, trust, and motivation among followers through genuine interpersonal communication?

> (RQ3): How do you experience and interpret the spiritual leadership of those who demonstrate personal growth while fostering the development of others in diverse communities, and how does their practice of delegation and empowerment shape your sense of belonging, purpose, and organizational well-being?

Principles

As previously mentioned, the current research systematically builds on Phase 2, using data collected in Phase 1. Winston (2023) points out that Caulton (2022) and Puppo (2022) share similar principles, including the importance of focusing on hearing God, empathy and respect, compassion, active listening, sharing knowledge, development, and empowerment. These principles are especially relevant for understanding how spiritual leadership impacts employee empowerment and creativity. Henson (2022) states that biblical organizational spirituality centers on Jesus Christ as the source of life and purpose. He explains that a literature review on organizational spirituality and workplace faith has identified specific themes aligned with the three levels of organizational spirituality. According to Henson (2022),

> (A) Intrapersonal aspects include spiritual identity, biblical values, Godly purpose, meaningful work, dependence, faith, integrity, spiritual formation, and personal development. (B) Interpersonal dynamics involve a range of values such as service, sacrifice, stewardship, generosity, empathy, compassion, inclusion, diversity, justice, trust, mutual respect, love, teamwork, communication, and empowerment. (C) Organizational elements comprise

values, a collective mission, shared vision, common purpose, social responsibility, community engagement, and a collective commitment (p. 4).

Principle 1: Spiritual Leaders Focus on Hearing the Word of God as They Pay Attention, Have Empathy for, and Show Respect to Their Followers (Puppo, 2022)

This principle emphasizes the importance of spiritual leaders being attentive to their followers, demonstrating empathy and respect, and focusing on the teachings of the Word of God. Evidence suggests that spiritual leaders should prioritize listening to the Word of God, paying close attention to their followers, and showing empathy and respect toward them. Fee (1995) supports the pastoral duty of leaders to engage deeply with Scripture, not only for personal growth but also to guide their communities with honesty and integrity. He highlights Paul's directive to "rightly divide the word of truth" (*English Standard Version Bible*, 2001, 2 Tim 2:15), reinforcing the importance of careful study and precise teaching of God's Word. Fee connects this to the broader pastoral responsibility of fostering a community built on mutual respect, empathy, and attentiveness, which aligns with the principles outlined by Puppo (2022). Paul's instructions serve as the foundational element of RQ1 and significantly influence interview question one (IQ):

> RQ1/IQ1: How do you experience the leadership of those who focus on hearing God's Word while paying attention, empathizing with, and respecting you, and how do those experiences influence your sense of personal well-being and your perception of the organization's overall health

Henry (1996a) asserts that effective spiritual leadership requires a deep engagement with and understanding of the Word of God, which allows leaders to provide meaningful guidance to their followers. Effective listening is a key part of successful leadership. Active listening involves an open mind, welcoming the opportunity to hear different ideas, accept various perspectives, and consider new possibilities (Center for Creative Leadership, 2019).

Additionally, Psalm 1:2 describes the blessed person as someone who "meditates on God's Law Day and night," highlighting the importance of continuous engagement with God's Word (Henry, 1996a). This implies that spiritual leaders should deeply engage with Scripture and consistently reflect on its teachings. In his commentary on 2 Corinthians 4:2, Henry explores the Apostle Paul's emphasis on transparency and integrity in ministry. Paul condemns secretive or deceptive practices and instead advocates for honest proclamation of truth. Henry emphasizes that true ministry is rooted in honestly and clearly presenting the Gospel, engaging each person's conscience before God. Alongside Henry's insights, Fee (1995) further discusses the pastoral

implications of 2 Timothy 2:15, asserting that spiritual leaders must be thoroughly involved with Scripture, ensuring accurate interpretation and application. Fee notes this diligent approach strengthens the leader's spiritual foundation and fosters a culture of respect and empathy within the congregation. This perspective suggests that spiritual leaders should focus on faithfully following God's Word while caring for and respecting their followers. Collectively, these passages show that spiritual leaders should prioritize listening to God's Word, being attentive to those they lead, and demonstrating empathy and respect through their leadership.

Principle 2: Effective Spiritual Leaders Facilitate Interpersonal Communication Among Followers (Caulton, 2022)

Several scholars in organizational behavior (Bakar et al., 2010; Jachowicz, 2016) recognize the critical mediating role of interpersonal communication satisfaction in their studies of the relationships between different leadership practices and various employee outcomes. The observations by Bakar et al. and Jachowicz highlight a connection to the second interview question, especially regarding leadership practices and the resulting effects at the employee level. Their comments significantly influence RQ2/IQ2:

> RQ2/IQ2: How does your organization demonstrate that spiritual leaders foster creativity, trust, and motivation among followers through genuine interpersonal communication?

Earlier studies (Thanacoody et al., 2009) show that open and regular communication among supervisors and colleagues, as well as satisfaction from effective conversations with management, can improve clarity about roles and expectations. This, in turn, helps reduce emotional exhaustion and lowers the risk of job burnout among employees. Concerning Ephesians 4:15–16, Henry (1996b) emphasizes the importance of speaking truth with love and the need for spiritual growth in Christ. The discussion focuses on the necessity for believers to share truth with love and foster unity within Christ's body. Henry's insights on spiritual growth and maturity are enlightening, demonstrating how each member contributes to the church's development, with Christ as its head. This passage highlights the importance of truth and love in fostering spiritual harmony and growth within the Christian community. In his commentary, Henry interprets James 1:19 as a call for moral restraint, urging believers to be "quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger" (*English Standard Version Bible*, 2001). This verse is seen as an invitation for believers to stay attentive and receptive to God's word, emphasizing patience and self-control in communication and reaction. Henry stresses that this behavior reflects insight and mature faith, leading to a more just and balanced life. These qualities are essential for living in harmony with divine principles, showing that anger often hinders spiritual progress.

Proverbs 27:17 highlights the transformative power of relationships in fostering growth and understanding. Henry (1996a) argues that people improve one another through meaningful contact and mutual accountability, similar to iron sharpening iron. This idea aligns with the broader biblical theme of community, where interactions support spiritual and personal development (Creswell, 2013). The proverb indicates that positive interactions boost individual effectiveness and enhance communal well-being. Engaging in such relationships requires humility, openness to feedback, and a commitment to mutual growth, reflecting the scriptural call to "spur one another on toward love and good deeds" (*English Standard Version Bible*, 2001, Heb 10:24).

Principle 3: Effective Spiritual Leaders Invest in the Diversity of Their Teams Through Delegation and Empowerment (Caulton, 2022)

El Boghdady (2025) asserts that embracing equality, diversity, and inclusion goes beyond ethical considerations; it is essential for advancing knowledge and solving global problems. Chengere and Bekele's (2024) research consolidates findings on leadership across different cultural settings, emphasizing the importance of cultural intelligence, inclusive leadership, and effective diversity management in improving organizational performance. The review critically examines the ethical and moral aspects of leadership, cross-cultural leadership frameworks, and the impact of diversity on organizational effectiveness. Additionally, it offers practical solutions to challenges in cross-cultural leadership, such as communication barriers and conflict resolution. Their work proposes strategies to develop cultural competence and create inclusive environments with clear implications for organizational practice. Chengere and Bekele's findings provide key insights for leaders, organizations, and policymakers to leverage diversity as a strategic asset for innovation and growth. Their review highlights the specific challenges of cross-cultural leadership and stresses the importance of adaptive leadership styles, community engagement, and capacity building in achieving organizational success. The issues discussed include communication obstacles, cultural expectations, dispute resolution, community involvement, and capacity development. Their findings underscore the importance of adaptive leadership, cultural intelligence, and continuous learning in overcoming these challenges and driving corporate success. Leaders skilled at managing these difficulties are more likely to foster innovation and growth worldwide (Chengere & Bekele, 2024). Chengere and Bekele's contributions regarding equality, diversity, and inclusion are significant in relation to RQ3/IQ3.

> RQ3/IQ3: How do you experience spiritual leaders who actively pursue personal growth while supporting the development of others in diverse communities, and how does their approach to delegation and empowerment influence your sense of purpose, belonging, and well-being within the organization?

When employees are encouraged to show engagement, they demonstrate increased commitment, motivation, and dedication to their professional roles. Al-Haj (2007) suggests that empowerment, by its very nature, aims to help those who are disadvantaged, facilitating a shift from a state of powerlessness to one of power, at both individual and collective levels. Several passages in the Bible demonstrate that effective spiritual leaders should foster team diversity through delegation and empowerment. For example, in Exodus 18:21–22, Moses assigns leadership duties to capable men, and in Acts 6:2–4, the apostles empower others to handle practical tasks, allowing them to focus on their ministry. Henry (1996a) highlights Jethro's advice to Moses as a fundamental principle in leadership, emphasizing the strategic delegation of responsibilities to capable individuals for better governance. In Exodus 18:17–23, Jethro notes Moses's extensive efforts in leading the people and recommends designating competent individuals to ease his leadership burdens. Henry underlines the wisdom of Jethro's counsel, emphasizing the importance of practical administration and the advantages of collective accountability in leadership.

The passage emphasizes the importance of teamwork and efficient organization in achieving effective leadership and preventing burnout. This supports the need for delegation and empowering others to assume leadership roles. According to Winston (2023), delegating enables leaders to free up time and allows followers to participate in productive information exchange. By implementing this strategy, leaders will discover that delegation fosters confidence within the team and enables them to concentrate their efforts on other priorities. Empowerment is achieved through trust and the exchange of information (Winston, 2023).

Henry (1996b) views Acts 6:1–7 as a crucial moment in early church leadership, emphasizing the appointment of seven deacons to address the concerns of Hellenistic Jews about fair food distribution, thus maintaining community harmony and apostolic focus. This verse shows the early church's commitment to fairness and the need for capable leadership. Henry highlights the wisdom of the apostles in assigning duties to meet both spiritual and practical needs. The event underscores the value of service, solidarity, and empowering capable individuals to support the growing church. Henry further explains 1 Corinthians 12:12–27, using the metaphor of the body of Christ to depict the profound unity and purposeful diversity within the church, emphasizing each member's unique yet vital role in fostering spiritual maturity. He demonstrates that each church member, like a body part, has a different purpose that contributes to the overall health and effectiveness of the whole. He stresses the importance of mutual care, relationships, and recognizing that all members, regardless of their roles, are essential for the body's optimal functioning. His discussion highlights the significance of unity in diversity, promoting a harmonious and collaborative community in Christ.

These biblical passages collectively underscore the responsibility of spiritual leaders to cultivate team diversity through thoughtful delegation and the affirmation of individual gifts. Such theological principles resonate with emerging scholarship on organizational spirituality. Henson (2022) argues that, despite a robust body of literature and conceptual ambiguity in organizational contexts, spirituality extends beyond personal experience and relational dynamics, permeating the organization's ethos itself. Similarly, Crossman (2016) emphasizes the necessity of harmony between individuals and their organizational environments, suggesting that spirituality fortifies the bond among individuals, their sense of purpose, and the broader community.

Literature Review

Mazzetti and Schaufeli (2022) highlight that the mechanisms linking engaging leadership to work engagement are a vital research area. They emphasize that effective leadership stems from identifying specific behaviors that foster positive outcomes by addressing individuals' needs. Hoek et al. (2021) emphasize the significant impact of leadership strategies and techniques on employee motivation and productivity, underscoring their critical role in achieving organizational success. Religious beliefs are key motivators that influence individuals' behaviors and attitudes in pursuit of personal and communal goals (Villani et al., 2019). Effective communication is crucial in religious contexts to improve mutual understanding and build community among participants (Croucher et al., 2017). These insights are essential for understanding how spiritual leaders can foster creativity, trust, and motivation among their followers.

Dimovski (2023) highlights that effective communication about religious diversity promotes mutual respect and understanding among employees. Building on this, Kwantes (2024) suggests that incorporating religious perspectives into organizational culture not only boosts workplace inclusivity but also increases employee engagement by recognizing and valuing different belief systems. Jo and Shin (2025) show that organizational culture significantly influences employees' attitudes and results, notably impacting their job satisfaction and overall engagement. Hoek et al. (2021) stress that factors like recognition, fairness, and participation are essential for fostering a positive work environment. According to Marques et al. (2009), the primary role of a leader is to provide ethical leadership. Marques et al. emphasize that spiritual principles and practices help leaders demonstrate ethical leadership, thereby supporting the spiritual growth of both individuals and organizations.

Henson's (2022) contributors (Buszka & Ewest, 2020; Crossman, 2016; Fry, 2003; Konz & Ryan, 1999) use grammatical-historical criticism and socio-rhetorical analysis approaches. Henson's research examines the concepts of biblical justice and shalom in Jesus's parable of the Good Samaritan found in Luke 10. It evaluates Jesus's actions in John 11 as a model for leadership during crises. The literature investigates leadership

insights through an analysis of John's account of the Last Supper in John 13. It also explores John 15, emphasizing the impact of spiritual formation on personal behaviors and relationships. The authors analyze how spirituality influences organizational change management in John 20 and consider its role in fostering unity, empowerment, and service, as exemplified in Acts 4. Henson's research, alongside contributions from various scholars, offers a comprehensive framework for examining how biblical principles and spiritual formation can enhance organizational spirituality and love. Ultimately, this promotes a more compassionate, resilient, and cohesive organizational environment. The findings by Croucher et al. (2017) and Villani et al. (2019) have significant implications for RQ1/IQ1.

RQ1/IQ1 explores how spiritual leadership influences organizational dynamics. Caulton (2022) examines the ways in which spiritual leaders foster creativity and trust within teams, highlighting these traits as essential drivers of innovation. Complementing this, Puppo (2022) emphasizes how spiritually grounded leadership promotes motivation, ultimately improving team cohesion and collective performance. The importance of authentic interpersonal communication is also emphasized, underscoring the value of genuine and empathetic interactions in leadership. Fry et al. (2017) show that spiritual leadership significantly enhances employees' sense of purpose and belonging at work. Their results indicate that a stronger connection to organizational values and mission increases commitment and boosts productivity. By focusing on intrinsic motivation and meaningful engagement, spiritual leadership helps create a workplace culture where employees are more aligned with shared goals and more willing to contribute to long-term success. Gotsis and Grimani (2017) highlight that integrating spiritual values within leadership frameworks encourages greater inclusivity by fostering respect for diverse beliefs, worldviews, and personal meaning-making. Their research suggests that such integration promotes psychological safety and emotional well-being, both individually and collectively, by aligning workplace culture with values of compassion, integrity, and shared purpose. This alignment cultivates environments where employees feel genuinely seen and supported, improving collaboration and overall organizational health.

Organizational Spirituality and Love

Building on the solid foundation of the leader-member exchange (LMX) theory, Angeles (2024) explores different expressions of biblical love. She examines their relevance in modern workplaces, especially in nurturing leader-follower relationships and influencing organizational performance. Angeles suggests that, by drawing inspiration from the Word of God and viewing Jesus as a model of leadership rooted in love for His followers, several key concepts emerge that represent the biblical qualities of love: kindness, patience, happiness, diligence, equality, self-acceptance, and optimism. Angeles argues that various ways a leader shows affection can significantly boost

employee performance, fostering stronger leadership and organizational effectiveness. Marques et al. (2009) state that ethical leaders act as moral individuals, demonstrating ethical behavior and caring for their followers. Marques et al. also argue that personal experience teaches most people that fear is love's spiritual, emotional, and psychological opposite.

According to Marques et al. (2009), no one is motivated by fear. Marques et al. emphasize that the opposite is true: Fear motivates people but does not inspire them. Love is the consistent source of most human inspiration. Bocarnea et al. (2024) state that different types of love exist. For example, *agape* (¢γ´απη) love is described as an unconditional and sacrificial love that exists between God and humanity (John 3:16) or between God the Father and God the Son (John 3:35, 15:9, 17:23–24). Bocarnea et al. highlight that the expressions of self-sacrificing agape love are shown in John 13:34 and 15:12–13. Based on a Greek translation, Bocarnea et al. clarify that agape is a form of selfless love characterized by its unconditional and limitless nature. The ancient philosopher Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.) emphasized that balance in relationships emerges through intentional expressions of love, suggesting that individuals often love others for specific reasons. This concept is further explored and interpreted in the 2011 edition of *Nicomachean Ethics* (Aristotle, ca. 250 B.C.E./2011).

Hees (2024) argues that joy arises from moments that acknowledge the spiritual significance of events and individuals depicted in Scripture. This view affirms that every person has inherent worth, rooted in the divine image given by the Creator. The crucifixion of Jesus Christ demonstrates the profound depth of divine love, revealing the innate value of humanity within God's redemptive plan for salvation, as further examined in Hees's earlier theological reflections from 2004. Through this act of sacrificial grace, believers see not only redemption but also the extraordinary compassion that underlies the Christian story. Despite this central theme, the two greatest commandments—loving God with all your heart and loving others as yourself—are increasingly pushed aside in modern discussions.

Hees (2024) emphasizes how these essential teachings, crucial to Christian ethics and spiritual growth, are often overlooked amid modern distractions and ideological divisions. Consequently, Jesus and the apostles frequently urged their followers to cultivate love for one another, stressing the rejection of self-love and the importance of humility and selflessness. Compassionate leaders recognize the intrinsic value of their followers as unique individuals (Hees, 2024). Hamilton and Winston (2022) highlights the importance of love within the context of organizational spirituality.

The discussion focuses on the vital role of love, respect, compassion, and teamwork in cultivating a spiritually rich organizational culture. Hamilton and Winston (2022) emphasizes that love at work builds a sense of community, strengthens mutual support,

and fosters a positive and inclusive environment. This results in improved employee well-being, increased job satisfaction, and a more effective organization. Such benefits boost employee satisfaction. Happy employees tend to be more engaged, have better social interactions, and work harder. Employee happiness enhances organizational performance by increasing productivity, financial success, and customer satisfaction (Hees, 2024). Angeles (2024), Bocarnea et al. (2024), Hees (2024), and Hamilton and Winston's (2022) perspectives align with the impact of RQ2/IQ2.

RQ2/IQ2 underscores the significance of empathetic leadership in corporate settings. It stresses the need for leaders to demonstrate empathy and kindness to create a supportive work environment, which can improve employees' mental and emotional health (Madden, 2024). The insights from this question can guide leadership development initiatives, emphasizing the growth of emotional intelligence, empathy, and interpersonal skills (Jordan, 2025). This question links individual well-being with organizational success, prompting leaders and organizations to adopt a more human-centered leadership style.

Well-Being and Spirituality

Ashforth and Pratt (2015) describe spirituality as an ongoing process—one that serves as a goal in itself rather than a destination that must be reached. In its transcendent form, spirituality involves engaging with the intangible aspects of human experience, such as meaning, purpose, and connection. However, within organizational contexts, they observe a common focus on measurable outcomes and tangible results. Procedures and immaterial elements, including spiritual values, are often viewed as tools to achieve objectives rather than as ends in themselves. Building on this view, Villani et al. (2019) examine the relationship between spirituality, religion, and subjective well-being. Their findings indicate that while both concepts can positively impact personal fulfillment and life satisfaction, the evidence is mixed across studies, highlighting the complexity of how spiritual and religious factors interact with individual well-being. Villani et al. argue that this inconsistency probably stems from inadequate operational definitions of the constructs and from overlooking the moderating effect that people's status may have on the relationship between spirituality/religiosity and subjective well-being, a connection of great importance.

Balzarotti et al. (2016) believe that many factors influence how people assess different parts of their lives, including personal traits that distinguish joyful from discontented personalities, the values people find important and worth pursuing, and the fulfillment of social needs. Ruggeri et al. (2020) suggest that well-being is closely linked to success in professional, personal, and social areas. People with high well-being show increased productivity, better learning ability, greater creativity, more prosocial actions, and healthier relationships.

Research by Cohen et al. (2025) employs mediation analysis, revealing a complete mediation effect in which the frequency of adverse life events influences well-being by improving positive and negative religious coping methods, compassion, and resilience. Their study uncovers additional mediation pathways through religious coping and resilience. Cohen et al. found that positive religious coping is associated with increased resilience and improved well-being. Conversely, negative religious coping is associated with reduced resilience and lower well-being. Ruggeri et al. (2020) suggest that well-being is defined as the absence of mental illness and the perception of a satisfying life. Furthermore, Ruggeri et al. note that well-being is correlated with success in professional, personal, and interpersonal areas. Individuals with high well-being exhibit greater workplace productivity, improved learning outcomes, increased creativity, more prosocial behaviors, and stronger relationships (Ruggeri et al., 2020).

Aten et al. (2015) emphasize the contradictory role of religion as a coping tool, noting that while it frequently offers comfort during tough times, traumatic events can significantly shake a person's faith. Such disruptions may challenge fundamental beliefs about oneself, the world, and the divine, resulting in spiritual confusion and weakened social support networks. This complexity indicates that religion and spirituality, though often linked to resilience, are not always helpful during struggles (Abu-Raiya et al., 2016; Campbell & Bauer, 2021).

Abu-Raiya et al. (2016) highlight that religious coping, like any psychological strategy, can lead to either positive or negative outcomes depending on how and when it is used. Positive religious coping—marked by spiritual support, forgiveness, and a feeling of divine connection—is usually linked to better adjustment. On the other hand, negative religious coping, which involves spiritual dissatisfaction or seeing the divine as punishing, is associated with greater distress and suffering (Pargament et al., 2000). Szcześniak et al. (2020) observe that seeking God's love and care, reinterpreting difficult situations as chances for growth, and relying on God for strength and comfort during tough times are examples of effective religious coping strategies. O'Brien et al. (2018) mention that disbelief in God's love, viewing a traumatic event as punishment, and feeling abandoned by both God and the faith community are signs of negative religious coping, often called a spiritual crisis or struggle.

Stringer's (2023) observations align with the focus of RQ3/IQ3. RQ3/IQ3 is crucial to the study because it explores the practical implications of each principle for employees' well-being and the overall health of the organization. RQ3/IQ3 emphasizes the significant influence of spiritual leaders who prioritize listening to divine teachings while demonstrating empathy and respect toward their followers. By building trust, emotional wellness, and mutual respect, this approach creates a workplace environment where individuals feel valued and supported. Such an environment not only improves interpersonal relationships but also promotes psychological safety, allowing employees

to engage more fully and authentically in their roles. As Muss et al. (2025) observe, these conditions are key to boosting morale and increasing productivity, highlighting the strategic importance of relational dynamics in organizational success. By integrating spiritual principles with compassionate leadership, organizations can foster a supportive atmosphere that aligns personal purpose with collective goals, ultimately enhancing overall well-being and performance (Reynaud & Bogacs, 2017). These leadership practices connect spiritual values to workplace dynamics, encouraging holistic growth and long-term success.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework outlined in the literature emphasizes the interaction among leadership, spirituality, communication, and organizational culture. It combines various theories and concepts. Mazzetti and Schaufeli (2022) highlight the engaging leadership theory, which connects specific leadership behaviors to fulfilling individual needs, boosting motivation, and enhancing work engagement. Spiritual leadership theory, studied by Fry (2003) and Marques et al. (2009), links spiritual principles and ethical leadership to positive organizational results. It emphasizes the role of spirituality in building trust, fostering creativity, and promoting ethical practices. Organizational culture theory, discussed by Jo and Shin (2025) and Kwantes (2024), examines how organizational culture shapes employee attitudes, inclusivity, and well-being. This aligns with leadership's role in fostering diversity and empowerment.

Croucher et al. (2017) and Dimovski (2023) emphasize communication and interpersonal relations, highlighting the importance of effective communication in religious settings and diverse workplaces to foster mutual respect and understanding. Henson (2022) uses biblical and spiritual foundations, drawing on principles like justice and unity, to explore how spiritual formation influences leadership behaviors and organizational environments. These theoretical elements provide a cohesive framework for understanding the role of spiritual leadership in shaping organizational dynamics, supporting well-being, and fostering inclusive and cohesive workplaces.

The conceptual framework emphasizes the interconnectedness of spirituality, well-being, leadership practices, and organizational outcomes. It is based on several key concepts to offer a comprehensive view. As Ashforth and Pratt (2015) explained, spirituality is a transcendent goal characterized by intangible qualities rather than tangible results, often serving as a means rather than an end within organizational contexts. Well-being is incorporated into the framework through its various dimensions, drawing on the work of Balzarotti et al. (2016), Ruggeri et al. (2020), Stringer (2023), and Villani et al. (2019). This includes subjective well-being, personal traits, values, and social needs, positioning well-being as both a contributor to and an outcome of professional, personal, and interpersonal success.

The framework further includes positive and negative religious coping, based on Abu-Raiya and Pargament (2015), Cohen et al. (2025), and Szcześniak et al. (2020). It distinguishes between positive strategies that build resilience and harmful coping mechanisms linked to spiritual crises or lower well-being. Spiritual leadership and compassionate practices are examined through the research of Muss et al. (2025) and Reynaud and Bogacs (2017), highlighting the role of leaders who incorporate divine teachings and empathy to foster trust, enhance emotional well-being, and boost organizational morale. Leadership, communication, and inclusion are practical elements of the framework, emphasizing the importance of fostering trust, creativity, and respect in diverse workplace settings through effective communication and compassionate leadership, as discussed by Dimovski (2023) and Hoek et al. (2021). This conceptual framework provides a foundation for studying how these concepts interact to influence employees' well-being, leadership effectiveness, and overall organizational health. It offers a perspective to understand the practical application of spiritual principles in leadership and their transformative impact on workplace dynamics.

Methods and Procedures

Phenomenological research develops rigorous methods and procedures to explore the lived experiences of individuals who are purposefully selected because they are relevant to the phenomenon being studied (Wertz, 2023). Semi-structured interviews and participant observations are the main methods used to gather detailed, rich data about participants' experiences and perceptions. The research employs a systematic approach to thematic analysis, which involves transcribing, coding, and interpreting data to identify key themes and patterns that emerge from participants' stories. While methodological triangulation often combines different data collection techniques (Creswell & Poth, 2018), semi-structured interviews and member checking together provide a unique approach. Semi-structured interviews offer depth and flexibility, enabling researchers to gain detailed insights through open-ended questions. At the same time, member checking verifies these insights by involving participants in confirming the accuracy of interpretations (Creswell & Poth, 2018). These methods enhance data richness, ensure authenticity, and strengthen the study's credibility. They help ensure the interpretations truly reflect participants' perspectives and experiences, reducing bias.

Design

A qualitative research design based on a phenomenological approach is used to examine how organizational spirituality influences well-being and performance in multicultural workplaces. The study aims to answer three main research questions (RQ1/IQ1; RQ2/IQ2; RQ3/IQ3). Semi-structured interviews collect qualitative data from professionals in various industries to explore the relationship among followership,

creative work environments, leadership dynamics, and effective communication. Data triangulation is employed through multiple sources, including interviews, observations, and written documents, to enhance the credibility and depth of the findings. This method ensures results are not dependent on a single data source and align with the phenomenological approach by capturing the complexity and richness of human experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Noble & Heale, 2019; Wertz, 2023). The study aims to provide valuable insights into how spiritual leadership fosters creativity, trust, motivation, and organizational well-being through authentic interpersonal communication.

Ethical integrity is fundamental to this research, acting as a safeguard and a guiding principle, protecting participants' rights, privacy, and dignity while also shaping methodological choices, promoting transparency, and exemplifying the leadership ethics being investigated. Informed consent is obtained by clearly communicating the study's goals, procedures, and potential risks, enabling participants to make voluntary and informed decisions about their involvement (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Ensuring confidentiality is equally vital, as researchers safeguard participants' identities and data to maintain trust and uphold ethical standards. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of respecting participants' beliefs and cultural values, fostering an inclusive and ethically responsible research environment (Wertz, 2023). By adhering to these principles, the research complies with ethical guidelines and prioritizes the well-being of all participants.

Participants

The participants in this study are crucial for understanding the phenomenon due to their diverse professional backgrounds, extensive experience, and shared spiritual beliefs. The group includes a 56-year-old female elementary schoolteacher with 30 years of teaching experience in science and mathematics; a 65-year-old male high school teacher with 40 years of experience in history and social studies; and a 57-year-old female logistics professional with 12 years of experience in supply chain management. The group also includes two food service managers: a 35-year-old female with 20 years of restaurant management experience and a 22-year-old male with five years in the fast-food industry. Eligibility criteria require participants to be full-time employees for at least five years, hold strong faith and spiritual beliefs, and be willing to participate in detailed interviews.

Guest et al. (2020) describe data saturation as the point where enough evidence has been collected to support analysis, with numerous examples provided for each category. Saturation significantly impacts the assessment of participant adequacy, requiring thorough engagement with interview questions to fully understand the phenomenon. In qualitative research, saturation occurs when data no longer reveals

new themes, patterns, or insights, indicating that further data collection is unnecessary (Saunders et al., 2018). Creswell and Creswell (2018) argue that a small, homogeneous sample can achieve saturation in studies with a specific focus, such as examining the relationship between leadership communication and its effects on followership. In this context, five participants are considered sufficient when the research questions are clear and the participants share similar experiences or backgrounds.

Data Collection

A semi-structured interview method gathers qualitative data from a diverse group of professionals across various industries to examine the relationship between followership, creative work environments, leadership dynamics, and effective communication (Galletta, 2013; Magaldi & Berler, 2020). The interviews take place at peaceful locations selected by the participants. The data is transcribed and securely stored on a password-protected desktop with multiple layers of security (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Wertz, 2023). This approach provides flexibility in the interview process, allowing for the discovery of unexpected insights and comprehensive perspectives from participants (Galletta, 2013). Carefully choosing participants from fields such as education, logistics, and food service—known for innovative work settings—serves as the initial step in data collection (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Participants engage in open-ended interviews designed to capture detailed perspectives on their experiences with leadership dynamics, communication techniques, and followership behaviors (Magaldi & Berler, 2020). The meticulous data collection process ensures the study's rigor and reliability, which are vital for its success (Galletta, 2013). This process demonstrates that the collected data thoroughly addresses the research problem with complexity, validating its content (Chadd et al., 2025; Perrier et al., 2017; Pfaffenlehner et al., 2025).

Ethical considerations are essential throughout the process, ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and participant anonymity (Kaiser, 2009; Wiles et al., 2008). The research follows established ethical standards and guidelines for qualitative studies involving human subjects, promoting a respectful and trustworthy research environment. The data collection provides insights into how organizational spirituality impacts employee well-being and organizational performance in multicultural workplaces. These insights can significantly influence real-world leadership practices, enhance effectiveness, and foster successful followership across various organizational settings. The practical implications of the research findings on leadership offer a meaningful and motivating opportunity, emphasizing the study's practical significance.

Analysis

The data section includes excerpts from the transcripts relevant to each interview question:

> RQ1/IQ1: Why is the benefit/outcome of spiritual leaders focusing on hearing God's Word while paying attention, empathizing with, and respecting their followers good to the employees and the organization's general well-being?

> RQ2/IQ2: How does your organization demonstrate that spiritual leaders foster creativity, trust, and motivation among followers through genuine interpersonal communication?

> RQ3/IQ3: What is the benefit/outcome of spiritual leaders demonstrating the development of self and others in diverse communities as they foster delegation and empowerment?

The primary goal is to explore and gain deeper insights into organizational spirituality, empowerment, diversity, empathy, and motivation while examining how leaders create positive work environments, boost morale, and increase productivity. Spiritual leadership is identified as a key element in achieving these goals. Data collected from participants is presented based on the main concepts addressed by the study's interview questions. Each of the five participants reviewed their transcripts, revising inaccuracies or removing details considered private or unrelated to the research. The transcripts are carefully edited to address inconsistencies, including incomplete sentences, overly complex phrasing, or speech patterns unsuitable for written form. Responses are systematically assigned italicized codes in brackets (e.g., [*Code: spirituality*]), then grouped into thematic categories for each concept to ensure clarity and organization. After organizing the topics, themes are refined to reduce overlaps within groups.

The participants' responses to the interview questions are presented in three sections, with each code corresponding to a theme arranged to ensure coherence and alignment with the study's goals. To demonstrate how these themes connect to the study's overarching framework, Table 1 provides a crosswalk linking the abstract's key concepts with their representation in the article's conclusion. The results section then presents participants' responses by thematic category, offering rich insight into their lived experiences and perceptions.

Table 1: Framework Integration of Spiritual Leadership Themes

Abstract theme	Conclusion integration
Integration of spiritual values and emotional intelligence	Essential for cultivating support and guiding ethical, compassionate leadership.
Lived experiences as a lens for understanding leadership	Grounded in the phenomenological emphasis on capturing participants' perceptions and emotional responses to spiritual leadership.
Use of coding to capture meaning-making	Highlighted through in vivo coding methods that organize participant data into themes that align with trust, creativity, and spiritual values.
Focus on organizational well-being and employee satisfaction	Consistently underscored through findings that link compassionate leadership behaviors to improved morale and workplace cohesion.
Thematic alignment with research questions (RQ1–RQ3 / IQ1–IQ3)	Reflected in the structured presentation of results, where participant responses directly speak to creativity, empathy, and the spiritual context of leadership.
Emphasis on trust-building through communication and ethical care	Reinforced through analysis of leaders' respectful and kind interactions, which foster trust and employee engagement.
Participant validation and transcript accuracy	Supported by a transparent data cleaning process, showing methodological rigor and ethical attentiveness to participant privacy and precision.
Link between personal faith and professional leadership	Embedded in conclusions that highlight leaders' spiritual listening and integration of God's Word as drivers of ethical decision-making and organizational culture.

Results

The research participants offer valuable perspectives based on their generational traits, leadership experience, and diverse professional backgrounds. Using an inductive approach, their varied experiences provide a basis for identifying emerging themes and

patterns without imposing preconceived ideas (Vanover et al., 2021). The group includes two veteran educators, both from the baby boomer generation. One is a female elementary science and mathematics teacher with 30 years of experience, and the other is a male high school history and social studies teacher with 40 years of experience. From Generation X, there is a female professional with 12 years in logistics and supply chain management. Additionally, two millennials share their insights: a female food service manager with 20 years of restaurant management experience and a male manager with five years in the fast-food industry. This inductive exploration of their experiences lays the groundwork for developing meaningful insights, which will be further explored through the interview questions.

RQ1/IQ1: How do you experience the leadership of those who focus on hearing God's Word while paying attention, empathizing with, and respecting you, and how do those experiences influence your sense of personal well-being and your perception of the organization's overall health?

> **Participant 1.** That is a great question. Focusing on the Word of God is essential, if not the most crucial aspect of being a spiritual leader. The Word serves as the foundation for everything. Leaders who focus on God's Word can learn from it and share it with others. It helps to keep them grounded, steering them away from areas they should avoid and ensuring they remain aligned with spiritual values [*Code: spirituality*] [*Code: guidance*] [*Code: alignment*]. By focusing on God's Word, leaders are better equipped to empathize with others, particularly those struggling. The Word allows leaders to offer support without forcing anything onto others. Instead, it encourages individuals to engage with the Word and interpret its meaning for themselves. Proper understanding does not just remain in the mind; it also takes root in the heart. For me, the Word has to be the foundation for every decision, conversation, or action I take as a leader [*Code: empathy*] [*Code: support*] [*Code: understanding*].

Interviewer. That is a compelling viewpoint. From a spiritual standpoint, do you think listening to the Word of God improves your capacity to focus on your employees, understand their feelings, and honor them? In what ways does this influence the comprehensive health of the organization?

> *Participant.* I am convinced it does [*Code: firm conviction*]. Listening to the Word aids me in refraining from making unjust evaluations of employees [*Code: unjust assessment*]. Rather than presuming that an individual is indolent or apathetic [*Code: indolent or apathetic*], the Word prompts me to contemplate that various underlying factors may influence their performance or disposition [*Code: underlying factors*]. It allows me to see beyond surface-level issues and try to understand the root causes of their struggles [*Code: fairness*] [*Code: judgment*]

[*Code: root causes*]. When leaders engage with situations through empathy and respect [*Code: the lens of compassion and respect*], they cultivate a more nurturing and insightful organizational culture [*Code: nurturing and insightful culture*]. When employees perceive recognition and appreciation [*Code: recognition and gratitude*], it significantly enhances their performance [*Code: enhances performance*] and contributes to the holistic health of the organization [*Code: holistic organizational health*]. This creates an environment where people can thrive and work collaboratively toward shared goals [*Code: organizational culture*] [*Code: motivation*] [*Code: collaboration*].

Interviewer. Thank you for sharing your thoughts. Is there anything else you would like to add on this topic?

> *Participant.* The Word of God serves as a guiding light. It is a resource that leaders can always turn to for wisdom and direction. By staying connected to the Word, spiritual leaders can better serve their teams and contribute to the well-being of the entire organization [*Code: wisdom*] [*Code: connection*] [*Code: leadership service*].

Theme 1: The Word of God as the Guiding Foundation for Leadership. This theme highlights the centrality of spirituality and guidance in spiritual leadership. Leaders who focus on hearing the Word of God derive clarity, direction, and alignment with spiritual values, which steer them away from areas of misjudgment and misalignment. The Word is the foundation for leaders' decisions, conversations, and actions, ensuring their leadership remains grounded and purpose driven. By anchoring leadership in the Word, leaders strengthen their ability to support, inspire, and guide their teams effectively.

Theme 2: Fostering Empathy, Respect, and Collaboration through Spiritual Leadership. The interview underscores how hearing the Word of God enhances a leader's empathy, fairness, and respect for their followers. Leaders cultivate a supportive organizational culture by understanding the root causes of employee struggles rather than focusing on surface-level judgments. This environment makes employees feel seen, valued, and motivated, resulting in stronger collaboration and shared goals. The Word also enables leaders to create a workplace where individuals thrive emotionally and professionally, contributing to organizational well-being and success.

Participant 2.

Interviewer. What are the benefits of spiritual leaders focusing on hearing the Word of God while showing attentiveness, empathy, and respect toward their followers? How does this approach contribute to employees' well-being and the general health of the organization?

Participant. Strong listening skills [*Code: listening skills*] are crucial for spiritual leaders as they foster effective communication. By leveraging these skills, leaders can create a supportive work environment [*Code: supportive work environment*] that allows followers to feel understood and valued. From a spiritual perspective, empathy [*Code: empathy*] is a key attribute. It helps leaders identify personal challenges that may affect their team members, leading to a deeper personal connection [*Code: personal connection*] where they can offer support and understanding. This approach significantly improves morale [*Code: improves morale*], ensuring employees feel safe and valued at work. It establishes a team-oriented environment [*Code: team-oriented environment*] where tasks are completed efficiently and accommodating personal needs [*Code: accommodating personal needs*], such as allowing time off to address challenges, becomes standard practice.

Interviewer. Could you provide an example of how this might manifest in a workplace setting from a spiritual perspective?

Participant. Imagine an employee who starts arriving late to work after a period of punctuality. From a spiritual standpoint, I would invite them to a private and open conversation [*Code: private and open conversation*] to explore the issue comfortably. Even if the employee lacks a spiritual background, I will focus on positive guidance [*Code: positive guidance*], reassuring them that challenges can improve. My goal would be to fully understand their situation and help rebuild morale [*Code: rebuild morale*], enabling them to return to punctuality and productivity.

Interviewer. What if the employee does not identify with any spiritual beliefs, but you, as a leader, rely on spirituality to guide your actions? How would you approach this situation without offending the employee?

Participant. Inclusivity is key here. My approach would emphasize inclusivity [*Code: inclusivity*], ensuring employees feel respected regardless of their spiritual beliefs. I would focus on providing support [*Code: providing support*], clarifying that they are not alone and that colleagues are here to help. Employees can share in mutual success by fostering a collaborative environment [*Code: collaborative environment*] while knowing that respecting boundaries [*Code: respecting boundaries*] is a priority. Ensuring the employee feels valued [*Code: valued*] and safe by facilitating time off [*Code: time off*] or letting them know their position is secure [*Code: secure*] are additional ways to offer support.

Interviewer. How do you see such actions influencing the organization as a whole?

Participant. These actions [*Code: build trust and morale*] within teams, improving both individual and group dynamics. When employees experience a [*Code: culture of empathy*], they tend to extend compassion to others, creating a [*Code: compassionate work environment*]. This encourages [*Code: positive reinforcement*], ensuring that the organization benefits from a cycle of understanding and cooperation that fosters collective success.

Theme 1: Empathy and Connection as Pillars of Supportive Leadership. This theme emphasizes the importance of listening skills, empathy [*Code: empathy*], and personal connection [*Code: personal connection*] in creating a supportive work environment [*Code: supportive work environment*]. By fostering a team-oriented environment [*Code: team-oriented environment*] where leaders provide positive guidance [*Code: positive guidance*] and accommodate personal needs [*Code: accommodating personal needs*], employees feel valued and supported. The participant illustrates how open communication, such as having a private and open conversation [*Code: private and open conversation*], allows leaders to address individual challenges compassionately, improving employee morale and enabling them to re-engage with their work.

Theme 2: Inclusive Communication and Morale Building for Organizational Growth. This theme highlights the value of inclusivity [*Code: inclusivity*] and respecting boundaries [*Code: respecting boundaries*] in spiritual leadership. Leaders create a collaborative environment [*Code: collaborative environment*] by ensuring employees feel supported without imposing personal spiritual values. Offering positive reinforcement [*Code: positive reinforcement*], providing support [*Code: providing support*], and facilitating secure positions [*Code: secure positions*] fosters a culture of empathy [*Code: culture of empathy*] and strengthens trust and morale [*Code: building trust and morale*]. As employees thrive in this compassionate work environment [*Code: compassionate work environment*], they are motivated to contribute positively, reinforcing a cycle of shared success across the organization.

Participant 3.

Interviewer. Why is the benefit of spiritual leaders focusing on hearing God's word while paying attention to, empathizing with, and respecting their followers significant for both employees and the overall well-being of the organization?

Participant. If genuinely called, spiritual leaders must listen and be attentive to the divine message. It is crucial because, without receiving guidance from God, how can a leader successfully direct others by His purpose? God frequently communicates with leaders to guide them in leading His people. I often hear God's voice. For example, a few years back, He guided me to initiate a ministry at my church—a ministry of dance [*Code: ministry of dance*]. Initially, I was hesitant. Yet, there was a time when I sensed a powerful guidance from God.

While on Richmond Road, I distinctly heard Him say, "You do it" [*Code: divine directive*]. I ventured out confidently, and the ministry thrived for approximately five years until COVID-19 interrupted our gatherings. Upon our attempt to restart after several years, the experience felt different. I eventually approached my pastor, who inquired whether I still had the same ministry passion. At that moment, I understood that I had lost that passion. I understood this as a sign from God indicating that the season for the ministry had come to a close.

Interviewer. This is a compelling illustration of how spiritual leadership can influence actions and decisions. Do you believe that the Word of God impacts the way leaders listen to, empathize with, and show respect for their followers?

Participant. Absolutely. For example, I worked with eight women in the dance ministry, each unique in their talents, opinions, and perspectives [*Code: recognizing diversity*]. They were all adults, not children, so I had to listen to and consider their needs and contributions. To create something meaningful and cohesive, I had to encompass everyone's input and unify it for the group's betterment. Hearing God's Word and reading Scriptures about dancing [*Code: Scriptures about dancing*] helped me lead the ministry with clarity and purpose. Dance became another form of expression and praise to God [*Code: expression and praise to God*], and I had to educate the members of the ministry, as well as the church, on its significance. Some people misunderstood what we were doing, assuming it was just dancing in a casual sense [*Code: dancing in a casual sense*]. However, we reframed it as ministering through music and dance. By changing the terminology and teaching the meaning behind our gestures and movements—like how certain gestures symbolized tears or rain—we gained acceptance and understanding from the congregation [*Code: positive outcome*].

Interviewer. This is a prime example of how spiritual leadership cultivates empathy and understanding. What is your assessment of the influence that servant leadership characteristics have on guiding the community of believers?

Participant. Servant leadership, mainly when guided by God [*Code: guided by God*], creates a positive environment for both the leader and the followers. It requires leaders to serve genuinely without ulterior motives [*Code: without ulterior motives*]. People can always tell when a leader is authentic [*Code: authentic*], and this fosters trust and mutual respect. When leaders prioritize the well-being of their followers and work together toward a shared goal, it benefits the entire organization. Conversely, leadership without authenticity [*Code: without authenticity*] can hinder progress.

Theme 1: Divine Guidance as the Foundation of Spiritual Leadership. The interview reveals that spiritual leaders derive their purpose and direction by listening to God's

Word, which is portrayed as an essential aspect of their calling. Divine communication not only influences their actions but also validates the authenticity of their leadership. The example of initiating a dance ministry underscores the importance of attentiveness to God's guidance, demonstrating how leaders can recognize and follow divine directives even in moments of hesitation or uncertainty. This connection to divine purpose strengthens the leader's ability to make decisions and facilitates the alignment of organizational objectives with spiritual principles. Moreover, the ability to discern when a ministry has fulfilled its purpose highlights the dynamic nature of spiritual leadership—one that is sensitive to changing seasons and God's will.

Theme 2: Empathy, Diversity, and Unity in Spiritual Leadership. Another key theme is the emphasis on servant leadership characterized by empathy, respect for diversity, and fostering unity among followers. The leader's approach to guiding a group with varied talents and perspectives illustrates the importance of inclusive leadership practices. By recognizing and valuing individual contributions, the leader creates an environment where collaboration thrives. This theme is further exemplified by the intentional efforts to educate and unify the ministry members and the congregation, reframing misconceptions about the dance ministry's purpose. This demonstrates how spiritual leadership fosters understanding, breaks down barriers, and cultivates mutual respect, resulting in positive outcomes for the community

Participant 4.

Interviewer. What are the benefits of spiritual leaders focusing on hearing God's Word while paying attention, empathizing with, and respecting their followers? How does this approach contribute to employees' well-being and the overall health of the organization?

Participant. Hearing the Word of God as a leader is incredibly important. Listening to God's signals and receiving His guidance helps me develop better leadership ideas [*Code: spiritual guidance*]. Spirituality also helps me stay attentive to my team and employees, which is essential for running my organization [*Code: attentiveness to the team*]. It allows me to lead as a servant leader, emphasizing understanding and respecting the thoughts and ideas of my followers [*Code: servant leadership*]. My faith is foundational, and I firmly believe nothing can be achieved without God [*Code: reliance on faith*]. For example, I had employees facing serious personal challenges over the last month. I had no issue granting them time off and listening to their emotions. From a spiritual perspective, this allowed me to counsel and ease their stress [*Code: employee support*]. They could focus on resolving family matters without added work-related anxiety [*Code: compassionate leadership*].

Interviewer. How did that unfold?

Participant. They took the necessary time off and were able to address their issues at home. They returned feeling supported and less burdened [*Code: positive outcomes for employees*].

Theme 1: Servant Leadership Rooted in Spirituality. Leaders draw strength and guidance from their faith, enabling them to listen attentively, empathize with employees, and respect their individuality. This approach fosters trust and understanding, aligning with the principles of servant leadership.

Theme 2: Compassionate and Supportive Leadership Practices. By offering emotional support and flexibility during personal challenges, leaders demonstrate care for their employees' well-being, contributing to a positive and productive workplace environment.

Participant 5.

Interviewer. Why is the benefit of spiritual leaders focusing on hearing God's Word, while paying attention, empathizing with, and respecting their followers, significant for employees and the organization's overall well-being?

Participant. As a leader, I believe remaining attuned to God [*Code: God is communicating to me*] is essential. This connection empowers me to be a better leader for my team [*Code: be a better leader for my team*]. Before making decisions, I consistently begin with prayer [*Code: begin with prayer*] and draw upon my faith in God's guidance [*Code: my faith in God's guidance*]. Through spirituality, I've learned to be patient [*Code: be patient*], listen effectively [*Code: listen effectively*], and incorporate team ideas [*Code: incorporate team ideas*] to create organizational strategies that resonate with everyone involved.

My leadership style embodies a servant leader mindset [*Code: servant leader mindset*], requiring patience [*Code: patience*], empathy [*Code: empathy*], and flexibility [*Code: flexibility*]. For instance, when a team member encounters personal challenges, I make an effort to understand their situation [*Code: make an effort to understand their situation*] and provide accommodations like granting time off when necessary [*Code: granting time off when necessary*]. In high-pressure environments where frustrations are inevitable, maintaining focus is challenging. Yet, by staying grounded in my faith [*Code: staying grounded in my faith*] and maintaining flexibility [*Code: maintaining flexibility*], I create a supportive environment [*Code: supportive environment*] where all team members feel valued [*Code: valued*].

Interviewer. Do you have specific examples of how God's Word has influenced your leadership approach?

Participant. Absolutely. Whenever frustration arises, I turn to the Bible for guidance [*Code: turn to the Bible for guidance*]. For example, I once faced an issue where a reliable team member was not answering their phone despite appearing to be available [*Code: not answering their phone despite appearing to be available*]. I had to choose between terminating their employment or addressing the issue differently [*Code: terminating their employment or addressing the issue differently*]. Considering her years of excellent performance [*Code: years of excellent performance*], I opted to be patient [*Code: be patient*] and have an open conversation with her [*Code: have an open conversation with her*] to understand the situation.

By relying on God's teachings [*Code: relying on God's teachings*] and avoiding an overly aggressive approach [*Code: avoiding an overly aggressive approach*], I found a constructive resolution. This choice allowed us to move forward without jeopardizing trust [*Code: move forward without jeopardizing trust*]. Such moments deepen my faith in the importance of staying connected to God [*Code: importance of staying connected to God*] and reinforce the value of practicing patience in leadership [*Code: practicing patience in leadership*].

Theme 1: Spirituality as a Foundation for Leadership. Dialogue. "Before making decisions, I always begin with prayer [*Code: begin with prayer*] and rely on my faith in God's guidance [*Code: my faith in God's guidance*]. My spirituality enables me to be patient [*Code: be patient*], listen effectively [*Code: listen effectively*], and incorporate team ideas [*Code: incorporate team ideas*] into organizational strategies. The participant emphasized the role of spirituality in shaping leadership decisions, highlighting how spiritual practices like prayer and Bible reading guide their actions. This foundation helps foster trust, collaboration, and empathy within the team.

Theme 2: Servant Leadership Through Empathy and Flexibility. Dialogue: "I approach leadership with a servant leader mindset [*Code: servant leader mindset*], which requires patience [*Code: patience*], empathy [*Code: empathy*], and flexibility [*Code: flexibility*]. For example, if a team member is facing challenges, I make an effort to understand their situation [*Code: make an effort to understand their situation*] and accommodate their needs, such as granting time off when necessary [*Code: granting time off when necessary*]." Participant 5 described how servant leadership involves prioritizing team members' needs and providing support. They create an empowering and productive work environment by addressing challenges empathetically and maintaining flexibility.

Clusters of Codes. The codes listed below were extracted from the transcript analysis and reflect key patterns and themes identified across participant responses.

- Extracted codes:

- Unjust assessment
- Firm conviction
- Underlying factors
- Root causes
- Recognizing diversity
- God is communicating to me
- My faith in God's guidance
- Begin with prayer
- Turn to the Bible for guidance
- Staying grounded in my faith
- Spiritual guidance
- Reliance on faith
- Guided by God
- Divine directive
- Scriptures about dancing
- Expression and praise to God
- Ministry of dance
- Dancing in a casual sense
- Spirituality
- Make an effort to understand their situation
- Listen effectively
- Empathy
- Lens of compassion
- Accommodating personal needs
- Private and open conversation
- Valued
- Empathy personal connection
- Supportive environment
- Supportive work environment
- Employee support
- Granting time off when necessary
- Positive outcomes for employees
- Inclusivity
- Recognition and gratitude
- Holistic organizational health
- Move forward without jeopardizing trust
- Alignment
- Guidance
- Wisdom
- Authentic

- Without ulterior motives
- Without authenticity
- Be a better leader for my team
- Servant leader mindset
- Servant leadership
- Leadership service
- Compassionate leadership
- Attentiveness to the team
- Incorporate team ideas
- Building trust and morale
- Positive reinforcement
- Positive guidance
- Collaborative environment
- Team-oriented environment
- Improving morale
- Providing support
- Respecting boundaries
- Faith and spirituality codes:
- God is communicating to me
- My faith in God's guidance
- Begin with prayer
- Turn to the Bible for guidance
- Staying grounded in my faith
- Spiritual guidance
- Reliance on faith
- Guided by God
- Divine directive
- Scriptures about dancing
- Expression and praise to God
- Ministry of dance
- Dancing in a casual sense
- Spirituality
- Leadership and team-oriented mindset codes:
- Be a better leader for my team
- Servant leader mindset
- Servant leadership
- Leadership service
- Compassionate leadership
- Attentiveness to the team
- Incorporate team ideas

- Building trust and morale
- Positive reinforcement
- Positive guidance
- Collaborative environment
- Team-oriented environment
- Improving morale
- Providing support
- Respecting boundaries
- Empathy and understanding codes:
- Make an effort to understand their situation
- Listen effectively
- Empathy
- Lens of compassion
- Accommodating personal needs
- Private and open conversation
- Valued
- Empathy personal connection
- Support and care for employees codes:
- Supportive environment
- Supportive work environment
- Employee support
- Granting time off when necessary
- Positive outcomes for employees
- Inclusivity
- Recognition and gratitude
- Holistic organizational health
- Guidance and decision-making codes:
- Move forward without jeopardizing trust
- Alignment
- Guidance
- Wisdom
- Analyzing and understanding context codes:
- Authentic
- Without ulterior motives
- Without authenticity
- Authenticity and integrity codes:
- Unjust assessment
- Firm conviction
- Underlying factors
- Root causes

- Recognizing diversity

RQ2/IQ2: How does your organization demonstrate that spiritual leaders foster creativity, trust, and motivation among followers through genuine interpersonal communication?

Participant 1.

Interviewer. How does your organization demonstrate that spiritual leaders foster creativity, trust, and motivation among followers through genuine interpersonal communication?

Participant. A situation in my business [*Code: business owner*] comes to mind. I had an individual who struggled deeply with trust [*Code: struggled deeply with trust*]. This person had encountered situations where leadership was inconsistent [*Code: leadership was inconsistent*]—making promises and returning to their word [*Code: making promises and returning to their word*]. Their trust had eroded in the workplace and other areas, like their home and the church [*Code: trust*] [*Code: leadership consistency*].

Interviewer. Spiritual leadership, I believe, bridges this gap by addressing trust holistically [*Code: addressing trust holistically*].

Participant. It requires connecting with people at a deeper level [*Code: connecting at a deeper level*] and creating a foundation through prayer, meditation, and shared experiences [*Code: prayer, meditation, and shared experiences*]. Trust is built when individuals start seeing results [*Code: trust is built when seeing results*] when their prayers and efforts lead to tangible successes [*Code: prayers and efforts lead to tangible achievements*]. For example, in my experience, I have seen difficult situations turn around because of collective prayer and belief. Seeing outcomes like someone finding a job after significant challenges reinforces faith and strengthens interpersonal bonds [*Code: spirituality*] [*Code: prayer and meditation*] [*Code: collective success*].

Participant. I think of biblical examples where faith and belief were demonstrated through actions [*Code: faith and belief demonstrated through actions*], such as adhering to religious dietary practices and proving their health benefits over time [*Code: religious dietary practices and health benefits*]. Similarly, I find it effective to lead by example [*Code: lead by example*]. Sometimes, you must show people results through a test or demonstration [*Code: show results through a test*]. For instance, I encouraged someone to trust God and take steps, like working the required hours to get paid [*Code: trust God and take steps*]. Seeing the practical

outcomes of their efforts strengthens their belief and builds trust in the process [*Code: belief-building*] [*Code: leading by example*] [*Code: result-driven trust*]**.**

Participant. Communication is key. I believe in asking questions to understand the root of someone's concerns. For example, if someone does not believe it, I would ask them why. What is it they don't believe? What's the roadblock? Once they articulate their doubts, it becomes easier to address them. Without communication, you're left guessing and cannot help effectively [*Code: interpersonal communication*] [*Code: addressing concerns*] [*Code: active listening*].

Participant. Dialogue has to be reciprocal. You won't progress much if it's one-sided, with only one person talking. However, when both parties express their perspectives, there's potential for greater understanding. Even if you agree to disagree on specific points, that is still progress. Disagreement doesn't have to hinder forward movement—it can foster respect and mutual acknowledgment [*Code: mutual understanding*] [*Code: reciprocal dialogue*] [*Code: respect and acknowledgment*]. If someone grows up immersed in spirituality—surrounded by family members who praise God and share their testimonies—it's much easier for them to believe and trust. On the other hand, if someone hasn't been exposed to those experiences, it is harder to reach them through the Word alone. Leaders must work harder to build trust through communication and action in such cases [*Code: exposure to spirituality*] [*Code: upbringing and belief*] [*Code: leadership persistence*].

Theme 1: Building Trust through Holistic and Result-Driven Spiritual Leadership. This theme highlights the role of spiritual leadership in addressing trust [*Code: trust*] by creating a foundation rooted in spirituality [*Code: spirituality*], prayer and meditation [*Code: prayer and meditation*], and collective success [*Code: collective success*]. Trust is cultivated when leaders demonstrate leadership consistency [*Code: leadership consistency*] and lead by example, encouraging belief building [*Code: belief building*] and fostering faith through tangible results like result-driven trust [*Code: result-driven trust*]. The interview underscores how actions and visible outcomes, such as collective prayer leading to success, help individuals regain trust and strengthen interpersonal bonds within an organizational context.

Theme 2: Interpersonal Communication as a Key to Fostering Mutual Understanding and Collaboration. The participant emphasizes the importance of interpersonal communication [*Code: interpersonal communication*] in addressing individual concerns and building connections. By practicing active listening [*Code: active listening*] and addressing concerns [*Code: concerns*] directly, leaders create space for reciprocal dialogue [*Code: reciprocal dialogue*] and mutual understanding [*Code: mutual understanding*]. This open communication fosters respect and acknowledgment [*Code:*

respect and acknowledgment], enabling progress even amidst disagreements. Furthermore, the interview shows that leaders adapt their communication and actions to bridge gaps in belief, especially for individuals with limited exposure to spirituality [*Code: exposure to spirituality*]. Such persistence enhances trust and collaboration within the organization.

Participant 2.

Interviewer. How does your organization demonstrate that spiritual leaders foster creativity, trust, and motivation through genuine interpersonal communication?

Participant. "Are we focusing on genuine communication from an interpersonal perspective?"

Interviewer. From a leadership perspective, interpersonal skills are critical in the workplace. Would you agree?

Participant. It is very important to understand how they are doing and where they are in their lives [*Code: understanding each individual*]. Maintaining an open-door policy is crucial for building these connections [*Code: open-door policy*].

Interviewer. Do you believe it is essential for spiritual leaders to have strong communication skills? If so, can you elaborate?

Participant. Yes, it is essential. From a spiritual perspective, effective communication helps establish mutual respect, a two-way street [*Code: mutual respect*]. Even if an individual does not have a spiritual background, it is important to foster an environment where they respect the leader's spiritual values and feel comfortable sharing their concerns [*Code: fostering respect and comfort*]. Leaders need to create a space where followers feel safe to express themselves, especially if personal issues are affecting their ability to complete tasks [*Code: safe space for expression*]. This open communication boosts morale and enables employees to re-engage with their work [*Code: boosting morale*].

Interviewer. Trust and motivation play key roles in fostering creativity and bringing out the best in employees. Can you explain how those elements are connected?

Participant. Trust is critical. Employees need to know that their leaders have their backs and will advocate for them when morale is low [*Code: leaders advocating for employees*]. This sense of trust allows them to feel secure and valued [*Code: feeling secure and valued*]. Spiritual leaders, in particular, can use their perspective to share insights that might uplift and inspire employees [*Code:*

uplifting and inspiring employees]. Respect is a big part of this process—it is about creating a dialogue where employees feel heard and leaders can provide spiritual guidance, if appropriate, to help rebuild morale [*Code: creating dialogue and providing guidance*].

Interviewer. Would you say that fostering trust and motivation is a positive direction for organizations to move toward?

Participant. Organizations that emphasize trust, motivation, and effective communication create environments where employees feel supported [*Code: supportive environment*]. When employees trust their leaders and feel respected, they are more likely to contribute positively to the team [*Code: contributing positively*]. Knowing that their superiors and the organization are there for them enhances individual and collective performance [*Code: enhancing performance*].

Interviewer. Is there anything else you'd like to add about the role of trust and motivation in spiritual leadership?

Participant. Trust is fundamental to effective communication. Employees want to know that their superiors are approachable and supportive [*Code: approachable and supportive leaders*]. Feeling comfortable in the workplace, knowing they are part of a strong team, and trusting that their leaders will support them in challenging times—all of this motivates employees to perform well [*Code: comfortable workplace*]. It is about creating an environment where everyone is on the same team and working together for mutual success [*Code: mutual success*].

Theme 1: Interpersonal Communication as a Foundation for Trust, Creativity, and Morale. This theme highlights the significance of mutual respect [*Code: mutual respect*] and understanding each individual [*Code: understanding each individual*] in fostering strong interpersonal communication. Spiritual leaders who maintain an open-door policy [*Code: open-door policy*] create safe spaces for expression [*Code: safe spaces for expression*], allowing followers to feel comfortable sharing concerns and personal challenges. This open communication not only boosts morale [*Code: boosts morale*] but establishes mutual trust [*Code: mutual trust*], which enables creativity and collaboration within the organization. Employees are motivated and engaged when they perceive leaders as supportive and attentive to their needs.

Theme 2: Trust and Respect as Drivers of Employee Motivation and Organizational Success. This theme underscores the crucial role of trust in driving employee motivation and overall organizational performance. Leaders who advocate for employees [*Code: advocate for employees*] and create a supportive environment [*Code: supportive environment*] foster feeling secure and valued [*Code: feeling secure and valued*], which strengthens morale. By uplifting and inspiring employees [*Code: uplifting and inspiring*

employees] through effective communication and creating dialogue and providing guidance [*Code: creating dialogue and providing guidance*], leaders empower individuals to contribute positively to the team. A culture built on approachable and supportive leaders [*Code: approachable and supportive leaders*] and a comfortable workplace [*Code: comfortable workplace*] encourages collaboration and aligns employees with shared organizational goals, resulting in mutual success [*Code: mutual success*].

Participant 3.

> *Interviewer.* How does your organization demonstrate that spiritual leaders foster creativity, trust, and motivation among followers through genuine interpersonal communication?

> *Participant.* My experience has shown how God's calling [*Code: God's calling*] plays a significant role in leadership. When I began the dance ministry [*Code: dance ministry*], I initially faced initial resistance [*Code: initial resistance*], feeling unsure about taking on the responsibility. However, through open communication [*Code: open communication*], I guided the group effectively. If issues arose, we discussed it [Code: effective communication], ensuring every member's opinion was included. We used a collaborative process [*Code: collaborative process*] to make decisions, such as choosing songs that were appropriate for ministering through dance [*Code: appropriate for ministering through dance*]. This ensured everyone felt their voice [*Code: voice*] mattered and contributed to the ministry's success.

> *Interviewer.* Open communication and collaboration seem central to your approach. How did trust and creativity influence the group's dynamics?

> *Participant.* Trust was essential. I relied on the group's input [*Code: group's input*], recognizing each member's unique talents. Together, we created something beautiful that the church loved [*Code: beautiful that the church loved*]. People appreciated our efforts, and attendance at our third-Sunday services increased significantly [*Code: attendance at our third-Sunday services increased significantly*]. We prioritized building relationships [*Code: building relationships*] outside our ministry activities. Rehearsals often involved praise and worship [*Code: praise and worship*], which deepened our connection. We also formed supportive relationships [*Code: supportive relationships*] by encouraging one another through personal challenges, fostering a strong sense of community.

> *Interviewer.* How can this leadership approach be applied to other organizational settings?

Participant. It begins with genuine feedback [*Code: genuine feedback*] and a willingness to work together [*Code: willingness to work together*]. Leaders must remain open to feedback [*Code: open to feedback*] and use problem-solving [*Code: problem-solving*] to address challenges effectively. This process strengthens trust and motivation [*Code: trust and motivation*], ultimately resulting in community success [*Code: community success*].

Theme 1: Open Communication as the Foundation for Collaboration and Community. This theme emphasizes the transformative power of open communication [*Code: open communication*] and effective communication [*Code: effective communication*], demonstrating how God's calling [*Code: God's calling*] inspires leaders to foster collaboration and inclusion. By maintaining an environment rooted in a collaborative process [*Code: collaborative process*], leaders ensure that each member's voice [*Code: voice*] is heard and valued, allowing the group's input [*Code: group's input*] to drive decision-making. Through practices like building relationships [*Code: building relationships*] and providing genuine feedback [*Code: genuine feedback*], leaders cultivate trust and strengthen bonds within the community. The willingness to work together [*Code: willingness to work together*] and remain open to feedback [*Code: open to feedback*] further reinforces mutual respect, creating a foundation for successful collaboration and community building.

Theme 2: Trust and Motivation as Keys to Success and Growth. This theme highlights how trust and motivation are essential in driving growth and fostering creativity. While initial challenges, such as initial resistance [*Code: initial resistance*], may arise, leaders empower individuals by acknowledging their contributions—whether through activities appropriate for ministering through dance [*Code: appropriate for ministering through dance*] or creating outcomes that are beautiful that the church loves [*Code: beautiful that the church loves*]. Celebrating accomplishments, such as the successful execution of a worship performance [*Code: worship performance*] or the visible joy expressed by congregants [*Code: congregational joy*], reinforces a culture of affirmation and spiritual creativity. Practices like praise and worship [*Code: praise and worship*] deepen connections, while supportive relationships [*Code: supportive relationships*] build a robust sense of community. Leaders use problem-solving [*Code: problem-solving*] to overcome challenges and cultivate trust, resulting in community success [*Code: community success*] that reflects the dynamic interplay of spiritual connection and organizational growth.

Participant 4.

Interviewer. How does your organization demonstrate that spiritual leaders foster creativity, trust, and motivation among followers through genuine interpersonal communication?

Participant. In my organization, creativity is incredibly important. Trust is also vital. To motivate people and keep them in good spirits, I focus on creativity, whether scheduling, empowering employees, or encouraging them to share ideas and push for innovation [*Code: fostering creativity*]. By doing this, I build trust because it makes employees feel they are part of something meaningful rather than just showing up to work without being heard [*Code: building trust*]. This approach motivates them because they feel empowered, lifting their spirits and helping them become effective problem solvers [*Code: employee motivation*]. It's not perfect, but it works well most of the time, as it encourages employees to solve challenges and be more engaged [*Code: empowerment and engagement*].

Themes 1: Fostering Creativity and Innovation. Effective spiritual leaders inspire creativity [*Code: creativity*] through empowering employees [*Code: empowering employees*] and fostering open communication [*Code: open communication*]. By encouraging idea sharing [*Code: encouraging idea sharing*] and embracing innovation [*Code: innovation*], leaders create a forward-thinking environment [*Code: forward-thinking environment*] that motivates individuals to think dynamically and contribute meaningfully to organizational growth.

Theme 2: Building Trust and Motivating Employees. Spiritual leaders emphasize genuine interpersonal communication [*Code: genuine interpersonal communication*] to establish trust [*Code: establish trust*] and strengthen relationships. When employees feel heard [*Code: feel heard*] and feel valued [*Code: feel valued*], they are empowered to engage in problem-solving [*Code: problem-solving*] and contribute positively to a workplace culture [*Code: workplace culture*] rooted in collaboration and respect. This foundation of trust [*Code: trust*] drives motivation [*Code: motivation*] and helps build a supportive and harmonious organizational atmosphere.

Participant 5.

Interviewer. How does your organization demonstrate that spiritual leaders foster creativity, trust, and motivation among followers through general or genuine interpersonal communication?

Participant. My faith in God [*Code: faith in God*] significantly shapes my communication and leadership [*Code: communication and leadership*] approach. From an interpersonal perspective, I find it vital to engage in conversations beyond work-related topics [*Code: vital to engage in conversations beyond work-related topics*]. For example, I often connect with a team member specializing in sports medicine [*Code: sports medicine*]. Discussing areas like NFL free agency [*Code: NFL free agency*] or recent NBA developments [*Code: NBA developments*] fosters a sense of camaraderie [*Code: sense of camaraderie*]. These interactions create moments of genuine connection [*Code: genuine connection*], helping to build

trust and rapport [*Code: build trust and rapport*] within the team. I prioritize maintaining open communication [*Code: maintaining open communication*] by checking in with team members about their day or weekend plans [*Code: day or weekend plans*]. Even when responses are brief, my efforts to keep communication lines open [*Code: keep communication lines open*] reassure them that I'm approachable and that they can approach me with concerns [*Code: approach me with concerns*]. These small exchanges help me understand team members' personalities and triggers [*Code: understand team members' personalities and triggers*], leading to smoother collaboration [*Code: smoother collaboration*]. This leadership approach aligns with patience [*Code: patience*] and a servant leadership perspective [*Code: servant leadership perspective*]. While achieving organizational goals [*Code: organizational goals*] is essential, I prioritize the well-being and mental health [*Code: well-being and mental health*] of my team. I ensure they feel supported and empowered by providing resources and flexibility [*Code: resources and flexibility*], such as allowing time off when necessary [*Code: allowing time off when necessary*]. My spirituality enhances my ability to lead [*Code: spirituality enhances my ability to lead*], offering guidance [*Code: guidance*] and helping me stay humble [*Code: humble*]. It reminds me to prioritize people over the bottom line [*Code: prioritize people over the bottom line*], enabling me to create an environment where humility fosters a supportive and empowering work environment [*Code: humility fosters a supportive and empowering work environment*]. This ultimately contributes to the success of the team and the organization.

Theme 1: Faith as a Guiding Influence in Leadership. Dialogue excerpt: "My faith in God [*Code: faith in God*] strongly influences my approach to communication and leadership [*Code: communication and leadership*]. From an interpersonal communication perspective, I believe it is vital to engage in conversations beyond work-related topics [*Code: vital to engage in conversations beyond work-related topics*]." The participant highlighted how their faith guides their leadership style, inspiring them to build meaningful interpersonal connections. These moments of camaraderie foster trust and rapport, essential for creating a collaborative and motivated team.

Theme 2: Servant Leadership and Open Communication. Dialogue excerpt: "This leadership approach is rooted in patience [*Code: patience*] and a servant leadership perspective [*Code: servant leadership perspective*]. While I recognize the importance of organizational goals [*Code: organizational goals*], I prioritize the well-being and mental health [*Code: well-being and mental health*] of my team members." The participant emphasized the role of servant leadership in creating an empathetic and supportive environment. By maintaining open communication and prioritizing team members' well-being, they cultivate trust and motivation, contributing to a positive and productive organizational culture.

Clusters of Codes. The codes listed below were extracted from the transcript analysis and reflect key patterns and themes identified across participant responses.

Extracted codes:

- o Fostering creativity
- o Building trust
- o Employee motivation
- o Empowerment and engagement
- o Creativity
- o Empowering employees
- o Open communication
- o Encouraging idea sharing
- o Innovation
- o Forwarding-thinking environment
- o Genuine interpersonal communication
- o Establish trust
- o Feel heard
- o Feel valued
- o Problem-solving
- o Workplace culture
- o Trust
- o Motivation
- o Understanding each individual
- o Open-door policy
- o Mutual respect
- o Fostering respect and comfort
- o Safe space for expression
- o Boosting morale
- o Leaders advocating for employees
- o Feeling secure and valued
- o Uplifting and inspiring employees
- o Creating dialogue and providing guidance
- o Supportive environment
- o Contributing positively
- o Enhancing performance
- o Approachable and supportive leaders
- o Comfortable workplace
- o Mutual success
- o Faith in God
- o Communication and leadership
- o Vital to engage in conversations beyond work-related topics

- o Sports medicine
- o NFL free agency
- o NBA developments
- o Sense of camaraderie
- o Genuine connection
- o Build trust and rapport
- o Maintaining open communication
- o Keep communication lines open
- o Servant leadership perspective
- o Well-being and mental health
- o Allowing time off when necessary
- o Humility fosters a supportive and empowering work environment
- o Business owner
- o Struggled deeply with trust
- o Leadership was inconsistent
- o Making promises and returning to their word
- o Trust
- o Leadership consistency
- o Addressing trust holistically
- o Connecting at a deeper level
- o Prayer, meditation, and shared experiences
- o Trust is built when seeing results
- o Prayers and efforts lead to tangible achievements
- o Spirituality
- o Prayer and meditation
- o Collective success
- o Faith and belief demonstrated through actions
- o Religious dietary practices and health benefits
- o Lead by example
- o Show results through a test
- o Trust God and take steps
- o Belief-building
- o Leading by example
- o Result-driven trust
- o Interpersonal communication
- o Addressing concerns
- o Active listening
- o Mutual understanding
- o Reciprocal dialogue
- o Respect and acknowledgment
- o Exposure to spirituality
- o Upbringing and belief

- o Leadership persistence
- o God's calling
- o Dance ministry
- o Initial resistance
- o Open communication
- o Effective communication
- o Collaborative process
- o Appropriate for ministering through dance
- o Voice
- o Group's input
- o Beautiful that the church loved
- o Attendance at our third-Sunday services increased significantly
- o Building relationships
- o Praise and worship
- o Supportive relationships
- o Genuine feedback
- o Willingness to work together
- o Open to feedback
- o Problem-solving
- o Trust and motivation
- o Community success

- Leadership and communication codes:
- Communication and leadership
- Maintaining open communication
- Keep communication lines open
- Servant leadership perspective
- Understanding each individual
- Open-door policy
- Approachable and supportive leaders
- Effective communication
- Collaborative process
- Creating dialogue and providing guidance
- Genuine interpersonal communication
- Addressing concerns
- Active listening
- Reciprocal dialogue
- Mutual respect
- Respect and acknowledgment
- Trust and relationships codes:
- Build trust and rapport

- Genuine connection
- Sense of camaraderie
- Building relationships
- Supportive relationships
- Trust
- Leadership consistency
- Addressing trust holistically
- Struggled deeply with trust
- Making promises and returning to their word
- Trust is built when seeing results
- Result-driven trust
- Belief-building
- Faith and belief demonstrated through actions
- Trust God and take steps
- Mutual understanding
- Employee well-being and motivation codes:
- Well-being and mental health
- Allowing time off when necessary
- Boosting morale
- Leaders advocating employees
- Feeling secure and valued
- Uplifting and inspiring employees
- Empowerment and engagement
- Motivating employees
- Comfortable workplace
- Workplace culture
- Supporting environment
- Community success
- Problem-solving
- Creativity and innovation codes:
- Fostering creativity
- Empowering employees
- Encouraging idea sharing
- Innovation
- Creativity
- Forward-thinking environment
- Appropriate for ministering through dance
- Spirituality and faith codes:
- Faith in God
- God's calling

- Prayer, meditation, and shared experiences
- Spirituality
- Prayer and meditation
- Collective success
- Praise and worship
- Exposure to spirituality
- Upbringing and belief
- Workplace and organizational dynamics codes:
- Business owner
- Dance ministry
- Initial resistance
- Group's input
- Voice
- Community success
- Mutual success
- Contributing positively
- Enhancing performance
- Leadership practices and examples codes:
- Religious dietary practices and health benefits
- Lead by example
- Leading by example
- Show results through a test

RQ3/IQ3: How do you experience spiritual leaders who actively pursue personal growth while supporting the development of others in diverse communities, and how does their approach to delegation and empowerment influence your own sense of purpose, belonging, and well-being within the organization?

Participant 1.

Interviewer. What is the benefit of spiritual leaders demonstrating the development of self and others in diverse communities as they foster delegation and empowerment?

Participant. The word "invest" really stands out when reflecting on this principle. What you get from any endeavor is directly tied to what you put into it. For spiritual leaders, this means investing time, genuine effort, spirit, and care into their teams and organizations [*Code: empowerment*]. It is about showing people their needs and finding ways to meet them. For example, if someone needs to leave work earlier to spend time with their family, you find ways to accommodate that by adjusting schedules. You are investing in their well-being

[*Code: well-being*]. Delegation is another key element. People have different needs and strengths. Some might require more guidance than others, and that's okay. By recognizing these differences and leveraging the talents of everyone in the organization, you create a more collaborative and supportive environment [*Code: diversity*].

Participant. Delegation is crucial. It ensures that everyone has a role and contributes to the process. Sometimes, coworkers may connect better with one another than with management, so allowing them to help and support each other builds trust and camaraderie [*Code: trust*]. Empowerment is also essential. Giving individuals the power to express their ideas and opinions without fear of judgment makes a significant difference. It allows them to feel heard and valued. For example, granting someone the authority to help a colleague fosters a sense of responsibility and inclusion. It reinforces their role as an integral part of the team [*Code: empowerment*]. When individuals feel that their abilities and knowledge are recognized, it gives them a sense of worth and achievement [*Code: motivation*]. My experience has shown that this approach is far more effective than simply giving orders or lecturing. It creates a dynamic where people feel like true collaborators rather than just employees following instructions [*Code: collaboration*].

Participant. To me, spiritual leadership is about authenticity. It is not about pretending to be someone you're not or trying to impress others with superficial knowledge. It is about being genuine, showing humility, and connecting with people on a deeper level. Leaders must ensure their team members never feel like they're just small, insignificant parts of the organization. Instead, they must feel valued, connected, and part of something greater [*Code: authenticity*]. Humility is critical. Spiritual leaders must acknowledge that they are not perfect and are still growing and learning. I ask for forgiveness daily, sometimes multiple times a day—because I know I fall short. Spiritual leadership strives to make others feel how we want to feel—respected, valued, and loved [*Code: humility*].

Participant 2.

Interviewer. What are the benefits of spiritual leaders demonstrating the development of self and others in diverse communities as they foster delegation and empowerment?

Participant. This principle often centers on diverse workplaces [*Code: diverse workplaces*] and its importance in promoting growth. Diversity allows organizations to benefit from diversity [*Code: diversity brings ideas*] shaped by unique cultures and perspectives [*Code: unique cultures and perspectives*]. When

individuals with varied backgrounds come together, they can collaborate and inspire [*Code: fostering collaboration and creativity*]. For example, in my own experience, diversity fosters shared knowledge [*Code: sharing knowledge*] and an exchange of perspectives [*Code: exchanging perspectives*], which leads to organizational enrichment [*Code: organizational enrichment*].

Interviewer. How does delegation impact team dynamics within a diverse workplace?

Participant. Delegation must be done fairly [*Code: delegating fairly*]. Treating team members equally is essential, ensuring equity [*Code: treating equally*] and maintaining shared goals [*Code: shared goals*]. By practicing equitable delegation [*Code: equitable delegation*], leaders can create opportunities for boosting morale [*Code: boosting morale*] and avoiding exclusion [*Code: avoiding exclusion*]. This approach enhances employee engagement and promotes a culture of sustained, motivated contribution [*Code: motivated contribution*].

Interviewer. Can you share an experience that exemplifies the importance of empowerment in a professional setting?

Participant. Years ago, I was a qualified employee [*Code: qualified employee*] with substantial training and experience. However, I witnessed unfair promotion [*Code: unfair promotion*] that overlooked my potential and led to morale plummeting [*Code: morale plummeting*]. Although it challenged my faith initially, I eventually regained faith [*Code: regained faith*] through reflection and perseverance. This faith helped me recognize new opportunities [*Code: new opportunities*] and ultimately find a workplace where I was respected [*Code: finding respect*].

Theme 1: The Role of Diversity and Fair Delegation in Fostering Organizational Success. This theme emphasizes the critical importance of diverse workplaces [*Code: diverse workplaces*] and empowering employees [*Code: empowering employees*] in driving creativity and collaboration. The participant highlights that diversity brings together individuals with unique cultures and perspectives [*Code: unique cultures and perspectives*], which fosters collaboration and creativity [*Code: collaboration and creativity*] and prevents organizations from being constrained by a single mindset. Delegating fairly [*Code: delegating fairly*] within diverse workplaces ensures equitable delegation [*Code: equitable delegation*] and equal opportunity [*Code: equal opportunity*], creating an environment where employees feel valued and can contribute toward shared goals.

Theme 2: Empowerment and Respect as Catalysts for Employee Morale and Trust. This theme emphasizes the importance of empowerment and respect in fostering employee morale and trust. When employees are treated as integral parts [*Code: integral parts*] of

the organization, free from favoritism [*Code: favoritism*], it enhances morale [*Code: morale*] and prevents feelings of exclusion or stereotyping. Empowerment through delegation encourages contribution [*Code: motivated contribution*] and connects employees more deeply with the organization. Additionally, the participant's personal experience reflects the detrimental effects of unfair promotion [*Code: unfair promotion*] and the lack of genuine reassurance [*Code: genuine reassurance*] but also highlights the redemptive power of resilience and regained faith [*Code: regained faith*] in finding new opportunities where respect and value are restored.

Participant 3.

Interviewer. What is the benefit of spiritual leaders demonstrating the development of self and others in diverse communities as they foster delegation and empowerment?

Participant. To answer that, I will return to when God called me [Code: God called me] to lead my church's dance ministry [*Code: dance ministry*]. I heard God clearly [*Code: heard God clearly*] and understood that I needed to prepare for this role [*Code: prepare for this role*]. To guide the team effectively, I first had to deeply understand [*Code: deeply understand*] what I was leading them into. This involved studying and training [*Code: studying and training*] in dance theory for an entire year to learn various styles. I also invited team members to join me in these classes. While only one participated, this preparation allowed me to equip myself to lead [*Code: equip myself to lead*].

Interviewer. That is a great example of preparation. Did you use delegation as part of your leadership within the ministry?

Participant. Yes. Within the group, we divided responsibilities [*Code: divided responsibilities*] to ensure everyone had a role. For instance, one member handled choreography [*Code: choreography*], another managed scheduling [*Code: scheduling*], and someone else led us in prayer and warmups [*Code: prayer and warmups*] before each rehearsal. Each person contributed ideas [*Code: contributed ideas*] for music or movement, which made the process collaborative. Delegation fostered empowerment [*Code: empowerment*], as members took their tasks seriously. For instance, the person responsible for birthdays ensured we celebrated special occasions [*Code: special occasions*], which strengthened group unity.

Interviewer. How did this empowerment affect the group's overall dynamics?

Participant. It created ownership and belonging [*Code: ownership and belonging*] within the ministry. Everyone felt they were a vital part [*Code: a vital part*] of the

team, evident in their dedication [*Code: dedication*]. For example, one member commuted long distances *[Code: commuted long distances]* every week but always made it to rehearsals. She often said how much the ministry inspired her [*Code: the ministry inspired her*], lifting her spirits and giving her joy for the week. This shared commitment turned the group into more than just a ministry—it became a community and family [*Code: community and family*] bonded by mutual respect and purpose.

Interviewer. That is such a meaningful and impactful experience. Based on this, how would you describe compelling organizational spirituality?

Participant. I believe compelling organizational spirituality [*Code: organizational spirituality*] requires people to share unity of purpose [*Code: unity of purpose*], centered on their believe in God [*Code: belief in God*]. When everyone follows His teachings and works harmoniously, incredible things happen. It fosters an environment where God's presence [*Code: God's presence*] can be felt, bringing uplifting and remarkable outcomes.

Theme 1: Preparation and Personal Development in Spiritual Leadership. The interview highlights the significance of spiritual leaders investing in their personal development to fulfill their roles effectively. The example of preparing to lead a dance ministry demonstrates the leader's commitment to equipping themselves by studying, reading, and even enrolling in a year-long course on dance theory. This preparation enabled the leader to guide the team with confidence and clarity. The leader demonstrated the importance of continuous growth and learning by inviting team members to participate in the learning process, even if only one member joined. This emphasis on preparation underscores the belief that spiritual leadership requires a calling and intentional effort to understand the responsibilities. The foundation of preparation ultimately strengthens the leader's ability to serve and develop others.

Theme 2: Empowerment and Delegation as Building Blocks for the Community. Another critical theme is empowering followers through delegation and shared responsibilities. The leader's approach of assigning roles within the dance ministry allowed each member to contribute meaningfully, fostering a sense of ownership and belonging. Simple yet impactful tasks, such as tracking birthdays, became more significant as members poured their hearts into their roles, feeling valued and important. This culture of empowerment and shared responsibility led to strong dedication and connection within the group, as evidenced by consistent attendance and members' commitment, even from those traveling long distances. The camaraderie and mutual respect that emerged transformed the ministry into a close-knit family, demonstrating how delegation increases efficiency and cultivates a vibrant, unified community.

Participant 4.

Interviewer. What is the benefit outcome of spiritual leaders demonstrating the development of self and others in diverse communities as they foster delegation and empowerment?

Participant. It is imperative to stay in tune and keep up with training from a leadership perspective. As leaders, we need to stay on top of our responsibilities. Training plays a significant role in that. I strongly believe in keeping myself trained and open to change [*Code: continuous self-development*]. In our line of business, staying current with systems is crucial, as they frequently evolve. This requires constant development [*Code: adapting to industry changes*].

Equally, it is vital for me, as a leader, to ensure my team is also developing. Millennials and Generation Z are data-savvy and hungry for information. Providing opportunities to work with new data and information enhances their abilities, encourages creativity, and keeps them motivated [*Code: fostering team development*]. For example, I delegate training sessions for leaders and team members. This exposes them to valuable experiences, like attending meetings with other leaders, and they return inspired to share their learning with the rest of the team [*Code: delegation and empowerment*]. Our office is very diverse, with a good balance of women, men, and different races. I ensure everyone gets equal opportunities for additional training and development, reinforcing their sense of value and importance to the organization [*Code: promoting diversity and inclusion*].

Theme 1: Empowering Diverse Teams through Development. Effective spiritual leaders prioritize team members' growth by fostering opportunities for skill enhancement, exposure, and empowerment. Delegating responsibilities and training supports employee confidence and drives innovation within diverse communities.

Theme 2: Commitment to Continuous Self-Improvement and Adaptability. Leaders' investment in their development ensures they remain adaptable to industry changes, serving as role models and equipping them to guide their teams effectively.

Participant 5.

Interviewer. What are the benefits or outcomes of spiritual leaders demonstrating the development of self and others in diverse communities as they foster delegation and empowerment?

Participant. I believe it is essential to praise God [*Code: praise God*] for allowing me to approach leadership with an open mind [*Code: approach leadership with an open mind*]. Delegation and empowerment are key components of my leadership style [*Code: key components of my leadership style*]. They allow team members to feel

a sense of belonging and significance [*Code: sense of belonging and significance*] within the organization while also alleviating some of my workload [*Code: alleviating some of my workload*].

As a business owner, I know there are areas where I need help [*Code: areas where I need help*], and I humbly reach out to my team [*Code: humbly reach out to my team*] for assistance. Whether it is asking them to double-check something [*Code: asking them to double-check something*] or designating one as the office manager while I am away [*Code: designating one as the office manager while I am away*], delegation ensures tasks are managed effectively [*Code: managed effectively*].

Interviewer. Could you share an example of how you've empowered a team member?

Participant. Over the years, I have built strong relationships with my team [*Code: built strong relationships with my team*], empowering them to make decisions independently and confidently [*Code: make decisions independently and confidently*]. For instance, when I'm not in the office, the designated office manager assumes responsibility [*Code: designated office manager assumes responsibility*] for running the business like theirs. This stems from the trust and support I have demonstrated [*Code: trust and support I have demonstrated*], which helps them feel confident in their role [*Code: feel confident in their role*].

Interviewer. How does delegation and empowerment address challenges with team members?

Participant. Delegation is essential for solving challenges with team members [*Code: solving challenges with team members*]. Many employees feel undervalued [*Code: undervalued*], which can lead to dissatisfaction or even leaving the company. By delegating meaningful responsibilities [*Code: delegating meaningful responsibilities*] and empowering them [*Code: empowering them*], I help team members enhance their skills and exceed expectations [*Code: enhance their skills and exceed expectations*]. This approach fosters loyalty [*Code: loyalty*], strengthens professional relationships [*Code: professional relationships*], and builds interpersonal connections [*Code: interpersonal connections*] within the organization.

Interviewer. How has delegation and empowerment helped your business?

Participant. These practices have greatly improved employee retention [*Code: employee retention*] and overall operational efficiency [*Code: overall operational efficiency*]. When team members are given the authority to make decisions [*Code: authority to make decisions*], they feel less stressed [*Code: less stressed*] and more

confident [*Code: more confident*]. Even if their decisions are not perfect [*Code: not perfect*], we discuss and refine processes together [*Code: discuss and refine processes together*] to ensure continuous improvement.

Interviewer. Has your faith influenced your ability to establish delegation and empowerment within your team?

Participant. My faith has played a crucial role [*Code: faith has played a crucial role*]. It humbles me [*Code: humbles me*] and helps me place myself in the shoes of my team members [*Code: place myself in the shoes of my team members*]. I strongly believe that followership is essential to leadership [*Code: followership is essential to leadership*]. As a business owner, I embrace flexibility [*Code: embrace flexibility*] and ensure I am willing to perform any task [*Code: willing to perform any task*] I ask of my team. Leading by example [*Code: leading by example*] has earned their respect and strengthened their willingness to follow my guidance.

Theme 1: Empowerment and Delegation as Catalysts for Success. Dialogue Excerpt: "Delegation and empowerment are key components of my leadership style [*Code: key components of my leadership style*]. They help team members feel a sense of belonging and significance [*Code: sense of belonging and significance*] within the organization while also alleviating some of my workload [*Code: alleviating some of my workload*]." The participant emphasized the importance of delegation and empowerment in fostering team members' confidence, encouraging loyalty, and strengthening their contributions to organizational success.

Theme 2: Faith and Humility as Foundations for Leadership. Dialogue Excerpt: "My faith has played a crucial role [Code: faith has played a crucial role]. It humbles me [*Code: humbles me*] and allows me to place myself in the shoes of my team members [*Code: place myself in the shoes of my team members*]. The participant highlighted how their faith shapes their leadership approach, fostering humility and flexibility. They cultivate a supportive and empowered organizational environment by leading through example and mutual respect.

Clusters of Codes. The codes listed below were extracted from the transcript analysis and reflect key patterns and themes identified across participant responses.

- Extracted codes:
  - Praise God
  - Approach leadership with an open mind
  - Key components of my leadership style
  - Sense of belonging and significance
  - Alleviating some of my workload
  - Areas where I need help

- Humbly reach out to my team
- Managed effectively
- Built strong relationships with my team
- Designated office manager assumes responsibility
- Trust and support demonstrated
- Solving challenges with team members
- Enhance their skills and exceed expectations
- Faith has played a crucial role
- Leading by example
- Key components of my leadership style
- Sense of belonging and significance
- Alleviating some of my workload
- Faith has played a crucial role
- Humbles me
- Place myself in the shoes of my team members
- Diverse workplaces
- Empowering employees
- Diversity brings ideas
- Unique cultures and perspectives
- Fostering collaboration and creativity
- Sharing knowledge
- Exchanging perspectives
- Organizational enrichment
- Delegating fairly
- Treating equally
- Boosting morale
- Avoiding exclusion
- Motivated contribution
- Faith challenged
- Regained faith
- God called me
- Dance ministry
- Heard God clearly
- Prepare for this role
- Deeply understand
- Studying and training
- Equip to lead
- Divided responsibilities
- Prayer and warmups
- Contributed ideas
- Empowerment
- Ownership and belonging

- Community and family
- Organizational spirituality
- God's presence
- Continuous self-development
- Adapting to industry changes
- Fostering team development
- Delegation and empowerment
- Promoting diversity and inclusion
- Empowerment
- Well-being
- Diversity
- Trust
- Motivation
- Collaboration
- Authenticity
- Humility
- Responsibility
- Recognition
- Inclusion
- Connecting deeper
- Leadership growth
- Supportive environment
- Forgiveness
- Investing in diversity and empowerment
- Investing time, effort, and care
- Diverse needs and strengths
- Fostering delegation and empowerment
- Supportive and collaborative environment
- Accommodating personal needs
- Encouraging coworkers to support each other
- Trust, camaraderie, and inclusion
- Feel valued
- Take responsibility
- Express ideas freely
- Integral team members
- Enhancing organizational health
- Authenticity and humility as foundations of spiritual leadership'
- Authenticity and humility as foundations
- Authenticity as key element
- Genuine connection
- Humility
- Focus on individual worth

- o Acknowledging imperfections
- o Respected, valued, and loved
- o Belonging and purpose
- o Motivates individuals
- o Transforms followers to collaborators
- o Commitment to shared vision
- o Well-being of individuals and organization
- Leadership and communication codes:
  - o Approach leadership with an open mind
  - o Key components of my leadership style
  - o Sense of belonging and significance
  - o Humbly reach out to my team
  - o Managed effectively
  - o Built strong relationships with my team
  - o Trust and support demonstrated
  - o Solving challenges with team members
  - o Enhance their skills and exceed expectations
  - o Leading by example
  - o Key components of my leadership style
  - o Leadership growth
  - o Recognition
- Faith and spirituality codes:
  - o Praise God
  - o Faith has played a crucial role
  - o God called me
  - o Dance ministry
  - o Heard God clearly
  - o Prayer and warmups
  - o Organizational spirituality
  - o God's presence
  - o Faith challenged
  - o Regained faith
  - o Authenticity and humility as foundations of spiritual leadership
  - o Authenticity and humility as foundations
  - o Authenticity as key element
  - o Genuine connection
  - o Humility
  - o Focus on individual worth
  - o Acknowledging imperfections
  - o Respected, valued, and loved
  - o Belonging and purpose

- Empowerment and inclusion codes:
  - Empowerment
  - Ownership and belonging
  - Community and family
  - Delegation and empowerment
  - Promoting diversity and inclusion
  - Investing in diversity and empowerment
  - Investing time, effort, and care
  - Diverse needs and strengths
  - Fostering delegation and empowerment
  - Supportive and collaborative environment
  - Accommodating personal needs
  - Encouraging coworkers to support each other
  - Trust, camaraderie, and inclusion
  - Feel valued
  - Take responsibility
  - Express ideas freely
  - Integral team members
- Diversity and collaboration codes:
  - Diverse workplaces
  - Diversity brings ideas
  - Unique cultures and perspectives
  - Fostering collaboration and creativity
  - Sharing knowledge
  - Exchanging perspectives
  - Organizational enrichment
- Continuous development and well-being codes:
  - Continuous self-development
  - Adapting to industry changes
  - Fostering team development
  - Well-being
  - Supportive environment
  - Forgiveness
  - Enhancing organizational health
  - Commitment to shared vision
  - Motivates individuals
  - Transforms followers to collaborators
  - Responsibility
  - Inclusion

Discussion

Each RQ encompasses numerous codes that share overlapping ideas, including faith-based leadership, trust, empathy, inclusivity, communication, and well-being. These recurring themes indicate that core topics have been addressed repeatedly. The codes are highly detailed and comprehensive. For example, RQ1/IQ1 includes themes like servant leadership, compassionate leadership, supportive work environment, and spiritual guidance, all of which paint a nuanced picture of how spiritual leaders influence well-being. Similarly, RQ2/IQ2 highlights genuine interpersonal communication, open communication, and mutual respect, which tie into trust, creativity, and collaboration themes. RQ3/IQ3 expands on concepts such as diversity, empowerment, and delegation, emphasizing their contributions to organizational health and personal growth. The existing codes cover a broad and interconnected spectrum of the key principles outlined in the RQs. Many codes (e.g., trust, empathy, faith, collaborative environment) are relevant across multiple RQs. This overlap shows that the study has captured the interconnected nature of the explored phenomena.

Answer to RQ1

Spiritual leaders who prioritize listening to the Word of God are often regarded as exemplars of servant leadership, embodying qualities such as attentiveness, empathy, and respect for their followers. This foundation in spirituality fosters an environment that cultivates trust and compassion. Employees perceive spiritual leaders as empathetic figures who attentively address their concerns and offer customized support, fostering a sense of belonging and worth within the organization. The steadfast faith of leaders serves as a foundational principle, fostering humility in their actions and dedication to the development of others. Applying these principles within organizational settings enhances employee morale, fosters mutual respect, and promotes improved collaboration. Integrating spirituality into leadership practices fosters a tone of integrity, encouraging others to adopt similar values and thereby enhancing the organization's overall well-being. Empathy and flexibility reinforce these principles, enabling leaders to tackle challenges while empowering followers to overcome obstacles effectively.

The involvement of spiritual leaders with the Word of God greatly influences organizational settings, forming a core foundation for leadership practices. This idea is centered on the theme of *Divine Guidance as the Foundation of Spiritual Leadership*, emphasizing the importance for leaders to stay in tune with God's direction. Leaders who actively listen to God's Word align their actions with a higher purpose, fostering authenticity and humility as key qualities. Followers often see leaders as attentive and empathetic, creating an environment rooted in trust and respect. The leader's ability to empathize with and honor their followers demonstrates the principle of hearing the

Word of God, which is shown by their consideration of team members' unique needs and contributions. Leaders guided by divine principles prioritize harmony and teamwork within their organizations, as highlighted in the theme of promoting empathy, respect, and cooperation through spiritual leadership. When leaders stay aligned with their spiritual calling, they make decisions that reflect the organization's and members' core values. Followers view these actions as meaningful, strengthening a sense of unity and shared purpose.

Answer to RQ2

Spiritual leaders who improve interpersonal communication are crucial for building trust and strengthening workplace relationships. Their ability to promote genuine dialogue, based on openness and humility, creates an environment of mutual respect and shared understanding. Followers see these leaders as communicators who focus on active listening and encourage collaboration. Spiritual leaders boost creativity and motivation by establishing open channels for exchanging ideas and feedback, fostering a shared sense of purpose. Employees view interpersonal communication as key for resolving conflicts, increasing engagement, and improving workplace satisfaction. These outcomes help create a cohesive organizational environment that promotes teamwork and deepens individuals' connection to their colleagues and the organization's mission. Leaders' interpersonal communication skills also enhance innovation by allowing followers to share their unique perspectives and skills in pursuit of organizational goals.

The benefits of each principle are most evident in how they affect interpersonal communication within organizations. Effective spiritual leaders focus on divine guidance and foster genuine communication, as illustrated by the theme of *Genuine Communication as the Bedrock of Spiritual Leadership*. This theme emphasizes how open and inclusive dialogue enables leaders to build trust, resolve conflicts, and encourage creativity among their followers. For example, spiritual leaders who promote collaborative decision-making make followers feel valued and heard, strengthening relationships and encouraging group unity. Additionally, the theme of *Interpersonal Communication as a Foundation for Trust, Creativity, and Morale* underscores the vital role of communication in creating a positive organizational culture. Leaders who support open dialogue promote mutual understanding and teamwork, helping teams overcome challenges together. This environment allows creativity to thrive, as team members feel confident sharing their ideas and contributions. Followers see this approach as a key sign of effective leadership, recognizing its ability to boost both individual and group motivation.

These principles provide practical benefits for organizations. The theme of *Building Trust through Holistic and Result-Driven Spiritual Leadership* shows that combining trust

with a results-oriented approach boosts employee engagement and supports organizational success. Higher morale, productivity, and job satisfaction are often linked to the spiritual leader's commitment to fostering trust and respect. This highlights the strong influence of spiritual leadership on the well-being of organizations.

Answer to RQ3

Understanding the benefits of diversity, empowerment, and delegation: People see the investments made by spiritual leaders in diversity, empowerment, and delegation as vital for both personal growth and organizational success. Leaders who prioritize diversity recognize the unique strengths of their team members and offer equal development opportunities, fostering inclusivity. Delegation serves as a tool for empowering employees, helping them develop their skills, and encouraging meaningful contributions toward organizational goals. When employees are entrusted with responsibilities, they feel valued, which boosts their confidence and motivation to perform well. Delegation promotes empowerment, enhances problem-solving, and sparks innovation, strengthening the team's overall capabilities. The practices of spiritual leaders support organizational health by cultivating a culture of mutual respect and collaboration among diverse groups. Inclusive and empowering environments enhance employee well-being, resulting in increased productivity and overall success. Leaders' commitment to diversity and empowerment aligns with their principles of faith and humility, reinforcing a sense of purpose and fairness within the organization.

Diversity, empowerment, and delegation are vital principles for promoting well-being and organizational health, as seen in spiritual leaders who prioritize investing in their teams. The theme of empowerment and delegation as core elements for community development shows that giving meaningful responsibilities to team members enhances efficiency and builds a sense of ownership and belonging. When leaders delegate tasks fairly, followers feel their contributions are appreciated, which boosts morale and increases commitment to organizational goals. Investing in diversity is a key part of spiritual leadership, highlighted by the theme of *Investing in Diversity and Empowerment to Foster Collaborative Teams*. Leaders who recognize and value their followers' unique talents and perspectives create inclusive environments that encourage collaboration. Leaders who promote diversity demonstrate respect for individuality and strengthen organizational unity. Followers see this approach as empowering, viewing it as a driver for their personal growth and the organization's success.

The theme of *Trust and Respect as Drivers of Employee Motivation and Organizational Success* emphasizes the role of spiritual leaders in building trust through genuine concern and support for their teams. This trust forms the foundation for delegation and

empowerment, enabling leaders to foster motivation and commitment among followers. When team members experience trust and respect, they are more likely to take initiative, share ideas, and contribute to the organization's overall success. This dynamic enhances individual well-being and cultivates a culture of mutual respect and collaboration. The benefits of these principles are clear in their positive impact on the organization's overall health. The theme of *Inclusive Communication and Morale Building for Organizational Growth* highlights how spiritual leaders use communication to create an environment of inclusivity and shared purpose. Leaders foster a sense of collective achievement by aligning organizational goals with the values and aspirations of its members. This approach strengthens organizational cohesion and boosts resilience in facing challenges.

Summary

Spiritual leadership represents a multifaceted framework that includes divine guidance, interpersonal communication, and a commitment to diversity, empowerment, and delegation. The principles evaluated through diverse themes demonstrate the transformative effects of spiritual leadership on individuals and organizations. Leaders prioritizing the Word of God align their actions with a greater purpose, promoting empathy, respect, and team collaboration. The focus on authentic communication fosters trust and creativity, allowing teams to navigate challenges and attain shared objectives. Moreover, investing in diversity and empowerment fosters inclusive environments that enhance individual value and motivation, thereby contributing to the organization's overall health and success. Spiritual leadership is a comprehensive framework that promotes well-being, unity, and organizational growth through its underlying principles and themes. Authentic and purpose-driven leadership has a profound impact on individuals and communities, motivating them to excel and reach their full potential.

Findings

The findings significantly improve the practitioner literature on spiritual leadership by offering practical insights for developing authentic, empathetic, and collaborative organizational settings. The contributions highlight the importance of engaging with the Word of God as a key aspect of leadership, showing how divine guidance motivates leaders to operate with integrity and humility. The results emphasize the need for leadership programs that focus on emotional intelligence, active listening, and spiritual inclusivity as essential strategies for creating environments where individuals feel valued, empowered, and connected (Sanders, 2007; Smith et al., 2018). Practitioners can apply these insights by aligning their leadership approaches with higher values, encouraging purpose-driven decision-making that deeply connects with teams and

communities. This focus on spiritual principles reinforces the unique role of spiritual leaders in creating environments built on trust, respect, and collaboration.

The findings emphasize the importance of interpersonal communication as a key aspect of effective leadership. Spiritual leaders build trust and stimulate creativity within their teams by encouraging honest communication, which in turn increases motivation and morale (Vanover et al., 2021). This insight is especially valuable for practitioners aiming to create inclusive environments where individuals feel recognized and valued. As demonstrated by spiritual leaders, effective communication practices can be applied across different organizational settings to improve cohesion and productivity (Sanders, 2007). The findings also highlight the importance of investing in diversity, empowerment, and delegation. Spiritual leaders who acknowledge and leverage their teams' unique talents and perspectives foster collaborative environments (Smith et al., 2018). Delegation enhances efficiency and empowers team members, fostering a sense of ownership and belonging. This analysis offers practitioners strategies to build diverse, empowered teams that drive organizational success. Incorporating spiritual leadership principles, such as empathy, humility, and inclusivity, can boost individual well-being and organizational health. Overall, these findings contribute to the existing literature by presenting spiritual leadership as a transformative approach for achieving shared goals and supporting holistic development within modern organizations.

Weaknesses of the Study

Conducting comprehensive interviews and carefully analyzing the collected data using qualitative techniques, such as thematic analysis, requires a significant investment of time, energy, and attention to detail. This process involves fully engaging with the complexities of participants' narratives and carefully identifying patterns, themes, and underlying meanings that emerge from their accounts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The commitment to rigorous qualitative methods highlights the demanding nature of ensuring the research is thorough and meaningful. In phenomenological studies, validating the reliability and credibility of the findings presents unique challenges. Since phenomenology focuses on exploring and understanding individuals' lived experiences, these findings are inherently subjective and deeply connected to personal perspectives. Unlike data obtained from quantitative approaches, which can be verified through statistical or empirical measures, the outcomes of phenomenological research depend on the interpretation of human experiences, making the establishment of their accuracy and trustworthiness a nuanced and complex task (Moustakas, 1994).

Recommended Future Research

New studies on spiritual leadership should explore its long-term effects on organizations to gain a better understanding of how sustained spiritual leadership

practices influence key success indicators, such as employee retention, creativity, efficiency, and overall workplace culture. Future research should expand the scope of spiritual leadership across different cultural contexts, focusing on various interpretations and applications of spirituality in international work environments. Cross-cultural studies could examine how spiritual leadership is perceived and practiced in multiple cultural settings, especially where spiritual values may interact differently with organizational norms and practices. Researchers might investigate the impact of cultural differences on employees' openness to spiritual leadership and how leaders navigate conflicts between individual spiritual values and collective cultural traditions. This research is crucial for multinational organizations seeking to foster inclusive environments that respect diverse spiritual and cultural perspectives.

Conclusion

This research provides a detailed, phenomenological examination of how spiritual leadership cultivates creativity, trust, and motivation through genuine interpersonal relationships and compassionate actions. Using in vivo coding, the study captures the lived experiences and voices of organizational members, highlighting the emotional richness and transformational effects of leadership grounded in empathy and spiritual principles. The results indicate that clear communication, kindness, and spiritual mindfulness, particularly through engagement with God's Word, are essential tools for promoting well-being, trust, and motivation in various workplace settings (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Fry, 2003; Reave, 2005).

The findings underscore that spiritual leaders create emotionally supportive environments that connect individual flourishing with organizational health. Participants' firsthand narratives reflect how such leadership builds emotional bonds and enhances organizational performance, emphasizing the centrality of listening, emotional intelligence, and respectful engagement. Leadership programs that prioritize active listening, empathy, and spiritual inclusivity are instrumental in nurturing cultures where individuals feel genuinely valued and empowered.

By highlighting the intersection of spiritual values and leadership practices, this study demonstrates that spiritual leadership not only strengthens emotional connections but also drives organizational excellence. The conclusion invites future researchers to investigate the long-term organizational effects of spiritual leadership across global and culturally diverse contexts, examining its adaptability, sustainability, and role in fostering cross-cultural collaboration. The enduring relevance of spiritual leadership within contemporary structures affirms its potential as a transformative framework for leading with wisdom, compassion, and purpose.

About the Author

Jeffrey McKinney is a decorated U.S. Army veteran with over 24 years of distinguished service, including five combat deployments in Operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Iraqi Freedom, and Enduring Freedom. Renowned for his calm, decisive leadership, he led more than 100 Combat Logistical Patrols under high-risk conditions, earning the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, and numerous other commendations. His military legacy reflects courage, integrity, and operational excellence.

Following active duty, Jeffrey transitioned into entrepreneurship as an independent contractor with State Farm Mutual Insurance Companies, where he guides clients in risk management, financial planning, and retirement solutions. He remains deeply committed to service through church outreach and community engagement.

Jeffrey holds a B.S. in Homeland Security and an M.S. in Management with a focus on organizational leadership. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership at Regent University, where his research explores ethical, adaptive, and complexity-based leadership. Integrating operational experience, academic rigor, and faith-informed values, Jeffrey is a trusted leader and emerging voice in both professional and community spheres.

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