

**Mediating role of workplace spirituality between spiritual leadership and  
employee commitment**

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Master of Philosophy (Corporate Strategy).

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## Declaration

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Corporate Strategy at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

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Signature

## **Abstract**

Spiritual leadership approach inspires employees to find meaning in their work and through a sense of belonging because of a satisfied need for spiritual survival in the workplace. Societal and organisational challenges are driving leaders to look at alternative approaches to traditional leadership styles to improve the working environments and deliver on organisational outcomes. The growing scholarly interest in spiritual leadership has resulted in studies demonstrating both organisational and individual benefits of spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality. Despite the growing interest in the topic, only limited empirical studies were conducted to understand the relationship between spiritual leadership and employee commitment mediated by workplace spirituality.

To contribute to the current debate, a quantitative cross-sectional study was conducted using an online survey to collect responses from 277 South Africans who are currently employed in various organisations. Data analysis used Partial Least Squares-based Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). The results showed a significant relationship between spiritual leadership and employee commitment mediated by workplace spirituality. Interestingly, the results showed varying outcomes in how dimensions of workplace spirituality influence the dimensions of employees' commitment. The theoretical implications of the findings stimulate further interest in understanding how the dimensions of workplace spirituality affect employees' commitment dimensions and consideration of workplace spirituality in organisational theory. The practical implications of the findings offer insights into an alternative approach to leadership that considers the spiritual needs of employees and embraces spirituality at work.

**Key Words:** Spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality, employee commitment, organisational outcomes

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **RESEARCH PROBLEM**

### **1.1 Introduction to the Research**

Spiritual leadership is an emergent paradigm of leadership that offers a new approach to leadership. To build on the growing literature on spiritual leadership and stimulate further scholarly interest, this study intended to explore the mediating role in the relationship between spiritual leadership and employees commitment. Despite the growing interest in spiritual leadership and the literature on workplace spirituality, no study has empirically examined the mediating role of workplace spirituality (inner life, meaning/calling and membership) in the relationship between spiritual leadership and the three-component model of employees commitment, which comprises affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment.

This study includes a thorough review of the published literature on spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and employees' commitment. The literature reviewed provided the background to the research problem; it guided the purpose of the study and outlines the contribution made by the study. Hypotheses were formulated that were aligned to the posed research questions. A conceptual model is presented, which is based on the literature review. The interaction of the constructs in this study such as spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and employees commitment are discussed with the formulated hypotheses. Subsequent chapters address the methodology followed in this study, the findings and the discussion of the research, and the conclusions drawn from the findings.

The study aimed to contribute to the current spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality dialogues and provide a detailed understanding of the mediating role of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and employees commitment. The study argued that i) there is a significant effect between spiritual leadership and employee commitment; ii) that there is a significant effect between workplace spirituality and employee commitment; iii) there is a significant effect between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality; and iv) that the positive relationship between spiritual leadership and employee commitment is mediated by workplace spirituality. A quantitative research design was used in this study, which is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

## 1.2 Background to the Research Problem

Spiritual leadership offers another dimension on substitutes for leadership that allows organisations to engage their employees holistically by enabling an intangible variable such as a spirituality to be present in the workplace. (Fairholm G. , 1996) argued that part of the basic values of spiritual leadership is that “spiritual leaders clarify followers’ moral identities and strengthen and deepen their commitments” (p. 12).

Benefiel (2005) stated that spirituality is necessary to be present in organisations that expected to achieve ethical behaviour, employees commitment, productivity, and a competitive. In contrast to traditional leadership studies that focus on power and authority (Chen & Yang, 2012), emergent studies emphasise the need for leaders to delve into value-based and spirit-centred leadership approaches such as spiritual leadership, which adds value to employees’ meaning of their work by satisfying their need for spiritual survival (Yang, Liu, Wang, & Zang, 2019). Societal and business discord is leading many people to search for spiritual solutions and therefore, spiritual leadership has helped spiritual themes to surface even in leadership studies (Parameshwar, 2005).

The increased interest in spiritual leadership can also be ascribed to the impact it has on the employees. Some of the benefits include providing employees with a sense of purpose and well-being, and adding meaning and job satisfaction (Fry, Latham, Clinebell, & Krahnke, 2017; Krishnakumar, Houghton, Neck, & Ellison, 2015; Tabor, Madison, Marler, & Kellermanns, 2020). Despite these identified benefits, there is scant research on how spiritual leadership affects employee performance (Yang et al., 2019). In addition, Vasconcelos (2018) states that research output in the field of workplace spirituality has been minimal, at an average of only 4.9 studies published a year, and this might be ascribed to insufficient publication of empirical studies in top-tier management journals. In a recent systemic review (Oh & Wang, 2020), the authors state that researchers at individual-level outcomes tend to focus mostly on followers and seldom on leader outcomes.

If leaders aim to achieve ethical behaviour in their organisations, then spiritual leadership matters, because their employees are spending the majority of their waking time at work and therefore, the desire to find meaning in their work, and a sense of belonging within their work environment seem to be increasing (Benefiel & Fry, 2014). According to Fry et al. (2017), there has been an increasing theory building and research focused on workplace spirituality and religion, and especially regarding the impact of spiritual leadership on individual and organisational outcomes. Researchers have examined spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality, and their impact on individual and organisational outcomes as well as through the

lens of various religions (Adawiyah & Pramuka, 2017; Benefiel, 2005; Fry et al., 2017; Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2004; Tabor et al., 2020; Vu & Gill, 2019; Mabey, Cronroy, Blakeley, & de Marco, 2015). The theory building and research as stated by Fry et al. (2017) responded to “an emerging movement to engage the whole person in the workplace” (p. 23), as leaders realised that work and other aspects of people’s lives are interlinked.

Other factors that might have contributed to the revived interest in spirituality in the workplace are the high levels of uncertainty caused by retrenchments, increased work stress, declining job satisfaction, environmental pollution, and energy crises (Adawiyah & Pramuka, 2017). The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has also challenged organisations to alter their approach in the management of the workforce through technical, technological, physical and social–psychological ways at a pace never seen before (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). Spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality are constructs that can be employed to address some of the challenges faced by organisations today and into the future. This study aimed to build on the literature that researched spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality, by exploring the mediating role of workplace spirituality in the relationship between spiritual leadership and employees commitment.

### **1.3 Research Problem**

#### **1.3.1 Academic problem**

Many researchers have invested their effort to examine the topic of spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality (Adawiyah & Pramuka, 2017; Benefiel & Fry, 2014; Daniel, 2015; Indrajaya et al., 2019; Krishnakumar et al., 2015). However, the researcher identified gaps that further research can contribute to by advancing in-depth knowledge and information on the topic of spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality scholarship. Fry et al. (2017) affirms that “satisfying spiritual needs in the workplace positively influences human health and psychological well-being, and forms the foundation for workplace spirituality and spiritual leadership” (p. 24). Similar views were expressed in previous research (Reave, 2005; Dent, Higgins, & Wharff, 2005; Fry, et al., 2005), where spiritual leadership was said to offer an opportunity for leaders to arouse their followers’ trust, promote positive work relationships, create a positive and ethical climate, and achieve individual and organisational goals through calling and membership. In another study, Sandra and Nandram (2020) demonstrate that the application of spiritual leadership theory in all level of the organisation can drive the interconnectedness through a process of entrainment as a mediator for spiritual leadership

and spiritual well-being. Despite the consensus on the expressed views, the studies fail to demonstrate how spiritual leadership affects the employees commitment.

In the quantitative study (Yang et al., 2019), which was conducted to examine how and when spiritual leadership enhances performance, the authors find that in their multilevel model, spiritual leadership enhances employees' performance. The study advances knowledge about spiritual leadership by identifying how spiritual leadership contributes to relational energy and ultimately employees' performance. However, the study was limited to a health service organisation and thus, limited in its generalisability, and it did not explore other variables such as employees commitment in relation to spiritual leadership. At the individual level, follower outcomes were discussed most often in the various studies that had been conducted (Fry et al., 2005; Fry et al., 2017; Yang & Fry, 2018), including factors such as organisational commitment and individuals' productivity because of spiritual leadership. Although organisational commitment might have been the most studied construct in relation to spiritual leadership (Oh & Wang, 2020), studies have not shown the link between the definition of spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality, or the relationship between the two constructs (Fry, 2003).

According to Jurkiewicz and Giacalone (2004), there is no conclusive evidence relating workplace spirituality with the organisation's bottom line performance and thus future research must address conceptual foundations and empirical work to test the theoretical formulations introduced in the workplace spirituality value framework, and especially the measurements, performance variables and moderator variables. Future research should also focus on exploring the value of spiritual leadership in diverse religious settings and different countries with varying economic development stages (Yang et al., 2019). In addition, it should test outcomes in various organisations across teams and individual levels, including leaders (Yang et al., 2019).

### **1.3.2 Business problem**

Business leaders are faced with mounting challenges in complex environments that require innovative ways of responding to the ever-changing world. Fiksel (2015) describes the interconnected global economy as characterised by turbulence and suggests that to survive in this turbulence, leaders must not resist change, but accept and embrace change. Arguably, these turbulent environments and the resultant high level of insecurity among employees require leadership that is about building relationships and relating to others. Openness to learning while leading enables the formation of better connections, relationships between the leader and others, and a higher power within an environment that will in turn,

facilitate the development of the leaders' spirituality and that of the follower (Chappell, Delbecq, & McCready, 2020).

As revived interest in the rise of workplace spirituality has highlighted that some of the difficulties faced by leaders in the workplace are fear and hesitancy regarding possible offence taken by peers, managers and employees in spiritual expression, conflicts with regard to religion and spirituality, unaddressed cultural norms, religious diversity and low levels of control over spiritual expression (Vu & Gill, "Letting go of the raft" - the art of spiritual leadership in contemporary organizations from a Buddhist perspective using skilful means, 2019). Concerning spiritual leadership development, Chappell et al. (2020) articulate that the fear of being lost in unstructured practices can be eliminated by creating structural support that "invites and holds religious plurality" (p. 55). Chappell et al. (2020) further affirm that careful design of support structures in the workplace for spiritual leadership development can invite what individuals deem as sacred, without relying on a specific religion, tradition or perspective.

Employees are spending the majority of their waking time at work and as a result, their desire to find meaning in their work and a sense of belonging in the work environment seems to be increasing. Because people are spending more time at work (Adawiyah & Pramuka, 2017) than at home, also affirms that any efforts to separate spirituality from other values in the workplace will not be successful. Adawiyah and Pramuka (2017) posit that business should place more effort on transcendental value by investing in people's well-being. Parameshwar (2005) argued that people are searching for spiritual solutions to calm the turbulence they experience in society and business. Spiritual leadership affirms the fostering of an organisational vision and the values throughout the organisation by creating workplaces that are inclusive, and where employees find a sense of belonging and meaningful experience (Tabor, Madison, Marler, & Kellermanns, 2020).

The positive relationship between spiritual leadership and organisational and individual outcomes is clearly demonstrated in literature (Benefiel, 2005; Duchon & Plowman, 2005; Fry et al., 2017; Karakas, 2010; Oh & Wang, 2020). However, this study argues that the relationship between spiritual leadership and employees' commitment specifically is mediated by workplace spirituality.

#### **1.4 Research Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to explore the mediating role of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and employees commitment.

The aims of the study were to establish:

- a) How does spiritual leadership affect affective commitment;
- b) How does spiritual leadership affect normative commitment;
- c) How does spiritual leadership affect continuance commitment;
- d) How does workplace spirituality affect affective commitment;
- e) How does workplace spirituality affect normative commitment;
- f) How does workplace spirituality affect continuance commitment;
- g) How does spiritual leadership affect workplace spirituality;
- h) How does spiritual leadership affect workplace spirituality and the mediating role of workplace spirituality between spiritual leadership and employees commitment (affective, normative and continuance).

### **1.5 Contribution of the Study**

This study aimed contribute to the current dialogue on spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality in literature. This study explored the relationship between spiritual leadership and the three-component model on employees commitment. Futhermore, the study intended to demonstrate the importance of workplace spirituality and its relationship to the three components of employees commitments as well as its mediating role.

Although previous studies have demonstrated the benefits of spiritual leadership and organisational and individual outcomes (Benefiel, 2005; Duchon & Plowman, 2005; Fry et al., 2017; Karakas, 2010; Oh & Wang, 2020), this study intended to show the importance of fostering an organisational vision by inspiring employees to have a sense of belonging and express themselves meaningfully, which positively affects employees commitment. Based on the findings, this study intended to demonstrate the mediating role of wokplace spirituality between spiritual leadership and employees commitment.

From a business perspective, the study aimed to contribute to the leadership literature and aid the practical implementation of the researched workplace spirituality by offering a new paradigm for organisations to embrace and nurture workplace spirituality, if they wish to positively affect their employees commitment. The study aimed to demonstrate the interaction between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality in understanding their contribution to employees commitment in organisations.

## **1.6 Outline of the Report**

Chapter 2 presents the literature review in relation to spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and employees commitment.

Chapter 3 outlines the research questions and hypotheses guided by the literature review and a conceptual model is presented.

Chapter 4 discusses in detail the research design and methodology.

Chapter 5 presents the results of the study aligned to the formulated research questions and hypotheses.

Chapter 6 discusses the results of the study aligned to the formulated research questions and hypotheses.

Chapter 7 discusses the implications for the study on academia and business. Limitations for the study are discussed and recommendations are made.

## **1.5 Conclusion**

This chapter introduced the research study, gave a detailed background to the research problem and discussed the research problem from an academic perspective and business perspective. The research purpose was stated, the intended contribution of the study was presented and the chapter concluded with an outline of the chapter to follow. The next chapter presents the literature review in line with the constructs examined in this study, which included spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and employees' commitment. The relationship between these constructs is discussed in relation to the aim of this study and finally, conclusions are drawn from the findings of the study.

# CHAPTER 2

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter starts by introducing the spiritual leadership theory in the theoretical framework section. The second section discusses the three constructs aligned to the research question. Thereafter, the three key constructs are discussed in relation to each other and the conclusions are drawn based on the literature review. Figure 1 illustrated the road map for chapter 2.

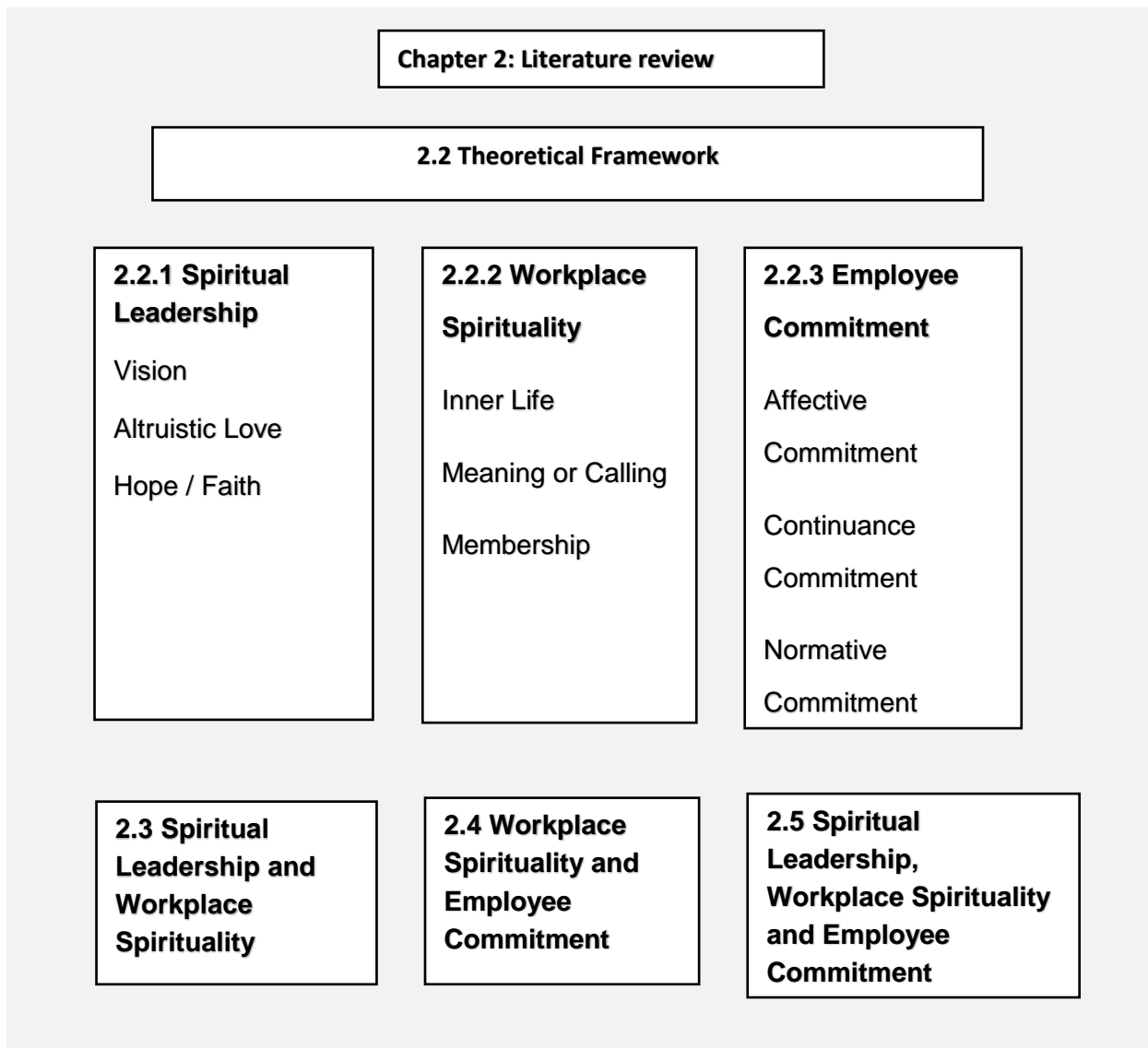


Figure 1. Literature review roadmap (Source: Author)

## 2.2 Theoretical Framework

According to Dent, Higgins, and Wharff (2005), the spirituality field of study and its relation to workplace leadership is still in its infancy and it is thus still marked by differences in definitions and other basic characteristics. Despite this limitation, spirituality in the workplace has aroused increased interest and has become a developing area of research (Meng, 2016). In acknowledging some of the work done in the field (Dent et al., 2005), the spiritual domain has become an integral component of leadership and has been described as one of the variables of the integrated leadership development model. Dent et al. (2005) further contended that Fry's definition of spiritual leadership allowed the required link between "the definition of leadership and workplace spirituality, which can be improved upon by testing for congruence and contingency" (p. 643).

Spiritual leadership theory was initially conceptualised by Fry (2003), who operationalised the concept of spiritual leadership in the workplace (Oh & Wang, 2020). However, another author (Fairholm, 1996) had already introduced spirituality in the workplace by positioning spiritual leadership as model that rejected models of leadership that merely focused on self-interest. Fairholm (1996) linked spirituality and leadership with the spiritual leader who was characterised by possessing and applying transcendent values.

More recently, Oh and Wang (2020) examined the theoretical framework that guided spiritual leadership in a scholarly manner and found that the causal model (Fry L. W., 2003; Fry L. W., Latham, Clinebell, & Krahnke, 2017) was the most frequently employed model in this field of study. According to Krishnakumar, Houghton, Neck, and Ellison (2015), the most comprehensive theory of spiritual leadership was the one presented by Fry (2003) and Fry (2005).

In the context of spiritual leadership theory, spirituality is not seen from a religious perspective, but rather it is about qualities or values of the human spirit that can be applied in religious and non-religious based organisations (Yang & Fry, 2018). Other authors (Yang & Fry, 2018) define spirituality in the context of the spiritual leadership theory as "the animating life principle or life-breath that provides the deepest dimension of human experience, the intangible reality at the centre of one's personality" (p. 308). The values of the human spirit were also described by Reave (2005) as integrity and trustworthiness, being admirable, reliable, honest and humble. In addition, Fry. (2003) added the values of an individual exhibiting patience and tolerance, harmony, the ability to take responsibility, and showing love, compassion and contentment.

Spiritual leadership is about inspiring followers to embrace the organisational vision through seeing work as a calling and developing a sense of belonging, which will ultimately result in positive organisational outcomes (Fry, 2003; Fry et al., 2005; Fry et al., 2017). This inspiration to followers is brought about by the interaction between hope / faith, vision and altruistic love. This study aimed to employ the assumptions from the spiritual leadership theory to explore the mediating role of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and employees' commitment.

## **2.2 Literature Themes Aligned to the Study**

### **2.2.1 Spiritual leadership**

Fry (2003) defined spiritual leadership as "comprising the values, attitudes, and behaviours that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one's self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership" (p. 711). Spiritual leadership focuses on an interactional relationship between the leader and the follower as opposed to applying a top-down approach (Krishnakumar, Houghton, Neck, & Ellison, 2015). Other authors (Krishnakumar, Houghton, Neck, & Ellison, 2015) affirm the definition of spiritual leadership provided by Fry L. (2003), "that feelings and beliefs of spirituality expressed and felt by a leader will influence followers to see work as a calling (and intrinsically motivating), subsequently resulting in better organisational outcomes" (pp. 17-18).

A spiritual culture is created within the organisation through spiritual leadership where both the leader and the followers portray genuine care, concern and appreciation for self and others, resulting in a sense of membership (Fry, 2003). Reave (2005) offered an alternative perspective, describing such culture or environment as having a clear consistency between the established ideas in leadership's effectiveness and practices emphasised in various spiritual teachings; and that the leaders' values and practices arouse in followers a sense of inspired trust, promote positive work relationships, create positive ethical climates and achieve organisational goals. Another perspective to spiritual leadership is a dual approach to individual and organisational transformation of a five-stage conceptual model of awakening, transition, recovery, dark night and dawn (Benefiel, 2005). While the other two models (Fry, 2003; Reave, 2005) focused on spiritual leadership resulting in individual and organisational outcomes, Benefiel's (2005) alternative approach is about both the individual and the organisation realising a natural starting point for a spiritual journey as opposed to only enhancing organisational performance.

The conceptualisation of spritual leadership has been developing since the late 1990s. when Fairholm G. (1996) introduced spirituality in the workplace. Fairholm G.(1996) argued that spiritual leadership refers to “redefining leadership in terms of service and stewardship” (p. 3) and thus creating an environment where people are encouraged and self-directed to choose duties from a moral standing. This would be for the benefit of society and ultimately give meaning and purpose to the work they perform. Fairholm and Gronau (2015) view spiritual leadership as the ability to relate with the “whole person in raising each other to higher levels of awareness and action, so that the best in people is liberated in the context of continous improvement of self, culture and service delivery” (p. 2). Table 1 summarises the various definitions of spiritual leadership as posited by the authors.

*Table 1. Definitions of Spiritual Leadership*

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Definition</b>
(Dent, Higgins, & Wharff, 2005)	“ Inspire and energise behaviour in employees based on meaning and purpose rather than on rewards and security, thus compelling employees to transcend their self-interests for the welfare of their organisational members, the sake of the mission, and for the good of humanity and the natural world.” (p. 627)
(Duchon & Plowman, 2005)	“Partly a function of ‘calling’, which is similar to our notion of meaning, and ‘membership’, which is similar to our notion of community.” (p. 809)
(Fairholm G., 1996)	“Clarify followers’ moral identity and strengthen and deepen their commitment...make connection between others’ interior worlds of moral reflection and the outer worlds of work and social relationships.” (p. 12-13)
(Fry L., 2003)	“Ccomprising the values, attitudes, and behaviours necessary to intrinsically motivate one's self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership." (p. 711)
(Reave, 2005)	“An observable phenomenon occurring when a person in a leadership position embodies spiritual values such as integrity, honesty and humility, creating the self as an example of someone who can be trusted, relied upon, and admired... also demonstrated through behaviour, whether in individual reflective practice or in the ethical, compassionate and respectful treatment of others.” (p. 663).
(Yang & Fry, 2018)	“An inner life or spiritual practice that generates hope/faith in a vision of serving others through a culture based on altruistic values to satisfy universal spiritual needs for calling and membership.” (p. 309)

Source: Author

Fry (2003) viewed spiritual leadership as a necessity for the transformation and sustainability of a learning organisation. Spiritual leadership dives into the deeply rooted needs not only of the followers, but also of the leaders for spiritual survival as well as for organisational commitment and productivity. Spiritual leadership addresses external and internal factors that arouse a person's enthusiasm and persistence to pursue a particular course of action (Indrajaya, Daryanto, Sjahrifa, & Yeung, 2019). Fry (2003) argued that other leadership theories neglected the spiritual component in humans and mainly focused on the physical, mental, and/or emotional elements of human interactions in organisations.

However, Collinson, Smolović, and Grint (2018) warn that spiritual leadership as a form of leadership romanticism uses faith as a catalyst that ties followers to an irrational attachment to their work, and consequently, claims to improve productivity almost sacrificially in service of spiritual leadership (SL). The transcended themes dominant in SL are viewed by Collinson, Smolović, and Grint (2018) as sketchy in how they are defined, "suggesting a purpose above and beyond enjoying one's job" (p. 1632).

Several reseachers (Dent et al., 2005; Fry et al., 2005; Fry et al., 2017; Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2004; Tabor et al., 2020; Parameshwar, 2005) have since explored SL and its impact on the workplace, for example, its impact on performance (Duchon & Plowman, 2005; Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2004; Yang, et al., 2019). Among these studies, it was Duchon and Plowman (2005) who demonstrated a clear relationship between spiritual leadership and positive organisational outcomes mediated by work unit spirituality. However, the study was limited in that it was conducted in only one organisation and the performance measures with regard to organisational outcomes were identified by the organisation as patient satisfaction measures.

While the spiritual leadership model presented by Fry et al. (2017) asserts that inner life practice in spiritual leadership results among other outcomes in organisational commitment, Jurkiewicz and Giacalone (2004) shared similar views that workplace spirituality had a positive impact on the organisational and employee performance. As with previous studies, the two studies (Fry et al., 2017; Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2004) were not able to demonstrate the mediating factor of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and employees commitment.

Spiritual leadership theory brings together the intrinsic motivation approach, an ethics-based approach, a shared value approach and a spiritual value-based approach (Chen & Yang, 2012). The combination of these approaches is evident through the stated values, attitudes and behaviours. The characteristics thereof are summarised in Table 2.

This study explored the relationship between spiritual leadership, as expressed through vision, altruistic love and hope / faith, employees commitment and how the relationship is mediated by workplace spirituality.

*Table 2. Characteristics of Spiritual Leadership*

<b>Vision</b>	<b>Altruistic love</b>	<b>Hope/faith</b>
Building shared value	Sharing meaning	Enabling
Broad appeal to key stakeholders	Trust / loyalty	Endurance
Define the destination and journey	Forgiveness / acceptance / gratitude	Perseverance
Reflect high ideals	Integrity	Do what it takes
Encourage hope / faith	Honesty	Stretch goals
Establish standard of excellence	Courage, humility	Expectation of reward
	Kindness, compassion	Excellence
	Patience / meekness / endurance	

Source: Author, adapted from Fry (2003); Fry, et al. (2005); Fairholm (1996)

### **Vision**

Spiritual leadership is concerned with the creation of transcendent vision and value, consistent across all levels of the organisation, driven by the spiritual need of the leader and follower through calling and membership (Fry, et al., 2005; Fry, 2003). The framework of spiritual leadership is based on the premise of moral leadership, with emphasis on service and stewardship (Fairholm, 1996). The spiritual leader encourages and creates the environment where the leader and all employees build shared values and “exhibit a sustained ability to build consensus and lead democratically within the framework of a common vision” (Fairholm, 1996, p. 14).

The vision in spiritual leadership theory is characterised by defining a path and destination for the organisation through shared values (Fairholm 1996), which appeals to all key stakeholders. Throughout the journey, spiritual leaders reflect on high ideals, encouraged by faith / hope and underpinned by standard of excellence (Fry , 2005; Fry et al., 2017).

The creation of the vision is established on the premise that employees feels that they add value and their duties are meaningful, with emphasis placed on love towards others, as it calls

for “intrinsic self-significance and self-value” (Chen & Yang, 2012, p. 109), as opposed to needing an extrinsic motivation.

### **Altruistic love**

Spiritual leadership is concerned with creating an organisational culture of serving others, a culture that is underpinned by altruistic values. Altruistic leadership is entrenched in spiritual leadership, and calls for leaders and followers who genuinely care and are concerned and appreciative of each other (Fry, 2003). Arguably, employees whose values are aligned to the values of the organisations they work in, are more likely to find contentment in their duties and contribute to the organisational outcomes. According to Reave (2005), it is important for leaders to respect their employees’ values, as such expressed respect is empowering for employees and cultivates a sense of sustainability within the organisation as opposed to an environment where there is employee dependency and short-term success.

Altruistic love in the context of the spiritual leadership theory is defined as “a sense of wholeness, harmony, and well-being, produced through care, concern and appreciation for both self and others” (Fry, 2003, p. 712). Fry (2003) also asserted that love has the power to remove or destruct anger, fear, the sense of failure and selfish pride.

Altruistic values were expressed by Reave (2005) as “kindness, compassion, patience, acceptance, and appreciation for both self and others” (pp. 662-663). In addition, Fry et al. (2005) and Fry (2003) characterised altruistic love as being reflected in values of self-control, a lack of envy, forgiveness, humility, trust, selflessness, loyalty and truthfulness.

### **Hope / faith**

Hope or faith is the vehicle through which employees are intrinsically motivated in a transcendent vision and values of altruistic love (Yang & Fry, 2018). Spiritual leadership is regarded as a process that arises from hope or faith. Yang and Fry (2018) assert that hope or faith is apparent because of the presence of “belief and trust” (p. 310) created by altruistic love.

Fry (2003) perceived hope or faith as surety that an organisation will fulfil its vision, purpose and mission. Fry (2003) used a race as a metaphor to describe faith, where he asserted that the “race of faith” (p. 713) must be run with an intention to win, and thus, requiring self-control and endurance, among other things. Hope or faith is thus demonstrated through work and is characterised by stretched goals, applying the necessary endurance of doing ‘what it takes’, and the expectation of rewards and excellence (Fry et al., 2005; Fry, 2003). Hope or faith lifts employees to look forward to the future, motivated intrinsically by a transcendent vision and the values of altruistic love.

Several other researchers (Chen & Yang, 2012; Duchon & Plowman, 2005; Fry et al., 2017) have demonstrated the interplay of the three variables in defining and applying spiritual leadership theory in organisations. This study applied the three variables in exploring the relationship between spiritual leadership and employees commitment as mediated by workplace spirituality.

### **2.2.2 Workplace spirituality**

Despite the growing scholarly interest in the role of workplace spirituality on organisational outcomes, there is no consensus in defining spirituality (Krishnakumar et al., 2015); however, scholars have increasingly brought clarity to the ambiguity (Benefiel & Fry, 2014).

Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003) defined workplace spirituality as “a framework of organisational values evidenced in the culture that promotes employees’ experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected to others in a way that provides feelings of completeness and joy” (p. 13). In this definition, workplace spirituality is viewed as the organisational ability to facilitate employees’ or individual’s spirituality through work processes and the promotion of interconnectedness. Other views involved defining workplace spirituality in the context of the organisation and variables of individual experiences (Duchon & Plowman, 2005). Workplace spirituality has also been defined as a “workplace that recognises that employees have an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of community” (Duchon & Plowman, 2005, p. 809). In this definition, three variables make up workplace spirituality – inner life, meaningful work and a sense of belonging (community), which will be considered in the context of this study as aligned (Fry L, Latham, Clinebell, & Krahnke, 2017).

The two definitions, which encompass the dimensions of inner life, membership and meaning / calling, are the most widely used by researchers when defining workplace spirituality (Vandenberghe, 2011; Daniel, Workplace spirituality and stress: evidence from Mexico and US, 2015; Benefiel, Fry, & Geigle, 2014).

In a qualitative research, McGhee and Grant (2017) outline four emergent global themes on how work place spirituality influences ethical behaviour. They describe it as being ‘other’ oriented and being guided, which speaks to participants being consciously aware of others within the organisation as well, and behaviour being guided by spiritual awareness of others. These global themes are likened to the sense of belonging or being part of community as defined by Duchon and Plowman (2005). The third identified global theme was being

authentic, which is described as being one's true self while finding meaning in one's job and one's work. This theme aligns to the concept of meaningful work as defined by Duchon and Plowman (2005). The fourth theme of well-being does not align to the variable (Duchon & Plowman, 2005), according to these author's definition of workplace spirituality; however, it touches on spiritual well-being as a construct (Fry et al., 2017) regarding the fundamental need by leaders and followers. From a human resource perspective, Karakas (2010) affirmed that "spirituality enhances employees' well-being and their quality of life" (p. 92). The other two perspectives were that workplace spirituality provides a sense of purpose and meaning (philosophical perspective) and that workplace spirituality provides a sense of community (Karakas, 2010). In reviewing these three perspectives, the author contended that these definitions provide a holistic view of how workplace spirituality results in organisational performance.

The positive impact of workplace spirituality on the organisations was demonstrated by scholars (Benefiel, 2005; Benefiel & Fry, 2014), where improved organisational processes and leadership practices (Fry et al., 2005; Reave, 2005; Yang et al., 2019) are related to workplace spirituality. In line with the growing interest by researchers in the topic of workplace spirituality, Vasconcelos (2018) affirms that it has also made inroads through interdisciplinary views and for enrichment of the workplace spirituality theory by focusing research conducted in Africa. This view is shared by Daniel (2015), who asserts that future research should focus on countries with diverse cultures to determine the concept's applicability across the different nations. McGhee and Grant (2017) investigated how spirituality influences ethical behaviour and call on researchers to focus future research onto gaining an understanding of the relationship between workplace spirituality and organisational commitment, among other variables. Table 3 outlines some definitions used by scholars for workplace spirituality.

Table 3. Definition of Workplace Spirituality

Authors	Definition
(Duchon & Plowman, 2005)	“The recognition that employees have an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of community.” (p. 809)
(Fry L. , Latham, Clinebell, & Krahnke, 2017)	“An inner life that nourishes and is nourished by calling or transcendence of the self within the context of a community based on the values of altruistic love.” (p. 23)
(Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003)	“A framework of organisational values evidenced in the culture that promote employees’ experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected to others in a way that provides feelings of completeness and joy.” (p. 13)
(Karakas, 2010)	“Spirituality is defined as the journey to find a sustainable, authentic, meaningful, holistic, and profound understanding of the existential self and its relationship/interconnectedness with the sacred and the transcendent.” (p. 91)
(Milliman, Czaplewski, & Ferguson, 2003)	“Three core dimensions include purpose in one’s work or ‘meaningful work’ (individual level), having a ‘sense of community’ (group level), and being in ‘alignment with the organisation’s values’ and mission (organisation level).” (p. 428)
(Rathee & Rajain, 2020)	“Having a sense of connection between own self and the workplace.” (p. 27)

Source: Author

This study adds to the body of knowledge in the field of workplace spirituality by determining the mediating role of workplace spirituality between spiritual leadership and employees commitment, where the workplace spirituality dimensions are viewed as inner life, meaning / calling and membership.

### Inner life

According to Duchon and Plowman (2005), inner life is referred to as the employees’ spiritual need and accordingly, this need is not left behind at home when an employee comes to work. These authors viewed inner life as a dimension of workplace spirituality that is required to nourish others and be nourished by providing meaning / a calling in the context of community

/ membership. Inner life is consistent with self-identity; employees who can identify with the values of an organisation because of their own set of values are also more likely to be energised (Duchon & Plowman, 2005).

These views are shared by other authors (Fry et al., 2017), who state that inner life is expressed as a source of “self-motivation for doing the work and from which active faith in a vision is fuelled” (p. 31). Furthermore, these authors (Fry et al., 2017) posit that inner life is a necessity for personal spiritual leadership development. Therefore, in this study inner life is viewed as a requirement for workplace spirituality, and when nourished, should result in employees’ commitment. However, it should be borne in mind that workplace spirituality is only one element that contributes to employees’ commitment to their workplace, and it does not replace all the other factors. Instead, it adds to all the other necessary factors that make employees committed to their job, the organisation where they work and their leadership.

### **Meaning or calling**

Meaning or calling is characterised by providing a sense of purpose, and making a difference through the service to others (Fry et al., 2017), adding a sense of one’s life as being valuable and a sense of one’s capability to achieve great things (Chen & Yang, 2012). Another study (Daniel, Workplace spirituality and stress: evidence from Mexico and US, 2015) found that meaning as a dimension of workplace spirituality significantly affects and reduces work stress, even when applied across cultures. Other authors (Duchon & Plowman, 2005) argued that workplace spirituality must not only advocate for employees finding meaning through their inner life, but also that added meaning should be satisfied through performing meaningful work in the organisation.

Meaning / calling was therefore applied in this study as the second dimension of workplace spirituality required in determining the relationship between workplace spirituality and employees’ commitment. Meaning / calling is a dimension of workplace spirituality required to determine the mediating role of workplace spirituality between the relationship of spiritual leadership and employees’ commitment.

### **Membership**

Some authors (Duchon & Plowman, 2005) viewed inner life as consistent with self-identity, they posited that this self-identity is cultivated in the context of a community or organisation, something that Fry (2003) referred to as membership. In the context of workplace spirituality, these authors (Duchon & Plowman, 2005) affirmed that the concept of membership arises because of a self-concept and social identity within an organisational culture that permits the expression of their inner life. Later authors (Chen & Yang, 2012) state that “a sense of

membership in the organisation strengthens employees' intrinsic motivations" (p. 108), which is key to organisational outcomes.

In this study, membership was viewed as the third dimension of workplace spirituality required to determine the relationship between workplace spirituality and employees commitment. Membership is the dimension of workplace spirituality required to determine the mediating role of workplace spirituality between the relationship of spiritual leadership and employees commitment.

Table 4 summarise some of the identified characteristics of workplace spirituality, based on the literature review (Fry et al., 2017; Duchon & Plowman, 2005; Chen & Yang, 2012).

*Table 4. Characteristics of Workplace Spirituality*

<b>Inner life</b>	<b>Meaning or calling</b>	<b>Membership</b>
Draws strength from their belief	Sense of purpose	Feel understood
Personal practice such as prayer, yoga, religious practices, walks in nature	Making a difference through service to others	Sense of belonging
Self-aware	Valuable	Appreciation for oneself and others
Conscious from moment to moment	Capable of great achievement	Social identity
Mindful practice		Self-concept

Source: Author

### **2.2.3 Employeescommitment**

Some authors (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001) viewed employees commitment as a multidimensional construct defined as "a mindset that can take different forms and binds an individual to a course of action that is of relevance to a particular target" (p. 310). In this definition, commitment was viewed as a binding force of the different dimensions and this binding force is experienced as a mindset. The type of the underlying mindset distinguishes the various dimensions of commitment. According to other authors (Meyer, Becker, & Vandenberghe, 2004; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Meyer, Morin, & Wasti, 2018), the three mindsets of organisational commitment (three-component model – TCM) experienced by employees are:

- i) Affective commitment is emotionally based and expresses the employees' desire to stay with an organisation based on their attachment and involvement within the organisation. Employees with a high affective commitment are more likely see themselves as part of the organisation, and are aligned to the values and vision of the organisation (Limpanitgul, Boonchoo, Kulviseachana, & Photiyarach, 2017). In the context of this study, participants with a high affective commitment felt that they can express their inner life through meaningful work or their calling with the organisation or as members of the organisation.
- ii) Continuance commitment is cost based, where the employees express awareness of the cost associated with leaving an organisation. Employees feel compelled to stay in an organisation as they might perceive the cost of leaving the organisation as higher. Some authors (Emre & De Spiegeleare, 2021) define continuance commitment as the fear and consequence of the cost related to leaving an organisation. Employees showing a high continuance commitment stay in an organisation, because they feel they have to stay as the cost related to leaving the organisation would be too high.
- iii) Normative commitment is based on individuals experiencing feelings of obligation to stay with an organisation. Employees with high normative commitment stay with an organisation because of a sense of loyalty that they feel they owe to the organisation (Emre & De Spiegeleare, 2021). Other authors (Bouckenooghe, Schwarz, & Minbashian, 2015) view normative commitment as a mirror of the feelings of moral obligation.

The dimensions of the three-component model of employees' commitment are at play in a concurrent manner and the interplay between them results in employees staying in an organisation (Emre & De Spiegeleare, 2021). Therefore, how the employee relates to the organisation will be reflected in the varying levels of the dimensions of employees commitment. According to other authors (Jaros, 2017; Bell-Ellis, Jones, Longstreth, & Neal, 2015), the three-component model discussed above is the most dominant framework in commitment research. In one of the conceptual studies, Vandenberghe (2011) found that two variables (calling and membership) of workplace spirituality had a mediating effect between spiritual leadership and employees commitment, in line with the three-component model.

In this study, the continuance commitment was further subdivided into two components – sacrifice and alternative. However, Vandenberghe (2011) affirmed that “much of the empirical literature has not distinguished between the two subcomponents” (p. 214). In another empiric study (Bell-Ellis et al., 2015), the authors examined the impact of four variables (engaging work, sense of community, mystical experience, and spiritual connection) of workplace

spirituality on employees commitment using an organisational commitment questionnaire (OCQ), which measures affective, normative, and continuance commitment. The study found that these variables had an impact on employees commitment to the two organisations studied.

Based on the reviewed literature (Bell-Ellis, et al., 2015; Jaros, 2017; Karakas, 2010; Vandenberghe, 2011), no specific study was found where workplace spirituality as defined by the three variables (inner life, meaningful work and sense of community) was examined as a mediator between spiritual leadership and employees commitment based on the three-component model. This study aimed to explore the relationship between spiritual leadership and the three-component model of employees commitment as mediated by workplace spirituality. The study further explored the relationship between workplace spirituality and the three components of employees commitment. Organisational commitment has been studied extensively and applied in various setting (Vance, Jaros, Becker, & MacKay, 2020; Soumyaja, Kamalanabhan, & Bhattacharyya, 2011; Hwang, Lin, & Shin, 2018; Bell-Ellis et al., 2015), which could be a result of its relevance to targeted outcomes (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Table 5 outlines studies where the three-component model has been applied.

*Table 5. Application of the three-component model of Employees commitment in relation to this study*

<b>Author</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>
(Bell-Ellis, Jones, Longstreth, & Neal, 2015)	“To examine the impact of four dimensions of spirit at work on organisational commitment: (1) engaging work, (2) sense of community, (3) mystical experience, and (4) spiritual connection” (p. 156) in two organisations in the bible belt.”	“Spirituality in the workplace has a strong relationship with organisational commitment in these two organisations centred in the Bible belt.” (p. 172).
(Hwang, Lin, & Shin, 2018)	“To test the relationship between personal information management motivation and the affective, continuance and normative dimensions of commitment.” (p. 220).	“There is a clear link between information transparency motivation and affective commitment, but the other aspects, such as continuance and

		normative commitment, are insignificant.” (p. 224).
(Limpanitgul, Boonchoo, Kulviseachana, & Photiyarach, 2017)	“To examine the moderating role of organisational culture on the relationship between empowerment and the three dimensions of organisational commitment among flight attendants working in a collectivist organisation and an individualist organisation.” (p. 227).	“The extent and direction to which empowerment influenced the different dimensions of organisational commitment differed significantly.” (p. 227).
(Soumyaja, Kamalanabhan, & Bhattacharyya, 2011)	To test whether the three-component model of commitment is applicable in an Indian context.	The study provides a strong base for generalisability of the three-component model as it was applied in various organisations across sectors.
(Vance, Jaros, Becker, & MacKay, 2020)	“To examine the internal structures and to compare the predictive validities of alternative measures of commitment.” (p. 164)	“We confirmed the four-factor structure of the established six-item affective commitment and four-item Klein scales, and the revised three-item versions of the normative commitment and continuance commitment scales. With our third sample, we also tested hypotheses regarding the predictive validities of the commitment measures.” (p. 184).

(Vandenberghe, 2011)	Building on spiritual leadership theory (Fry, Vitucci, & Cedillo, 2005; Fry L. W., 2003) propose a new model of spiritual leadership and organisational commitment.	“Sense of calling and membership and commitment components are not specified as full mediators of the spiritual leadership–work outcomes relationships.” (p. 225).
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### 2.3 Spiritual Leadership and Workplace Spirituality

From the conceptualisation of spirit at work (Fairholm G. , 1996) and its operationalisation (Fry, 2003) in the workplace, the link between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality has been of interest. The definition of spiritual leadership adopted in this study (Fry, 2003; Fry et al., 2017) and other definitions (Duchon & Plowman, 2005) suggest that the three dimensions of spiritual leadership are expressed through meaningful work and motivated through inner life in the context of a community or membership.

Arguable the expressions (attitudes and behaviours) of spiritual leadership are nourished in organisations where spirituality is permitted to have its role in the workplace, as outlined in the workplace spirituality dimensions. Scholars have demonstrated the relationship between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality (Parameshwar, 2005; Fairholm & Gronau, 2015; Chen & Yang, 2012; Yang & Fry, 2018). This study aimed to add to the growing body of knowledge by determining the relationship between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality in the context of this study and the extend of the relationship.

### 2.4 Workplace Spirituality and Employees Commitment

Employees are spending the majority of their day at work (Duchon & Plowman, 2005), and when employees present to work, they do not leave their spirituality at home (Fairholm, 1996). Therefore, this creates a need for employees to express their spirituality at work as well (Duchon & Plowman, 2005). In the context of this study, the expression of spirituality at work took place through transcendent meaning attached to one’s work that is brought on by one’s spirituality (inner life) in the context of an organisation (community / membership) based on values of altruistic love (Fry el al., 2017). In turn, workplace spirituality should enhance

employees' commitment as expressed by the three dimensions of affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment.

This study aimed to add to the growing body of knowledge in his field of study (Benefiel, Fry, & Geigle, 2014; Fry L. , Latham, Clinebell, & Krahnke, 2017; Daniel, Workplace spirituality and stress: evidence from Mexico and US, 2015; Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003; Indrajaya, Daryanto, Sjahrifa, & Yeung, 2019), by exploring the relationship between workplace spirituality and employees commitment and the extend of the relationship between the two constructs.

## 2.5 Spiritual Leadership, Workplace Spirituality and Employee Commitment

While the field of spirituality in the workplace was still considered to be in its infancy a few years ago (Dent, Higgins, & Wharff, 2005), organisational commitment has been studied extensively and applied in different settings (Vance et al., 2020; Meyer, Morin, & Wasti, 2018; Emre & De Spiegeleare, 2021; Bouckennooghe et al., 2015). Furthermore, the link between spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and organisational outcomes have been studied (Fry L. , Latham, Clinebell, & Krahnke, 2017; Yang & Fry, 2018; Vandenberghe, 2011; Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2004). Despite the growing interest by scholars in spirituality at work, no study was found that examined the relationship between spiritual leadership and employees commitment as mediated by workplace spirituality in relation to the three dimensions of workplace spirituality and the dimensions of employees commitment adopted in this study. Table 6 outlines the studies that researched the relationship between spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and employees commitment in the context of this study.

This study proposed that the relationship between spiritual leadership and employees commitment is mediated by workplace spirituality in relation to the variables adopted for this study.

*Table 6. Summary of studies concerning the relationship of constructs (spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and employees commitment) relevant to this study*

<b>Author</b>	<b>Constructs relationship</b>	<b>Mediator</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>
(Chen & Yang, 2012)	The relationship between spiritual leadership, spiritual survival (membership	Membership and calling	Confirmed generalisations made by Fry L. (2003) on spiritual leadership

	and calling), organisational citizenship		theory in the services industry. Dimensions of spiritual leadership have a significant impact on membership and calling.
(Duchon & Plowman, 2005)	Spiritual leadership, work unit spirituality (Inner life, meaningful work, sense of community), work unit performance	Work unit spirituality	“This study showing a relationship between work unit spirituality, work unit performance, and leadership attitudes towards spirituality.” (p. 828)
(Fry L. W., Latham, Clinebell, & Krahnke, 2017)	The relationship between spiritual leadership and life satisfaction, productivity, organisational commitment and calling and membership	Membership and calling	The dimensions of spiritual leadership are constituted by characteristics that drive intrinsic motivation of oneself and others to have a sense of calling and membership.
(Milliman, Czaplewski, & Ferguson, 2003)	Workplace spirituality and five prevalent employee attitudinal variables	No mediator	The analysis results are supportive of the hypothesised relationships between the spirituality dimension's five prevalent employee attitudinal variables presented in the study.

(Karakas, 2010) (conceptual study)	Spirituality, three perspectives (employee well-being, sense of meaning & purpose, sense of community & interconnectedness), increased productivity and performance	The three perspectives (employee well-being, sense of meaning & purpose, Sense of community & interconnectedness)	“It is critical to proceed carefully in implementing spirituality programmes and incorporating spirituality at work: as imposing spirituality and religion on employees would be counterproductive, alienating, and disastrous for some people.” (p. 100)
(Vandenberghe, 2011) (Conceptual)	Spiritual leadership, employees’ commitment and job performance, organisational citizenship behaviours, retention, and psychological well-being	Sense of calling and sense of membership	“an integrated model of spiritual leadership and organisational commitment.” (p. 227)

## 2.6 Conclusion

Chapter 2 discussed the reviewed literature by presenting the theoretical framework guiding this study, the definitions of spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and employees commitment, which guided the discussions on the variables of each main construct in this study. The last three sections of Chapter 2 discussed the link between spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and employees commitment in the context of this study and stated the intent of the study in each section. The next chapter outlines the research questions and the hypotheses formulated.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Chapter 3 outlines the research questions and formulated hypotheses based on the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, with the intention of building onto existing literature. It also provides a graphical presentation of the conceptual model.

#### **3.2 Research Questions**

Past research has demonstrated a positive relationship between spiritual leadership and organisational outcomes such as enhanced employee commitment, productivity and improved organisational performance (Tabor et al., 2020). Organisational commitment and productivity are fostered through the desire among both leaders and followers for spiritual survival to create a vision and a set of values across the organisation through individuals feeling their calling and membership (Fry et al., 2005). However, previous studies did not examine the mediating role of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and employees commitment in respect of the three-component model. Review of the literature on spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality resulted in the formulation of a main research question from the research gaps identified in previous studies, which this study proposed to answer.

##### ***Main research question***

What is the mediating role of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and employee commitment?

##### ***Sub-questions***

How does spiritual leadership affect employees' commitment?

How does workplace spirituality affect employees' commitment?

How does spiritual leadership affect workplace spirituality?

### **3.3 Hypotheses**

#### **3.3.1 Hypothesis 1: The relationship between spiritual leadership and employees commitment**

Previous studies have demonstrated the positive relationship between spiritual leadership and organisational outcomes (Dent et al., 2005; Fry et al., 2005; Fry et al., 2017; Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2004; Tabor et al., 2020; Parameshwar, 2005). Similar views (Fry et al., 2017) state that spiritual leadership results, among other outcomes, in organisational commitment (Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2004). The previous studies broadly expressed the relationship between spiritual leadership and organisation commitment, but did not explore how that relationship affects employees commitment when it is aligned to the three-component model, namely, affective, normative and continuance commitment. Based on the identified gap, hypothesis 1 (H1) was formulated and subsequently, sub-hypotheses (H1a; H1b and H1c) were formulated.

H1: Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on employees commitment.

(H1a): Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on affective commitment.

(H1b): Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on normative commitment.

(H1c): Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on continuance commitment.

#### **3.3.2 Hypothesis 2: The relationship between workplace spirituality and employees commitment**

Workplace spirituality has aroused a growing interest among researchers who have viewed the topic from different lenses. Some authors (McGhee & Grant, 2017) posit that workplace spirituality has a positive influence on ethical behaviour, based on the four emergent global themes identified in their study. Another study (Karakas, 2010) found that workplace spirituality was related to employees' well-being and their quality of life. Although the impact of workplace spirituality is stated by authors as being evident (Benefiel, 2005; Benefiel & Fry, 2014), other authors (Fry, et al., 2005; Reave, 2005; Yang, et al., 2019) validated the relationship between organisational processes and workplace spirituality. However, these studies did not show the relationship between workplace spirituality and the three-component model of employees commitment. Based on the identified gap, hypothesis 2 (H2) was formulated and subsequent sub-hypotheses were formulated.

H2: Workplace spirituality has a significant effect on employees commitment.

H2a: Workplace spirituality has a significant effect on affective commitment.

H2b: Workplace spirituality has a significant effect on normative commitment.

H2c: Workplace spirituality has a significant effect on continuance commitment.

### ***3.3.3 Hypothesis 3: The relationship between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality***

Since the conceptualisation of spiritual leadership and introduction of spirituality in the workplace in the 1990s by Fairholm (1996), several scholars have associated workplace spirituality with spiritual leadership (Dent et al., 2005; Fairholm & Gronau, 2015; Fry et al., 2017; Indrajaya et al., 2019). The studies showed a relationship between spiritual leadership and fragmented variables of workplace spirituality. Based on the gap identified, hypothesis 3 (H3) was formulated where the relationship between spiritual leadership and all the variables of workplace spirituality were tested.

H3: Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on workplace spirituality.

H3: Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on inner life.

H3: Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on meaning or calling.

H3: Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on membership.

### ***3.3.4 Hypothesis 4: The relationship between spiritual leadership and employees commitment is mediated by workplace spirituality***

The three-component model of employees commitment reviewed in this study was the most dominant framework in commitment research (Jaros, 2017; Bell-Ellis et al., 2015). Vandenberghe (2011) affirmed the mediating role of workplace spirituality between spiritual leadership and employees' commitment; however, the study was limited to the two variables of workplace spirituality (calling and membership). Other authors (Duchon & Plowman, 2005) demonstrated the relationship between spiritual leadership and organisational outcomes, mediated by the work unit spirituality; however, the study did not address employees commitment in terms of the three-component model. Hypothesis 4 (H4) was formulated based on the gap identified in literature.

H4: Workplace spirituality has a mediating effect on the relationship between spiritual leadership and employee commitment.

(H4a): Workplace spirituality does have a mediating effect on the relationship between spiritual leadership and affective commitment.

(H4b): Workplace spirituality does have a mediating effect on the relationship between spiritual leadership and continuance commitment.

(H4c): Workplace spirituality does have a mediating effect on the relationship between spiritual leadership and normative commitment.

### 3.3.5 Conceptual model

The aim of this study was to explore the mediating role of workplace spirituality in the relationship between spiritual leadership and employees commitment in the context of the three-component model. The study had aimed to demonstrate the interaction between spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and employees commitment. The conceptual model in Figure 2 illustrates the graphical presentation of the mediating role of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality.

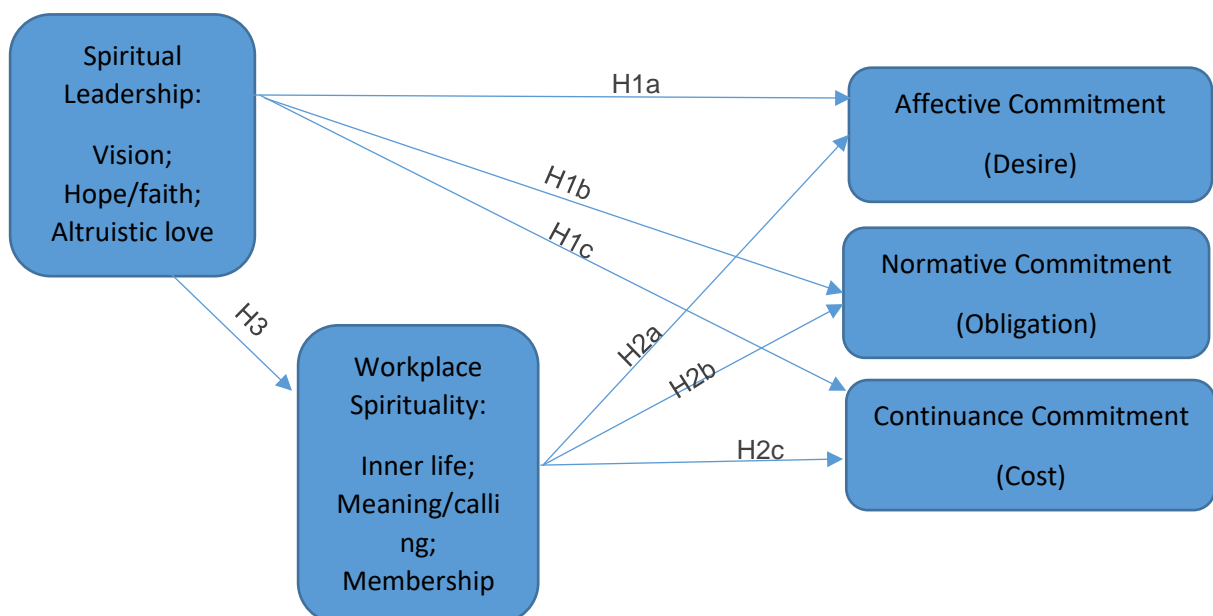


Figure 2. Proposed conceptual model (source: Author)

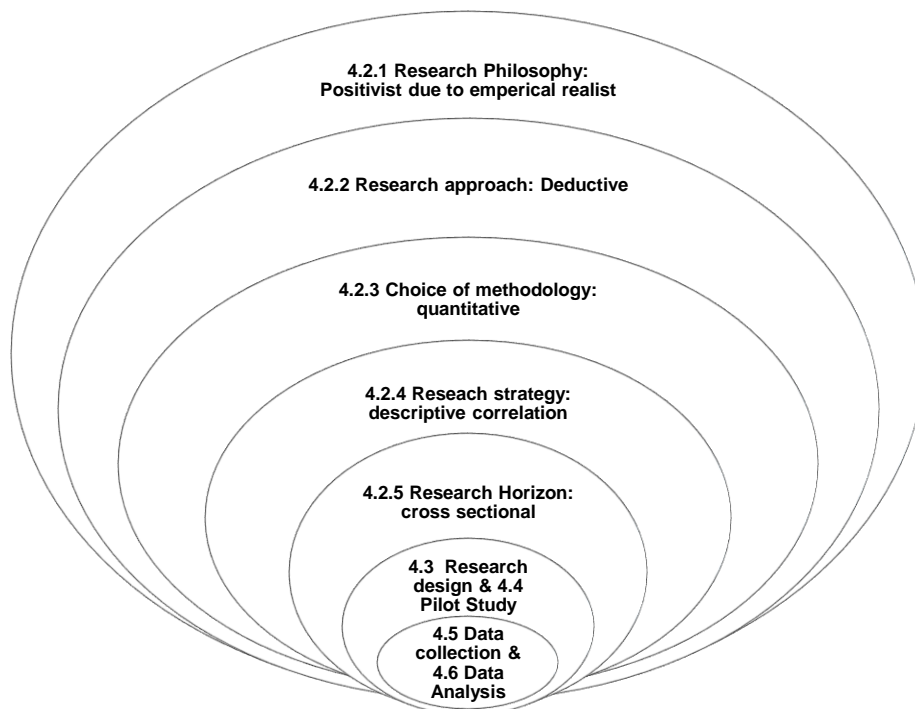
### **3.5 Conclusion**

This chapter outlined the research questions and stated the hypotheses as guided by gaps identified in the reviewed literature. The research questions and hypotheses served as a guide to the research design and methodology in how the study was conducted, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY and DESIGN

### 4.1 Introduction

In Chapter 3, the research questions and hypotheses were formulated and explained, based on the literature reviewed relating to the spiritual leadership theory and the theme relating to the research questions of this study, which referred to spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and employee commitment. Chapter 4 discusses in depth the research design and the methodology used in this study. Figure 3 represents the outline of the research design and methodology used.



*Figure 3. Research design and methodology outline (Source: created by author, adapted from Sanders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019))*

### 4.2 Research Methodology

#### 4.2.1 Research philosophy

The philosophical assumptions that guided the study were informed by four key components relating to the understanding of a number of decisive factors, including the reality (ontology), the understanding of how the knowledge of this reality can be measured (epistemology), the

understanding of which research methods to follow in attaining the knowledge (methodology) (Bell, Bryman, & Harley, 2019) and the understanding of what causes make and change the world (Sousa, 2010). A philosophical positivist view was applied, in which a systemic way with emphasis on observable facts (Brink, van der Walt, & van Rensburg, 2012) was adopted to address the interaction between spiritual leadership and employees commitment, workplace spirituality and employees' commitment and the interaction between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality, and to test the formulated hypotheses (Bell et al., 2019).

An empirical realist ontological position was taken that asserted that social phenomena are observable, measurable and quantifiable and they exist independently of human knowledge (Sousa, 2010). Therefore, a phenomenon is only researchable if it can be observed and measured, which implies that reality can be understood through the application of an appropriate method (Bell et al., 2019).

An epistemological position of a positivist was adopted because of the ontological position taken, where the social phenomenon was viewed as an external fact, in that the social phenomenon will still take place, irrespective of whether the actor is there or not (Bell et al., 2019). An epistemological position adopted is a natural progression based on the ontological position adopted (Bell et al., 2019). In this study, the three constructs – spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and employees commitment, could be observed and measured empirically through measurement indicators.

#### **4.2.2 Research approach**

This study employed a deductive research approach to investigate the interaction between spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and employees commitment (Cramer-Petersen, Christensen, & Ahmed-Kristensen, 2019). These authors view deductive reasoning as the ability to reach a conclusion “based on logical implications of two or more propositions asserted to be true” (p. 41). This implied that the approach followed was informed by critically reviewing literature to understand previous studies done in the field of spirituality at work, which guided the formulation of the hypotheses tested in this study. The approach selected was justified, because the study did not seek to develop new theory, which would have been the case with an inductive approach (Bell et al., 2019). Instead, this study aimed to build on the findings garnered from existing literature in understanding the mediating role of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership (independent variable) and employee commitment (dependent variable).

### **4.2.3 Choice of methodology**

Quantitative methods are widely utilised in the field of business and society to advance theory (Crane, Henriques, & Husted, 2017). Some of the advantages of the quantitative research design is that it allows easier comparison of data and thereby might be void of the biased influence of personal feelings in the presentation of data and facts (Basias & Pollalis, 2018). Quantitative methods were considered to be the more appropriate method for this study to allow for measurement of the three constructs in understanding the type and significance of the relationship between them.

### **4.2.4 Research strategy**

This study employed a descripto-explanatory survey design, as it aimed to build on fundamental knowledge found in the spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality literature. It did not aim to contribute any short-term solutions to the identified problem or to determine and describe the relationship between existing variables (Brink et al., 2012). The three constructs were condensed to their variables to enable observability; formulated hypotheses were tested empirically by the application of the measurement instrument, and the results of the empirical data were analysed statistically.

### **4.2.5 Research time horizon**

A cross-sectional quantitative research design was used for this study. The study explored the mediating role of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and employees commitment, where spiritual leadership was the independent variable and employees commitment was the dependent. A mediating study denotes a causal association (Lacobucci, 2011), in which case a longitudinal time horizon would be preferable; however, the restricted time to complete this study dictated the cross-sectional time horizon. The cross-sectional data for this study was collected at a particular point in time within eight weeks. It was collected from participants on the variables based on the formulated hypotheses.

## **4.3 Research Design**

A cross-sectional quantitative research design was used for this study. Quantitative research is a distinctive research strategy that involves the collection of numerical data to view the

relationship between theory and variable (Bell et al., 2019). In this study, ordinal data was collected, using a self-administered online survey to test the relationship of the constructs defined in this study, referring to spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and employee commitment. The survey questions were drawn up from existing measurement instruments in spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and employees commitment. The survey was standardised and structured with closed-ended questions, using the seven-point Likert scale. All participants received the same set of standardised structured questions, which were answered at a specific point in time within a period of eight weeks. The results of the empirical data were analysed statistically and the results are presented in the next chapter.

### **4.3.1 Population**

The concept of spiritual leadership originated from the United States of America (Fairholm, 1996) and was studied in various industries (Adawiyah & Pramuka, 2017; Carnevale & Hatak, 2020; Fry et al., 2017; Fry et al., 2005; Bell-Ellis et al., 2015), and according to Oh & Wang (2020), it has been studied in several national context. These authors (Oh & Wang, 2020) conducted a study where 59 empirical studies on spiritual leadership from peer-reviewed journals were analysed. They found that 51% of the studies were conducted in Asia and only one study from Kenya was reported. Due to the scant studies conducted on spiritual leadership in Africa, this study provided an opportunity to add to the existing literature in the South African context.

The target population in this study was people currently employed in South Africa in various organisations. A population is an entire group of people or objects that meet the criteria that the researcher is interested in (Brink et al., 2012). The population was selected according to the Department of Statistics South Africa (Stats SA, 2021) in their Quarterly Labour Force Survey of 1st quarter 2021, where the total number of people employed in South Africa were 15,0 million (Home: P0211 - Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS), Quarter 2021, 2021).

### **4.3.2 Unit of analysis**

The unit of analysis for this study referred to the individual level, where each participant responded to the self-administered online survey, standardised from the measurement instrument. Gronn (2002) referred to a unit of analysis as “a bounded set of elements comprising the entity that is the focus of research” (p. 444). Unit of analysis is a holistic dynamic entity constituted by specific properties (Gronn, 2002).

### 4.3.3 Sampling method and size

The non-probability sampling technique was used for this study. Some authors (Brink et al., 2012) state that non-probability sampling is more convenient and economical, and even more so when the entire population cannot be reached. Some of the reasons for using a non-probability sampling was that there were less costs and time involved in obtaining the non-probability sample (Bell et al., 2019). It would not be practical to access the entire target population of employed people in South Africa of 15,000,000 people. Therefore, a non-probability sample was the preferred sampling method for this study.

In considering the heterogeneity of the population, Brink et al. (2012) suggest that there should be at least 10 participants per variable and 20 to 30 participants per variable is preferred. Other factors to be considered when choosing the sample size is the precision of the measurement tool as well as the statistical analysis requirements.

Based on the assumed 15,000,000 employed people in South Africa, the sample size for this study was calculated by using Slovin's formula, outlined below:

$n = N/(1+Ne^2)$ , where **N** is the population size and **e** is the margin of error, which is the permitted probability of committing an error in determining the sample size. This study assumed a confidence level of 95%, where the margin of error was 5%.

$n = 15,000,000 / (1 + (15,000,000 \times 0.05^2)) = 399$ . This study aimed for 399 participants.

Other studies in this field had varying sample sizes, ranging between 162 (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003), 652 (Fry et al., 2017) and 304 (Daniel, Workplace spirituality and stress: evidence from Mexico and US, 2015). Snowball sampling was also applied, wherein participants were requested to supply the contact information of other potential participants who matched the criteria for this study. Participants for this study had to be employed and South African citizens. Participants were also asked to repost the link to the survey questionnaire on their social media feeds to increase accessibility to the study and thus increasing the number of participants.

### 4.3.4 Measurement instrument

An anonymous structured self-administered online survey was used, which included 43 measurement items in total, and represented all three constructs, referring to spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and employees commitment, being measured. The statements were based on a seven-point Likert scale with the low score indicating higher levels of disagreement and the high scores indicating the higher levels of agreement. In line with the

deductive approach adopted for this study, the survey was adapted from previous studies (Fry et al., 2017; Vance et al., 2020).

### **Construct operationalisation**

The measurement instrument was adopted from Fry et al. (2017), in an aim to derive at measurement items for spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality for this study. In the context of this study, spiritual leadership was viewed as inspiring followers to embrace the organisational vision, inspired by hope / faith and altruistic love. The variables of spiritual leadership were love, hope / faith and altruistic love. Vision and hope / faith were each measured by four measurement items on the seven-point Likert scale, while altruistic love was measured on five measurement items on the seven-point Likert scale. Workplace spirituality was viewed through the three dimensions of inner life, meaning / calling and membership (Fry, 2003; Fry et al., 2017). All three dimensions of workplace spirituality were measured by four measurement items each on the seven-point Likert scale. Measurement items for employees' commitment for this study were adopted from Vance et al., (2020). Employee commitment presented with three dimension of affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. All three dimensions of employee commitment were measured by six measurement items each on the seven-point Likert scale. The Cronbach's alpha for sample items for inner life was ( $\alpha = .82$ ), for vision was ( $\alpha = .94$ ), for meaning/calling was ( $\alpha = .88$ ) and for membership was ( $\alpha = .93$ ) (Fry et al., 2017). The coefficient alpha reliabilities were for sample items for Affective Commitment = .949 / .932; Normative Commitment = .863 / .811 and Continuance Commitment = .795 / .738 (Vance et al., 2020).

Common method bias was analysed for measurement error, using the Herman's single factor test. The expected results of the common method bias were presented by the principal factoring axis at a percentage variance of less than 50%. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to test the constructs validity and reliability of the measurement instruments in the context of this study by using the structural equation modelling partial least square (PLS-SEM). This was done, because the instrument was pre-existing from Fry et al. (2017). A model fit test was conducted for the constructs, represented by the standardised root mean square residual (SRMR), normed fit index (NFI) also known as the Bentler and Bonett Index, and the computation of the Chi<sup>2</sup> value of the model compared against a meaningful benchmark.

#### **4.4 Pilot Study**

“Pilot studies should warn of possible failures, deviations from protocols, or problems with proposed instruments” (Lewis-Beck, Bryman, & Liao, 2011) (p. 824). A pilot study was conducted to address any possible design shortcomings, and evaluate the flow and content of the survey before the questionnaire was distributed. The survey was distributed to eight people; two of these people were academics who had extensive experience in viewing student surveys, while the other six people were random individuals chosen to assist with the flow of the survey. The feedback received from the pilot study assisted the researcher in deleting some measurement items, which were repeated, and also in adjusting the time required to complete the survey, and editing the survey for visual appeal.

#### **4.5 Data Collection**

An anonymous structured self-administered 43-item online questionnaire was used to collect the primary data and measure the constructs. Google Forms was used to deliver the online questionnaire to participants. The questionnaire was distributed through networking social media platform, using the LinkedIn, Facebook and WhatsApp messaging applications, where the researcher sent the link to her contacts as well as daily updating of the WhatsApp status. The daily updating of the WhatsApp status was necessary to encourage participation in the study and thus increasing the number of participants, as the status remained visible to contacts only for 24 hours.

Social media provided a platform for the collection of data at individual level (Crane et al., 2017). Because the variables in this study were able to be ranked and the distance between the categories was not equal (Bell et al., 2019), ordinal variables were employed by using a seven-point Likert scale.

The questionnaire was distributed in September 2021 and was open for approximately eight weeks. The questionnaire was distributed after the researcher had obtained ethical clearance from the University and the pilot study was completed. The questionnaire had an introductory page that included the voluntary consent statement, outlining that participation in the study was voluntary and therefore participants could withdraw from the study at any stage without any negative consequences. The participants were also informed that it would take a maximum of 15 minutes for them to complete the questionnaire. The data collected was stored securely on Google Drive, a cloud-based storage platform that is password protected and uses a two-stage authentication process.

## 4.6 Data Analysis

In this study the relationship between workplace spirituality, spiritual leadership and employee commitment was analysed initially with IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 28 then transferred to Smartpls 3.0 for the PLS-SEM. The data analysis approach is summarised in Table 7.

The data analysis followed a structured phase approach, wherein the initial phase dealt with the preparation and the assessment of the missing values. Missing value analysis confirmed that all the variables had a missing value that was less than 5% (Schafer, 1999). This was followed by conducting an extreme outlier analysis. The extreme outliers' analysis was conducted and observation which were extreme outliers *i.e.* three times interquartile range were removed, following by conducting a missing value analysis (MVA). The data was then analysed for the common method bias (CMB) with Herman's single factor test, with 50% being the threshold based on guidelines of (Jordan & Troth, 2020). The last part of this phase was the descriptive statistics which were used to understand the characteristics of the data using frequency and percent frequency as well as mean for central tendency and standard deviation for dispersion. The normal distribution of the data was confirmed with skewness and kurtosis based on the guidelines of  $\pm 3$  indicating near normal or normal distribution.

The second phase involved analysis of the data quality which looked at the validity and reliability (quality of the data). Existing instruments were used to analysis workplace spirituality, spiritual leadership and employee commitment, respectively (Fry et al., 2017; Vance, et al., 2020). Since there are an existing instrument the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) conducted using the Structural Equation Modelling partial least square (PLS-SEM) for validity and reliability. The Standardised Root Mean Square Residual, SRMR (SRMR <0.080) and Normed Fit Index (NFI) were used for model fit (Henseler et al., 2014; Hui, et al., 2020). Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was used to analyse the convergence validity, with a value of 0.5 and higher indicating good convergent validity, while Fornell-Larcker criterion and cross loading were used to assess the discriminant validity. Composite reliability (CR) and rho\_A were used to determine the reliability of the constructs with 0.7 indicating acceptable reliability.

Phase three involved data analysis to test the formulated hypotheses using PEL-SEM. The predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ) test was performed to determine the predictive relevance of the endogenous constructs of the models ( $Q^2 > 0$ ). The hypotheses were tested using direct effect, total effect and total indirect effects, with statistical significance minimum of 95% confidence level.

*Table 7. Data Analysis Approach*

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Statistical Analysis Performed</b>
Phase 1	Data preparation and coding	Missing Value Analysis (MVA)
	Missing data	Herman's single factor test
	Common method bias	Mean, Standard Deviation, Skewness,
	Descriptive statistics	Kurtosis
Phase 2	Data Quality	Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)
	Validity	Standardised Root Mean Square Residual
	Reliability	(SRMR)
	Model Fit	Normed Fit Index (NFI)
		Chi-Square (Chi <sup>2</sup> )
		Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
		Composite Reliability
	Fornell-Larcker criterion	
	Cross Loading	
Phase 3	Hypotheses testing	The predictive relevance (Q <sup>2</sup> )

#### **4.6.1 Data preparation**

After exclusion of participants who were not living in South Africa, who were not South Africa citizens, or were not employed, a total of 277 responses were used for the data analysis. The responses received through Google Form, the platform used to deliver the questionnaire, were downloaded and then exported onto Microsoft Excel as a consolidation of the questions and responses. The data was coded into numeric values to allow for statistical data analysis, because the responses were in text format.

#### **4.6.2 Missing data**

As outlined by Kwak and Kim (2017), it is important that missing data and outliers are treated appropriately, as they can greatly affect the results of the data analysis.

To ascertain a complete data set with no missing data, which is a requirement for statistical data analysis, the extreme outlier analysis was conducted and observations that were extreme outliers were removed, such as the three times interquartile range. Missing value analysis (MVA) was conducted for the extreme outlier analysis, which confirmed that all variables had

a missing value of less than 5% (Schafer, 1999), as discussed in the next chapter. IBM's Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was the computer software used to analyse the data collected for descriptive statistics. The SPSS data was then imported to the Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) for further analysis.

## **4.7 Data Quality**

The constructs in this study were spiritual leadership, which was an independent variable, commitment was a dependent variable and workplace spirituality was the mediating variable. The validity and reliability of the constructs in this study were analysed. The measurement instrument for the study was adapted from previous studies Fry et al., (2017); Vance, et al., (2020)., and therefore, the constructs had to be re-validated to be able to be used for the framework of this study .

### **4.7.1 Validity**

Construct validity was conducted using CFA, which employed the structural equation modelling partial least square (PLS-SEM). An important component of PLS-SEM is its ability to exploit the explained variance of the endogenous latent variables (Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Mena, 2012). In contrast, the covariance-based structural equation model approximates model parameters to reduce the discrepancy between the approximate and sample covariance matrices, which implies that it considers commonality of the variables (Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Mena, 2012), which was not in line with the objectives of this study. Furthermore, the PLS-SEM has a high degree of statistical power compared to the CB-SEM, which implies that when relationships are present in a population, then PLS-SEM is more likely to identify the significance of the relationship (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019).

The objective of this study guided the choice of the PLS-SEM. The objective of the study was to explore the mediating role of workplace spirituality in the relationship between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality; therefore, the use of PLS-SEM was able to explain the variance on the endogenous constructs (Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Mena, 2012). The use of PLS-SEM in this study was further motivated by the developmental stage of theory in spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality, which is aligned to the original purpose of PLS-SEM of predicting in research context, where there might be rich data and weak theory (Hair et al., 2012).

Finally, as a causal predictive approach, the PLS-SEM selection for this study was confirmed by considering the following in the context of this study: (i) The theoretical framework analysis

was undertaken from a predictive perspective; (ii) the objective of the study was to better understand the relationship of the construct building on established theory; (iii) the structural model involves three constructs (multivariate) and model relationship (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019). The PLS-SEM tested each construct's convergent and discriminant validity.

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was used to determine the convergent validity of the variables. Convergent validity is the extent to which a construct converges to explain the variance of its items (Hair et al., 2019). The AVE was applied to all items on the three constructs. This was calculated as the square of the loading of each indicator on a construct and establish the mean (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019). An AVE of 0.5 or higher is acceptable, which shows that the construct explains at least 50% of the respective items (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019). The mathematical formula for AVE is outlined as follows:

*Equation 1. AVE formula*

$$\text{Average Variance Extracted (AVE)} = \sum \left( \frac{\text{Loading}^2}{\text{Number of indicators}} \right)$$

Discriminant validity empirically shows the extent to which a construct is different from other construct in the structural model (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019). To determine discriminant validity, the Fornell-Larcker criterion as well as cross-loading was used. The Fornell-Larcker criterion assessed the degree of shared variance between the variables in the model. Cross-loading calculates the correlation between the variables' component scores and other indicators (Chin, 1998). The intention of the cross-loading is for an indicator to load higher for a variable it is assessing, where the concern would be if the cross-loading were to be higher with other variables than the one it was intended to measure (Chin, 1998). This was not the case in this study, where the cross loading confirmed the distinction between the variables as discussed in Chapter 5. In addition, some authors (Hair et al., 2019) caution that the Fornell-Larcker criterion might not perform ideally if the indicator loading on a construct differs slightly, for example, if all loading indicators on a construct are between 0.65 and 0.85. Again, this was not the case for all three constructs in this study.

#### **4.7.2 Reliability**

Cronbach's alpha was used in this study to measure internal consistency reliability. The expected value for Cronbach's alpha can vary, depending on the context of the research (Hair

et al., 2019), where these authors posit that for exploratory research, the reliability should be a minimum of 0.6, while a research that uses existing measures, the reliability should be 0.70 or higher. The reliability for the variables in this study all had a value higher than the minimum Cronbach's alpha of 0.7.

Composite reliability was also used in this study to assess the internal consistency reliability. Composite reliability provides a more suitable measure because of its ability to take into account varying indicator reliabilities as well as avoiding underestimates as is the case with Cronbach's alpha (Hair Jr, Sarstedt, Hopkins, & Kuppelwieser, 2014).

This study also considered rho A ( $\rho_A$ ) as a better measure of construct reliability, as it reconciles the two extremes presented by the Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (Hair et al., 2019). Composite reliability is considered as too liberal and Cronbach's alpha too conservative (Hair et al., 2019).

In using the three approaches, the study was robust in measuring construct reliability, the result of which will be presented in Chapter 5.

### **4.7.3 Model fit**

PLS-SEM relies less on concepts of model fit when compared to CB-SEM (Hair et al., 2019); however, some researchers (Henseler, et al., 2014) have argued that there is value in model fit measures for PLS-SEM.

The good model fit was assessed with SRMR. SRMR is not dependent on sample size, and as a rule of thumb, an ideal measure is  $< 0.080$  (Henseler, et al., 2014). The lowest value indicates a better fit (Dash & Paul, 2021). Furthermore Dash & Paul (2021) recommends a threshold of 0.05 or less. Chen (2007) defines SRMR as a "measure of the average of the standardised residual between the observed and model-implied covariance matrices" (p.467).

Other model fit indices used in this study were Normed Fit Index (NFI) also known as the Bentler and Bonett Index. As with the  $\chi^2$  NFI is affected by the sample size and cannot be considered alone as a measure (Dash & Paul, 2021). The threshold for NFI is 0.95 or more, anything above 0.95 is considered a good fit (Dash & Paul, 2021). The  $\chi^2$  is not considered the best measure for model fit as it is affected by sample size and number of indicators (Dash & Paul, 2021).  $d_{ULS}$  (the squared Euclidean distance) and  $d_G$  (the geodesic distance) are considered exact measures as oppose to approximate measures with SRMR, NFI and  $\chi^2$  (Daniel, 2015). The Table 8 provides model fit indices used in this study.

Table 8. PLSM-SEM Model Fit indices

Model fit index	Measure
Chi <sup>2</sup>	<0.05
NFI	0.89
SRMR	0.06
d_ULS	0.58
d_G	0.23

Source: Author adapted from Dash & Paul (2021)

## 4.8 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics are applied to a sample to determine the characteristic of a population (Nick, 2007). This study had 43 items that investigated spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and employee commitment. The descriptive statistics in this study presented measures of location and variability. Furthermore, descriptive statistics provided details of the participants' profiles based on their tenure at the current employer, their position at work, employment status, years reporting to their current manager or supervisor, gender and race. The detailed outcomes of the measures are presented by the mean, standard deviation, skewness and Kurtosis discussed in Chapter 5.

### 4.8.1 Population demographics

The population demographic data is represented as profiles of participants, which provided the characteristics of the measured variables. A frequency test was applied to gather information related to the characteristics of the variables and to determine patterns and outliers.

### 4.8.2 Position at work as a control variable

Position at work was the control variable identified to be excluded from the focal relationship between the variables in this study (Aneshensel, 2015). Position at work composed of five

selections, referring to employee, manager or supervisor, middle management, senior management and executive. An independent t-test was performed for the control variable after application of the predictive relevance test ( $Q^2$ ) to determine the endogenous constructs of the model. The independent t-test was chosen, as it is able to determine whether differences in the mean of both groups exist. The results are presented in detail in Chapter 5.

## 4.9 Hypotheses Testing

### 4.9.1 Multivariate linear regression

Multivariate linear regression was applied to determine the association between the independent variables and dependent variables with the aim of modelling a linear relationship between the models. The variables were computed simultaneously to determine the relationship between the independent and dependent variable (Chenini & Khemiri, 2009). Multiple linear regression is an extension of simple regression (Salkind, 2011), and the equation is expressed as follows:

*Equation 2. Multiple linear regression formula*

$$Y \leftarrow \hat{Y} = a + b_1 X_1 + b_2 X_2 + \dots b_k X_k$$

In this equation, a is the constant, b is the multiplicative, X is the independent variable (spiritual leadership) and Y is the dependent variable (employees commitment).

The predictive relevance test ( $Q^2$ ) was the initial test for hypothesis testing to determine the predictive relevance of the endogenous constructs. The  $R^2$  (coefficient of determination) was computed, which is the percentage of variance of the dependent variable (employees' commitment) that is explained by independent variable (spiritual leadership). Once the  $R^2$  was determined, the subsequent methods were applied to further understand the significance of the relationships between the variables (Salkind, 2011). The beta coefficient and t-value were measures used to test the significance of the relationship between the variables; this was also used to determine the causal chain, where the spiritual leadership affects the workplace spirituality and in turn affects the employees commitment.

### 4.9.2 Assumptions of regression analysis

Statistical tests rely on certain assumptions that have to be met for the results to be trustworthy (Osborne & Waters, 2002). First, multiple linear regression assumes that the variables are normally distributed. This assumption was met by testing of the mean, standard deviation, skewness and Kurtosis. The second assumption was the linear relationship between the independent and dependent variable, and this assumption was met by application of the findings from previous studies to inform the analysis of this study. The third assumption was that variables are measured without error, and this assumption was met by the validity and reliability testing conducted for this study, the results of which are presented in Chapter 5. The fourth assumption was that the sample employed is representative of the population, and this assumption was met by the sample size of 277 (Salkind, 2011) having been achieved.

## **4.10 Limitations**

### **4.10.1 Research strategy – time horizon**

This study opted for a cross-sectional approach, wherein the responses were taken at a particular point in time, in which case a longitudinal time horizon would be preferable (Lacobucci, 2011). The cross-sectional approach presented a bias or limitation in the findings, as the depth to understand the relationship of the variables in this study when measured over an extended period might be limited.

### **4.10.2 Sample size**

Other studies on spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality had varying sample sizes, ranging between 162 (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003), 652 (Fry et al., 2017) and 304 (Daniel, 2015) for smaller population sizes compared to this study. Statistical measures were applied to justify the smaller sample size for this study. However, the sample size for this study may not have been large enough to generalise the findings for the population.

### **4.10.3 Sample method**

Non-probability sampling (Brink et al., 2012) was adopted for this study, where an online, structured questionnaire was distributed on a professional network platform (LinkedIn) and social media platforms (Facebook and WhatsApp status). The responses received were from individuals who had access to these platforms, although the study addressed this scantily by adding a snowballing dimension, where participants could send the questionnaire to their own

contacts who qualified for the survey, but might not necessarily be on the media platforms. The sampling method was limited in that it could not directly reach employed people who did not have access to the social media platforms used in this study.

#### **4.10.4 Population**

Several studies of spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality (Adawiyah & Pramuka, 2017; Duchon & Plowman, 2005; Fry et al., 2017) were industry specific, whereas this study was conducted only among employed South African citizens. The participants for this study were representative of African blacks, whites, Indians and coloureds, with the majority of these participants being African black females and only 3.2% of participants being coloured. The responses in this study present a bias with regard to underestimated representation of certain groups.

#### **4.11 Conclusion**

Chapter 4 presented the research design and methodology for this study. It discussed the research methodology, which outlined the philosophical stance for this study. Furthermore, it discussed the research design, the data collection approach, the statistical tests used to measure data quality, the descriptive statistics, and the methods used to test the formulated hypotheses. Chapter 4 concluded with discussions of the limitations for the methodology and design. Chapter 5 presents the results from this study.

# **CHAPTER 5**

## **RESULTS OF THE STUDY**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The purpose of the study was to explore the mediating role of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and employee commitment. A cross-sectional quantitative research design was used during the investigation, where responses were collected from respondents who live in South Africa and are currently employed. The results of the empirical data analysis is presented in this chapter, starting with the response rate and the approach used in data preparation, followed by the profile of the respondents, and then the descriptive statistics. Multivariate analysis is presented, which focuses on construct validity and reliability and the tested hypotheses. The chapter closes out by summarising the results in preparation for the discussion in Chapter 6.

### **5.2 Response Rate and Data Preparation Approach**

A total of 277 responses were used for the analysis, after exclusion of respondents who were not living in South Africa and were not employed. The response rate is 69.4%, based on the sample size calculated from Slovin's formula presented in Chapter 4. The results of principal factoring axis showed a percent variance of less than 50%, which is 35.31%. This confirmed that there were no issues with CMB in the data (Jordan & Troth, 2020).

### **5.3 Profile of the Respondents**

Table 9 presents the profile of the respondents based on their tenure at their current employer, their position at work, years reporting to their current manager or supervisor, and their gender and race. Most of the respondents were employed by their current employer for 10 years or less (67.1%), while those with a tenure of between 10 to 20 years comprised 9.7%; those who had worked for their current employer for longer than 21 years were 9.7%. It should be noted that there was an overlap between those with 10 years' tenure, caused by inadequate separation of the groups. Most of the respondents were either employees (31.8%) or

managers / supervisors (26.7%). The middle management comprised 15.9% of the total respondents, senior management (15.2%) and executives (10.5%). All respondents had people reporting to them, with the majority having reported to their current manager for 10 years or less (84.4%). The majority of the respondents were females (64.3%), and they were African blacks (72.2%).

*Table 9. Profile of the respondents*

Variables		N	%
Tenure at the current employer	Up to 10 years	186	67,1%
	10-20 years	64	23,1%
	21 years and more	27	9,7%
Position at work	Employee	88	31,8%
	Manager or supervisor	74	26,7%
Position at work	Middle management	44	15,9%
	Senior management	42	15,2%
	Executive	29	10,5%
Reports	Reports	277	100,0%
Years reporting to current manager / supervisor	Up to 10 years	233	84,4%
	10 years and more	26	9,4%
	No direct reports	17	6,1%
	Prefer not to say	1	0,4%
Gender	Male	98	35,4%
	Female	178	64,3%
Race	African blacks	200	72,2%
	Whites	50	18,1%
	Indian	18	6,5%
	Coloured	9	3,2%

## 5.4 Descriptive Statistics

The study had 43 items that investigated the spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and commitment. The statements were based on a seven-point Likert scale with the low score

indicating higher levels of disagreement and the high scores indicating the higher levels of agreement. There were seven statements that the respondents mostly agreed with on a score higher than 6.0, which is the zone 'agree' to 'strongly agree'. The highest score was given to VAR 16 (M = 6.39 SD = 1.14) which states, 'The work I do is very important to me', followed by VAR 14 (M = 6.33 SD = 1.011), 'The work I do makes a difference in people's lives'; then VAR 15 (M = 6.33, SD = 0.998) - 'The work I do is meaningful to me'. This affirmed their agreement on the importance of the work they do in the organisation. Other variables that the respondents highly agreed with were VAR22 (M = 6.19, SD = 1,049) - 'I seek guidance on how to live a good life from people I respect, great teachers / writings, and/or a higher power, being, or God', VAR 23 (M = 6.18, SD = 1.143) - 'I maintain an attitude of gratitude even when faced with difficulties', I have compassion for the hopes and fears of all people, regardless of how they view the world based on their culture and past experiences' and 'I understand and am committed to my organisation's vision' (VAR1) ( M = 6.13, SD = 1.001).

There were several statements that the respondents least agreed with, the four in particular with more on the 'somewhat disagree' range (mean less than 3.50). These were VAR 38, VAR 39, VAR 40 and VAR 41. These were 'I would feel guilty if I stopped working for my current employer' (M = 3.03, SD = 1.900); and 'Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to stop working for my current employer' (M = 3.04, SD = 1.887). The other two items were 'I feel an obligation to work for my current employer' (M = 3.19, SD = 1.827) and 'I owe a great deal to my current employer' (M = 3.47, SD = 1.990). These items were dealing with the feelings, perceived obligations and commitment to their employer. Table 10 outlines the descriptive statistics of the variables.

*Table 10. Descriptive statistics of the variables*

Variables		Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
I understand and am committed to my organisation's vision	VAR1	6,13	1,001	-1,240	1,079
My organisation has a vision statement that brings out the best in me	VAR2	5,60	1,399	-1,112	0,770
My organisation's vision inspires my best performance	VAR3	5,54	1,488	-1,115	0,674
My organisation's vision is clear and compelling to me	VAR4	5,57	1,491	-1,158	0,862

I have faith in my organisation, and I am willing to “do whatever it takes” to ensure that it accomplishes its mission	VAR5	5,40	1,589	-1,164	0,783
I demonstrate my faith in my organisation and its mission by doing everything I can to help us succeed	VAR6	5,84	1,317	-1,505	2,109
I persevere and exert extra effort to help my organisation succeed because I have faith in what it stands for	VAR7	5,83	1,350	-1,486	2,140
I set challenging goals for my work because I have faith in my organisation and want us to succeed	VAR8	5,71	1,373	-1,394	1,926
The leaders in my organisation “walk the walk” as well as “talk the talk”	VAR9	4,58	1,827	-0,355	-1,038
The leaders in my organisation are honest and without false pride	VAR10	4,55	1,786	-0,388	-0,862
My organisation is trustworthy and loyal to its employees	VAR11	4,75	1,770	-0,509	-0,705
The leaders in my organisation have the courage to stand up for their people	VAR12	4,58	1,925	-0,419	-0,938
My organisation is kind and considerate towards its workers, and when they are suffering, want to do something about it	VAR13	4,79	1,850	-0,549	-0,784
The work I do makes a difference in people’s lives	VAR14	6,33	1,011	-1,671	2,276
The work I do is meaningful to me	VAR15	6,33	0,998	-1,681	2,409
The work I do is very important to me	VAR16	6,39	0,943	-1,778	2,906
My job activities are personally meaningful to me	VAR17	6,18	1,143	-1,509	1,573
I feel my organisation appreciates me, and my work	VAR18	4,79	1,762	-0,448	-0,872
I feel my organisation demonstrates respect for me, and my work	VAR19	5,00	1,684	-0,695	-0,443
I feel I am valued as a person in my job	VAR20	5,03	1,719	-0,674	-0,496
I feel highly regarded by my leaders	VAR21	4,97	1,762	-0,606	-0,605
I seek guidance on how to live a good life from people I respect, great teachers/writings, and/or a higher power, being, or God	VAR22	6,19	1,049	-1,308	1,143
I maintain an attitude of gratitude even when faced with difficulties	VAR23	6,19	0,881	-1,318	2,409

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Skewness</b>	<b>Kurtosis</b>	
I maintain an inner life or reflective practice (for example, spending time in nature, prayer, meditation, reading inspirational literature, yoga, observing religious traditions, and writing in a journal)	VAR24	5,83	1,419	-1,472	1,901
I have compassion for the hopes and fears of all people, regardless of how they view the world based on their culture and past experiences	VAR25	6,15	1,033	-1,256	1,139
I feel "emotionally attached" to my current employer	VAR26	4,39	1,853	-0,278	-1,078
I feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my current employer	VAR27	4,74	1,762	-0,569	-0,641
I feel like a "part of the family" with my current employer	VAR28	4,81	1,782	-0,631	-0,555
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with my current employer	VAR29	4,01	2,036	-0,023	-1,247
I really feel as if my current employer's problems are my own	VAR30	4,32	1,968	-0,271	-1,142
My current employer has a great deal of personal meaning to me	VAR31	4,39	1,930	-0,281	-1,077
Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided to stop working for my current employer	VAR32	3,77	2,046	0,111	-1,337
I believe I have too few options to consider no longer working for my current employer	VAR33	3,66	1,938	0,180	-1,161
A scarcity of available alternatives would be a negative consequence of no longer working for my current employer	VAR34	3,89	1,922	0,031	-1,186
Right now, it would be very hard for me to stop working for my current employer	VAR35	4,30	2,008	-0,227	-1,260
I might consider working elsewhere if I had not already put so much of myself into my relationship with my current employer	VAR36	3,72	1,965	0,211	-1,149
Right now, it is a matter of necessity that I continue working for my current employer	VAR37	4,37	2,011	-0,220	-1,264
I feel an obligation to work for my current employer	VAR38	3,19	1,827	0,594	-0,724
I would feel guilty if I stopped working for my current employer	VAR39	3,03	1,900	0,748	-0,679

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	
I owe a great deal to my current employer	VAR40	3,47	1,990	0,357	-1,168
Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to stop working for my current employer	VAR41	3,04	1,887	0,647	-0,840
My current employer deserves my loyalty	VAR42	4,49	1,961	-0,327	-1,130
I have a sense of obligation to my current employer	VAR43	4,10	2,017	-0,136	-1,258

## 5.5 Validity and Reliability of the Data

The validity and reliability of the constructs were analysed. These were for spiritual leadership, which is an independent variable, where commitment is a dependent variable and workplace spirituality is a mediating variable.

### 5.5.1 Spiritual leadership

The construct validity and reliability for spiritual leadership was conducted using CFA employing the Structural Equation Modelling partial least square (PLS-SEM). The revalidation with CFA was based on the fact that the measurement instrument was adapted from a previous study (Fry et al., 2017). There was a good model fit for spiritual leadership with the Standardised Root Mean Square Residual, SRMR = 0.026, better than the guide of SRMR < 0.080 by Henseler et al. (2014) (Table 11). Normed Fit Index (NFI) also known as the Bentler and Bonett Index, NFI = 0.933. This is the computation of the Chi<sup>2</sup> value of the model compared against a meaningful benchmark. The good value proposed for a good fit is 0.9 or more, although 0.85 is still acceptable (Hui & Singh, 2020).

*Table 11. Model fit of Spiritual Leadership*

	Spiritual leadership Model
SRMR	0,026
d_ ULS	0,062
d_ G	0,205
Chi-Square	293,780
NFI	0,933

The model has good factor loadings, with vision loading VAR1 to VAR4 and their loading range falling between 0.713 and 0.947. Hope / faith also has a good loading of 0.884 to 0.931, while altruistic love has loadings of 0.893 to 0.951. These loadings are better than the acceptable level of 0.7 and higher for confirmatory factor analysis model (Yana et al., 2015) (Figure 4).

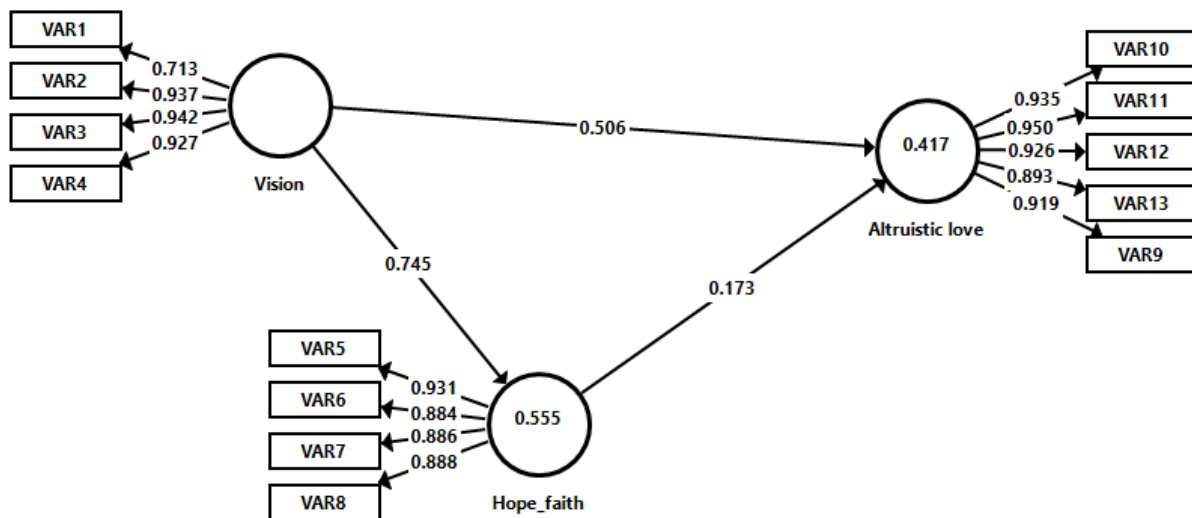


Figure 4. Structural model for CFA for Spiritual Leadership

The construct validity was evaluated with convergence and discriminant validity (Table 12-14). AVE was used to determine the convergence validity of the variables (Table 12). The AVE for vision is 0.784; for hope / faith it is 0.805; and for altruistic love it is 0.856. All these values are higher than 0.5, which confirms the convergence validity (Latan & Ghozali, 2012). There is good reliability of the constructs, with vision having a composite reliability, CR = 0.784, hope / faith with CR = 0.805 and altruistic love with CR = 0.856. All these values are higher than the minimum CR of 0.7.

Table 12. Convergence validity and reliability of Spiritual Leadership

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	AVE
Altruistic love	0,967	0,968	0,967	0,856
Hope / faith	0,943	0,943	0,943	0,805
Vision	0,931	0,945	0,935	0,784

The Fornell-Larcker criterion as well as cross-loading were used to determine the discriminant validity. The Fornell-Larcker criterion assessed the degree of shared variance between the variables in the model. The results show that there is a distinction between the variables.

*Table 13. Fornell-Larcker criterion for discriminant validity*

	Altruistic love	Hope / faith	Vision
Altruistic love	0,925		
Hope_faith	0,551	0,897	
Vision	0,636	0,745	0,885

The cross-loading confirms the distinction between the variables, with all the variables highly loaded on one construct, while weakly loading on the other, mainly lower than 0.2 to 0.3 (Table 14).

*Table 14. Cross loading of the Spiritual Leadership constructs*

	Vision	Hope_faith	Altruistic love
VAR1	0,713	0,568	0,412
VAR2	0,937	0,705	0,588
VAR3	0,942	0,689	0,614
VAR4	0,927	0,670	0,613
VAR5	0,689	0,931	0,520
VAR6	0,669	0,884	0,473
VAR7	0,648	0,886	0,503
VAR8	0,668	0,888	0,480
VAR9	0,580	0,511	0,919
	Vision	Hope_faith	Altruistic love
VAR10	0,587	0,523	0,935
VAR11	0,604	0,523	0,950
VAR12	0,594	0,504	0,926
VAR13	0,573	0,485	0,893

Based on these results, it can be confirmed that there is validity and reliability of the instrument for spiritual leadership.

### 5.5.3 Employee commitment

The employee commitment constructs comprised affective, continuance and normative commitment. Table 15 presents the results of the model fit, and the results show a good model fit. The Standardised Root Mean Square Residual, SRMR = 0.075 (SRMR < 0.080), while the Normed Fit Index (NFI), also known as the Bentler and Bonett Index, NFI = 0.85 (Hui & Singh, 2020).

Table 15. Model fit of Employee commitment

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0,075	0,075
d_ULS	0,670	0,670
d_G	0,333	0,333
Chi-Square	539,215	539,215
NFI	0,846	0,846

The structural model shows interrelationships between the normative, affective and continuance commitments and has good loading factors that are all higher than 0.7, which are good for confirmatory analysis (Figure 5).

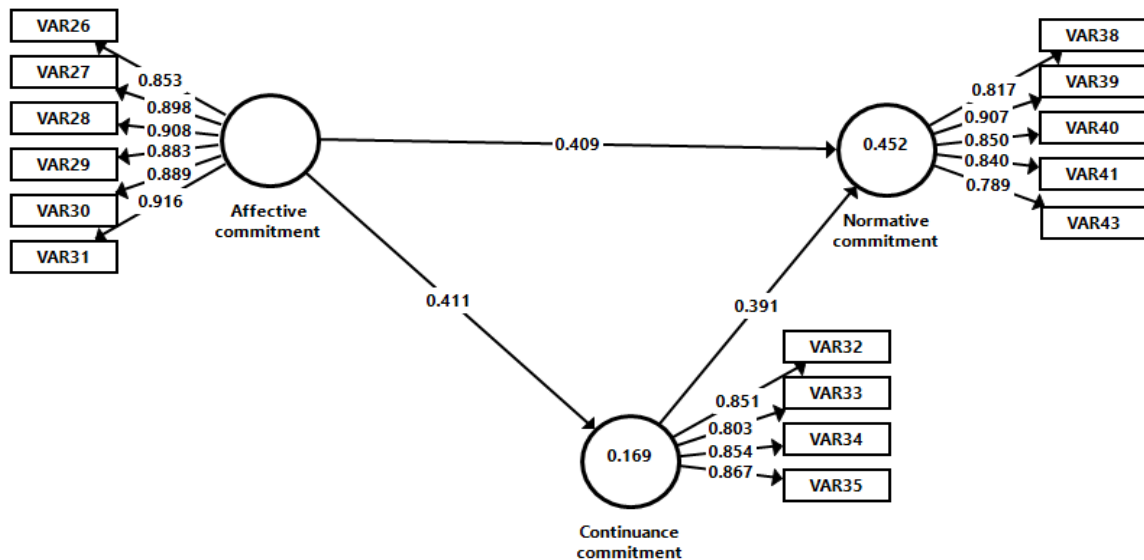


Figure 5. Structural model for CFA for Employees commitment

AVE of the affective commitment is 0.794, with the one of continuance commitment, AVE = 0.713, while the result for normative commitment is 0.708, thus confirming the convergence validity (Table 16).

Table 16. Convergence validity and reliability of Employees commitment

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Affective commitment	0,948	0,954	0,959	0,794
Continuance commitment	0,869	0,895	0,908	0,713
Normative commitment	0,896	0,898	0,924	0,708

The Fornell-Larcker criterion assessed the degree of shared variance between variables in the model and confirms the discriminant validity with affective commitment (0.891), continuance commitment (0.844) and normative commitment (0.842), while the other share variance is 0.57 or less, showing a distinction of more than 0.2 (Table 14).

Table 17. Fornell-Larcker criterion for discriminant validity

	Affective commitment	Continuance commitment	Normative commitment
Affective commitment	0,891		
Continuance commitment	0,411	0,844	
Normative commitment	0,570	0,560	0,842

The discriminant validity between the variables of commitment is confirmed by the cross-loading. VAR 26 to VAR 31 load in affective commitment with values 0.853 – 0.916, while the loadings in other variables are 0.575 or less. The same pattern is also encountered in continuance commitment, which has the variables (VAR 32 to VAR 35) and normative commitment with VAR 38 to VAR 41 and VAR 43 (Table 18).

Table 18. Cross loading of employee commitment

	Affective commitment	Continuance commitment	Normative commitment
VAR26	0,853	0,335	0,459
VAR27	0,898	0,297	0,426
VAR28	0,908	0,355	0,493

	Affective commitment	Continuance commitment	Normative commitment
VAR29	0,883	0,458	0,575
VAR30	0,889	0,360	0,522
VAR31	0,916	0,365	0,541
VAR32	0,456	0,851	0,513
VAR33	0,224	0,803	0,365
VAR34	0,224	0,854	0,422
VAR35	0,405	0,867	0,540
VAR38	0,377	0,500	0,817
VAR39	0,467	0,495	0,907
VAR40	0,516	0,485	0,850
VAR41	0,531	0,460	0,840
VAR43	0,496	0,413	0,789

### 5.5.3 Workplace spirituality

The model for workplace spirituality, which is the mediator comprising meaning or calling, membership and inner life was constructed, and the model fit is presented in Table 19. The Standardised Root Mean Square Residual, SRMR = 0.056 (SRMR < 0.080), while the Normed Fit Index (NFI), also known as the Bentler and Bonett Index, NFI = 0.912 (Hui & Singh, 2020).

*Table 19. Model fit of workplace spirituality*

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0,056	0,056
d_ULS	0,206	0,206
d_G	0,134	0,134
Chi-Square	226,698	226,698
NFI	0,912	0,912

The model has good factor loadings, with meaning loading VAR 14 to VAR 17 and their loading range featuring between 0.834 and 0.919. Membership also has a good loading of 0.926 to 0.964, while inner life has loadings of 0.788 to 0.849. These results are better than the acceptable level of 0.7 and higher for confirmatory factor analysis model (Figure 6).

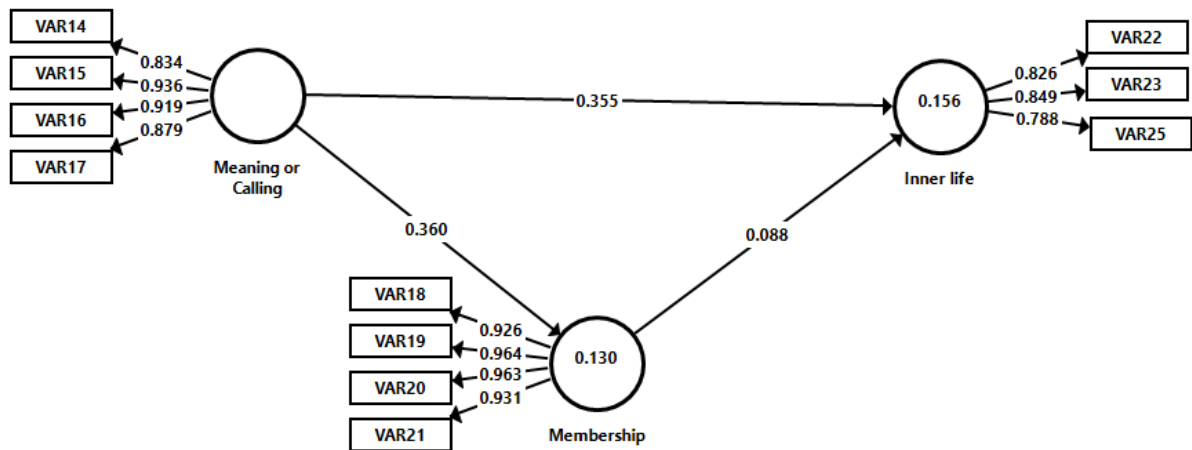


Figure 6. Structural model for CFA for Workplace Spirituality

The construct validity was evaluated with convergence and discriminant validity (Table 20 to 22). AVE was used to determine the convergence validity of the variables (Table 20). The AVE for meaning or calling is 0.797, membership is 0.895 and inner life is 0.674. All these values are higher than 0.5, which confirms the convergence validity (Latan & Ghozali, 2012).

There is good reliability for all constructs, with composite reliability higher than 0.7. CR for meaning or calling is 0.914, membership with CR = 0.961 and inner life, CR = 0.760.

Table 20. Convergence validity and reliability of Workplace Spirituality

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Inner life	0,760	0,769	0,861	0,674
Meaning or calling	0,914	0,914	0,940	0,797
Membership	0,961	0,962	0,972	0,895

The Fornell-Larcker criterion assessed the degree of shared variance between variables in the model and confirms the discriminant validity with meaning or calling (0.893), membership (0.946) and inner life (0.821) (Table 21).

Table 21. Fornell-Larcker criterion for discriminant validity

	Inner life	Meaning or calling	Membership
Inner life	0,821		
Meaning or calling	0,387	0,893	
Membership	0,216	0,360	0,946

Table 22 confirms the discriminant validity between the variables of workplace spirituality with the cross-loading. The variables, VAR 14 to VAR 17 load highly in meaning or calling, while VAR 18 to VAR 21 load highly in membership and VAR 22, VAR 23 and VAR 25 load highly in inner life.

Table 22. Cross loading for workplace spirituality

	Meaning or calling	Membership	Inner life
VAR14	0,834	0,327	0,371
VAR15	0,936	0,301	0,338
VAR16	0,919	0,289	0,374
VAR17	0,879	0,367	0,294
VAR18	0,342	0,926	0,194
VAR19	0,329	0,964	0,196
VAR20	0,340	0,963	0,203
VAR21	0,352	0,931	0,223
VAR22	0,349	0,193	0,826
VAR23	0,349	0,144	0,849
VAR25	0,242	0,200	0,788

## 5.6 Hypotheses Testing

The predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ) test was performed to determine the predictive relevance of the endogenous constructs of the models. The  $Q^2$  values were obtained for endogenous variables, with all these variables having good predictive relevance with  $Q^2 > 0$  (Table 23).

Table 23. Predictive of the endogenous constructs of the relationship models

	SSO	SSE	Q <sup>2</sup> (=1-SSE/SSO)
Affective commitment	1662,000	1016,741	0,388
Continuance commitment	831,000	799,438	0,038
Control variable	277,000	277,000	
Normative commitment	1662,000	1413,269	0,150
Spiritual leadership	3601,000	3601,000	
Control variable	277,000	277,000	
Inner life	831,000	806,176	0,030
Meaning or calling	1108,000	919,311	0,170
Membership	1108,000	529,535	0,522
Spiritual leadership	3601,000	3601,000	
Affective commitment	1662,000	1038,260	0,375
Continuance commitment	1108,000	1044,317	0,057
Control variable	277,000	277,000	
Inner life	831,000	831,000	
Meaning or calling	1108,000	1108,000	
Membership	1108,000	1108,000	
Normative commitment	1385,000	1227,676	0,114

All these models have good predictive relevance, with the best being membership from spiritual leadership,  $Q^2 = 0.522$  and affective commitment from spiritual leadership,  $Q^2 = 0.388$ .

### 5.6.1 Relationship between spiritual leadership and employee commitment

The first hypothesis of the study focused on testing the effect spiritual leadership has on employees commitment. This hypothesis can be recapped as follows:

Null hypothesis (H1<sub>0</sub>): Spiritual leadership has no significant effect on employees commitment.

Alternative hypothesis (H1<sub>1</sub>): Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on employees commitment.

The results of the study show that spiritual leadership has a statistically significant positive relationship with affective commitment, spiritual leadership  $\rightarrow$  affective commitment,  $\beta = 0.721$  (16.62),  $p < .001$  (Figure 7 and Table 24). The control variable was the position, and the results show that it does not have a statistically significant influence on the relationship,  $\beta = 0.057$  (1.177), not significant. The results also show a statistically significant relationship for spiritual leadership  $\rightarrow$  normative commitment,  $\beta = 0.534$  (11.07),  $p < .001$  and well as spiritual leadership  $\rightarrow$  continuance commitment,  $\beta = 0.258$  (3.823),  $p < .001$ . Similarly with the relationship between the spiritual leadership and affective commitment, the position of the respondents does not have a statistically significant influence on the relationship as the control variable.

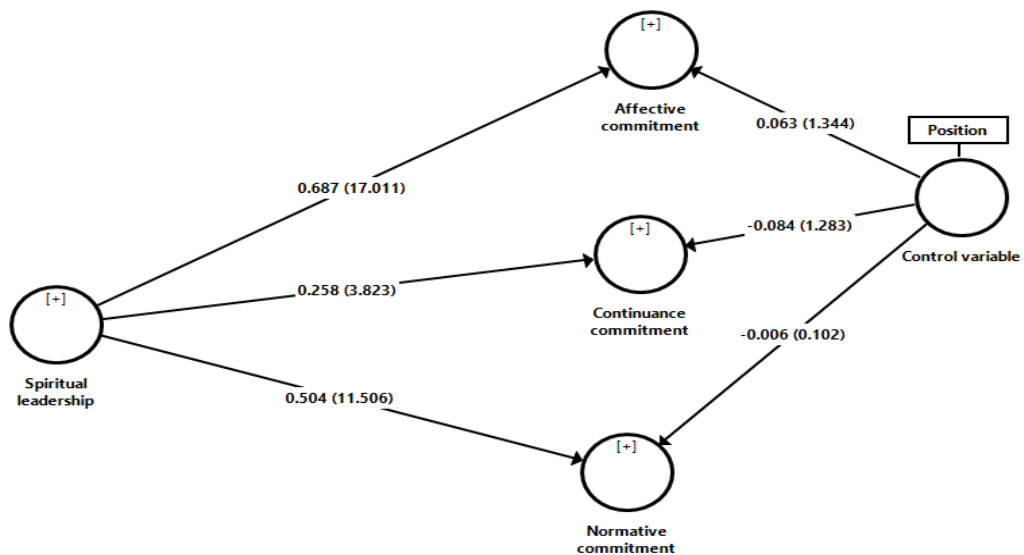


Figure 7. Path model of the spiritual leadership and employee commitment

Table 24. Path coefficient of the relationship models

Relationship		Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values	R <sup>2</sup> (Adj R <sup>2</sup> )
IV -----> DV	Control variable -> Affective commitment	0,063	0,061	0,047	1,344	0,179	
	Control variable -> Continuance commitment	-0,084	-0,087	0,065	1,283	0,200	
	Control variable -> Normative commitment	-0,006	-0,009	0,058	0,102	0,919	
	Spiritual leadership -> Affective Commitment	0,687	0,688	0,040	17,011	0,000	0.496(0.492)
	Spiritual leadership -> Continuance commitment	0,258	0,264	0,068	3,823	0,000	0.063(0.056)
	Spiritual leadership -> Normative commitment	0,504	0,509	0,044	11,506	0,000	0.252(0.246)
	Control variable -> Inner life	0,080	0,084	0,069	1,157	0,248	
	Control variable -> Meaning or calling	-0,033	-0,031	0,051	0,633	0,527	
	Control variable -> Membership	0,004	0,003	0,041	0,095	0,924	
	Spiritual leadership -> Inner life	0,202	0,207	0,070	2,902	0,004	0.055(0.048)
IV -----> M	Spiritual leadership -> Meaning or calling	0,479	0,481	0,049	9,769	0,000	0.223(0.217)
	Spiritual leadership -> Membership	0,767	0,768	0,027	28,093	0,000	0.589(0.586)
	Control variable -> Affective commitment	0,106	0,102	0,054	1,946	0,052	
	Control variable -> Continuance Commitment	-0,124	-0,127	0,071	1,755	0,080	
	Control variable -> Normative commitment	0,051	0,049	0,068	0,749	0,454	
	Inner life -> Affective commitment	-0,046	-0,045	0,047	0,981	0,327	
	Membership -> Affective commitment	0,592	0,593	0,047	12,486	0,000	0.480(0.472)
	Meaning or calling -> Affective commitment	0,178	0,181	0,058	3,060	0,002	
	Inner life -> Continuance commitment	-0,171	-0,177	0,061	2,809	0,005	
	M ----->DV	Meaning or calling -> Continuance commitment	0,064	0,063	0,075	0,856	0,392

Membership -> Continuance commitment	0,259	0,263	0,071	3,663	0,000	
Inner life -> Normative commitment	-0,195	-0,200	0,059	3,282	0,001	
Meaning or calling -> Normative commitment	0,077	0,077	0,064	1,203	0,229	0.178(0.166)
Membership -> Normative commitment	0,381	0,385	0,061	6,261	0,000	

The  $R^2$ , which is the proportion of the variance for an employees commitment that is explained by the spiritual leadership, shows that 49.6% ( $r^2 = 0.496$ ) of the affective commitment can be predicted by the spiritual leadership. It is considerably higher than the 25.2% of the normative commitment predicted by spiritual leadership and only 6.3% of the continuance commitment predicted by spiritual leadership.

The results indicate that the null hypothesis is not supported, with the alternative hypothesis supported, which states that spiritual leadership has a significant effect on employees commitment.

## 5.6.2 Relationship between workplace spirituality and employees commitment

Hypothesis 2 tested the relationship between the workplace spirituality and employees commitment. The hypothesis can be recapped as follows:

Null hypothesis ( $H_{2_0}$ ): Workplace spirituality has no significant effect on employees commitment.

Alternative hypothesis ( $H_{2_1}$ ): Workplace spirituality has a significant effect on employees commitment.

The result show that the meaning or calling aspect of workplace spirituality has a statistically significant positive relationship with affective commitment, meaning or calling  $\rightarrow$  affective commitment,  $\beta = 0.178$  (3.060),  $p < .001$  (Figure 8 and Table 24).

The results show that meaning or calling does not have a statistically significant relationship with continuance commitment, meaning or calling  $\rightarrow$  continuance commitment,  $\beta = 0.064$  (0.856), (not significant) and meaning or calling does not have a statistically significant relationship with normative commitment,  $\beta = 0,077$ (1.203), (not significant). The control variable was the position, and the results show that it does not have a statistically significant influence on the relationships, on workplace spirituality or employees commitment.

The other variable of workplace spirituality was membership, and the results show that membership  $\rightarrow$  affective commitment has a statistically significant positive relationship,  $\beta = 0.592$ (12.49),  $p < .001$ . There is also a statistically significant relationship between membership and continuance commitment,  $\beta = 0.259$  (3.663),  $p < .001$  as well as membership and normative commitment,  $\beta = 0,381$  (6.26),  $p < .001$ . The relationship inner life  $\rightarrow$  continuance commitment and well as inner life  $\rightarrow$  normative commitment are statistically significant and positive in nature. However, the inner life  $\rightarrow$  affective commitment relationship

is not statistically significant,  $\beta = -0,046$  (0.981), (not significant). Position as the control variable does not have a statistically significant influence on the relationships between workplace spirituality and employees commitment.

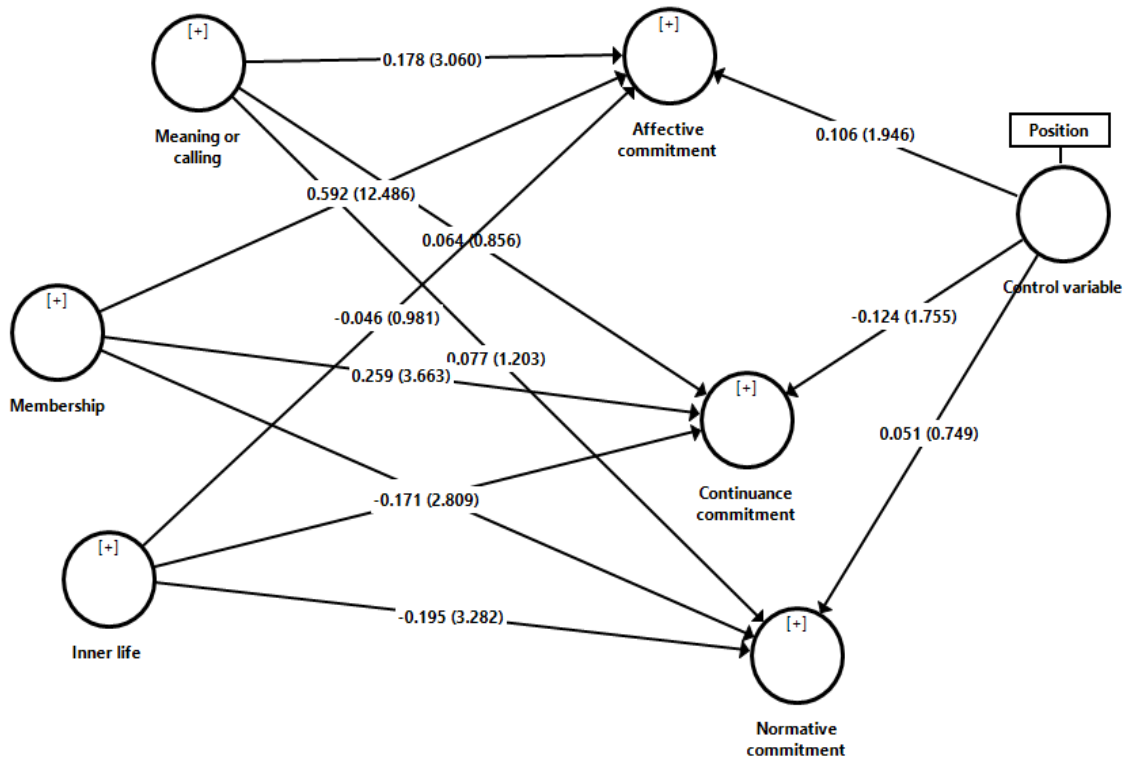


Figure 8. Path model of the workplace and employees commitment

The  $R^2$  for an employees commitment that is explained by the workplace spirituality shows that 48.0% ( $r^2 = 0.480$ ) of the affective commitment can be predicted by the statistically significant elements of workplace spirituality (meaning or calling and membership). It is considerably higher than the 17.2% of the normative commitment predicted by workplace spirituality (inner life and membership) and the 9.6% for continuance commitment predicted by workplace spirituality (membership and inner life).

These results indicate that the null hypothesis 2 is partially supported (meaning or calling -> continuance commitment; meaning or calling -> normative commitment; inner life -> affective commitment), while the rest of the results support the alternative hypothesis that workplace spirituality has a significant effect on employees commitment.

### 5.6.3 Relationship between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality

The relationship between the spiritual leadership and the mediator, workplace spirituality, was tested (hypothesis 3) and can be recapped as follows:

Null hypothesis (H3<sub>0</sub>): Spiritual leadership has no significant effect on workplace spirituality.

Alternative hypothesis (H3<sub>1</sub>): Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on workplace spirituality.

The results show that spiritual leadership has a statistically significant positive relationship with all dimensions of workplace spirituality, spiritual leadership -> membership,  $\beta = 0.767$  (28.09),  $p < .001$ , spiritual leadership -> inner life,  $\beta = 0.202$  (2.902),  $p < .01$  and spiritual leadership -> meaning or calling,  $\beta = 0.479$  (9.77),  $p < .001$  (Figure 9 and Table 24). The results shows that spiritual leadership has a statistically significant positive relationship with workplace spirituality, Spiritual leadership -> Workplace Spirituality,  $\beta = 0.776$  (33.60),  $p < .001$  (Figure 10).

As has been found in the other relationship models, the respondents' position at the organisations they work for does not have a statistically significant influence on the relationship as the control variable.

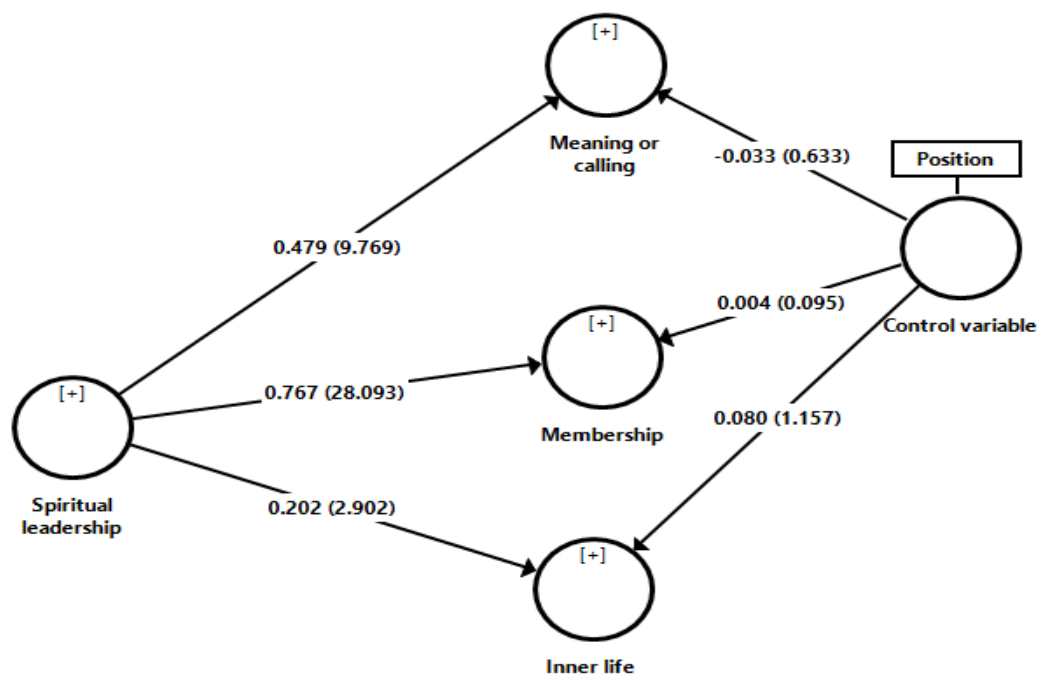


Figure 9. Path model of Spiritual Leadership and dimensions of Workplace Spirituality

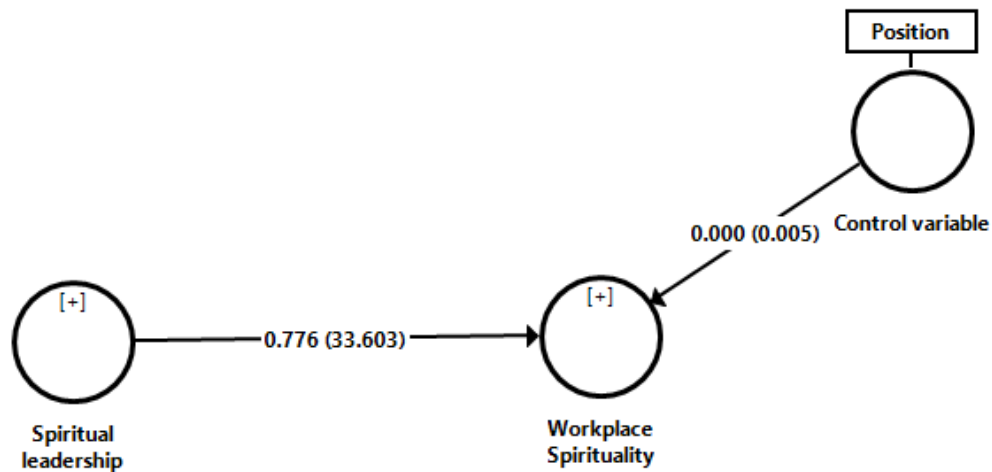


Figure 10. Path model of Spiritual Leadership and Workplace Spirituality

The  $R^2$  for workplace spirituality is explained by the spiritual leadership showed that 58.9% ( $r^2 = 0.589$ ) of the workplace spirituality (membership) can be predicted by the spiritual leadership. Additionally, 22.3% of the meaning or calling is predicted by spiritual leadership and 5.5% of the inner life is predicted by spiritual leadership.

The results confirm that null hypothesis 3 is not supported, with the alternative hypothesis ( $H_{3_1}$ ) supported that spiritual leadership has a significant effect on workplace spirituality.

#### 5.6.4 Mediating effect of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and employees commitment

In this study, the mediation variable, workplace spirituality, is regarded as the variable that causes the mediation in the employees commitment and spiritual leadership. The focus of this hypothesis is to examine whether the impact of spiritual leadership on employees commitment is not direct, and whether it is through the mediator, workplace spirituality.

The mediation is the causal chain, where the spiritual leadership affects the workplace spirituality and in turn, it affects the employees commitment. However, it has to be assessed to what extent the influence occurs.

##### 5.6.4.1 Affective commitment

Hypothesis 4a tested the mediating effect of workplace spirituality on the relationship between the spiritual leadership and affective commitment:

Null hypothesis (H4<sub>0a</sub>): Workplace spirituality does not have a mediating effect on the relationship between spiritual leadership and affective commitment.

Alternative hypothesis (H4<sub>1a</sub>): Workplace spirituality has a mediating effect on the relationship between spiritual leadership and affective commitment.

Figure 11 and Table 25 present the mediation results, based on the direct effect, total effects and specific indirect effects. In the direct effect, the results show that spiritual leadership → affective commitment is statistically significant and positive,  $\beta = 0.400$  (4.576),  $p < .001$ . This implies that in the presence of workplace spirituality, the effect of spiritual leadership on affective commitment is significant. The total effects relationship test evaluated the direct effect of spiritual leadership on affective commitment without the mediator, workplace spirituality dimensions. The results show that spiritual leadership → affective commitment is statistically significant,  $\beta = 0.682$  (16.43),  $p < .001$ . When evaluating the indirect specific effects, spiritual leadership → membership → affective commitment is statistically significant,  $\beta = 0.248$  (4.18),  $p < .001$ . However, spiritual leadership → meaning or calling → affective commitment,  $\beta = 0,041$  (1.40) (not significant), as well spiritual leadership → inner life → affective commitment,  $\beta = -0,007$  (0.703), (not significant), are both not statistically significant. The control variable has no statistically significant influence on the relationship.

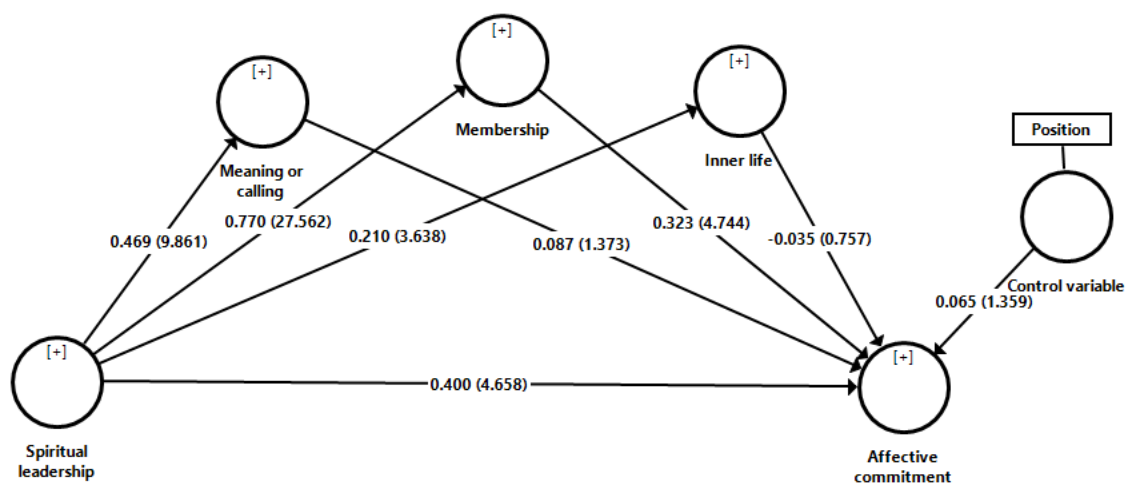


Figure 11. Mediation of dimensions workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and affective commitment

Membership is a partial mediator, since both the direct and indirect effect are statistically significant. Considering that the specific indirect effect is not statistically significant for meaning or calling and inner life, it can be concluded that meaning or calling as well as inner life do not have a mediating effect on the relationship between spiritual leadership and affective commitment.

Table 25. Direct effect, total effects, and specific indirect effects of Workplace Spirituality on Spiritual Leadership and Affective Commitment

	Direct effect	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
Mediation effect	Control variable -> Affective commitment	0,065	0,065	0,047	1,378	0,169
	Inner life -> Affective commitment	-0,035	-0,030	0,045	0,776	0,438
	Meaning or calling -> Affective commitment	0,087	0,082	0,062	1,399	0,162
Direct effect	Membership -> Affective commitment	0,323	0,326	0,073	4,433	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Affective commitment	0,400	0,400	0,087	4,576	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Inner life	0,210	0,220	0,055	3,837	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Meaning or calling	0,469	0,473	0,048	9,684	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Membership	0,770	0,769	0,028	27,405	0,000
	Control variable -> Affective commitment	0,065	0,065	0,047	1,378	0,169
	Inner life -> Affective commitment	-0,035	-0,030	0,045	0,776	0,438
	Meaning or calling -> Affective commitment	0,087	0,082	0,062	1,399	0,162
	Membership -> Affective commitment	0,323	0,326	0,073	4,433	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Affective commitment	0,682	0,683	0,041	16,428	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Inner life	0,210	0,220	0,055	3,837	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Meaning or calling	0,469	0,473	0,048	9,684	0,000
Total effect	Spiritual leadership -> Membership	0,770	0,769	0,028	27,405	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Membership -> Affective commitment	0,248	0,252	0,059	4,177	0,000
Specific indirect effect	Spiritual leadership -> Meaning or calling -> Affective commitment	0,041	0,038	0,029	1,399	0,162
	Spiritual leadership -> Inner life -> Affective commitment	-0,007	-0,007	0,010	0,703	0,483

### 5.6.4.2 Continuance commitment

Hypothesis 4b tested the mediating effect of workplace spirituality on the relationship between the spiritual leadership and continuance commitment:

Null hypothesis (H4<sub>0b</sub>): Workplace spirituality does not have a mediating effect on the relationship between spiritual leadership and continuance commitment.

Alternative hypothesis (H4<sub>1b</sub>): Workplace spirituality does have a mediating effect on the relationship between spiritual leadership and continuance commitment.

Figure 12 and Table 26 present the mediation results, based on the direct effect, total effects and specific indirect effects. In the direct effect, the results show that spiritual leadership -> continuance commitment is not statistically significant,  $\beta = 0.009$  (0.078), (not significant). The total effects relationship evaluated the direct effect of spiritual leadership on continuance commitment without the mediator, workplace spirituality, dimensions. The results show that spiritual leadership -> continuance commitment is statistically significant,  $\beta = 0,247$  (3.474),  $p < .001$ . When evaluating the indirect specific effects, spiritual leadership -> inner life -> continuance commitment has a statistically significant negative effect,  $\beta = -0,041$  (4.18),  $p < .05$ . Similarly, spiritual leadership -> meaning or calling -> continuance commitment,  $\beta = 0,081$  (2.366),  $p < .05$  and spiritual leadership -> membership -> continuance commitment,  $\beta = 0.197$ (2.569),  $p < .05$  has a statistically significant positive effect on the relationship.

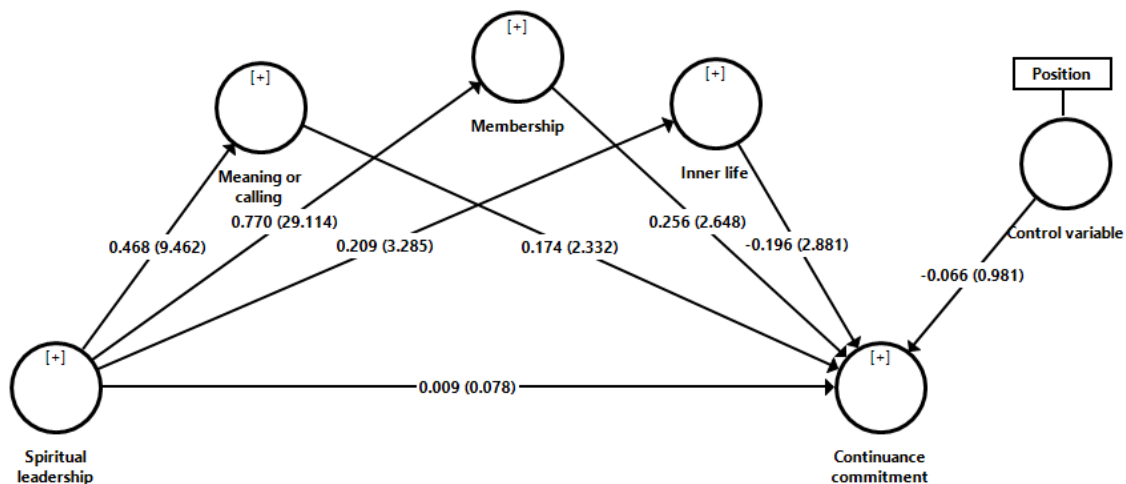


Figure 12. Mediation of dimension's workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and continuance commitment

Table 26. Direct effect, total effects and specific indirect effects of Workplace Spirituality on Spiritual Leadership and Continuance Commitment

	Direct effect	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
Direct effect	Control variable -> Continuance commitment	-0,066	-0,066	0,067	0,981	0,327
	Inner life -> Continuance commitment	-0,196	-0,205	0,068	2,881	0,004
	Meaning or calling -> Continuance commitment	0,174	0,176	0,075	2,332	0,020
	Membership -> Continuance commitment	0,256	0,256	0,097	2,648	0,008
	Spiritual leadership -> Continuance commitment	0,009	0,012	0,121	0,078	0,938
	Spiritual leadership -> Inner life	0,209	0,215	0,064	3,285	0,001
	Spiritual leadership -> Meaning or calling	0,468	0,471	0,050	9,462	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Membership	0,770	0,772	0,026	29,114	0,000
Total effect	Control variable -> Continuance commitment	-0,066	-0,066	0,067	0,981	0,327
	Inner life -> Continuance commitment	-0,196	-0,205	0,068	2,881	0,004
	Meaning or calling -> Continuance commitment	0,174	0,176	0,075	2,332	0,020
	Membership -> Continuance commitment	0,256	0,256	0,097	2,648	0,008
	Spiritual leadership -> Continuance commitment	0,247	0,248	0,071	3,474	0,001
	Spiritual leadership -> Inner life	0,209	0,215	0,064	3,285	0,001
	Spiritual leadership -> Meaning or calling	0,468	0,471	0,050	9,462	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Membership	0,770	0,772	0,026	29,114	0,000
Specific indirect effect	Spiritual leadership -> Inner life -> Continuance commitment	-0,041	-0,044	0,020	2,033	0,042
	Spiritual leadership -> Meaning or calling -> Continuance commitment	0,081	0,082	0,034	2,366	0,018
Specific indirect effect	Spiritual leadership -> Membership -> Continuance commitment	0,197	0,198	0,077	2,569	0,010

The results show that there is complete mediation, since the direct effect is not statistically significant, but the indirect effect is statistically significant. This means that inner life, membership and meaning or calling are mediators of the relationship between the spiritual leadership and continuance commitment. As such, the null hypothesis (H4<sub>0b</sub>) is not supported and the alternative hypothesis (H4<sub>1b</sub>), which states that workplace spirituality does have a mediating effect on the relationship between spiritual leadership and continuance commitment is supported.

### 5.6.4.3 Normative commitment

Hypothesis 4c tested the mediating effect of workplace spirituality on the relationship between the spiritual leadership and normative commitment:

Null hypothesis (H4<sub>0c</sub>): Workplace spirituality does not have a mediating effect on the relationship between spiritual leadership and normative commitment.

Alternative hypothesis (H4<sub>1c</sub>): Workplace spirituality does have a mediating effect on the relationship between spiritual leadership and normative commitment.

Figure 13 and Table 27 present the mediation results, based on the direct effect, total effects, and specific indirect effects.

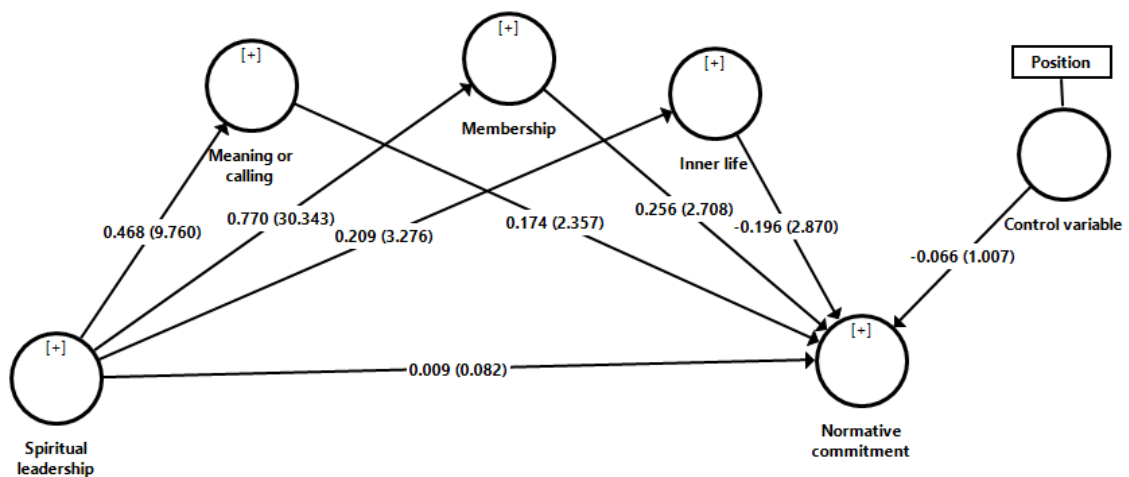


Figure 13. Mediation of dimensions of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and normative commitment

Table 27. Direct effect, total effects and specific indirect effects of Workplace Spirituality on Spiritual Leadership and Normative Commitment

	Mediation relationships	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
Direct effects	Control variable -> Normative commitment	-0,066	-0,064	0,066	1,007	0,314
	Inner life -> Normative commitment	-0,196	-0,202	0,068	2,870	0,004
	Meaning or calling -> Normative commitment	0,174	0,175	0,074	2,357	0,019
	Membership -> Normative commitment	0,256	0,257	0,094	2,708	0,007
	Spiritual leadership -> Inner life	0,209	0,217	0,064	3,276	0,001
	Spiritual leadership -> Meaning or calling	0,468	0,471	0,048	9,760	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Membership	0,770	0,771	0,025	30,343	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Normative commitment	0,009	0,009	0,116	0,082	0,935
	Control variable -> Normative commitment	-0,066	-0,064	0,066	1,007	0,314
	Inner life -> Normative commitment	-0,196	-0,202	0,068	2,870	0,004
	Meaning or calling -> Normative commitment	0,174	0,175	0,074	2,357	0,019
	Membership -> Normative commitment	0,256	0,257	0,094	2,708	0,007
	Spiritual leadership -> Inner life	0,209	0,217	0,064	3,276	0,001
	Spiritual leadership -> Meaning or calling	0,468	0,471	0,048	9,760	0,000
Total effects	Spiritual leadership -> Membership	0,770	0,771	0,025	30,343	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Normative commitment	0,247	0,247	0,070	3,542	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Meaning or calling -> Normative commitment	0,081	0,082	0,034	2,368	0,018
	Spiritual leadership -> Membership -> Normative commitment	0,197	0,199	0,074	2,654	0,008
Specific indirect effects	Spiritual leadership -> Inner life -> Normative commitment	-0,041	-0,043	0,020	2,074	0,038

In the direct effect, the results show that spiritual leadership -> normative commitment is not statistically significant,  $\beta = 0,009$  (0.082), *not significant*. The total effects relationship evaluated the direct effect of spiritual leadership on normative commitment without the mediator, workplace spirituality dimensions. The results show that spiritual leadership -> membership is statistically significant,  $\beta = 0,247$  (3.542),  $p < .001$ . The indirect specific effects, spiritual leadership -> meaning or calling -> normative commitment has a statistically significant negative effect,  $\beta = 0,081$  (2.368),  $p < .05$ . Also, spiritual leadership -> membership -> normative commitment,  $\beta = 0,197$  (2.654),  $p < .05$  and spiritual leadership -> inner life -> normative commitment,  $\beta = -0,041$  (2.074),  $p < .05$  has a statistically significant effect on the relationship.

The results show that there is complete mediation, meaning that inner life, membership and meaning or calling are mediators of the relationship between the spiritual leadership and normative commitment. As such, the null hypothesis ( $H4_{0c}$ ) is not supported and the alternative hypothesis ( $H4_{1c}$ ), which states that workplace spirituality does have a mediating effect on the relationship between spiritual leadership and normative commitment, is supported.

#### **5.6.4.4 Mediating effect of work spirituality on the relationship between components of work spirituality and employee commitment**

Figure 14 and Table 28 presents the mediation results based on the direct effect, total effects and specific indirect effects for the mediating effect of components of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and employee commitment. In the direct effect the results show that Spiritual leadership -> meaning or calling was statistically significant,  $\beta = 0.471$  (9,715),  $p < .001$ . There was also statistically significant relationship between spiritual leadership and membership as well as spiritual leadership and inner life. The total effects relationship evaluated the direct effect of spiritual leadership and employee commitment without the mediator, workplace spirituality dimensions. The results show that Spiritual leadership -> commitment is statistically significant,  $\beta = 0,514$  (12,508),  $p < .001$ . When evaluating the indirect specific effects, Spiritual leadership -> Inner life -> Employee Commitment there was not statically significant relationship,  $\beta = -0,023$  (1, 886), (not significant) . Spiritual leadership -> Meaning or calling -> Employee Commitment,  $\beta = 0,084$  (2,903),  $p < .01$  and Spiritual leadership -> Membership -> Employee Commitment,  $\beta = 0,453$  (10,226),  $p < .001$  both had statistically significant positive relationship. As such, the inner life does not have a mediating effect on the spiritual leadership and employee commitment, which means membership as well as meaning or calling had partial mediation effect on the relationship between spiritual leadership and employee commitment.

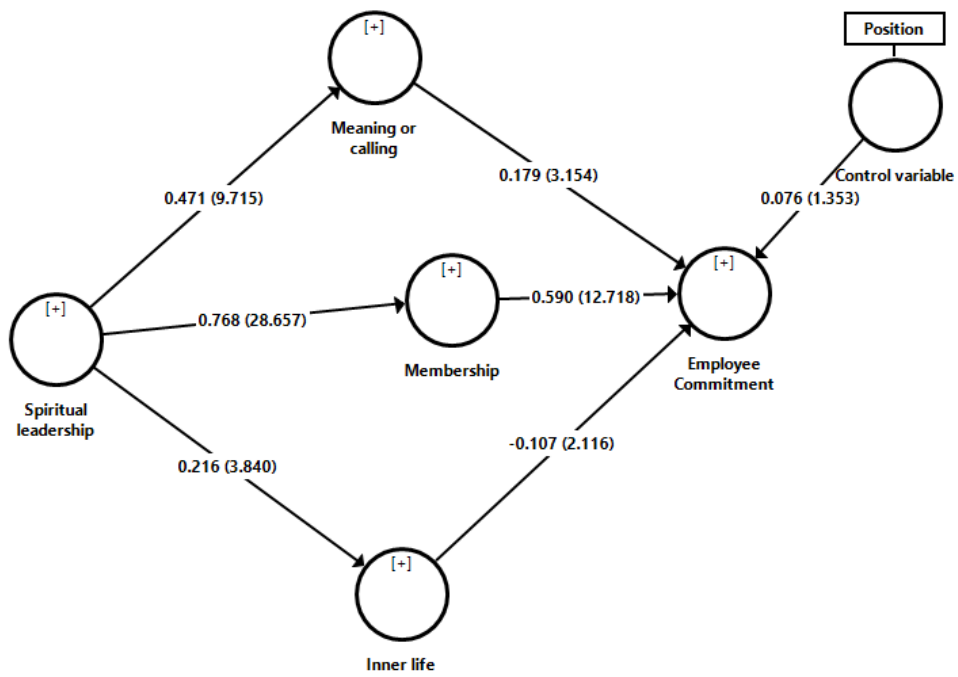


Figure 14. Mediating effect of dimensions of workplace spirituality in the relationship between spiritual leadership and employee commitment

Table 28. Direct effect, total effect and specific effect of workplace spirituality on spiritual leadership and commitment (total)

	Effect	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
Mediation effect	Control variable -> Employee Commitment	0,076	0,077	0,056	1,353	0,176
	Inner life -> Employee Commitment	-0,107	-0,097	0,050	2,116	0,035
	Meaning or calling -> Employee Commitment	0,179	0,175	0,057	3,154	0,002
	Membership -> Employee Commitment	0,590	0,591	0,046	12,718	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Inner life	0,216	0,226	0,056	3,840	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Meaning or calling	0,471	0,474	0,049	9,715	0,000
Direct effect	Spiritual leadership -> Membership	0,768	0,769	0,027	28,657	0,000
	Control variable -> Employee Commitment	0,076	0,077	0,056	1,353	0,176
	Inner life -> Employee Commitment	-0,107	-0,097	0,050	2,116	0,035
	Meaning or calling -> Employee Commitment	0,179	0,175	0,057	3,154	0,002
	Membership -> Employee Commitment	0,590	0,591	0,046	12,718	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Employee Commitment	0,514	0,516	0,041	12,508	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Inner life	0,216	0,226	0,056	3,840	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Meaning or calling	0,471	0,474	0,049	9,715	0,000
Total effect	Spiritual leadership -> Membership	0,768	0,769	0,027	28,657	0,000
	Spiritual leadership -> Inner life -> Employee Commitment	-0,023	-0,022	0,012	1,886	0,060
	Spiritual leadership -> Meaning or calling -> Employee Commitment	0,084	0,083	0,029	2,903	0,004
Specific indirect effects	Spiritual leadership -> Membership -> Employee Commitment	0,453	0,455	0,044	10,226	0,000

#### 5.6.4.5 Mediating effect of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and employee commitment (total effect of constructs)

An assessment was conducted of total workplace spirituality as mediating variable on the relationship between spiritual leadership (total) and commitment (total). Figure 15 and Table 288 presents the mediation results based on the direct effect, total effects and specific indirect effects. In the direct effect the results show that Spiritual Leadership  $\rightarrow$  Workplace spirituality was statistically significant,  $\beta = 0.782$  (33.93),  $p < .001$ . There was also a statically significant positive relationship, Workplace Spirituality  $\rightarrow$  Employee commitment,  $\beta = 0.618$  (14,29),  $p < .001$ . When evaluating the indirect specific effects, Spiritual leadership  $\rightarrow$  Workplace spirituality  $\rightarrow$  Employee commitment was statistically significant positive effect,  $\beta = 0,483$  (11,47),  $p < .001$ . The results show that there was a partial mediation since the direct effect and indirect effect were statistically significant.

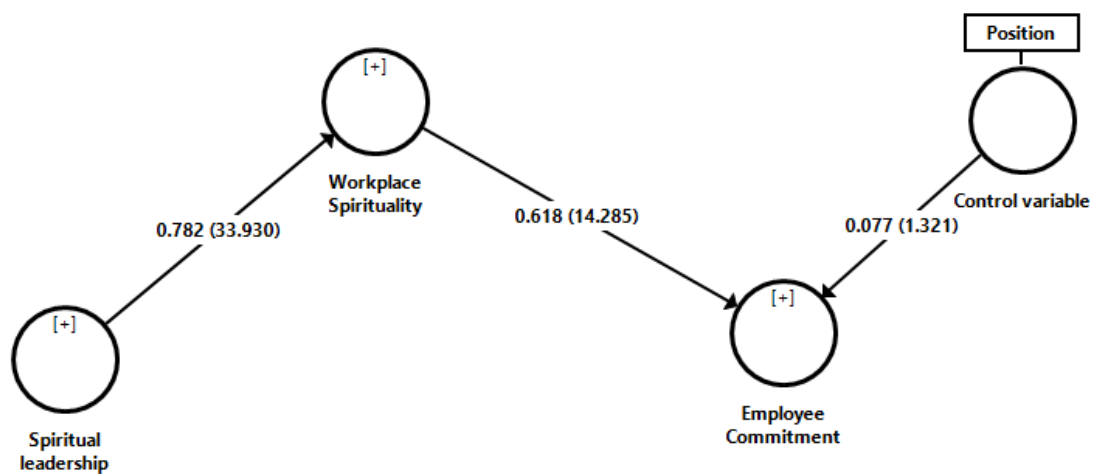


Figure 15. Mediating effect of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and employee commitment

## 5.7 Conclusion

Chapter 5 presented the results for the study. Data preparation and response rate were discussed, followed by the profile of the respondents, descriptive statistics, validity and the reliability of the data. Chapter 5 concluded by providing the hypotheses testing results. Chapter 6 discusses the result of the study in detail.

# **CHAPTER 6**

## **DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

Chapter 6 presents the discussions of the findings from the data analysis. The summary of the results is outlined, linking to the aim of the study, and the statistical analysis and descriptive statistics are discussed, based on the results presented in the previous chapter. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the findings regarding each of the hypotheses. In each section, the key findings will be discussed, compared to the literature review. Chapter 7 will present the conclusions and recommendations for the study.

The study aimed to explore the mediating role of workplace spirituality on the relationship between spiritual leadership and employee commitment. The arguments put forward in this study were that: i) There is a significant effect between spiritual leadership and employee commitment; ii) there is a significant effect between workplace spirituality and employee commitment; iii) there is a significant effect between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality; iv) the positive relationship between spiritual leadership and employee commitment is mediated by workplace spirituality.

### **6.2 Data Collection**

A total of 356 respondents completed the survey, and this number excludes the eight people who completed the survey during the pilot phase. After removing participants who were not living in South Africa or were not employed, 277 responses remained, which were used for data analysis. The response rate was 69.4%, which is considered high for an online survey, as response rates with online surveys could be as low as 10% (Van Mol, 2017). Similar studies had varying sample sizes of 162 (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003), 652 (Fry et al., 2017) and 304 (Daniel, Workplace spirituality and stress: evidence from Mexico and US, 2015). Those studies presented a smaller population compared to the one used in this study, which might limit the generalisability of the current study.

## **6.3 Statistical Analysis**

One of the assumptions made about multiple linear regression analysis used in this study is that the variable distribution must be normal. Observation of extreme outliers were made after having used the extreme outlier analysis, and the interquartile range was removed to ascertain normal distribution. The data was also analysed to confirm missing values of less than 5% (Schafer, 1999), using the missing value analysis. Further confirmation to ensure that data did not present issues with CMB was done, using Herman's single test, which resulted in 35.31% of a principal factoring axis, which is below the expected result of less than 50% (Jordan & Troth, 2020).

To ensure construct validity and reliability for spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and employee commitment in the context of this study, revalidation of CFA was measured. The results confirmed validity for the measurement instrument. Ascribed to the inability of the CFA to account for the character of the construct, such as the varying indicator reliabilities as well as avoiding underestimates that could affect the results, a confirmatory composite analysis (CCA) was performed (Schuberth, Henseler, & Dijkstra, 2018; Hair Jr, Sarstedt, Hopkins, & Kuppelwieser, 2014). The confirmatory composite analysis is able to provide model fit indices, whereas AVE and composite reliability are better measures for construct reliability and validity (Dash & Paul, 2021). To reconcile the two extremes of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, rho A ( $\rho A$ ) was applied to measure the construct reliability (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019). Both cross-loading and the Fornell-Larcker criterion were measured for discriminant validity, which validated the variables in this study. Accordingly, the measures applied for model fit were standardised root mean square residual (SRMR), Normed Fit Index (NFI) \_ULS (the squared Euclidean distance), d\_G (the geodesic distance), and Chi<sup>2</sup> (Dash & Paul, 2021). Therefore, based on statistical analysis of the results presented in the previous chapter, the validity and reliability of the data could be ascertained in the context of this study in application of the pre-existing scales.

## **6.4 Descriptive Statistics**

### **6.4.1 Profile of the respondents**

The respondents' profiles were analysed according to their tenure at the current employer, their position at work, the number of years reporting to the current manager or supervisor, and respondents' gender and race. The results suggested that the population of this study was predominantly female (64.3%) and of these females, 72.2% were African blacks. The data

indicated that the majority (67.1%) of the sample had worked for 10 years or less with their current employer. Less than 10% of the sample recorded a 21 years or more tenure with their current employer. Other inferences made based on the data was that most of the sample were employees (31.8%) and managers or supervisors (26.7%).

#### 6.4.2 Position at work as a control variable

The extensive review of the literature on spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality revealed that the relationship between the leader and the followers tended to be interactional rather than a top-down approach (Krishnakumar, Houghton, Neck, & Ellison, 2015). Furthermore, the application of spiritual leadership in an organisation tends to be based on altruistic love, which is characterised by a shared relationship of meaning, kindness and compassion (Fry et al., 2017). In addition, workplace spirituality was characterised by both the leader and the followers being drawn to their work by their inner life convictions or values, thus finding meaning or a calling in their work (Fry et al., 2017; Duchon & Plowman, 2005). The theory suggested that the work position of an individual (leader / follower) did not have an effect on spiritual leadership or workplace spirituality. Therefore, the results supported the theory that position at work did not have a significant influence on (i) the relationship between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality; (ii) the relationship between workplace spirituality and employees commitment; (iii) the relationship between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality; and (iv) the relationship between spiritual leadership and employees commitment as mediated by workplace spirituality.

### 6.5 Hypothesis Testing

Table 29 gives a summary of the hypothesis findings

*Table 29. Summary of hypotheses findings*

Hypothesis	Outcomes
H1: Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on employee commitment.	Supported
H1a: Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on affective commitment.	Supported
H1b: Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on normative commitment.	Supported
H1c: Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on continuance commitment	Supported
H2: Workplace spirituality has a significant effect on employee commitment.	Partially supported

Hypothesis	Outcomes
H2a: Workplace spirituality has a significant effect on affective commitment.	Partially Supported
H2b: Workplace spirituality has a significant effect on normative commitment.	Partially supported
H2c: Workplace spirituality has a significant effect on continuance commitment.	Partially supported
H3: Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on Workplace spirituality.	Supported
H3a: Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on Inner life.	Supported
H3b: Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on Meaning or calling.	Supported
H3c: Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on Membership.	Supported
H4: Workplace spirituality has a mediating effect on the relationship between spiritual leadership and employee commitment.	Partially supported
H4a: Workplace spirituality does have a mediating effect on the relationship between spiritual leadership and affective commitment.	Partially supported
H4b: Workplace spirituality does have a mediating effect on the relationship between spiritual leadership and continuance commitment.	Supported
H4c: Workplace spirituality does have a mediating effect on the relationship between spiritual leadership and normative commitment.	Supported

### 6.5.1 Relationship between spiritual leadership and employees commitment

The first hypothesis of the study tested the effect of spiritual leadership on employees commitment. The results suggests that spiritual leadership positively affect employee commitment. This study adopted the three-component model of employees commitment, which presented affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment as the three dimensions of employee commitment to be measured (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Vance et al., 2020). Several studies have explored the impact of spiritual leadership on

organisational outcomes (Karakas, 2010; Oh & Wang, 2020; Benefiel, Fry, & Geigle, 2014; Chen & Yang, 2012). In one study, Vandenberghe (2011) proposed that a positive relationship between spiritual leadership employees commitment existed, based on his general model of workplace spirituality and employees commitment. Therefore, the results of the current study support the theory that (i) spiritual leadership has a significant positive effect on affective commitment,  $\beta = 0.721$  (16.62),  $p < .001$ ; (ii) spiritual leadership has a significant positive effect on normative commitment,  $\beta = 0.534$  (11.07),  $p < .001$ ; (iii) spiritual leadership has a significant positive effect on continuance commitment,  $\beta = 0.258$  (3.823),  $p < .001$ . Second, the data suggests that how spiritual leadership affects employee commitment varies between the three dimensions. Therefore, based on the  $R^2$  measures, the data suggests that there is a stronger relationship between spiritual leadership (independent variable) and affective commitment (49.6%), compared to the strength in relationship between spiritual leadership and normative commitment (25.2%). The strength in the relationship between spiritual leadership and continuance commitment is the weakest (6.3%), which implies that the proportion of continuance commitment that is explained by spiritual leadership is only 6.3%.

### **6.5.2 Relationship between workplace spirituality and employee commitment**

The second hypothesis of the study tested the effect of workplace spirituality on employees commitment. This study adopted three dimensions of workplace spirituality, referring to inner life, meaning or calling, and membership as defined by Fry (2005). Previous studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between workplace spirituality and organisational outcomes (Benefiel, Fry, & Geigle, 2014; Daniel, Workplace spirituality and stress: evidence from Mexico and US, 2015; Duchon & Plowman, 2005). In another study, Vandenberghe (2011) proposed that there was a positive relationship between experiencing a calling and membership, and four components of commitment (affective, normative, continuance-sacrifices, and continuance-alternatives).

The results of the current study did not suggest a significant relationship between workplace spirituality and employees commitment. First, the results suggested that seeing a meaning or a calling had a significant positive effect on affective commitment,  $\beta = 0.178$  (3.060),  $p < .001$ ; however, meaning or calling did not have a significant effect on continuance commitment,  $\beta = 0.064$  (0.856) or normative commitment,  $\beta = 0.077$  (1.203). Second, the results suggested that membership had a significant effect on affective commitment,  $\beta = 0.592$  (12.49),  $p < .001$ , as well as a significant effect on both continuance commitment,  $\beta = 0.259$  (3.663),  $p < .001$  and normative commitment  $\beta = 0.381$  (6.26),  $p < .001$ . Third, the results suggested that inner life had a significant positive effect on both continuance commitment  $\beta = -0.171$  (2.809) and

normative commitment,  $\beta = -0.195(3.282)$  however inner life has no significant effect on affective commitment  $\beta = -0.046 (0.981)$ . The data also suggested that the proportion of variance regarding employees commitment that was explained by workplace spirituality was 48% of the affective commitment, predicted by the statistically significant elements of workplace spirituality (meaning or calling and membership). The data also suggested that the proportion of variance of employees commitment was explained by 17.2% of normative commitment predicted by inner life and membership, and 9.6% for continuance commitment predicted by membership and inner life. Therefore, it was concluded that workplace spirituality has a partial effect on employees commitment.

### **6.5.3 Relationship between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality**

The third hypothesis of the study tested the effect of spiritual leadership on workplace spirituality. Previous studies demonstrated the positive relationship between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality (Parameshwar, 2005; Fairholm & Gronau, 2015; Chen & Yang, 2012; Yang & Fry, 2018). The results of the current study supported the previous studies' findings in that spiritual leadership had a significant positive effect on workplace spirituality. The data inferred that (i) spiritual leadership had a significant positive relationship with membership  $\beta = 0.767 (28.09)$ ,  $p < .001$ ; (ii) spiritual leadership had a significant positive relationship with inner life  $\beta = 0.202 (2.902)$ ,  $p < .01$ ; (iii) spiritual leadership had a significant positive relationship with meaning or calling  $\beta = 0.479 (9.77)$ ,  $p < .001$ . The results inferred that spiritual leadership can predict 58.8% of membership, which implied a strong relationship, and 22.3% of the meaning was predicted by spiritual leadership, while only 5.5% of inner life was predicted by spiritual leadership – which implies a weak relationship for this dimension of workplace spirituality.

### **6.5.4 Mediating effect of workplace leadership on the relationship between spiritual leadership and employee commitment**

The fourth hypothesis of this study tested whether the impact of spiritual leadership on employees commitment is not direct, but whether it is through the mediator, workplace spirituality, and what the extent of the mediation was. The results suggests that workplace spirituality partially mediate the relationship between spiritual leadership and employee commitment. Previous studies (Chen & Yang, 2012; Duchon & Plowman, 2005; Yang et al., 2019; Yang & Fry, 2018) have demonstrated mediating role of spiritual leadership and organisational outcomes. The results of the current study inferred that the relationship

between spiritual leadership and employees commitment was partially mediated by workplace spirituality. In addition, the results suggested that (i) the relationship between spiritual leadership and affective commitment was partially mediated by membership; (ii) the relationship between spiritual leadership and continuance commitment was mediated by inner life, meaning or calling and membership; (iii) the relationship between spiritual leadership and normative commitment was mediated by inner life, meaning or calling and membership. Therefore workplace spirituality mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and continuance commitment and normative commitment. The relationship between spiritual leadership and affective commitment is not mediated by workplace spirituality. Based on the outcome of this study a revised conceptual model is presented in figure 16.

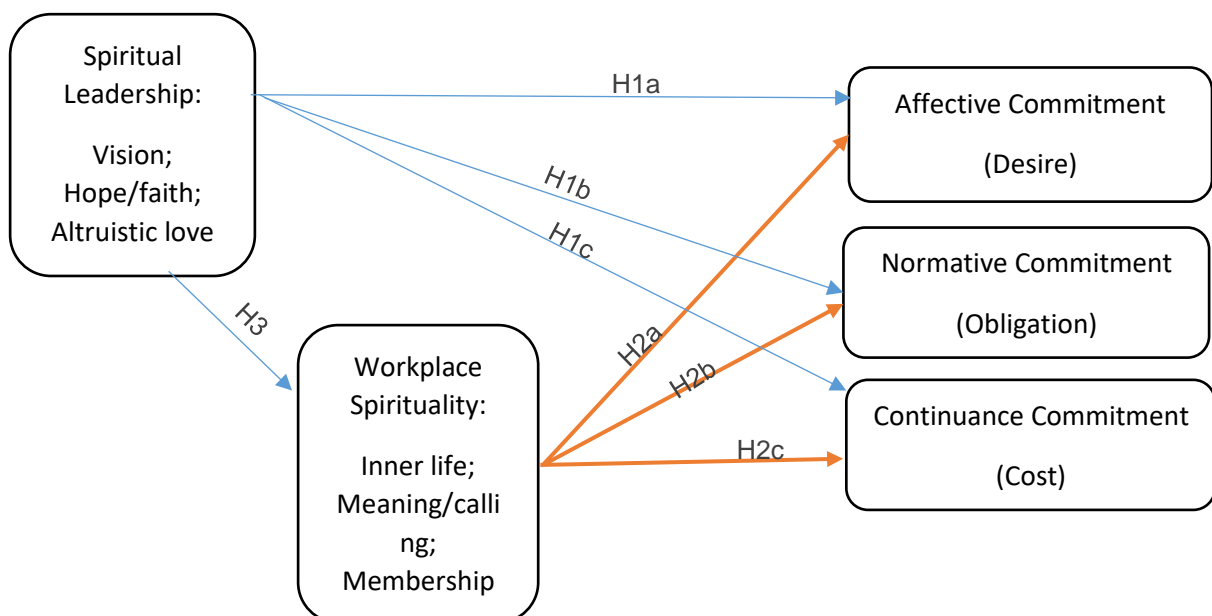


Figure 16. Revised conceptual model

## 6.6 Conclusion

Chapter 6 revisited the aims of the study to guide in the discussion of the results presented in the previous chapter. The discussion of the results were structured around the data collected, the statistical findings, and the descriptive statistics, which provided an insight into the respondents' profile as well as the control variance. The chapter concluded with discussions

of the results based on hypothesis testing and a revised conceptual model was presented. Chapter 7 will draw conclusions and make recommendations for future studies.

# **CHAPTER 7**

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **7.1 Introduction**

Chapter 7 presents the main conclusions for the study, and the theoretical implications and contribution of the study are discussed. The last three sections of the chapter discuss the implications for practice and the limitations of the study. The chapter is concluded with recommendations for future research.

### **7.2 Main Conclusions**

The aim of this study stated in Chapter 1 was to add to the existing knowledge in the field of spirituality at work by exploring the mediating role of workplace spirituality in the relationship between spiritual leadership and employees' commitment. The main conclusions will be based on the argument put forward in Chapter 1.

The first aim of the current study was to determine the effect between spiritual leadership and employees' commitment. The formulated hypothesis was tested and results were presented and discussed. The findings confirmed a significant positive relationship between spiritual leadership and employees' commitment. The findings are consistent with findings from previous studies (Yang et al., 2019; Chen & Yang, 2012; Fry et al., 2017).

The second hypothesis put forward was that there is a significant effect between workplace spirituality and employees' commitment. The formulated hypothesis was tested and the results presented did not suggest a significant relationship between workplace spirituality and employees' commitment, and therefore, the hypothesis was mainly rejected. The partial acceptance of the hypothesis was motivated by the role the dimension of inner life played, and that workplace spirituality had a significant effect on both continuance commitment and normative commitment. The dimension of meaning or calling was found to have a significant effect only on affective commitment, whereas membership was found to have a significant effect on all three dimensions of employees' commitment. Interestingly, in a similar conceptual study done by Vandenberghe (2011), membership and calling were proposed to have a positive effect on the dimensions of employees' commitment and in this study, inner life was not considered as a variable regarding employees' commitment. Affective commitment is based

on employees' desire (emotional perspective) to stay in an organisation (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001); therefore, a link could be made between affective commitment and membership, and meaning or calling. Membership was associated with creating a sense of belonging and meaning or calling, which were associated with the intrinsic motivation to do one's job to the best of one's ability.

The third argument put forward was that there is a significant effect between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality. The formulated hypothesis was tested and the hypothesis was accepted. The result confirmed that there was a significant positive relationship between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality. The results confirmed similar results encountered in previous research studies (Fry et al., 2017; Benefiel, Fry, & Geigle, 2014; Joelle & Coelho, 2019).

The fourth argument put forward was that the positive relationship between spiritual leadership and employees commitment is mediated by workplace spirituality. The formulated hypothesis was tested and accepted. The results showed that workplace spirituality partially mediated the relationship between spiritual leadership and employees commitment. Although the hypothesis was partially supported, it is worth noting that workplace spirituality mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and two dimensions of employee commitment i.e. continuance commitment and normative commitment. Continuance commitment is linked to the cost to stay with a company whereas normative is associated with an obligation to stay with a company (Bouckenoghe, Schwarz, & Minbashian, 2015). Based on the results of this study it is suggested that in an organisation that embrace workplace spirituality, employees are more likely to be obliged to stay even though the cost of staying might be higher.

Finally, the measurement instrument was found to be valid and reliable in the context of this study. In a literature review study done by Oh and Wang (2020), recommendations were made to test (Fry L., 2005; Fry et al., 2017) the measurement instrument also on other continents, for example in Africa.

### **7.3 Theoretical Implications**

The theoretical implications were discussed in relation to the research questions addressed in Chapter 1 and guided the main conclusions drawn from this study. Despite the growing interest among researchers in spirituality in the workplace, very few empirical studies were conducted to understand the relationship between spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality and employees commitment (Oh & Wang, 2020; Vance et al., 2020; Vandenberghe, 2011).

This study confirmed that there was a significant relationship between spiritual leadership and employees' commitment. This study also added a voice to the debate around spiritual leadership and employees commitment. Although several scholars have studied the relationship between spiritual leadership and organisational outcomes (Yang et al., 2019; Chen & Yang, 2012), the study was able to test the hypotheses formulated.

Second, this study added to the body of knowledge by confirming the significant relationship between spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality. Spiritual leadership theory is associated with the interactional relationship between the leader and the followers, where they both express transcendent intrinsic motivation to do meaningful work as a sense of expressing their calling based on their faith / hope underpinned by altruism (Duchon & Plowman, 2005; Fry et al., 2017). This finding contributes to the theoretical dialogue concerning the spiritual leader and promoting an organisational culture that nourishes spirituality at work. It should be remembered that spirituality in this context does not refer to the expression of one's religion, but that it embraces the ethical and moral values of humanity with all its cultures, beliefs and traditions.

Third, the hypothesis formulated to test the relationship between workplace spirituality and employee commitment was rejected. A similar study (Vandenberghe, 2011) proposed that there is a positive relationship between workplace spirituality and employees commitment. However, in the context of the current study, this relationship could not be confirmed. Perhaps the contribution of this study to the theoretical debate with regard to the findings is how the dimensions of workplace spirituality relate to decisions made that lead to employees commitment.

Finally, the study inferred that workplace spirituality partially mediated the relationship between spiritual leadership and employee commitment. This finding adds to the theoretical debate concerning the mediating role of workplace spirituality between spiritual leadership and organisational outcomes, and in the context of this study, employees commitment. This finding further affirmed the importance of spirituality in the workplace as posited by Fry et al. (2017) that "satisfying spiritual needs in the workplace positively influences human health and psychological well-being and forms the foundation for workplace spirituality and spiritual leadership" (p. 24).

## **7.5 Implication for Practice**

Spiritual leadership offers a new approach to leadership that results in employees commitment more so in organisations where workplace spirituality is embraced and nurtured. The findings

of this study should stimulate further interest among researchers in the field of spiritual leadership in relation to employees commitment and other mediating variables not addressed fully as yet. Past studies have confirmed that efforts to separate people at work from their spirituality are futile (Adawiyah & Pramuka, 2017), as people do not leave their spirituality at home when they go to work (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). Therefore, spirituality at the workplace offers organisations the opportunity to address leadership challenges and organisational cultures, which could not be addressed by other forms or styles of leadership.

Fears and hesitancy regarding religious conflicts, unaddressed cultural norms and low levels of spiritual expression Vu & Gill (2019) could be addressed by embracing workplace spirituality as part of the organisational values and putting in place development programmes that advocated for spirituality at work. This study offers validation for leader to embrace spirituality in organisations

## **7.6 Limitations**

There are a few limitations in this study. Due to the time horizon for this study, a cross-sectional data collection provided a narrowed view of the relationship of spiritual leadership and employees commitment as mediated by workplace spirituality.

The sample size used to analyse the data was statistically acceptable, but it was small compared to similar studies where the population was smaller and thus the proportionate sample was more representative. This might affect the generalisability of the finding to the entire population. The probability sampling method limited the reach for respondent who were not on LinkedIn, Facebook or WhatsApp.

The measurement instrument was found to be valid and reliable in the context of this study. However, because of the lack of consensus in defining workplace spirituality, researchers and participants might be left to their own interpretation, leaving them to confuse religion and spirituality.

## **7.6 Recommendations for Future Research**

The cross-sectional data provided a narrowed view of the relationship of spiritual leadership and employees commitment as mediated by workplace spirituality. Future studies can overcome this shortcoming by conducting longitudinal studies.

Hypothesis 2, which related to the direct relationship between workplace spirituality and employees commitment, was mainly rejected. This could possibly be ascribed to a number of reasons, including the lack of consensus in defining workplace spirituality, which could leave researchers with dilemmas of how to measure the constructs. Future research could relook how workplace spirituality should be defined for clearer interpretation by participants.

The data was collected for a large population, which limited the study to make comparisons between industries and organisations with regard to the findings in the context of South Africa. Future research could explore the application of workplace spirituality in specific industries and organisations.

The study examined the role of one mediating variable of workplace spirituality between spiritual leadership and employee commitment. The study did not consider other possible mediating and moderating variables, which poses an opportunity for future studies to explore other mediating and moderating variables between spiritual leadership and employee commitment.

Lastly, a non-probability sampling approach was employed in this study, which was a limitation in that it did not represent the entire study population. An opportunity for future studies would be to consider randomised sample selection methods in similar studies.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1 - Questionnaire

# Mediating role of workplace spirituality between spiritual leadership and employee commitment

My name is Macdeline Yvonne Rametse, an MPhil Corporate Strategy final year student at Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria, South Africa. I am conducting research as part of my studies on Mediating role of workplace spirituality between spiritual leadership and employee commitment. To that end, you are invited to complete an online survey relating to my topic. The survey consist of four main sections and should take no more than 15 minutes to complete.

Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without penalty. Your participation is anonymous and only aggregated data will be reported. By completing the survey, you indicate that you voluntarily participate in this research. If you have any concerns, please contact my supervisor or me. Our details are provided below.

Researcher name: Macdeline Yvonne Rametse

Email: [20820179@mygibs.co.za](mailto:20820179@mygibs.co.za)

Phone: 011 2199101

Research supervisor name: Professor Anastacia Mamabolo

Email: [mamaboloa@gibs.co.za](mailto:mamaboloa@gibs.co.za)

Phone: 011 7714346

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\*Required

1. Do you live in South Africa? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

2. Are you employed currently? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No *Skip to question 18*

## Section 1

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1aCA269jg2MFLSCMPc7tIDY9iHD76DpM4K2iyF0lv8NQ/edit>

1

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29/21, 3:04 PM

Mediating role of workplace spirituality between spiritual leadership and employee commitment

3. How long have you been working for your current employer? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

0-1 year

- 3-6 years
- 6-10 years
- 10-15 years
- 15-20 years
- 21 years and more

4. What is my position in this organisation? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Employee
- Manager or Supervisor
- Middle management
- Senior management
- Executive

5. I have employees reporting to me. \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes
- No

6. How long have you reported to your current supervisor / line manager? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- 0-1 years
- 1-3 years
- 3-6 years
- 6-10 years
- 10-15 years
- 15-20 years
- 20 years and more
- I do not report to anyone

7. What is your gender? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Male
  - Female
  - Prefer not to say
- 

8. What is your race? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Black
- White
- Indian
- Coloured

9. \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I understand and am committed to my organization's vision.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My organization has a vision statement that brings out the best in me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My organization's vision inspires my best performance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My organization's vision is clear and compelling to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have faith in my organization and I am willing to "do whatever it takes" to ensure that it accomplishes its mission.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I demonstrate my faith in my organization and its mission by doing everything I can to help us succeed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I persevere and exert extra effort to help my organization succeed because I have faith in what it stands for.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I set challenging goals for my work because I have faith in my organization and want us to succeed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The leaders in my organization "walk the walk" as well as "talk the talk".	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The leaders in my organization are honest and without false pride.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My organization is trustworthy and loyal to its employees.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The leaders in my organization have the courage to stand up for their people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My organization is kind and considerate toward its workers, and when they are suffering, want to do something about it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The work I do makes a difference in people's lives.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The work I do is meaningful to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The work I do is very important to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My job activities are personally meaningful to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I feel my organisation appreciates me, and my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel my organization demonstrates respect for me, and my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel I am valued as a person in my job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel highly regarded by my leaders.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I seek guidance on how to live a good life from people I respect, great teachers/writings, and/or a Higher Power, Being or God.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I maintain an attitude of gratitude even when faced with difficulties.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I maintain an inner life or reflective practice (e.g. spending time in nature, prayer, meditation, reading inspirational literature, yoga, observing religious traditions, and writing in a journal).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have compassion for the hopes and fears of all people, regardless of how they view the world based on their culture and past experiences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I feel "emotionally attached" to my current employer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my current employer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel like a "part of the family" with my current employer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with my current employer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I really feel as if my current employer's problems are my own.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My current employer has a great deal of personal meaning to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

16. \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided to stop working for my current employer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe I have too few options to consider no longer working for my current employer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A scarcity of available alternatives would be a negative consequence of no longer working for my current employer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Right now, it would be very hard for me to stop working for my current employer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I might consider working elsewhere if I had not already put so much of myself into my	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

relationship  
with my  
current  
employer.

---

Right now, it  
is a matter of  
necessity  
that I  
continue  
working for  
my current  
employer.

---

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I feel an obligation to work for my current employer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would feel guilty if I stopped working for my current employer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I owe a great deal to my current employer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to stop working for my current employer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My current employer deserves my loyalty.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a sense of obligation to my current employer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Appendix 2 – Ethical Clearance

**Gordon Institute  
of Business Science**  
University of Pretoria

**Ethical Clearance  
Approved**

Dear Macdeline Yvonne Rametse,

Please be advised that your application for Ethical Clearance has been approved.

You are therefore allowed to continue collecting your data.

We wish you everything of the best for the rest of the project.

[Ethical Clearance Form](#)

Kind Regards

This email has been sent from an unmonitored email account. If you have any comments or concerns, please contact the GIBS Research Admin team.