

## **Spiritual Leadership in Organizational Context: A Research Gap in South Asia**

**Umm-e-Farwa Mubasher**

*University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.*

**Yaamina Salman**

*University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.*

**Sidra Irfan**

*University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.*

**Nasira Jabeen**

*University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.*

### **Abstract**

There is an emerging research area related to vision, hope, faith and intrinsic motivation as “spiritual leadership”. Researchers are presently in quest of publication channels as knockers argue whether this novel leadership theory is ominously discrete, practical, and valued for organizational triumph. The purpose of this research was to find research studies that discovered “spiritual leadership” theory to evaluate and produce the instruments, dimensions, consequences, and effects of “spiritual leadership”. Therefore, we pursued to offer an evidence well-versed solution that by what means “spiritual leadership” work, and in what way can we put on it? We led a “SLR” (Systematic Literature Review), an approach embraced from the medicinal disciplines to synthesize research in an organized, clear, and reproducible way. A well-organized screening procedure stemmed in an ultimate sample population of 62 fitting research studies. The synthesis of these empirical research studies shown: (a) there is no agreement on the definition of “spiritual leadership” (b) The investigation discloses that there are merely three frequently cited (73%) dimensions which have been verified empirically by means of both Quantitative and Qualitative Methods. These are Altruistic Love, Hope and Faith proposed by Fry et al 2003; 2005; 2008 (Table 3). Rest of the 27% dimensions have been least tested empirically and cited. (c) Empirical authentication of “spiritual leadership” models other than Fry 2003; 2005; 2008 which are contributing 27% of empirical and 75% of the conceptual/review studies needs to be done in establishments like schools, cities, police, military units, and for profit officialdoms with numerous sample dimensions for authentication of these models (d) “Spiritual Leadership” theory is being examined crossways in a diversity of settings and cultures but there is a significant research gap in this area of research (where the Spiritual Leadership is being studied in organizational contexts) in South Asian countries including Pakistan India, and Sri Lanka etc. (e) “spiritual leadership” is a practical leadership theory that aids organizations and mends the well-being of groups. This scholarship backs to the advancement of “spiritual leadership” notion and practice. Also, this scholarship contributes to the practice for piloting Systematic Literature Reviews in the arena of management, stressing an operative process for plotting out thematically, and inspecting holistically, novel research themes.

**Key Words:** Leadership, “Spiritual Leadership”, Leadership Theory, Systematic Literature Review.

### **Introduction**

Leadership” is one of the most systematically investigated collective influence courses in the social sciences. This is for the reason that the success of all

monetary, administrative, and administrative structures is contingent on the operational and well-organized leadership of the leaders of these structures (Barrow 1977). A perilous aspect to considerate the success of an organization, at that point, is to study the situation leaders. "Leadership is a skill used to influence followers in an organization to work enthusiastically towards goals specifically identified for the common good" (Barrow 1977; Cyert 2006; Plsek and Wilson 2001). According to Banutu-Gomez and Banutu-Gomez 2007 "great leaders create a vision for an organization, articulate the vision to the followers, build a shared vision, craft a path to achieve the vision, and guide their organizations into new directions" (Banutu-Gomez and Banutu-Gomez 2007).

How "do people treat spirituality in the workplace? People always heard about spirituality but reluctant to associate it with the workplace, due to assumptions that workplaces or other social institutions are secular (Hicks, 2002). Some researchers and scholars have argued that future organizational life and social change in our society consists of critical elements such as spirituality, the desire for meaningful work, and employee job satisfaction (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003; Karakas, 2009; Marques, Dhiman & King, 2005) . Studies "on the link between spirituality and organizational leadership; and the impact of spirituality to employee outcomes such as absenteeism, productivity, turnover, ethicality, stress, and health are growing and have become a central issue in current trend of spirituality studies (Fairholm, 1998; Fry, 2003; Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). Justin (2008) states that there has been a rising doubts regarding the impact of spirituality on leadership practices in the past decade, even though there were evident that the effectiveness of the leaders has been associated with their spiritual values and practices (Reave, 2005). Astin and Astin (2000) stressed the importance of spirituality to be emphasized in leadership by suggesting that future leaders should not only be equipped with new knowledge and skills, but would also be able to demonstrate a high level of emotional and spiritual wisdom and" maturity.

Fairholm (2011) labeled leadership progress in relationships of generations;

**1st generation:** Focused on who the leader is (e.g., great man theory, charismatic leadership and other discussions of traits). Prior to the 1970s, the predominant emphasis was the leader as an individual and his/her point of view; **2nd generation:** What leaders do (behavioral theories); **3rd generation:** Where leadership happens (e.g., contingency theory; situational theory); **4th generation:** What leaders think about, value, and do (transactional, transformational, principle-centered, servant, moral leadership, etc.); **5th generation:** spiritual leadership. From the 1970s and 1980s forward, there was increased recognition and attention paid to leadership as an influencing process. Another aspect of the 1970s was an increased focus on morals and values in relation to leadership. The 1990s and 2000s continued to see many proposed leadership approaches and definitions using such terms as: strategic, visionary, connective, authentic, spiritual, responsible, adaptive, and principle centered" (Fairholm, 2011).

Each of the generation is on the go and justly self-governing from one another with each one still attaining scholarly consideration and emphasis. Leadership

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theories do not seem like to go missing on the other hand remains evolving.

A new paradigm (Current Trend) in organizations: Spirituality Movement  
There were many best-selling books on leadership and management had “spirit” or an analogous term in the label; the theme of place of work spirituality is commencing to be seen in organizational behavior texts (Robbins, 2003a, b) representing that it is currently being taught in a conventional way equally in graduate and undergraduate business programs; and numerous symposiums on this theme are nowadays programmed round the world (Biberman & Altman, 2004). “The concept of spirituality and religion in the workplace has gained enough strength and interest that the Academy of Management has created a new special interest group for its membership. This group, Management, Spirituality, and Religion, has grown to more than 500 members since its inception (Robbins, 2003a) and is helping to legitimize within academia the study of spirituality in the workplace while simultaneously paving the way for introducing this emerging concept into the leadership research agenda” (Academy of Management, 2004)”. Current status of the membership is as follow;

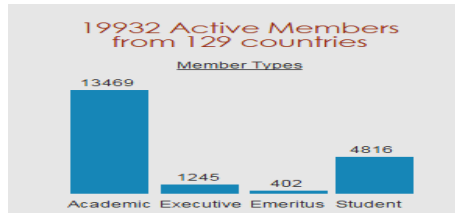


Fig 2 Past Ten Year Membership Ratio of Management, Spirituality, and Religion (Academy of management, 2016)



Fig 2 Past Ten Year Membership Ratio of Management, Spirituality, and Religion (Academy of management, 2016)

In Pakistan, there are 35 Members from 29 Institutions (Academic: 24, Executive: 2, Student: 9) (Academy of management, 2016). The lines of research propose the spiritual field as an essential constituent of leadership and place into view spirituality as unique variable of an assimilated “leadership development model” (Cook-Greuter, 2002; Sanders, Hopkins & Geroy, 2003; Thompson, 2000; Wilber, 2000a). The foundation of this cohesive model is that as advancement happens there is a surpassing of worldviews and a change to advanced stages of inner locus of control (Sanders et al., 2003), then hominid development is attained with the interaction of discrete, communal, and environment. At the advanced phases of development, leaders are excavating their perception and internal meaning over a collective perception with a supreme power or divine (Cook-Greuter, 2002; Wilber, 2000a).

## **Approaches to “Spiritual Leadership”**

Association among spirituality and leadership can be assumed via two approaches. According to Peters & Waterman 1982 “the first approach to relating spirituality and leadership requires an acceptance that these two concepts are distinct. Spirituality is asserted to increase leadership effectiveness (Peters & Waterman, 1982)”. The Second approach to assess the relation among spirituality and leadership is the creation of spiritual leadership. The scope of this research follows the second approach. According to which “spiritual leadership is not simply a type of leadership. The very mind of the leader has shifted, and this shifted mind affects the leader and others” (Fairholm, 1998). According to Fry 2003 “spiritual leadership comprises the values, attitudes, and behaviors that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one’s self and others so they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership” (Fry, 2003).

“Spiritual Leadership” Theory and Major Conversant

Fry (2003, 2004), and Fairholm (1996, 1998, 2002, 2005) have contributed the furthestmost work till now on framing models of “spiritual leadership”. These forerunners are contributing substantial work in outlining and abstracting “spiritual leadership”. Their fortes anchor in the capacity of the leadership side of “spiritual leadership”.

Fairholm (1996, 1998) “was one of the first scholars to put the terms spiritual and leadership together to explain spirituality in context of workplace leadership, and since then others have attempted to validate his model in order to move the field toward a theory of spiritual leadership” (e.g., Fairholm, 2002; Fry, 2003). Other researchers have put forward “spiritual leadership models that relate to constructs such as emotional intelligence, ethics, values, and to leadership models such as charismatic, stewardship, transformational, and servant” (Biberman, Whitty, & Robbins, 1999; Cacioppe, 2000a; Tischler, Biberman, & McKeage, 2002). “To date, these constructs have been confounded and need conceptual distinction” (Fry, 2003). Fairholm (1996), builds on his peculiar casual research, exhibited afterwards of Jacobson’s (1995), in order to get the conception of spirituality. “Using a sample of nineteen graduate students, Fairholm understands spirituality in terms of definitional characteristics given by his respondents. While there is nothing inherently wrong with the definitional characteristics he lists (e.g., ban inner conviction of a higher, more intelligent force, the essence of self that separates humans from creatures, the source of personal meaning, values, life purposes” (Fairholm, 1996, p. 29).

Fry (2003) defines “spiritual leadership as the values, attitudes, and behaviors necessary to intrinsically motivate one’s self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership. Spiritual leadership is a causal leadership theory for organizational transformation. The theory of spiritual leadership is developed within an intrinsic motivation model that incorporates vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love, theories of workplace spirituality, and

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spiritual survival. The purpose of spiritual leadership is to tap into the fundamental needs of both leader and follower for spiritual survival through calling and membership, to create vision and value congruence across the individual, empowered team, and organization levels and, ultimately, to foster higher levels of organizational commitment and productivity” (Fry, 2003).

### **Research Questions**

The research questions steered this Systematic Literature Review are; (1) we pursued to offer an evidence-informed solution to how “spiritual leadership” defined in empirical (Qualitative and Quantitative) and Conceptual/Literature Review studies in organizational contexts? OR What values/dimensions do the leaders exhibit so that they are called Spiritual Leaders in organizations? (2) What are the gaps in the empirical studies, regarding theory/framework/model testing, which have been proposed in the conceptual/review papers? (3) In what settings/context was “spiritual leadership” theory empirically investigated?

### **Methodology**

Strack et al. (2002) deal with the research schema connecting spirituality and leadership is a theoretical swamp since both concepts can be well-defined in countless means. Our pragmatic appraisal of studies establishes this to be stand correct. Thus, the authors of current study led a Systematic Literature Review of “spiritual leadership” theory in Organizational Context.

The Systematic Literature Review is frequently compared with customary literature reviews as systematic reviews are impartial, replicable, logical, all-inclusive, and the procedure is stated in the similar way as per for reportage of empirical study (Weed 2005). The derivation of Systematic Literature Reviews is in the medicinal, policy fields, and health care, whereas they have been second handed to collect the finest substantiation to mark medical and policy choices (Cook et al. 1997; Tranfield et al. 2003). Systematic Literature Reviews in management offer pellucidity, lucidity, ease of understanding, and neutral wide-ranging attention on a specific capacity (Thorpe et al. 2006). Klassen et al (1998) define Systematic Literature Review as “a review in which there is a comprehensive search for relevant studies on a specific topic, and those identified are then appraised and synthesized according to a pre-determined explicit method” (p. 700). This SLR explicitly discovered research scholarships that guarantee examined “spiritual leadership” theory in a specified organizational context.

Meanwhile our emphasis was achievement of understanding how “spiritual leadership” actually perceived (dimensions, through which it is operationalized). The method of present appraisal involved widespread exploration of pertinent database with the intent of guaranteeing, as much as probable, that altogether literature on “spiritual leadership” was acknowledged whereas upholding the emphasis on literature of utmost relevance to the research questions (i.e., research

studies that have investigated spiritual leadership theory in organizational settings)". Afterwards, we deliberate our exploration approaches, inclusion and exclusion criteria, sample, and data analysis.

## **Search Methods**

Published research studies were acknowledged via exploration of "ISI Web of Knowledge-online subscription-based scientific citation indexing service maintained by Thomson Reuters". The whole outcomes were narrowed to English language and peer-reviewed journal articles. The explorations for published research studies be located in a logical way, ensuing the order of the ISI Web of Knowledge.

## **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

The preliminary exploration requisite that articles incorporated in the review were studies that must:

- a. be published in a peer reviewed journal
- b. be in the English language; and
- c. use the keyword spiritual leadership. No restriction was placed on year of publication. The number of articles containing the keyword spiritual leadership retrieved from ISI Web of Knowledge was recorded".

As soon as all likely research studies had been acknowledged, we led a next repeat to evaluate suitability compared to inclusion criteria and at that moment complete version of articles were saved for those that encountered the inclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria for the next selection prerequisite that the published peer-reviewed article encounter all of the subsequent three stipulations:

- a. be in the English language
- b. be a research study (i.e., not an essay, book review, letter, editorial, opinion, journalistic or antidotal article); and
- c. discuss spiritual leadership as the main topical theme in an organizational context".

In the second selection step, articles were omitted if one of these three constituents was not be present in the abstract, results, or discussion sections of the respective study i.e. those articles were excluded which were not studying the spiritual leadership within an organizational context (i.e. heroic and societal level).

## **Sample**

Peer-reviewed publications through ISI Web of Knowledge were acknowledged by means of the basic term "spiritual leadership" that has been specified in the inclusion and exclusion criteria segment overhead. An aggregate of 78 articles where saved; though, 68 articles summit the preliminary inclusion criteria. But when the full text articles were screened out, further six of the articles was

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disqualified since they did not satiate the selection criteria (do not discussing the “spiritual leadership” in organizational context). Ultimately, the sample of 62 studies was selected. These include peer-reviewed articles that fulfill the drawn criteria and were published between 1996 (ISI Time Span index starting point) and 2016.

**Analysis and Findings**

The 62 published articles were drained surfing from a miscellany of peer-reviewed online journals on ISI Web of Knowledge. Table 1 and Table 2 shows the list of journals encompassed in the research study and the total of articles encompassed from every journal. We grouped the research studies by their research methodology, i.e. Empirical (Quantitative/ Qualitative) and Conceptual/Review. There are 40 Empirical and 22 Conceptual/Review studies, 62 in total.

Table 1 and 2 shows that there is a concentration of sample articles in the “Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion f Management, Spirituality & Religion” established after emergence of interest group of Academy of Management; Leadership Quarterly and Leadership & Organization Development Journal, specified for leadership research streams; Journal of Business Ethics, indicating a strong infusion of Ethics branch of research and “spiritual leadership”.

**Table 1**  
**Journals included in systematic literature review (Empirical Studies, n=40)**

| <b>Journal</b>                                                     | <b>Count</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Journal of Environmental Psychology                                | 1            |
| Leadership Quarterly                                               | 5            |
| Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences                            | 1            |
| International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research | 1            |
| Journal of Educational Administration                              | 1            |
| The International Journal of Organizational Analysis               | 1            |
| Leadership & Organization Development Journal                      | 1            |
| Journal of Business Ethics                                         | 3            |
| Quality & Quantity                                                 | 1            |
| Journal of College and Character                                   | 1            |
| Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion                     | 6            |
| Journal of Applied Social Psychology                               | 1            |
| International Journal of Business and Management                   | 2            |
| Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice                            | 1            |
| Interdisciplinary Journal Of Contemporary Research In Business     | 1            |
| International Journal of Business and Information                  | 1            |
| Indian Journal of Fundamental and Applied Life Sciences            | 1            |
| Journal of Basic and Applied Scientific Research                   | 1            |
| World of Sciences Journal                                          | 1            |
| Indian Journal of Scientific Research                              | 1            |
| Human Resource Management                                          | 1            |
| International Journal of Business and Management                   | 1            |
| Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice                            | 1            |
| European Journal of Business and Management                        | 1            |
| Scientific International                                           | 1            |
| Management and Administrative Sciences Review                      | 1            |
| Journal of Basic and Applied Scientific Research                   | 1            |
| <b>Journal Of Social Science And Humanities</b>                    | <b>1</b>     |

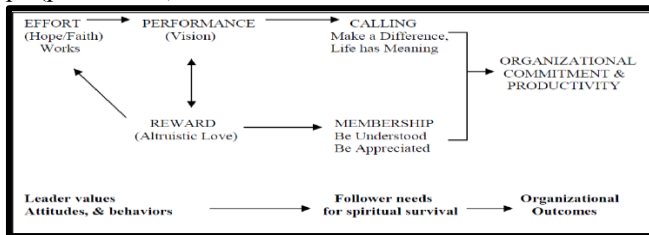
**Table 2**  
**Journals included in systematic literature review (Conceptual/Review studies, n=22)**

| Journal                                                  | Count |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Leadership Quarterly                                     | 4     |
| Organizational Dynamics                                  | 2     |
| Human Resource Management International Digest           | 1     |
| Journal of Managerial Psychology                         | 1     |
| Leadership & Organization Development Journal            | 3     |
| Foresight                                                | 1     |
| Journal of Business Ethics                               | 2     |
| Journal of College and Character                         | 1     |
| Intl Journal of Public Administration                    | 1     |
| Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion           | 3     |
| International Journal of Humanities and Social Science   | 1     |
| International Review of Management and Business Research | 1     |
| International Journal of Business and Information        | 1     |

*Q1. We search for an evidence-informed answer to how “spiritual leadership” defined in empirical (Qualitative and Quantitative) and Conceptual/Literature Review studies in organizational contexts? (What characteristics/values/dimensions do the leaders exhibit so that they are called Spiritual Leaders in organizations?)*

Collected data of studies has been analyzed for answering the 1<sup>st</sup> question of the study. The analysis reveals that there are only three most cited (73%) dimensions which have been tested empirically by using both Quantitative and Qualitative Methods. These are Altruistic Love, Hope and Faith proposed by Fry et al 2003; 2005; 2008 (Table 3). Rest of the 27% dimensions has been least tested empirically and cited.

Table 3 shows that the work of Fry et al 2003; 2005; 2008 has been most cited and adapted. Referring back to the “spiritual leadership” Theory and Major Conversant section of introduction; Fry (2003) defines “spiritual leadership as the values, attitudes, and behaviors necessary to intrinsically motivate one’s self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership” (p. 694–695).



**Figure 1. Causal model of “Spiritual Leadership” (Fry, 2003)**

The three dimensions framework of “spiritual leadership” presented by Fry 2003 has been elaborated in Table 4.



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**Table 4**  
**Qualities of “spiritual leadership” by Fry, 2003**

| Vision                              | Altruistic love                  | Hope/faith                    |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Broad appeal to key stakeholders    | Trust/loyalty                    | Endurance                     |
| Defines the destination and journey | Forgiveness/acceptance/gratitude | Perseverance                  |
| Reflects high ideals                | Integrity                        | Do what it takes              |
| Encourages hope/faith               | Honesty                          | Stretch goals                 |
| Establishes standard of excellence  | Courage                          | Expectation of reward/victory |
|                                     | Humility                         | Excellence                    |
|                                     | Kindness                         |                               |
|                                     | Compassion                       |                               |
|                                     | Patience/meekness/endurance      |                               |

As observed in Figure 1;

“Vision: It is about an appealing future of organization and its role is to encourage. It represents future not present. The leader has to create and inspect it and the leader is an intermediate between present and the future. Shortly, vision composes of showing high expectations, creating standards of perfection and being charming to stakeholders.

Altruistic Love: It is all about accepting and loving everyone the way they are. In this dimension people have the sorrow instead of others. Their basic components can be trust, being forgiving, grateful, honest, brave, modest, and merciful.

Hope/Faith: It helps the followers to be positive about future, put efforts as they have desire and positive expectations, The key features of it are perseverance, trying to do the best, putting achievable goals, perfection and building expectations about reward and victory.

Spiritual well-being; the manifestation of spiritual leadership is spiritual well-being that consists of calling and membership. Calling refers to an experience of how a person can make a difference by serving others. It leads to a purpose and meaning in life” (Fry et al., 2011).

People not only look for competence in their work, but also a feeling about social value or meaning of the work (Pfeffer, 2003). Membership includes the social and cultural structures that we are immersed in. Membership is a feeling of being understood derives from relationships and communications through social interaction with others (Fry et al., 2011).

**Table 5**  
**Common Values/Dimensions/Characteristics of “Spiritual Leadership” and Citations (Conceptual/Review studies, n=22)**

| Common Values/Dimensions/Characteristics of “spiritual leadership”                                                                                                                  | Citation                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| “vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love, theories of workplace spirituality, and spiritual well-being; where the spiritual wellbeing variables are meaning/calling and membership” | Fry, 2003; Fry, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry et al, 2010 |
| integrity, honesty, and humility                                                                                                                                                    | Reave, 2005                                                |
| “Connection, inner peace, strength, harmony, love, meaning, wisdom, joy and right action”                                                                                           | Altman, 2010                                               |
| Share Valuses, Sharing Cimmon Meaning, Vision Setting, Enabling, Influence and Power, Intuition, Service, Transformation (Fairholm, 1996)                                           | Korac-Kakabadse & Kakabadse,2002                           |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Compassion and caring, Courage, Generosity, Holistic perspectives and a sense of interconnectedness, Hope, Honesty, Humility, Inclusivity, Integrity and sense of purpose, Intuition, Unity, Openness and transparency, Forgiveness, Gratitude, Patience, Questioning, Service, Stillness and peace, Thankfulness, Trustworthiness, trusting others and the universe, Reflection, mindfulness and self-awareness and self-knowledge<br>Meaning making, meaning seeking or a sense making, Vision | Crossman, (2010)            |
| Integrity/honesty, Freedom/independence, Fairness/equality/justice, Family, Love/caring/charity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Fairholm, (1996,2005)       |
| “energy”, “feel”, Inspiration                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Geh , (2014)                |
| common and social good, stewardship, sustainability, servanthood, calling, meaning, and connectedness                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Crossman, 2011              |
| Live a reflective life, Practice balance, Embody compassion, Hold relationships as sacred responsibility, Maintain connectedness, Sustain, openness, Steward, Radiate hopefulness, Live simply, Give thanks                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Jablonski, 2005             |
| Articulating a higher cause or purpose, being authentic, and being in service to developing and empowering employees                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Ferguson and Milliman, 2008 |
| follower’s feelings of interconnectedness, religious or existential faith, and leader charisma along with such boundary conditions and contingencies (moderators) as narcissism, pro-social motivation to lead, follower perceptions of leader integrity (ethics), and perceived organizational support .                                                                                                                                                                                        | Krishnakumar, 2014          |

Table 5 shows that Fry’s contribution towards the “spiritual leadership” theory is 25% of the conceptual papers. 60% of the conceptual papers are proposing other frameworks/models for the operationalization of the construct-”spiritual leadership” in organizational context. 15% of the conceptual papers are only reviewing the existing streams of literature related to “spiritual leadership”. There seems to be no consensus on the definition of “spiritual leadership” in the literature.

*Q2 What are the gaps in the empirical studies, regarding theory/framework/model testing, which have been proposed in the conceptual/review papers?*

The Fry’s SL causal model which is contributing the 73% of empirical and 25% of the conceptual/review studies has been established valid to the for profit establishments. Fry and Slocum (2008) have used the a sample of 347 employees working in 43 wholesale firms and 388 employees at home-based place of work, Fry and Slocum (2008) establish that “the SLT explained 13% of the distributor sale growth, 94% of an employee's commitment to the company, and 73% of the distributorship productivity”. Currently, “spiritual leadership” model developed, verified, and confirmed in a diversity of backgrounds can be credited to Fry (2003, 2005, 2009) only. Empirical validation studies for “spiritual leadership” models other than Fry 2003; 2005; 2008 which are contributing 27% of empirical and 75% of the conceptual/review studies needs to be conducted in establishments containing colleges, army units, municipalities, police department, and profit organizations with many sample amounts for authentication of these models.

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| Context/Country | Count |
|-----------------|-------|
| Thailand        | 1     |
| USA             | 6     |
| China           | 5     |
| Turkey          | 6     |
| Iran            | 4     |
| Africa          | 1     |
| Sri Lanka       | 1     |
| Taiwan          | 2     |
| India           | 1     |
| Korea           | 2     |
| Japan           | 1     |
| Australia       | 1     |
| Indonesia       | 3     |
| Tehran          | 2     |
| Pakistan        | 2     |
| Malaysia        | 2     |

Table 9 shows that “spiritual leadership” theory is being inspected through a diversity of backgrounds and cultures. USA, China, Turkey and Iran are the countries having larger frequency of empirical research studies conducted on “spiritual leadership”. Results are also indicating for a dearth of empirical research needed in other contexts including South Asian countries, specifically in Pakistan, India, and Sri Lanka etc. for generalizability of the “Spiritual Leadership” Theory.

### **Limitations**

Though this SLR was led in a well-organized modus, latent limits need to be known. We narrowed the examination procedure to the indexed journals which are accessible on ISI Web of Knowledge that were peer-reviewed published articles written in the English language. Therefore, this analysis did not take into account non-indexed journals or studies for the reason that they are not peer-reviewed, or peer reviewed “spiritual leadership” articles published in a language other than English. For the guidance of future scholars in leading Systematic Literature Reviews, added efforts are needed on in what way to evaluate the eminence of qualitative and quantitative studies in the arena of management. Given Systematic Literature Reviews roots are in the medicinal arena, which perform meticulous experimental research, here are insufficient acute assessment instruments that are appropriate to the study techniques used in other fields, like qualitative inquiry and cross-sectional studies.

## **Conclusion**

The group of Management, Spirituality, and Religion had around 500 members since its inception (Robbins, 2003a) and currently the numbers have increased to 19932 (Academy of management, 2016) and is continuously increasing. This trend current shows the enhancing interest in the field and research work in process. The researcher tried best to conduct Systematic Literature Review of “Spiritual Leadership” in organizational context and tried to ensured replicability, systemacity and clarity of the procedures followed.

This Systematic Literature Review validates “spiritual leadership” theory is appropriate in a diversity of cultures, backgrounds, and organizational settings. But the concentration of research studies in few geographic areas point outs towards the need for research across the globe including South Asian Region for validation and generalizability of the theory. Operationalization, mechanisms, dimensions, outcomes, and impacts of “spiritual leadership” in the sample literature were explored in different contexts across the globe. This research backs to the advancement of “spiritual leadership” theory and practice. In adding, this research contributes to the practice for leading Systematic Literature Reviews in the field of management, stressing an operational method for mapping out thematically, and viewing holistically, new research topics. The development of “spiritual leadership” as both a theoretic paradigm and as a pertinent and valid standpoint to update workplace attitudes and rehearses, proposes that it takes the possibility to arise as an influential and spirited state-of-the-art management model for the twenty-first epoch. The voyage will be unique that swells out from an inspection of identity, institution and community. The notion of “spiritual leadership” will also remain to necessitate acute and academic commitment that positions it amongst prevailing leadership theories, mainly those that are value based.

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### **Biographical Note**

**Umm-e-Farwa Mubashar** is Lecturer/Ph.D. Scholar, Institute of Administrative Sciences, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

**Dr. Yaamina Salman** is Assistant Professor, Institute of Administrative Sciences, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

**Dr. Sidra Irfan** is Assistant Professor, Institute of Administrative Sciences, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

**Prof. Dr. Nasira Jabeen** is Director, Institute of Administrative Sciences & Director, Human Resources Development Centre Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

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