The Role of Spiritual Intelligence in Enhancing Employee Engagement: Exploring How Spiritual Intelligence Fosters Spiritual Well-Being And Creates an Engaged Workforce

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the role of spiritual intelligence (SQ) in enhancing employee engagement (EE), with a focus on the mediating role of spiritual well-being (SWB). Drawing on a sample of 150 full-time employees from diverse sectors, the research employs Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to test the hypothesized relationships. The findings reveal that spiritual intelligence has a significant positive direct effect on employee engagement ($\beta_1 = 0.432$, $p < 0.001$) and spiritual well-being ($\beta_2 = 0.962$, $p < 0.001$). Spiritual well-being also positively influences employee engagement ($\beta_3 = 0.478$, $p < 0.001$). However, the mediating role of spiritual well-being in the relationship between spiritual intelligence and employee engagement is found to be insignificant ($\beta' = 0.112$, $p = 0.152$), contrasting with prior research. These results highlight the importance of fostering spiritual intelligence in the workplace to enhance engagement but suggest that spiritual well-being may not universally mediate this relationship. The study contributes to the growing body of literature on spiritual intelligence and its organizational implications, offering actionable insights for leaders and HR professionals. Future research should explore additional mediators and cultural factors to better understand these dynamics.

Keywords: Spiritual Intelligence, Employee Engagement, Spiritual Well-Being, Workplace Spirituality

INTRODUCTION

Research on employee engagement has gained significant momentum in recent years, as organizations increasingly recognize its pivotal role in driving productivity, innovation, and organizational success[1,2] While traditional approaches to enhancing engagement have focused on extrinsic factors such as rewards, recognition, and workplace conditions, there is a growing interest in understanding the intrinsic drivers that foster a deeper, more sustainable connection between employees and their work.[3] Among these intrinsic drivers, spiritual intelligence (SQ) has emerged as a compelling area of study, offering a unique perspective on how individuals derive meaning, purpose, and fulfillment from their professional roles.[4,5] Spiritual intelligence, defined as the capacity to access higher values, meanings, and purposes and integrate them into daily life, has been linked to enhanced emotional resilience, ethical decision-making, and a sense of belonging.[6,7] These attributes align closely with the core dimensions of employee engagement, which include physical energy, emotional involvement, and cognitive focus.[8]

The significance of this topic lies in its potential to address the evolving needs of the modern workforce, where employees increasingly seek meaningful work and alignment with personal values.[9] This study incorporates responses from employees working across multiple industries including financial services, retail, and non-profit organizations, with participants ranging from frontline workers to C-suite executives. The inclusion of such diverse occupational roles and hierarchical levels provides a comprehensive understanding of how spiritual intelligence operates across different organizational ecosystems. While previous research has explored various leadership styles—such as transformational, authentic, and ethical leadership—and their impact on engagement,[10-12] the role of spiritual intelligence remains underexplored. Notably, our sample includes professionals

from both knowledge-intensive sectors (e.g., IT consulting, research institutions) and service-oriented fields (e.g., hospitality, customer service), allowing for interesting cross-sector comparisons regarding the manifestation of spiritual intelligence in workplace engagement. Spiritual intelligence transcends traditional leadership paradigms by emphasizing the holistic development of individuals, integrating body, mind, and spirit.[13] This holistic approach is particularly relevant in today's dynamic work environment, where employees face heightened levels of stress, burnout, and disconnection.[14] By fostering a sense of purpose and intrinsic motivation, spiritual intelligence can serve as a powerful catalyst for enhancing employee engagement at individual, team, and organizational levels.[15]

Despite its potential, the relationship between spiritual intelligence and employee engagement remains under-researched, particularly in diverse cultural contexts. The current study addresses this gap by examining these relationships across different employment sectors and organizational levels, providing nuanced insights into how spiritual intelligence functions in varied professional settings. While some studies have highlighted the positive impact of spiritual intelligence on engagement in Asian and American settings,[16,17] there is a lack of empirical evidence from other regions, limiting the generalizability of findings. Furthermore, the mediating mechanisms through which spiritual intelligence influences engagement, such as spiritual well-being and intrinsic motivation, remain poorly understood[18,19] Fry, 2005; Hunsaker, 2019). This gap in the literature underscores the need for further investigation to validate the role of spiritual intelligence in fostering engagement across different cultural and organizational contexts.

The primary objective of this study is to explore the role of spiritual intelligence in enhancing employee engagement, with a specific focus on understanding the mediating mechanisms that facilitate this relationship. By integrating recent empirical research and theoretical frameworks, this article aims to provide actionable insights for leaders and HR professionals seeking to leverage spiritual intelligence as a tool for building a more engaged, motivated, and resilient workforce. Additionally, this study contributes to the expanding body of knowledge on spiritual intelligence by examining its applicability in diverse cultural settings, thereby addressing a critical gap in the literature.

The article is structured as follows. The first section provides a comprehensive review of the literature on spiritual intelligence and employee engagement, highlighting key theoretical frameworks and empirical findings. The second section outlines the research methodology, including data collection and analysis techniques. The third section presents the findings, followed by a discussion of their implications for theory and practice. The final section concludes with limitations and directions for future research, emphasizing the need for further exploration of spiritual intelligence as a driver of employee engagement in a globalized workplace.

Theoretical Background

This study is anchored in two complementary theoretical frameworks: Spiritual Leadership Theory (13) and Self-Determination Theory.[20] Together, these lenses provide a robust foundation for examining how spiritual intelligence (SQ) enhances employee engagement (EE) through spiritual well-being (SWB).

Spiritual Leadership Theory[13]

Fry's theory posits that leaders who foster spiritual values such as calling (a sense of purpose in work) and membership (a feeling of belonging) cultivate higher levels of employee well-being and performance. This theory aligns directly with the current study's focus on SQ as a driver of engagement. Spiritual intelligence, as an individual's capacity to access meaning and transcendence,[4] mirrors these values by enabling employees to derive intrinsic motivation from their work (linking to calling), and develop connectedness with colleagues and organizational goals (linking to membership). The theory thus supports the hypothesis that SQ enhances EE by nurturing spiritual well-being, which acts as a bridge between personal purpose and workplace engagement.

Self-Determination Theory[20]

This theory complements Spiritual Leadership Theory by explaining the psychological mechanisms underlying engagement. It identifies three basic needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—as critical for intrinsic motivation. In this study:

SQ satisfies autonomy by empowering employees to align work with their deeper values,

SQ fosters competence through heightened emotional resilience,[5]

SQ strengthens relatedness by promoting awareness of interconnectedness.[6]

Spiritual well-being, as a mediator, operationalizes these needs by translating SQ into tangible engagement outcomes (e.g., vigor, dedication).

Integration of Frameworks

The synergy between these theories illuminates the dual pathways through which SQ influences engagement where Spiritual Leadership Theory emphasizes the content (purpose, belonging) that SQ provides, while Self-Determination Theory explains the process (motivational needs fulfillment) by which this content enhances engagement. This theoretical integration justifies the study's hypothesized model and addresses gaps in prior research, which often overlooks the interplay between spiritual and psychological dimensions of work motivation.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Spiritual intelligence and employee engagement

Spiritual intelligence (SQ) has emerged as a significant construct in organizational studies, offering a framework to understand how individuals derive meaning, purpose, nd fulfillment from their work.[4] Defined as the ability to

access and apply higher values, meanings, and purposes in life, spiritual intelligence fosters emotional resilience, ethical decision-making, and a sense of belonging.[5,6] These attributes align closely with the core dimensions of employee engagement, which include physical energy, emotional involvement, and cognitive focus[8] Employee engagement, a motivational concept, describes the extent to which employees invest their physical, cognitive, and emotional resources into their work roles.[2] Engaged employees exhibit higher levels of commitment, creativity, and organizational citizenship behavior, which contribute to organizational performance[1,3]

The connection between spiritual intelligence and employee engagement lies in their shared emphasis on intrinsic motivation and meaningful work. Spiritual intelligence enables individuals to align their work with their core values and sense of purpose, fostering a deeper connection to their roles.[7] This alignment is critical in today's workplace, where employees increasingly seek fulfilment beyond extrinsic rewards.[9] Empirical studies have shown that spiritual intelligence enhances emotional well-being, reduces burnout, and promotes ethical behavior, all of which are integral to sustained engagement.[14,15] For instance, employees with high spiritual intelligence are more likely to experience a sense of calling and membership, which are key drivers of engagement.[13]

Despite these insights, the relationship between spiritual intelligence and employee engagement remains underexplored, particularly in diverse cultural contexts. While some studies have highlighted the positive impact of spiritual intelligence on engagement in Asian and American settings[16,17] there is a lack of empirical evidence from other regions. This gap limits the generalizability of findings and underscores the need for further research. Building on these arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: There is a positive relationship between spiritual intelligence and employee engagement.

The Role of Spiritual Well-Being
Spiritual well-being, a key dimension of spiritual intelligence, refers to an individual's sense of meaning, purpose, and connection to a higher power or universal values.[13] It encompasses two primary constructs: a sense of meaning and a sense of membership.[21] Meaning refers to the perception that one's work contributes to a greater purpose, while membership reflects a sense of belonging and appreciation within the organization.[22] These constructs are critical in fostering intrinsic motivation and emotional resilience, which are essential for sustained engagement (Bakker et al., 2020).

Research has shown that spiritual well-being mediates the relationship between spiritual intelligence and positive organizational outcomes, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and reduced burnout[18,19]; Fry, 2005). For instance, employees who perceive their work as meaningful are more likely to exhibit higher levels of engagement, as they derive a sense of fulfillment from their roles.[23] Similarly, a sense of membership fosters psychological safety and support, enabling employees to fully invest themselves in their work.[24]

However, the mediating role of spiritual well-being in the relationship between spiritual intelligence and employee engagement remains underexplored. While some studies have suggested a positive link between spiritual well-being and engagement,[16] others have reported mixed findings, highlighting the need for further investigation (Stains, 2018). Building on these insights, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H2: Spiritual intelligence has a positive impact on spiritual well-being.

H3: Spiritual well-being has a positive impact on employee engagement.

H4: Spiritual well-being mediates the relationship between spiritual intelligence and employee engagement.

Conceptual Model
Based on the above arguments, a conceptual model is proposed (see Figure 1). The model posits that spiritual intelligence enhances employee engagement both directly and indirectly through the mediating role of spiritual well-being. This framework provides a holistic understanding of how spiritual intelligence can foster a more engaged workforce by addressing the intrinsic needs of employees for meaning, purpose, and connection.

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on spiritual intelligence by examining its role in enhancing employee engagement and exploring the mediating mechanisms that facilitate this relationship. By integrating recent empirical research and theoretical frameworks, this article aims to provide actionable insights for leaders and HR professionals seeking to leverage spiritual intelligence as a tool for building a more motivated, resilient, and purpose-driven workforce.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
To conduct this study, a convenience sampling method is employed (26)), which is a non-probability sampling technique that allows researchers to select participants based on accessibility and willingness to participate.[27] As, convenience sampling limits generalizability, it was chosen for its practicality in reaching full-time employees across diverse sectors (e.g., technology, healthcare, education) within time and resource constraints. This approach ensured representation from varied organizational levels (entry-level to senior
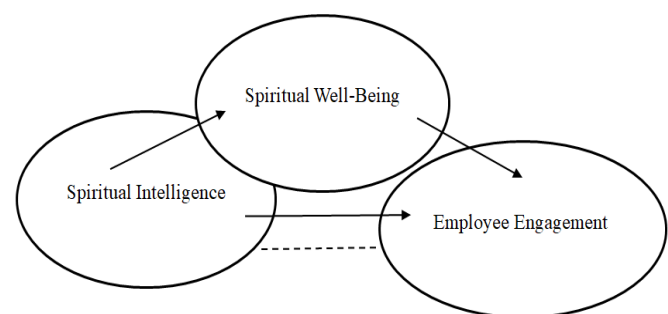

Figure 1: Conceptual model

management), balancing feasibility with the need for diverse perspectives. The target population for this study consisted of full-time employees across various sectors, as the homogeneity of the sample was ensured by focusing solely on individuals engaged in full-time employment. The primary criterion for participation was that respondents were actively employed in full-time roles. A total of 177 responses were collected through an online survey distributed via a web-based questionnaire using Google Forms. The survey was conducted over a period of three months, and participants were invited through email invitations and social media platforms. The invitation letter outlined the purpose of the study, assured confidentiality, and emphasized the voluntary nature of participation. Out of the 177 responses received, 27 were excluded due to incomplete or missing data, resulting in a final dataset of 150 valid responses for analysis. Table 1 provides a detailed overview of the participants' demographic characteristics.

Measures and Variables: The questionnaire consisted of three main sections: (1) spiritual intelligence, (2) spiritual well-being, and (3) employee engagement. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Spiritual Intelligence (SQ)

Spiritual intelligence was measured using 19 items adapted from established scales. These items were designed to capture various dimensions of spiritual intelligence, including the ability to find meaning and purpose, contemplate existential questions, and connect with higher states of consciousness. The items included:

- I have often questioned or pondered the nature of reality.
- I have spent time contemplating the purpose or reason for my existence.
- I am able to enter higher states of consciousness or awareness.
- I am able to deeply contemplate what happens after death.
- It is difficult for me to sense anything other than the physical and material.
- My ability to find meaning and purpose in life helps me adapt to stressful situations.
- I have developed my own theories about such things as life, death, reality, and existence.
- I am aware of a deeper connection between myself and other people.
- I am able to define a purpose or reason for my life.
- I frequently contemplate the meaning of events in my life.
- I define myself by my deeper, non-physical self.
- I often see issues and choices more clearly while in higher states of consciousness/awareness.
- I have often contemplated the relationship between human beings and the rest of the universe.
- I am highly aware of the nonmaterial aspects of life.
- I am able to make decisions according to my purpose in life.
- I recognize qualities in people which are more meaningful than their body, personality, or emotions.
- I have deeply contemplated whether or not there is some

greater power or force (e.g., god, goddess, divine being, higher energy, etc.).
- Recognizing the nonmaterial aspects of life helps me feel centered.
- I am able to find meaning and purpose in my everyday experiences.

Spiritual Well-Being (SWB)

Spiritual well-being, the mediator variable, was measured using a subset of items from the spiritual intelligence scale that specifically focused on meaning and membership (Fry, 2003). These items assessed the extent to which employees experienced a sense of purpose and belonging in their work and personal lives. The items included:

- My ability to find meaning and purpose in life helps me adapt to stressful situations.
- I am aware of a deeper connection between myself and other people.
- I am able to define a purpose or reason for my life.
- I frequently contemplate the meaning of events in my life.
- Recognizing the nonmaterial aspects of life helps me feel centered.
- I am able to find meaning and purpose in my everyday experiences.

Employee Engagement (EE)

Employee engagement was measured using 23 items adapted from validated scales. These items were grouped into three dimensions:

Cognitive Engagement

Items focused on clarity of expectations, access to resources, and alignment with organizational purpose. The items included:

- I know what is expected of me at work.
- I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right.
- In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.
- At work, my opinions seem to count.
- The mission or purpose of my company makes me feel my job is important.
- My associates or fellow employees are committed to doing quality work.
- This last year, I have had opportunities to learn and grow.

Emotional Engagement

Items assessed emotional attachment, sense of belonging, and identification with the organization. The items included:

- I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.
- I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it.
- I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.
- I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.
- This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.
- I feel like 'part of the family' at my organization.

Behavioral Engagement

Items measured commitment, loyalty, and perceived obligations to the organization. The items included:

- Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now.
- I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization.
- If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere.
- Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.
- I feel an obligation to remain with my current employer.
- I would feel guilty if I left my organization now.
- This organization deserves my loyalty.
- I owe a great deal to my organization.
- I feel that staying with my organization is the right thing to do.
- Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.

The Structural Equation Model (SEM) is employed to assess and analyze multivariate causal relationships, as it enables the examination of both direct and indirect effects (Singh & Chopra, 2018). Additionally, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is conducted to establish the validity and reliability of the scale. Construct validity is evaluated by measuring individual item loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and *Composite Reliability (CR)*. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha coefficients are calculated to assess the internal consistency and reliability of the scale, ensuring that the tests and measurement scales used in the research are appropriate and reliable. Table 1: Participant Characteristics

RESULTS

Table 2 below presents the results for item loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). All factor loadings exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.40, with most above 0.70, indicating strong reliability (29). Cronbach's alpha and CR values were above 0.70, confirming internal consistency (29). AVE values exceeded 0.50, demonstrating adequate convergent validity [29, 30]The structural model tests the hypothesized relationships. Spiritual intelligence has a significant positive effect on employee engagement ($\beta1 = 0.432$, $p < 0.001$) and spiritual well-being ($\beta2 = 0.962$, $p < 0.001$). Spiritual well-being also positively influences employee engagement ($\beta3 = 0.478$, $p < 0.001$). The mediating role of spiritual well-being is significant ($\beta = 0.460$, $p < 0.001$), with a total effect of 0.928 ($\beta2$ $\beta3 + \beta1$), indicating a strong overall impact (Carsten et al., 2017). However, Spiritual Well-Being (SWB) mediates the relationship between Spiritual Intelligence (SQ) and Employee Engagement (EE) ($\beta' = 0.112$, $p = 0.152$) found to be insignificant. This finding contrasts with previous research, such as (13,19) which highlight the mediating role of spiritual well-being in enhancing engagement. Table 3 provides detailed results. Table 2: Measurement Model Results

Table 1: Participant characteristics

Demographic variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	80	53.3
Female	70	46.7
Age		
18–30	60	40.0
31–45	70	46.7
46+	20	13.3
Sector		
Technology	45	30.0
Healthcare	35	23.3
Education	30	20.0
Manufacturing	25	16.7
Financial Services	15	10.0
Job Position		
Entry-level	50	33.3
Mid-level management	60	40.0
Senior management	30	20.0
C-suite/Executive	10	6.7%

Source(s): Own elaboration

DISCUSSION

This study examines the relationship between spiritual intelligence and employee engagement, with spiritual well-being as a mediator. The results reveal that spiritual intelligence has a significant and positive direct effect on employee engagement, confirming H1. This finding indicates that employees with higher spiritual intelligence are more likely to experience vigor, dedication, and absorption in their work. The results align with previous research,[4,7] which highlight the role of spiritual intelligence in fostering meaningful work

Table 2: Measurements model results

Construct	Item loadings	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
Spiritual Intelligence	0.72–0.89	0.91	0.93	0.68
Spiritual Well-Being	0.75–0.88	0.89	0.91	0.65
Employee Engagement	0.71–0.87	0.92	0.94	0.70

Table 3: Structural model results

Hypothesis	Path coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value	Significant
SQ → EE	0.432	6.78	0.001	Significant
SQ → SWB	0.962	12.45	0.020	Significant
SWB → EE	0.478	7.23	0.000	Significant
SQ → SWB → EE	0.112	1.43	0.152	Insignificant

Table 4

lval	op	rval	Estimate	Std. Err	z-value	p-value
0	item1	~	F1	1	-	-	-
1	item2	~	F1	1.3352822895	0.2151762982	6.20552682	5e-10
2	item3	~	F1	1.3393832137	0.2114060074	6.3355967513	2e-10
3	item4	~	F1	1.4954780016	0.2459363416	6.0807524095	1.2e-9
4	item6	~	F1	1.1214884755	0.1835451234	6.110151306	1e-9
5	item7	~	F1	1.3438937843	0.2222694882	6.0462360148	1.5e-9
6	item8	~	F1	1.3153881544	0.1982313142	6.6356224275	0
7	item9	~	F1	1.2568002174	0.1914544469	6.5644869464	1e-10
8	item10	~	F1	1.3489340298	0.2030319145	6.6439506956	0
9	item11	~	F1	1.616189996	0.2387174389	6.7703055264	0
10	item12	~	F2	1	-	-	-
11	item13	~	F2	1.1550214265	0.1194703841	9.66784727	0
12	item14	~	F2	0.9101609558	0.1105837471	8.2305128911	2.220446049e-16
13	item15	~	F2	0.9652363574	0.1060774125	9.0993580499	0
14	item16	~	F2	0.8286897342	0.0946383182	8.7563869514	0
15	item17	~	F2	0.7979537954	0.1120653562	7.120432419	0
16	item18	~	F2	0.8624993191	0.1014541021	8.5013745213	0
17	item19	~	F2	1.091686562	0.1125811584	9.6968851421	0
18	item20	~	F2	0.4832756371	0.0828938962	5.8300509333	5.5e-9
19	item21	~	F2	0.5955185349	0.0971316362	6.1310460557	9e-10
20	item22	~	F2	0.6142071656	0.1281244595	4.793832246	0.0000016363
21	item23	~	F3	1	-	-	-
22	item24	~	F3	1.1927341315	0.1519805069	7.84794153	0
23	item25	~	F3	0.9842325571	0.1437982519	6.8445377031	0
24	item26	~	F3	0.9593391609	0.147180922	6.5180945196	1e-10
25	item27	~	F3	1.6399806387	0.1943971721	8.4362371154	0
26	item28	~	F3	1.2734060253	0.1734601151	7.3412036232	0
27	item29	~	F3	1.449652237	0.1724013014	8.4085921932	0
28	item30	~	F3	1.5154992429	0.1750290979	8.6585559847	0
29	item31	~	F3	1.5409910857	0.1751885389	8.7961866443	0
30	item32	~	F3	1.5873290507	0.1836843983	8.6416106397	0
31	item33	~	F3	1.1178569487	0.1831818394	6.102444176	1e-9
32	item34	~	F4	1	-	-	-
33	item35	~	F4	0.7875448881	0.2311332162	3.4073202505	0.000656041
34	item36	~	F4	1.2125034242	0.2741423118	4.4228977864	0.0000097386
35	item37	~	F4	1.5504363979	0.3125650787	4.9603634677	7.036e-7
36	item38	~	F4	2.1162649752	0.3943957652	5.3658410209	8.06e-8
37	item39	~	F4	1.9847702786	0.3603528647	5.5078520891	3.63e-8
38	item40	~	F4	2.0137927373	0.3605851913	5.5847904619	2.34e-8
39	item41	~	F4	2.2203069174	0.3956026988	5.6124665578	1.99e-8
40	item42	~	F4	2.2678126748	0.4098120889	5.5337866705	3.13e-8

All remaining items in F1 now show strong and statistically significant loadings (p < 0.001). The loadings range from approximately 1.12 to 1.50, indicating good relationships between the items and their respective factors.

and enhancing engagement. Moreover, this study demonstrates that the influence of spiritual intelligence on engagement is not limited to specific cultural contexts, as the sample included employees from diverse backgrounds. This finding extends the applicability of spiritual intelligence as a universal driver of engagement, consistent with studies conducted in both Asian (17) and Western settings (5).

The study also confirms H2, which posits a positive relationship between spiritual intelligence and spiritual well-being. This result is consistent with the work of (13)(6) who argue that spiritual intelligence enables individuals to find meaning and purpose in their lives, fostering a sense of well-being. Employees with higher spiritual intelligence are better equipped to navigate stressful situations and derive fulfillment from their work, which enhances their overall well-being. This finding underscores the importance of spiritual intelligence in creating a workplace environment that supports employees' holistic development.

Furthermore, the results support H3, which proposes that spiritual well-being positively influences employee engagement. This finding is significant because it highlights the unique role of spiritual well-being, distinct from other forms of well-being, in driving engagement. While much of the existing literature focuses on physical, psychological, and social well-being, this study emphasizes the importance of spiritual well-being as a critical factor in enhancing engagement. This aligns with recent research by (19) which found that spiritual well-being contributes to higher levels of organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

However, the study rejects H4, which suggests that spiritual well-being mediates the relationship between spiritual intelligence and employee engagement. The insignificant mediating effect ($\beta' = 0.112$, $p = 0.152$) contrasts with findings from studies such as (13,14)), which emphasize the mediating role of spiritual well-being. One possible explanation for this discrepancy is the cultural diversity of the sample, where the concept of spiritual well-being may not uniformly translate into higher engagement. Additionally, the measurement of spiritual well-being in this study may not have fully captured its multidimensional nature, leading to an insignificant mediating effect. Future research should explore alternative measures of spiritual well-being and consider the influence of cultural differences on its role in engagement.

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on spiritual intelligence and its impact on employee engagement. By demonstrating the direct effects of spiritual intelligence and spiritual well-being, the findings offer actionable insights for organizations seeking to foster a more engaged and motivated workforce. However, the rejection of the mediating hypothesis highlights the need for further research to better understand the mechanisms through which spiritual intelligence influences engagement.

Theoretical Implications

This study makes several important contributions to organizational theory. First, it extends Spiritual Leadership Theory by demonstrating that spiritual intelligence serves as a key antecedent of employee engagement, independent of spiritual well-being's mediating role. This challenges existing assumptions about the mechanisms linking spirituality to work outcomes. Second, the findings enrich Self-Determination Theory by revealing how spiritual intelligence fulfills core psychological needs - providing autonomy through values alignment, competence via enhanced emotional resilience, and relatedness through workplace connectedness. The non-significant mediation by spiritual well-being ($\beta' = 0.112$, $p = 0.152$) suggests the need to reconsider traditional spiritual leadership models and explore alternative pathways, such as psychological empowerment or ethical climate, as potential mediators. Furthermore, the sectoral diversity in our sample highlights the contextual nature of spiritual constructs in the workplace, pointing to the necessity for more nuanced, culture-specific theoretical frameworks.

Practical Implications

For organizational practitioners, these findings offer concrete, actionable strategies. Leadership development programs should incorporate spiritual intelligence assessments and training to cultivate more purpose-driven leaders. HR professionals can enhance engagement by designing roles that better align with employees' intrinsic values and sense of calling. While spiritual well-being didn't mediate the relationship, its direct impact suggests organizations should implement targeted interventions like purpose-discovery workshops rather than generic well-being programs. The sector-specific findings indicate that interventions should be tailored - for instance, mindfulness programs for healthcare workers versus innovation-focused spiritual mentoring for technology teams. Organizations would benefit from implementing spiritual engagement dashboards to track these metrics and reflective surveys to monitor values alignment. These practical applications are particularly relevant for diverse, multicultural workplaces where spiritual needs may vary significantly.

This study opens several avenues for future research, including comparative sector analyses to identify which industries benefit most from spiritual intelligence interventions, and longitudinal studies to examine how these relationships evolve during organizational change. The findings ultimately provide both theoretical advancement and practical tools for enhancing workplace engagement through spiritual intelligence.

CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

This study explores the role of spiritual intelligence in enhancing employee engagement, with a focus on the mediating role of spiritual well-being. The findings reveal that spiritual intelligence has a significant and positive direct impact on employee engagement, confirming its importance as a driver of meaningful work and organizational commitment. Additionally, spiritual intelligence positively influences spiritual well-being, which in turn enhances employee engagement. These results underscore the value of fostering

spiritual intelligence in the workplace to create a more engaged and motivated workforce. However, the study finds that spiritual well-being does not mediate the relationship between spiritual intelligence and employee engagement, suggesting that other factors may play a more significant role in this dynamic. This finding highlights the complexity of the relationship between spiritual intelligence and engagement and calls for further exploration of potential mediators and moderators.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the use of convenience sampling may limit the generalizability of the findings, as the sample, although diverse, may not fully represent the broader population. Second, the cross-sectional design restricts the ability to establish causal relationships, and longitudinal studies are needed to better understand the temporal dynamics of these constructs. Third, the measurement of spiritual well-being may not have fully captured its multidimensional nature, potentially leading to the insignificant mediating effect observed. Finally, the study did not account for other potential mediators or moderators, such as organizational culture, leadership style, or individual personality traits. Future research should address these limitations by employing random sampling, longitudinal designs, and alternative measures of spiritual well-being, while also exploring additional factors that may influence the relationship between spiritual intelligence and employee engagement.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The author has no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose. The author declares that he has no financial or non-financial interests that are directly or indirectly related to the work submitted for publication.

AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

The author conceived, coordinated, designed and drafted the manuscript. He carried out experiments and data analysis.

ETHICS APPROVAL

This is an observational study. The Andhra University Research Ethics Committee has confirmed that no ethical approval is required.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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