

Is Spiritual Leadership Powerful for Strengthening Organizational Commitment?

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ABSTRACT

Spiritual leadership has recently become a hot topic of discussion because it is related to organizational commitment. The success of organizational commitment is strongly supported by the presence of meaning, membership and empowerment. This research was conducted at the State Owned Enterprise, PT. Pelindo (Region III) involving 160 respondents from various divisions who met the requirements. Structural equation modeling was applied using AMOS to explore the proposed relationships. The results of this study indicate that spiritual leadership has a direct effect on meaning, membership, and empowerment of the leaders. Meanwhile, meaning, membership, and empowerment of the leaders have a significant positive effect on organizational commitment. In addition, the results also show that meaning, membership, and empowerment of the leaders mediate the effect of spiritual leadership on organizational commitment. This research provides information to the leaders of PT. Pelindo (Region III) in order to be able to make effective decisions about why and under what circumstances leaders / supervisors can have high organizational commitment.

ABSTRAK

Kepemimpinan spiritual akhir-akhir ini sedang hangat diperbincangkan karena berkaitan dengan komitmen organisasi, dimana keberhasilan komitmen organisasi sangat didukung oleh adanya makna, keanggotaan dan pemberdayaan. Penelitian ini dilakukan di PT. Pelindo (Wilayah III), Badan Usaha Milik Negara, dengan 160 responden yang memenuhi persyaratan dari berbagai divisi. Pemodelan persamaan struktural diterapkan menggunakan AMOS untuk mengeksplorasi hubungan yang diusulkan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan spiritual berhubungan langsung dengan makna, keanggotaan, dan pemberdayaan dari atasan, sedangkan makna, keanggotaan, dan pemberdayaan dari atasan secara langsung memiliki efek positif yang signifikan terhadap komitmen organisasi supervisor. Terakhir, hasil menunjukkan adanya pengaruh mediasi makna, keanggotaan, dan pemberdayaan dari atasan terhadap pengaruh kepemimpinan spiritual terhadap komitmen organisasi supervisor. Penelitian ini memberikan informasi bagi pimpinan di PT. Pelindo (Wilayah III) agar dapat mengambil keputusan yang efektif tentang mengapa dan dalam keadaan apa supervisor dapat memiliki komitmen organisasi yang tinggi.

1. INTRODUCTION

The port is a very important facility for human life. This area is used as a stopover for ships before anchoring or continuing their journey. There are many activities carried out at the port, such as loading and unloading of goods. One of the ports which is quite busy and has various activities is PT. Pelindo (Region III), with Head Office in Surabaya. PT Pelindo (Region III) is a business unit owned by a State-Owned Enterprise (BUMN). As a business unit, its main objective is to serve the community,

starting from transportation, logistics, health needs to daily living needs. For the sustainability of this business unit, competent human resources with strong organizational commitment are needed.

According to Ayodele et al. (2020), organizational commitment is an attitude related to employee loyalty to the organization and is also a continuous process where participants or members of the organization are more focused on paying attention to the organization. PT Pelindo's employees are expected to be able to demonstrate

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their high organizational commitment. When individuals join a company, they are required to have a commitment to the organization. Employees with high commitment play an important role in determining organizational success (Sudaryati et al., 2020).

Various previous studies examined the effect of organizational commitment on performance. Organizational commitment encourages employees to work seriously for the success of the organization (Eliyana & Ma'arif, 2019; Hendri, 2019; Jatmiko et al., 2020; Loan, 2020). It leads to a more innovative behavior (Iqbal et al., 2021; Siengthai et al., 2019). Employees will be willing to share their knowledge, skills, and energy to carry out activities that can add value to the company (Chang et al., 2015; Imamoglu et al., 2019; Marques et al., 2019).

In contrast to previous studies, current studies focus on the determinants of organizational commitment. Garg (2017), Jung & Yoon (2016), and Neubert & Halbesleben (2015) state that meaning, which is also referred to as spiritual wellbeing, has an influence on organizational commitment. This increases the motivation of the employees and has a positive effect on their performance (Dan et al., 2020). Meaning is very important for the employees of PT Pelindo because their work has a positive meaning for themselves and the community. The organizational commitment is also affected by organizational membership (Colquitt et al., 2019). The membership is related to being recognized or appreciated as the member of organization. It can increase employees' organizational commitment and their performance (Chatzopoulou et al., 2020; Zagenczyk et al., 2021). Empowerment also plays an important role in increasing organizational commitment (AlKahtani et al. 2021). Empowerment relates to employees' belief in the extent of their competence, the meaningfulness of their work, and the autonomy in their work (Robbins & Judge, 2019). Therefore, it becomes a crucial part in improving organizational commitment (Aggarwal et al., 2018; Saleem et al., 2018).

Furthermore, the employees' meaning, membership, and empowerment can be developed through spiritual leadership (Ali et al., 2021; Nguyen et al., 2020). Spiritual leadership is the formation of values, attitudes and behaviors needed to motivate oneself and others intrinsically to form a meaning, spiritual well-being and empowerment that have an impact on organizational commitment (Efferin & Hutomo, 2021; Wahyono et al., 2020).

This research focuses on spiritual leadership because it is a vital principle. Spiritual leadership is

part of leadership related to thoughts, desires, feelings, the essential nature of one's beliefs and awareness in acting and making decisions that a leader in general must have. Previous research mentions that spiritual leadership discusses the adoption of western religious theology theory and leadership ethics (Lean & Ganster, 2017). So this research focuses on spiritual leadership in the context of Indonesian by linking organizational commitment with the application of supervisors at ports. This study also examines the effect of spiritual leadership on organizational commitment mediated by meaning, membership and empowerment (Chen & Li, 2013; Fr et al., 2017). The stronger or higher the spiritual leadership, the stronger or higher the meaning, membership and empowerment will be. Meaning, membership and empowerment are things that are inherent in individuals who need support and encouragement from other parties. This research is expected to make PT. Pelindo (Region III) more sustainable in all aspects. This research is carried out to close the research gap. So far previous studies that revealed antecedents of organizational commitment examined materialistic variables or extrinsic motivation. Meanwhile, current research seeks to uncover how the influence of spiritual aspects or intrinsic motivation by elaborating spiritual leadership. The spiritual context becomes a novelty in current research.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

Organizational Commitment

The concept of organizational commitment refers to a person's commitment to the organization. The willingness of individuals to exert all efforts for the interests and desires of the organization can achieve the expected goals, as an example of sustainability being maintained (Bae, 2021; Kmiecik, 2021; Sani & Ekowati, 2020). Organizational commitment is the full and direct involvement of existing members, both cognitive and affective. According to Ayodele et al. (2020), organizational commitment is an attitude about employee loyalty to the organization and is also a continuous process where participants or members of the organization focus more on paying attention to the organization.

Guan & Hsu (2020) and Oyewobi et al. (2019) state that organizational commitment is a psychological state of a person that the person has full confidence not to leave his organization. An individual who has a strong organizational commitment will strive to achieve organizational goals, have a positive outlook, and try to do his best

to provide benefits and a sense of belonging to the organization. According to Shoaib et al. (2021), someone who is committed to an organization is someone who believes in and accepts the goals and values of the organization, is willing to strive to achieve the goals set by the organization, and has a strong desire to remain part of the organization.

Spiritual Leadership

Spiritual leadership is the alignment of positive values between what the organization wants and what the individual needs in the organization, by facilitating a culture and work environment based on the values of excellence, integrity, honesty, compassion and enjoyment in helping (Fry et al., 2017; Zakkariya & Aboobaker, 2020). In 2005, in a discussion of specific issues related to leadership theory, published in the leadership quarterly, Fry (2005) reviewed 87 articles. The results show that there are consistent values between spiritual values and practices, and leadership effectiveness. Sharma & Kumra (2020) and Vu & Burton (2022) argue that the presence of values such as spiritual ideals, integrity, honesty, and humility, has a positive influence on leadership success.

According to Nguyen et al. (2018), spiritual leadership is an interesting variable to discuss in an organization because organizational leaders hope that spiritual leadership models can create wise communication in solving problems. Various conflicts related to culture and differences in meaning are expected to be resolved properly. In addition, spiritual leadership is expected to prioritize the well-being of members both physically and mentally (Hunsaker, 2020; Tabor et al., 2020).

The purpose of spiritual leadership is to create prosperity for the organization and all members in it, so that the vision, hope and altruism that have been created can be realized. This makes leaders able to help employees or members understand the meaning of why they work for and show a great concern for their fellow or different members. Such leaders are very important in organizations because spiritual leadership provides the concept of development in the organization and helps create a motivated workforce, especially intrinsic motivation, because intrinsic motivation has a very important role (Chen & Yang, 2012; Salehzadeh et al., 2015). Spiritual leaders also shares their vision and mission with employees. In this case, the leaders care about the importance of values and the meaning of employees. Therefore, it can be concluded that spiritual leadership has a positive effect on meaning (Chen & Li, 2013; Wang et al.,

2021). Based on the argument above, the hypothesis is:

H₁: Spiritual leadership has a positive effect on meaning.

Spiritual leadership emphasizes that this leadership style is related to the existence of great motivation, ability, and commitment to employees (Wang et al., 2018; Zhang & Yang, 2020). The leaders give freedom to their members as long as they follow the applicable rules (Damar & Eskiler, 2017; Rosa & Ancok, 2020). Based on this argument, the hypothesis is:

H₂: Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on membership.

Furthermore, spiritual leadership is able to appreciate and respect members in the organization because they have given love and care to the goals of the organization (Bayighomog & Araslı, 2019; Chen et al., 2019). Therefore, it can be concluded that spiritual leader empower his members (Nguyen et al., 2018; Yang et al., 2020). Based on this argument, the hypothesis is:

H₃: Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on empowerment.

Meaning/Spiritual Well-Being

Meaning is something that is clearly close to spirituality because the main key to spirituality is finding meaning in life (Hasanshahi & Mazaheri, 2016; Rabow & Knish, 2015). Spirituality has been proven to predict a person's positive behavior (Li & Chow, 2014).

Spiritual well-being is an alternative that is close to meaning of spirituality because it includes religious values in one's spirituality (Del Castillo, 2021). Spiritual leadership increases understanding of the meaning of life and work for employees and it will encourage employees to internalize their work, commit, and be loyal to their organization (Bell-Ellis et al., 2015; Wan Yunan et al., 2018). Based on this argument, the hypothesis is:

H₄: Meaning/spiritual well-being has a positive effect on organizational commitment.

Membership

Membership is related to a feeling of being understood, appreciated, and part of a community and an organization to carry out daily activities or activities (Chen & Yang, 2012). According to Fry

(2005), membership itself is a person's main need, the desire to be understood and appreciated. Therefore, the two characteristics of membership are having a feeling of being understood in an organization and having a feeling of wanting to be valued in the organization. Employees expect the leader to treat them according to the norms that exist within the organization, so that employees feel comfortable in carrying out activities. Members of the organization who have a high sense of membership will perceive their existence in the organization to be recognized, understood and appreciated so that it will increase their organizational commitment (Chatzopoulou et al., 2020; Zagenczyk et al., 2021). Therefore, the hypothesis is:

H₅: Membership has a positive effect on organizational commitment

Empowerment

Empowerment relates to employees' belief in the extent of their competence, the meaningfulness of their work, and the autonomy in their work (Robbins & Judge, 2019). According to Griffith et al. (2020), empowerment has two approaches: organizational empowerment and psychological empowerment. Organizational empowerment is related to matters within the organization from the lowest level to the highest level. Psychological

empowerment is empowerment that exists within a person who has a strong and positive desire to take an action and make a decision from the results of the actions taken.

According to Aldaihani et al. (2020) and Saleem et al. (2019), empowerment is a multidimensional and very sensitive matter that cannot be taken from just one concept. Broadly speaking, empowerment is a motivation that consists of four cognitive aspects that lead to individual goals. These four cognitive aspects are meaning, competence, self-determination and impact.

Empowerment is carried out by increasing the involvement, participation, and motivation of members of the organization. Therefore, it becomes a crucial part in improving organizational commitment (Aggarwal et al., 2018; Saleem et al., 2018). As a result, individuals who have the perception that they are involved and are given the opportunity to participate in the organization will increase their commitment to the organization (Ibrahim, 2020; Savaz & Dermikol, 2013).

H₆: Empowerment has a positive effect on organizational commitment

Based on the above discussion, the research framework can be summarized as presented in Figure 1.

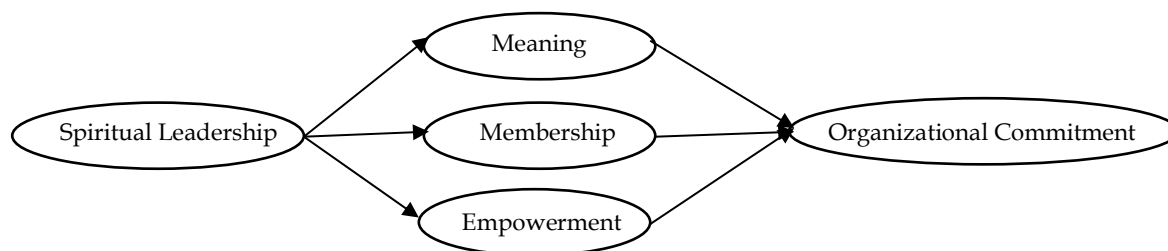


Figure 1. Research framework

3. RESEARCH METHOD

Sample and Data Collection

This study uses a quantitative method with the positivism method to test the sample. This research was conducted at a State Owned Enterprise, PT. Pelindo (Region III), involving 160 respondents from various divisions who meet the criteria. The questionnaire that has been made is distributed to respondents via the Google form.

Analysis Technique

A structural equation model (SEM) using AMOS is

used to test the hypotheses. Before testing the hypotheses, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) are first performed to analyze the validity of the factor structure of the measurement variables. After being validated, the structural equation model (SEM) is used to test the validity of the proposed model and hypotheses.

Variable Definition and Indicator

Spiritual leadership is defined as a belief, understanding, and behavior that follow applicable

norms. The measurement of spiritual leadership is based on Chen & Yang (2012). The indicators include the experience, desire and hope to actively contribute to the organization. The measurement of meaning is adapted from Sholikhah et al. (2019). Membership is a feeling and a belief in oneself that he is part of the organization. The indicators of membership are based on Pawar (2017). Empowerment is defined as freedom to be creative and productive. The measurement of the empowerment follows Mubarak et al. (2022). Organizational commitment is measured through the existence of a purpose, clear values and goals from the organization so that members of the organization feel they can and have a strong emotional bond to survive. The measurement of organizational commitment is based on Sani & Maharani Ekowati (2020), which has been adapted to the conditions of this study. The measurement scale for all indicators lies between 1 to 5 variables using a Likert scale, as based on previous research references.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION
Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This research is quantitative research. Data collection is done by distributing questionnaires (via google form), containing respondent data including gender, age, years of service and units distributed, to respondents over a period of 4 months. There are 160 respondents selected and have met the specified requirements. Based on gender criteria, 90 respondents are male and 70 respondents are female. Based on educational background, 98 respondents are Bachelor’s Degree, 30 respondents are Master’s degree, and 32 respondents are High School graduates. Based on age criteria, 67 respondents are 41-50 years old, 56 respondents are 31-40 years old, and 37 respondents are 20-30 years old. Based on length of work/service, 78 respondents have 21-30 years of service, 55 respondents have 11-20 years of service, and 28 respondents have 5-10 years of service.

Construct Validity and Reliability

Table 1 shows that the AVE values (construct validity) of all variables > 0.5. So, it can be said that all indicators are constructs of the latent variables studied. It can be ascertained that the indicators have formed a unity in each construct. The highest construct validity value of 0.661 (> 0.5) is in the spiritual leadership variable which means that all indicators can form a single unit. The presence of spiritual strength can make what is done in line

with self-confidence according to the rules. The lowest construct validity value of 0.549 (> 0.5) is in empowerment which means that there is freedom in carrying out tasks but still below the norms that exist in PT. Pelindo III.

Table 1. AVE test results (construct validity)

Variable	AVE
Organizational Commitment	0.562
Meaning	0.607
Membership	0.561
Empowerment	0.549
Spiritual leadership	0.661

Source: Processed data, 2022

Table 2 shows that each construct has a discriminant validity value > 0.50, meaning that each is an independent construct. The highest discriminant validity value of 0.781 is in the spiritual leadership construct, and the lowest discriminant validity value of 0.711 is in the empowerment construct.

Table 3 shows that all construct reliability values are > 0.70, meaning that the five constructs have good internal consistency. The highest construct reliability value of 0.856 is in the meaning construct, while the lowest reliability value of 0.830 is in the empowerment construct.

Table 2. Discriminant validity test results

Variable	Discriminant Value
Organizational Commitment	0.740
Meaning	0.769
Membership	0.723
Empowerment	0.711
Spiritual leadership	0.781

Source: Processed data, 2022

Table 3. Reliability test results

Variable	CR
Organizational Commitment	0.855
Meaning	0.856
Membership	0.854
Empowerment	0.830
Spiritual leadership	0.831

Source: Processed data, 2022

Table 4 shows that the absolute fit index with parameters RMR, RMSEA, GFI and AGFI provides a suitability index that is in accordance with the recommended limits. In addition, the incremental fit index with TLI parameters and CFI also provides a suitability index that is in accordance with the recommended limits.

Table 4. Suitability index on structural model

Criteria	Fit index	Result Index	Conclusion
Chi-square	-	301.833	-
Probability	≥0.05	0.000	-
CMIN/DF	≤2.00	1.879	Fit
RMR	≤ 0.05	0.017	Fit
RMSEA	≤0.08	0.061	Fit
GFI	≥0.90	0.904	Fit
AGFI	≥0.90	0.906	Fit
TLI	≥ 0.90	0.953	Fit
CFI	≥ 0.95	0.956	Fit

Source: Processed data, 2022

Table 5 shows the results of the direct hypothesis test. Spiritual leadership has the highest direct effect on meaning with a value of 0.429, CR value of 3.432, and significance level of 0.000. This table also shows that spiritual leadership has a significant positive effect on meaning, membership, and empowerment. Furthermore, meaning, membership, and empowerment have a significant positive effect on organizational commitment. Spiritual leadership has the highest indirect influence on organizational commitment, with meaning as a mediating variable, with coefficient value of 0.169, CR value of 2.667, and significance level of 0.005.

Table 5. Relations of variables

Relationship of Variables	Direct & Indirect Relationship	CR	Sig.
Spiritual leadership → Meaning	0.429	3.432	0.000
Spiritual leadership → Membership	0.324	2.788	0.005
Spiritual leadership → Empowerment	0.252	2.452	0.014
Meaning → Organizational Commitment	0.396	2.623	0.009
Membership → Organizational Commitment	0.268	2.001	0.045
Empowerment → Organizational Commitment	0.423	3.001	0.000
Spiritual leadership → Meaning → Organizational Commitment	0.169	2.667	0.005
Spiritual leadership → Membership → Organizational Commitment	0.089	2.345	0.000
Spiritual leadership → Empowerment → Organizational Commitment	0.108	2.642	0.021

Source: Processed data, 2022

Discussion and Analysis

The results of hypothesis testing (H₁) show that spiritual leadership has a direct positive effect on meaning. This indicates that the higher the spirituality of leadership, the higher the meaning obtained. This finding is in accordance with the finding of the research conducted by Chen & Li (2013), Fry et al. (2017), Sholikhah et al. (2019), and Wang et al. (2021). Leaders at PT Pelindo apply spiritual leadership by socializing the vision, mission and objectives of the organization and directing employees to carry out the vision and mission in order to achieve the goals of the organization. Leaders emphasize the meaning of work life by emphasizing the organization and life purpose. This, in turn, influences the employees' meaning/spiritual wellbeing. The main key to spirituality is finding meaning in life. Spirituality has been proven to predict a person's positive behavior. This makes leaders able to help employees or members to understand the meaning of why they work for.

The results of hypothesis testing (H₂) show that spiritual leadership has a significant positive effect on membership. The higher the spiritual leadership, the higher the employees' membership. This is in line with the results of research conducted by Rosa & Ancok (2020) and Damar & Eskiler (2017) that

spiritual leadership increases membership. Altruistic love shown by PT. Pelindo's leaders makes the employees feel that they are appreciated and become part of the organization.

The results of hypothesis testing (H₃) show that spiritual leadership has a significant positive effect on empowerment. This indicates that a leader who has confidence and determination in spiritual values will increase the value of empowerment. This finding is supported by the results of previous research conducted by Nguyen et al. (2018) and Yang et al. (2020). Through spiritual leadership, leaders at PT. Pelindo motivate employees to have high involvement and participation to the organization.

The results of hypothesis testing (H₄) show that meaning has a positive influence on organizational commitment. This indicates that employees have a high commitment to the organization because of the high meaning values of leadership. Spiritual leadership increases understanding of the meaning of life and work for employees and it will encourage employees to internalize their work, commit, and be loyal to their organization. This finding supports the results of previous research conducted by Bell-Ellis et al. (2015), Delegach et al. (2017), Ibrahim (2020), and Wan Yunan et al. (2018) that spiritual leadership plays an important role in improving meaning. This

finding implies that leaders at PT. Pelindo have increased employees' meaning/spiritual well-being, thus influencing employees' organizational commitment.

The results of hypothesis testing (H₅) show that membership has a positive effect on organizational commitment. This indicates that employees feel they are part of the organization so that this can increase high organizational commitment. Members of the organization who have a high sense of membership will perceive their existence in the organization to be recognized, understood and appreciated so that it will increase their organizational commitment. This finding supports the results of previous research conducted by Bell-Ellis et al. (2015), Chatzopoulou et al. (2020), and Zagenczyk et al. (2021).

The results of hypothesis testing (H₆) show that empowerment has a significant positive effect on organizational commitment. This indicates that the existence of empowerment possessed by a person will increase the value of commitment to the organization. Employees who have the perception that they are involved and given the opportunity to participate in the organization will increase their commitment to their organization. This finding supports the results of the research conducted by Ibrahim (2020), Meng & Han (2014), and Savaz & Dermikol (2013) that empowerment becomes a crucial part in improving organizational commitment.

Mediating Variables

The results also show that in the context of the port, meaning, empowerment and membership have a mediating role in the relationship between spiritual leadership and organizational commitment. The spiritual improvement of the spiritual well-being/meaning of PT Pelindo's employees caused by the improvement of the spiritual leadership style will increase the organizational commitment of PT. Pelindo's employees.

Spiritual leadership can increase organizational commitment through membership as mediating variable. Employees, who feel themselves part of the organization due to an increase in spiritual leadership style, have a strong belief in commitment. This finding is in line with the results of research conducted by Chan & Ao (2019) that membership mediates the effect of spiritual leadership on organizational commitment.

Spiritual leadership has a significant effect on organizational commitment through empowerment as a mediating variable. The higher the empowerment caused by the improvement of the spiritual leadership style, the higher the employees'

organizational commitment due to the spiritual values possessed by the leadership. This finding is in line with the results of the research conducted by Han et al. (2016) and Savas et al. (2013) that empowerment has an important role in mediating the effect of spiritual leadership on employees' organizational commitment.

5. CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION, SUGGESTION, AND LIMITATIONS

The results of this study show that all research hypotheses are accepted. Spiritual leadership has an influence on organizational commitment through meaning, membership and empowerment. This research has two main managerial implications. First, PT Pelindo should improve its spiritual leadership style through spiritual leadership training for leaders to increase employee's organizational commitment. Second, PT Pelindo should improve spiritual well-being/meaning, empowerment and membership to increase employee's organizational commitment.

There are several limitations of this study that need to be considered and these become suggestions for improvement for further research. First, the use of self-reported cross-sectional data can lead to common method bias. Therefore, further research should use longitudinal data. Second, this study has a limited sample which limits the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, future research can be scaled up in various business organizations in various industries.

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