

## **SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A CONCEPTUAL REVIEW TOWARD A VALUE-BASED FRAMEWORK**

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### **Abstract**

Spiritual leadership is considered to have a positive impact on organisational sustainability, but its understanding remains limited to higher education institutions. This study aims to examine and broaden the understanding of value-based spiritual leadership in higher education institutions. The research uses a qualitative approach with a narrative literature review design. The analysis is conducted thematically and through critical conceptual synthesis of spiritual leadership, organisational values, and educational management. The findings identify five dimensions of spiritual leadership in higher education institutions: vision, hope/faith, altruistic love, soulful Directive, and organizational inclusivity. These dimensions emphasize the importance of moral reflection and structural justice in the diversity and complexity of higher education institutions. An understanding of this fosters spiritual wellbeing through a multidimensional approach that encompasses personal, communal, environmental, and transcendental aspects. The model shapes holistic spiritual leadership in higher education. Higher education management needs to build value-based spiritual leadership that is reflective, humanistic, and transformative.

**Keywords:** spiritual leadership, higher education, values-based leadership, soulful Directive, organizational inclusivity

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Higher education institutions have faced a crisis of values in recent decades, marked by a decline in integrity, moral responsibility, and the spirit of service. Ethical and spiritual dimensions have been neglected due to the dominance of managerial leadership models that focus on administrative efficiency and transactional approaches (Huang, 2024; Liu et al., 2021; Mintz, 2021; Pratt & Shaughnessy, 2021). Managerialism shapes an institutional culture that prioritizes quantitative targets and market logic (Ajayan & Balasubramanian, 2020; Tight, 2024; Želvys et al., 2021). It has led to a decline in academic autonomy, creating a gap between moral principles and rigid management (Morley, 2023; Hypeev et al., 2020). Therefore, integrating transcendental goals and personal values focused on the principle of service should be implemented through spiritual leadership (Noorhayati & Fahyuni, 2024; Pilonato & Monfardini, 2022). Spiritual leadership encourages moral decision-making, creating an inclusive, reflective, and meaningful academic environment. This understanding highlights the role of leaders as guardians of spiritual integrity and



facilitators of value-based change (Frye & Fulton, 2020; Gafiatulina et al., 2020; Karjalainen et al., 2022; Tyagi, 2021). Spiritual leadership becomes a practical and strategic model for overcoming the humanitarian crisis in higher education.

Spiritual dimensions and humanistic values in educational leadership tend to shift under the pressures of globalization, the commercialization of education, and demands for administrative efficiency (Guthrie & Hu, 2022; Zulfqar et al., 2021). Higher education leaders prioritize performance logic over moral reflection and the meaning of leadership. Spiritual leadership is believed to be a holistic, value-based approach to addressing these demands, yet its implementation remains limited to higher education (Oh & Wang, 2020; Subhaktiyasa et al., 2023). Studies on spiritual leadership have not given much consideration to the complexity of academia, which demands integrity and ethical sensitivity (Fiernaningsih et al., 2022; Kumari & Dash, 2022; Safiullah et al., 2023; Wang, 2022). This understanding confirms that spiritual leadership in higher education needs to be developed as a value-based conceptual framework that considers academic cultural dynamics, moral challenges, and a transcendental and inclusive vision (Ali et al., 2020; Bush & Sargsyan, 2020; Komives & Sowcik, 2020; Tuấn & Vo, 2020).

Studies on spiritual leadership have been conducted more extensively in the business, industrial, and corporate sectors (Abubakar, 2024; Oh & Wang, 2020). Ali et al. (2022) and Prabhu & Modem (2022) explain how integrating spiritual values into the conceptual framework in academic environments has not yet yielded a comprehensive understanding. Furthermore, Jiao & Lee (2021) and Khaddam (2023) emphasize that the normative approach to ethics in leadership in higher education requires an in-depth explanation. The leadership framework in the education sector, which tends to be transactional and bureaucratic, has not addressed spiritual needs or fostered moral reflection in strategic decision-making. Hence, a more analytical and contextual conceptualization effort is needed to develop spiritual leadership as a value-based leadership model in higher education. This model will strengthen personal integrity and foster collaboration based on human values and academic achievement (Ahmed et al., 2023; Kolomboy et al., 2023; Zhang & Yang, 2020). It emphasizes the importance of a leadership paradigm rooted in the moral mission of education and relevant to the complexity of academic governance (Javed et al., 2021; Srivastava & Madan, 2022).

Spiritual leadership fosters empathy, service, and integrity to preserve the quality of relationships among the academic community and the meaning of education (Fenech et al., 2023; Sunaengsih et al., 2021). However, limited studies on spiritual leadership in higher education highlight the need for a conceptual framework that addresses the ethical and moral concerns of the educational community (Bou et al., 2024; Howell, 2022). This understanding raises four research questions. (1) How does the leadership paradigm shape educational management practices? (2) How is spirituality conceptualized in academic leadership? (3) How does spiritual leadership theory explain the dynamics of leadership in higher education? (4) What concepts are needed to strengthen spiritual leadership theory in higher education?. The objectives of this study are to examine and expand the theory of spiritual leadership as it applies to higher education. The findings provide a conceptual

model for developing academic leadership practices that are aligned with the humanistic vision of higher education.

## **B. METHODS**

This study uses a qualitative conceptual approach with a narrative literature review design to analyze relevant literature and develop a conceptual framework of spiritual leadership in higher education (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The review was conducted systematically by systematically reviewing the scientific literature, including peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, conference proceedings, dissertations, and policy documents related to spiritual leadership, higher education leadership, and value-based approaches (Miles et al., 2014). Data were obtained through the Scopus and Google Scholar databases, which were determined purposively. The inclusion criteria were scientific sources published within the last 10 years that discuss the concept of spiritual leadership or leadership values, and that are relevant to the context of higher education. Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria included non-academic popular literature, non-peer-reviewed articles, and articles without a theoretical basis. The analysis used a conceptual thematic analysis, followed by a critical conceptual synthesis. Thematic analysis involved identifying, grouping, and categorizing the main themes that emerged from the literature. A critical conceptual synthesis was conducted by identifying relationships among concepts and constructing an integrative theoretical framework. The initial step was a literature review through mapping the leadership paradigm in higher education. It was followed by analyzing the understanding of spirituality in academic leadership and evaluating the suitability of spiritual leadership in higher education. Finally, an integrative conceptual synthesis of the construction was carried out, and the value-based dimensions of spiritual leadership in higher education were articulated.

## **C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Leadership Paradigms in Higher Education**

Academic leaders play an important role in maintaining institutional integrity and facilitating intellectual and moral transformation (Andenoro & Skendall, 2020; Bryman, 2007). It demonstrates that higher education leadership has complex, multidimensional characteristics that extend beyond managerial capacity and administrative skills. Higher education institutions are responsible for developing knowledge and character, helping students explore meaning and integrate humanistic values. The demands of ethical development in the academic community cannot be met by a leadership approach that focuses solely on structural efficiency and resource management (Dibaba et al., 2024; Schophuizen et al., 2022).

Leadership in educational institutions tends to foster transactional, bureaucratic, and technocratic practices that contribute to the crisis of values (Liu et al., 2021; Mintz, 2021). This condition has the potential to degrade spiritual and humanistic values in fulfilling the educational mission (Ahmed et al., 2023; Ballesteros et al., 2023). Astra et al. (2024) also describe how creating an ethical, reflective, and transformative educational environment is a real challenge for educational leaders. Therefore, a framework of spiritual leadership

grounded in values, transcendental motivation, and ethical awareness is required to overcome the crisis in higher education leadership (Muti'ah & Triatna, 2021). This leadership model will equip leaders with ethical sensitivity as agents of cultural and moral transformation.

### **Conceptualizing Spirituality in Academic Leadership**

Spirituality in leadership is related to religiosity, the deepest dimension of human existence. Spirituality encompasses the meaning of life, existential purpose, and connection to something greater than oneself (Guthrie et al., 2021; Phillips & Hammond, 2023). Ngotho (2023) and Toker (2022) explain that spirituality in academic leadership is grounded in personal integrity, sincerity, presence, and a commitment to service. Spirituality can serve as a moral foundation that supports a leader's courage in facing ethical dilemmas, organizational complexities, and pragmatic pressures that often obscure value orientation (Flores et al., 2022; Owais & Siddiqui, 2021). The spiritual dimension is essential in education, as its essence lies in the process of humanization and character building (Mhatre & Mehta, 2023; Utama et al., 2023). Leaders with spiritual awareness view their position as a power and a mandate to build an inclusive, meaningful, and transformative academic community. Spirituality strengthens empathy and human values, and encourages leaders to think and act for the common good (Falah & Alifah, 2022; Wu & Lee, 2020).

Oh & Wang (2020), Samul & Wangmo (2021), Subhaktiyasa et al. (2024), and Triharjanti & Tjahjono (2023) demonstrate the effectiveness of spiritual leadership in fostering practical, visionary, and morally significant leadership that enhances work engagement, work meaning, job satisfaction, and organizational cohesion. Leaders who integrate spirituality create an inspiring and inclusive work environment, strengthening a sense of belonging, self-esteem, and academic collaboration (Fasieh et al., 2023; Sulasmi & Akrim, 2023). Frantz et al. (2020) and Wang (2020) emphasize the importance of integrating spirituality into leadership by considering cultural dynamics, values, and institutional challenges. Frantz et al. (2020) and Wang (2020) discuss how spirituality can encourage leaders to manage the complexities of higher education more effectively, thereby facilitating intellectual transformation. Based on this understanding, spirituality can be defined as a moral and ethical framework for leaders to build fair, humane, and sustainable communities. Spirituality fosters a character-based academic environment, strengthens human values, and cultivates a shared awareness to achieve educational goals (Emmanuelle, 2024; Habiballa et al., 2021; Zulfqar et al., 2022).

### **Spiritual Leadership Theory in Higher Education**

Spiritual leadership has emerged as a contemporary leadership paradigm that addresses the limitations of traditional leadership approaches (Oh & Wang, 2020; Subhaktiyasa et al., 2023). The integration of spirituality creates leadership that is more holistic, ethical, and transformative (Ribeiro et al., 2020). Spiritual leadership contributes positively to work engagement, satisfaction, loyalty, and organizational climate (Karsono et al., 2022; Siswanto et al., 2023). However, spiritual leadership is still in the conceptual

development stage and has not yet reached academic consensus. Some academics view spiritual leadership as rooted in specific religious values, while others see it as a universal and trans-religious approach (Nurabadi et al., 2021; Yang et al., 2020). Nicolae et al. (2013) state that spiritual leadership has a paradigmatic that needs to be strengthened. Inconsistent terminology, limited measurement tools, and underdeveloped empirical evidence still leave room for debate. It indicates the need for a contextual approach in integrating spirituality into leadership, especially in higher education settings (Ahmed et al., 2023; Azzuhri et al., 2024). Spiritual leadership needs to be developed through a critical understanding of social dynamics, pluralistic values, and ethical challenges in academic institutions as a framework for operational and transformative leadership (Samul, 2024; Supriyanto et al., 2020).

Spiritual leadership stems from the Western epistemological tradition, which tends to promote individualistic philosophy and personal spirituality. This view contrasts with the Eastern, which emphasizes collective and contextual spirituality (Alfarajat & Emeagwali, 2021; Siswanto, 2022). Spirituality in the Western framework is commonly understood as a personal search for meaning and self-actualization. Meanwhile, from the Eastern perspective, spirituality tends to be integrated into social life and communal values, such as harmony, collectivity, and ecological relationships. This difference poses a challenge to the implementation of cross-cultural spiritual leadership, as spiritual expression depends on social constructs and local values. Spirituality in some organizations is also deliberately separated from religiosity to maintain scientific neutrality and prevent ideological exclusivity (Oh & Wang, 2020; Prabhu & Modem, 2022; Siddique et al., 2024). However, the epistemological debate between spirituality and religiosity remains significant because an overly universal approach may overlook local cultural nuances. Furthermore, an overly religious approach risks marginalizing groups with different beliefs (Sandra, 2022). This reinforces the criticism that spiritual leadership is a concept that remains vague, inconsistently defined, and fraught with epistemological conflicts (Aslam et al., 2023; Zou et al., 2020). Thus, spiritual leadership requires a more reflective, contextually grounded theoretical articulation across various social, cultural, and institutional realities (Subhaktiyasa et al., 2023; Yang et al., 2020; Yusefi et al., 2022).

The Fry spiritual leadership model is currently the most influential and widely used. This model consists of three main dimensions (vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love) that build spiritual wellbeing through the meaning of work (calling) and social attachment (membership). These three dimensions generate intrinsic motivation, which increases engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational cohesion across sectors such as business, the military, and health (Candrawati et al., 2024; Riski et al., 2023; Sandra, 2022; Yasin et al., 2022). Leaders who incorporate spiritual values can strengthen members' psychological capital and commitment, thereby impacting organizational performance and harmony. However, empirical evidence of Fry's spiritual leadership in education is still limited (Ashta & Parekh, 2023; Oh & Wang, 2020; Yusefi et al., 2022). This phenomenon creates a paradox, given that education is a domain of moral mission, transcendental values, and an orientation towards holistic human character development. Hence, exploring how Fry's leadership model translates into education is crucial to understanding the complexity of neglected values. Spiritual leadership functions as a catalyst for universal motivation,

which must be adaptively repositioned to respond to the uniqueness of value systems, relational complexity, and ethical dilemmas intertwined within academic institutions.

Criticism of the Fry model generally focuses on its limitations in accommodating the complexity of educational institutions operating in a multidimensional space (Karsono et al., 2022; Zeid et al., 2022). In fact, the relatively flat structure of educational organizations requires flexibility on the part of actors to carry out transformative roles in integrating intellectual and character development with the spiritual dimension of students. Thus, the application of the Fry model is not sufficient to capture the dynamics of values and power relations in the educational environment (Siswanto, 2022; Wang et al., 2021). Although the discourse on spiritual leadership in education shows a positive trend, synthesis in educational management requires a deep understanding. A crucial problem arises when this concept often overlaps theoretically with other leadership models, which can obscure the distinction of spiritual leadership as an independent theoretical entity (Subhaktiyasa et al., 2023; Sutomo & Javlean, 2022). Hence, conceptual rearticulation and empirical validation are needed to respond to various ethical and spiritual dilemmas in educational institutions (Karsono et al., 2022; Li & Ju, 2023).

The challenge in spiritual leadership lies in methodological limitations, as most instruments are adaptations of different constructs (Chang et al., 2021; Ullah et al., 2023). This condition causes contamination of unclear constructs between spiritual concepts and non-spiritual indicators (Nicolae et al., 2013). Instruments that are too general tend to fail to capture the essence of spirituality, such as transcendental reflection, ethical awareness, and collective meaning. These limitations also impact educational leadership, which requires individual motivation and facilitates value dialogue, character development, and collective spiritual growth (Arthachinda & Charoensukmongkol, 2024; Riasudeen & Singh, 2020). The complexity of educational institutions requires an approach that can capture spirituality as a social and institutional experience (Adnan et al., 2020; Subhaktiyasa et al., 2023; Zhang & Yang, 2020). Therefore, the development of contextually relevant dimensions is imperative to operationalize spiritual leadership scientifically and accurately within the educational ecosystem.

### **Toward a Contextualized Value-Based Spiritual Leadership Framework**

Although Fry's spiritual leadership model has provided a solid foundation for the integration of intrinsic values, empirical validation in the dimensions of vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love still faces conceptual challenges when confronted with the complex reality of higher education. Academic institutions today are not merely pursuing productivity, but also functioning as discursive spaces for character development, ethical reflection, and social responsibility (Vassallo, 2021). Therefore, this study reconceptualizes spiritual leadership as more contextually grounded by integrating the Soulful Directive and Organizational Inclusiveness dimensions. The Soulful Directive dimension emphasizes the urgency of strategic leadership that can touch academics' inner space and ethical awareness (Acharya, 2024). Meanwhile, Organizational Inclusiveness responds to the need for social justice in modern educational institutions, where leaders must embrace epistemological and spiritual diversity (Johnson, 2021; Subhaktiyasa et al., 2023). The integration of these two

dimensions transforms spiritual leadership into a framework that humanizes and strengthens ethical commitment to the holistic development of the academic community.

Soulful Directive represents leadership capacity rooted in deep inner reflection and internalization of ethical values amid institutional complexity. This dimension is fundamentally different from the conventional concept of vision; it emphasizes the contemplative aspect that unites personal meaning with the institution's collective goals (Prasetya, 2024). Amid administrative challenges and moral dilemmas, ranging from issues of academic freedom to the advocacy for vulnerable groups, educational leaders are required to consider spiritual dimensions that transcend managerial logic (Sharif et al., 2021). Drawing on the traditions of authentic and servant leadership, Soulful Directive centers self-awareness and moral integrity in decision-making (Roberge et al., 2021). Furthermore, this dimension transforms leadership practices into a humanitarian effort capable of fostering justice and deep meaning in educational management.

Organizational inclusivity emerged as a critical response to the limitations of conventional spiritual leadership, which tends to be trapped in individualistic dimensions. This overly personal orientation has proven incapable of unraveling structural problems in educational bureaucracy. Given that higher education is inherently pluralistic, with diversity in culture, spirituality, and epistemology, spiritual leadership is required to go beyond merely expressing personal values. It must be manifested in inclusive, fair, and democratic policies, systems, and institutional cultures (Polat & Turhaner, 2024). Within the framework of Organizational Inclusivity, the scope of spirituality is expanded beyond interpersonal relationships to participatory institutional structures capable of breaking down barriers to decision-making exclusivity (Шулекина et al., 2021). Educational leaders are now required to not only be visionary but also to be involved in social spaces that empower the entire academic community. The integrity between spirituality and structural equality can transform educational institutions into spaces of collective justice and shared spirituality (Jiao et al., 2022).

Soulful Directive and Organizational Inclusivity fundamentally reinforce the relevance of spiritual leadership frameworks in responding to the dynamics of higher education institutions. Through Soulful Directive, leadership is no longer merely a managerial matter but a manifestation of reflective spirituality that harmonizes leaders' inner space with an ethical and transformative institutional vision (Jemal et al., 2025). Meanwhile, the dimension of Organizational Inclusivity serves as a reinforcing pillar, ensuring that academic structures and campus culture continue to uphold diversity of values and fair participation (Moreno, 2025). These two dimensions intrinsically foster a more humane and responsible institutional ecosystem (Moreno, 2025). This conceptual strengthening develops educational leadership that is more reflective, ethical, and based on social justice (Meza et al., 2021; Proches et al., 2024). This approach is relevant in higher education ecosystems that shape the academic skills, character, moral awareness, and responsibility of future generations.

### **1. Integrative Dimensions of Spiritual Leadership in Higher Education**

Spiritual leadership is essential in higher education to provide managerial effectiveness and facilitate value transformation within the academic community.

Spiritual leadership, with five dimensions (Vision, Hope/Faith, Altruistic Love, Soulful Directive, and Organizational Inclusiveness), synergistically forms a paradigm of leadership that is structurally and institutionally transformative. This approach places leadership in shaping an ethical, inclusive, and equitable environment. Soulful Directive is a new conceptual framework that emphasizes reflection on values and moral sensitivity in decision-making. Given that leadership policies often address issues of ethics, social justice, and institutional identity, policy directions originating from inner awareness are crucial for maintaining harmony between organisational strategy and transcendental values (Karsono et al., 2022). Aligned with this, Organizational Inclusivity is a spiritual expression in institutional structures and cultures that ensure justice, equality, and sustainable representation. This dimension requires leaders to eliminate exclusionary practices in policy, selection processes, and decision-making. This approach makes the campus an active and participatory space for diverse identities (Ayeni & Eden, 2024; Mardones & Campos-Requena, 2020).

Spiritual leadership with these five dimensions offers a response to the complexity and needs of higher education. This paradigm does not merely pursue administrative efficiency, but revives collective spirituality through value transformation, depth of moral reflection, and strengthening of social responsibility. This model repositions the role of educational leaders to not only manage institutions technically, but also to lead with depth of soul. This model is essential for creating authentic, ethical, and meaningful change in an increasingly dynamic academic ecosystem.

## **2. Spiritual Wellbeing as Institutional Outcome**

Fry's spiritual leadership shows that spiritual wellbeing is the primary outcome to be achieved through a leadership process that is intrinsically motivating and rooted in noble values. This framework defines spiritual wellbeing through the indicators of calling and membership. Calling refers to an individual's experience of deep meaning and purpose in their work (Krishnani, 2023; Samul & Wangmo, 2021). Calling has a significant contribution to improving psychological wellbeing, job satisfaction, and individual resilience in the face of work pressure (Jurčec et al., 2023; Sutin et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2023). Meanwhile, membership emphasises the importance of social connectedness and belonging to a respectful and supportive work community, strengthening social identity and reducing the risk of psychological isolation (Dezutter et al., 2022; Walker et al., 2024). Calling and membership connect the personal and relational dimensions of an organization, which manifest in work engagement and conducive social relationships. This spiritual leadership creates a work environment that maintains personal integrity and collective wellbeing through the fulfilment of meaning (calling) and togetherness (membership) in the professional space (Dezutter et al., 2022; Jurčec et al., 2023; Krishnani, 2023; Samul & Wangmo, 2021).

Fry's spiritual leadership is understood to create spiritual wellbeing, but this approach is limited to the complexities of higher education. The academic environment encompasses diversity in identity, values, epistemology, and aspirations among faculty, students, and educational staff (Malik, 2023; Rozikan et al., 2024). Educational institutions demand a more holistic understanding of spirituality that differs from the

corporate world (Al-Thani, 2025; Hobson & Nieuwerburgh, 2022). Calling is believed to be a search for meaning, academic freedom, and recognition of individual uniqueness. The concept of membership as a sense of belonging to a community is not necessarily uniformly recognized. This concept arises from academic pressure, competition, and even feelings of impostor syndrome, which are often experienced by academics (Orsini, 2023; Roos & Borkoski, 2021). Spiritual wellbeing in higher education needs to encompass broader dimensions, including emotional, existential, and social factors inherent in the dynamics of educational institutions (Lourebam & Ete, 2021; Rajan et al., 2024). This framework can accommodate a learning environment that is spiritually supportive, reflective, and inclusive (Ramesh & Balamurugan, 2024). Calling and membership need to be expanded with a framework that is more adaptable to the plurality of values and realities in contemporary education. This is important to ensure that spiritual leadership can help shape a transformative and equitable academic climate (Malik, 2023; Orsini, 2023).

A more comprehensive and contextual alternative for spiritual wellbeing is the approach developed by Gomez & Fisher (2003). This spiritual wellbeing provides a multidimensional framework that encompasses four domains: personal, communal, environmental, and transcendental. This concept is believed to be more relevant to education because it can capture the complexity of diverse identities, values, and spiritual experiences in academic settings (Heng et al., 2021; Pattaraarchachai & Viwatpanich, 2021). The personal domain focuses on individual reflection on the meaning and purpose of life. This domain is particularly important for students and educators as they navigate identity formation and academic aspirations (Rozikan et al., 2024). The communal domain emphasizes the quality of interpersonal relationships built on love, honesty, and justice, which are the foundations of a collaborative academic culture (Gomez & Watson, 2022). The environmental domain invites individuals to build harmony with nature and their surroundings, which aligns with the mission of sustainable, ecologically responsible education (Božek et al., 2020).

Meanwhile, the transcendental domain connects individuals to forces greater than themselves, whether God, universal moral values, or other spiritual principles. This dimension provides a sense of existential connectedness and a deeper orientation toward meaning (Coppola et al., 2021). This framework of spiritual wellbeing is consistent with a holistic approach to higher education that can adapt to diverse values, cultures, and beliefs (Cariñgal et al., 2021). Meanwhile, calling and membership are more in line with functional and structural corporate contexts (Zach & Rosenblum, 2021). Gomez and Fisher's concept can accommodate the dynamics of identity and academic freedom that characterize educational institutions. This approach provides a more applicable conceptual basis for higher education management.

Gomez & Fisher (2003) formulated four domains of spiritual wellbeing: personal, communal, environmental, and transcendental. These dimensions encompass the existential, relational, ecological, and transcendental aspects of human spirituality. This approach reflects the reality of academic life, which involves interactions across values, social responsibility, and scholarship. Spiritual wellbeing is the main outcome of

spiritual leadership, which is determined by five dimensions (Vision, Hope/Faith, Altruistic Love, Soulful Directive, and Organizational Inclusiveness). Each of these dimensions contributes directly to the four domains of spiritual wellbeing. Vision and Hope/Faith provide meaningful direction and motivation (personal). Altruistic Love strengthens empathetic and ethical relationships between individuals (communal). Soulful Directive encourages ethical awareness of the impact of decisions on the social and ecological environment (environment). Meanwhile, Organizational Inclusivity opens space for the recognition of transcendental values in institutional governance (transcendental) (Bahmani et al., 2021; Murdiono & Suparno, 2023).

The addition of the Soulful Directive and the Organisational Inclusivity dimension can help higher education institutions overcome the challenges they face. The Soulful Directive emphasizes contemplative reflection and moral wisdom in leadership, while organizational inclusiveness emphasizes the importance of relational justice and diversity in institutional practices (Bahmani et al., 2021; Murdiono & Suparno, 2023; Siswanto, 2022; Yusefi et al., 2022). These two dimensions expand the meaning of spiritual leadership from a motivational tool to a transformational paradigm that encompasses the structural, relational, and systemic aspects of educational organisations. Integrating the five dimensions of spiritual leadership with the four domains of spiritual wellbeing produces a value-based framework that is personally transformative and institutionally effective. This framework supports the development of ethical, inclusive, and humanistic educational leadership and aligns with the mission of higher education to shape a just and civilised society (Sutomo & Javlean, 2022; Utami et al., 2022). Therefore, spiritual leadership is theoretically valid and applicable for supporting decision-making, policy formulation, and the development of institutional culture in academic settings.

#### **D. CONCLUSIONS**

This study aims to examine and broaden the understanding of value-based spiritual leadership in higher education institutions. These findings indicate that the leadership paradigm is limited in addressing the moral, relational, and transcendental dimensions in academic institutions. Spiritual leadership has provided a normative framework, but higher education governance must also attend to epistemic, communal, and ethical complexities. This study presents a reconstructed spiritual leadership model comprising five dimensions: vision, hope/faith, altruistic love, soulful directive, and organisational inclusiveness. The integration of the soulful and inclusiveness dimensions provides reflective depth in university governance. Furthermore, spiritual wellbeing, as the main outcome, is situated within a multidimensional framework that encompasses the personal, communal, environmental, and transcendental domains. Although this study is conceptual and non-empirical, the propositions offered provide a basis for academic leaders to implement more ethical and humanistic policies. Future research agendas should focus on empirically testing these new dimensions across various higher education landscapes.

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