

# Monitoring the Intermediary Role of Interpersonal Dimensions in Assessing the Impact of Spirituality on Leadership Styles

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## ABSTRACT

*The authors in the present study attempted to contribute to the existing research on spirituality and leadership by considering professional course students (MBA & Engineering) in terms of their spirituality, leadership styles and interpersonal behavior dimensions. This study by considering these concepts and empirically test the model assesses the relationship between spirituality, leadership and interpersonal dimensions. To test whether there is a relationship among the three or not researchers used structural equational modeling and hierarchical regression analysis. Researchers in the present study found that spirituality has not any effect on interpersonal dimensions (expressed & wanted), while spirituality affected the leadership styles. Furthermore, researchers used hierarchical regression analysis to find the intermediating role of the impact of spirituality on leadership styles and found significant effect of interpersonal dimensions (expressed & wanted.)*

**Key words:** Spirituality, Leadership styles, Interpersonal behavior dimensions

The current business environment's focus is on various abstract concepts like emotional intelligence, spirituality, cognitive behavior, interpersonal dimension skills, multiple intelligence and relationship among themselves and business concepts like leadership styles, organizational citizenship behavior and performance management. It is also true that after independence India has expanded in terms of science and technology. But it is also true that these developments gave rise to loneliness and weaken the bonds among people, raise the weaker spiritual life of individuals. According to Yasuno (2008) development in technology raises the production of nuclear weapons and other destructive weapons. These weapons become cause of destruction of human life as well as environment consequently, humanity's spiritual life has destructed and consequences like loneliness and destroyed social life arise. Furthermore, he said that transformation of people is required to change the external world for the better development hence, arises the need to understand spirituality in organization and society as well. Past researches suggest that high level of positive life energy affecting the human physiology as well as psychology state is Spirituality. Traditionally, acquiring power and privilege was the major feature of leadership. Recent years are the witness of gaining importance of spirituality in leadership, education as well as management research area.

## Spirituality

Whether in the development of society and organization need for spirituality exist or not? The focus of present study is on this argument only. In today's busy schedule where work is preferred over

family, employees become the victim of work life stress that destroyed the job security and harmony at the workplace. In that stage beyond the set rules and regulation something is required called spirituality. Promoting spirituality in the workplace is to declare that traditional approach to work place does not persist any more. It is an attempt to re-engineer the thought processes of employees. Therefore, in management literature spiritual leadership is playing an important role.

Fairholm (1996) defines spirituality as the vital, energizing force or principle in an individual that affects identity, values and memories of an individual. He stressed on the role of spirituality in work life balance. De Klerk (2005) defined spirituality as..... spirituality is to include a broad range of concept and values such as transcendence, balance, sacredness, altruism, meaning in life, living with a deep connectedness to the universe and the awareness of something or someone greater than oneself (God) that provides energy pp (65 – 66). Researchers have defined spirituality in more than hundred ways. According to some it is the inner self awareness that connects the inner self and the world (Kakabadse et al., 2002; Fernando et al., 2009). However there has been an argument on spirituality is same as religion however, recently researchers associated religion with formal religion whereas, spirituality predominantly with closeness with God and inner feeling with the world and living organisms (Reave, 2005). Furthermore, religion is associated with only specific rules of religion while, spirituality is generic in nature and may focus on more than one religious approach.

Though roots of spirituality are in religion, but in context with workplace it is not associated with religion (Kakabadse et al., 2002).

Spirituality is notably considered in management as well as among researchers. But the term is ambiguous in nature and means different to different people (Hart & Brady, 2005). According to them, spirituality does not mean confined to religion only but human spirituality formalize religion and form the foundation of human being. They argue on the importance of spirituality in managing organizational life, as it is inherent part of human being. They defined spirituality in an archetypal perspective, as spirituality means self – awareness of one's basic psychological nature. They tried to establish a connection between human psyche and spirituality. The work of the Swiss psychologist Carl Jung's (1875 – 1961) personality theory defined human psyche.

#### **A thin line between spirituality and leadership**

The present paper argues that if one knows the spirituality of any individual through any measurement scale one can work on the same to achieve personal as well as organizational goals. The purpose of the current paper is to highlight the impact of spirituality on leadership formed. According to Burke (2006) spiritual leadership focus on the value of human being and what humans really mean by growth and development, moreover, what should be the value and power distribution that work in the growth and development of organization and society as well. Approach of the present paper on spirituality is not from a religious point of view but on the faith that exists among human being and plays a significant role on the personality development as well as values exhibited by them in organization as well as in society. Why spirituality is studied in concern with the leadership as it is the leader's challenge to look after the performance management as well as employee development. As Burke (2006) said that spirituality defines the feeling of being as well as affects the effective communication. Spirituality is not a thing that can be measured by an instrument but it is the inherent property of any individual that is inbuilt within oneself. Reave (2005) stressed on spirituality in leadership by stating that it can be included in leadership through the leader's behavior such as integrity, and by expressing caring and concern towards the followers. Spirituality does not mean the formal rules and regulations of religion but it stresses on the development of instinct of human being to progress the organizational life. Spirituality in leadership studies is defined somewhat different from religion in order to avoid any conflict between religion and leadership styles (sendjaya, 2007). Religiousness is a belief that there is a higher power outside one's self whose influence guide one's

actions and with whom one has a relationship. Leadership is the ability to influence and develop people, teams and organizations to achieve a worldwide purpose (Cacioppe, 1999). Leadership has a key role in facilitating the wisdom and spirituality in the workplace. However, till date, no clear connections were found between workplace spirituality and leadership (Sendjaya, 2007). Whether spirituality have to do something with leadership or not? Before few years, both spirituality and leadership have not any connection with each other. But a number of researches have been done on the existence of relationship between the two from the past few years.

#### **Leadership and spirituality: a worldwide approach**

Most leadership theories, transformational, transactional and laissez – faire focus on the development and motivating the followers. But they gave less attention towards spirituality. Researchers have done a lot studies in order to find the impact of leadership styles on the employee performance and how it can be used to improve the organizational outcomes. Spirituality is what which deals with the effectiveness of leadership. Spirituality is something that is beyond the self. Leaders today, losing the values, morals, mission and vision to do the work. Spirituality is what deals with the improvement of personal values and understanding of self and work towards the integration of self and group development. As Fairholm (1996) worked on spiritual leadership having managers (corporate as well as government). In his survey he found that focus of spiritual leaders is on integrity, justice and independence as well as also found that spiritual leaders strengthen the follower's commitment through clarifying their moral identities. Spiritual leaders are high on moral values, they don't compromise collaborate and accommodate where their moral values confront. Hence, spiritual leaders are superior in values than the normal leaders. Leaders are the back bone of organization. Indeed, 360 degree feedback, and achievement of organizational goals are some of the measures of leadership effectiveness. But spiritual values such as integrity, caring, respect and healthy conversation are the only mode to achieve leadership effectiveness. And past researches show that there is an alignment between the two terms spirituality and leadership. Why spirituality is associated with leadership as past researches showed that in spiritual organizations leader's scores are higher than in others in measuring leadership effectiveness (Reave, 2005; Druspat, 1994).

Spirituality is the inner spirit or being of an individual, an inner vital component of an individual's total personality. Spirituality was an

underneath concept only within the religion and philosophy but as the time passed it sprang in other fields also. And from the last two decades among researchers spirituality is the important concept of organization and society as well to be considered. According to Nanduri and Mmerek (2013) man discover within himself the values with time which has direct connection to the reality of supreme power which is responsible for all creations in the universe, religions called it God and spiritualistic super consciousness. Spirituality is the latest concept that enters the management. It is also recently added in a number of national as well as international conferences, and a number of researches till date has been done on the finding some relationship between spirituality, leadership and personality. Apart from that yoga and meditation also found to provide some positive results in the development of spiritual values. Spiritual awareness of a person can be measured and the scores obtained can be practically used. According to them an ideal and effective leader is the one who possesses purity of heart, individual character, courage and spirit of adventure, patience, determination, sacrifice. These are also important as the leader should also be free from jealousy and greed. In today's materialistic world where everyone is after only physical, intellectual, financial skills and eloquent capabilities. However there is a conflict whether spirituality should be part of management and leadership or not. As many people considered spirituality as a religious concept and have to do only with personal that it can not be considered into an open conversation at work. However others feel that spirituality is required for leaders for their deep understanding and clear conversation. Spirituality should be a part of organization (Nanduri and Mmerek, 2013). Countries like America faces crises in leadership in areas like politics, government, business and religion because of choosing leaders for wrong positions. They were chosen because of their charisma rather than their character and because of their image instead of integrity (Nanduri and Mmerek, 2013). They found a positive correlation of higher managerial values with higher spiritual awareness.

### **Spirituality, Leadership styles and Interpersonal dimensions: Hypothesis**

#### **Spirituality**

Spirituality can be measured in seven dimensions: vision, altruistic, love, hope/faith, membership, meaning/ calling, organizational commitment and productivity (Sedeghifar et al., 2014). Sendjaya (2007) found that there is a higher power outside one's self whose influence guides one's actions and with whom one has a relationship and also a sense of connectedness between the internal self and the external world. It is named as

spirituality. Fry (2003) defined spiritual leadership as comprising the values, attitudes and behaviors that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one's self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership. In the present study three factors were researched by the researchers: (i) Immateriality – It is the connection of the inner self of a person with the supernatural world. (ii) Spiritual awareness – It means individual feel himself/herself as a part of supernatural power and aware of it. (iii) Religiosity – It means faith in the existence of God and engage himself/herself in the religious activities. In the present study these three factors of spirituality are taken into consideration to study their relationship with leadership styles and interpersonal dimensions.

#### **Leadership**

Most important aspect for organization to focus is human resources for growth and development, where raw material (human resources) must be refined and nurtured for optimum performance in the organization. Organizations can performed this task only by having leaders who can align the organizational and followers goals in the same direction. Barnett (2011) defined leadership as a process by which one individual influences others toward the attainment of group or organizational goals. As organizations cannot succeed without their employees putting up their appropriate efforts and right commitment. However no one leadership style is ideal for every situation, since a leader may have knowledge and skills to act effectively in one situation but perform effectively in other situation. Burke (2006) defines four leadership functions: 1. Characteristics like challenge, confront, risk taking and self-disclosure are attributed by emotional stimulation; 2. support, praise, protection, care, genuineness, concern are the characteristics of caring; 3. Explain what is required, clarifying the doubts, interpretation are attributed by meaning attribution and 4. Setting rules, goals, norms, procedures are the characteristics of executive function. In the present study focus of the researchers mainly on the two leadership styles: Transformational and Transactional and their duties and responsibilities. Transformational leaders work on boosting the morale, motivation of their followers, while transactional leaders focus on the follower's self – interests. Transformational leaders stresses on what you can do for your country whereas, transactional leader, what your country can do for you. Hence there is an enhancing need to become more transformational leader than transactional (Bass, 1999). Multifactor leadership questionnaire implies that every leader displays both transactional and transformational factors to some extent but it involves more of one and less of the other (Bass, 1999). Modification in leadership theories has been

continuously done from the last hundreds of years. But still, we are not able to define leadership in one definition. Bass (1999) tried to differentiate leadership in three styles. Transformational, transactional and laissez – faire. More than 200 different definitions of leadership have been discovered till date. A number of leadership styles have been discovered so far namely: situational, servant, transformational & transactional & charismatic. In the present study researchers focus on the two leadership styles: Transformational, Transactional.

1. Transformational leadership style: Out of the two it is the most popular style that is studied and researched by academicians and researchers over the last few years. Transformational leader raises the follower's motivation to get the desired outcomes and also communicate the methods to get the desired outcomes. It works on the Maslow's need of hierarchy theory. Leaders motivate the followers from lower – level need for safety and security to higher needs for achievement and self – actualization (McCleskey, 2014). Transformational leadership further categorized into four types (McCleskey, 2014; Bass, 1999 & Bass 1985): (i) Idealized influences or charisma – in this style leader act as role models to the followers, building trust among leaders and followers. (ii) Inspirational motivation – leaders communicate inspirationally what are the goals to be achieved to the followers. Leaders are strong in communication skills that allow them to communicate their vision to the followers in a persuasive way. Enthusiasm and optimism are two main features of inspirational motivation. (iii) Intellectual stimulation – leaders work in sync with the followers and motivate them to have creative ideas and also leader takes risks by following followers' creative ideas. Leaders enhance followers' efforts by reframing the existing problem into a new framework through innovation. (iv) Individualized consideration – leader act as a coach or mentor and pays attention what are the followers' needs. However transformational leadership has been criticized in a number of ways. Yulk (1999) observed that leader's inspirational communication unclear at work place and little influence of transformational leadership found on groups and teams whilst, Brandt and Laiho (2013) studied that transformational leadership benefits the organization by increasing the productivity, lowering the turnover rates, enhancing job satisfaction and motivation of employees.

2. Transactional leadership: Bass (1985) identified that transactional leaders show low level of motivation and leader activity when compared with transformational leadership style. It is the exchange between leaders and followers to fulfill objectives and the required tasks through motivating the followers by giving rewards (Bass, 1985). It is further

categorized into two types (Bass, 1985; Judge and Bono, 2000): (i) Contingent reward – Rewards and incentives are given on achievement of leader's expectations to the followers. (ii) Management – by – exception – Leader interfere only when problem becomes serious.

In the present paper researchers examine the three characteristics of Individuals namely: spirituality, leadership styles and interpersonal dimensions. Hence, the following hypothesis arises:

**H1:** There is an impact of spirituality on interpersonal dimensions.

**H2:** Spirituality has an impact on leadership styles (Transformational & Transactional).

**H3:** Spirituality affects leadership style considering the intermediating role of interpersonal dimensions.

### Interpersonal dimensions

In this study interpersonal behavior dimension of students was measured using FIRO – B developed by Schutz in 1958. The FIRO – B instrument measures the interpersonal behavior of an individual on six dimensions – expressed inclusion, wanted inclusion, expressed control, wanted control, expressed affection and wanted affection. Because of varied implications in different areas FIRO – B has been used in diverse areas such as measuring relationship between leadership and interpersonal relationship orientations using FIRO – B (Ahmetoglu, 2010); FIRO – B and leadership model (Sayeed, 2010); study of team performance (Mansfield, 2012); interpersonal needs of management students (Sharma, 2011); social skill preferences among auditors (Siegel, 2011). Schutz proposed an interpersonal relationship theory in 1958 named FIRO – B (fundamental interpersonal relations orientation). This instrument has three dimensions (Inclusion, Control and Affection). Further two sub scales in each dimension: (a) expressed & (b) wanted. The basic assumption of FIRO – B model is that individuals try to establish a congruous relationship with others in social interactions (Siegel, 2001). To establish this individuals maintain a compatible relationships among three dimensions of FIRO – B namely: inclusion, control and affection to avoid conflict. According to Schutz (1958) the inclusion dimension of FIRO –B instrument represents an individual's need for interaction with others. In doing so, need to be included in other's activities and include other's in your activities arise, these termed as "expressed inclusion" and "wanted inclusion". Control is the second dimension of FIRO – B instrument. It refers to need for power and influence. Further two sub scales measures this dimension "expressed control" and "wanted control", indicating to control others to some extent and on the other hand want to be controlled by others to some extent. Affection is the third dimension of FIRO – B

instrument defines the need for intimacy and friendship (Siegel, 2001). Individuals need to express their affection behavior towards other and also need to maintain distance. This dimension measured in “expressed affection” and “wanted affection” sub scales. Mansfield et al., (2012) studied the role of FIRO –B in the performance of team by stating that teams fail due to the lack of clarity in communication resulting in disparity of goals, roles and finally problems in team formation. They stressed on the importance of interpersonal relations in the success of team. In the present study researcher try to find out whether spirituality affects interpersonal dimension or not and also the mediating role of interpersonal dimension in studying the impact of spirituality on leadership styles.

### Methodology

The present study was designed to establish a relationship between spirituality, leadership styles and interpersonal dimensions.

In the present study researchers selected a sample of students from the listed students of professional courses – MBA & Engineering using the simple random sampling technique. A sample of 114 students consisted of 69 males contributed 60.5% to the total sample and 45 females contributed 39.5% of the total sample. Under the supervision of the researchers the questionnaire was filled by the students in the class room with complete instructions for filling the questionnaire provided by the researchers.

### Instrument

Researchers in the present study employed FIRO – B instrument (Schutz, 1958) consisting of 54 items. Out of which 24 items measure the behavioral preferences of respondents toward others. These items are measured on a 6 – point scale ranging from 1 = most people to 6 = nobody, whilst, the other 30 items describes the usual patterns of behavior. They are also completed on a 6 – point scales ranging from 1 = usually to 6 = never.

Leadership styles were assessed using multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ Form 6S; Vinger & Cilliers, 2006). It is a most frequently and well researched and also validated instrument to measure the three leadership styles (transactional, transformational and non – transactional). Spirituality was measured using a questionnaire developed taken an idea from the Nanduri & Mmereki (2013) study, whose reliability was calculated .864.

### Result analysis

Researchers in this study assess whether there is any impact of spirituality on leadership styles and interpersonal dimensions or not. For the same,

structural equational modeling technique was used on a sample of 114 students. Table I shows the regression estimates researchers found through using SEM technique.

Results shows that p value is more than .05 and critical ratio (C.R) is less than 1.96. It means there is no impact of spirituality on expressed and wanted behavior of respondents. It disagrees with the H1 as the results are not significantly related. Researchers found that it is not necessary that an individual high in spiritual values also shows more expressed and wanted towards and from others (appendix III & IV). However, spirituality has an impact on leadership styles. Form table I it is clear that spirituality is significantly related with transformational as well transactional (TFLS, TLS) leadership styles (appendix I & II). As p – value is less than .05 and critical ratio is more than 1.96. it shows that there is an impact of spirituality on leadership styles, as if an individual has more spiritual values then he/she has high transformational as well transactional leadership traits. Hence, H2 is proved. Table II shows whether the model fits well or not. Researchers found that the theoretical model fit well the study. As the p value is more than .05, hence, chi square goodness of fit criteria is fulfilled and the model fit the data well. If we talk about other model fit parameters then form the Table II it is clear comparative fit index (CFI), normal fit index (NFI) and tucker lewis index( TLI) are greater than or near about .9. it shows that the model fit well the data.

On the other hand, root mean square of error of approximation (RMSEA) which should be less than .08 is also found significant and minimum discrepancy is also favorable in the present study. Hence overall the model fits the data well in all the cases (interpersonal dimensions as well as leadership styles).

To test H3 researchers incorporated hierarchical regression analysis. Table III shows the results of hierarchical regression analysis. In the first researchers test for transformational leadership style (TFLS). In the first step researchers entered the spirituality scores of respondents followed by expressed scores of the same. And in the second step researchers entered spirituality scores and later wanted scores of the respondents. Same was done with transactional (TLS) leadership style. It is clear from the table that entry of expressed and wanted variables (control, affection and inclusion) raises the R2 value from 12.4 to 16% and 12.4 to 17.5%. It means variance explained in transformational leadership style is more when spirituality is accompanied by interpersonal dimensions. Researchers also found the prediction equation significant as p value is less than .05. Same is the case of transactional leadership style in which R2 changes from 7.8 to 9.4% in case of spirituality &

expressed and from 7.8 to 14.5% in case of spirituality and wanted interpersonal dimension. Also, researchers found an overall significant prediction equation in case of transactional leadership

style, as p value is less than .05. These results proved the H3 which was spirituality affects the leadership styles while considering the mediating role of interpersonal dimensions.

**Table I: Regression Estimates  
(Impact of spirituality on interpersonal dimensions & leadership styles)**

| Spirituality | Estimate | S.E  | C.R  | P    |
|--------------|----------|------|------|------|
| <b>TEB</b>   | .063     | .108 | .581 | .562 |
| <b>TWB</b>   | .063     | .126 | .504 | .612 |
| <b>TFLS</b>  | .379     | .122 | 3.12 | .002 |
| <b>TLS</b>   | .596     | .186 | 3.21 | .001 |

**Table II: Model fit**

| Spirituality | CMIN   | P    | Min. discrepancy<br>(CMIN/df) | NFI  | RFI  | TLI   | CFI   | RMSEA |
|--------------|--------|------|-------------------------------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>TEB</b>   | 5.36   | .719 | .669                          | .970 | .920 | 1.045 | 1.000 | .000  |
| <b>TWB</b>   | 13.23  | .104 | 1.654                         | .933 | .972 | .922  | .970  | .076  |
| <b>TFLS</b>  | 11.025 | .609 | .848                          | .946 | .884 | 1.02  | 1.000 | .000  |
| <b>TLS</b>   | 9.01   | .061 | 2.253                         | .922 | .709 | .814  | .950  | .105  |

**Table III: Hierarchical regression analysis**

| Dependent variable | Predictor variable                  | R2   | R2 change | F     | Sig. |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|------|-----------|-------|------|
| <b>TFLS</b>        | Spirituality                        | .124 | .124      | 5.156 | .002 |
|                    | Spirituality and expressed behavior | .160 | .036      | 3.373 | .004 |
|                    | Spirituality                        | .124 | .124      | 5.156 | .002 |
|                    | Spirituality and wanted behavior    | .175 | .051      | 3.749 | .002 |
| <b>TLS</b>         | Spirituality                        | .078 | .078      | 3.085 | .030 |
|                    | Spirituality and expressed          | .094 | .015      | 1.823 | .101 |
|                    | Spirituality                        | .078 | .078      | 3.085 | .030 |
|                    | Spirituality and wanted             | .145 | .067      | 2.996 | .010 |

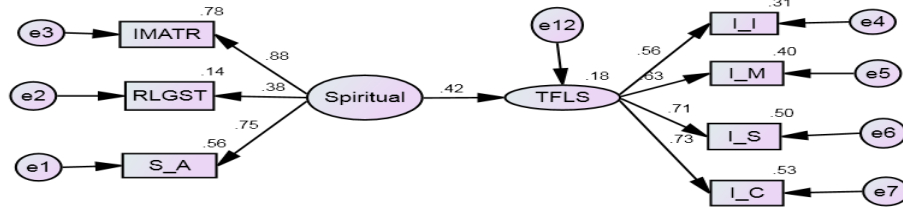
## DISCUSSION

Spirituality is a need of present business environment. Researchers in the present study tried to establish a relationship among spirituality and the management practices leadership style and interpersonal dimensions. From Table I, it was found that H1 was rejected as spiritual does not affect the interpersonal dimensions. From the study it is clear that it does not mean that a respondent who is high on spirituality (religious, spiritual awareness & immateriality) also has more expressed and wanted behavior towards others. While on the other hand impact of spirituality was found on leadership styles (transformational as well as transactional). Hence respondents who are high in spirituality show more transformational and transactional behavior towards their followers. It means that traits like motivation,

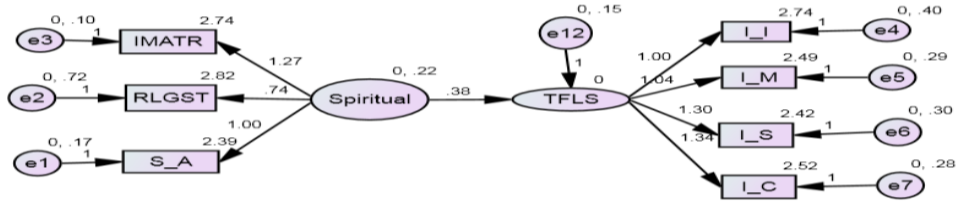
optimism, creativity, mentorship will be more in a spiritual leader than others.

The present study also tried to find out the intermediating role of interpersonal dimensions (expressed and wanted) in spirituality and leadership styles. Table III shows that there is a significant effect of interpersonal dimensions in studying the impact of spirituality on leadership style. It shows that individuals who are spiritual in nature and also high on expressed and wanted behavior toward others shows more transformational and transactional leadership style. Form the present study it is clear that spirituality plays a significant role in leadership styles and also interpersonal dimensions affect the relationship among spirituality and leadership. Leaders who are spiritual in nature will have more transformational as well as transactional leadership characteristics.

**APPENDIX I: Spirituality & Transformational leadership style**

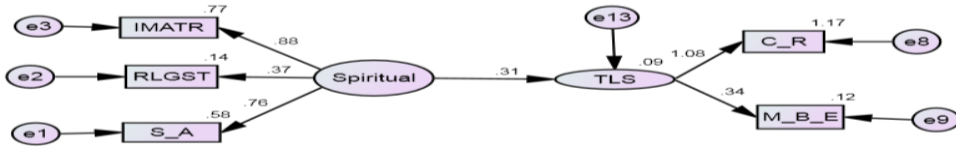


A) Standardized estimates

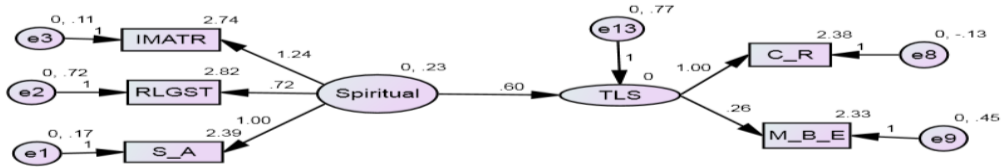


B) Unstandardized estimates

**APPENDIX II (Spirituality & Transactional leadership style)**

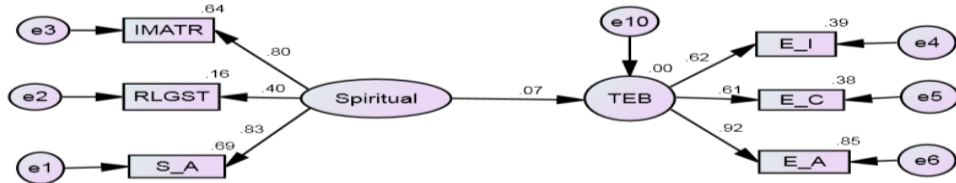


A) Standardized estimates

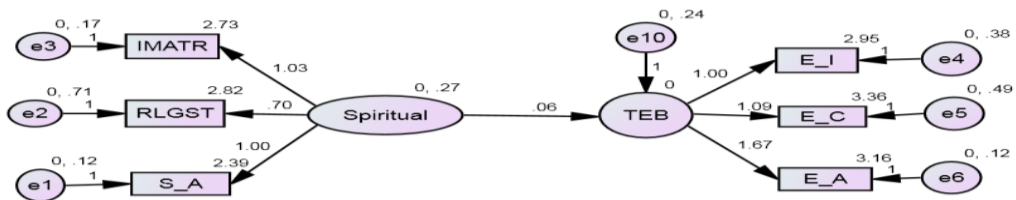


B) Unstandardized estimates

**APPENDIX III (Spirituality & interpersonal expressed dimension)**

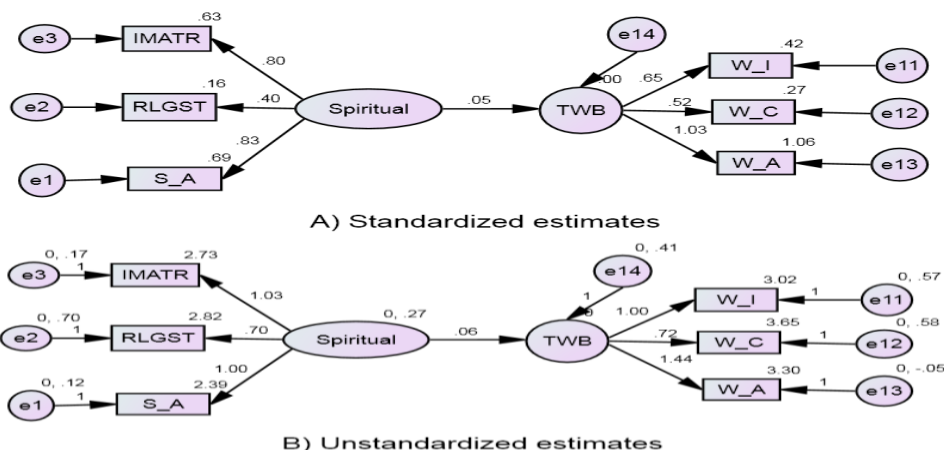


A) Standardize estimates



B) Unstandardize estimates

## APPENDIX IV (Spirituality &amp; interpersonal wanted dimension)



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