The Role of Work Climate in Mediating the Relationship of Spiritual Leadership and Creative Behavior

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
Keywords: work climate, spiritual leadership, creative behavior, employees	Employee creative behavior is a requirement for innovative behavior, which is a form of HR excellence that supports the success and sustainability of the organization. The research aims to analyze the role of work climate in mediating the relationship between spiritual leadership and employee creative behavior. The research used a quantitative approach with subjects of 140 private employees in Semarang who were obtained by incidental sampling. Data was obtained using a questionnaire and analyzed using path analysis and Sobel test. Research results: Workplace climate mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and creative behavior. Organizational leaders must demonstrate spiritual qualities and activities to deal with subordinates' actions in complex and challenging situations so subordinates can behave creatively.
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INTRODUCTION

Organizations operate in a dynamic environment and therefore need to be aware that they are currently facing increasingly complex ambiguities and difficulties. Globalization and automation due to advances in information technology, further increase business uncertainty and risk. Therefore, top management sets innovation as a priority strategy (Pattnaik & Sahoo, 2020) . Innovation requires a variety of individual behaviors, and innovative individuals need to undertake not only the generation of ideas which is important for, but also the promotion and implementation of ideas (Pandey et al., 2019) . Innovation is the result of highly creative employee behavior (Alzghoul, 2017 ; Giannopoulou et al., 2014) . Creativity is a prerequisite for innovation (Yang et al., 2020)

High creative behavior in employees will encourage high employee performance as well. Creative employees can apply new methods to overcome work-related problems and challenges, so that their performance related to the process of generating new ideas is also increased and gives the company a competitive advantage (Pattnaik & Sahoo, 2020) . Apart from being caused by internal factors, employee creative behavior is also the result of interactions with social and organizational factors (Tracey et al., 2001). Leadership is a factor that supports the development of original thinking and situational appropriateness (Alhashedi et al., 2021).

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Strong human resource-based organizations are more competitive and perform better in work and creativity (Stone et al., 2020). This will provide a unique combination of competitive advantages, including increased creativity, lower production costs, and higher revenues (Swalehe, 2021). High creativity becomes an organizational strength, and this motivates managers to pay attention to, encourage and motivate employees (Al-Ajlouni, 2020).

Intrinsic motivation theory reveals that the realization of the archetypal human tendency to learn and be creative involves the leader's philosophy (spiritual leadership) (Suriyankietkaew & Kamtamara, 2019). Intrinsic motivation is related to high performance and creativity (Fischer, 2019). Spiritual leadership tends to foster subordinates' intrinsic motivation by being oriented towards achieving goals, actively participating in knowledge transfer, adopting ideas from new knowledge into the organizational change process through continuous learning and the possibility of growth (Elrehail et al., 2021). To develop productivity and organizational commitment, spiritual leadership always encourages the creation of vision and value alignment within subordinates and team empowerment. Spiritual leadership supports enjoyable work and a harmonious environment, enabling employees to better understand themselves and the meaning of life through their work. Spiritual leadership has an impact on work because it brings personal faith (Samul, 2019).

The purpose of this research is to analyze the strength of the relationship between variables that can change along with changes in the spirituality of leaders. A safe and productive workplace can only develop when managers successfully lead their subordinates. However, studies on spiritual leadership and creative behavior involving workplace climate are still relatively limited.

Spiritual leadership according to Fry (2003) consists of the beliefs, attitudes and actions needed to truly encourage oneself and others through inspiration and participation . Spiritual leadership is an idea developed within the framework of intrinsic motivation , which consists of vision, hope/faith, altruism and spirituality (Wang et al., 2019) . The success of spiritual leadership depends on the team's ability to identify and meet needs basic requirements of all participants. Finding meaning in life is possible for a leader and the people he leads if they work together to create a shared vision and set of principles . Each member's needs are met, the team is strengthened, and output is increased (Gotsis & Grimani, 2017) . Spiritual leadership is a game-changing method in motivating individuals to work hard and produce extraordinary results, while building loyalty and unleashing employee creative potential (Jahandar et al., 2017) . By facilitating an individual's ability to express his or her uniqueness in the business, spiritual leadership has the potential to provide a more enjoyable work atmosphere increasing work morale, and reducing absenteeism (Cissna & Schockman, 2020) .

Leadership learning facilitates the creation of a shared vision that inspires loyalty both superiors and employees (Atiyeh, 2022) . In addition, foster a social/organizational model where leaders and followers truly care, sympathize, and admire each other essential for a healthy and successful business (Gillette, 2018) . People from this culture try hard to make everyone feel welcome and appreciated. Having strong relationships with other

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people may increase a person's ability to understand and appreciate other people's points of view (Kaya, 2015) . Each individual derives hope and confidence from spiritual leadership, and this impacts his or her spiritually based vision and the process of designing followers' visions (Wang et al., 2019) . As a leadership role, a confident attitude motivates followers to show perseverance and strive for excellence by giving their all to difficult tasks (Wahyono et al., 2020) .

Spiritual leadership focuses on empowering individuals and teams compared to other leadership styles to increase commitment, productivity, job happiness, and quality of work. Usman et al (2021) found that spiritual leadership correlates well with workers' psychological empowerment which in turn increases entrepreneurial behavior. while Jeon & Choi (2020) revealed that sub- spiritual leadership constructs such as "vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love" were positively associated individual creativity. Wang et al (2019) found resourcefulness, knowledge sharing, and performance were all positively correlated with spiritual leadership. Employees who have more hope and confidence are better able to maintain high levels of performance because spiritual leadership aids in making a connection between their work and the significance of life. Moreover, creative performance behavior increases with the level of performance. Therefore, spiritual leadership has a positive influence on creative behavior employee .

Workplace climate is related to "a set of perceptions regarding an organization's policies, practices and procedures, respect, support and expectations." (Schneider & Reichers, 1983) . Workplace climate is basically how employees perceive their work environment (Kundu, 2007) , including structural aspects of the workplace. Workplace climate is distinct from workplace norms and culture, and can be observed and maintained by employees (Moran & Volkwein, 1992) . Organizational leadership , policies and practices influence how employee behavior works (Mert et al., 2022)

Employees who feel that their leaders can be relied on will perceive a supportive work environment . Leadership plays an important role in creating a work environment that supports quality of work life and performance (Teng et al., 2020) . Therefore, low spiritual leadership will have a negative impact on working conditions causing employee performance to fall short of the expectations set by the organization.

Spiritual leadership influence employee perceptions regarding workplace climate (Pio & Lengkong, 2020) . Subordinates' basic needs to be understood and appreciated are met when leaders demonstrate spiritual leadership qualities which creates a feeling of mutual care and affection. Spiritual leadership creating a happy and harmonious work environment through realizing a personal vision which is then considered the vision of the organization as a whole (Samul, 2020) .

Leaders demonstrate workplace processes, rules and practices, and their descriptions are reflected in employees' actions and behavior (González-Torres et al., 2023) . To accommodate desires, ambitions and demands for work *outcomes* , leaders must be able to manage a work environment that can help their subordinates to build good relationships with all organizational leaders (Elrehail et al., 2021 ; Alzghoul, 2017) . This is as revealed by the research results of Sethibe & Steyn (2018) that workplace climate and leadership

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style are key factors in influencing the creativity and behavior of subordinates. Khan et al (2020) revealed that there is a strong relationship between leadership style and the work environment, which encourages and supports employee creative behavior. Hunsaker (2016) revealed that a spiritual leadership style can create a spiritual workplace that encourages creative behavior in subordinates . Spiritual leadership is a leadership style that emphasizes vision, altruistic love, and faith/hope, so the relationship between spiritual leadership and work outcomes such as creative behavior, is likely to be mediated by workplace climate.

Based on the explanation above, the hypotheses proposed in the research include:

H $_1$: Spiritual leadership has a positive effect on creative behavior .

H $_2$: Spiritual leadership has a positive effect on workplace climate

H $_3$: Workplace climate has a significant positive effect on creative behavior

H $_4$: Workplace climate mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and creative behavior .

METHOD

This research uses an inferential quantitative approach. Subject is 150 employees in the city of Semarang obtained by incidental sampling . Data was collected using a questionnaire , namely *the Spiritual Leadership Questionnaire* (Fry & Matherly, 2006) , *Work Team Climate Questionnaire* (Zhu et al., 2016) , and *Employee Creativity Questionnaire* (Montag et al., 2012) The data was then analyzed using path analysis and Sobel tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first hypothesis states that H $_1$: Spiritual leadership has a positive effect on creative behavior . From the results of data processing, a probability figure of 0,000 < significance level α= 5% (0.05) is obtained between spiritual leadership having a positive effect on creative behavior with a standard beta coefficient of 0.312 (β_1). Thus, the first hypothesis which states that H $_1$: Spiritual leadership has a positive effect on creative behavior , is accepted.

Spiritual leadership has a positive effect on employee creative behavior, because the higher the spiritual leadership, the more the leader will gain the trust of subordinates which encourages the emergence of creative behavior. Spiritual leadership focuses on efforts to inspire and motivate subordinates, as well as providing autonomy and independence, which increases the level of employee performance , especially creative behavior . Spiritual leadership also provide possibilities for professional growth or mentoring of their employees , thereby inspiring employees , increasing employee dedication to work and employee performance , as well as instilling creative behavior into the tasks given to employees (Usman et al., 2021) . Spiritual leadership has been linked to higher levels of creative behavior among employees. consistent with previous research (Usman et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2019; Xinyu & Zhihua, 2020). The results of this research are consistent with the findings of Jeon & Choi (2020) that sub- spiritual leadership has a positive effect on individual creativity. The results of this study are also consistent with the findings of Wang

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et al (2019) that employees who have more hope and confidence are better able to maintain creative performance at a high level because of the help of spiritual leadership .

The second hypothesis states that H $_2$: Spiritual leadership has a positive effect on workplace climate . From the results of data processing, numbers are obtained probability of 0.049 <significance level α= 5% (0.05); This means that partially (individually) there is a positive and significant influence between spiritual leadership and a positive influence on workplace climate with a standard beta coefficient of 0.197 (β 2). Thus, the second hypothesis which states that H 2 : Spiritual leadership has a positive effect on workplace climate , is accepted.

Spiritual leadership is important in creating a work environment that inspires employees . Spiritual leadership has a positive impact on workplace climate, and the results are consistent with research Samul (2020) and Yang et al (2020) . Spiritual leadership is able to instill feelings of happiness by fostering a living environment that is encouraging, fair, transparent and just, which leads to improved performance and creativity (Sholikhah et al., 2019 ; Pradhan et al., 2012) . Employees who feel that their leaders can be relied on will perceive a supportive work environment . Spiritual leadership supports the maintenance of a conducive workplace climate (Teng et al., 2020) .

The third hypothesis states that H 3 : Workplace climate has a significant positive effect on creative behavior . From the results of data processing, numbers are obtained probability of 0.000 <significance level α= 5% (0.05); This means that partially (individually) there is a positive and significant influence between workplace climate and a significant positive influence on creative behavior with a standard beta coefficient of 0.300 (β 3). Thus, the third hypothesis which states that H $_3$: Workplace climate has a significant positive effect on creative behavior , is accepted.

The workplace environment influences creativity. Subordinates' basic needs to be understood and appreciated are met when leaders demonstrate spiritual leadership qualities which creates a feeling of mutual care and affection. Spiritual leadership creating a happy and harmonious work environment through realizing a personal vision which is then considered the vision of the organization as a whole (Samul, 2020) . The results of this study are consistent with previous research findings that workplace climate is a positive predictor of creative behavior (Pattnaik & Sahoo, 2020 ; Zhu et al., 2016) . Employee enthusiasm for providing creative ideas, solving problems, and taking advantage of opportunities to advance the company increases in a healthy work environment or psychological comfort (Alzghoul, 2017) .

The fourth hypothesis states that H 4 : Workplace climate mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and creative behavior . From the results of data processing, numbers are obtained probability of 0.002 <significance level α= 5% (0.05); This means that workplace climate significantly mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and creative behavior . Thus the fourth hypothesis which states that H $_4$: Workplace climate mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and creative behavior , is accepted.

Workplace climate mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership with employee creative behavior . Workplace climate and leadership style are key factors in

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influencing subordinates' creativity and behavior (Sethibe & Steyn, 2018) . Spiritual leadership can create a spiritual workplace thereby encouraging creative behavior in subordinates (Hunsaker, 2016) . Spiritual leadership is a leadership style that emphasizes vision, altruistic love, and faith/hope, so the relationship between spiritual leadership and work outcomes such as creative behavior is mediated by workplace climate (Khan et al., 2020) .

CONCLUSION

Workplace climate mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and creative behavior . Higher levels of creative behavior among employees are associated with spiritual leadership, as is a supportive work environment . Organizational leaders need to demonstrate spiritual qualities and activities to deal with subordinates' actions in difficult and challenging situations so that subordinates are able to behave creatively.

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