



Section 4. Management

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SPIRITUAL VALUES IN MANAGERIAL DECISION-MAKING AND TEAM MANAGEMENT: TOWARD A HIERARCHICAL MODEL OF MANAGERIAL VALUES

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Abstract

In contexts shaped by technological change, economic uncertainty, and rising social expectations, organizations are increasingly expected to reconcile performance with ethical responsibility and human development. This article examines the role of spiritual values in managerial decision-making and team management and proposes a hierarchical model of managerial values represented as a colored pyramid. The study is based on a conceptual analysis of the literature on workplace spirituality, spiritual leadership, ethical management, and organizational behavior. Spiritual values are defined not in religious terms, but as universal inner orientations related to meaning, authenticity, integrity, compassion, transcendence, and commitment to the common good. The analysis shows that spiritual values deepen managerial judgment, reinforce ethical decision-making, strengthen interpersonal relations, and contribute to employee well-being and organizational sustainability.

Keywords: *workplace spirituality; managerial values; spiritual leadership; decision-making; team management; ethical leadership*

Introduction

Contemporary organizations operate in a climate of volatility, digitalization, ecological pressure, and increased demands for social responsibility. Under such conditions, managers are expected not only to ensure efficiency, but also to protect human dignity, cultivate trust, and align organizational goals with broader societal interests. Within this context, spiritual values have become an

important dimension of management theory and practice.

In organizational studies, spiritual values refer to deep principles that orient individuals and institutions toward a purpose that transcends immediate material interests. They include integrity, compassion, authenticity, humility, service, inner peace, and responsibility for the common good. These values are not reducible to religion. Rather, they express

a universal aspiration for meaning, coherence, truth, and connection with others and with a purpose greater than the self. This distinction is especially important in plural organizational settings, where spirituality can function as an inclusive and humanistic category.

Mitroff and Denton (1999) described workplace spirituality as the search for ultimate meaning and connection with something larger than oneself. Fry (2003) conceptualized spiritual leadership through vision, hope or faith, and altruistic love. Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003) emphasized transcendence through work and connection with others, while Lips-Wiersma (2003) highlighted authenticity, unity, service, and meaning. Subsequent studies connected workplace spirituality with job satisfaction, lower turnover, engagement, well-being, innovation, and sustainable performance.

Despite this growing body of research, the structural place of spiritual values within the broader hierarchy of managerial values remains insufficiently conceptualized. This article therefore has two aims: to examine the impact of spiritual values on managerial decision-making and team management, and to propose a hierarchical model showing how spiritual values relate to other value categories in managerial practice. The model is presented as a colored pyramid and is referred to in the text as Figure 1.

Method

This article adopts a qualitative conceptual approach based on a structured review and interpretive synthesis of the literature contained in the source text provided by the author. The analysis brings together classical and contemporary contributions in workplace spirituality, spiritual leadership, ethical leadership, employee well-being, and team management. Its purpose is not to test a causal hypothesis, but to clarify concepts, identify recurrent dimensions, and organize them into a coherent theoretical framework.

The procedure involved three stages. First, the literature was reviewed to identify the principal definitions of spiritual values and to distinguish spirituality from ethics and religion. Second, the reported effects of spiritual values on managerial decision-making and team functioning were compared. Third,

based on this synthesis, a hierarchical model of managerial values was constructed. The model includes five levels: basic, instrumental, interpersonal, ethical, and spiritual values. Each level was associated with a color whose symbolic meaning was drawn from color psychology, making the pyramid both a visual and theoretical representation of the progressive deepening of managerial consciousness.

Results

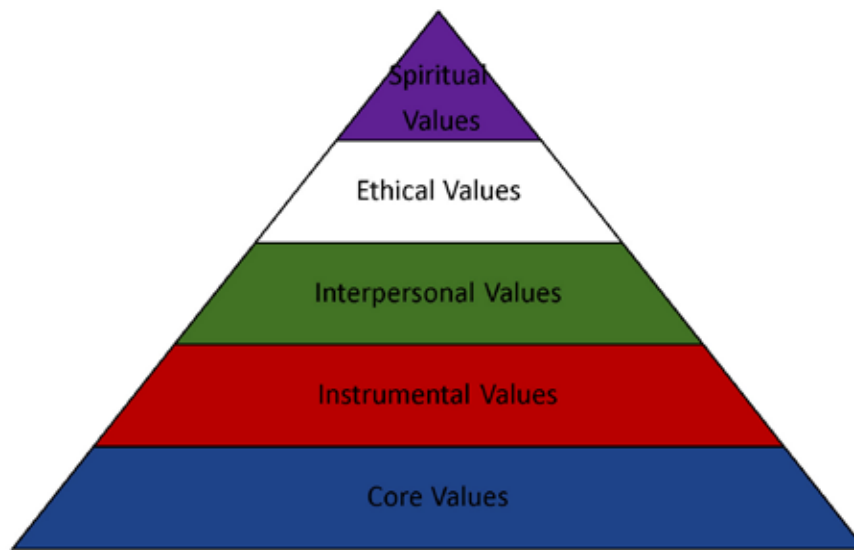
The analysis indicates that spiritual values exert a multidimensional influence on management. First, they shape managerial decision-making by providing an internal compass that complements formal ethical rules. Ethics answers the question of what ought to be done according to accepted norms, whereas spirituality addresses why one acts and what deeper meaning guides action. In organizational life, this distinction is crucial. A manager may comply with regulations and still act without moral depth, whereas spiritually grounded leadership implies alignment between action, conviction, and purpose.

Second, spiritual values foster more ethical and socially responsible decisions. Leaders guided by integrity, humility, compassion, and service are more likely to consider the long-term consequences of decisions for employees, communities, and the environment. Such a perspective expands managerial reasoning beyond short-term profitability and encourages more sustainable governance. In periods of crisis, spiritual values such as hope, resilience, and inner stability may also support thoughtful rather than reactive decision-making (De Klerk, 2021).

Third, spiritual values strongly affect team management. The literature reviewed in the source text shows that authenticity, empathy, mutual respect, and recognition improve cohesion, communication, trust, and collective resilience. Employees who perceive their work as meaningful and who feel recognized in their full humanity demonstrate stronger motivation, engagement, and commitment. Workplace spirituality therefore supports both individual well-being and collaboration (Fry & Egel, 2021).

On the basis of this review, the article proposes a hierarchical model of managerial values, represented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. *Hierarchy of a Manager's Values*



Source: Authors own work

At the base of the pyramid are basic (core) values, including punctuality, discipline, reliability, loyalty, and rigor. These values form the elementary conditions of professional credibility and stable functioning. The second level consists of instrumental values, such as initiative, adaptability, competence, creativity, and result orientation. These values guide managerial effectiveness and the capacity to achieve organizational goals. The third level is formed by interpersonal values: empathy, listening, cooperation, trust, mutual respect, and the ability to inspire others. At this stage, the manager is no longer focused only on performance but also on the quality of relationships. The fourth level contains ethical values, including honesty, justice, transparency, responsibility, integrity, and moral courage. These values orient managerial conduct toward fairness and accountability. At the summit of the pyramid are spiritual values. These include compassion, altruism, humility, gratitude, inner peace, transcendence of ego, harmony, global vision, and commitment to a higher purpose. Spiritual values are the most subtle and encompassing because they do not abolish the lower levels but integrate them into a more conscious and humanistic mode of leadership.

The model also incorporates a color interpretation. Blue is associated with the basic level because it symbolizes stability and reliability. Red corresponds to instrumental

values because it conveys action, energy, and performance orientation. Green represents interpersonal values, reflecting harmony, growth, and positive social interaction. White is linked to ethical values because it suggests clarity, honesty, impartiality, and moral transparency. Violet marks the spiritual level, as it is traditionally associated with wisdom, contemplation, transcendence, and spiritual awakening.

Discussion

The proposed pyramid suggests that spiritual values occupy the highest place in the hierarchy of managerial values because they presuppose the consolidation of the preceding levels. A manager cannot credibly embody compassion, transcendence, or service to the common good while lacking discipline, competence, relational maturity, or ethical judgment. Spiritual values therefore become effective only when they rest on a solid foundation of enacted professional and moral values.

This interpretation reframes management as a developmental process. Leadership does not evolve solely through the acquisition of technical skills; it also involves the gradual interiorization of deeper values. It also explains why attempts to introduce spirituality into organizations may fail when they are reduced to rhetoric or superficial well-being initiatives. Spiritual values cannot be decreed administratively. They require

personal maturation, reflective capacity, and organizational conditions consistent with dignity, trust, and responsibility.

At the same time, the model should not be interpreted too rigidly. Human development is complex, and value integration does not always follow a strictly linear se-

quence. The boundaries between levels remain porous, and the model is heuristic rather than dogmatic. Its value lies in offering a structured way to think about the interplay between operational effectiveness, ethical responsibility, and existential meaning.

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