



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Spiritual Leadership, Organizational Identification and Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior in Hospitality Sector: A Social Exchange Perspective**

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**ABSTRACT**

Based on Leader-member exchange theory present study examines the influence of spiritual leadership on unethical pro-organizational behaviors of employees in the hospitality sector of Pakistan by examining the mediating role of organizational identification. Sometimes employees oblige unethical behavior not merely for themselves but for the benefit of their firms. Spiritual leaders prohibit unethical behavior in organizations by cultivating superior exchange relationships with their subordinates. To attain study objectives primary data were gathered by distributing close-ended structured questionnaires from 400 employees working in hospitality firms in Pakistan by employing a convenience sampling technique. PLS-SEM was utilized to test the hypothesis. Spiritual leadership lowers unethical pro-organizational behavior by permitting employees to boost their identification with their organization. As a result, workers are more likely to prescribe UPB in organizational settings. A significant positive association exists between spiritual leadership and UPB via the mediating mechanism of organizational identification. Future studies may embrace the actual phenomena of UPB in organizational premises by structuring multisource research designs and additional antecedents' of UPB.

**KEYWORDS** Hospitality, Organizational Identification, Spiritual Leadership, Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior

**Introduction**

In modern organizations, employees are showing a new type of unethical behavior, which is unethical but proves beneficial for their organization, known as unethical pro-organizational behavior (Nguyen, Zhang, & Morand, 2021). Unethical pro organizational behavior (UPB) is defined as the behaviors that motivate members of an organization so as to hastily attain their work-related goals, interrupt the basic societal morals, laws, standards and coherent behavioral and interactive standards (Veetikazhi, Kamalanabhan, Malhotra, Arora, & Mueller, 2022). Though some researchers have validated the existence of unethical pro organizational (UPB) to the affirmative relationships adored by employees with certain kinds of leadership (Luu, 2023; Wang, Zhang, Li, & Henry, 2023) and are dedicated to construct the relationship based leadership for organizations with reciprocal trust and free communication amongst members of organization (Dennerlein & Kirkman, 2022). Spiritual leadership not only fulfil the psychological needs of leaders and their followers but encounters fundamental needs related to their spiritual survival, which in turn, cuddle their values associated with management practices and organizational identification (Sapta, Rustiarini, Kusuma, & Astakoni, 2021).

By triggering faith, hope and love, spiritual leader act as an effective role model and instigates their subordinates through a self-confident attitude to reveal their determination to perform exceptionally performance to accomplish challenging duties (Ali, Usman, Soetan,

Saeed, & Rofcanin, 2022). The spiritual leader provides clarity to their subordinates regarding their moral identities and boosts their organizational identification and commitment, which, in turn, pointers to the success of organizations. Additionally, a leader's interactive mechanisms can influence the ethical contexts of subordinates (Matthews, Kelemen, & Bolino, 2021).

On the other hand, Chen, Chen, and Sheldon (2016) placed a condensed theoretical basis that organizational identification serves as a precursor of Unethical pro-organization behaviors (UPB). Organizational identification refers to uniformity amid the values of the individuals and the particular organization to which they belong (Riketta, 2005). Employees having intense organizational identification might most probably get motivated to assist the interests of their organization using every possibility, for instance, by violating core organizational, social as well as individual moral values, to merely demonstrate unethical actions to assist and favor their organization (Gigol, 2021). Furthermore, another dark side associated with organizational identification is that it might manifest itself in workers' endorsement of their self-based unethical choices in a work setting, predominantly if these choices were united with their inducement of the organization's keenness to counter (Naseer, Bouckenoghe, Syed, Khan, & Qazi, 2020).

Extensive preceding literature high spot that in the relentlessly modest business environment, UPB is extensively prevailing in the organizational settings and have considerable impending destructive influences on the organizations and entire society (Chhabra & Srivastava, 2022; Lian et al., 2022; Yin, Zhang, & Lu, 2021). Therefore, in management and organizational studies, lessening such unethical pro-organizational behavior is becoming a grave concern (Zhang & Xiao, 2020). Contrary, few studies exposed that leaders are a source of depressing the happening of UPB among employees as a leader offers the basis for transfiguring the cognitions as well as moral values of employees by aiding as a role model (Mesdaghinia et al., 2022; Mo, Lupoli, Newman, & Umphress, 2023). Furthermore, it has been exposed from preceding research that organizational identification act as a robust prosecutor of attitudes as well as behavior of workers at the workplace (Chang, Chen, & Lin, 2022), however, little attention is paid on its plausible influences on unethical behaviors in organizational settings (Naseer et al., 2020). Furthermore, leadership does not directly influence the conduct of followers or employees in the workplace but also through the mechanism of mediation (Song, Wang, & He, 2022). In this regard, very few preceding researches naked the positive impacts of leadership on UPB of employees possessing non-autonomous positions in their organizations via considering organization identification as a mediator (Gigol, 2021). Hence, this organizational identification is required to consider a recurrent mediator among leadership styles as well as employees (Qian & Jian, 2020). Nonetheless, investigations associated with the influences of spiritual leadership on unethical pro-organizational behavior of employees in work setting via mediating role of organizational identification have just progressed up until now (Dennerlein & Kirkman, 2022). Even though extensive preceding literature replicates theoretic work just in the area of basic business-related ethics, however, very few realistic researches concerning unethical conducts like UPB and relative factors that originate these unethical conducts in organizational settings are prevailing (Yao, Luo, Fu, Zhang, & Wan, 2021). Henceforth, the current study is distinctive in that in the present investigation, organizational identification is deliberated as a mediator amid spiritual leadership and UPB under the framework of LMX in the hospitality industry of Pakistan.

## **Theory and Hypotheses Development**

### **Leader-Member Exchange Theory**

Leader-member exchange (LMX) indicates the worth of a social exchange relationship between leaders and employees in a particular organization. LMX suggests that relationships between leaders and members result from social exchange, and in

organizational settings, employee outcomes are influenced by the quality of these exchanges (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). According to LMX, different resources, for instance, citizenship behaviors, organizational identification, commitment and sociability, are gradually presented because these exchange relationships and the quality of this leader-member exchange relationship change over time (Lee, Schwarz, Newman, & Legood, 2019). Besides, it is anticipated that in LXM, social resources are reciprocated; therefore, the strength of these association can decrease if any side reciprocates (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). As a result of high quality, LMX employees' positive outcomes get increased, such as high commitment and identification with the organization, high organizational citizenship behavior and greater well-being of employees (Das & Pattanayak, 2022; Liang, Liu, Park, & Wang, 2022). Furthermore, the Leader-member theory of social exchange (LMX) claims that spiritual leadership impedes workers from executing UPB and unethical practices in organizational premises by sustaining them as spiritual supporters (Almutairi & Khashman, 2022). Furthermore, spiritual leaders highlight the tactics that might instigate employees to perform beyond their responsibilities and role obligations to achieve common organization and group goals (Garg, Punia, Garg, & Punia, 2022). Hence, because of such stimulation, workers sturdily identify or recognize their selves with their firms; as a consequence, their identification with organizations gets boosted (Srivastava & Madan, 2022), and as a result, the likelihood of executing UPB declines (Kelebek & Alniacik, 2022).

### **Spiritual Leadership and UPB**

It is a coherent reality that when a leader fosters sagacity amid his subordinates regarding executing ethical conduct in an organizational environment, it results in diminishing the effects and occurrence of unethical behaviors at the workplace, whereas these behaviors bring benefits or values for their firm (Bryant & Merritt, 2021). In the same context, various preceding investigations inspected the incidence of UPB in organizational settings as an outcome of exchange relationships between leaders and their subordinates (Bryant & Merritt, 2021; Inam, Ho, Ng, & Mohamed, 2021; Kelebek & Alniacik, 2022; Song et al., 2022; Yang & Huang, 2022). Coleman and Donoher (2022) exposed that the discernment of employees concerning the ethical conduct of leaders is allied positively to the quality of (LMX) association with leaders. Similarly, Inam et al. (2021) disclosed that LMX partially mediates the association amid leadership and employee behavior or conducts in work settings. Wen, Chen, Chen, and Cao (2020) as well demonstrated that employees infer the actions of their seniors at work and reflect their behavior following their interpretations, which in turn roots diverse behavior in variant individuals.

Moreover, Luu (2023); Uymaz and Arslan (2022) revealed that different leadership approaches, such as servant and responsible leadership fortified employees to show UPB. Contrary, few studies exposed that leaders are a source of depressing the happening of UPB among employees as a leader offers the basis for transfiguring the cognitions and moral values of employees by aiding as a role model (Mesdaghinia et al., 2022; Mo et al., 2023). Centered upon the LMX theory of social exchange, the current investigation inspects the influences of spiritual leadership on UPB of the workforce in the hospitality industry of Pakistan. According to this theory, the depth of association between leaders and their followers relies on social interactions or exchanges between them, and in organizational settings, personnel performance is based on these social exchanges or interactions (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Furthermore, the Leader-member theory of social exchange (LMX) claims that spiritual leadership impedes workers from executing UPB and unethical practices in organizational premises by sustaining them as spiritual supporter. The insolence, behavior, values and self-concepts of followers settled after combining with a spiritual image of the leader; therefore, spiritual leaderships inhibit followers or subordinates from executing UPB in organizational premises (Almutairi & Khashman, 2022). Hereafter concentrating on the LMX theory of social exchanges, this study developed the following hypothesis;

**H1:** Spiritual leadership has a significant impact on UPB.

### **Spiritual Leadership and Organizational Identification**

At the organizational level, leaders retain prestige and supremacy to acquire work from employees. Accordingly, leaders who concentrate on generating an energetic organizational vision, adequate organizational ethos or culture and rousing employees' inward motivation enrich their identification with their organizations (Song et al., 2022). As indicated by past research, leadership styles offer a foundation for robust organizational identification (Lv et al., 2022); therefore, the current study assumes that organizational identification is probably provoked due to spiritual leadership. Centered upon the LMX theory of social exchange, in the presence of spiritual leadership, workers oversee the conduct or behavior of their spiritual leaders by seeing them as their idols and showing their behavior accordingly. Furthermore, spiritual leaders highlight the tactics that instigate employees to perform beyond their responsibilities and role obligations to achieve common organization and group goals (Garg et al., 2022). Hence, because of such stimulation, workers sturdily identify or recognize their selves with their firms; consequently, their identification with organizations gets boosted (Srivastava & Madan, 2022). Centered upon past literature and arguments of LMX, this study conceived the following hypothesis;

**H2:** Spiritual leadership has a significant impact on organizational identification.

### **Organizational identification and UPB**

The influence of organizational identification may manifest itself in the case of employees' endorsement of their self-related unethical choices in work settings, predominantly if these choices unite with their conversion of the organizational readiness to counter (Naseer et al., 2020). Besides, preceding studies' research naked the obvious influence of leadership on unethical pro-organizational behavior. Consistent with a study by Zhan and Liu (2022), seniors might significantly appraise the employees' outcomes of performing UPB. On the other hand, because of good quality social exchange association between leader and followers, employees' organizational identification gets elevated, and as a result, the likelihood of executing UPB declines (Kelebek & Alniacik, 2022; Song et al., 2022). Chhabra and Srivastava (2022) also theoretically appraised positively exchanged thoughts and robust identification with organizations that exclusively affect the UPB of employees. Likewise, employees considered strong organizational identifiers found more executing UPB at the workplace (Graham et al., 2020). Furthermore, it has been exposed from preceding research that organizational identification act as a robust prosecutor of attitudes as well as the behavior of workers in the workplace (Chang et al., 2022). Henceforth, the present study draws the following hypothesis;

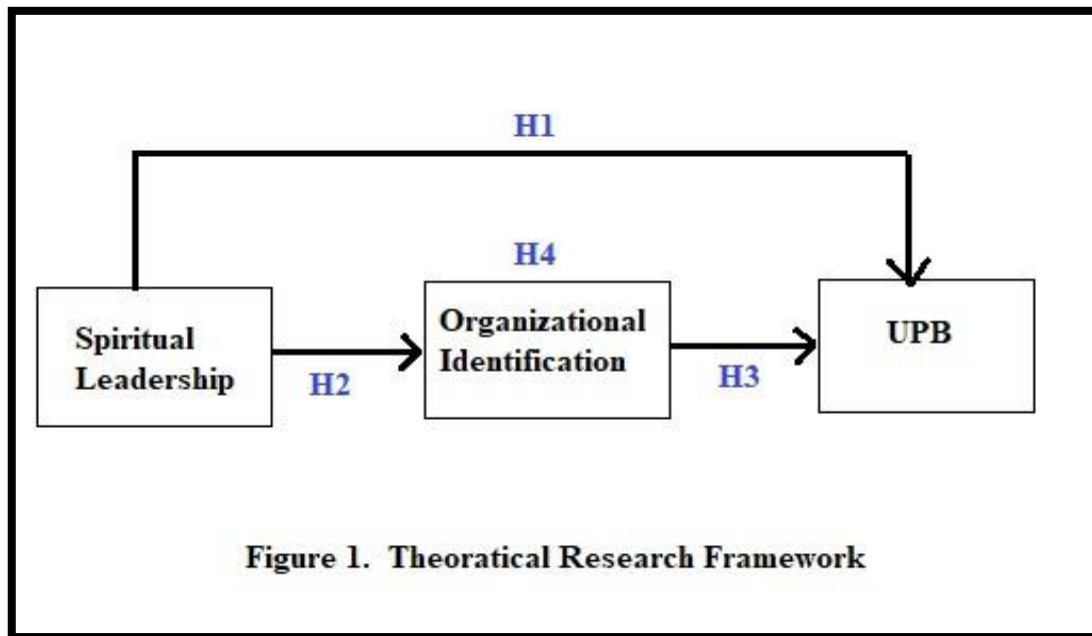
**H3:** Organizational identification has a significant impact on UPB.

### **Organizational identification as a mediator**

In a meta-analysis, Costa, Daher, Neves, and Velez (2022) exposed that measures of organizational identification are significantly allied to the extra-role behaviors of employees. Henceforth, a greater level of organizational identification presented by subordinates from the side of their leaders encouraged as well as enabled them to execute UPB to recompense their leaders for seeing their values and also support their organizations in attaining their aims (Costa et al., 2022; Inam et al., 2021; Kelebek & Alniacik, 2022). Correspondingly, an investigation by Niu, Liang, Meng, and Liu (2020) deliberated organizational identification as a mediator amid leadership and unethical conduct of employees. So, centered upon arguments of LMX theory present study argues that robust identification with the organization due to positive social exchanges between a leader and his followers stimulates or inspires workers to perform for the benefit of their organization

in every potential way by departing social or individual ethical and moral norms by giving preferentiality to unethical conducts to assist their organization. In this regard, it has been hypothesized that;

**H4:** Organizational identification mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and UPB.



## Material and Methods

### Population and Sampling Procedure

The present study was accompanied in Pakistan at the end of March 2023. In the current study, full-time frontline employees working in variant hotels and restaurants in different cities of Pakistan were taken as a study population. The reason behind focusing on hospitality organizations in Pakistan is that in these organizations, employees require frequent interface, dealings and interaction with customers, clients or workers. Henceforth, this sector proposed a foundation to set off or mitigate UPB from the work environment. In the same way, in hospitality organizations, employees are instructed to remain courteous, tranquil, polite, selfless and well-mannered with their customers and other employees within their organizational boundaries (Ghani et al., 2022).

The current study employed a convenience sampling method to explore the direct and mediating impacts of the study variables. The present investigation is quantitative and as well as cross-sectional by nature. This study requires primary data to determine the association among constructs. Hence, the current study questionnaire was drafted both in online and offline modes, and participants were requested to appraise the convenient categories among offline or online modes. The questionnaire used in the current study is organized into two segments. The first segment consisted of demographic variables, while the second included personal values, e.g. items to measure relevant constructs. To gain assistance from managers of organizations, informal negotiations were arranged with managers before starting the data collection process. Besides, before initiation participant, respondents were entreated to sign a consent form to ensure them regarding the concealment of their replies. Overall 1050 questionnaires were detached among hotels and restaurant-based organizations in Pakistan. Out of 1050, 650 questionnaires get discarded owing to bad and unsatisfactory replies; thus, 400 questionnaires were kept on to analyze results. Henceforth, 400 were settled as the sample size for the present research.

Additionally, pre-testing was executed to conclude questionnaire meets current study necessities or not at all.

### Measurements

The current study followed up the 5-point Likert scale to appraise entire items of latent constructs ranging from 1 to 5 (where 1 denotes strongly agree and 5 denotes strongly disagree). The questionnaire was constructed in the English language. In the current study, 7 items offered by Umphress, Bingham, and Mitchell (2010) were extracted to measure unethical pro-organizational behavior. The construct of spiritual leadership was evaluated by taking 11 items from Fry (2003). To measure the construct of organization identification, 7 items were considered from the scale established by De Roeck and Farooq (2018).

### Methods

In this study, PLS-SEM (4.0) was applied for analyzing and determining the results of hypothesis testing. PLS model results are considered more reliable than OLS model outcomes; that's why PLS is preferred in the current study. PLS is also appropriate when the study explores the associations among variables (Hair Jr, Howard, & Nitzl, 2020). Furthermore, PLS also assist in performing analysis even in small sample size and multicollinearity issues (Hair, 2011). Measurement and structural models are constructed to draw results.

### Results and Discussion

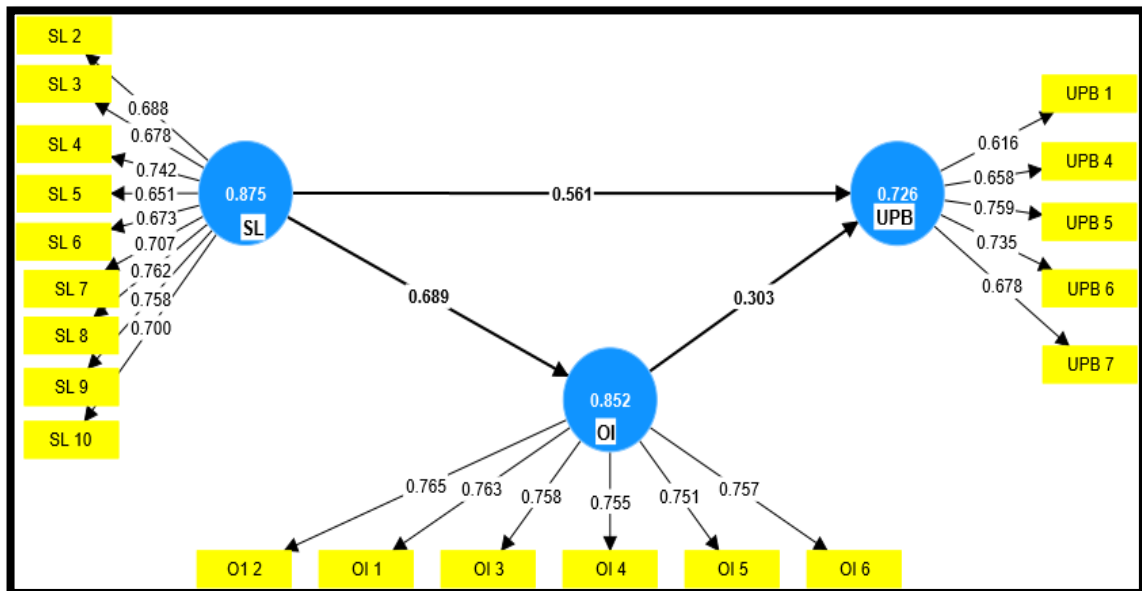
Table 1 provides inferences from demographic statistics. As revealed in Table 1, most participants were classified as males, constituting 88% of the total sample, and only 12% were females who provided their responses for this study. The highest ratio of participants (47.5%) belongs to 30 to 40 years of age; subsequently (28.5%) lies in 41-50 years of their age. Concerning qualification, 73% of participants have done their graduations; instead, 11.75% of respondents have done their graduate degrees. Additionally, in the case of the sector distribution heights ratio, 68% of respondents were employees of the restaurant sector, followed by 32 % of participants who were employed in the hotel industry.

**Table 1**  
**Demographic statistics**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	352	88%
Female	48	12%
Age		
> 30 years	5	13%
30-40 years	190	47.5%
41-50 years	114	28.5%
Over 50 years	44	11%
Education		
Bachelors	47	11.75%
Graduation	292	73%
Post-graduation	22	5.5%
Others	39	9.75%
Type of Organization		
Hotel	128	32%
Restaurants	272	68%

**Assessment of Measurement Model**

For the current study, the measurement model was assessed via tests of reliability and validity, as reflected in Figure 2.



**Figure 2. Measurement Model**

The present study examined convergent, construct and discriminant validity. Table 2 directed the results of the measurement model of this investigation. The number of items, their loadings, composite reliability (CR), and values of average variance extracted (AVE) taken out from the results are all reflected in Table 2. Hair (2011) stated that the convergent validity values in item loading must meet 0.60. For the current study, the item loadings of entire items were lied in between 0.616 to 0.759. Internal consistency in this study was computed via CR, entire CR values of latent variables fulfilling the threshold level of 0.70 (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019).

Moreover, entire values of AVE should be higher than 0.50, as commended by (Hair et al., 2019), to induct convergent validity of entire constructs. Table 2 redirects that entire values of item loading and AVE for considered variables satisfy the recommended level; subsequently, results of the present study manifested convergent validity of all latent variables. Furthermore, Composite reliability (CR) assist in quantifying the instrument's reliability; individual values of both should be greater than 0.70 to achieve instrument reliability (Hair Jr et al., 2020). Hence, Table 2 pretends that the entire values of CR for entire latent all constructs have gratified the recommended reliability ratios; as per the description, the entire figures are more than 0.70.

**Table 2  
Measurement Model**

Latent Constructs	Items	Item Loadings	CA	CR	AVE
Spiritual leadership	SL 2	0.688	0.875	0.900	0.501
	SL 3	0.678			
	SL 4	0.742			
	SL 5	0.651			
	SL 6	0.673			
	SL 7	0.707			
	SL 8	0.762			
	SL 9	0.758			
	SL 10	0.700			

	OI 2	0.765	0.852	0.890	0.575
	OI 1	0.763			
	OI 3	0.758			
Organizational Identification	OI 4	0.755			
	OI 5	0.751			
	OI 6	0.757			
	UPB 1	0.616	0.726	0.820	0.578
	UPB 4	0.658			
	UPB 5	0.759			
Unethical pro organizational behavior	UPB 6	0.735			
	UPB 7	0.678			

**Discriminant Validity**

In the current study, discriminant validity was appraised using the Fornell and Larcker (1981) tool. According to preceding PLS literature entire values of Fornell and Larcker (1981) criteria must be less than the threshold level of 0.90 (Gold, Malhotra, & Segars, 2001); otherwise, discriminant validity prevails. Results of the current study are demonstrated in Table No. 3, which clarifies that entire figures are less than the defined level of 0.90. Therefore, this study fulfils the criteria concerning discriminate validity as commended by (Gold et al, 2001).

**Table 3  
Discriminant Validity**

	Organizational Identification	Spiritual Leadership	Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior
Organizational Identification	0.758		
Spiritual Leadership	0.689	0.770	
Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior	0.590	0.608	0.691

**Assessment of Structural Model**

Bootstrapping was executed to assess the structural model by considering 400 cases to determine path coefficients significance level. Hence, the current study followed the directions presented by (Henseler, 2020). The overall approximations of the structural model are demonstrated in Figure 3.

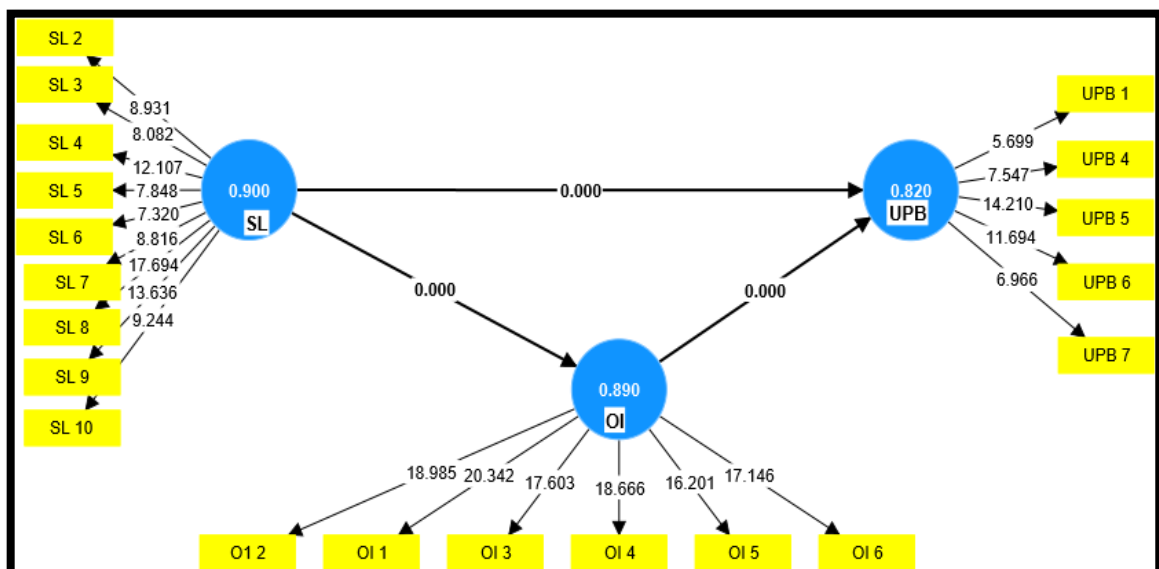


Figure 3. Structural Model



## Hypotheses Testing

After establishing the structural model, the current study followed the next step, hypothesis testing. This is done to prove the significance of path coefficients. Centered upon the commendations of (Hair et al., 2019), this study executes bootstrapping process via PLS-SEM (4.0). Table 4 signify the findings in the context of path coefficients. In Table. 4, the results of path coefficients deliberated that spiritual leadership has a negative association with UPB. In this case ( $\beta = -0.561$ ;  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ), therefore, results revealed acceptance of hypothesis 1. Contrarily, findings naked that spiritual leadership is significantly associated with the organizational identification of employees. Because here ( $\beta = 0.689$ ;  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ), after that, hypothesis 2 is accepted. In the case of the relationship between organizational identification and UPB values of ( $\beta = 0.303$ ;  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ), this proves acceptance of hypothesis 3 of the current study, which stated as there is a significant relationship between organizational identification and UPB. Additionally, It was extracted from findings that organization identification mediates the association between spiritual leadership and UPB with ( $\beta = 0.209$ ,  $p\text{ value} = 0.000$ ). Hence, hypothesis 4 of the present study get accepted.

**Table 4**  
**Results of Hypothesis Testing**

Hypothesis	Hypothesize Path Paths	$\beta$	T-Value	P-Value	Decision
H1	SL→UPB	-0.561	6.369	0.000	Supported
H2	SL→OI	0.689	10.757	0.000	Supported
H3	OI→UPB	0.303	12.850	0.000	Supported
H4	SL→OI→ UP	0.209	7.043	0.000	Supported

**Note:** SL= Spiritual Leadership, OI= Organizational identification, UPB= Unethical Pro Organizational Behavior.

## Discussion

Unethical conduct is recurrently befalling in organizational settings, though sometimes employees oblige unethical actions not merely for their selves but for the benefit or aid of their leaders or firms (Umphress et al., 2010). According to a past study by Chhabra and Srivastava (2022), organizational sustenance, as well as leadership, are affirmative organizational aspects which fuel the manifestation of unethical conduct in organizational boundaries. These asserting aspects enhance identification as well as the commitment of workers to their organizations; consequently, workers detriment societal comforts to deliver benefits to their organization by executing unethical pro-organizational behaviors (Umphress et al., 2010; Wen et al., 2020). The outcomes of this study also established the negative association between spiritual leadership and UPB by supporting hypothesis 1. On the other hand, preceding studies explored that spiritual leaders permit their followers to develop the senses of acceptance, recognition, obligation and membership, elevating their organizational identification (Bayighomog & Arasli, 2022).

Taken together, leaders as a source of increasing employee's trust, happiness and pride lead to enhancing subordinates' organizational identification, which as well as enhances their positive conduct to benefit their organization owing to exceptional quality social exchange among them (Kelebek & Alniacik, 2022; Song et al., 2022). Thus, perform UPB (Wen et al., 2020). The current study subsequently supports this argument that spiritual leadership boosts employees' organizational identification by accepting hypothesis 2. Besides, robust identification with the organization compels workers to redirect their actions or conducts steady with their identity; hence, ethical behavior reflected by the leaders in organizational premises leads to diminishing the unethical behavior of employees, whereas this conduct proves beneficial or valuable for their

organization (Al Halbusi, Ruiz-Palomino, Morales-Sánchez, & Abdel Fattah, 2021). Consistent with LMX theory and literature, this study's results support hypothesis 3, which proposed a significant relationship between organizational identification and UPB. Furthermore, diverse leadership styles impacted workers' UPB via the mediation mechanism (Gigol, 2021). Few researchers detected that leadership emboldened UPB of workers by decontaminating their identification with their organizations (Effelsberg & Solga, 2015; Xiaochen & Ying, 2018). In this context, this study identified that organizational identification mediates the association between spiritual leadership and unethical pro-organization behavior of hospitality workers of Pakistan, hence, reflecting support for hypothesis 4.

### **Theoretical Implications**

This contemporary study anticipated several theatrical contributions to organizational management and leadership. First, the present study will offer insightful contributions for investigators to explicit the UPB of workers from the viewpoint of an innovative leadership style termed spiritual leadership. This study contributes to leaders comprehending the bad consequences of UPB within organizational premises. Even though abundant research has scrutinized the probable precursors to inspect the UPB of the workforce, for instance, positive reciprocity beliefs, and job satisfaction (Kelebek & Alniacik, 2022), indeed, scarce prevailing research emphasized the theoretical inspection of UPB via mediating role of organizational identification. Henceforth, by relying on the LMX theory of social exchange, the current study distinguished the mediating mechanism of organizational identification amidst spiritual leadership and UPB of workers; thus, it anticipated the new-fangled for investigators in conducting pertinent studies. The current study as well serves as a splinter of preceding literature concerning ethical challenges regarding pro-organizational behaviors for instance, (Zhang & Xiao, 2020), the present study authenticates that organizational identification is a sturdy instigator of unethical pro organizational conducts in organizational settings.

### **Practical Implications**

The current study also offers significant practical implications. As this study prescribed detailed discussion concerning persecutors of UPB practices in the hospitality industry, it will prove obliging in offering insightful comprehension in understanding the construct of UPB in the hospitality industry. As the current study's finding inaugurated spiritual leadership as an efficient means of diminishing workers' UPB via mediating role of organization, this study highlights that the hospitality sector must accentuate an assortment of spiritual leaders. Though unethical conduct seems expensive for firms, particularly conducts or actions accompanied by the name of a specific firm, more likely to undermine its participants as well root failure of a specific organization. Robust or over-identification with the organization expedites the prospect of UPB in an organizational environment. Hence, the hospitality sector might as well outlook the dark or negative side of the organizational identification construct (Kelebek & Alniacik, 2022). Lastly, the current study contributes by carrying recommendations for leaders and managers in the hospitality industry concerning means of averting UPB of workers, such as initiating incentives, constructing feasible policies and establishing relaxed and ethical organizational culture. Moreover, as fewer investigations emphasized the significance of spiritual leadership and UPB in the hospitality framework, in this sense, the current study delivers an appreciated contribution to Hospitality related literature.

### **Conclusion**

The current study's findings concluded that spiritual leader, by the mean of spiritual values, lowers the probability of employees executing unethical pro-organizational practices in organizational settings. Moreover, spiritual leadership permits employees to

boost their identification with the organization. Sequentially, workers get stimulated and fortified to execute proactive behaviors in organizational settings in favor of their organizations, in turn, extensively implementing UPB. More precisely, owing to the extreme quality of social exchange association amid workers and their leaders' identification of workers with their organization gets elevated, because of which workers are more likely to prescribe UPB in organizational settings. Hence, a significant positive association exists between spiritual leadership and UPB via the mediating mechanism of organizational identification.

**Limitations and Further research indications:**

This study also provides insight for further research instead of some limitations as the current study assessed workers' disposition to execute UPB in hospitality firms, in spite of evaluating concrete phenomena of UPB. So, it is obligatory to gauge actual unethical conduct in organizational settings (Mo et al., 2023). In this regard, it is recommended for future studies embrace the actual phenomena of UPB in organizational premises by structuring multisource research designs. Additionally, as in the current study, merely organizational identification was considered to explore the consequences of UPB. Likewise, further studies are also required to inspect distinctive complexities concerning UPB with the aim of detecting additional antecedents' of UPB, e.g. social disconnection, workplace incivility and financial or home pressure. Next, in the present study, a cross-sectional time frame was employed, which restricted our competency to capture the discrepancies amid the construct of the study (You & Henneberg, 2022). Henceforth, further investigations are exhilarated to go for longitudinal or time-lagged frames to more evidently grasp the vigorous nature of the relevant constructs. Moreover, the current study merely investigated the positive associated influences of spiritual leadership. However, further investigations can scrutinize the pitfalls of this leadership style to comprehend the dark side of spiritual leadership in organizational settings.

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