Strengthening Public Service Motivation with Spiritual Leadership: An empirical Study of Public Organizations in East Java

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the important role of each aspect of spiritual leadership (which consist of vision, hope or belief, and altruistic love) on the public service motivation (PSM) among employees who work in public organizations in East Java Province. As many as 72 civil servants who were involved as respondents in this study identified who worked in public organizations in the province of East Java. Data that has been collected were investigated using multiple regression analysis to answer research questions about what aspects of spiritual leadership have the most influence on PSM. The findings of this study reveal that among three aspects of spiritual leadership only two aspects that are hope or faith and altruistic love were found to have a significant effect on PSM. The vision which considered one dimension of spiritual leadership was found not to be significant in strengthening PSM. The value of the coefficient of determination shows a sufficient variety of variants from the aspect of spiritual leadership as a determinant of PSM.

Keywords: Spiritual Leadership, Public Service Motivation, Public Organization

INTRODUCTION

Leaders in the public sector are experiencing increasing pressure to deliver more social justice-centered public benefits with (a) leaner budgets, (b) limited staff, and (c) traditional attitudes to the impropriety of the public sector behaving comparing with private sector. In a special administrative paradigm oriented to the new public service in managing organization (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000; Denhardt & Denhardt, 2007), all forms of governance focus on the delivery of public service quality. For example, several public service quality has been widely known by reviewing the general realm that adopted concept of SERVQUAL in business (Pramuditha & Agustina, 2022; Mansyar & Sadad, 2014; Novira et al., 2020;). Therefore, leaders in public sector organizations always focus on efforts to strengthen accountability and quality in the cultivate of services delivery to the society. As important aspect of managing public organizations, managing

human resources of the organization is more strategic than before which it can foster value added and benefits for the organization (Thunnissen & Buttiens, 2017). In some previous literature show that individuals in public organization also are becoming more essential as part of delivering public services, especially those that exploring or examining individual's attitude (Dawud et al., 2018; Putranto et al., 2022; Tanjung et al., 2022) and behavior (Agustina & Harijanto, 2022; Crant, 2000) in the public organization while others also pointed out about how well public officers feel more obligated in their job (Harijanto et al., 2022; Pradesa et al., 2018, 2019) in fostering public value and benefit for society.

While growing concern for leader and stakeholder in managing human resources in the public sector, there is a situation where the classical needs-based work motivation model explains and even predicts behavior successfully. Some experts in public administration argue that the classical work motivation behavior model is incompatible with motivation for individuals who are in the public sector (Alonso & Lewis, 2001; Perry & Wise, 1990). The general articulation of the concept of PSM is that individuals who work in public sector organization are characterized by specific value such as ethic to serve the public. Several researcher in previous studies have linked the multidimensional concept of PSM on theoretical and empirical grounds to the pro-social behavior of individuals, commitment to the public value and interest, also desire to serve society with maintain self-sacrifice (Amegavi & Mensah, 2020; Harari et al., 2017).

Since the conceptual development from the first start (Perry & Wise, 1990), it can be understood about the key definition of PSM based on context of this research is: "public service motivation is part of a behavioral process in which public service motives lead to behavior that is beneficial to the public" (Kim & Vandenabeele, 2010). As far as can be known, this definition best fits current research that does not differentiate between the public and non-profit sectors, but more emphasize on process about providing public services provided by both types of organizations. As first mentioned before (Perry & Wise, 1990), term of public service should not be argued and debated with concept of government service, because "public service denotes more than one place of work". However, public service motivation was initially and largely attributed as a public sector prerogative. For example, "the tendency of individuals to respond to motives that are primarily or uniquely based in public institutions and organizations"(Perry, 1996).

The prevalent of the concept of public service motivation continues to grow and is increasingly being studied in the three decades since its first appearance (Ritz et al., 2016). But this also leads to the emergence of problems regarding its conceptualization (Bozeman, 2014). Many theorists and researchers who studying on this concept showing stack from the area of successive concepts and measures, while it always increasing but rarely decreasing the area or size of the concept. Although in a theoretical review, this is not only experienced by the concept of PSM, but also other concepts in the realm of behavioral studies. Most studies about PSM have examined the discrepancy between public and private sector employees at the level of dimensions. The first path line of PSM research often addresses whether employees in the public sector demonstrate higher levels of public service motivation, and are motivated differently, than their counterparts from other sectors such as the private sector (Kjeldsen & Jacobsen, 2013; Liu et al., 2015; Taylor, 2008). Another path from the study area seeks to measure and explain the multi-dimensional aspects of the construct of PSM in several empirical studies that have been conducted (Agustina et al., 2021; Amegavi & Mensah, 2020; Houston, 2000; Perry, 1996). Until now, the concept of public service motivation is even still being studied in a situational context such as a pandemic that has occurred and its relevance to the level or motivation of public services. (Agustina et al., 2022; Guswandi et al., 2020; Putranto & Anwar, 2021; Ramadhan & Tamaya, 2021).

Public service motivation is a standardized concept and there have been many empirical studies that have reviewed it. This form of motivation is often reviewed as a determinant of individual attitudes and or behavior in organizations such as commitment (Agustina et al., 2021; Hidayati & Sunaryo, 2019; Leisink & Steijn, 2009; Putranto et al., 2018). Several other important antecedents

that have been identified are compensation (Dharmanegara et al., 2021) then job burnout, and work engagement (Agustina et al., 2022; Borst et al., 2017) as well as various types of leadership (Andersen et al., 2018; Belrhiti et al., 2020; Jensen & Bro, 2018; Miao et al., 2018; Paarlberg & Lavigna, 2010; Schwarz et al., 2020). If the compensation received by employees is perceived as good, this can encourage their satisfaction and also the level of PSM (Dharmanegara et al., 2021). Meanwhile, the increasing fatigue of an employee working in a public organization is proven to reduce the level of PSM (Agustina et al., 2022; Tanjung et al., 2022). Then how the pattern of leadership that applies to an organization can be related to the public service motivation is still dynamic because of the type and variety of leadership that applies. Considering that motivation is a form of self-feeling that can support a person to work or be active, it is important to know what can make this public service motivation increase.

In contrast to work motivation theory, public service motivation theory excludes external rewards and places focus only on one's internal values and attitudes. This research provides an opportunity to find out whether there is a significant influence found between leadership style and motivation in work is also present between leadership style and public service motivation. The contention of this study is that leadership provides a useful framework for a better understanding of the potential impact of motivational levels on public service. Leadership can be viewed as encompassing a variety of attitudes and behaviors that are often characterized as different styles of leadership (Bass et al., 2008).

Several previous studies have shown that there is no stable relationship between spiritual leadership (as a type of leadership in organizations) and public service motivation. While spiritual leadership is known to affect affective commitment, this has been confirmed empirically in several previous studies (Astuti & Haryani, 2021; Jeon & Choi, 2020; Pradesa & Tanjung, 2021; Rahayu & Kusumaputri, 2016). However, an important idea that needs to be raised and examined based on previous empirical results is how the influence of spiritual leadership can play a role in strengthening the motivation for public service felt by employees. The relationship and nature of the influence of spiritual leadership on public service motivation are still not much known empirically until now as far as researchers know.

Leadership style can be directly applied to employee motivation at work (Sulistyan, 2017). It should be recognized that detrimental leadership styles create negative consequences in the workplace. Therefore, in general, the pattern of leadership that applies in an organization can be associated with forms of individual attitudes and behavior such as employee discipline (Khaerani & Badar, 2020) or employee performance (Ardiansyah & Jaenab, 2020; Prasetyo, 2017). So it can be concluded that leadership is a process of influence, both visible and invisible, in society that is inherited, built, and felt as the interaction of people in human (and inhuman) conditions. While many experts and researchers use the words transformational and transformative interchangeably, there is a branch of leadership theory that distinguishes the two (Bass et al., 2008). But regardless of the type and theoretical basis of leadership, understanding how the pattern of leadership is very important to support the effectiveness of organizational management.

Leaders who professionally incorporate spirituality reap benefits such as a productive staff and better results. Leaders who use spirituality appear focused and more balanced overall. Spiritual leadership as a theory is a relatively new concept, but the literature is growing as groups such as the International Institute for Spiritual Leadership, academic journals, and other publications specifically address the concept. Like the concept of spirituality, spiritual leadership has different meanings and interpretations (Zachary, 2013). Values (eg, gentleness, charity, honesty) and visions shared by many beliefs are the basis for spiritual leadership theory and its explanations for satisfying spiritual survival needs in the workplace (Fry et al., 2017; Fry, 2008). Vision, altruistic love, and hope or faith are three important concepts that must be understood for spiritual leadership theory. Spiritual leadership is collaborative, community-oriented, distributed, trust-based, and ethical, and must ultimately lead to transformative practices that democratically engage

the whole of society to create a positive personal and organizational climate and achievement that can hopefully bring about transformation not only for the organization but for the wide community.

Leadership has been well recognized as contributing to the shape of a person's attitude and behavior in an organization (Abrori & Hidayati, 2021; Darmawan, 2018; Puspitasari, 2019), and also leadership is expected to encourage the motivation possessed by individuals in an organization (Andersen et al., 2018; Schwarz et al., 2020; Sulistyan, 2017). The research problem identified in this study is to determine why practicing the principles of spiritual leadership is important for strengthening public service motivation. Researchers seek to understand how spiritual leaders in the public sector area can have an impact on the attitudes of the individuals they lead in the workplace concerning improving public service delivery. The research conceptual framework model will later be tested on civil servant as unit of analysis of this research. It is known that the problem of public service motivation has been studied in previous research, especially involving civil servants who working in the East Java Province area (Hidayati & Sunaryo, 2019), and some of them only focus on the concept of motivation in general (Widyawati, 2021; Zulkarnain, 2016). It is not yet known how public service motivation can be recognized as an effect of spiritual leadership. Based on these empirical phenomena, this study intends to test the conceptual framework model developed in this study with the focus and locus of civil servants working in the East Java province.

METHODS

This research adheres to the paradigm of positivist thinking, with research that uses quantitative methods in measuring the research construct observed in the model and then analyzing the influence between one variable and another. Based on problems and research questions developed, the study will use quantitative research methods with a cross-sectional research design. Research is carried out at a certain time, and the same research is not carried out at different times to compare the results between the two. Unit of analysis in this study is civil servants in the scope of East Java Province. Conceptual framework for this research can be developed that examines the effect of the vision, hope or belief, and altruistic love on public service motivation in Figure 1 as follows.
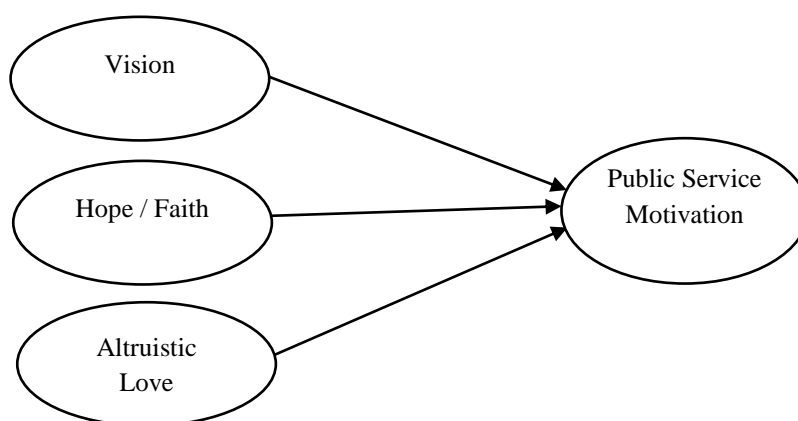
Figure 1. Research Conceptual Framework

Based on Figure 1 above, it can be arranged hypotheses in this study include the following:

H1 = Vision as an aspect of spiritual leadership can enhance public service motivation among employees

H2 = Hope or belief as an aspect of spiritual leadership can enhance public service motivation among employees

H3 = Altruistic love as an aspect of spiritual leadership can enhance public service motivation among employees

This research determines the object of civil servants from public organizations in East Java Province, and specifically, the researcher has determined that the target population is employees who work in the public service area directly, not in administrative and other parts. Snowballing sampling used as sampling technique in this study. This technique was carried out because of the consideration that the sample was taken based on predetermined criteria, namely civil servants working within the Province of East Java, using intermediaries of initial respondents who disseminated or recommended other potential respondent candidates who were known to both works at the same institution or organization. other public officials as long as they are within the scope of the province of East Java and work in the public service area directly. Data collection was carried out for one month (June 2022), and as many as 72 employees were successful in obtaining their consent to respond to the questionnaires distributed.

The cross-sectional research design limits the data collection process which is carried out only once. Considering primary data or data which originating from the first source that are respondents, the data collection process was carried out by first establishing and standardizing the research instrument manifested as questionnaire, and converted in the online form. An online questionnaire link was created to facilitate the process of collecting data from predetermined respondents in this study.

From the conceptual level, the variables observed in this study refer to the empirical results and theoretical basis, then these two aspects can then be used as the basis for developing the instruments used in the research. Instruments that accurately measure the construction of spiritual leadership are needed to identify the benefits of spiritual leadership that apply to employees, leaders, and to organizations. Altruistic love, hope and faith, and vision are the most empirically studied constructs of spiritual leadership (Fry, 2008). Public service motivational instrument (Perry & Wise, 1990) is generally recognized for its four dimensions, namely: (1) Public Policy Making, (2) Public Interest, (3) Compassion, and (4) Self-sacrifice. This instrument produces one overall measure and four-dimensional sub-scales (Alonso & Lewis, 2001). The PSM survey has been proven to provide reliable and valid results which are proven in various previous empirical results that have been carried out (Ritz et al., 2016). For all research instruments using the measurement scale used in this study is the Likert scale, using five categories ranging from 1 - strongly disagree to 5 - strongly agree.

The data that has been collected is then processed and tested first for the level of validity and reliability. For further data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis techniques by considering the conceptual framework model that has been defined previously. The research conceptual framework model shows the relationship and direct influence between the three independent variables (aspects of spiritual leadership namely vision, hope or belief, and altruistic love) with one dependent variable (public service motivation). Therefore the use of multiple regression analysis methods is believed to be appropriate following the stated objectives of this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of data processing are preceded by validity and reliability tests which indicate the level of validity and constancy of the research instrument. The discussion of the results of the validity test includes the results of the mean values for each indicator on the research variable, as important additional information that can show empirical facts in the field about the perceptions of the respondents.

Table 1. Validity and Mean Test Results for Vision

Indicators	r	Mean
Leaders commit to the vision	.720	3.42
A vision statement that drives the best	.670	3.36
The organizational vision is upheld by leaders to inspire performance	.634	3.46
The vision of the organization is maintained by the leader	.413	3.50

Source: Data Processed (2022)

The results of the validity test regarding the correlation coefficient values for each indicator on the vision variable were found to range from 0.413 to 0.720. These findings indicate that the indicators of the vision variable as an aspect of spiritual leadership can be declared valid or fulfill valid rules. With a range of mean or average values from 3.36 to 3.50, the average value of the vision variable was found to be 3.434 which means that the visual aspect of the spiritual leadership of public organizations is perceived at a moderate level. Result show that a spiritual leader who have believed more in vision, also maintain organizational vision that articulated in strategic aspect.

Table 2. Validity and Mean Test Results for Faith / Hope

Indicators	r	Mean
The leader's belief in doing something to ensure the mission is accomplished	.427	3.51
The persistence of leaders to help the success of the organization	.646	3.46
Leader setting of challenging organizational goals	.547	3.50
Leaders demonstrate belief in the organization's mission	.574	3.65

Source: Data Processed (2022)

The results of the validity test concerning the value of the correlation coefficient for each indicator on the variable expectations or beliefs were found to range from 0.427 to 0.574. These findings indicate that the indicators of the variable expectations or beliefs as an aspect of spiritual leadership can be declared valid or well-confirmed. With a mean or average value range from 3.46 to 3.65, the average value of the hope or belief variable is found to be 3.531, which means that the expectation or belief aspect of the spiritual leadership of public organizations is perceived at a moderate level. Meanwhile, in the faith or hope aspect show that spiritual leaders more precisely demonstrate belief in the organization's mission.

Table 3. Validity and Mean Test Results for Altruistic Love

Indicators	r	Mean
Leaders in organizations who are kind to employees	.483	3.57
Leaders in the organization are trustworthy and loyal	.533	3.58
Leaders in the organization are honest and lack false pride	.615	3.54
Leaders dare to defend employees	.550	3.60

Source: Data Processed (2022)

The results of the validity test regarding the value of the correlation coefficient for each indicator on the variable expectations or beliefs were found to range from 0.483 to 0.615. These findings indicate that the indicators of the variable expectations or beliefs as an aspect of spiritual

leadership can be declared valid or well-confirmed. With a range of mean or average values from 3.54 to 3.60, the average value of the altruistic love variable was found to be 3.573, which means that the aspect of altruistic love from the spiritual leadership of public organizations is perceived at a moderate level. The most important thing about altruistic love is shown by leaders who dare to defend employees in the public organization. When the aspects of spiritual leadership are derived into separate independent constructs it shows that the values found are in a relatively equal range in the moderate category. This shows that the practice of spiritual leadership in public organizations in East Java Province is at a moderate or sufficient level.

Table 4. Validity and Mean Test Results for Public Service Motivation

Indicator	r	Mean
Vision	.591	3.65
Hope / Faith	.704	3.61
Altruistic Love	.642	3.75
Public Service Motivation	.440	3.61

Source: Data Processed (2022)

The results of the validity test concerning the value of the correlation coefficient for each indicator on the public service motivation variable were found to range from 0.440 to 0.704. These findings indicate that indicators of public service motivation variables can be declared valid or well-confirmed. With a range of mean or average values from 3.61 to 3.75, the average value of the public service motivation variable was found to be 3.656, which means that public service motivation is perceived at a moderate level. When public service motivation is seen as normatively supporting public service ethics, the emphasis is on the conceptualization of how aspects of service in public organizations or government are things that can attract individuals to work and be part of it. Moderate or moderate value for public service motivation for employees in East Java Province may lie in that although there is a notion of public service from the government as the main draw of employees, there is still a lack of emphasis on disaggregated views: for example different forms of assignment (even in areas public service) regardless of sector or form as well as main tasks in the organization; differences in attitudes relative to the hierarchy in an organization; and the sometimes blurred boundaries between public and private and between public and non-profit.

Table 5. Alpha Cronbach

Variables	Alpha Cronbach	Remarks
Vision	.794	Reliable
Hope / Faith	.748	Reliable
Altruistic Love	.749	Reliable
Public Service Motivation	.783	Reliable

Source: Data Processed (2022)

Based on Table 5 above, the results of the reliability test in this study showed the Cronbach's alpha value of each variable in the study. Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.748 to 0.794 which means that all the variables observed in this study can be declared reliable. The constancy value of the variables observed in this study indicates a high probability that the construction of spiritual leadership can be tested multidimensionally, or separately based on conceptual dimensions. In addition, a reliable value indicates that the construction of spiritual leadership, both multidimensional and unidimensional, is believed to be used properly in the context of research in the public organization sector.

Table 6. Result of Multiple Regression Analysis

Relationship	Standardized Coefficient Beta	t-value	p-value
Vision (X_1) --> Public Service Motivation (Y_1)	-.093	-.871	.387
Hope / Faith (X_2) --> Public Service Motivation (Y_1)	.513	3.512	.001
Altruistic Love (X_3) --> Public Service Motivation (Y_1)	.374	3.206	.002
Dependent = Public Service Motivation			
R Square (R^2) = 0,602			
e = 0,398			

Source: Data Processed (2022)

Table 6 is the result of multiple regression analysis for the research model, showing the results of the standardized beta coefficient and its significance value. The framework of the research model that has been tested can be seen in Figure 2. Based on the results of the multiple regression analysis, the research hypothesis tested are explained below.

Hypothesis 1: Vision as an aspect of spiritual leadership can increase public service motivation from employees. The results of the regression analysis showed that the standardized beta coefficient for the influence of vision on public service motivation was -0.093, with a significance value of p. 0.387 which means that the significance is above 0.05. It can be concluded that hypothesis 1 is rejected. There is no significant effect of vision as an aspect of spiritual leadership on public service motivation. In other words, the higher the vision of spiritual leadership perceived by employees in East Java Province, the lower their motivation to provide quality public services. Vision is one of the most important indicators of spiritual leadership in an organization, and is often associated with results in both attitudes and individual behavior (Astuti & Haryani, 2021; Kaya, 2015; Pradesa & Tanjung, 2021). Leaders who can articulate organizational visions and align them with individual visions are expected to increase intrinsic motivation for individuals to be more motivated in providing quality public services. This is not really shown in public organizations in East Java province based on research findings.

Hypothesis 2: Hope or belief as an aspect of spiritual leadership can increase public service motivation from employees. The results of the regression analysis showed that the standardized beta coefficient for the effect of expectations or beliefs on public service motivation was 0.513, with a significance value of p. 0.001 which means that the significance is still below the critical value of 0.05. It can be concluded that hypothesis 2 is accepted. There is a significant influence of hope or belief as an aspect of spiritual leadership on public service motivation. In other words, the higher the expectations or beliefs from spiritual leadership perceived by employees in East Java Province, the higher their motivation in providing quality public services. Hope or faith is the most important aspect in encouraging public service motivation. Leaders who have strong hope and beliefs in the organization are leaders who have strength in building their organizations better. The hope or beliefs of these leaders can be seen as a strong basis in making employees in the public sector more motivated to work optimally and provide quality services. The spiritual leadership model is also believed to be able to encourage performance achievement in organizations (Fry et al., 2017; Jeon & Choi, 2020; Osboei & Nojabaee, 2016) with leaders who strengthen their spiritual aspects which tend to focus on hope or faith. The findings of this study are considered important in strengthening the relationship pattern between spiritual leadership and public service motivation.

Hypothesis 3: Altruistic love as an aspect of spiritual leadership can increase public service motivation from employees. The results of the regression analysis showed that the standardized beta coefficient for the influence of altruistic love on public service motivation was 0.374, with a

significance value of p. 0.002 which means that the significance is still below the critical value of 0.05. It can be concluded that hypothesis 3 is accepted. There is a significant influence of altruistic love as an aspect of spiritual leadership on public service motivation. In other words, the higher the altruistic love of spiritual leadership perceived by employees in East Java Province, the higher their motivation in providing quality public services. *Altruistic love* often seen as the existence mode of human being (Zachary, 2013), and this seems also applies to public organizations. Recognizing the altruism in a person can encourage him to manage his existence better. Leaders who recognize altruistic love will try to articulate it in the leadership that is applied in the organization (Jeon & Choi, 2020; Pavenkov et al., 2015). This will strengthen the motivation of employees to provide higher quality public services to the community.
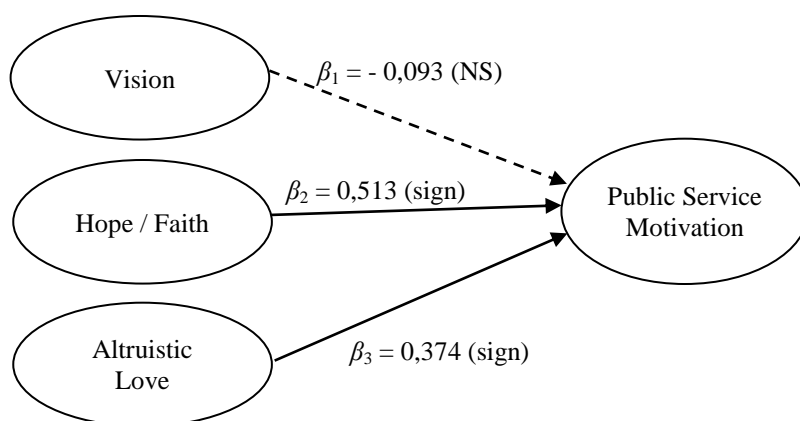
Figure 2. Result of Multiple Regression Analysis
Source: Data Processed (2022)

The total determination coefficient value was found to be 0.602, indicating that the various explanatory variants of public service motivation were 60.2 percent. This means that either vision, hope or faith, as well as altruistic love, can be a determinant of public service motivation by 60.2 percent, while the remaining 39.8 percent are other factors or variables beyond vision, hope or faith, as well as altruistic love in providing influence on the motivation of public service. It is believed that there are many things that have not been explored in this study which can be considered as important determinants of public service motivation. Finding reveals that hope or belief have the greatest effect on public service motivation when compared to altruistic love. In general, the results of this study can empirically confirm the multidimensional model of spiritual leadership (Jeon & Choi, 2020; Kaya, 2015; Pradesa & Tanjung, 2021), although the impact of the three aspects was found to be different on the outcomes or the dependent variable analyzed in this research model.

However, in general, the results of this study support some of the premises regarding the relationship between leadership and public service motivation, as confirmed in previous research (Bottomley et al., 2016; Schwarz et al., 2020; Vandenabeele, 2014). This considers that not all aspects of spiritual leadership studied are proven to be able to reinforce the motivation of public service felt by employees. Believing that every aspect of leadership can drive public service motivation proves to be a premise that is still premature when viewed from the findings of this study. However, this is inseparable from the limited research on spiritual leadership in public organizations and its relationship with public service motivation. Although the number of research samples is still considered small (n below 150), this study is believed to be able to contribute to the existing knowledge about the relationship between leadership theory and public service motivation. Spiritual leadership in this case is vision, hope, or belief, and altruistic love is the predictor variable, while public service motivation is the criterion or dependent variable.

CONCLUSION

Findings show several important things, in which one of them is vision as an aspect of spiritual leadership is not relevant in strengthening public service motivation. Meanwhile, hope or belief and altruistic love as aspects of spiritual leadership were found to have an important effect on the public service motivation. Hope or belief is the key aspect of spiritual leadership when it is associated with public service motivation. For leaders in public organizations in East Java Province, this is important information that strengthening every aspect of spirituality in the pattern of leadership is proven not to be able to have key meaning on motivating the public service employees. In addition, the practice of spiritual leadership which is still considered moderate or sufficient shows the urgency in improving the quality of leadership in the management of public organizations. Because if this could improve well, it will reinforce the motivation of employees to provide quality services to the society.

Future studies may also gain benefit when directing to re-examine the relationship between public service motivation results of spiritual leadership from a broader theoretical lens perspective. Testing the concepts and the relationships between these concepts is recommended in a wider scope and a larger number of samples. Expanding the scope of the organizations studied will strengthen conclusions about the correlation between the level of public service motivation and potential antecedents and outcomes. The explanatory variance of the criterion variable at a moderate level still allows that there is potential for exploration and construction of a more complex research model for future research. As employees involved in the many provisions of services such as schools, public transport, and local public administration in every society. It could show similar patterns of PSM among employees by showing about how much their self-sacrifice, compassion, or a desire to contribute to the public value and common good. It will also be interesting if one can review how much spiritual leadership contributes to this.

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