The Moderation of National Culture Regarding the Effect of Spiritual Leadership on Organizational Commitment and Productivity: A Cross-Cultural Meta-Analysis

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Abstract

In this study, the role of national culture regarding the effect of spiritual leadership on the organizational commitment and productivity was tested through meta-analysis method. Following the literature review, 105 research on this topic has been reached, and 27 of them were included in the meta-analysis. Within the study, a total of 27 research, from 6 countries, with a total sample of 8,011 people were covered. The results of the analysis, which was conducted using random effect model, showed that spiritual leadership has a moderate effect on organizational commitment and productivity. In addition, it has been found that the effect of spiritual leadership on productivity is higher in horizontal-individualistic cultures (e.g. USA) than in vertical-collectivist ones (e.g. Asia). These findings reveal that spiritual leadership is universal and the effect of leaders' spiritual leadership behaviors in horizontal-individualist cultures on the work efficiency of employees is much more than those in vertical-collectivist ones.

keywords: spiritual leadership, national culture, organizational commitment, productivity, meta-analysis

Résumé

La modération de la culture nationale concernant l'influence du leadership spirituel sur l'engagement organisationnel et sur la productivité: Une recherche de méta-analyse transculturelle

Cette méta-analyse a pour but d'analyser le rôle de la culture nationale sur la relation entre le leadership spirituel et l'engagement organisationnel et la productivité. Dans notre étude, nous avons constaté 105 recherches dont 27 sont inclus à la méta-analyse. Ce travail, réunissant 27 recherches, obtient un groupe d'échantillon de 8011 personnes. Les résultats de cette recherche, faite selon le modèle Rassal, démontre que le leadership spirituel a une influence modérateur sur l'engagement organisationnel et sur la productivité. D'ailleurs, on remarque que l'influence du leadership spirituel sur la productivité dans la culture verticale-collectiviste (comme dans les cultures asiatiques) est plus efficace que son influence dans la culture horizontale-individualiste (comme aux États-Unis). Ces indications mettent en évidence le fait que, malgré l'universalité du leadership spirituel dans les cultures horizontales-individualistes, la spiritualité du leader influence beaucoup plus la productivité que les cultures verticales-collectivistes.

mots-clés: *leadership spirituel, culture nationale, engagement organisationnel, productivité, méta-analyse*

Öz

Ruhsal Liderliğin Örgütsel Bağlılık ve Verimliliğe Etkisinde Ulusal Kültürün Moderatörlüğü: Kültürler Arası Bir Meta-Analiz Çalışması

Bu çalışmada ruhsal liderliğinin örgütsel bağlılık ve verimlilik üzerindeki etkisinde ulusal kültürün rolü meta-analiz yöntemiyle test edilmiştir. Yapılan taramada, 27 tanesi meta-analize dâhil edilebilen 105 araştırmaya ulaşılmıştır. Çalışmayla altı ülkeden toplam 27 araştırma bir araya getirilerek 8,011 kişilik örneklem grubu elde edilmiştir. Rassal etki modeli kullanılarak yapılan analiz sonuçları, ruhsal liderliğinin örgütsel bağlılık ve verimliliğe orta düzeyde etkisinin olduğunu göstermiştir. Ayrıca yatay-bireyci (USA gibi) kültürlerde dikey-kolektivist (Asya gibi) kültürle göre ruhsal liderliğin verimliliğe etkisinin daha yüksek olduğu saptanmıştır. Bu bulgular ruhsal liderliğin evrensel olduğunu ve yatay-bireyci kültürlerde liderlerin ruhsal liderlik davranışlarının, çalışanların işteki veriminin dikey-kolektivist kültürlere göre daha çok etkilendiğini ortaya koymaktadır.

anahtar kelimeler: *ruhsal liderlik, ulusal kültür, örgütsel bağlılık, verimlilik, meta-analiz*

Introduction

Great man leadership approach, which has dominated the leadership discourse before 1900's, has triggered the emergence of *trait leadership approach*, which was the leadership approach of 1900's, and during this period people attempted to define singularized power and authority in the leader. The source of this power and authority was the leader's innate properties and his hierarchical power given by the group. The leadership expressed by trait leadership approach was carrying innate properties; however, the studies conducted by Stogdill (1948, 1950) and Myers (1954) revealed that leadership had no significant relationship with physical properties and high intelligence, which prepared the end of trait leadership approach. Moreover, Stogdill (1948) stated that personal factors that build sub-categories related to leadership, such as capacity, achievement, responsibility, participation and situational analysis, were insufficient for the characterization of the leadership and one cannot be leader by having some particular personal traits. In 1940's, *group leadership approach* has started to influence the field of leadership. Whyte (1943) defined group leadership as a manipulation process, in which power and beneficial relationship are avoided. In 1950s, group approach movement have thoroughly shown its influence in the definition of leadership; which formed a basis for the birth of certain behavioral theories, trying to explain leadership through the orientation of the leader. Again, these studies have pioneered the first experimental leadership studies in the universities of Ohio State (Halpin & Winer, 1957) and Michigan (Katz & Kahn, 1952). Which gave rise to modern leadership studies. Parallel to this development, the *behavioral approach* to leadership has been effective in 1960s. Fiedler (1967) stated that behavioral approach means being engaged in the coordination and instruction of peer members' works. Ohio State and Michigan studies have addressed leadership in two behavioral dimension, namely consideration and initiating structure. Being a behavioral leadership approach, Managerial Grid Model developed by Blake and Mouton (1964) has integrated leadership orientations towards people and towards the work, which allowed the conceptualization of leaders' behaviors. Being another behavioral leadership theory, *X & Y leadership theory* (McGregor, 1960) expressed leadership behaviors as two opposite groups. X theory suggests that leader should have an authoritarian and intrusive behavior, whereas Y theory represent democratic and participative behavior. The *system four leadership* theory (Likert, 1971), being the continuation of Michigan studies, handled leadership as; abusive-authoritarian, helpful-authoritarian, participative-democratic.

After this period, *situational approach*, which takes the current situation as the basic premise, attempted to explain leadership. The theories belonging to this approach are: *effective leadership theory* (Fiedler, 1967), which places leader's orientation (towards the work or towards the relation) to the center; *3D leadership theory* (Reddin, 1970), which added effectiveness dimension to work

and relationship dimensions of situational leadership theory; *path-goal theory* (Hause, 1971), which emphasized motivational role of the leaders; *strategic contingencies theory* (8), which associate the emergence of the leader to the situation rather than the personality; and *normative leadership theory* (Hersey & Blanchard, 1972), which considered decision making as the key aspect of the leadership (Vroom & Yetton, 1973).

After 1990's, new theories of leadership have emerged: *Shared leadership, future- focused leadership, ethical leadership, cultural leadership, service leadership and spiritual leadership* can be mentioned as some of them. Among these theories, *shared leadership* means sharing group leadership with many members (Gronn, 2006); *future-focused leadership* means developing a living and ongoing strategy (Marx, 2006); *ethical leadership* express the rules about what to do rather than the ones about what not to do (Rubenstein, 2003); *cultural leadership* focuses on the process of creation, development and protection of organization's cultural values (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1988); *service leadership* represents a leadership approach accepting the willingness of helping as a natural part of the human character and aiming to assist to the members in the process of establishing their objectives (Ferch, 2005); *spiritual leadership* theory represent a sense of leadership instilling the philosophy of existence to the individual, enabling spiritual salvation by gathering the values, attitudes and behaviors required for intrinsic motivation of the members (Fleischman,1990; Fry, 2003; Maddock & Fulton, 1998). As stated up to here, the theoretical debates and classification discussions about leadership approaches still continues today and also seems like it will continue in the coming years. The root of spiritual leadership concept is based on the word of spirit.

Spiritual Leadership: a Conception Framework

According to Anderson (2000) *spirit* comes from *spiritus* word in Latin, which means breath. Spirit, which is expressed as a refreshing and abstract power keeping people alive, is the deep relationship that a person establishes with his/her essence and a state of awareness of the reality found in the human nature (Fairholm, 1997). In the field of religion and philosophy, the spirit is defined as the intangible side of human existence and it is considered as the surviving part of the human after death (Baloğlu & Karadağ, 2009).

Parallel to these definitions, the concept of *workplace spirituality* has been emerged through the adaptation of spirituality into the working life. The concept of *workplace spirituality* focuses on how the spiritual leadership affects organizational culture. The main objective of workplace spirituality is to create an intrinsic motivation by satisfying employees' spiritual needs, such as faith, sacrifice, and belonging, in the business environment and to increase their job performance or organizational commitment. Workplace spirituality is nourished from leadership and top out through the organizational culture.

Unlike classic organizational, administrative and leadership theories; spiritual leadership deals with people's spiritual aspects at work (Fairholm, 1997). Within this leadership theory, it is quite difficult to separate leadership from the image of religious belief and to eliminate confusion in this regard. Many researcher and author see spiritual leadership as a faith leadership and concentrate on this dimension in their work (Barna, 2005; Caldwell, Kallestad & Sorensen, 2004). However, some researchers address spiritual leadership differently, include religious leadership as well and attempt to explain it accordingly (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Fleming, 2004; Fry, 2003; Giacalone et al., 2005; Robertson, 2005; Shaw, 2006; Thompson, 2004).

Fleming (2004) sees spiritual leadership as a completely world-based effort, whereas Thompson (2004), refers to spiritual leadership, as a type of leadership which focus on organizational meaning. Fry (2003) states that some basic requirements of the individuals should be met in order to sustain their lives and consider spirituality as a kind of need to be met. According to Fry, *organizational commitment* is one of the ways of satisfying these needs and spiritual leaders meet it by creating a vision, which possess a sense of belonging both for themselves and their followers. Sanders, Hopkins and Geroy (2004) have described spiritual leadership as a type of leadership that attempts to increase *business efficiency* by providing a sense of working for a purpose, developing a sense of engagement and meaning among employees, and organizational spirituality.

The relationships between the variables of spiritual leadership model can be outlined as; "doing something whatever it costs" through faith, creating a sense of belonging as a part of inner peace, and raising faith that leads to a sense of feeling that life has a meaning. Faith increases people's work efficiency for achieving the vision. Because of this high productivity, the faith toward the vision of the organization allows the employees to look to the future with confidence, and has a positive effect on their commitment to the organization through intrinsic motivation. This fact has also been observed in some studies (Benefiel, 2005; Burkhart, 2008; Ferguson & Milliman, 2008; Fry & Cohen, 2009). According to the researches, leaders, who display spiritual leadership behaviors, motivate employees while they are self-motivating themselves. In this way, they contribute to the better performance of the organization allowing the formation of constructive and transformative employees.

Hunt, Sekaran and Schriesheim (1982) stated that rediscovering the phenomenon of leadership is a need for today's world. In fact, leadership corresponds to a consciousness including the provision of physical and logical clarity and awareness towards all possibilities. On one way or the other, leadership is based on a spiritual dimension (Klenke, 2003; Wheatley, 2002) and spiritual leaders are working to create a productive work environment with highly motivated employees. As stated by Fry, Matherly, Whittington and Winston

(2007), the ultimate goal of spiritual leadership is to rise both organizational commitment and the level of productivity to the highest level. From this point of view, spiritual leadership is established by providing the necessities that followers need for spiritual salvation. According to Fry (2003), to achieve this, the followings should be done:

(i) Creating an organizational vision that contains a call, which makes the organizational lives of the followers meaningful and special.
(ii) Creating a social/organizational culture that provides a sense of value, understanding and belonging, based on the leader and the sacrifices of the followers.

The job plays an important role in achieving the goals of the individual. Individuals find the meaning of life through the job (DeKlerk, 2005) and they can get to know themselves better. From such a point of view, job is a tool for the individual's self-discovery (Hoffman, 2003). Spirituality affects the job (Perrone, Webb, Wright, Jackson & Ksiazak, 2006) and therefore it brings the faith, which is a personal orientation, into the job in a way that it shapes the workplace (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Eisner & Montuori, 2003; Klenke, 2003; Komala & Ganesh, 2007; Milliman et al., 2003).

People see themselves as spiritual creatures, and the dedication, commitment and the efforts for searching a meaning in the workplaces are increasing (Fry, 2003; Gull & Doh, 2004; Sheep, 2004), which transforms the workplaces into a place where employees desire to experience such feelings (Bennis, 2002). In other words, the employees of post-modern era want to get to the deep of their interests and capacities in their workplace (Klein & Izzo, 1999); they need to make the work more meaningful in the sense of serving others, to be part of a principled organizational structure (Ashar & Lane-Maher, 2004), to find deeper meaning in their work rather than monetary prizes and prestige (McGee-Cooper & Trammell, 2002). From such a perspective, work is a spiritual quest that helps to renew fragmented work force and society as a whole (Klenke, 2003).

Fry (2003) defines spiritual leadership as a type of leadership that connects leaders' and their followers' spiritual needs for a higher organizational commitment and productivity. Matherly and Fry (2005) have attempted to draw the portrait of spiritual leaders and described them as people who have a vision of salvation to motivate themselves and the members, and having the attitudes, behaviors and values required for it. Spiritual leaders are seen as the people who created a culture in the organizational environment, in which the members can experience a sense of duty, vocation, purpose and meaning (Wheatley, 2002), and who made themselves and the members of the organization valuable in the business environment (Matherly & Fry, 2005).

Most of the theoretical and empirical studies conducted about spiritual leadership up to now are based on Western individualistic context and low power distance. However, especially with the spread of the theory to the whole world, it has been begun to be used in Asia and other regions of the world, in collective cultures with higher power distance. For instance, in United States spiritual leadership is closely associated with productivity (r= .69, Fry & Matherly 2006), however there is not such a relation in Iran (r=.09; Khani et al., 2013). As a result of similar findings, this study aimed to systematically examine the moderating role of national culture on the relationships of spiritual leadership with organizational commitment and productivity.

The Theory and Hypotheses of the Study

Configurationally Approach to National Culture

Culture is collective mind programming that distinguishes the members of a group or category from the others (Hofstede, 2001). In the literature there are two approaches explaining the effects of national culture: (*i*) *Traditional approach* consider individual value dimensions, whereas (*ii*) *formal approach* considers the configuration of cultural values (Tsui et al., 2007).

Since socio-cultural values tend to emerge together, the use of a formal approach is more convenient in studies featuring culture at national level. In this context Triandis (1995) has theorized various national culture forms, such as horizontal-individualism and vertical-collectivism. In societies where collectivism is high (e.g. in Asian societies) the distance between the individual and the power is also high. In societies where collectivism is low (e.g. in USA) power distance is shorter. Horizontal-individualism and vertical-collectivism concepts that were suggested by Triandis et al. categorize national cultures according to the positioning of two cultural values (Singelis et al., 1995; Triandis, 1995; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). First cultural value is individualism - collectivism (independent and mutually dependent ego), whereas the second cultural value is the distance between the individual and the power (emphasizing the respect towards authority, even though people have equal status). People in horizontal-individualistic cultures tend to see themselves independent from others and at equal status. On the other hand, vertical-collectivist cultures are more prone to define themselves as dependent on others and tend to respect authority more. Western communities fit horizontal-individualistic form, whereas Asian communities fit vertical-collectivist form.

Individualism-collectivism is closely associated with the leader and leadership and power distance. Since there is a correlation between national cultural values such as individualism-collectivism and power distance (r=.67; Hofstede, 2001), we have focused on the social forms of individualism-collectivism and power distance for the moderating role of national culture

while analyzing the relationships of spiritual leadership with organizational commitment and productivity. Although the theory has suggested four cultural forms, very few of 105 studies that we have identified from the literature review were coming from horizontal-collectivist or vertical-individualist societies. Therefore, the moderation of the combined effect of individualism-collectivism and power distance on the relationships of spiritual leadership with organizational commitment and productivity was addressed only in *horizontal-individualist* and *vertical-collectivist* cultures.

Individualism-collectivism defines how an individual see him/herself within the community, whereas power distance defines to what extent individuals accept the unequal distribution of power in society and social stratification (Hofstede, 2001). Due to their individualistic orientation, people in horizontal-individualistic cultures tend to see themselves as independent from the others, to emphasize personal goals and to adjust their social behaviors according to personal attitudes and how the others treat them (Singelis et al., 1995). In addition, since the power distance is low in horizontal-individualistic cultures, people are more prone to see themselves as equal to others (Shavitt et al., 2006). Therefore, personal relationships and likes are more effective in determining the response of the individual towards people having a position of authority (Dickson et al., 2003).

In contrast, in vertical-collectivist cultures, individuals see themselves as depending on others, emphasize that their objectives are compatible with the collective interests and they underline the perceived duties and obligations in their social behaviors (Triandis, 1995). In addition, since the power distance is high in vertical-collectivist cultures, people tend to respect authority more (Shavitt et al., 2006). Consequently, individuals in vertical-collectivist cultures don't respond to authority figures solely according to their personal relationships or likes, but according to the obligations of their roles as well (Dickson et al., 2003). As a result, it has been observed the vertical-collective cultures have a stronger acceptance and respect for authority, which may cause spiritual leaders to be less effective in these cultures.

Horizontal-individualist / vertical-collectivist culture differentiations have directly or indirectly correlated with various variables related to spiritual leadership. Spiritual leadership theory instills employees a philosophy of existence; it consists of combining the beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors that the individual needs to be motivated and to motivate the others by providing convocation and a sense of belonging, which is varying among members. Thereby in horizontal-individualist cultures, the individual's personal relationship with the leaders and the benefit of this relationship to the individual's personal objectives vary from person to person (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998), whereas people's attitudes and behaviors are based on how their leader treat them (Farh et al., 2007). Therefore the relationship of spiritual leadership with organizational

commitment and productivity is expected to be stronger in the countries with horizontal-individualist cultures. The members of vertical-collectivist cultures believe that they are attached to something, thus they tend to believe that their leader's interest reflects the interest of the collective (Chen & Miller, 2011). More importantly, vertical-collectivist cultures emphasize that the individual should adopt collective interests even though it contradicts with his/her personal objectives (Triandis, 1995). As a result of it, members of vertical-collectivist cultures tend to work more for their leader, even though it doesn't provide a personal benefit to them. On the other hand the basis of spiritual leadership theory, which doesn't adopt vertical hierarchy, is shared objective, vision, hope and faith. This fact shows that spiritual leadership is more suitable for horizontal-individualist cultures. The attitude and behaviors of the members of vertical-collectivist cultures does not depend on the treatment of their leader against them, because their respect for authority is stronger. In addition, the attitude and behavior of the members towards their leader's way of treatment is also influenced by their role-based loyalty (Jiang & Cheng, 2008) and the homage to the leaders (Wasti & Can, 2008). Accordingly, in vertical-collectivist cultures, nice treatment of a leader affects in-job attitude and behavior of the member less, compared to horizontal-individualistic cultures. In the light of these discussions, the following hypotheses have been tested within this study:

H_1: There is a positive relationship between spiritual leadership and organizational commitment.

H_2: There is a positive relationship between spiritual leadership and productivity.

H_3: The positive relationship existing between spiritual leadership and organizational commitment is stronger in the countries with horizontal-individualist cultures compared to the countries with vertical-collectivist cultures.

H_4: The positive relationship existing between spiritual leadership and productivity is stronger in the countries with horizontal-individualist cultures compared to the countries with vertical-collectivist cultures.

Method

Study Design

In this study, moderating role of national culture regarding the relationships of spiritual leadership with organizational commitment and productivity was tested through meta-analysis method. Meta-analysis is expressed as the method that merge the result of multiple studies conducted on a particular issue, which are independent of each other, and performing statistical analysis on the obtained research findings (Çoğaltay & Karadağ, 2015).

Sample of Studies and Selection Criteria

First, a literature review was performed in PsycINFO, Science-Direct, Proquest, Ebsco, and Google Scholar academic databases to determine the studies to be included in the meta-analysis. At this phase, used in the title, keywords and abstract fields. The publication deadline to be included was January 2016. Additionally, doctoral theses and research that was published in peer-reviewed journals were included in the analysis.

In the study, many strategies were used to identify the researches that are suitable for meta-analysis. First a study pool (105 researches), including all the studies related to school climate and academic achievement was formed by scanning headings, keywords and abstracts, then the summaries were reviewed. Then, the research abstracts were reviewed. Among these, 23 research articles/ dissertations were not related to spiritual leadership, 17 research articles/ dissertations did not specify r/R^2 values, and 7 research articles/dissertations were qualitative studies. Thus, 67 research articles/dissertations were excluded from the analysis. In the second phase, the remaining 58 research articles/ dissertations were analyzed in detail; 21 of these articles/dissertations were found to be appropriate, and the other 10 were deemed inappropriate. Descriptive statistics of the mentioned 27 researches are shown in Table 1. Inclusion criteria defined for this study are as follows:

- The studies were conducted between 2000 and 2016.
- The studies include statistical information required for correlational meta-analysis.
- The studies measure spiritual leadership.

Table 1. Features of the studies included in the meta-analysis

Characteristic		1	2	3	4	5	6		Total
Publication year of research		2016	2014	2013	2012	2011	2006	2005	-
	N	1	3	9	4	5	2	3	27
	%	3.7	11.1	33.3	14.81	18.5	7.4	11.1	100
Type of Research		Disserta-tions	Article						-
	N	4	23						27
	%	14.8	85.2						100
Country [Culture]		USA	China/ Taiwan	Iran	South Korea	Malaysia	Thailand		
	N	8	6	6	5	1	1		27
	%	29.6	22.2	22.2	18.5	3.7	3.7		100

Coding and Operational Definitions

Basically, coding is the process of extracting the data; it can be expresses as the extraction of more accurate and appropriate data from the complex data pile of the researches. In this regard, a coding form was developed before starting statistical analysis and coding operation was performed according to this form. The main objective here is to develop a particular coding system that is so generic that all researches can be seen; at the same time so sophisticated that even the features of a single research will not be missed. The coding form developed within the study consisted of the following components:
- References of the research
- National cultures
- r or R^2 values

The operational definition is to make the concepts of research testable and to explain the variables, standard observations and measurement processes according to the purpose. In this context, the definitions of the variables in the study are as follows:
- *Moderator variable*: the variables that are thought to cause the effect size distribution to become heterogeneous are national culture within the studies.
- *National culture*: The studies were classified as (*i*) horizontal-individualist or (*ii*) vertical-collectivist, according to the country that the data have been collected. Ideally, while classifying the studies, each country should be accepted as a culture; however there were not sufficient number of studies. Thus, the society, where the study has been conducted, was classified by two criteria. In order to determine the most appropriate configuration, Hofstede's median separation of country-level collectivism and power distance scores was used for each society. The findings of Taras, Kirkman, & Steel (2010) have stated that the prediction power of the scores at country level was lower that cultural values that have been evaluated in particular samples. Therefore, using country-level scores provides a more conservative test about potential effects of the culture.

Analyses of Effect Sizes

The effect size obtained in meta-analysis, is a standard measure that is used for the determination of the strength and direction of relationship in the study (Borenstein et al., 2009). In this study, Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was calculated for the effect size. Since Pearson's correlation coefficient takes values between *+1* and *-1*, (r) value was converted to the value taken from Fisher's *z* table (Hedges & Olkin, 1985). In correlational meta-analysis studies, if the variable is formed more than one factor, more than one r value will be obtained; there are two approaches for deciding which of them will be used in

the meta-analysis (Borenstein et al., 2009; Kulinskaya et al., 2008). In this study: (*i*) if the correlations were independent, all relevant correlations were included in the analysis and taken as independent studies. (*ii*) In case of dependent correlations, the average of them were taken. Although there are several methods to correct average correlations, most of them causes to estimate a higher correlation (Schyns & Schilling, 2013). Thus, taking this criticism into account and keeping in mind that using average correlation gives a conservative estimate of all correlations, it was preferred to use a conservative estimate in this study.

There are two main models in meta-analysis: the fixed effects model and the random effects model. To determine which model to use, whether the model's prerequisites were met by the characteristics of the research studies included in the meta-analysis were considered (Borenstein et al., 2009; Hedges & Olkin, 1985; Kulinskaya et al., 2008; Littel et al., 2008; Wampold et al., 2000). Fixed effects model assumes that; *(i)* the researches are functionally identical and (*ii*) the objective of the researches is to calculate the effect-size for a defined population. If the researches are not functionally equal and if it is planned to make generations for bigger populations using the calculated effect size, the model to be used should be *random effects model* (Karadağ et al., 2015). Considering these conditions together, *random effects model* was preferred for the meta-analysis processes of this study and *Comprehensive Meta-Analysis* software was used while performing meta-analysis.

Moderators and Moderators Analysis

Moderator analysis is an analysis method to test the direction of the differences between sub-groups and between the average effect sizes of the variables. Moderator analysis in a meta-analysis study is planned in accordance with the objective of the study, and the procedures are applied in accordance with this plan (Littel et al., 2008). In this study, only the Q_b values were given because only the statistical significance of the differences between moderators was required.

In the study, the moderators of national culture include: The studies were classified as (*i*) horizontal-individualist or (*ii*) vertical-collectivist, according to the country that the data have been collected. Ideally, while classifying the studies, each country should be accepted as a culture; however there were not sufficient number of studies. Thus, the society, where the study has been conducted, was classified by two criteria. In order to determine the most appropriate configuration, Hofstede's median separation of country-level collectivism and power distance scores was used for each society. The findings of Taras et al. (2010) have stated that the prediction power of the scores at country level was lower that cultural values that have been evaluated in particular samples. Therefore, using country-level scores provides a more conservative test about potential effects of the culture.

Reliability and Validity of the Study

The concepts of reliability and validity are the two criteria most commonly used in the researches. These concepts, which are the most important factors in determining the scientific quality, particularly in qualitative research, are also one of the most important criteria in meta-analysis research. Since the studies included in the meta-analysis are inevitably nonidentical, one of the most critical aspects that must be determined during the analysis of these studies is deciding the similarity of the researches. Despite the absence of an objective methodology, the points considered to ensure validity and reliability of this study are as following:

- The most important criticism addressing meta-analysis is comparing apples and oranges. On the other hand, this fact is a symbol of the strength of meta-analysis studies since the purpose of the literature review is the generalization of a group of studies that has several differences. In this research, all the characteristics of the field of study were considered together while determining inclusion criteria. The appropriate criteria were defined through precise evaluations and the researches included in the study were as identical as possible. Therefore, this limitation was minimized.
- There are criticism pretending that meta-analysis ignore the differences of the researches. In order to eliminate this criticism, the differences of the studies were tested by using five moderator variables.
- Since the studies included in the meta-analysis can't be functionally equivalent, random effects model was preferred.
- Another criticism made on meta-analysis research is the publication bias. In this study publication bias was tested using *Funnel Plot* and *Trim & Fill* test, the results of the tests were presented in the Findings section.
- In order to determine the reliability of the coding process, coding was performed by two different researchers. *Cohen's Kappa* reliability coefficient of the coders was calculated as .95.

For accurate results, sample of the studies included in the meta-analysis should be representative of the universe. However, there will be random errors occurring in the included or excluded units regardless of how well the sample was selected; therefore, the sample would never be same with the universe. If the sample of the study was infinite, sampling error would be zero. But the samples of the studies included in the meta-analysis were not infinite; however, since the statistical computations about how much of the effect-size reached in the research is caused by sampling error was already considered in the performed analysis (Borenstein et al., 2009), no intervention has been made for this issue.
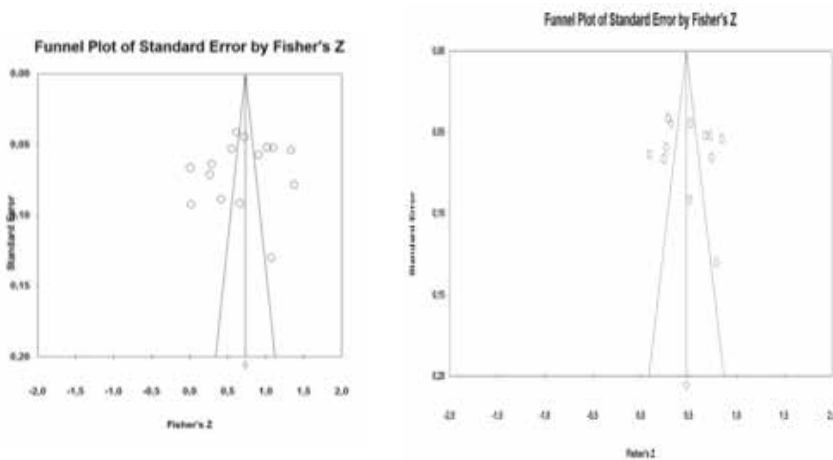
Results

Assessment of Publication Bias

For the examination of publication bias, the following questions were addressed:

- Is there an evidence of publication bias?
- Is it possible that the overall effect-size could be a result of publication bias?
- What proportion of the overall effect-size is related to publication bias?

Meta-analysis uses some computation methods for providing statistically significant answers to the questions including the possibilities mentioned above. *Funnel plot* method is one of them. The shape provided by this method reveals if there is a publication bias on the studies obtained through subjective evaluation. The funnel plot of the researches included in the meta-analysis is given in Figure 1. According to Figure 1, there is no evidence of publication bias in the researches included in the meta-analysis. In case of publication bias, funnel plot is expected to be seriously asymmetric. The accumulation of the researches, especially the one placed at the lower part of the funnel, on one side of the line showing the effect size, indicates the likelihood of publication bias. In this study, no evidence of publication bias was observed for 27 research (15 Organizational commitment & 12 Productivity) that were included in the meta-analysis.

Figure 1.

Effect size funnel on publication bias

Although no evidence of publication bias was observed in the funnel plot, the results of *Trim and Fill test,* which has been performed to evaluate the amount of publication bias effect on the effect-size obtained through the meta-analysis, are given in Table 2. As can be seen from the table, there is no difference between observed effect-size and virtual effect-size that has been formed according to random effects model to correct the effect of publication bias.

Table 2. The results of Duval and Tweedie's trim and fill test

Concepts		Excluding Study	Point estimate	CI (Confidence Interval)		Q
				Lower Limit	Upper Limit	
Organizational commitment	Observed values		.62	.60	.64	590.3
	Adjustment values	0	.62	.60	.64	590.3
Productivity	Observed values		.44	.41	.46	203.1
	Adjustment values	0	.44	.41	.46	203.1

Overview of the Average Effect Sizes

Table 3 shows the meta-analysis results between spiritual leadership and organizational commitment and productivity. The findings has supported H_1 hypothesis, where a positive relationship was expected between spiritual leadership and organizational commitment. Impact value of spiritual leadership over organizational commitment was calculated as .59. This value shows that spiritual leadership has a *moderate level (see* Cohen, 1988) effect on employees' organizational commitments.

The findings of the study has supported H_2 hypothesis, where a positive relationship was expected between spiritual leadership and productivity. The impact value of spiritual leadership over productivity was calculated as .46. This value shows that spiritual leadership has a *moderate level (see* Cohen, 1988) effect on employees' productivity.

Table 3. Correlations between spiritual leadership, organizational commitment ve productivity: The results of meta-analysis

Concepts	k	N	r	CI		Q
				Lower Limit	Upper Limit	
Organizational commitment	15	4,136	.59	.45	.71,41	590.3*
Productivity	12	3,875	.46	.34	.56	203*

Results of Moderator Analysis

Table 4 shows the meta-analysis results about the moderating role of national culture on the relationship of spiritual leadership with organizational commitment and productivity. In hypothesis 3, we have suggested that the relationship between spiritual leadership and organizational commitment would be stronger among the members of horizontal-individualist countries compared to the members of vertical-collectivist countries. According to the moderation analysis, the relationship between spiritual leadership and organizational commitment is not significantly different in horizontal-individualist cultures ($r=$ .65) and vertical-collectivist cultures ($r=$ .56) ($Q_b=$ .32, $p>$.05). Therefore H_3 was not supported.

On the other hand in H4, we have suggested that the relationship between spiritual leadership and productivity would be stronger among the members of horizontal-individualist countries compared to the members of vertical-collectivist countries. According to the moderation analysis, the relationship between spiritual leadership and productivity is significantly higher in horizontal-individualist cultures ($r=$ .65) then vertical-collectivist cultures ($r=$ .38) ($Q_b=$ 21.9, $p<$.05). Therefore H_4 was supported.

Table 4. Results of moderator analysis of national culture on relationships between spiritual leadership, organizational commitment ve productivity

Moderator	k	N	r	CI (confidence interval)		Q_b
				Lower limit	Upper limit	
[Organizational commitment]						.32
Vertical collectivism	10	3108	.56	.40	.69	
Horizontal individualism	5	1028	.65	.32	.84	
[Productivity]						21.9*
Vertical collectivism	9	3097	.38	.26	.49	
Horizontal individualism	3	778	.65	.60	.70	

Discussion

The purpose of this meta-analysis study is testing the relationships of spiritual leadership with organizational commitment and productivity through meta-analysis method and examining the moderating role of national culture quantitatively. Narrow confidence intervals of the meta-analysis shows that the result of the research included in the study were reliable. This finding is considered to be an important finding, in terms of making more reliable decisions about the direction and power of the relationships obtained through the meta-analysis.

The most important point of the study's findings is clarifying that the theories developed in one culture cannot be applied in other cultural contexts (Gelfand et al., 2007). To be more precise, it provides new understandings about the conditions that limit spiritual leadership theory by analyzing the moderating role of national culture on the effect of spiritual leadership over the employees' organizational commitment and productivity. These limitations also comprise leader-employee interaction and communication of different cultures.

The results of the meta-analysis showed that spiritual leadership has a moderate level positive effect on both organizational commitment and productivity. The review of spiritual leadership theories shows that, their major outcomes, particularly the ones of Fry's (2003) spiritual leadership theory are organizational commitment and productivity. Hunt, Sekaran and Schriesheim (1982) stated that rediscovering the phenomenon of leadership is a need for today's world. In fact, leadership corresponds to a consciousness that contains building physical and logical clarity and awareness to all the possibilities. One way or another, leadership is definitely based on a spiritual dimension (Klenke, 2003; Wheatley, 2002) and spiritual leaders attempt to create a productive work environment with highly motivated employees. In addition, as Fry, Matherly, Whittington and Winston (2007) has stated, the ultimate goal of spiritual leadership is to maximize organizational commitment and productivity. From this perspective, spiritual leadership is provided by offering the requirements that the followers need for spiritual salvation. From this point of view, the result obtained from the study shows that the theory is quantitatively valid. In addition, the findings obtained within the study confirm the accuracy of the inferences about spiritual leadership in vertical and horizontal dimensions: The vertical dimension represents the communication between the Holy Power accepted by the individual and him/herself and the horizontal dimension expresses the satisfaction that (s)he gets from life regardless of the sacred one. The review of these dimensions explored that *communication power* constitutes their basis. It was revealed that using communication power, spiritual leaders improve employees' sense of belonging and self-sacrifice levels, their self-recognition and self-expression abilities, as well as communication, equality of opportunity and their attitudes.

Regarding the two moderating arguments of the study, only productivity showed a consistent structure. Although the members of both cultural configurations were sensitive (moderate effect) about how their leaders treated them in terms of organizational commitment, which was set as the moderator variable, the reactions of the members from vertical-collectivist cultures might have been affected from collective interests and role-based loyalty. However, according to the results of moderation analysis, the relationship between spiritual leadership and organizational commitment is not different in horizontal-individualist and vertical-collectivist cultures. These findings can be explained as follows: in both horizontal-individualist and vertical-collectivist cultures, the followers think that their leaders behave as an agent of the organization that they are situated within; thus, in both cultures the emotional attachment and obligations towards the organization are affected by the quality of the relationship with the leader (Rockstuhl et al., 2012). This result is also supported by a research (Eisenberger et al., 2010). In a study that has tested the relationships between leadership and organizational commitment in both horizontal-individualist (United States) and vertical-collectivist (Portugal) cultures, it has been found that "employees were generating their relationships with the supervisors to the organization, because they were seeing the supervisors as an agent of the organization". Therefore, whether the members are from horizontal-individualist or vertical-collectivist cultures, the evaluations that they make about the quality of the relationship with their leader will lead to a spreading effect, which is also reflected in their attitudes towards the organization (Rockstuhl, et al. 2012).

In addition, it has been found that the relationship between spiritual leadership and productivity is different in horizontal-individualist and vertical-collectivist cultures. According to this finding, the productivity level of the members of horizontal-individualist cultures was more affected by spiritual leadership. This fact is related to the balance formed between the individual and the group, the sense of integrity and the high level of communication, which are the most significant points in distinguishing spiritual leadership from other types of leadership. Individuals can realize themselves, feel safe and express individual differences only within a group. All the individuals that form the group are sacred and they make a difference regardless of the work they do. Due to the characteristic of their culture, horizontal-individualistic cultures are especially distant to communitarianism. However, today's business environment includes community more than individuality, such as the implementation of open offices. This fact obligates the leaders of horizontal-individualistic cultures to build successful communication, it requires the leaders to look with communication tinted glasses.

In general, it can be said that the members of vertical-collectivist cultures will evaluate their relationship with their leader according to their formal roles and the fulfillment of their needs by this relationship. Spiritual leaders of vertical-collectivist countries are seen as the formal authorities who perform their jobs

(although the theory doesn't say so). On the other hand, it can be said that spiritual leaders of horizontal-individualist cultures provide a goal to their followers and make efforts to establish high quality relations with them. If this theoretical interpretation is correct, spiritual leaders of horizontal-individualist countries may create a personal liking by emphasizing that the leader and followers share a common fate, therefore they may make formal roles and obligations attached to them less important.

Taken together, the results that we have obtained provides important empirical evidence that sheds light on cultural assumptions of spiritual leadership and consequently, on its cultural restrictions. At the same time, current study also shows that the effect of the culture on spiritual leadership is more complex that it has been assumed in the past and requires closer attention of the scientists. In addition, the findings of the study provide valuable contributions to the leaders working in a global context in terms of establishing better personal relations with their members, thereby they can achieve positive results for their organizations.

Conclusion and Managerial Implications of the Study

In this study, the meta-analysis of the relationships of spiritual leadership with organizational commitment and productivity was performed to examine the role of national culture in spiritual leadership research. The results, which was based on 27 independent samples (N=8,011) from six countries, indicated that national culture moderates the relationships between spiritual leadership and productivity. The relationships between spiritual leadership and productivity are particularly stronger in horizontal-individualistic cultures (Western) compared to vertical-collectivist (Asian) ones. These findings support the hypothesis that the members of both societies are sensitive about how their leaders treat them; however the reactions of the members of vertical-collectivist (Asian) cultures might have been affected from collective interests and role-based loyalty. In addition the results show that national culture affects the relationships between spiritual leadership and organizational commitment. Taken together, the results brings clarity to the cultural assumptions of spiritual leadership theory and underline the importance of conducting further research to reveal the role of the culture on the relations of spiritual leadership.

- This empirical research contributes to the field in that it highlights various management strategies for leaders from different countries and cultures supporting their implementations. Since this is a thinly researched area, especially in the context of spiritual leadership, the findings from this study are expected to be very useful, both for management practitioners as well as for academicians. Following are the managerial implications of this study:
- The importance of appreciation and gratification in work has been considerable, since the business life has now been perceived as a

place to satisfy the needs of individuals and groups. It is not just the physical rewards the people expect for. It should be noted that the materialistic gains feed the soul for just a limited time, and later it may cause the spirit to turn into a greedy monster making it feel hungry. In this context, the spiritual leaders should manage the efficiency of the employees through creating an open organization, calling individuals, conducting an open communication, making the employees feel the membership sense, and appreciating.

- The managers and leaders should seek after a satisfactory value which means a lot in their organizations rather than money and leisure time. Hence, the leaders may build a unity between the spirituality and their work. Thanks to this unity, many leaders experience positive improvements in their communication with the employees and in the efficiency they aim. To reach such an aim, workplace spirituality programs should be organized for the managers and employees in the organizations. Such programs do not just create individual benefits [joy, peace, happiness, job satisfaction], but also eliminate the problems for employing a new worker after the leave of employment and absenteeism in addition to the increase in productivity.
- Four claims that there are four basic dimensions for people's search of life. These are listed as meaningful job letting person improve learning and have the sense of competence and mastery, meaningful job including sense of purpose, sense of positive social relationship and attachment with the people who they work with, and capacity to have an interwoven life. The leaders and employees who internalize the spiritual leadership including these four dimensions will have a harmony for their roles in their jobs and lives.
- Works should be carried out to respect the values of the employees, to treat everybody fairly, to care, to listen to the speaker, to appreciate the ones who contribute to the work, and to develop their own spiritual characteristics for a successful organization and leader.
- The informal communication which is a base for leadership generally and spiritual leadership specifically should be noticed and used in favor of the organization.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This study was realized based on the existing data obtained from primary researches. Most probably, the biggest disadvantage of the study is that obtained data are solely based on correlational studies. This fact shows that a potential methodology bias may exist. Although the discussions about how to measure spiritual leadership still continues, pretending that obtained results will completely explain causal effects will not be objective, considering that qualitative research approach may be more effective.

It was not possible to reach all studies despite the strategies developed to access the studies to be included in the present meta-analysis. This was due to one reason. First, the full texts of some studies were not accessible through the databases searched. Hence, presumably, some studies thought to include the data suitable for the present research were not accessed. Second, because the publication language of the studies included in the present research was limited to English, studies published in other languages were not accessed. Thus, the majority of the studies included were conducted in various states of the USA, China/Taiwan, South Korea, Iran, Thailand and Malaysia. Accordingly, this limitation should be taken into consideration when generalizing the results obtained. Although there was not a statistical result indicating a publication bias, the absence of publication bias was not ensured because it was not possible to access the unpublished studies. The fact that the sample of the present research consisted of studies published from 2000-2016 was another limitation of the research. The weakest point of the study is having worked with a smaller data set compared to previous meta-analysis. The reasons of it are; different languages were used in the studies conducted outside the United States and spiritual leadership theory is relatively new. Thus, future research may continue to examine the relationships of spiritual leadership with other variables across cultures. Another weakness of the meta-analysis is conducting the study by classifying into two cultural structures. According to Van de Vijver and Leung (1997), cross-cultural structural equivalence is needed for making meaningful comparison across cultures. However, empirical approaches commonly used to test structural equivalence require the estimates of covariance between items. Unfortunately, this information is not included in basic studies. Consequently, the change in the meaning of the structure across cultures may be an alternative explanation for the findings of the study. Further research, in which structural equivalence is established, will show if our findings would be duplicated through carefully controlled designs (Rockstuhl et al., 2012).

Through the findings obtained as a result of the analyses, suggestions can be listed as follows:
- The findings of the study showed that spiritual leadership - productivity relationships of horizontal-individualist and vertical-collectivist cultural configurations are moderated. Therefore future research should be designed in a way to include cultural values of the subordinates in horizontal-individualism and vertical-collectivism, thus it will be possible to see if the effects observed in national level is similar in personal level as well.
- With reference to the positive effect of spiritual leadership on organizational commitment, and productivity, the necessary precautions should be taken into consideration to make the stakeholders adopt the spiritual leadership behaviors with the aim of accomplishing the instructional aims of the workplace.
- Further meta-analysis studies should take into consideration studies published in different languages to reveal cultural differences.

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