



Spiritual Marketing in Light of Paternal Leadership: An Applied Study in the General Company for Food Products

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Abstract

Background: Presenting literary contributions to parental leadership and spiritual marketing and focusing on the advantages and benefits that can be benefited from on the practical side

Objective: This research aims to study and analyze the relationship between paternal leadership and spiritual marketing. The problem of the research was expressed in questions: Was the General Company for Food Products able to employ paternal leadership in achieving spiritual marketing? What is the nature of the relationship between paternal leadership and spiritual marketing?

Method: The General Company for Food Products was chosen as a research community, and a random sample of directors and officials in the company was chosen as a sample for the research. A five-point questionnaire was used to collect data. The number of respondents reached (48). To analyze the data, the descriptive analytical approach was adopted using SmartPLS

Results: There is an impact relationship and connection between paternal leadership and spiritual marketing, as the paternal leadership approach contributes greatly to localizing the main relationship with subordinates, encourages them to work, and motivates them to make efforts, and this is consistent with the philosophy of spiritual marketing

Conclusion: Directing the efforts of the company's senior leadership to define and promote a clear spiritual vision for the company that focuses on morals, values, and lofty principles and relying on the paternal leadership approach in achieving them by encouraging subordinates to carry out business and marketing activities in accordance with standards, ethics, and integrity to achieve the goals of spiritual marketing

Keywords: paternal leadership; spiritual marketing; autocratic leadership; ethical leadership; good leadership

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1. Introduction

Companies today seek to explore new methods to achieve excellence and success in the business market, and the marketing shift from product-based marketing to consumer-oriented marketing to value-based marketing has led to the emergence of the term spiritual marketing (Hamdan et al., 2022). It is a marketing approach that focuses on enhancing spiritual values and morals within the company's marketing framework. Spiritual marketing is defined as a marketing effort that focuses on spiritual values and takes into account spiritual values before the product reaches the consumer, from selecting the materials involved in production to the production and marketing process and the impact of the product on the consumer (Queiroz et al., 2020). Spiritual marketing focuses on the spiritual and moral aspects and does not care much about the material and profit aspects (Husaeni et al., 2021). It seeks to achieve happiness for all marketing parties, including stakeholders, suppliers, distributors, employees, and even competitors, meaning that competition is honorable and based on respect. It is a spiritual approach linked to values, principles, ethics, frankness, and honesty (Suhan & Aprillia, 2023). The paternalistic leadership philosophy is one of the autocratic leadership styles (Aljader & Aboudi, 2023). Paternal leadership is among the most widespread patterns in Chinese culture. It is a philosophy based on concern for the happiness and well-being of subordinates and caring for them, such as fathers. It is a pattern that combines authority, benevolence, and moral integrity within the framework of authority (Bedi, 2020). Paternal leadership defines a leadership style that combines discipline, authority, morals, benevolence, and paternal dealing with subordinates (Huang & Liu, 2023). This research attempts to explore the application of the spiritual marketing philosophy within the company's marketing activities, with a focus on the philosophy of paternal leadership. Leadership must be linked to spiritual and moral values, and spiritual leaders must be role models for others in the field of morals and values (Al-Khazraje & Zahra, 2023). This model will be analyzed through an applied study in the General Company for Food Products, where the role of paternal leaders is evident in promoting spiritual marketing values and transforming them into tangible actions within the company. The problem of the research emerged in answering the questions: Was the General Company for Food Products able to employ paternal leadership in achieving spiritual marketing? What is the nature of the relationship between paternal leadership and spiritual marketing? The research aimed to focus on the philosophy of spiritual marketing and enhance the practices of paternal leadership. This research attempts to fill the knowledge gap in spiritual marketing and paternal leadership. The research's originality is underscored by its integration of two significant trends in management and marketing, emphasizing a leadership philosophy rooted in cooperation, tolerance, and virtuous ethics, while applying these principles to advance marketing objectives centered on benefit, honesty, moral values, and consumer welfare. To achieve this, the General Company for Food Products was chosen as a community for the research. The research sample consisted of managers at higher administrative levels and officials from department, division, and unit leadership at middle and lower levels, with data collected through a questionnaire. This article is structured into methodology, literature review, results and discussion, and conclusions.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Paternal leadership

The concept of paternalistic leadership was first introduced by Weber, who viewed it as a form of legitimate authority (Calás, 2019). This leadership style is particularly prevalent in environments that emphasize collectivism and strong social communication (Patel & Bakari, 2022). Paternalistic leadership involves a leader fulfilling subordinates' needs while limiting their responsibility and freedom to act in what is perceived as their best interest, often without their consent (Lan et al., 2019; Harini, 2021). However, a paternalistic manager is also expected to be caring and supportive, fostering both employee productivity and satisfaction (Steele & Miyake, 2021).

Some scholars describe paternalistic leadership as a form of traditional hegemony (Indah et al., 2022), while others argue that it combines power and affection to create a structured yet supportive environment (Khorakian et al., 2021). Salih (2021) defines the paternal manager's role as providing support, respect, care, and protection to subordinates. Yao and Hao (2023) even characterize

paternalistic leadership as a "benevolent dictatorship." This leadership style is marked by strong authority and well-defined standards (Zhijie et al., 2022; Hou et al., 2019).

According to Zou et al. (2020), paternalistic leadership allows managers to both ensure productivity and enhance employee well-being. However, it remains controversial because it involves acting in another person's interest without their explicit consent, much like a parent making decisions for their child (Gull et al., 2021; Aybar & Cark, 2023). Despite this, Dianingrum et al. (2022) argue that paternalistic leadership is a balance between strict discipline, authority, and moral integrity. Zahir and Mohammed (2023) further define three core characteristics of a paternalistic leader, which are as follows:

- Tyranny: This calls for the leader to impose strong control and authority on his subordinates to obey him and carry out his orders.
- Benevolence: Leaders assist employees to increase their happiness, and therefore they expect their employees to respond to them in kind.
- Ethics: It demonstrates the superiority of the moral character, which encourages employees to increase respect for the leader.

Paternal leadership enhances trust between the leader and workers and increases group harmony (Qdri, 2023). It affects employee motivation and commitment.

2.2. *Dimensions of paternal leadership*

The dimensions of paternal leadership include benevolent leadership, moral leadership, and autocratic leadership, as referenced by Aljader & Aboudi (2023) and Mahmoud et al. (2020).

- Good leadership: Effective leadership prioritizes both organizational success and employee well-being by helping subordinates navigate challenges with generosity, empathy, and courage (Saygili et al., 2020). Benevolent leaders demonstrate care, compassion, and understanding, fostering stronger commitment and enhanced citizenship behavior among employees (Em, 2023). Such leaders focus on motivating and supporting their team, actively seeking solutions to workplace problems while ensuring that both individual and collective interests are addressed (Dedahanov et al., 2019). Ultimately, benevolent leadership aims to create a positive work environment that promotes shared success and collective well-being (Rasool et al., 2018).
- Ethical leadership: Ethical leadership is characterized by the demonstration of morally appropriate behavior through personal actions, professional relationships, and the motivation of employees to adopt ethical values (Ren et al., 2020). This leadership style is built on two key pillars: first, the perception of the leader as an ethical individual, displaying integrity, trustworthiness, and honesty (Kim & Vandenberghe, 2020); second, the leader's role as an ethical manager who makes fair and balanced decisions, sets clear role expectations aligned with organizational goals, and genuinely cares for subordinates (Hassan & Al-Jubouri, 2023). Ethical leadership is rooted in fundamental ethical principles, including consequentialist, deontological, and virtue ethics approaches, making it an essential aspect of modern business practices (NEGİŞ IŞIK, 2020).
- Autocratic leadership: Autocratic leadership contrasts sharply with both benevolent and ethical leadership. It positions the manager as the central authority, whose decisions are absolute and must be followed without question, emphasizing dominance over employees (Al-Jobory, Haneen Abd alsalam, 2023a). This leadership style is characterized by absolute authority and complete centralization, where managers exert full control and expect unquestioning obedience from subordinates (Özçelik & Cenkci, 2014). Autocratic leaders often exhibit negative behaviors, using excessive power to achieve personal goals with little regard for employee needs, which can harm job performance (Adiguzel, 2019). Such leadership may create a climate of fear and hesitation, restricting employees' job performance and suppressing creative expression (Mahmoud et al., 2020). Furthermore, authoritarian leaders often use coercion to enforce compliance, which can lower organizational commitment (Zahir & Mohammed, 2023). However, in some cases, autocratic leadership can drive high performance by compelling

subordinates to adhere strictly to directives (Al-Jobory, Haneen Abd alsalam, 2023b). From a broader perspective, research suggests that benevolent leadership positively correlates with ethical leadership while having a negative relationship with autocratic leadership (Fu et al., 2013). Benevolence and authoritarianism are fundamentally incompatible within the same organizational framework, making it difficult for both leadership styles to coexist in managerial practice.

2.3. *Spiritual Marketing*

The increasing diversity in society has led to the emergence of a new type of marketing that focuses on rational and emotional activity (Khairy & Abidin, 2018). Marketers want to target not only consumers' minds but also their hearts and touch their feelings (Triatmo et al., n.d.). Spiritual marketing is defined as practicing all marketing activities and operations with spiritual values that ensure the happiness and well-being of all stakeholders, from stakeholders to employees, suppliers, distributors, and even competitors (Fahamsyah, 2020). Spiritual marketing as a marketing strategy based on spiritual values derived from society that generate a relationship linking the consumer to the product (Dwihantoro & Vianto, 2022). Spiritual marketing is based on the basic principles of honesty, love, empathy, and concern for the public good. Spiritual marketing, unlike traditional marketing methods that seek to achieve profit, does not prioritize financial gains and tries a lot to avoid unethical practices in marketing (Bambang et al., 2021). Spiritual marketing aims to satisfy the needs and desires of consumers according to the rules of ethics, values, honesty, and non-harm (Costa, 2018). Some call it legitimate marketing because it attempts to apply God's law in marketing through its application of justice, honesty, transparency, and ethical values (Alfarisi & Fasa, 2023; Nurjannah et al., 2023). It is consistent with the rules of divine law, the principles of good conscience, and Islamic values, which aim to make marketing activity safer and more beneficial and make it loved by consumers (Dwihantoro & Vianto, 2022). Spiritual marketing has four basic elements: faith-based, realistic, ethical, and humanistic (Dwihantoro & Vianto, 2022; Rahayu & Setiyadi, 2022). Marketing work is managed by Sharia law, which is the faith level (Hermawati et al., 2022). As for the realistic level, marketing is based on social principles, honesty, empathy, love, and concern for others. As for the ethical level, marketing derives its principles from the call of the spirit, living conscience, and commitment to ethical standards, and the human level. Marketing is a necessary human need to satisfy needs and desires. The elements of spiritual marketing are detailed below (Hindarsah, 2021; Husaeni et al., 2019; Praditya, 2020):

- Faith: Spiritual marketing activities are linked to the satisfaction of God Almighty. Spiritual marketing is managed according to the rules of divine law. As a matter of awareness of religious values, not to deceive and deceive consumers, not to make profits at their expense, not to break oaths and promises after concluding a sales deal, and for the marketer to keep God Almighty in his sight.
- Ethics: The marketer must adhere to ethical and moral standards while practicing marketing activity and present moral values and moral considerations first and not harm consumers. The more positive his behavior is, the more he will gain the trust of consumers.
- Realism: Spiritual marketing recognizes pluralism, difference, and contrast between tastes. It understands social situations, is concerned with feelings and sensations, and interacts with everyone with flexibility and professionalism.
- Humanity: Spiritual marketing maintains human values, deals with a humane, non-exploitative nature, does not seek to gain benefit over the interests of others, refrains from greed, feels for others, accepts all consumers and treats them as brothers, and does not exploit people's need to achieve personal gain at their expense.

It is necessary to respect consumers' values and beliefs when providing a service or product (Hajizadeh & Kazemi, 2022). Spiritual marketing increases customer satisfaction, enhances consumer loyalty, and improves consumer confidence in the brand (Rini & Absah, 2017).

3. Method

3.1. Problem Research

The issue of commitment to values and ethics is one of the main goals of companies, which try as much as possible to adhere to them in their marketing activities to gain the trust of customers. Therefore, companies try to find a close link linking the company to the customer, and perhaps the spiritual aspect is the most prominent. Spiritual marketing is a marketing philosophy based on ethics, honesty, faith, and application. Virtuous principles that seek to achieve happiness and well-being for all. The leadership style adopted in the company dictates the nature of the relationship between subordinates and determines the company's direction in the market. The term paternal leadership has emerged, which seeks to treat subordinates as a father treats his children, and which takes values, morals, severity, kindness, and attention as a pattern of dealing. The research gap is the lack of studies and research that explore the relationship between paternal leadership and spiritual marketing, as there is a scarcity of research that deals with the topic of spiritual marketing, especially its application in companies operating in the food industry sector. The term spiritual marketing did not receive much attention in the Iraqi environment. The main research problem arises in how paternal leadership can contribute to applying the philosophy of spiritual marketing in the marketing activities of the General Company for Food Industries. The research will also attempt to answer the following questions:

- Was the General Company for Food Products able to employ paternal leadership in achieving spiritual marketing?
- What is the nature of the relationship between parental leadership and spiritual marketing?

3.2. The importance of research

The importance of the research stems from the importance of adopting the philosophy of paternal leadership, as well as revealing the real problems facing employees. The importance of the research also stems from the necessity of using spiritual marketing as an alternative to approved traditional marketing. The research gains its importance from the importance of the role that the researched company plays in the food sector.

- Analyzing the relationship of influence and connection between parental leadership and spiritual marketing.
- The research seeks to urge the company under study to enhance spiritual marketing practices and shed light on the paternal leadership philosophy and the advantages that this philosophy achieves in the management of the institution and employees.
- Identify the reality of applying paternal leadership and the extent of its adoption by senior management in the General Company for Marketing Food Products.
- Reaching results that provide recommendations to the researched company to achieve spiritual marketing and rely on the paternal leadership philosophy.

3.3. Research Aims

According to the problems addressed by the research and the importance it acquires, research objectives can be set, which are as follows:

- Analyzing the relationship of influence and connection between parental leadership and spiritual marketing.
- The research seeks to urge the company under study to enhance spiritual marketing practices and shed light on the paternal leadership philosophy and the advantages that this philosophy achieves in the management of the institution and employees.
- Identify the reality of applying paternal leadership and the extent of its adoption by senior management in the General Company for Marketing Food Products.

- Reaching results that provide recommendations to the researched company to achieve spiritual marketing and rely on the paternal leadership philosophy.

3.4. Model and Hypothesis Research

The proposed research scheme was built with an independent variable, which is paternal leadership, which includes three sub-variables, which are moral leadership, benevolent leadership, and Autocratic leadership, while the dependent variable represents spiritual marketing. Two main hypotheses were formulated for the research, which are as follows:

- The first main hypothesis (H1): There is a significant correlation between parental leadership and spiritual marketing. Three sub-hypotheses emerged from it:
 - (H1-1) There is a significant correlation between ethical leadership and spiritual marketing.
 - (H1-2) There is a significant correlation between good leadership and spiritual marketing.
 - (H1-3) There is a significant correlation between autocratic leadership and spiritual marketing.
- The second main hypothesis (H2): There is a positive significant impact between paternal leadership and spiritual marketing. Three sub-hypotheses emerged from it:
 - (H2-1) There is a positive significant impact between ethical leadership and spiritual marketing.
 - (H2-2) There is a positive significant impact between good leadership and spiritual marketing.
 - (H2-3) There is a positive significant impact between autocratic leadership and spiritual marketing.

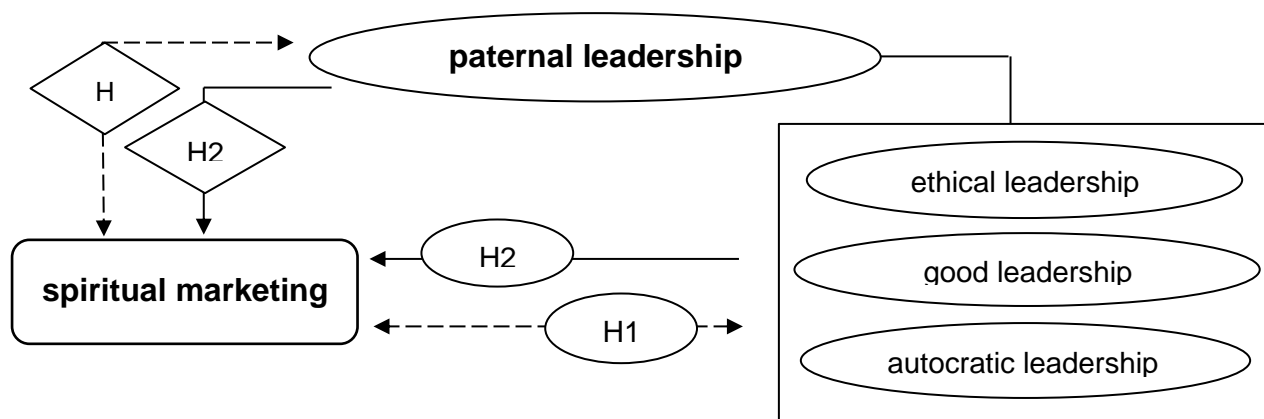


Figure 1. Search model

3.5. Sample and research tools

The researcher employed both the applied approach and the descriptive analytical approach in conducting the research. The General Company for Marketing Food Products, a division of the Ministry of Industry and Minerals in Baghdad, was selected as the research community. The study sample comprised senior and middle leaders accountable for the company, including general managers, department directors, and division and unit officials, totaling a specific number. A total of 56 questionnaire forms were distributed, of which 48 were returned, audited, and deemed valid for analysis. The study utilized a five-point Likert scale questionnaire, designed based on previous research to measure the study variables. To assess parental leadership, the scale developed by Aljader and Aboudi (2023) was adopted, with modifications to better align with the company's structure and industry

context. Similarly, the scale from Hermawati et al. (2022) was used to measure the spiritual marketing variable. Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares (PLS) modeling through the SmartPLS software, along with statistical analysis performed using SPSS V.26 to derive the study results.

4. Results

4.1. Coding the items and testing the measurement tool

The SMART PLS program was used to build the path model to test the evaluation of the measurement model. The measurement standards require that the saturation values be greater than or equal to 0.50, the Cronbach's alpha values be greater than 0.70, the composite reliability values greater than or equal to 0.60, and the AVE values greater than or equal to 0.40. When conducting a test to evaluate the model for measuring the parental leadership variable, Table (1) shows that the values of The AVE are greater than 0.40, the Cronbach's alpha values are greater than 0.70, and the saturations are greater than 0.50. Therefore, the validity, reliability, and consistency values of the scale's items are all within acceptable limits. This means that the model is ready for measurement. A discriminant validity test was also conducted based on the outputs of the HTMT test and all the items are within the standards. This means the items developed to measure the variable of parental leadership, as they appear in Table (1).

Table 1. Test results of the measurement tool for the parental leadership variable

AVE	CRV	Cronbach's alpha	Factor loading	Coding	Paragraphs	
0.707	0.916	0.890	0.877	GL1	The way my boss treats workers makes me feel like I am a member of his family	Good leadership GL
			0.898	GL2	My boss helps me when I have problems at work	
			0.955	GL3	My boss is interested in my personal life outside of my work relationships	
			0.841	GL4	My boss constantly shows concern for my well-being	
			0.878	GL5	My boss fulfills my demands when I ask him to	
0.661	0.849	0.822	0.803	EL1	My manager has credibility and integrity when evaluating employees' performance	Ethical leadership EL
			0.856	EL2	My manager distributes work-related tasks to employees according to their ability	
			0.874	EL3	My boss prefers the pressure of subordinates over his interests	
			0.885	EL4	My manager at work values my contributions and achievements at work	
0.629	0.730	0.715	0.746	AL1	My boss demands that his instructions be followed to the letter	Autocratic leadership AL
			0.877	AL2	The final decision in meetings always rests with my boss	
			0.751	AL3	My boss appears controlling and controlling of subordinates	
0.832				Cronbach's alpha Paternal Leadership		
0.877				The composite reliability of parental leadership		
0.666				AVE for paternal leadership		

Source: Smart PLS4 output

Figure (2) shows the saturations of the items of the parental leadership variable scale, which shows that all items are accepted as exceeding the minimum limits

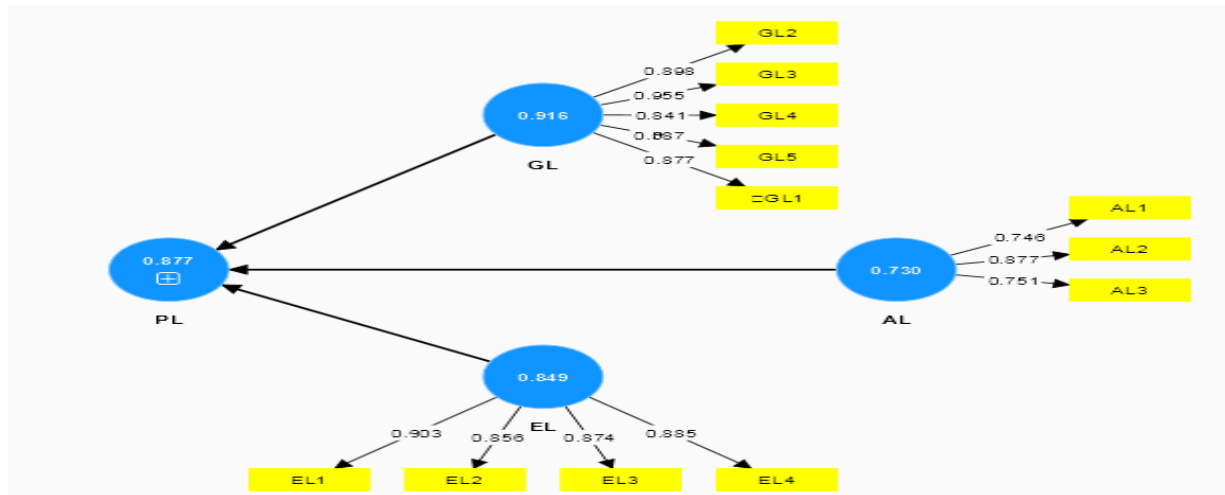


Figure 2. Satisfaction of items measuring the variable parental leadership

Table 2. HTTH test of discriminant validity for the spiritual marketing variable

	PL	GL	AL	EL
PL				
GL	0.596			
AL	0.529	0.300		
EL	0.869	0.853	0.808	

Source: Smart PLS4 output

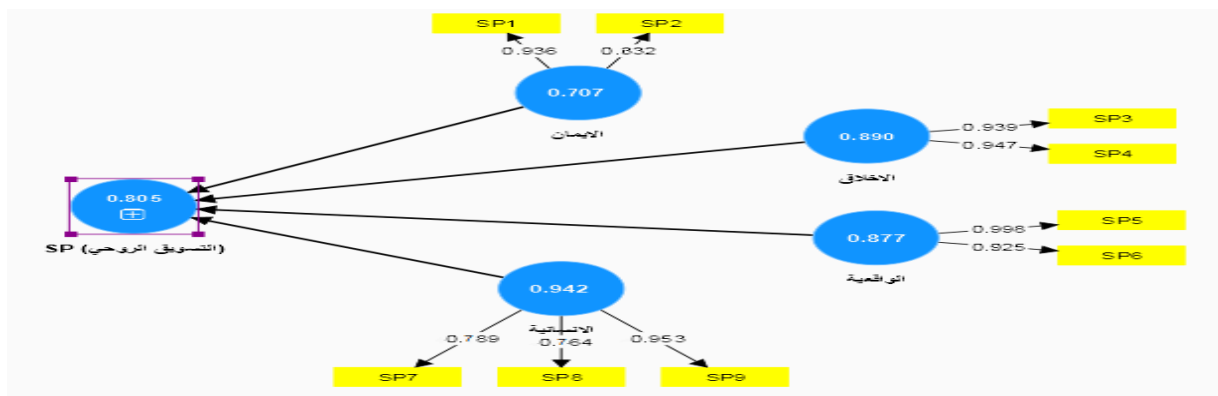
The SMART PLS program was utilized to construct a path model for evaluating the measurement model. According to measurement standards, saturation values must be ≥ 0.50 , Cronbach's alpha should exceed 0.70, composite reliability must be ≥ 0.60 , and AVE (Average Variance Extracted) values should be ≥ 0.40 . Upon evaluating the spiritual marketing variable, Table 3 indicates that the AVE values are above 0.40, Cronbach's alpha exceeds 0.70, and saturation levels are greater than 0.50. These results confirm that the scale's items demonstrate adequate validity, reliability, and consistency, indicating that the model is suitable for measurement. Furthermore, a discriminant validity assessment was conducted using the HTMT test, confirming that all items meet the established standards. As shown in Table 4, the items developed for measuring spiritual marketing comply with these criteria.

Table 3. Results of testing the measurement tool for the spiritual marketing variable

AVE	CRV	Cronbach's alpha	Factor loading	Coding	Paragraphs	
0.793	0.707	0.743	0.906	SP1	The company relies on honesty in all its sales operations	Faith
			0.832	SP2	The company does not break the promises it makes to customers	
0.890	0.880	0.877	0.939	SP3	The company adheres to ethical standards when conducting marketing activities	Moral
			0.947	SP4	The company seeks to gain customer trust by not harming the consumer	
0.801	0.877	0.848	0.998	SP5	The company has sufficient experience and skill in marketing its products in an excellent manner	realism
			0.925	SP6	The company knows the tastes of consumers and seeks to provide products that suit those desires	
0.887	0.942	0.958	0.769	SP7	The company provides its products to various customers without discrimination in dealing	Humanity
			0.764	SP8	The company does not exploit consumers' need for products to raise prices or monopolize products	
			0.953	SP9	The company always seeks to assist customers	
0.789			Cronbach's alpha for Spiritual Marketing			
0.805			The compounding consistency of spiritual marketing			
0.889			AVE Spiritual Marketing			

Source: Smart PLS4 outputs.

Figure (3) shows the saturations of the items on the spiritual marketing variable scale, which shows that all items accept that they exceed the minimum limits.

**Figure 3.** Saturations for the items of the spiritual marketing variable scale

Source: Smart PLS4 outputs.

The discriminant validity test was conducted using the HTTH test to determine the extent to which the spiritual marketing items conform to the discriminant validity test, which values must be less than 0.90. Table (4) shows that all values are within acceptable limits, and thus the discriminant validity of the measurement tool for the spiritual marketing variable is achieved.

Table 4. HTTH test of discriminant validity for the spiritual marketing variable

	Spiritual Marketing	Faith	Moral	realism	Humanity
Spiritual Marketing					
Faith	0.862				
Moral	0.345	0.417			
realism	0.761	0.413	0.488		
Humanity	0.522	0.703	0.647	0.533	

Source: Smart PLS4 output

4.2. Descriptive analysis of the research variables

Descriptive analysis allows for the examination of the prevalence of the variables discussed in the study within the company's community by analyzing the mean, standard deviation, and percentage, as detailed below:

Table 5. Descriptive statistical analysis of the variable parental leadership

St.D	Mean	Code
1.062	3.979	GL1
1.263	3.646	GL2
1.134	3.771	GL3
1.272	3.500	GL4
1.376	3.646	GL5
1.184	3.542	EL1
1.302	3.083	EL2
1.254	3.292	EL3
1.254	3.792	EL4
1.229	3.646	AL1
1.219	3.563	AL2
1.051	3.542	AL3
1.217	3.584	Total

The results presented in Table (5) indicate that the overall average for the independent variable, paternal leadership within the General Company for Food Products, is (3.584), surpassing the hypothesized average of (3). This suggests the presence of the independent variable among the respondent sample.

Table 6. Descriptive statistical analysis of the spiritual marketing variable

St.D	Mean	Code
0.975	3.833	SP1
1.044	3.875	SP2
1.158	3.750	SP3
1.378	3.375	SP4
1.236	3.563	SP5
0.956	4.021	SP6
1.148	3.542	SP7
1.313	3.021	SP8
1.151	3.623	Total

Source: SPSS V.26 output

The results presented in Table (6) indicate that the overall average for the dependent variable items, spiritual marketing of the General Company for Food Products, is (3.623), surpassing the hypothesized average of (3). This signifies the presence of the independent variable within the respondent sample.

4.3. Evaluating the structural model and testing hypotheses

4.3.1. Testing the correlation hypotheses (H1) and the hypotheses emerging from them

To evaluate the first main hypothesis—"There is a correlation between parental leadership and spiritual marketing"—a Pearson correlation test was conducted. As shown in Table 7, the results indicate a significant and positive correlation between parental leadership (PL) and spiritual marketing (SP), with a correlation coefficient of 0.373 at a 0.01 significance level. These findings confirm the validity of the first main hypothesis (H1). Three sub-hypotheses branch out from this hypothesis, which are:

- A positive and significant correlation exists between good leadership (GL) and spiritual marketing (SP). Table (7) illustrates a positive and significant correlation between effective leadership (GL) and spiritual marketing (SP). The value of the correlation coefficient between them reached (0.491**) at a significance level (0.01), and this means that the first sub-hypothesis is correct.
- A positive and significant correlation exists between ethical leadership (EL) and spiritual marketing (SP). Table (7) illustrates a positive and significant correlation between ethical leadership (EL) and spiritual marketing (SP). The value of the correlation coefficient between them reached (0.288*) at a significance level (0.05), and this means that the second sub-hypothesis is correct.
- A positive and significant correlation exists between autocratic leadership (AL) and spiritual marketing (SP). Table (7) indicates that there is no significant correlation between autocratic leadership (AL) and spiritual marketing (SP). The significance of the relationship was not achieved as the level of morality reached 0.586, which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the third sub-hypothesis is rejected because it does not conform to the criteria. required.

Table 7. Correlation hypothesis testing matrix

		SP	PL	GL	EL	AL
SP	Pearson Correlation	1	.373**	.491**	.288*	-.081-
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003	.000	.047	.586
	N	48	48	48	48	48
PL	Pearson Correlation	.373**	1	.789**	.711**	.711**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003		.000	.000	.000
	N	48	48	48	48	48
GL	Pearson Correlation	.491**	.789**	1	.248	.357*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.089	.013
	N	48	48	48	48	48
EL	Pearson Correlation	.288*	.711**	.248	1	.374**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.047	.000	.089		.009
	N	48	48	48	48	48
AL	Pearson Correlation	-.081-	.711**	.357*	.374**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.586	.000	.013	.009	
	N	48	48	48	48	48

Source: SPSS V.26 output

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.3.2. Testing the impact hypotheses (H2) and the hypotheses emerging from them

The structural model was evaluated by analyzing path coefficients, which measure direct effects, and by extracting the interpretation coefficient (R^2) to determine how much the independent variable (parental leadership) explains the dependent variable (spiritual marketing). The second main hypothesis proposed that "parental leadership has a positive and significant influence on spiritual marketing." To test this hypothesis, a structural model was developed, as illustrated in Figure 4, with the results presented in Table 8.

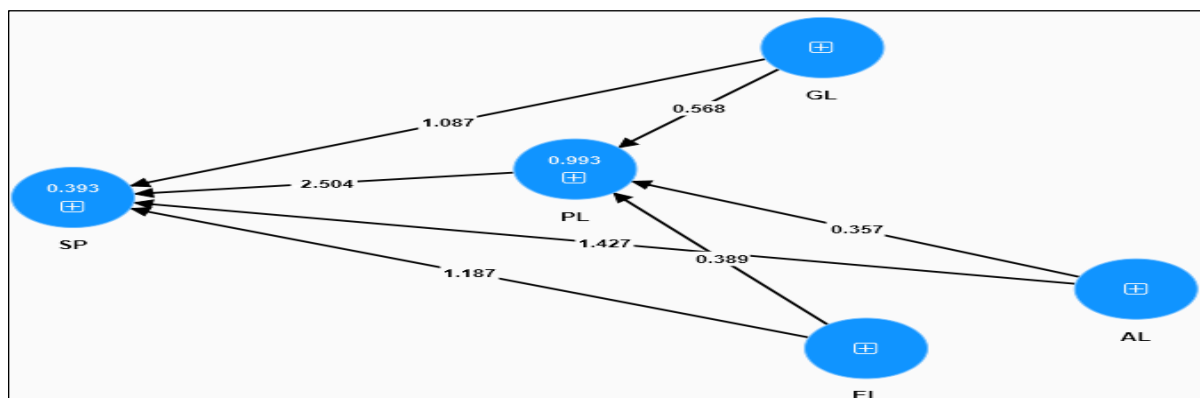


Figure 4. The structural model for testing the second main hypothesis

Source: Smart PLS4 output.

Note: The numbers in the arrows represent the path coefficient, while the numbers in the circles represent the coefficient of determination. The symbol [+] indicates hiding the paragraphs belonging to the variable due to the lack of need for them in evaluating the structural model.

Table 8. structural model for the second main hypothesis

R ² Aju.	R ²	f ²	result	p Value	t Value	Estimate	VIF	Path	H	SUMME R
0.337	0.393	0.071	Accept	0.044	2.011	2.504	3.548	PL→SP	H2	0.213
		0.041	Accept	0.037	2.087	1.087	0.237	GL→SP	H2-1	
		0.169	Accept	0.005	2.806	1.427	1.243	EL→ SP	H2-2	
		0.100	Reject	0.289	1.060	1.187	0.779	AL→ SP	H2-3	

Source: Smart PLS4 output

Table (8) displays the results of assessing the structural model for the second primary hypothesis and its derived hypotheses, indicating that the SRMR criterion of 0.213 meets the requisite standard for goodness of fit. The path coefficients of the secondary principal hypothesis met the requisite t and p value standards, signifying the importance of these relationships and rendering them acceptable. The hypothesis, along with its derivatives H2-1 and H2-2, satisfied the requisite t and p value thresholds, signifying the significance of these relationships and thereby warranting the acceptance of these hypotheses. The third sub-hypothesis H2-3 failed to satisfy the criteria for t and p values. This signifies the rejection of the hypothesis, indicating that autocratic leadership does not influence spiritual marketing. The coefficient of determination R² attained a value of 0.337, indicating that paternal leadership accounts for 33% of the factors influencing the spiritual marketing model, while the remaining percentage pertains to factors not addressed by the model.

5. Discussion

In recent years, the demand for leaders accountable for environmental, social, business, and stakeholder rights protection has significantly increased (Salem et al., 2021). The topic of spiritual marketing is one of the important topics because it deals with spiritual aspects, which have a major role in influencing individuals' consumer behaviors (Purwaningwulan, 2021). Permatasari and Yunita (2023) assert that spiritual marketing influences consumer interests, fosters loyalty, and impacts purchasing decisions, rendering it a marketing philosophy of significant interest to marketing managers. Hindarsah (2021) asserts that spiritual marketing has emerged as the optimal alternative for marketing managers, as it resolves the issues associated with traditional marketing. The findings of this study align with the assertions of Triatmo et al. (2022) that spiritual marketing fundamentally relies on elevated ethics and the aspiration arising from a commitment to goodness and righteousness. This study concurs with Bambang et al. (2021) that the reliance of company officials on the spiritual marketing philosophy fosters positive employee relations and enhances marketing capabilities.

The results of this study showed that there is an effect of ethical leadership and benevolent leadership in spiritual marketing because the goals of ethical and benevolent leadership are compatible with the goals of spiritual marketing in adhering to honest values, standards, and ethics (Ren et al., 2020). Although no apparent connection or influence exists between autocratic leadership and spiritual marketing, the rigid and authoritarian approach contradicts the principles of spiritual marketing, which emphasize forgiveness, empathy, and ethical values.

The research by Smith et al. (2018) suggests that the authoritarian style is essential in certain situations; however, it is incompatible with spiritual and human attributes. Montaudon-Tomas et al. (2020) contend that authoritarian leadership exemplifies a fundamental model of paternal leadership, yielding significant benefits in terms of direction and goal attainment. This study explores a relatively new topic, with ongoing debates about the nature of the relationship between paternal leadership and spiritual marketing. Currently, there is limited research available to fully explain this connection. According to Triatmo et al. (2022), spiritual marketing is a modern marketing concept that adopts an unconventional approach, emphasizing spiritual and moral values in the marketing process.

Wang et al. (2019) suggest that leadership style is closely linked to spiritual values, significantly influencing the work environment. Similarly, Hou et al. (2019) highlight paternal leadership as a key leadership approach that integrates elements of moral leadership, benevolence, and authoritarianism in managing and leading organizations.

This study addressed its main research questions by examining the relationship between paternal leadership and spiritual marketing, confirming a clear connection and influence between the two. The second research question was answered by demonstrating that the General Company for Food Industries applies paternal leadership principles, particularly good and ethical leadership, to achieve spiritual marketing. Additionally, this study met its objectives by clarifying the significance of spiritual marketing. According to Cahyani and Alvianto (2020), spiritual marketing positively impacts consumer satisfaction, as paternal leadership fosters a workplace culture of care, guidance, and attentiveness, ultimately strengthening loyalty and respect between leaders and subordinates (Khorakian et al., 2021).

Findings from this study indicate that paternal leadership plays a crucial role in advancing spiritual marketing by incorporating human values into marketing strategies. The philosophy of good leadership ensures a mutually beneficial marketing process, free from harm or exploitation of consumers, while ethical leadership emphasizes moral principles and ethical standards in all marketing activities. However, a conflict exists between authoritarian leadership and spiritual marketing approaches. Given these insights, this research recommends future studies exploring the connection between spiritual marketing and branding, its impact on consumer behavior, and its relationship with sensory marketing.

6. Conclusions

The findings of this study lead to several key conclusions. Paternal leadership has a significant impact and correlation with spiritual marketing, as do its dimensions—good leadership and ethical leadership. However, no significant evidence was found to support a relationship between autocratic leadership and spiritual marketing. As a result, the hypothesis suggesting a connection between autocratic leadership and spiritual marketing was rejected, indicating that autocratic leadership does not influence spiritual marketing.

The General Company for Food Industries actively applies paternal leadership principles, particularly the benevolent leadership style, in managing its operations. Additionally, the company seeks to integrate spiritual marketing into its marketing strategies, as reflected in the responses of the study participants. Paternal leadership fosters strong leader-subordinate relationships, encouraging employees to work diligently while balancing their personal interests with organizational goals. A paternalistic leader, much like a father figure, provides care, support, and a sense of responsibility, treating subordinates with respect and appreciation while maintaining authority and control to achieve company objectives.

Spiritual marketing is centered on justice, honesty, and integrity, adhering to spiritual values, divine law, and Islamic Sharia principles throughout all marketing activities—from production and distribution to final product delivery. This approach aims to build long-term spiritual relationships with customers,

yielding deeper and more sustainable benefits compared to traditional marketing. By prioritizing credibility, adherence to standards, and fulfilling promises to customers, companies can strengthen customer trust, satisfaction, and loyalty, ultimately benefiting both present and future business performance.

Conversely, authoritarian leadership conflicts with the principles of spiritual marketing, as it lowers employee morale by restricting independence and creating a high-pressure work environment, which diminishes commitment to spiritual values. Additionally, authoritarian leadership relies on unilateral decision-making and strict control, which contradicts the cooperative, respectful, and transparent nature of spiritual marketing.

In contrast, ethical leadership aligns well with spiritual marketing, as it fosters trust and respect between leaders and employees through fair and honest behavior. This leadership style enhances a cooperative work environment, reinforcing spiritual values such as integrity and respect. Similarly, good leadership promotes spiritual values by ensuring effective and transparent communication, strengthening customer loyalty, and fostering a positive and integrity-driven business atmosphere that prioritizes the human aspect of marketing.

7. Recommendations

Based on the conclusions presented, several recommendations can be made, the most significant of which are:

- Guiding the senior leadership of the company to articulate and advocate a distinct spiritual vision centered on ethics, values, and noble principles, while employing a paternal leadership style to inspire subordinates to conduct business and marketing endeavors in accordance with standards, ethics, and integrity to fulfill the objectives of spiritual marketing.
- The General Company for Food Industries must uphold integrity, transparency, and ethical conduct in all marketing endeavors, thereby strengthening its relationships with suppliers, distributors, and consumers to enhance operational efficiency and deliver value to both the company and its customers.
- The imperative of embracing the philosophy of spiritual marketing lies in its alignment with the virtuous values and ethical standards upheld by the company and the marketer. It explicitly incorporates the principles of Islamic Sharia, which advocate for non-harm in transactions and promote integrity and honesty in dealings, thereby fostering robust relationships with consumers.
- The company in question should diminish dependence on the Autocratic leadership style and adopt a benevolent leadership approach to enhance opportunities for subordinates to innovate and exercise creativity in business, while promoting the principles of ethical leadership to integrate paternalistic leadership with spiritual marketing.
- Develop and educate the marketing personnel to comprehend consumer behavior and engage with it in a manner that fosters consumer trust in the marketer. Ensure that interactions are grounded in honesty and mutual benefit, safeguarding the consumer's interests. Promote respectful treatment of customers, prioritizing their emotional well-being, and ensuring equitable attention and service for all consumers, without pursuing company gains at the customer's expense.

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