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Eleftheria Egel & Louis W. Fry

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Spiritual Leadership as a Model for Islamic Leadership

Eleftheria Egel

International University of Monaco

Louis W. Fry

Texas A&M University–Central Texas

Western-based models dominate leadership research and practice, although a consensus is emerging that new theories and models are needed to foster cross-cultural understanding and rapprochement. This holds not only for global organizations that employ workers from different cultures but also for public and private organizations whose cultures and employees are grounded in and embrace religious beliefs and practices as central to their work. This article addresses these issues, drawing from spiritual leadership theory and Islamic religious tenets, and performing a theoretical transposition of the components of the spiritual leadership model into a model of Islamic leadership more appropriate for Islamic organizations and organizations employing Muslim workers. Implications for future theory building, research, and practice are discussed.

Keywords: cross-cultural leadership, Islamic leadership, public administration, spiritual leadership, theory of transposition, workplace spirituality

Twenty-first century business leaders confront a constantly changing global environment that demands that they embrace diverse cultural worldviews if their organizations are to succeed (Kazmi, 2003; Parvez, 2000). Geopolitically, they face endless and intractable conflicts rooted in deep cultural, religious, and political interests that seemingly defy solution through any organized multinational or United Nations effort (Baur, 2011; Ruggie, 2011). This requires leaders who can quickly adjust and work with partners and employees of other cultures, because their organizations are embedded in sociocultural environments that significantly influence employees in terms of the beliefs and social relationships they bring with them to the work situation (Hofstede, 2001; House, Javidan, & Dorfman, 2001).

Embracing cross-cultural diversity can bring substantial benefits, such as better customer service, improved decision-making, and greater creativity and innovation (Earley & Ang, 2003). It also brings costs and concerns, including communication difficulties, interpersonal and intraorganizational conflict, and turnover, as leaders and employees embody different perspectives and approaches to work (Earley & Ang, 2003). For example, GLOBE researchers found that their Anglo cluster respondents viewed outstanding leaders as demonstrating charismatic influence while being diplomatic, delegating authority, and encouraging participation.

Outstanding leaders in the Arabic cluster, however, viewed effective leaders as needing to balance a paradoxical set of expectations: They were expected to be charismatic, with a great deal of power and control to direct most decisions and action, yet they were also expected to not differentiate themselves from others and to have a sense of humility.

Given these striking differences, it is essential that leaders understand and appreciate the characteristics that make a particular cultural worldview unique and how it is likely to influence organizational behavior; they must as well be able to view the environment from a cross-cultural perspective (House, Javidan, & Dorfman, 2001, 2004). In particular, many leaders must deal with cross-cultural challenges along religious lines (Scherer & Palazzo, 2011; Yom, 2002). Religion is a pervasive force in many societies and tends to influence a wide range of values, attitudes, and behaviors, both as a dimension of the decision-maker's personal characteristics (i.e., an individual's religiosity) and as the decision-making environmental context (Tracey, 2012; Weaver & Agle, 2002).

Whether or not one is a believer in the efficacy of religious traditions generally or of a particular tradition is immaterial to the call for leadership models that can be grounded in the tenets of a faith tradition for those who recognize no separation between their practice of their faith tradition and their work, while also being of utility for others in cross-cultural organizational environments that see no such linkage. This is especially true in the case of Islam due to its holistic character, its geopolitical significance, and the fact that as of 2013 there are 1.6 billion Muslims, with the number expected to increase to 2.76 billion (30% of the world's population) by 2050 (Pew Research Center, 2015). Unlike most other parts of the secular West, Islam is a complete way of life, and faithful Muslims are expected to follow Islamic tenets 24 hours a day (Qur'an 3:19; 3:85; 6:153). Moreover, business leaders in the United States, Europe, and the Muslim world today face a growing challenge of how to prevent disputes now woven into the fabric of Western-Muslim relations by splintering and destabilizing political communities and the organizations that seek to thrive within this context (Mahmood, 2006).

In the face of these challenges, there has been a call for, and preliminary attempts made to offer, leadership models grounded in the Islamic primary sources, the Qur'an and the *sunnah* (Beekun, 2012; Elkaleh & Samier, 2013; Ezani, Nordin, Atiqah, & Akmaliah, 2011; Kazmi, 2005; Metcalfe, Minouni, & Murfin, 2011; Toor, 2008, 2011). Such a model would explicitly incorporate conscious reflection and contemplation of God, faith as the basis for the motivation to perform righteous deeds, leadership as an ethical and moral responsibility based on spiritual values (e.g., humility, trust, patience, compassion, and forgiveness). It must also focus on ego transcendence and receiving spiritual or heavenly rewards as the basis for a vision for loving and serving others, especially the weak and unprivileged.

In response to this call, the authors propose that spiritual leadership theory (Fry, 2003; Fry, Matherly, & Ouimet, 2010) incorporates spiritual qualities central to Islam and therefore has potential for providing the foundation for an Islamic leadership model based in Islamic tenets. For such purposes, "spirituality" is concerned with qualities of the human spirit and the intangible reality at the core of personality, the animating life principle or life-breath that alerts us to look for the deepest dimension of human experience. It is at the heart of the quest for self-transcendence and the attendant feeling of interconnectedness with all things in the universe (Kriger & Seng, 2005). Spirituality is most often viewed as inherently personal, although it can reside or manifest in groups and organizations. From this perspective, a religion is concerned with a theological system of beliefs, ritual prayers, rites and ceremonies and

related formalized practices, and ideas. Typically religion is practiced in institutions which have formed and evolved over time around the spiritual experiences of one or more founding individuals and that now provide the context for leadership based upon the beliefs and practices inherent in the religion.

Spiritual leadership theory was intentionally developed and focused at the spiritual level so that it can be applied in both religious and nonreligious organizations (Benefiel, Fry, & Geigle, 2014; Fry, 2003). Spiritual leadership is viewed as necessary for satisfying the fundamental needs of both leaders and followers for spiritual well-being through calling and membership; to create vision and value congruence across the individual, empowered team, and organization levels; and, ultimately, to foster higher levels of employee well-being, organizational commitment, financial performance, and social responsibility (Fry, 2003; Fry & Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry et al., 2010).

A general model of spiritual leadership is given in Figure 1.

Essential to spiritual leadership is:

1. Creating a vision wherein leaders and followers experience a sense of calling, so that their lives have purpose and meaning, and make a difference.
2. Establishing an organizational culture based on the values of altruistic love, whereby leaders and followers have a sense of membership and belonging, and feel understood and appreciated.

The source of spiritual leadership is an inner life or spiritual practice to enable one to step beyond self- interests to connect with and serve something greater that promotes the common good. This connection to something greater can include being a member of an organization that serves others. Or, depending on one's beliefs, the connection to something greater than oneself can include an ultimate, sacred, and divine Nondual force, Higher Power, Being, or God that provides people with purpose and meaning, altruistic spiritual values, rules to live by, and a source of strength and comfort during experiences of adversity (Benefiel et al., 2014; Fry & Kriger, 2009; Sweeney & Fry, 2012).

The results of spiritual leadership and related research to date reveal that it predicts a number of individual and organizational outcomes across various countries and cultures (Benefiel et al., 2014). These include being positively related to organizational commitment, job satisfaction, altruism, conscientiousness, self-career management, sales growth, job involvement, identification, retention, organizational-citizenship behavior, attachment, loyalty, and work unit
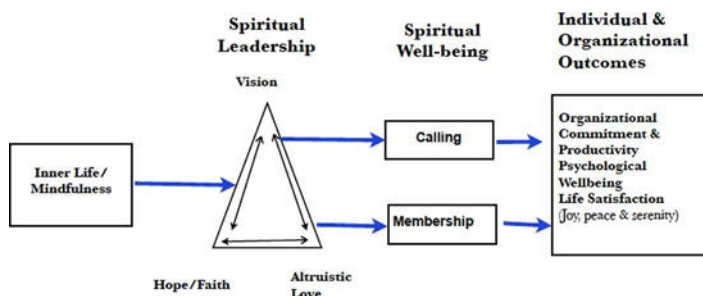

FIGURE 1 Model of spiritual leadership.

productivity, and negatively related to role conflict, frustration, earnings manipulation, and instrumental commitment (Benefiel et al., 2014; Fry, Vitucci, & Cedillo, 2005; Jeon, Passmore, Lee, & Hunsaker, 2013).

To explore this proposition, the discussion that follows draws on the theory of transposition, spiritual leadership theory (Fry, 2003; Fry & Nisiewicz, 2013), and Islamic primary sources, the Qur'an and *sunnah,* to perform a theoretical transposition of components of the spiritual leadership model (SLM) into an Islamic leadership model (ILM) that is efficacious in cross-cultural organizational fields. The term *theoretical transposition* refers to a scientific theory of a process that emphasizes the experience of creative insight in engendering other, alternative ways of knowing. It involves a movement or transversal transfer, in the sense of a leap from one code, field, or territory to another (Braidotti, 2006; Cluver & Watson, 1989). Such transpositions are used in the fields of law, semiotics, music, genetics, and, recently, managerial practices across institutional fields (Boxenbaum & Battilana, 2005; Furnari, 2014).

This article advances leadership theory in four fundamental respects. First, it demonstrates that theoretical transposition holds promise for others who may want to take an existing leadership theory and transpose it into a model that is more suited to the organizational field of their research and the arena within which it may see practical application. Second, it transposes a model of spiritual leadership based on universal spiritual qualities and principles, and illustrates how this can inform leadership in cross-cultural organizational fields. Third, it shows how a transposed model of spiritual leadership can be utilized either as a model for Islamic leadership or as a foundation for a revised Islamic leadership model more appropriate for a cross-cultural institutional field comprising Islamic organizations and public and private organizations employing Islamic workers. Fourth, it enlarges our understanding of how spiritual leadership theory can inform leadership in cross-cultural organizational fields dominated by other religious traditions, such as Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism (Fry & Kriger, 2009; Kriger & Seng, 2005).

The article is structured into four main sections. First, it reviews the foundational principles of Islamic leadership, the models developed for Islamic leadership, and the research conducted to date in this area. Second, it utilizes the theory of transposition to transpose the components of the spiritual leadership model (SLM) into an Islamic leadership model (ILM). Next, it offers an illustrative case study of an actual company and situation operating within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which explores both the degree to which an organization is following ILM and the extent to which Islamic tenets are referred to and inform Islamic leadership behavior and practices within this organization. Finally, it discusses the theoretical, research, and practical implications for how a theoretical transposition of the SLM can be useful for informing leadership in public and private organizations where Islamic tenets come into play.

ISLAMIC LEADERSHIP

The Islamic religion, as revealed through Islam's primary sources, the Qur'an and the *sunnah,* is foundational for Islamic leadership. For the faithful, the Qur'an is the unalterable word of God. The *sunnah* describes the life of Prophet Muhammad and is the second source of Islamic jurisprudence after the Qur'an. The creed of Islam is based on the metaphysical concept of divine unity, or *tawhid.* The concept of *tawhid* means that there is only one God, that Allah

is the only Lord of Creation, and that Allah is morally perfect. *Tawhid* is also foundational to Islamic ontology and the epistemology that underlies the Islamic worldview.

For Islamic leaders, material and spiritual pursuits are inseparable, and every action is a religious act (Mahmood, 2006). Islam encourages leaders to express their faith through active participation in all aspects of life, including work (Ali, 1998). The Qur'an clearly states that "God hath permitted trade" (Qur'an 2:275), and therefore leaders should strive to their utmost to be successful and ethical at the same time. As such, Islam prescribes a code of rules for Islamic public administration and business activities. These are all pursuant to the concept of lawful and unlawful, and reflect features of social responsibility in every aspect of the transactions (Halstead, 2007). This being so, business activities that improve the economy and contribute to the community can become a type of worship if they are performed in line with the Islamic code of conduct.

Foundational Principles of Islamic Leadership

Islam appeared around 610 C.E. in the Arabian Peninsula, which was inhabited by Bedouins who led a harsh life in the desert in tribes unified by blood relationships and ancestry. Leadership was inherited; however, the selection and maintenance of the position had to be validated by the subtribal chiefs. The greater a chief's reputation for wisdom and generosity, the greater his power (Pryor, 1985). Islam assimilated the desert Bedouin values of simplicity, generosity, and protection of the weak. However, it rejected the tribal practice of favoring one's kin, emphasizing instead the principles of equity and justice. The Prophet Muhammad was the first recognized Islamic leader and stands as the best exemplar of leadership in Islam. He not only incorporates the qualities of the "perfected character" as mentioned in the Qur'an (33:21) but also embodies Islamic ethical values in the practice of his worldly affairs, both in the private sector as a merchant and also as a public administrator as one of the leaders of the city of Medina (Pryor, 1985).

In those early days, the Prophet, following the qur'anic teaching, would consult with his followers in the conduct of worldly matters (Qur'an 42:38). Mutual consultation and servanthood became the main governance mechanism, implemented at all levels in the Islamic community and the selection mechanism of political leadership. The first four caliphs, or "rightly guided successors," who followed the Prophet were also elected by the Islamic community through mutual consultation (Ahsan, Zein, & Zakaullah, 2008). Islamic leadership is thus a triangular relationship among God, the leaders, and the followers (Egel, 2014). God provides the vision of the leaders and limits their exercise of power. The followers, like the leaders, are answerable to God for their deeds and share the responsibility of the leader. The fundamental leadership qualities in this relationship are stewardship, servanthood, and mutual consultation (Qur'an 2:30, 57:7) (Abeng, 1997; Ahsan et al., 2008).

Islamic Leadership Research

A consensus is emerging concerning the significant role that leadership based on Islamic tenets could play in improving cross-cultural understanding, enhancing work quality and organizational effectiveness, and contributing to economic growth and more well-developed and stable

societies (Ali & Al-Owaihan, 2008; Beekun & Badawi, 2005). In answer to this call, a new field called Islamic management, or management from an Islamic perspective (MIP), has emerged. Kazmi (2005, p. 264) defines it as "the discipline that deals with the management of organizations, from the perspective of the knowledge acquired from the revealed and other Islamic sources of wisdom, and results in applications compatible with Islamic beliefs and practices." Islamic leadership, or leadership from an Islamic perspective (LIP), takes a similar approach. Toor (2008, p. 26) describes LIP as "a social process in which the leader seeks to achieve certain organizational goals by garnering the support from relevant stakeholders—primarily followers—while fully complying to Islamic teachings and principles." His model incorporates several variables, including, the Muslim leader and followers, spiritual variables, mediating variables, and leadership outcomes.

As is apparent from the preceding definitions, the main distinction between Islamic leadership and Western leadership models is the close connection of leadership to religion (Faris & Parry, 2011). Drawing upon the foundational principles outlined above, Islamic leadership cannot be understood separately from the Islamic religion and must be based on the Qur'an, the *sunnah,* and the prescriptions of the Prophet Muhammad (Egel, 2014; Faris & Parry, 2011). It should also be concerned with internal and external affairs, enhancing cross-cultural understanding, and empowering Muslim followers. Followers must obey their leaders as long as there is no disobedience to God and the Prophet. On the other hand, a similar requirement is placed upon leaders to be ethical and trustworthy (Ali, 2011).

To date, only transformational and servant leadership, which are Western secular-based models, have seen research and been promoted in practice (e.g., Abdalla & Al-Homoud, 2001; Faris & Parry, 2011; House et al., 2001, 2004; Khaliq & Fontaine, 2011). Elkaleh and Samier (2013) and Beekun (2012) identify servant and transformational leadership as two Western-based leadership models that correspond to core values of Islamic leadership and the exemplary leadership of Prophet Muhammad. Other models of Islamic leadership take into consideration mediating variables such as positive organizational context (Toor, 2008), internalized and task-related values (Ezani et al., 2011), and governance and institutions (Metcalfe et al., 2011).

However, although these models attempt to address the major concern Islamic scholars have concerning Western-based theories of leadership, they do not incorporate the Islamic tenets found in the Qur'an and the *sunnah* or capture the realities and requirements for Islamic leadership (Ahmad, 2006; Faris & Parry, 2011; Fontaine, 2011; Metcalfe et al., 2011). While one may infer that these and other values-based leadership theories implicitly incorporate the key variables of the Islamic leadership model given above, they do not do so explicitly (e.g., Avolio, Zhu, Koh, & Bhatia, 2004; Liden, Wayne, Liao, & Meuser, 2014). While these theories incorporate some of the spiritual qualities, such as service to the growth of followers (servant leadership), integrity and authenticity (authentic leadership), other-centered ethical values (ethical leadership), or idealized influence and inspirational motivation (transformational leadership), they do not refer to these qualities as spiritual. Nor do they specify relationships with specific spiritual outcomes, such as calling and membership in the SLM. There is also no mention of the importance of inner life practice, which clarifies the leader's hope/faith in a vision of loving and serving others based on Islamic tenets.

Therefore, even though these efforts point in the right direction, there is as yet no widely accepted ILM based on Islamic tenets (Kazmi, 2005; Toor, 2008). This is partly because

non-Islamic scholars have limited access to Islamic literature, but is also due to the fact that the diversity and huge size of the Islamic population worldwide has resulted in many different applications of Islamic principles and ethics (Ali & Al-Owaihan, 2008; Faris & Parry, 2011). In addition, Ali (2009) contends that the Muslim infatuation with ideals has also hindered the development of sound and practical leadership theories based on Islamic tenets. Once an ideal is treated as identical to practice, the infatuation with the ideal in an authoritarian environment may solidify autocratic tendencies among individuals in authoritative positions. Today's reality, in terms of Islamic leadership, closely reflects ancient Arab tribal traditions and their collectivist culture. Leaders generally shoulder responsibility for organizational members, centralize authority, and tend to define and consult with in-groups defined by nepotism and favoritism (Abdalla & Al-Homoud, 2001; Ali, 2005, 2011).

Empirical research on Islamic leadership is limited and also draws from Western leadership models not grounded on Islamic tenets (Faris & Parry, 2011). Findings to date are mixed, although they generally report a positive relationship between transformational leadership and various individual and organizational outcomes in Islamic organizations (Abdalla & Al-Homoud, 2001; Faris & Parry, 2011; Khaliq & Fontaine, 2011). Khaliq and Fontaine (2011) found that perceptions of the qualities of Islamic leadership were in accordance with the principles of Islamic leadership as defined by Islam's religious beliefs, while Faris and Parry (2011) discovered a contradiction between the tenet underlying Islamic leadership concerning the principle of mutual consultation, and the lived reality of an Islamic organization in a non-Islamic environment.

THEORETICAL TRANSPOSITION OF THE SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP MODEL INTO A MODEL FOR ISLAMIC LEADERSHIP

The theoretical transposition of SLM components into a model of Islamic leadership is depicted graphically in Figure 2. The SLM is drawn in black, and the proposed ILM in bold italics. Tables 1–3 are organized according to the stages of the SLM: inner life, spiritual leadership
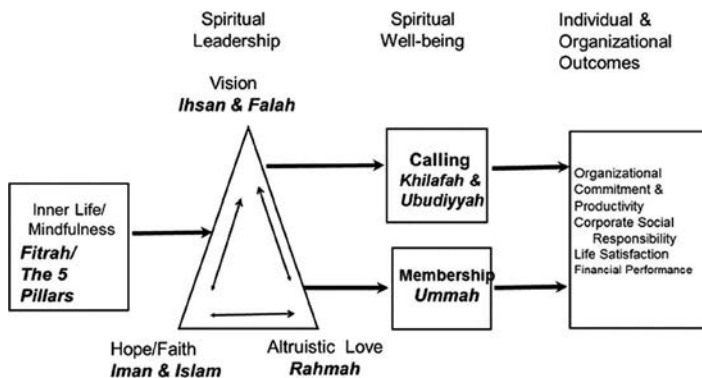

FIGURE 2 Theoretical transposition of the components of the spiritual leadership model into a model for Islamic leadership.

TABLE 1
Theoretical Transposition of Inner Life in SLM into ILM

	SLM	*ILM*
Inner life	Inner life is a process of understanding and tapping into a power greater than oneself; how to draw on that power to live a more satisfying and full life	*Fitrah* is the innate sense of connection to God (30:30, 7:172–73), existent because God has breathed His spirit (*ruh*) to humans.
Inner life practices	Mindfulness practices	*Tafakkur* (reflection) (2:66, 3:13, 59:21)
	Examples: spending time in nature, prayer, meditation, reading inspirational literature, yoga, observing religious traditions, writing in a journal.	Examples: The Five Pillars of Islam (2:183, 2:197, 9:103, 20:14, 29:45)
		Zikr (state of presence/awareness of God when no prayers are performed) (4:103, 24:37, 33:41, 63:9).
	Outcomes: Mindfulness, presence; letting go moment-to-moment of the noise around us and in us; release our preoccupations and concerns with the past and future.	Outcomes: *taqwa* (state of connection with God: sense that He is always watching) (2:177, 49:13, 53:32); *khusho* (state of mindfulness that encompasses patience, calmness, serenity, tranquility, dignity, and humility) (39:23, 33:35, 8:45, 13:28, 89:27–28).

(hope/faith, vision, and altruistic love), and spiritual well-being (calling and membership) and provide comparisons between components of the SLM and their transposed ILM counterparts. The Arabic words used in the ILM are not translations of the English terms used in the SLM but interpretations, chosen to convey best the meaning of the English terms as defined by Fry (2003; Fry et al., 2010).

Transposition of Inner Life into ILM

In Islam the term *fitrah* describes the innate sense of connection to God (see Table 1). This connection exists because God has breathed his spirit (*ruh*) into humans. Without this connection, humans would be concerned only with self-preservation, inclined toward evil acts, and unable to fulfill their purpose on earth. In order to maintain God's presence in daily life, Muslim faithful use mindful practices.

Transposition of Spiritual Leadership into ILM

As shown in Figure 1, hope/faith, vision, and altruistic love form the fundamental components of spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003; Fry & Nisiewicz, 2013). The Qur'an speaks of vision in terms of a journey along the path of life (*sirat*). The notion that shapes and underlies the journey is *tawhid* (see Table 2). As the leader's purpose is to worship God (*ibadah*), *tawhid* formulates the criterion by which all actions, beliefs, and thoughts must constantly be assessed so as to ensure compliance (Zaman & Asutay, 2009). Within this framework, the leader's vision evokes the actualization of excellence (*ihsan*) and success (*falah*) in this life and the hereafter. In the context of the spiritual journey, *falah* and *ihsan* are synonymous, as success is the achievement of perfected character. *Tawhid* creates intrinsic motivation and transforms faith (*iman*) to certainty

TABLE 2
Theoretical Transposition of Spiritual Leadership in SLM into ILM

	SLM	ILM
Vision	Definition Picture of future that describes organization's journey, what it aspires to be, and why leaders and followers should strive to create that future Qualities of vision: Broad appeal to key stakeholders Defines destination and journey Reflects high ideals Encourages hope/faith Establishes standards for excellence	Definition Vision is realization of *tawhid*. Process of human progression is depicted as personal journey along *sirat* (path) that aspires to reach *falah* (success) and *ihsan* (excellence) in this life and the hereafter. Qualities of vision: God is key stakeholder that leaders and followers are called to satisfy Defines our life's aim as *ibadah* (worshiping of God) (2:208, 2:285, 6:82, 21:16, 51:46–58) Leaders and followers are called to be God's *khalifah* (stewards) and *'abd* (servants) on earth (35:39, 3:180, 5:17, 2:30) Transforms *iman* (faith) (11:123) to *yaquin* (certainty) (102:5, 102:7, 69:51) Desired standard is *ihsan* and *falah* (achievement of perfected character), role-model of which is Prophet Muhammad (16:97, 33:21, 42:20, 24:39)
Hope/ Faith	Definition Positive expectation grounded in absolute certainty and trust that what is desired and expected (the vision) will come to pass. Qualities of hope/faith Endurance Perseverance Do what it takes Stretch goals Expectation of reward/victory	Definition *Iman* is basis for all human motivation, encompassing belief and action (5, 55, 8:2–4, 19:76) and grounded in heart (49:14). The higher the degree of faith, the higher the certainty that the vision will be realized (2:268, 6:102, 69:51, 102:7) Qualities of *iman* Endurance is constancy and self-restrain (90:17) Perseverance is characteristic of someone who is God-conscious and accepts trials of faith (11:10–11, 12:90, 29:2, 31:17, 90:17) *Taqwa* (inner consciousness of God) will help Muslims develop qualities they need to remain faithful and "do what it takes" (2:2, 3:175). *Mujahada* (constant inner struggle) assists Muslims in remaining faithful to achieve what is desired (74:56, 2:263, 42:43) *Yaquin* (certainty) (3:175; 19:76) of actualization of the vision (*ihsan* and *falah*) (2:155–56)
Altruistic love	Definition Sense of wholeness, harmony, and well-being produced through care, concern, and appreciation for self and others. Qualities of altruistic love: Integrity and honesty—I walk the walk as well as talk the	Definition *Rahmah* is nurturing, parental love full of compassion (6:54, 39:53, 57:27); it refers to the compassionate love God shows to humanity and to all creatures, and also describes the compassionate love of human for human.

(*Continued*)

TABLE 2
Continued

SLM	ILM
talk. I say what I do, and I do what I say. I seek and rejoice in truth and base my actions on it.	Qualities of *rahmah*:
Trust and loyalty—In my chosen relationships, I am faithful and have faith in and rely on the character, ability, strength, and truth of others.	*Adl, birr,* and *ahd* (55:7–9, 83:1–6, 33:64, 26:181–183; 28:26). *Adl* is the fulfillment of promises, pacts, and contracts. *Ahd* is keeping a promise. *Birr* is righteousness/justice.
Humility—I am modest, courteous, and without false pride. I am not jealous, rude, or arrogant and do not brag.	*Amanah* (2:282–83, 8:27, 12:64, 18:46) means trust, reliability, trustworthiness, loyalty, faithfulness, and confidence. It stresses the idea of responsibility governing social relationships.
Courage—I have the firmness of mind and will, as well as the mental and moral strength, to maintain my morale and prevail in the face of extreme difficulty, opposition, threat, danger, hardship, and fear.	*Ijz, tawadu* (25:63, 5:54, 31:17–19, 2:262–263, 4:154, 7:161) Not arrogant and without false pride, the quality of servanthood. Awareness of a person's real position before God.
Patience, meekness, and endurance—I bear trials and/or pain calmly and without complaint. I persist in or remain constant to any purpose, idea, or task in the face of obstacles or discouragement. I pursue steadily any course or project I begin.	*Sha'ja* (2:283, 3:175, 5:54, 33:39,; 42:43) is showing determination in following the divine tenets, remaining brave in case of adversity, fearing none other than God. It is the result of trust in God and must be accompanied by knowledge (*ma'refah*) and wisdom (*hekma*). Forgiveness & patience are exercised through courage.
I never quit in spite of counter-influences, opposition, discouragement, suffering, or misfortune.	*Sabr, Mujahada Sabr* conveys the meanings of patience in pain and difficulty, endurance in pain and dealing calmly with problems (2:45; 2:155–156; 3:199; 16:126–127; 42:43).
Kindness, Empathy, & Compassion—I am warm-hearted, considerate, humane, and sympathetic to the feelings and needs of others. When people are suffering, I understand and want to do something about it.	*Mujahada* (struggle with oneself toward self-improvement) conveys the quality of self-restrain inherent in meekness (2:263; 5:105; 25:43–44; 42:43; 74:56; 91:7–11).
Forgiveness, Acceptance, & Gratitude—I suffer not the burden of failed expectations, gossip, jealousy, hatred, or revenge. Instead, I choose the power of forgiveness through accepting what is and gratitude for my many blessings. This frees me from the evils of self-will, judging others, resentment, self-pity, and anger and gives me serenity, joy, and peace.	*Ihsan &Rahman:* Both words convey the meaning of compassionate kindness that goes beyond empathy into practical charity, with *Ihsan* implying the highest degree of achievement.
	Rahman (11:75; 16:16; 18:65; 90:17)
	Ihsan (4:36; 3:134; 46:15; 59:9)
	Istighfar, Maghfirah, Shukr
	Human forgiveness is the outcome of God's forgiveness and magnanimity (2:263; 4:116; 9:128; 16:126–127; 17:110; 20:50; 24:22; 33:43; 40:7; 42:37; 43:45; 55:60-65).
	Forgiveness rooted in faith is genuine and acceptance brings serenity, as believers know all actions take place for a reason (25:2)
	Gratitude is due to God for being the Provider (2:152;16:53; 93:8).
	Gratitude is a fastener binding humans together in love (3:103)

10

TABLE 3
Theoretical Transposition of Spiritual Well-Being in SLM into ILM

	SLM	*ILM*
Spiritual well-being	Spiritual dimension of well-being that includes a sense of abundant joy, peace, and serenity that flows from attainment of goals consistent with one's spiritual values and functioning in society as a whole. Spiritual well-being is outcome of spiritual leadership and result of satisfying universal human needs for calling and membership.	Well-being is "a life that is good and pure" (16:97). It is *a priori* spiritual, as humans are endowed with the spirit of God "fashioned him and breathed into him of My spirit" (15:29). It flows from *tawhid* "(feasible for) whoever works righteousness … and has faith" (16:97) and is a result of fulfilling the double role entrusted (*amanah*) to humans by God; as principal (*khalifah*) and agent ('*abd*) (2:30, 3:180, 5:17, 57:7).
Calling	Calling is experienced when one has sense of purpose that one's life has meaning and makes a difference.	Muslims' purpose in life is to worship God and serve His Cause (2:30, 6:165, 21:16, 23:115–16, 35:39, 67:2). Humans can realize their purpose by honoring the trust they have been granted (*amanah*) (5:17, 33:72, 57:7) by God and contributing to the promotion of human well-being (*falah*) and good life (*hayat tayyibah*); both of which stress universal brotherhood and socioeconomic justice (2:177, 3:110, 4:58)
Membership	Membership is experienced when one has a sense of belonging and community; it encompasses the cultural and social structures we are immersed in and through which we are understood and appreciated.	Identity of Islamic community (*ummah*) centers upon ideal of Islamic ethos; upon principles of consistent balance, exemplary conduct, unity of purpose, reciprocity of feelings, solidarity, and equity; upon brotherhood (2:143, 4:135, 4:1, 49:10, 21:92, 23:52).

(*yaquin*), and so knowing becomes being, blind faith becomes gnosis, and the heart sees clearer than the eyes.

In Islam, hope and faith form the basis for all human motivation. Their importance is evident, as the Qur'an mentions them more than 700 times (Alawneh, 1998). They encompass belief and action together and are manifested in the form of righteous deeds. The higher the degree of faith, the higher the certainty that a desire or plan will be realized or that a certain course of action is the right one and will be rewarded (Al-Jifri, 2012). True faith also means having hope in and reliance on God. The foundation for hope is the same as for faith: good deeds. The higher the level of hope/faith, the greater the ability of the Islamic leader to withstand crises and to persevere without complaining in order to attain organizational goals. At the same time, hope/faith will prevent the Islamic leader from panicking and taking unnecessary risks or making compromises.

In Islam, the word *rahmah* conveys the meaning of altruistic love. (Al-Jifri, 2012). Etymologically, it stems from the Arabic word *rahm,* which means "uterus" and implies "family ties." It can be interpreted as nurturing love, similar to the love of a parent for a child. In the Qur'an, *rahmah* appears over 500 times and refers to the compassionate love God shows to humanity, and to all creatures, and the compassionate love of human for human. The qualities of altruistic love are also present in the Qur'an, in the 99 attributes of God (Egel, 2014). The more spiritual an Islamic leader, the more he embodies these qualities.

Transposition of Spiritual Well-Being Through Calling and Membership in ILM

In Islam, spiritual well-being is the natural state of humans (see Table 3). It is *a priori* spiritual, as humans are endowed with the spirit of God. Man feels psychologically happy and satisfied only as long as he stays in, or moves closer to, his inner nature, and feels unhappy and miserable when he deviates from it (Alawneh, 1998). Accordingly, spiritual well-being is synonymous with closeness to God. The Qur'an describes well-being as "a life that is good and pure," feasible for "whoever works righteousness … and has faith"; for those who succeed in fulfilling their double role as stewards (*khalifah*) and servants ('*abd*) of God within the human community. In this sense, spiritual well-being can be depicted as the meeting point of *tawhid,* where connectedness with God (transcendence) is tangent to connectedness with humans (community).

Self-transcendence in Islam creates a sense of calling and purpose when humans become fully aware of what it means to be God's vicegerent on earth. Faithful Muslim leaders seek to transcend the desires of the egotistical self and aspire to honor the trust they have been granted (*amanah*) by God and contribute to the promotion of employee well-being (*falah*) and a good life (*hayat tayyibah*), both of which stress universal brotherhood and socioeconomic justice (2:177; Chapra, 1992). In the Islamic community (*ummah*), man's destiny (calling) is individualistic, but it cannot be fulfilled outside of membership in the collective life (Ahmad, 1955). What is required of the community at large is likewise required of every individual member, which is the enforcement of Muslim brotherhood. Since leaders are part of the *ummah,* they aspire to practice and share these values with their followers.

AN ILLUSTRATIVE CASE STUDY

To further explore the potential for the transposed SLM to serve as an ILM, an illustrative case study is offered, based on qualitative research conducted by Egel (2015). Illustrative case studies are descriptive; they use one or two instances to show what a situation is like. These case studies serve to make the unfamiliar familiar and give readers knowledge of a certain topic, in this instance, an actual company and situation within which an organization is following the transposed ILM, and Islamic tenets are referred to and inform Islamic leadership behavior and practices.

The research was conducted on the BUILD Company (name disguised for anonymity), a closed joint stock company owned 100% by Construction Holding Group (CHG) since 2011. BUILD is a Saudi company, owned fully by a Saudi family and operating in Saudi Arabia. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) can be considered to have a dominant Islamic institutional environment. Islam—in its strict interpretation according to the Wahhabi philosophy—provides the foundation for the governance system and the institutions of KSA and determines all aspects of the life of its inhabitants. The company is run by a Saudi CEO. CHG is a well-established and diversified business group located in KSA and the United Arab Emirates. It focuses on business development in four sectors: water utilities, transport, construction, and energy. BUILD is a class "A" general contracting group employing more than 8,877 professionals with ongoing projects worth over 30 billion Saudi riyal, or US$8 billion (CHG Q3 2013).

The goal of the original study that is drawn upon for this illustrative case study was to examine the degree to which the SLM was evident within an Islamic organization in Saudi Arabia (Egel,

2015). However, while the SLM is proposed to be a universal theory (Fry, 2003), the ILM, as a theoretical transposition, makes it more suited for the context that is the focus of this article— Islamic organizations and organizations employing significant numbers of Muslims. As such, it is a more targeted or specialized application of the more general SLM. Here Egel's original study is reexamined and the degree to which Islamic tenets and the ILM are manifest is explored.

The overall research design is that of qualitative theory testing (Yin, 2009). However, some of the principles of data gathering and analysis that are axiomatic of the grounded theory method were employed (Eisenhardt, 1989; Miles & Huberman, 1994). The predominant method for data collection was 16 cross-functional, face-to-face, in-depth, semi-structured interviews, from 1 to 2 hours in length, conducted with Saudi Sunni Muslims in English at the headquarters of the company in Riyadh. The interviews were supported with secondary evidence provided by nonparticipant observations and archival data. Data were gathered using a nonprobabilistic, purposive sampling (Patton, 2002). The interview guide consisted of 10 questions based on the Spiritual Leadership Survey (Fry & Nisiewicz, 2013).

RESULTS

Findings revealed that BUILD did not follow the ILM. There was agreement concerning the general nature of the company's vision among senior managers, who said they wanted "to create a leading company." The vision also reflected high ideals, as it was a nationally oriented business: "They are from this country; they grow here; their business grows here; they believe in this country. They have clear ethics on nationalizing the businesses, even nationalizing the resources within their firms." However, none of the managers spoke to the vision's being based on Islamic tenets.

It was found that all the study participants—regardless of their position—had a personal calling and vision based on religious tenets. For example, they described their calling as "to help people" or to "make people happy," and their vision was "to go to Paradise." One employee reported: "Islam is a big factor in my life: I walk at home or in the street—I help these people because it's a … it's not like a … it's a way of life—it's not just a religion—it's a way of life you have to live 100 percent." However, their vision and calling were not linked to the organization's vision and calling. The employees interviewed never used a word like "we" or other wording that would indicate an organizational linkage.

Two factors leading to this finding for the women relates to the position of women in Saudi society and the importance of family ties. In KSA, women make up less than 15% of the national workforce, and most jobs are not open to them. Even highly educated women struggle to find work. One study found that 60% of Saudi women with Ph.D.s and 78.3% of women university graduates were unemployed (Pulitzer Center, 2013). Until 2001, women needed to get permission from husband, father, brother, or son to travel, work, or get medical treatment (Human Rights Watch, 2008). In addition, women in Saudi society are highly segregated, especially in business organizations. At BUILD, all the women were physically located in a separate department. Access to the department was through a central door opened with a special code. All males needed to ring. If issues could not be resolved by e-mail or phone, men had to wait for the female employees to put on their veils and *abayas* before the door would be opened.

Within this context, the women participants reported a team culture based on the values of altruistic love. One of them talked about "sisterhood": "Here we are like sisters," as manifested through the qualities of integrity, honesty, trust, benevolent care, concern, and appreciation of others. They also said that if they had problems, they would "eat breakfast together" and sort them out. However, what united the female participants was not the vision or cultural values of the company but their societal commonalities—the commonalities of a minority group. The women participants, like their male counterparts, spoke to the Islamic vision and calling of serving God by doing good for others. A female employee reported: "I think such things are from my religion: to render happiness to people—that's from Islam, and I think during my work, completing my work is from my religion, from something inside me." The component of *iman* (faith) was also present. An employee reported: "Your faith in God makes you stronger." However, as stated earlier, the vision of the company was unknown or remote to the female employees, and policies intended to increase communication and a common culture—such as intercultural lunches or a company football game—were only focused on the male employees. Another factor contributing to this finding may be due to the influence of family relationships in the institutional environment. Family ties in KSA are extensive and strong, thus lessening the importance of membership at work. As one of the participants said: "If you consider that many men are married to four wives, and every wife is conditioned to having eight children, then there is not much time left on weekends apart from visiting part of the family."

DISCUSSION

In the social sciences, the theory of transposition is based in a contemplative and creative stance that respects the visible and hidden complexities of the phenomena it attempts to study, thus in itself making it a paradigmatic model for gaining scientific knowledge. In addition, the notion of transposition describes the focal connection within its social and historical context. Thus, for the purposes of this article, theoretical transposition provides a process for creating links and interconnections between discursive communities which are too often kept apart from each other. It transits, or brings about, a connection or linkage between two different theoretical territories, in the present case between the spiritual qualities of the SLM and a model of Islamic leadership based on Islamic tenets.

Theoretical and Research Implications

It is possible that the transposition of a general theoretical model into a model to be used for practice in a specific arena—in the present case between spiritual leadership theory and a model of Islamic leadership—may require some theoretical innovation or adaptation so that the model will be more suited to its institutional environment (Ansari, Fiss, & Zajac, 2010; Boxenbaum & Battilana, 2005; Furnari, 2014). However, this is not believed to be the case for the ILM. Rather than finding any need to modify or adapt the ILM to its institutional environment, it is proposed that the institutional environment must change before a transposed ILM can be efficacious. For example, this could be the case for an Islamic institutional environment that dictates gender segregation, evidences strong family networks that are not so prevalent in the West, or, as appears to be the case in KSA, does not face the Western work demands that create the context

for satisfying spiritual needs at work. Thus, Saudi workers may not have the opportunity or feel the necessity to primarily satisfy their spiritual needs for calling and membership at work. Given this, the success of a transposed SLM will also depend on the processes of practice adaptation, which usually must be driven or facilitated by the presence of a major problem in the institutional environment that cannot be solved by means of existing practices and models. In the case of BUILD, this would mean that societal forces would have to be mobilized, as they have been in the West, to address the two issues that surfaced in the illustrative case study concerning gender segregation and close extended-family ties. These appear to be aspects of BUILD's institutional environment that require change due to the fact they preclude the possibility of vision and value congruence based on the spiritual qualities of the SLM, thus blocking any attempt for transposition and implementation of the ILM. There was some evidence that Islamic tenets are important and being adhered to as much as possible by BUILD employees individually, but this was not evident at the unit and organizational levels.

Research that explored these issues would require that one or more organizations following the ILM based on Islamic tenets be found or developed through organizational development/ transformation interventions. It would also be informative to examine organizations following the SLM and compare them to organizations following the transposed ILM. In addition, empirical research has begun to demonstrate that the SLM predicts important individual and organizational outcomes (Benefiel et al., 2014). Similar studies should be conducted to further explore whether similar findings hold for organizations following the ILM.

Future research should also examine whether the ILM is perceived similarly from the perspective of the various Islamic denominations—most important of which are the Shia and the Sunni. Additionally, given the influence of religion in KSA, one should not underestimate the influence of country culture, as Islam is practiced in countries as diverse as Indonesia (216 million), Pakistan (186 million), India (164 million), Bangladesh (146 million), and Egypt (77 million) (CIA, 2013).

Practical Implications

One implication of the theoretical transposition of the SLM into an ILM is that it can also be utilized to advance leadership practice in both public and private organizations. Thus there is a potential for helping to address significant global and geopolitical issues faced by both secular and religious organizations and the cultural environments in which they operate. First, and per-haps most important, since the ILM is based on Islamic tenets, there is a potential for bridging the gap mentioned earlier between Islamic religious beliefs and actual practice (Ali, 2011). An instance of this gap is the Islamic banking and finance industry (IBF). Despite its extensive growth, IBF has converged toward conventional finance and has failed to fulfill the institutional and policy aspirations of an Islamic economic system. Fundamental notions of the Islamic ethi-cal and socioeconomic system such as *riba* (interest-free) risk becoming just another financial tool within the global capitalized economy (Zaman & Asutay, 2009).

If used in Muslim organizations, the ILM could lead to the application of the Qur'an and *sunnah* and help Muslim leaders tap into their employees' spiritual needs for calling and membership. This offers the potential for fostering more harmonious work, humanizing the impersonal workings of bureaucracies, and constraining the competitive and self-serving

instincts of individuals and groups. Since the ILM is the result of a theoretical transposition based on the SLM, Islamic leader who have fully embraced the ILM will place human well-being and sustainability at the core of their business even when it may mean sacrificing short-term profit (Fry & Nisiewicz, 2013).

Leadership that follows or adopts both the SLM and the ILM could also create a strong organizational culture within which a rapprochement between diverse societal and religious organizational contexts becomes possible. Within a mixed secular and faith-based organizational environment, the combined use of the SLM and ILM, as well as other transposed models based on the tenets of other religions, can initiate and set the tone for intercultural and interfaith dialogue between employees who believe that work is a form of worship and should be performed according to the tenets of faith and other employees who do not. In this case, for Muslims, there is no message more pertinent than the message of the Qur'an. For non-Islamic leaders, understanding the workings of the ILM can serve as a guide for leading within an Islamic environment, where there is no separation between religious practice and work activities. The theoretical transposition can therefore become a vehicle for building an organizational culture of understanding and trust among Islamic and non-Islamic employees from both secular and other religious traditions. For non-Muslim leaders operating in Muslim organizational or cultural environments who embrace and practice the SLM, knowledge of the ILM will not only allow for better understanding of the relationship between religion and business practice in the Muslim world, it will also be based in a model of leadership that is congruent with the Islamic tenets so foundational to Islamic leadership. This unity in the vision and values of loving and serving others, which is foundational to the SLM and provides the spiritual underpinning for all religions, could pave the way for genuine reconciliation as well as serve to reduce claims to religious, national, or ethnic superiority.

CONCLUSION

This article offers the general proposition that the theory of transposition can be used to apply Western-based leadership models in cross-cultural organizational fields, especially for organizations with workers who feel the need to integrate their spiritual or religious beliefs with their work. To explore this proposition, it focuses on the potential of spiritual leadership theory to provide a model for Islamic leadership, since Western-Muslim relations present an especially highly complex and uncertain business climate. In doing so the authors have sought to address the question posed earlier concerning how global organizations, both public and private, can create vision and value congruence and facilitate collaboration among employees from diverse cultural backgrounds, instill a higher level of purpose and belonging, and maximize employee well-being in cross-cultural institutional environments. This is particularly important because the Muslim world, with its growing percentage of the global working population, does not embrace Western-based leadership models or the practice of separating religion and work. Finally, the theory of transposition offers promise to not only enlarge our understanding of how spiritual leadership theory can inform leadership inspired by other religious traditions such as Judaism, Christianity, or Buddhism, but can also provide a general process for developing new leadership theory more suited to its institutional field of focus.

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