

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Doctor of Philosophy in Leadership  
Organizational Leadership

Adventist University of Africa

School of Post Graduate Studies

Title: THE INFLUENCE OF LEADERS SPIRITUALITY ON  
CONGREGATIONAL SPIRITUALITY THROUGH LEADERSHIP  
BEHAVIOR IN LOCAL SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCHES OF  
BOTSWANA UNION CONFERENCE

Researcher: Tapologo Kago Simankane

Primary Advisor: Marie-Anne Razafiarivony, PhD

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This study investigated the influence of church leaders' spirituality on congregational spirituality through leadership behavior among local Seventh-day Adventist churches within the Botswana Union Conference. Anchored in Fry's Spiritual Leadership Theory, the study recontextualized the "inner life" construct as "spiritual experience" to better reflect a theistic worldview and Christian praxis. The study aimed to (a) determine the relationship between leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality, (b) examine the mediating role of leadership behavior, and (c) assess whether contextual variables, conference affiliation, church size, and church location, moderate this relationship. The study employed a quantitative correlational design using a cross-sectional survey methodology. Data were collected from 49

churches and 309 church leaders and members across two conferences using standardized instruments: the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES), validated leadership behavior questionnaire and Congregational Spirituality questionnaire. Statistical analyses included Pearson correlation, multiple regression, mediation analysis using the Baron and Kenny (1986) approach, and moderation analysis. Findings revealed a significant positive correlation between leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality ( $r = .40$ ,  $p = .004$ ). Leadership behavior fully mediated this relationship, as evidenced by the reduction in significance of leaders' spirituality when leadership behavior was included in the model ( $\beta = .167$ ,  $p = .138$ ), and the significant indirect effect confirmed by the Sobel test ( $t = 2.446$ ). The combined model explained 48.9% of the variance in congregational spirituality ( $R^2 = .489$ ). Moderation analyses showed that contextual variables, conference, church size, and church location, did not significantly alter the relationship between leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality. This study advances new knowledge by offering empirical evidence that spiritual leadership influences congregational spirituality primarily through behavioral enactment rather than direct influence. It also introduces a culturally and theologically contextualized adaptation of Spiritual Leadership Theory for faith-based organizations. The findings underscore the importance of intentional leadership development programs that integrate spiritual experience with modeled behavior, irrespective of organizational or geographical setting.

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A dissertation  
presented in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree  
Doctor of Philosophy in Leadership

by  
Tapologo Kago Simankane

May 2025



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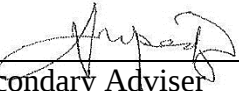
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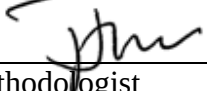
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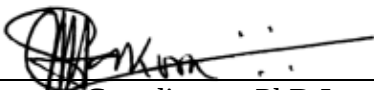
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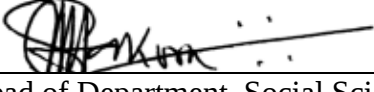
  
Primary Adviser  
Marie-Anne Razafiarivony, PhD

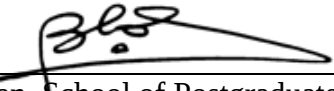
  
Secondary Adviser  
Rodreck Mupedziswa, PhD

  
Methodologist  
Josephine Ganu, PhD

  
External Examiner  
James Ng'ang'a Muya, PhD

  
Program Coordinator, PhD Leadership  
Musa Nyakora, PhD

  
Head of Department, Social Sciences  
Musa Nyakora, PhD

  
Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies  
Lossan Bonde, PhD

Date: May 6 2025

This work is dedicated first and foremost to God, my Sustainer, Provider, Protector, and constant Guide, without whom this journey would not have been possible. His grace has been sufficient, His mercies unfailing, and His presence ever near throughout this scholarly pilgrimage.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|      |                                                                                   |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ACMS | Adventist Church Management System                                                |
| AUA  | Adventist University of Africa                                                    |
| BUC  | Botswana Union Conference                                                         |
| CFI  | Comparative Fit Index                                                             |
| DSE  | Daily Spiritual Experience                                                        |
| DSES | Daily Spiritual Experience Scale                                                  |
| FDT  | Faith Development Theory                                                          |
| GC   | General Conference (of Seventh-day Adventists) Adventist<br>Seventh-day Adventist |
| IRB  | Institutional Review Board                                                        |
| NFI  | Normed Fit Index                                                                  |
| OLA  | Organizational Leadership Assessment                                              |
| SLS  | Servant Leadership Theory                                                         |
| SLT  | Spiritual Leadership Theory                                                       |
| SPSS | Statistical Package for the Social Sciences                                       |
| TLI  | Tucker-Lewis Index                                                                |

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Background of Study**

Leadership remains a central theme in organizational development, particularly in faith-based institutions where spiritual and administrative objectives intersect. Contemporary leadership research increasingly acknowledges spirituality as an essential element in guiding human behavior and organizational transformation (Dent, 2017). As organizations strive to cultivate environments where purpose, meaning, and ethical values thrive, the need for leaders who exemplify spiritual depth becomes imperative (Fry & Nisiewicz, 2017). Spiritual leadership has thus emerged as a distinctive paradigm that integrates the internal life of the leader with their outward leadership behaviors, aiming to inspire intrinsic motivation and holistic development among followers (Fry & Nisiewicz, 2017; Dent, 2017).

Spiritual leaders, as Dent et al. (2005) suggest, serve as catalysts for transforming organizations from being task-focused to purpose-driven communities. They foster a culture where individual and collective spirituality are nurtured, and where spiritual development is practiced consistently in daily operations. These leaders are not driven by self-interest or institutional gain but are motivated by a profound sense of meaning and a mission aligned with higher ideals (Dehler & Welsh, 1994). Their decisions are often grounded in spiritual discernment practices such as prayer, reflection, and moral reasoning (Dent, 2017), and they seek to align their

leadership behaviors with divine guidance and ethical principles. This spiritual experience often becomes something they desire to share with those they lead.

Spirituality itself is a universal phenomenon expressed in various forms across cultures and traditions. Sena et al. (2021) posit that spirituality is shaped by religious, philosophical, and cultural factors, making it both universally resonant and contextually diverse. While religion often involves prescribed rituals, doctrines, and institutions, spirituality is typically understood as a personal, non-sectarian experience of the sacred. Even within religious contexts, interpretations of spirituality can vary widely. For instance, the intrinsic origin view of spirituality, as described by Krishnakumar and Neck (2015), emphasizes internal well-being, consciousness, and a sense of oneness with the transcendent.

This view is echoed in many Eastern traditions. In Buddhism, spirituality is characterized by the journey toward enlightenment and unity with the cosmos (Analayo, 2017), while in Hindu thought, the realization of the Paramatman (Supreme Self) by the Jivatman (individual soul) captures the essence of spiritual maturation. Islamic mysticism or Sufism, as described by Belhaj (2013) and Huda (2003), emphasizes an inner journey toward divine union. Mathews (2021) highlights that these practices all point to a spiritual process that divinizes the self through immersion in the transcendent.

In contrast, Christian spirituality centers on a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. It emphasizes love, as encapsulated in the foundational verse John 3:16, and spiritual growth is fostered through prayer, Bible study, service, and fellowship (Britannica, 2023). Love, in Christian spirituality, is not only the character of God but also the driving force behind spiritual leadership. This theological

foundation serves as a compass for leaders, shaping their actions, priorities, and relationships within their faith communities (Love & Christian Ethics, 2016).

From a leadership perspective, the integration of spirituality brings a profound transformation in the way leadership is understood and practiced. Moxley (2000) advocated for a more wholistic view of leadership that incorporates body, mind, heart, and spirit. Spiritual leadership models thus seek to develop leaders who are emotionally connected, authentic, and grounded in transcendent values (Krishnakumar et al., 2014). These leaders do not merely exercise power or authority; they inspire, empower, and foster meaningful relationships among organizational members.

The trajectory of leadership theory development supports this evolution. Starting with the Great Man Theory and Trait Theory of the 19th and early 20th centuries (Benmira & Agboola, 2021; Shonk, 2025), leadership was initially perceived as a function of inherent qualities. Later, Behavioral and Contingency Theories shifted the focus toward observable actions and situational responsiveness (Graziano, 2023; Safonov et al., 2018). The emergence of Transformational and Transactional Leadership theories in the 1990s emphasized relational and motivational dynamics (Benmira & Agboola, 2021). In recent decades, however, servant leadership and spiritual leadership have gained prominence for emphasizing moral authority, relational wholeness, and a sense of calling (Fry, 2003; Greenleaf, 2002).

Servant leadership, as pioneered by Robert Greenleaf (2002), turns traditional leadership hierarchies upside down. Leaders serve first, with an emphasis on empathy, listening, stewardship, and community building. In faith contexts, this model resonates deeply, as it mirrors the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, who led by

serving others. Spears (2010) outlines ten characteristics of servant leaders, including awareness, foresight, commitment to the growth of people, and building community, all attributes essential in a church setting. This leadership model aligns seamlessly with spiritual leadership, where values, meaning, and service are integral to leadership identity (Reave, 2005).

A critical factor in the spiritual health of religious organizations is the congregation, the community of believers who participate in worship, ministry, and mission. Congregations are not passive recipients of leadership; they are co-constructors of the spiritual environment. The leader's ability to model authentic spirituality has direct implications for congregational development. Howard et al. (2018) affirm that congregations thrive when leadership reflects Christ-like values, creating spaces where collective spiritual growth is nurtured. The spirituality of a congregation is also shaped by its theological education, worship practices, and communal disciplines such as prayer and service.

Congregational spirituality is most effectively developed through consistent alignment between the leader's values and those of the organization. Rocha and Pinheiro (2021) identify three levels of organizational spirituality: individual, group (workplace), and institutional. At the individual level, a leader's personal faith experience sets the tone. At the group level, a sense of belonging and shared purpose emerges. Finally, organizational spirituality flourishes when the collective values are aligned, creating a unified, mission-driven community.

Fowler's (1981) Faith Development Theory offers an important lens through which spiritual maturity can be examined in both leaders and congregants. Fowler proposed six stages of faith that trace the developmental path from childhood beliefs to a mature, universalizing faith. In early stages, faith is shaped by authority and

external narratives (Stages 1–3), while in later stages, it becomes more individuated and integrated (Stages 4–6). Understanding these stages helps leaders tailor their approach to congregational development, recognizing the diversity of spiritual needs across age groups and backgrounds. Faith development is therefore both personal and communal—a journey that leaders must model and facilitate.

Empirical studies show that the spiritual maturity of leaders directly affects the spiritual health of congregations. Reave (2005) found that spiritual leadership traits such as integrity, humility, and compassion, correlate positively with organizational trust and performance. Similarly, Allen and Fry (2023) emphasize the need for leaders to prioritize inner transformation to authentically influence others. When spiritual leaders exhibit consistency between belief and behavior, congregations are more likely to engage in meaningful spiritual practices and develop a stronger sense of identity and purpose.

African contexts add another dimension to the discussion of leadership and spirituality. Traditional African leadership is rooted in the concept of *botho* (also known as *ubuntu*), which emphasizes communalism, respect, and moral responsibility. These values align closely with servant and spiritual leadership models, making African cultural frameworks a fertile ground for such leadership paradigms (Nkomo, 2017). In the African religious context, leaders are often seen as custodians of both cultural and spiritual heritage. Their role is not only to administer but to nurture, guide, and embody moral integrity (Chigudu, 2020).

In the specific context of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (Adventist), leadership takes on an explicitly spiritual mandate. The Church’s mission to “make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19-20) involves both proclamation and formation, requiring leaders who are spiritually mature and mission-focused

(Simankane, 2009). The global Adventist Church is governed by the General Conference and includes regional entities such as divisions, unions, and local conferences. The Botswana Union Conference (BUC), which oversees the North Botswana Conference (NBC) and South Botswana Conference (SBC), serves as the administrative structure in focus for this study.

The Adventist Church promotes spiritual development through corporate worship, Sabbath School studies, mission-focused service, and stewardship. Regular activities, including preaching, communal singing, and Bible study, foster a shared spiritual identity. These congregational practices are often guided and influenced by the spiritual leadership of pastors and administrators. Annual councils and committee meetings also underscore the Church's commitment to Christ-like values, affirming Scripture as the authoritative guide and the Holy Spirit as the transformative agent. Nevertheless, challenges persist. As the church grows globally, variations in leadership quality, cultural expression, and generational attitudes toward spirituality emerge. Younger generations, in particular, show less adherence to institutional religion but often express spirituality in new, non-traditional ways (Johnson & Walker, 2016; Mukherjee & Joseph, 2018). The leadership challenge lies in bridging these generational and cultural gaps while maintaining the theological and spiritual integrity of the Church's mission.

This study, therefore, focuses on understanding how the spirituality of Adventist church leaders in the Botswana Union Conference influences congregational spirituality, especially through their leadership behavior. It seeks to explore whether spiritual leadership behaviors are naturally present in church leaders and how these behaviors impact the spiritual growth of the congregations they serve. By considering contextual, theological, and cultural dynamics, the study aims to

contribute to the growing body of knowledge on spiritual leadership, especially in the African religious landscape.

### **Problem Statement**

The primary mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to lead individuals into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ and to develop them as His disciples (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2020). This mission inherently demands spiritually mature leadership at all levels of the Church, particularly at the local church level where daily interactions with members occur. Leadership within this context is expected to be intrinsically motivated, driven by spiritual conviction, and reflective of Christ-like character and service (North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, 2018). However, empirical observations and administrative reports have increasingly pointed to spiritual and leadership deficiencies among local church leaders within the Botswana Union Conference (BUC).

Recent organizational reviews and anecdotal evidence from church records in the BUC indicate challenges such as leadership resignations, internal disputes, financial mismanagement, and low participation in spiritual and administrative functions (Botswana Union Conference Annual Report, 2022). These issues have raised concerns regarding the spiritual integrity and effectiveness of local church leadership. Furthermore, it appears that some leaders lack intrinsic motivation and exhibit behaviors inconsistent with the mission of the Church such as absenteeism from board meetings, ineffective planning, limited pastoral care, and lack of transparent stewardship practices (Mogotsi, 2023).

Research has shown that spiritual leadership, which is rooted in values such as vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love, enhances both individual well-being and

organizational commitment (Fry et al., 2017). However, many studies have predominantly focused on the impact of spiritual leadership on follower outcomes, such as job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behaviors, and performance (Reave, 2005; Oh & Wang, 2020), often overlooking the spiritual well-being of leaders themselves. This oversight presents a gap in literature, especially within ecclesiastical contexts where the spiritual life of the leader is presumed foundational to effective ministry and organizational health (Crawford et al., 2022).

Additionally, the spirituality of the congregation appears to be diminishing. Reports suggest a decline in congregational participation in worship services, poor interpersonal support among members, and diminished trust in leadership (Botswana Union Conference Strategic Review, 2023). These indicators may reflect a broader spiritual malaise, potentially influenced by the leaders' spiritual disengagement and ineffective leadership behavior. Empirical studies underscore that congregational spirituality is significantly influenced by the spiritual experience and modeling of leaders (Henson, 2021; Molina et al., 2019). Therefore, when local church leaders lack spiritual conviction and ethical behavior, the spiritual life of the congregation is likely to suffer.

Theoretical frameworks such as Fowler's (1981) Faith Development Theory suggest that spiritual maturity progresses through stages, from intuitive-projective faith to universalizing faith. If church leaders function at lower stages of faith development, driven more by conformity or external rewards than by deeply held convictions, their leadership is less likely to inspire transformational spiritual experiences within the congregation (Love et al., 2016). Furthermore, servant leadership theory (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 2010), which aligns closely with spiritual leadership, emphasizes the leader's role in serving followers with humility, empathy,

and a commitment to their growth. In faith-based organizations, these values are essential for cultivating spiritually vibrant communities. When such behaviors are absent, the mission of making disciples and fostering a spiritually nurturing environment is compromised (Patterson et al., 2021).

Despite the Church's structured leadership selection processes which are intended to identify spiritually mature and morally sound individuals, there is a gap between expectations and lived reality in many local congregations (Moyo, 2023). Congregants often report feelings of spiritual isolation, lack of compassion within the church body, and disengagement from the church's mission, suggesting a disconnect between leadership behavior and congregational spirituality. Globally, spiritual leadership has shown positive organizational outcomes, yet little research has empirically examined the relational dynamics between the spirituality of local church leaders, their leadership behavior, and the congregational well being in the Seventh-day Adventist context, particularly in Botswana (Phipps & Benefiel, 2019; Fry et al., 2020). As such, this study seeks to determine the relationship between leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality within the Botswana Union Conference, thereby filling a significant gap in both regional and global research on faith-based organizational leadership.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were used to guide the study and to outline the scope of the study:

1. What is the level of spirituality of church leaders in the local churches of the Botswana Union Conference of the Seventh-Day Adventist church?
2. What is the level of congregational spirituality in the local churches of the Botswana Union Conference?

3. To what extent do the church leaders in the Botswana Union Conference engage in the following behaviours:
  - a. Sharing the Vision
  - b. Inspiring Faith/Hope,
  - c. Exhibiting Altruistic Love?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the spirituality of church leaders and congregational spirituality in the churches of the Botswana Union Conference?
5. To what extent does leadership behavior mediate the relationship between the spirituality of church leaders and congregational spirituality in the churches of the Botswana Union Conference?
6. To what extent do the demographic factors of Conference, Church location, and Church size, moderate the relationship between the spirituality of church leaders and congregational spirituality in the churches of the Botswana Union Conference?

### **Null Hypothesis**

It was hypothesized that:

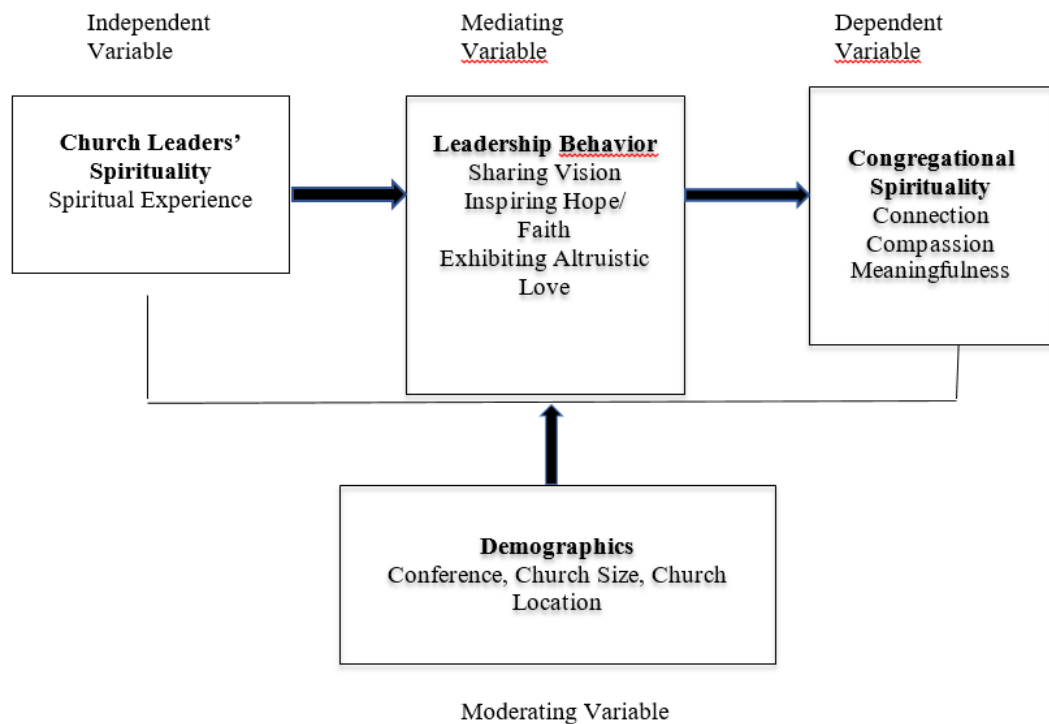
1. There is no significant relationship between the spirituality of church leaders and congregational spirituality in the local churches of the Botswana Union Conference.
2. Leadership behavior does not significantly mediate the relationship between local church leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality in the local churches of the Botswana Union Conference.
3. The demographics of the respondents, church location, and church size do not significantly moderate the relationship between the spirituality of local

church leaders and congregational spirituality in the local churches of the Botswana Union Conference.

### Conceptual Framework

**Figure 1**

*Conceptual Framework*



The leader's spirituality as the spiritual experience is the independent variable in this study. According to Fry (2016), the inner life, also known as mindful practice, is at the core of spiritual leadership. Inner life addresses an individual's understanding of their being, who they are, their actions, and their contributions. It is a search for a source of strength that strengthens hope/faith supported by a vision to love and serve others (Fry, 2023). Spiritual experience is strengthened by personal practices such as meditation, prayer, religious practices, journaling, walking in nature, and

organizational contexts (e.g., prayer rooms). A leader will experience something that validates their worth and purpose. As stated above, a source of strength and motivation is necessary and can be sustained through varied practices.

When the independent variable of spirituality or spiritual experience focuses on intrinsic motivation, it addresses the individual's spiritual needs, and a leader's behaviors are bound to be enhanced. The leader is likely to do well when the focus is placed on altruistic love and showing care, ethics that include responsibilities that necessitate the achievement of reciprocal outcomes, and values that enhance the organizational atmosphere for meaningful experiences (Fry, 2003). Key components of spiritual leadership behavior are observed in incorporating vision, hope/faith, and altruistic Love as core spiritual leadership values.

The spiritual leader plays a critical role in organizational or congregational spirituality formation and promotion because spiritual connectivity, spiritual responsibility, and organizational spiritual reflexivity are shaped by leadership. An organization that assumes spiritual reflexivity from the individual, workplace, and organizational spirituality then supports the individual and workplace spirituality. The practices of the organization and the outcomes must be compatible with Spirituality (Pawar, 2014). This is supported by the spiritual values present (Khari & Sinha, 2018), as seen in the organizational/congregational image, mission, vision, and values that emulate spirituality. In this study, Organizational/Congregational spirituality is considered a dependent variable of spiritual experience and leadership behavior.

In this study, the conceptual framework is anchored in the premise that a leader's spiritual experience influences their leadership behavior, which in turn affects the spirituality of the congregation. However, this relationship is not necessarily

uniform across all local churches. Contextual and demographic variables such as church size, church location, and conference affiliation can potentially moderate the strength or direction of these relationships. As such, these variables are considered moderators within the conceptual model.

Church size refers to the number of members in a local congregation. It can have a significant moderating effect on how spiritual leadership is exercised and experienced. Larger churches often have more complex administrative structures and diversified ministries, which may dilute direct leader-member interactions, potentially weakening the influence of a leader's spirituality on individual congregants. In contrast, smaller churches tend to have closer relational dynamics and more visible leadership presence, which may amplify the leader's influence on the congregation's spiritual experience (Zhao et al., 2022).

Moreover, the impact of leadership behavior may be more immediately felt in small churches where leaders are directly involved in day-to-day operations and spiritual activities. In such settings, a spiritually vibrant leader can more easily set the tone and cultivate a spiritually rich environment. In larger congregations, however, the leader's influence may need to be mediated through multiple layers of sub-leaders, potentially weakening or altering the impact.

Church location, typically categorized as urban or rural, also plays a role in shaping the dynamics of spiritual leadership. Urban churches often operate in fast-paced, culturally diverse environments that may expose congregants to secular influences, possibly affecting their receptivity to spiritual leadership. In such contexts, leaders may need to adopt more adaptive and context-sensitive leadership behaviors to maintain spiritual vitality (Okpara & Wynn, 2020). In rural areas, on the other hand, communities may be more cohesive and homogeneous, potentially allowing for

more traditional or relational forms of leadership to thrive. The influence of a spiritual leader in rural churches may be stronger due to long-standing relationships, shared cultural values, and the centrality of the church in community life. This suggests that church location can moderate the effectiveness of leadership behavior as a conduit for transmitting spiritual experience from leaders to congregants.

In the Seventh-day Adventist Church structure, local churches belong to different conferences, which provide administrative oversight, policy direction, and support systems. These conferences may vary in leadership styles, resource availability, strategic focus, and overall spiritual climate. For example, some conferences may emphasize member empowerment and spiritual revival, while others may focus more on organizational stability and policy compliance. As a moderating variable, the conference can shape how spiritual leadership is cultivated and supported at the local level. If a particular conference strongly supports spiritual formation for leaders, this may enhance the effect of the leader's spiritual experience on their behavior and the congregation's spiritual life. In contrast, conferences that do not prioritize leadership development may see weaker associations between these constructs.

In the proposed conceptual model, the leaders' spiritual experience is hypothesized to influence their leadership behavior, which in turn influences congregational spirituality. The inclusion of church size, church location, and conference as moderating variables acknowledges the contextual complexity of local church environments. These variables may strengthen, weaken, or alter the hypothesized relationships depending on the specific characteristics of the church setting. Statistically, this moderation can be tested using interaction terms in regression analysis or through multigroup analysis in structural equation modeling, if

the sample allows. The inclusion of these moderating variables enhances the explanatory power of the model and supports the generalizability of the study across diverse church contexts within the Botswana Union Conference.

### **Significance of Study**

The results of this study are of importance, particularly to the following stakeholders or groups of people:

#### **Local Church Leaders**

Local church programming and leader's practices are to be consistent with the ultimate objective of connection with the divine God. The ultimate object of the local Church's work is to lead people into a relationship with God, and the leaders need to have a genuine connection with God. This study's results indicated the Church's status in terms of spirituality and leadership, thus creating an opportunity for self-introspection.

#### **Local church members**

Leadership sets the tone for the members. When the leaders themselves are empowered and motivated to lead, the members will also enjoy the fruits of motivated leadership. Local church members will benefit from knowledge-empowered leadership.

#### **Conference Union Administration**

Conference and Union administrators will use the information in planning and implementation of church programmes. Adventist local churches apply policies influenced by behaviors impacted by spiritual lifestyle. The potential exists for policy changes to align with spirituality and spiritual leadership behaviors. When administered, have a picture of the local church leadership and an appreciation of the

strengths and weaknesses; they will also know what to focus on in training local church leaders.

### **Researchers**

Not many studies on spiritual leadership in nonprofit organizations have been conducted; the results of this study, therefore, serve as additional resource material, for instance, in the debate on spiritual leadership in the context of nonprofit organizations. Spiritual leadership is often considered in the context of salaried employees; this study gives a perspective of volunteers or non-salaried personnel.

Spiritual leadership studies have been conducted, focusing on various religions, including Christianity, Confucianism, Judaism, and Islam, and the results have enhanced the appreciation of spiritual leadership in different religious contexts. This study examined this theory and practice using different cultural and religious lenses.

### **Personal and Professional**

Being a minister of religion and currently serving as a local church pastor responsible for leading member leadership teams, the challenge entails modeling spirituality and showing leadership behaviors consistent with the study. Further, as an author, my work involves developing material to empower the spiritual component of local church leadership and possibly align that with the organizational culture developed in the process.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study was confined to local church leaders currently elected and serving in selected Seventh-day Adventist local churches within the North Botswana Conference and the South Botswana Conference, both of which fall under the

Botswana Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. These leaders were chosen because they play a critical role in shaping spiritual tone and implementing church programs at the grassroots level, often influencing the day-to-day spiritual experiences of members (Knight, 2016). Data were collected from 49 local churches, 26 from the North Botswana Conference and 23 from the South Botswana Conference, selected to reflect geographical and demographic diversity within the Union. The study targeted only leaders who were actively serving in their respective church departments at the time of the research. By narrowing the focus to those currently in office, the study aimed to assess real-time perceptions and practices rather than retrospective or theoretical leadership ideals.

The study specifically explored the relationship between spiritual experience (the independent variable) and congregational spirituality (the dependent variable), as mediated by leadership behavior. While Spiritual Leadership Theory as proposed by Fry (2003) encompasses a triadic framework involving leaders' intrinsic motivation, follower motivation, and organizational outcomes, this study limited its scope to the leader dimension. That is, it focused exclusively on the intrinsic motivation of leaders (as shaped by their spiritual experience), without measuring follower motivation or broader organizational performance indicators.

This narrowed focus was guided by the need to isolate and understand how the leader's spiritual experience alone affects leadership behavior and, ultimately, the spiritual life of the congregation. Leadership behavior, which encompasses dimensions such as vision sharing, altruistic love, modeling, and service (Northouse, 2022), was analyzed as a mediating variable. Additionally, demographic variables, church location, church size, and conference were considered as moderating variables

to assess whether they influenced the strength or direction of the relationship between spiritual experience and congregational spirituality.

### **Limitations of the Study**

As with all empirical research, this study is subject to certain limitations that must be acknowledged to provide context for the interpretation of findings. First, the study's sample size and geographic coverage were limited to selected churches in the North and South Botswana Conferences, which may affect the generalizability of the findings to the broader Seventh-day Adventist Church in Botswana or in other regions. While descriptive studies do not primarily seek generalization (Babbie, 2020), readers should exercise caution in extrapolating the results beyond the sampled churches, particularly given the organizational, cultural, and demographic uniqueness of local congregations.

Second, the study relied on self-reported data through questionnaires, which are inherently subject to response bias. Respondents may have overestimated their own spirituality or the spirituality of their congregations due to social desirability or perceived expectations (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Member responses were incorporated to mitigate bias and enhance findings of variable relationships. While efforts were made to ensure anonymity and confidentiality to mitigate such biases, these limitations remain inherent in self-assessment instruments.

Third, the research adopted a cross-sectional design, meaning that data were collected at a single point in time. This restricts the ability to make causal inferences about the relationships among the variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Although correlations can indicate associations, they cannot definitively establish that leaders' spiritual experience causes changes in congregational spirituality. Fourth, the study excluded non-serving leaders such as former elders, treasurers, and clerks, and

departmental leaders who may also have significant influence on congregational life. Their exclusion was intentional to maintain a focused scope, yet it also limits the wholistic understanding of spiritual leadership dynamics within local churches.

Finally, while the study measured congregational spirituality through the perceptions of local church members, the subjective nature of spirituality remains a challenge to quantify comprehensively. Spirituality is multidimensional, encompassing faith, meaning, connection, and transcendence (Fowler, 1981; Pargament, 2007). The selected instruments were based on validated scales, yet some nuances of congregational life may not have been fully captured. Despite these limitations, the study contributes meaningfully to the understanding of spiritual leadership within the Seventh-day Adventist context in Botswana. It offers empirical insights into how a leader's spiritual experience potentially shapes leadership behavior and the spiritual climate of the congregation.

### **Assumptions of the Study**

This study assumed that the spiritual experiences of leaders are a motivation for Christian leadership in the Church. Yet, there are cases where the motivation of church leaders is self-centered. It is also assumed that the instrument for data collection would have the required validity and reliability levels to measure the select variables. Furthermore, it is also assumed that the respondents would answer the questionnaire honestly (truthful representation of the local situation) and not correctly (a presentation of the ideal). It was further assumed that the sample would sufficiently represent the population.

## **Operational Definition of Terms**

*Altruistic Love* – a leader's attribute that enables the leader to motivate and encourage followers. This attribute is acquired and strengthened through connectedness with God.

*Hope/Faith* – attributes of a leader that empower and motivate followers, further win their confidence

*Leadership* – the ability to influence and guide others towards a common goal or vision

*Leadership Behavior* – the actions and conduct of a leader

*Local Church Leaders* – lay members in local churches who are currently serving as elected leaders in their departments.

*Mission* – what a leader seeks or sets out to accomplish

*Organizational Spirituality* – The spirituality of an organization experienced by individual members, groups, and the organization in meaningfulness, connection, and compassion.

*Religion* – a group of people who believe in a like-minded way, adhere to a common set of beliefs, and share group affiliation and practices.

*Spiritual experience* – defines the connection with the Divine God in a religious/spiritual context, in essence the leader's spirituality

*Spirituality* – a connection with the triune God

*Vision* – foresight of a leader that can be informed or inspired by God

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a comprehensive review of literature that informs and supports the study on the influence of leaders' spirituality on congregational spirituality through leadership behavior in local Seventh-day Adventist churches in the Botswana Union Conference. The review adopts a funnel structure, moving from general concepts and theories of leadership toward more specific constructs directly related to the research focus, including spiritual leadership, servant leadership, spiritual experience, and congregational spirituality. This structure allows for a coherent development of the conceptual and theoretical foundations of the study while highlighting relevant empirical and contextual insights.

The chapter begins by conceptualizing leadership, providing definitions and perspectives on leadership from general, organizational, and faith-based viewpoints. This section highlights how leadership is understood as a process of influence and transformation, particularly in spiritual communities where the moral and spiritual integrity of leaders significantly impacts follower development. The role of leadership in African religious contexts and the Seventh-day Adventist tradition is emphasized to ground the discussion in the study's cultural and ecclesial setting.

Following this, the chapter explores Fowler's Faith Development Theory, which offers a psychological and spiritual framework for understanding how individuals mature in faith across the lifespan. This theory provides a developmental lens through which leaders' and congregants' spiritual growth can be better

understood. The focus then narrows to Spiritual Leadership Theory (SLT), which forms the core theoretical framework for this study. SLT, as originally developed by Fry (2003), integrates values such as vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love to foster intrinsic motivation and organizational commitment. However, in alignment with a biblical worldview and the Adventist context, this study replaces the concept of “inner life” with “spiritual experience”, recognizing the vital role of a leader’s lived relationship with God in inspiring and sustaining spiritual leadership.

To explain the mechanism through which spirituality influences congregational outcomes, the chapter incorporates Servant Leadership Theory as a mediating framework. This theory, pioneered by Greenleaf (1977), emphasizes humility, empathy, and the growth of others as the essence of effective leadership—values that resonate strongly with Christian leadership ideals. A detailed discussion of spiritual experience follows, positioning it as the foundation of intrinsic motivation and leadership authenticity in this study. This section includes theoretical definitions and measurement tools relevant to assessing spiritual experience in practical and empirical terms.

Subsequently, the concept of congregational spirituality is examined as the study’s outcome variable. It is defined in terms of meaningfulness, connection, and compassion within the church community. The literature shows that congregational spirituality is shaped by the leader’s character and behavior, particularly in faith-based contexts like the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Incorporating a biblical and theological perspective, the chapter draws from Scripture and the writings of Ellen G. White to underscore the spiritual and moral expectations placed on leaders in the Christian tradition. These insights affirm the study’s theological foundation and relevance for SDA congregations. The chapter then considers the influence of

demographic factors such as Conference, Church size, and Church location, which are explored as potential moderators in the relationship between leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality.

Finally, the chapter reviews empirical studies and identifies research gaps. While previous research affirms the importance of spiritual leadership, few studies have investigated this phenomenon within the African context, and none, to the researcher's knowledge, have specifically examined the mediating role of leadership behavior between leaders' spiritual experience and congregational spirituality in Botswana's Adventist churches. This gap underscores the significance and originality of the present study. In sum, this literature review integrates theoretical, conceptual, theological, and empirical perspectives to provide a solid foundation for understanding the dynamics between spiritual leadership and congregational spirituality in local SDA churches.

### **Conceptualizing Leadership**

Leadership is a multifaceted and evolving construct that has attracted scholarly attention across diverse fields such as sociology, psychology, theology, and organizational studies. In the context of religious organizations, particularly within faith communities like the Seventh-day Adventist Church, leadership is both a functional and spiritual responsibility. It encompasses not only the ability to influence and guide others but also the moral and spiritual integrity to model godly living (Northouse, 2022). According to Northouse (2022), leadership is "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 6). This definition reflects the relational and goal-oriented nature of leadership, emphasizing influence as its core mechanism. However, in spiritual and faith-based settings, leadership extends beyond goal attainment to include spiritual nurturing, discipleship,

and moral example (Reave, 2005). Therefore, leadership in the church must be evaluated not only by outcomes but also by the leader's character, values, and spiritual depth.

Blanchard and Hodges (2005) define leadership within Christian contexts as serving others by guiding them toward accomplishing a shared vision that reflects God's purpose. They argue that effective Christian leadership is rooted in the example of Jesus Christ, who led by serving, teaching, and empowering others. This aligns closely with the Adventist theology of leadership, which emphasizes Christlike conduct, humility, and service as central leadership traits (White, 1898). In the context of African religious organizations, leadership is often intertwined with communal expectations, moral accountability, and spiritual authority. Tandoh (2011) notes that in African settings, leadership is understood not merely as positional power but as a sacred trust conferred by the community and guided by divine will. As such, the spiritual leader is expected to exemplify virtues such as integrity, compassion, and wisdom, which are essential to maintaining congregational trust and cohesion.

Scholars have also observed a shift from traditional authoritarian leadership styles to more human-centered and spiritually grounded models in contemporary church leadership. Fry (2003) introduced the Spiritual Leadership Theory (SLT), which integrates vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love as foundational values. This theory argues that spiritual leadership arises from intrinsic motivation grounded in a sense of calling and membership—two spiritual needs that are critical for fostering commitment and meaning in organizations. In religious contexts, these values manifest through prayer, mission orientation, and modeling Christlike love (Fry, 2003; Fry & Nisiewicz, 2013).

Furthermore, servant leadership, as articulated by Greenleaf (1977), provides a compelling conceptual framework for leadership in the church. Greenleaf proposed that authentic leadership begins with the desire to serve, and that leadership emerges as a natural extension of service. This model emphasizes key characteristics such as empathy, listening, stewardship, and a commitment to the growth of people (Spears, 1995). Servant leadership is inherently relational and spiritual, aligning with biblical imperatives such as those found in Matthew 20:26–28, where Jesus teaches that “whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant.” In the Seventh-day Adventist tradition, leadership is a spiritual calling aimed at nurturing discipleship and advancing the church’s mission. This view is reinforced by Ellen G. White (1903), who emphasized that “only he who has learned to serve is qualified to lead” (p. 76). White consistently portrayed leadership as a divine stewardship characterized by humility, moral influence, and Christlike behavior.

Given these perspectives, it is evident that leadership in faith-based contexts, particularly within the Seventh-day Adventist Church, cannot be adequately understood through secular models alone. Rather, it must incorporate spiritual dimensions such as calling, character, and covenantal relationships. This conceptualization is particularly relevant to the Botswana Union Conference, where local church leaders function not only as organizational managers but also as spiritual mentors and community shepherds. In summary, leadership in the context of this study is conceptualized as a spiritually grounded process of influence, wherein the leader’s character, spiritual experience, and relational behavior play a central role in shaping the faith and vitality of the congregation. This view integrates biblical principles, servant leadership characteristics, and spiritual leadership theory to provide a wholistic understanding of leadership suited for religious communities.

## **Theoretical Foundations of Leadership**

Having established a foundational understanding of leadership as a process of influence characterized by service, moral integrity, and spiritual responsibility, particularly within the context of faith-based and African religious communities, it is now essential to examine the theoretical frameworks that inform the constructs central to this study. While leadership in general involves guiding individuals toward a shared goal, in spiritual contexts it also includes nurturing personal faith and communal spirituality. Therefore, this study draws on established theories of faith development and spiritual leadership to provide a deeper conceptual grounding. These frameworks help explain how a leader's spirituality is formed and expressed, how it translates into observable behaviors, and how it ultimately shapes the spiritual atmosphere of a congregation. The discussion now turns to Fowler's Faith Development Theory, which offers a developmental perspective on spirituality and sets the stage for understanding the personal faith journey of leaders and its influence on their leadership approach.

### **Fowler's Faith Development Theory**

The Faith Development Theory was developed by James W. Fowler (1940-2015). Fowler was a Theology and Human Development professor at Emory University, an American by origin (Armstrong, 2020). He retired in 2005 after serving as director of the Center for Research on Faith and Moral Development and the Center for Ethics. Fowler was a minister in the United Methodist Church and was known to be the originator of the developmental model based on faith, which was first presented in his book *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*. In this study, this theory serves as the vehicle for spirituality.

According to Janse (2024), Fowler's Stages of Faith Development is a concept that forms a framework for people's spiritual development throughout their lives. The proposition is that the development of an individual's spiritual awareness runs parallel to other aspects of human development. Further, it is suggested that spirituality is a fundamental aspect of human existence, such as cognition, social behavior, or motor skills (Janse, 2024a). Fowler (1981) argues that faith is the underlying meaning-making process everyone uses regardless of faith's role in their lives. Faith occurs and is exercised at all times and with everyone. People put their trust in money, family, religion, or power, thus exercising faith. James Fowler defines faith as how people interact with the universe and thus create meaning in life. Therefore, faith is not confined to faith and religion but is a universal quality of human meaning-making (Janse, 2024b).

As stated, faith is understood not as a set of beliefs but as a way of knowing, a way of constituting one's experience of the world, a sense of what is ultimate for an individual, and the centers of value and images of power and core stories (Tarrar & Hasan, 2015). Faith is a sense of being in a certain way in its totality (Fowler, 1981) along seven aspects of faith as per the stages proposed by Fowler. Thus, Fowler et al. (2004) recognize these seven structures or aspects of faith as 'windows' into faith. However, Fowler and Dell (2005) maintain that this approach caters to the whole, which is more than the sum of its parts. Hence, parts individually cannot account for the whole underlying faith. These aspects make faith multidimensional, increasingly complex, and comprehensive as these aspects interact from one stage to another (Tarrar & Hasan, 2015).

Fowler's theory of faith development describes the process in seven phases with six stages; each stage addresses a varying way of seeing and understanding one's faith. Here are the stages:

### **Primal Faith (Infancy)**

This first stage is a pre-language disposition, a total emotional orientation of trust offsetting mistrust, and takes form in the mutuality of one's relationships with parents, caregivers, and others (Powers et al., 2000). At this stage, a child learns to perceive the good and/or evil in the world based on how his/her parents treat him/her (Armstrong, 2020). A sense of security, consistency, and confidence is to be developed by the baby at this stage. These feelings later translate into trust and security in the universe and the divine.

According to Armstrong (2020), this stage is similar to Erik Erikson's first stage about "trust versus mistrust." The outer environment serves as the platform to provide experiences that instill trust and assurance from comfort, living in a secure and stable environment, and experiencing a sense of consistency and care from parents. These experiences are personalized and translated into assurance and trust in the universe and harmony with the divine. The opposite, being negative experiences of neglect by parents and the environment and/or abuse at this developmental stage, may result in the formation of feelings of mistrust and fear concerning the universe and the divine, thus planting seeds for doubt in later stages.

This stage forms the basic rituals of care interchange and mutuality (Powers et al., 2000) and the forming of logic (Tarrar & Hasan, 2015). Even though this stage does not determine the course of our later faith, it serves as the foundation to impact the future building or rebuilding of faith. At this stage, infants and young children have essential trust in their caregivers but have not yet developed any particular

religious or spiritual faith. Their faith is founded on their undifferentiated primary relationships (Theories of Spiritual Development and the Social Work Exam | SWTP, 2023).

### **Intuitive-Projective Faith (Early Childhood)**

This stage corresponds with evoking moral emotions and standards around the second year of life. It also corresponds with the awareness of taboos and the sacred and the struggle to balance autonomy and will with shame and construction in the child's forming self (Tarrar & Hasan, 2015). Representations of God take conscious form in this period and draw, for good or will, on the child's experiences affected by parents and/or other adults emotionally attached in the first years of the child's life (Powers et al., 2000).

Armstrong (2020) suggests that at this stage, children have acquired language and have developed the ability to express thoughts using symbols. Here, imagination is combined with perception and feelings to create long-lasting images that develop faith, and this is stimulated by stories, gestures, and symbols uncontrolled by logical thinking. These images serve as the protective and the threatening powers surrounding one's life.

There is no development of a formal religious belief at this stage in the child. Instead, the child is affected by the exposure of the psyche to the unconscious and relatively fluid thought patterns. Encounters with stories, images, and the influence of others are some of the primary ways faith is developed, including a profound intuitive sense of right and wrong and the child's innocent discernment of how God causes the universe to function (Armstrong, 2020). Children tend to see the world in a black-and-white manner and are very much affected by their parents' or caregivers' beliefs and values.

Children at this stage are very self-centred and take ideas about right and wrong. Their ability to distinguish real from fantasy is not yet well developed. Also, they generally cannot perceive how another person may view the world (Janse, 2024a). Robert Keeley writes about this: children cannot think like scientists, cannot consider logical arguments, and cannot think through and elaborate complex ideas. Therefore, children in this phase cannot yet develop a formalized religious faith.

### **Mythic-Literal Faith (Elementary-School Years through Early Adolescence)**

Here, concrete operational thinking—the developing ability to think logically—emerges to help us order the world with categories of causality, space, time, and number (Tarrar & Hasan, 2015). We can now sort out the real from the make-believe and the actual from fantasy. Unlike the previous stage, the child in this stage can perceive other people's views and perspectives and develops capabilities of capturing life and meanings in narratives and stories.

Regarding religion and spirituality, at this stage, we observe religious and spiritual formation. At this stage, the child's appreciation and understanding of religious stories and symbols in a literal sense is observed. Further, a moral and ethical framework is formed based on these stories and symbols. The child's faith is often strongly tied to their family or community's religious traditions and practices. (Theories of Spiritual Development and the Social Work Exam | SWTP, 2023)

Children at this stage believe in justice and fairness in religious matters and have a sense of exchange of tit for tat in the world, such as an appreciation that doing good will result in a good result while doing something bad will result in a bad thing happening. They also have a sense of social awareness (Tarrar & Hasan, 2015). They may also have an anthropomorphic image of God, such as a man with a long white

beard who lives in the clouds. Because religious metaphors are oftentimes taken literally, they set a plane that leads to misunderstandings. If promises in sacred scripture do not pass in the world, a person at this stage might feel cheated or disappointed in God (Armstrong, 2020).

For better understanding and comprehension at this stage, information is organized into stories combined with moral rules (Janse, 2024a). One key challenge at this stage is an inability to distance oneself from a story and formulate an overarching meaning. At this stage, justice and fairness are considered reciprocal. Armstrong (2020) states that this stage aligns with Piaget's concrete operational stages of cognitive development, where real logical thinking develops in the child's mind (Armstrong, 2020). Some people stay in this phase their whole lives.

### **Synthetic-Conventional Faith (middle adolescence)**

The emergence of formal operational thinking paves the path for abstract ideas and concepts to make sense of one's world. This stage is the adolescence and young adulthood season. The search for meaning involves reflecting upon past experiences and observing patterns (Powers et al., 2000). Concerns about the young person's future at this time, as well as their identity, work, career, or vocation, and personal relationships, have become important. These new cognitive abilities make mutual interpersonal perspective-taking possible.

The young person in this stage, if they get to experience friendship or intimacy, develops an awareness of the mirroring of self, which is provided by the responses of persons whose feelings about them matter (Tarrar & Hasan, 2015). Concerning a personal relationship with God, these new human relations correlate with one's hunger for a personal relationship with God. A relationship in which one feels that they are known and deeply loved comprehensively.

Critical examination of beliefs and enquiry is observed among individuals in this stage. The formation of a more personal and reflective faith incorporating elements from various sources that include the young person's family, religious community, and personal experiences is observed (Theories of Spiritual Development and the Social Work Exam | SWTP, 2023). The adolescent/adult leans on identifying with religion or a religious institution, a belief system, or some authority and the growth of a personal religious or spiritual identity. This faith-based identity avoids conflicts due to challenges regarding one's beliefs that come across as a threat (Armstrong, 2020).

The divine in this stage and all subsequent stages corresponds to Piaget's stage of formal operational thinking. Making it possible for adolescents or adults to comprehend the divine as an abstract or formless manifestation (Armstrong, 2020). The simple and compelling stories are now seen as cohesive stories of values and morals. Children can think abstractly in this stage and see layers of meaning in their faith's stories, rituals, and symbols (Janse, 2024a). Possess moral judgment is an ability to think about morality while making decisions (Tarrar & Hasan, 2015)

### **Individuative-Reflective Faith (Presumably, Young Adulthood)**

To move into the Individuative-Reflective stage, we must question, examine, and reclaim the values and beliefs we have formed to that point in our lives (Powers et al., 2000). They become explicit [consciously chosen] commitments rather than tacit [unexamined] commitments. Now, one maintains that commitment and identity by choice and explicit assent rather than by unconscious formation and tacit commitment. By the time we are adolescents, we have played several different roles in the drama of our lives.

The task of the Individuative stage is to position an "executive ego" as the "I" who manages and "has" all these roles and relations yet is not fully expressed in any one of them. It means taking charge of one's life in a new way. It means claiming a new quality of reflective autonomy and responsibility (Tarrar & Hasan, 2015). At this stage, the individual develops an independent and self-reflective faith. Here, the fear of challenging and questioning one's beliefs is addressed, enabling the search for a deeper spiritual understanding which is meaningful at a personal level. A more nuanced and complex faith approach is involved at this stage. (Theories of Spiritual Development and the Social Work Exam | SWTP, 2023)

Individuals may be taking personal responsibility for their beliefs and feelings. However, this is not without anxiety and struggle. As a result of the open-mindedness approach, potential conflicts due to the collision of beliefs and traditions are likely to be experienced as religious or spiritual beliefs can assume greater complexity and shades of nuance (Armstrong, 2020).

Robert Keeley argues that people have experienced cognitive dissonance for generations, with fundamental questions of faith confronted in this phase. People in these stages begin to question their assumptions. Not only do individuals question their assumptions about their faith, but the existing authority structures within their faith are also subjected to the same questioning. That is when someone turns their back on their religious community. They see this as the only solution when they do not get answers to their questions (Janse, 2024a).

### **Conjunctive Faith (Mid-life or Beyond)**

This stage involves embracing and integrating opposites or polarities in one's life, such as symbol and story, metaphor and myth, both from our traditions and others, to gain a new appreciation (Powers et al., 2000). A critical conceptual

understanding considers one's traditions and their meanings and translates them, leading to one experiencing a hunger for a deeper relationship to the reality that symbols mediate. Biblical narratives are essential at this stage for drawing one into using them to read one's life for reforming and reshaping as opposed to the meanings of the text being read and formed (Acquah & Boakye, 2018).

Empathy, understanding, and integrating diverse perspectives are easier at this stage than in previous stages. The ability to comprehend all humanity's interconnectedness and embrace the value of multiple belief systems is observed here. Humility and acceptance become a byproduct of recognizing the human limitations of comprehension (Theories of Spiritual Development and the Social Work Exam | SWTP, 2023).

Due to human maturation, a person at this stage acknowledges paradoxes and the mysteries attendant to values transcendent. The result is that a person surpasses the conventional religious beliefs and/or traditions they may have inherited from previous stages of development (Armstrong, 2020). A resolution of the conflicts of this stage occurs when the person can hold a multidimensional view that considers 'truth' as something that no particular statement of faith can adequately articulate.

It is a phase that is also known as the time of the midlife crisis. At this stage, one recognizes that paradoxes and mysteries are attached to faith's transcendent values and norms. As a result, a person goes beyond the traditional beliefs they inherited from the earlier stages of faith development. More comfortable places are achieved by overcoming the hurdle of complex questions and struggles encountered in the previous phase (Tarrar & Hasan, 2015). At this stage, questions that seem complex are answered, and it is not perplexing to know that some answers may be challenging.

Unlike previous phases, this phase opens the door to an awareness of community and how communities are essential in developing faith. No longer is the focus on self-reflection. Social status established in the community becomes an ingredient for lasting faith. Further, in attaining this phase, one becomes more and more open to the religions and beliefs of other people. It is not because the individuals distance themselves from their faith but because they believe their faith can be enriched, deepened and informed by the faith of others(Janse, 2024a).

### **Universalizing Faith**

According to Fowler (1981), not many individuals reach this stage. A selfless faith universalizes this faith and is characterized by a transcendent faith that is seen in the well-being of people, including promoting promoting and compassion. This faith is scarce and is a highly evolving form of faith. (Theories of Spiritual Development and the Social Work Exam | SWTP, 2023).

Beyond paradox and polarities, individuals at this stage seem to be grounded persons who also show oneness with God. Their visions and commitments seem to free them from passionate yet detached spending of the self in love(Tarrar & Hasan, 2015). Fowler asserts that "such persons are devoted to overcoming division, oppression, and violence and live in effective anticipatory response to an inbreaking commonwealth of love and justice, the reality of an inbreaking kingdom of God" (James Fowler, 1991, pp. 102-15).

According to Fowler (1981), as stated, this stage is rarely achieved by individuals; only a few people reach it. A person at this stage does not allow differences in religious or spiritual beliefs among people in the world to deter them from a cause but instead regards all beings as worthy of compassion and deep understanding (Armstrong, 2020). These individuals "walk the talk" of the great

religious traditions. The life of Count Leo Tolstoy is one good example of this life stage of an individual who emphasized the importance of equality among people in his later years. Further, he exemplified asceticism in one's style of living, showing the practice of compassion for all in his last novel, *Resurrection*. This action caused him to be excommunicated from the Russian Orthodox Church (Armstrong, 2020). Other examples of people who reached these stages include Mahatma Gandhi and Mother Teresa (Janse, 2024a).

People at this stage have the potential to become important religious figures. They can relate with anybody regardless of their differences in faith development without condescending. Even though they cherish life, the individuals in this phase do not take life too seriously. This position is observed in their practical faith, challenging the status quo, and working to establish justice in the world. Fowler also includes Gandhi and Mother Teresa as examples of individuals in this stage (Janse, 2024a).

Not everyone progresses through all these stages; some people, throughout their lives, may remain at a particular stage. Others may keep shifting back and forth between various stages, particularly informed by encountering significant life events or challenges that cause one to reevaluate their faith. Fowler's theory should be considered a guide, not a rigid model. However, it is a helpful framework for understanding the diversity of spiritual development (SWTP, 2023). Therefore, this framework developed by Fowler serves as a hinge for spirituality in this study.

Fowler's Faith Development Theory (FDT), while widely regarded as a seminal framework in understanding spiritual and psychological maturation, is not without its critiques. One of the primary criticisms of Fowler's theory is its Western-centric, individualistic bias. Critics argue that the model assumes a linear, cognitive-

rational progression of faith that may not adequately capture the communal, narrative-based, and experiential nature of spirituality in non-Western contexts, including African settings (Dillon, 2003; Streib, 2005). Moreover, the theory has been critiqued for its emphasis on cognitive development as the primary driver of faith evolution, potentially neglecting emotional, relational, and cultural dimensions of spiritual formation (Parker, 2010).

Another limitation is the rigid stage-based structure, which suggests that individuals move sequentially from one stage to another, with “higher” stages representing more mature faith. This can inadvertently imply spiritual hierarchy, which may not resonate with theological perspectives that view spiritual growth as multidimensional and non-linear (Love, 2002). Furthermore, empirical validation of the theory has been mixed; while instruments such as the Faith Development Interview and Faith Development Scale (Leak et al., 1999) have been used, critics argue that measuring such a personal, transcendent experience poses methodological challenges. Despite these critiques, Fowler’s theory remains influential due to its robust attempt to systematize faith development across the lifespan, offering insight into how faith matures in complexity, reflexivity, and inclusivity. In the context of leadership and organizational spirituality, these insights are still highly valuable when appropriately contextualized.

In the present study, Fowler’s Faith Development Theory serves as an important conceptual foundation for understanding the personal spiritual journeys of both leaders and congregants in Seventh-day Adventist churches within the Botswana Union Conference. Leaders’ approaches to decision-making, interpersonal relationships, and spiritual influence are deeply shaped by the stage of faith they inhabit. For instance, a leader functioning primarily within Fowler’s Synthetic-

Conventional stage may prioritize institutional traditions and social conformity, while one operating at the Individuative-Reflective or Conjunctive stage may engage in critical theological reflection and demonstrate openness to complexity and diversity in spiritual experience.

Understanding these dynamics is especially important in faith-based communities where leadership is not merely administrative but also spiritual and moral. Leaders are expected to model and nurture faith development among members, which implies that their own maturity in faith has a cascading effect on the spiritual health of the congregation. Furthermore, this theory helps explain variations in congregational response to leadership behaviors. Congregants at different stages of faith may interpret leaders' vision, actions, and spiritual emphases in varied ways, affecting how they experience meaningfulness, connection, and compassion key dimensions of congregational spirituality. Therefore, Fowler's theory not only provides insight into the individual spiritual maturation process but also underscores the relational and communal implications of faith development. This makes it a valuable lens for interpreting the interplay between leaders' spirituality and congregational outcomes, as explored in this dissertation.

While Fowler's Faith Development Theory provides a developmental backdrop for understanding personal and communal spirituality, it does not fully account for the mechanisms through which spiritual maturity translates into organizational influence and leadership behavior. To address this gap, the study now turns to Spiritual Leadership Theory (SLT) a framework that integrates intrinsic motivation, leadership values, and spiritual well-being. SLT offers a structured model for examining how spiritually mature leaders inspire faith, hope, and purpose among followers, and how these dynamics contribute to the formation of a spiritually vibrant

congregation. The next section discusses SLT in depth, with a focus on its components, its adaptation to a theistic worldview through the concept of spiritual experience, and its application within the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

### **Core Leadership Framework: Spiritual Leadership Theory (SLT)**

Spiritual Leadership Theory (SLT) is a comprehensive leadership model that integrates values, intrinsic motivation, and spirituality to foster organizational and personal transformation. Emerging in the late 20th century, the theory reflects the growing interest in spirituality at work and recognizes the leader's inner world as essential to effective leadership. Although initial contributions came from Metroff and Denton (1999), Biberman, Whitty, and Robbins (1999), and Cacioppe (2000), Louis W. Fry is most prominently credited with systematically developing and formalizing SLT. His foundational model presented in 2003, and refined in later works, emphasizes leadership as a means to satisfy fundamental spiritual needs: calling (life has meaning and purpose) and membership (feeling understood and appreciated) (Fry, 2003; Fry & Nisiewicz, 2013). It also influenced leadership practice which became a product of these continuous refinements of spiritual leadership (Benefiel et al., 2014). This model was used to develop others, such as the organizational transformation framework by Benefice (2005), the integrative conceptual model based on ego transcendence by Parameshwar (2005), and Fry and Nisiewicz's (2013) spiritual leadership business model incorporating strategic management. Various scholars have conducted tests for the universal application of this theory (e.g., Jeon et al., 2013; Tafreshi et al., 2017). Spiritual leadership, according to Oh & Wang (2020), is being recognized as a key contributor to a new approach to leadership. At its core, SLT posits that leadership should transcend self-interest and organizational profitability to

address the deeper spiritual needs of followers. This is especially relevant in religious contexts, where leaders operate not only as organizational stewards but also as spiritual shepherds. For the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Botswana Union Conference, where spiritual vitality is central to congregational life and mission, SLT offers a valuable framework. Leaders must inspire, nurture, and model spiritual experience that draws from the triune God and fosters communal spirituality. This dissertation modifies Fry's (2003) "inner life" construct, replacing it with "spiritual experience" to better reflect a theistic worldview rooted in Adventist theology.

### **Components of Spiritual Leadership Theory**

Fry's model of spiritual leadership consists of three interdependent core values: vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love. These values guide leaders in cultivating a spiritually healthy organizational culture where individuals experience purpose and connectedness. Each component contributes to intrinsic motivation and shapes the quality of relationships and purpose within the organization. Table 1 summarizes their key features.

**Table 1**

#### *Qualities of Spiritual Leadership*

| Vision                               | Altruistic love            | Hope/faith       |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| Broad appeal to key stakeholders     | Forgiveness                | Endurance        |
| Defines the destination and journey  | Kindness                   | Perseverance     |
| Reflects high ideals                 | Integrity                  | Do what it takes |
| Encourages hope/faith                | Empathy/compassion         | Stretch goals    |
| Establishes a standard of excellence | Honesty                    | Expectation of   |
|                                      | Patience, Courage          | Reward/Victory   |
|                                      | Trust/Loyalty,<br>Humility |                  |

Source: Fry 2003

These values feed into spiritual well-being, defined as the experience of calling and membership. This, in turn, influences positive outcomes such as organizational commitment, productivity, and life satisfaction (Fry et al., 2005).

## **Vision**

Vision is the spiritual leader's articulation of a higher purpose. Unlike secular leadership models where vision is often limited to organizational success, in SLT, vision embodies moral and spiritual ideals. Fry (2003) defines vision as a clear picture of the future that appeals broadly to stakeholders and sets high expectations. For spiritual leaders, vision must inspire transcendence, calling people beyond the ordinary toward a divine mandate.

In religious organizations such as Seventh-day Adventist churches, vision is both theological and practical. It is rooted in Scripture and reflects God's redemptive mission. This eschatological vision informs not only personal behavior but also institutional mission and direction. As Smith (1992) noted, vision is essential in every religion because it frames human existence within a cosmic context. In the Adventist context, vision is grounded in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) and the Three Angels' Messages (Revelation 14:6-12), pointing to a holistic message that integrates salvation, judgment, and restoration.

Effective spiritual leaders thus act as prophetic voices who communicate this vision compellingly, helping members to internalize it and act accordingly. According to Fry (2003), a compelling vision encourages hope and faith, creating an environment where people are motivated intrinsically. In Botswana's Adventist churches, this translates to leaders who not only preach the vision but embody it, becoming living testimonies of God's transformative power.

## **Hope/Faith**

Hope and faith refer to the confidence and perseverance required to realize the vision. Fry (2003) describes this component as the leader's belief that the vision will be fulfilled, even in the face of obstacles. This belief is not naive optimism but is rooted in a deeper spiritual conviction and perseverance.

Within this dissertation, the concept of spiritual experience replaces Fry's (2003) "inner life" as the source of hope and faith. In a Christian context, and particularly in the Adventist tradition, hope and faith stem from personal communion with God. Spiritual experiences such as prayer, worship, Bible study, and witnessing are the primary means by which leaders connect with the divine and are sustained in their calling.

Hope, in this setting, has both existential and eschatological dimensions. It is the assurance of God's presence in current struggles and the confident expectation of Christ's return, and the establishment of God's kingdom. Faith is more than belief; it is fidelity to God's purposes and trust in His promises. As such, leaders are expected to model both spiritual resilience and unwavering confidence in God's leading.

Spiritual leaders who are grounded in authentic spiritual experience can sustain their faith amid trials and inspire the same endurance in their followers. This becomes essential in contexts where church leaders face economic hardship, political instability, or organizational resistance. As Fry (2016) points out, such hope/faith fuels persistence and "stretch goals," enabling congregations to strive for spiritual and missional excellence.

## **Altruistic Love**

Altruistic love is the selfless concern for the well-being of others. Fry (2003) emphasizes that this love is manifested in forgiveness, compassion, humility, and

integrity. It is not a sentimental emotion but a practical ethic of care and service. It is, in essence, the social dimension of spiritual leadership, reflecting God's love in community life.

In Christian theology, altruistic love is best exemplified by Jesus Christ, whose leadership was sacrificial and servant-oriented (Matthew 20:28; John 13:1–17). This Christocentric model of leadership is foundational in the Seventh-day Adventist tradition, which encourages leaders to emulate Jesus' example of love in action. The Apostle Paul, in 1 Corinthians 13, describes love as the highest virtue, without which all other gifts and actions are meaningless.

Altruistic love nurtures trust, safety, and belonging in a congregation. It allows members to experience acceptance and support, contributing to their sense of membership. In Botswana Union Conference, where communal values and extended kinship are culturally Significant, the expression of altruistic love in leadership enhances social cohesion and spiritual vitality.

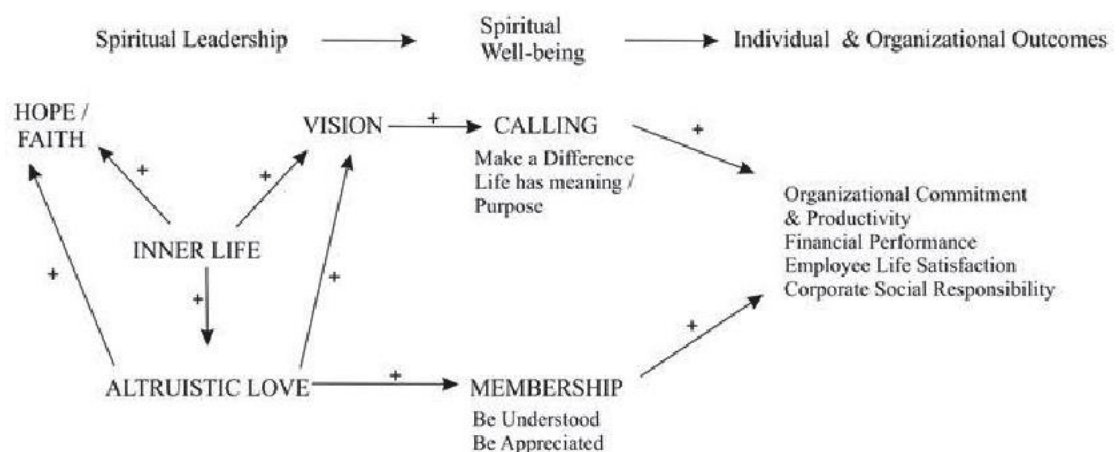
Furthermore, leaders who operate from this principle are more likely to engage in ethical behavior, avoid authoritarian tendencies, and prioritize members' holistic development. It is through altruistic love that leaders create inclusive, empowering spiritual environments where all members can flourish.

One of the major theoretical shifts in this dissertation is the substitution of Fry's "inner life" with "spiritual experience." While Fry (2003, 2005, 2016) conceptualizes inner life as practices that nurture spiritual self-awareness (such as meditation, reflection, or prayer), this dissertation reorients the concept toward a distinctly Christian understanding rooted in biblical theology. Fry et al. (2005) argue that spiritual leadership theory does two things: it firstly takes into account and advances transformational and charismatic theories together with ethics and values-

based theories like authentic and leadership, and secondly, it seeks to evade the weaknesses of the measurement model misspecification. Rahmawati (2014) states that it may serve to establish a new approach to leadership theory, research, and practice. This position set the foundation for the extension of the model, which included inner life/spiritual practice, life satisfaction, spiritual well-being, and corporate social responsibility. Specifically, inner life as a fundamental source of spiritual leadership was added to emphasize the influence of developing spiritual leaders' qualities (Fry, 2016).

**Figure 2**

*Altruistic Love*



Source: Fry (2016)

Spiritual experience refers to the leader's authentic, ongoing relationship with God through the indwelling Holy Spirit. It includes devotional life, obedience to Scripture, participation in sacraments, engagement in mission, and the transformative work of grace. This aligns with Adventist theology, which emphasizes experiential religion—knowing God personally and responding to His calling in daily life.

Fry and Kriger (2009) acknowledge that spiritual leadership can be empowered by a “higher spiritual power.” This dissertation builds on that premise by clearly identifying that power as the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and positioning spiritual experience as the wellspring of authentic leadership.

Spiritual leadership theory (SLT) coordinates leaders' abilities to mobilize followers' capabilities in today's changing environment and gives a fresh view of leadership (Fry, 2003). The purpose of spiritual leadership is to meet the fundamental needs of both leader and follower for spiritual survival (Holden, 2017). Ultimately, it fosters the member commitment to the organization and boosts productivity (Fry, 2003; Javanmard, 2012). Essentially, the relevance of SLT to Seventh-day Adventist congregations in Botswana lies in its ability to bridge organizational leadership and spiritual formation. In a context where pastoral and lay leaders are expected to be both visionaries and shepherds, SLT offers a robust framework for spiritual influence.

Additional conceptualizations of spiritual leadership have been proposed. These include the conceptualization by Sanders, Hopkins, and Geroy (2003), who defined spiritual leadership as the degree to which organizations can encourage and provide a sense of significance and interconnection among their collaborators concerning the hierarchical structure. Moore and Casper (2006) highlight that intrinsic values have attitudes, beliefs, and emotions that are experienced in a real humanistic perspective. Therefore, a feeling of significance and connection, intrinsic values, attitudes, beliefs, and emotions are incorporated into this concept.

Leaders' spiritual experiences directly affect their behavior, decision-making, and capacity to influence congregational spirituality. A leader who cultivates vision, models faith, and leads with altruistic love not only strengthens their own calling but also shapes the spiritual health of the congregation. This dynamic interplay forms the

central focus of this dissertation: examining how leaders' spirituality influences congregational spirituality through their leadership behaviors.

The spiritual leadership concept keeps evolving and improving and is enhanced by continually discussing varied leadership qualities. For instance, Fry, Kisselburgh, and Butts (2007) affirm that Spiritual Leadership should be understood as "a relative process whose objective is the construction, coordination, and transformation of one's self, others, and the organization as a whole." Crossman (2010) adds to this discussion, highlighting that Spiritual Leadership includes attributes such as compassion, generosity, care, inquisitiveness, valor, service, peace, tranquility, and gratitude. Hackett and Wang (2012) reaffirmed that the organizations' favorable aspects and social goals are considered primarily and not just the business, and this is a signal of spiritual leadership attributes.

In formulating spiritual leadership theory, Fry (2003) established an understanding of God based on Horton's (1950) continuum of God as a higher power. Smith's (1992) contributed to this philosophy by proposing that all religions entail vision as a leadership factor and that the important values of humility, charity, and veracity are a part of the SLT. Fry (2003) also argued that a vision or journey can help leaders and followers satisfy their needs for spiritual survival and seek organizational goals or God's will as proposed in SLT. This theory, save the Buddhist Emptiness Theory, is compatible with leadership in a Christian organization context, and we will explore a spiritual experience concept as a substitute for Emptiness theory, which informs inner life. Spiritual experiences replaces inner life in the intrinsic motivation concept. By embedding the spiritual leadership model within a theistic worldview, this study affirms that leadership is a divine calling, not merely a managerial role. It contends that spiritual leadership is not optional in faith communities it is essential.

While SLT offers a compelling framework, it is not without critique. Cregård (2017) cautions that emphasizing spiritual leadership may inadvertently foster a closed culture that marginalizes dissent or nonconformity. Lindberg (2020) adds that spiritual leadership may suppress internal conflicts, create dependency on charismatic figures, or lead to enforced religiosity. Moreover, Dent et al. (2005) and Strack et al. (2002) warn of the conceptual vagueness surrounding terms like “spirituality” and “leadership,” especially in diverse cultural contexts. For SLT to be effective in the Seventh-day Adventist context, such ambiguities must be addressed through theological clarity and contextual adaptation. This dissertation addresses these limitations by clearly defining spirituality in terms of biblical theology and contextualizing leadership practice within the Adventist tradition. The substitution of “inner life” with “spiritual experience” enhances conceptual clarity and aligns the theory with lived faith realities.

This theory is highly applicable to the current study, which seeks to understand the influence of leaders’ spirituality on congregational spirituality in local Seventh-day Adventist churches within the Botswana Union Conference. In this context, leaders are expected to do more than manage programs; they are spiritual mentors, entrusted with nurturing the faith and character of their congregations. SLT addresses this expectation by framing leadership as a sacred responsibility grounded in personal spiritual experience. The present study advances Fry’s model by substituting the “inner life” construct with “spiritual experience”, a shift that reflects the theistic and biblical worldview of Adventist theology. This modification recognizes that for faith-based leaders, spirituality is not merely psychological self-awareness but a lived relationship with God demonstrated through practices such as prayer, worship, and obedience (Fry & Kriger, 2009; Underwood, 2006).

In African religious contexts, especially among Seventh-day Adventist congregations, leadership authority is predominantly spiritual and moral rather than institutional. Leaders are often laypersons whose influence derives from their perceived godliness, consistency, and ability to model Christlike character. SLT is well-suited to this setting because it emphasizes spiritual maturity as the foundation of leadership effectiveness (Benefiel, 2005). Moreover, the theory's focus on altruistic love, a Christ-centered ethic that involves humility, forgiveness, and compassion, aligns with the Adventist philosophy of leadership as service (White, 1903).

Within this study, SLT supports the investigation of how spiritual experience fuels leadership behavior, specifically, sharing a God-given vision, fostering hope/faith in challenging circumstances, and modeling altruistic love. These behaviors are expected to influence congregational spirituality, operationalized here as meaningfulness, connection, and compassion within the faith community. By connecting personal spirituality with relational and organizational outcomes, SLT bridges the gap between individual faith and communal vitality. In summary, SLT provides a biblically and empirically grounded framework for understanding the spiritual dynamics of leadership in faith-based settings. Its emphasis on intrinsic motivation, character, and ethical influence makes it uniquely suited for this study's focus on the Botswana Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The next section introduces Servant Leadership Theory, which complements SLT by articulating the behavioral expressions through which spiritual leadership manifests in daily church life.

### **Servant Leadership**

While Spiritual Leadership Theory (SLT) provides the overarching framework for understanding how leaders' spirituality fosters intrinsic motivation and shapes

congregational spirituality, it does not fully detail the specific leadership behaviors through which this spiritual influence is exercised. To bridge this gap, this study incorporates Servant Leadership Theory (SLS) as a complementary model that articulates the behavioral dimension of spiritual leadership. Servant leadership, rooted in humility, service, and the ethical treatment of others, offers a tangible and observable framework for the actions and conduct of spiritually motivated leaders. In the context of this study, leadership behavior functions as a mediating variable between leaders' spiritual experience and congregational spirituality. Thus, exploring Servant Leadership Theory enhances the understanding of how spiritual values are embodied in daily leadership practice, particularly within the volunteer-based, faith-driven leadership structures of local Seventh-day Adventist churches. The following section examines the conceptual origins, core characteristics, and relevance of servant leadership within religious contexts, with a specific focus on its application to the Botswana Union Conference.

Servant Leadership Theory (SLT) is a formally established leadership theory that emphasizes the leader's role as a servant first prioritizing the growth, development, and well-being of followers before organizational goals. Although it originated from Robert K. Greenleaf's seminal essay *The Servant as Leader* (1977), servant leadership has since evolved from a philosophical idea into a structured, testable theory, supported by rigorous empirical research, theoretical models, and validated measurement tools (Eva et al., 2019; Liden et al., 2014).

Greenleaf (1977) introduced the idea that effective leadership begins with the moral motivation to serve others, asserting that the best leaders are those who serve first and lead second. This foundational premise reversed traditional leadership paradigms, which often emphasize hierarchy, authority, and control. While initially

expressed as a philosophy, Greenleaf's work laid the foundation for servant leadership to emerge as a theoretical framework with distinct constructs and predictive value. Subsequent scholars operationalized Greenleaf's ideas, advancing servant leadership from a conceptual orientation to a formal theory of leadership behavior. Spears (1995) identified ten characteristics of servant leaders, including empathy, listening, stewardship, and commitment to the growth of people. These traits served as early empirical anchors for scholarly inquiry and were further developed into models suitable for organizational research and testing.

Laub (1999) contributed significantly to the development of servant leadership as a theory by constructing the Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA), a measurement tool grounded in the servant leadership framework. Similarly, Liden et al. (2008, 2014) proposed a multidimensional model of servant leadership comprising measurable dimensions such as emotional healing, creating value for the community, helping subordinates grow and succeed, and behaving ethically. These models have undergone extensive validation in both corporate and nonprofit settings, confirming that servant leadership is more than a leadership "style", it is a distinct theoretical construct with explanatory and predictive power (Hunter et al., 2013; van Dierendonck, 2011).

Recent meta-analyses further confirm servant leadership's theoretical status. Eva et al. (2019), in a comprehensive review of over 285 empirical studies, conclude that servant leadership is "a mature and distinct leadership theory" with strong empirical support for its effects on organizational citizenship behavior, trust in leadership, follower performance, and spiritual well-being. They further differentiate servant leadership from related theories such as transformational, authentic, and

ethical leadership, noting that it offers unique explanatory insights, particularly in follower-centric and value-driven organizational contexts.

In religious and faith-based institutions, servant leadership theory has found especially fertile ground. Sendjaya and Sarros (2002) argue that servant leadership is rooted in moral and spiritual values, making it particularly applicable to organizations that emphasize community, mission, and holistic well-being. In church settings, servant leadership has been empirically linked to higher congregational engagement, trust in leadership, and spiritual formation (Parris & Peachey, 2013). These outcomes affirm servant leadership's construct validity and practical relevance within contexts, such as the Seventh-day Adventist Church, where leadership is inherently a form of spiritual service.

While critics have historically pointed to conceptual overlap with other theories (e.g., transformational or ethical leadership), advances in measurement and theory building have helped distinguish servant leadership as a unique theoretical model (Eva et al., 2019; Northouse, 2022). For instance, servant leadership places more explicit emphasis on moral responsibility, follower development, and community stewardship than other leadership theories (Liden et al., 2014). Moreover, unlike transformational leadership, which often begins with the leader's vision, servant leadership begins with attending to the needs of followers (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011).

In the context of this dissertation, servant leadership is not simply a set of personal values or ministry practices, but a robust behavioral theory that explains how leaders' spirituality manifests in tangible ways that affect congregational life. By incorporating servant leadership theory, this study investigates how leaders' spiritual experiences are translated into observable behaviors, such as altruism, empathy,

ethical conduct, and commitment to growth, that mediate the relationship between spirituality and congregational spirituality.

Servant leadership is a distinctive philosophy that positions service to others as the foundation of leadership practice. Unlike traditional leadership paradigms that often emphasize authority, control, and hierarchical power structures, servant leadership prioritizes the growth, development, and well-being of followers as the leader's primary concern (Greenleaf, 1977). First introduced by Robert K. Greenleaf in his seminal essay *The Servant as Leader*, the theory has gained significant traction in both secular and religious leadership literature. It is particularly relevant in faith-based contexts such as the Seventh-day Adventist Church, where the principles of humility, self-sacrifice, and service are deeply embedded in the theological and organizational fabric of the church.

In the context of this study, servant leadership serves as a critical behavioral link between a leader's personal spirituality and the spiritual vitality of the congregation. Leaders who embody servant leadership principles may be more likely to nurture an environment that fosters spiritual growth, unity, and moral integrity. This section provides an in-depth review of servant leadership theory, its conceptual development, its core characteristics, its spiritual foundations, and its relevance in religious leadership—particularly in the Botswana Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Churches.

The servant leadership model was born out of Greenleaf's (1977) dissatisfaction with the authoritarian leadership models prevalent in corporate and institutional settings. Influenced by Hermann Hesse's novel *Journey to the East*, Greenleaf conceptualized the servant leader as one whose desire to serve precedes the desire to lead. This foundational premise reversed traditional assumptions about

leadership origins and motivations. Greenleaf observed that genuine leadership arises not from a drive for power or personal gain, but from an intrinsic commitment to the growth and development of others.

Over time, Greenleaf's ideas evolved into a broader framework embraced across sectors such as business, education, nonprofit organizations, and religious institutions. Although initially popularized in organizational settings, the theory found deep resonance in ecclesiastical environments where leadership is often understood as a form of spiritual stewardship. Scholars such as Spears (1995), Laub (1999), and Patterson (2003) further elaborated and operationalized servant leadership, leading to the development of various models, assessment tools, and research applications.

### **Characteristics of Servant Leadership**

As stated earlier, Spears (1995), one of the most influential interpreters of Greenleaf's work, identified ten foundational characteristics that define servant leadership. These include:

1. Listening – Active listening is central to servant leadership, enabling leaders to understand the needs, concerns, and perspectives of their followers.
2. Empathy – Servant leaders seek to empathize with others, offering support and compassion rather than judgment.
3. Healing – A commitment to the emotional and spiritual healing of individuals and communities reflects the leader's role as a restorer.
4. Awareness – Leaders maintain a keen awareness of themselves, others, and the environment, which enhances moral and ethical decision-making.
5. Persuasion – Rather than using coercive power, servant leaders rely on influence and consensus-building to inspire action.

6. Conceptualization – This trait involves the ability to think beyond day-to-day realities and envision long-term goals and values.
7. Foresight – Informed by past experiences and present circumstances, servant leaders anticipate consequences and prepare accordingly.
8. Stewardship – Leaders serve as trustees of the organization, valuing accountability, responsibility, and the proper use of resources.
9. Commitment to the Growth of People – Servant leaders invest in the wholistic development of individuals under their care.
10. Building Community – Cultivating a sense of belonging and mutual support is vital in creating a healthy, spiritually vibrant community.

These traits are not isolated behaviors but represent an integrated leadership identity rooted in service and spirituality. In religious settings, these characteristics closely align with biblical teachings and values, making servant leadership particularly applicable in Christian leadership models.

Servant leadership resonates deeply with Christian theology, particularly the example set by Jesus Christ, who described himself as one who “came not to be served, but to serve” (Matthew 20:28, New International Version). The New Testament presents a vision of leadership centered on humility, sacrifice, love, and care for others—values that are echoed throughout servant leadership theory. Theological scholars argue that servant leadership is more than a management technique; it is a spiritual calling (Wilkes, 1998). For instance, Blanchard and Hodges (2005) describe Jesus as the ultimate servant leader whose model of leadership provides a blueprint for contemporary Christian leadership. In this model, the leader’s authority is grounded in moral influence and relational integrity rather than

institutional position. Leaders are expected to serve as spiritual shepherds, guiding others toward maturity, unity, and purpose in Christ.

Within the Seventh-day Adventist tradition, servant leadership finds expression in the model of Christ's ministry, the prophetic role of leaders, and the Adventist emphasis on mission and service. Ellen G. White (1898), a foundational figure in Adventist theology, emphasized that true greatness lies in humble service, a principle directly aligned with servant leadership. Her writings frequently stressed the importance of selflessness, love, and spiritual maturity in those called to lead God's people. The relationship between servant leadership and personal spirituality is symbiotic. On one hand, personal spirituality, understood as the leader's relationship with God, engagement in spiritual disciplines, and embodiment of Christian virtues—serves as the foundation for servant leadership behaviors. On the other hand, the practice of servant leadership can deepen a leader's spiritual growth by fostering humility, dependence on God, and intentional care for others (Patterson, 2003; Sendjaya, Sarros, & Santora, 2008).

Winston and Fields (2015) argue that servant leadership arises from a spiritual orientation that is "other-centered" and value-driven. Spiritual leaders are motivated not by ambition or recognition but by a desire to fulfill God's purposes through their leadership. This orientation translates into concrete behaviors such as mentoring, empowering, forgiving, and encouraging others, behaviors that create spiritually enriching environments. For church leaders in Botswana, a spiritually grounded approach to leadership that reflects servant values is likely to have a profound impact on congregational life. In cultures where leadership may be associated with status or hierarchy, servant leadership provides a counter-cultural model that uplifts humility, community, and shared responsibility.

One of the central assumptions of this study is that servant leadership mediates the relationship between a leader's spirituality and the spirituality of the congregation. Research supports the idea that servant leaders influence not only organizational outcomes but also the moral and spiritual development of followers (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Eva et al., 2019). Servant leadership fosters a culture of trust, mutual respect, and spiritual accountability, conditions that are essential for congregational spirituality. When leaders model Christlike service, congregants are more likely to internalize those values, leading to increased spiritual engagement, participation in ministry, and communal unity. Moreover, servant leaders are better positioned to address conflict, support pastoral care, and mentor emerging leaders within the church.

In the African context, studies have highlighted the relevance of servant leadership in enhancing ethical leadership, reducing abuse of power, and promoting inclusive decision-making (Van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015). In Botswana, where traditional leadership models may sometimes emphasize hierarchical authority, servant leadership provides a transformative alternative rooted in biblical principles and relational integrity. More recently, research by Eva et al. (2019) synthesized findings from over two decades of servant leadership research, concluding that servant leadership positively correlates with employee engagement, trust in leadership, organizational citizenship behaviors, and overall performance. While much of this research has focused on corporate or educational settings, similar patterns have been observed in church contexts.

In a study of African Pentecostal churches, Agbim (2018) found that servant leadership practices significantly enhanced congregational loyalty, leadership trust, and spiritual participation. These findings suggest that servant leadership has both

practical and spiritual benefits in church leadership, reinforcing its relevance to this study. This study investigates the influence of leaders' spirituality on congregational spirituality, mediated through leadership behavior. Servant leadership offers a powerful explanatory model for how spiritually grounded leaders can impact their congregations. By embodying values such as humility, empathy, and service, church leaders enact their personal spirituality in ways that are observable, relational, and transformative.

In the context of the Botswana Union Conference, servant leadership provides a culturally and theologically appropriate model for church leadership. It aligns with biblical teachings, responds to contextual leadership challenges, and supports the spiritual growth of congregants. Understanding the role of servant leadership in this setting offers new insights into how spiritual leadership can be practiced and measured in faith-based African communities. Servant leadership is a deeply spiritual and relational approach to leadership that prioritizes the growth, well-being, and spiritual maturity of others. Rooted in Christian theology and supported by empirical research, servant leadership serves as a vital bridge between leaders' personal spirituality and their observable influence on congregational life. As such, it forms a central component of the theoretical framework for this study, offering both explanatory depth and practical relevance.

However, despite its strengths, Servant Leadership Theory is not without criticism, and it is important to acknowledge its conceptual and empirical limitations. One major concern is its lack of definitional precision and theoretical clarity. Scholars have noted that the broad and overlapping nature of servant leadership often blurs its distinction from other leadership paradigms, particularly transformational and authentic leadership (Eva et al., 2019; Northouse, 2022). This overlap can result in

confusion regarding the uniqueness of the construct and complicates efforts to isolate its specific outcomes. Furthermore, measurement inconsistency is a documented challenge. Although validated instruments exist (e.g., Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Liden et al., 2008), there is little consensus on a standard scale, leading to variation in how servant leadership is operationalized across studies. This inconsistency hampers the comparability of findings and limits the accumulation of generalizable evidence (Eva et al., 2019).

Another noted limitation is its cultural applicability. Servant leadership is predominantly rooted in Western ethical traditions and may not translate seamlessly across all cultural settings. In high power-distance or collectivist cultures, the emphasis on humility, shared authority, and self-sacrifice may contrast with prevailing leadership expectations (Hale & Fields, 2007; Trompenaars & Voerman, 2009). Given the African context of this study, particularly within the Botswana Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, this issue is pertinent. However, spiritual leadership in African church communities often carries communal and moral expectations aligned with servant ideals, suggesting that SLT may still be contextually relevant when adapted to local cultural and theological frameworks.

Despite these critiques, Servant Leadership Theory remains a viable and contextually appropriate lens for this study. Its emphasis on leader-follower relationships, moral behavior, and spiritual development provides a robust platform for investigating how leadership behavior mediates the relationship between spiritual experience and congregational spirituality. Importantly, the theory's alignment with scriptural values and its demonstrated impact on organizational spirituality (Sendjaya, 2015) reinforce its practical and theological relevance for understanding leadership dynamics in faith-based settings.

The evolution of servant leadership from a moral philosophy to a mature leadership theory is well-documented in scholarly literature. Through the development of validated constructs, theoretical models, and empirical support across disciplines and cultural contexts, servant leadership has earned its status as a distinct and rigorously tested leadership theory. Its grounding in service, humility, and spiritual integrity makes it particularly suited for faith-based contexts, such as local Seventh-day Adventist churches in the Botswana Union Conference, where leadership is both a spiritual and organizational function. As such, servant leadership provides a critical theoretical bridge in this study, connecting leaders' spirituality to their behavior and ultimately to the spiritual vitality of the congregation. In sum, while acknowledging its theoretical and methodological limitations, this study draws on Servant Leadership Theory as a spiritually congruent and ethically grounded model that supports the empirical examination of spiritual influence within religious leadership structures.

### **Spiritual Experience**

Measuring spirituality or spiritual experience may be considered a challenge in scholarship. Brubaker (2016) suggests that while individual spirituality may be immune to measurement, it can be sensed and intuited. A person may sometimes be described as a "deeply spiritual" person, suggesting that we intuit something about the person that we cannot fully explain but are still aware of (Brubaker, 2016, p. 2). This suggests that a person can sense and intuit their spirituality. This study proposes the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale concept as a spirituality measuring scale in place of inner life as a source of intrinsic motivation.

Underwood (2006) constructed the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES) as a scale that allows for an "overlapping circles" concept of religiousness/spirituality.

This scale is informed by the realization that individuals engage in religious activity without a spiritual sense. This reality is observed in various contexts, such as a person who attends church to appease God and recites the creeds aloud to grow their business. Underwood (2011) also correctly observes that spirituality is usually hinged on various factors like some religious faith, a wording, and/or activities that can be both spiritual and religious, while other spirituality is not in any way related to any religious belief, activity, or concepts spiritual but not religious historically or presently. The benefits of spirituality cannot be understated. Ross et al. (2018) argue that spiritual health entails a sense of connectedness and harmony between oneself, others, and nature. A dynamic and cohesive growth process is essential to recognize life's ultimate goal and meaning.

Scorgie et al. (2022) define spiritual experience as a perception of an encounter with someone or something that may or may not exclusively be transcendent. The center of the self is understood as the place of this encounter. Further, these experiences of perceived encounters are usually informed by the assumptions from doctrine or worldview that the individuals bring to these experiences (Scorgie et al., 2022). Luhrmann (2012) rightly observes that the transcendent, in the Christian faith tradition, is not only perceived but also believed to be personal and inherent. Many Christians anticipate spiritual experiences to rise to a level where one immediately apprehends the direct divine presence (Scorgie et al., 2022). Theistic presuppositions of a transcendent and immanent God inform this.

According to McGinn (1995), this classical worldview in Christian suggests or implies that the spiritual experience of direct and immediate apprehension of divine presence is desirable and possible. Further, such spiritual experiences remain a contextually nuanced phenomenon. The social, physical, and psychological settings in

which spirituality occurs are evidenced in the forms of human spirituality displayed. (McGinn, 1995; Luhrmann, 2012; Scorgie et al., 2022). This suggests that spiritual experiences are subjective and confined to the individual context.

At an individual level, finding meaning in life, which leads to a deeper understanding of life's purpose, positive life experiences, a sense of happiness, and life satisfaction (Ahmadi et al., 2021; Daghan, 2018), are encompassed in daily spiritual experiences. Estebarsari et al. (2024) state that daily spiritual experiences have factors that influence them, including one's relationship with God, such as worship, communion, intimacy, and friendship with God. Other factors include a sense of personal attention from God and positive feelings of connection with God. Soltani et al. (2017) argue that spiritual experiences enable an individual to cope with stressful life conditions and chronic diseases by providing meaning, a sense of belonging, and hope in a higher power. In addition, spiritual experiences play a significant role in health, positive psychological outcomes, and spiritual wellbeing (Rudaz et al., 2019). Following the unpacking of the definition of spirituality in the context of this study, a definition of religiosity/religiousness is essential. Underwood (2011) approaches religiousness as "a person's relationship to a group of people who believe in a like-minded way, adhere to a common set of beliefs, and share group affiliation and practices." On the one hand, spirituality is the connection to a triune God. Religiosity, however, is congruent with the above view, a connection or affiliation to a group sharing similar beliefs and practices.

Spirituality and religion in the leadership scholarship are essential, though not immune to negative connotations. Spirituality has been associated with the New Age movement (Underwood, 2006) and harmful practices in African religion (Okyere, 2014), while religion has been used to define science (Underwood, 2011) and football

in Europe (Ludwig, 2015). Religiously-based spirituality has been observed to play a key role in the lives of many leaders and in their leadership (Allen & Williams 2015, 2017; Benefiel, 2008; Fairholm, 1996; Pruzan, 2008). This study will avoid the pitfalls of religiosity and highlight the positive impact of religiosity in society.

### **Concept of Spirituality vs. Religiosity**

Distinguishing between religion and spirituality is complex, yet spirituality and religion are likely to serve as critical experiences in the lives of humans and leaders in particular. For example, in social science concerning social work, Janes et al. (2023) observe that when clients are faced with stressors, they will often first seek help from and rely on their religion or spirituality as a resource. These two aspects of life are essential for the health of many.

The question is, how do these concepts relate, and how can they be defined? According to Singh and Bhagwan (2020), religion and spirituality are constructs that are multifaceted and overlap, and they further observed that a definition of spirituality that is precise and hard to grasp. Hodge (2015) also asserts that although spirituality and religion are two distinct terms, they however overlap. The overlap especially concerns feelings, thoughts, experiences, and behaviors influenced by the desire to find the sacred (Hill et al., 2000). It is, therefore, a complex exercise trying to separate the concepts because, as observed, they do closely relate.

Definitions of concepts and perceptions of the same are affected by societal changes from traditional views to modernized views. For example, a definition of religion by Praglin (2004) is similar to the traditional view that takes into account shared values from cultural systems, important beliefs, and rituals that are spiritually influenced. Gardner (2016), however, adds to this traditional view the religious and spiritual practices that are pursued in this process. Further, it highlights that this is

particularly true for individuals who follow a specific traditional faith as well as those who form spiritual understanding by connecting with religious beliefs (Singh & Bhagwan, 2020). This idea introduces the individual perceptions and interpretations of religion and spirituality.

Religion and spirituality are viewed differently in various parts of the world although they serve as essential factors of society. For example, a figure as high as 89% of people in the United States of America (USA) believe in a God or a Universal Spirit, while 53% believe that most of today's problems can be answered through religion (Gallup, 2019). On the other hand, the traditional religions in Africa, or the African traditional belief systems and practices, comprise some diverse beliefs, including different ethnic religions. At times, the nature of transmission of these traditions is oral rather than scriptural, characterized by belief in gods that are either higher or lower, and sometimes including “a supreme creator, belief in spirits, veneration of the dead, use of magic, and traditional African medicine (Henama & Apleni, 2021. p. 290).” Thus, defining religion and spirituality is a complex task and subjective exercise.

Given the varied ways of perceiving religion and spirituality, is it possible to find a common understanding of spirituality? Krishnakumar et al. (2014) argue that the pace at which spirituality research is moving to the mainstream in research may be attributed to the failure to agree on the definition of spirituality. For example, in the UK, where spirituality used to be seen as mutual religious and cultural norms, an experience shared by all has changed and developed into a religious faith that is individualistic, thereby replacing the traditional shared experience view (Gillespie, 2021). This development may be considered valid in other parts of the world, including Africa.

The arguments presented above suggest that spirituality and the spirituality component have now gone beyond the recognized formal religion as it is traditionally known. According to Gillespie (2021), spirituality is one of the elements of religion traditionally, and it, therefore, is bound to be defined and explained theoretically from religious contexts. However, it has become as individualized and unique as those who reflect upon it. Further assets that this is due to societal changes since the mid-twentieth century. The definition of spirituality and the interpretation of what it means to be spiritual is not subjective and debatable.

Given that the definition of spirituality is now open for debate, it is crucial to consider other definitions already submitted towards a definition related to this study. Miller et al. (2004) define spirituality as a concept which incorporates beliefs of an individual as well as a search for connections with people in all areas of life without necessarily being attached to religion. Underwood (2006) has also observed that the meaning and use of the words spirituality and religiosity have changed over time; an example cited is the everyday use of the phrase, “I am spiritual but not religious,” which has become familiar. Scientific research has supported this observation frequently encouraging the dichotomization of these constructs (Fry, 2003). The personal aspect of spirituality continues to be a general notion in research.

Spirituality is presented as a fundamental human need. Fry (2003) argues that the spiritual needs of individuals need to be satisfied even in their work to be able to handle the demands of work. Fry (2003) asserts that spirituality is about “the presence of a relationship with a higher power or being that affects how one operates in the world.” It is incontrovertible that spirituality cannot be limited to formal, organized religion; it also goes beyond religious doctrines, dogmas, and tenets (Zellers &

Perrewe, 2003). Therefore, if spirituality is a fundamental need and as broad as stated, it must be understood for purposes of practice.

Early research defined spirituality as a connection with a higher power, yet cautious to make a conclusive statement. For example, Zinnbauer, Pargament, and Scott (1999) state that "spirituality (e.g., prayer, yoga, meditation) is the source for one's search for spiritual survival—for meaning in life and a sense of interconnectedness with other beings." Kyle (2020) states that the spiritual quest is a dynamic process involving individuals seeking to discover their ultimate potential and purpose and a personal relationship with a higher power or being that may or may not be called God. Credit is given to Fry (2003), who explicitly accommodates a nondual God in the spiritual leadership model, which is also open for debate, as stated above. For this study, we propose a definition of spirituality as a connection with a triune God as the higher power.

### **Congregational Spirituality**

Having established spiritual experience as the foundational source of intrinsic motivation in spiritual leadership, particularly within a theistic framework, the discussion now turns to its potential impact on the collective spiritual life of the congregation. In the context of this study, spiritual experience is not only an internal, individual phenomenon but also a relational and communal force that shapes how leaders engage with others, embody spiritual values, and influence the broader faith community. Leaders who consistently experience God through prayer, worship, and service are more likely to foster environments characterized by spiritual vitality, relational depth, and moral coherence. Therefore, to fully understand the relational and organizational outcomes of leaders' spirituality, it is essential to explore the concept of congregational spirituality. This next section examines how the spiritual

experiences of leaders may contribute to meaningfulness, connection, and compassion within local Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Botswana Union Conference.

The concept of congregational spirituality is increasingly gaining attention as scholars begin to bridge the long-standing gap between organizational theory and the spirituality of religious communities. According to Brubaker (2016), much of the understanding of congregational life has emerged from social sciences over the last 50 years, while less attention has been given to the spirituality of congregations and their leaders. This under-exploration is particularly significant in the context of faith-based organizations, such as churches, where the spiritual dimension is integral to the organization's identity and mission. As churches are not only religious but also social and organizational entities, the spirituality of a congregation can be meaningfully understood through the broader framework of organizational spirituality (Crossman, 2016; Karakas, 2017; Poole, 2009).

Organizational spirituality has attracted scholarly interest due to its association with both organizational performance and societal well-being. Scholars have recognized its value for promoting employee well-being, enhancing organizational climate, and contributing to the common good (Lips-Wiersma et al., 2009; Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). In religious organizations such as churches, these benefits extend to both leaders and congregants. Exploring spirituality within this framework, therefore, offers valuable insights into how spiritual values and practices shape the culture and vitality of congregations (Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2006; Karakas, 2010).

Van Der Walt and De Klerk (2014) emphasize that spiritual leadership plays a pivotal role in nurturing organizational spirituality. Leaders shape spiritual connectivity, foster a sense of responsibility, and facilitate reflective practices within the organization. These elements are not only essential to corporate spirituality but

also directly affect congregational spirituality in churches. According to Karakas and Sarigollu (2017), connectivity, responsibility, and reflexivity are foundational to sustaining spiritual dynamics within an organization, particularly one grounded in a spiritual mission like the church.

Pawar (2017) affirms that leadership behaviors often stem from a leader's inner spirituality and manifest in observable acts such as authenticity, openness, service, forgiveness, and values-based decision-making. These behaviors are deeply congruent with servant and spiritual leadership models, especially within ecclesiastical settings (Lean & Ganster, 2017). Leaders influence organizational culture, and in faith-based organizations, their personal spirituality can significantly affect the spiritual climate of the congregation (Benefiel, 2007; Ahangaran et al., 2016; Geh, 2014). This view is critical to the present study, which investigates the influence of leaders' spirituality on congregational spirituality through leadership behavior.

Congregational spirituality refers to the shared spiritual practices, values, and climate experienced by members within a church body. It is closely related to the concept of organizational spirituality but tailored to religious contexts. Theologically, congregational spirituality is often expressed through corporate worship, shared values, communal prayer, and spiritual disciplines (Brubaker, 2016). Sociologically, it is seen in the collective identity, practices, and relational dynamics that characterize the congregation.

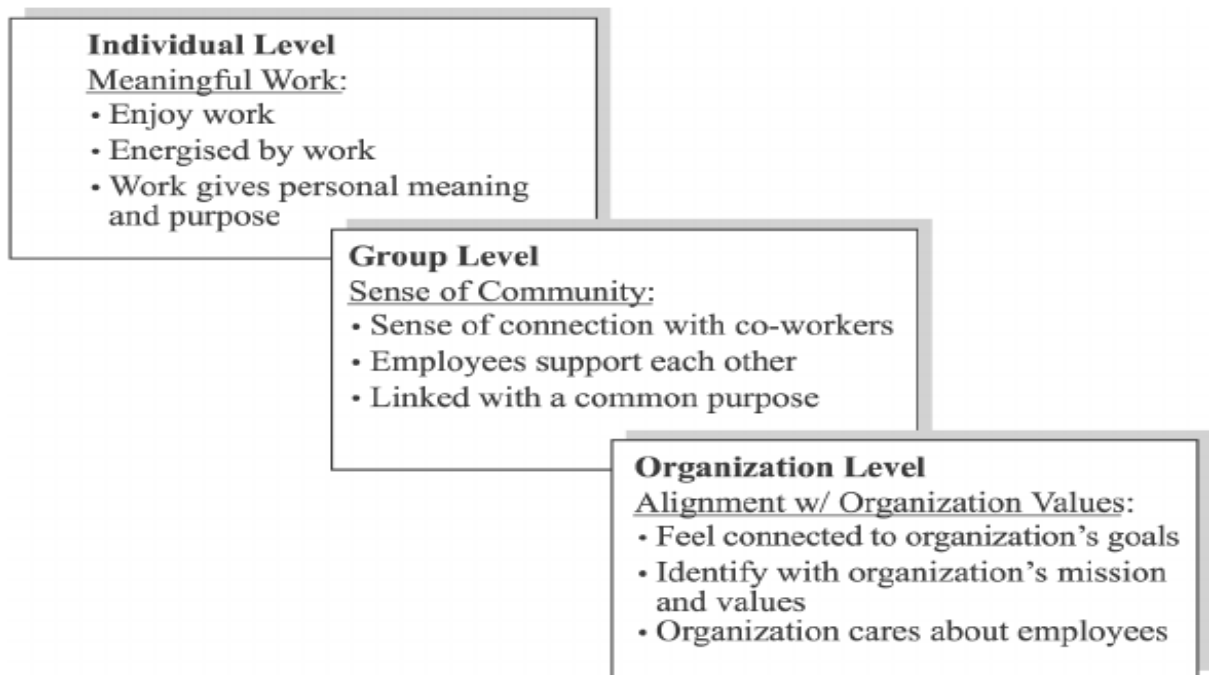
Pawar (2017) defines organizational spirituality as the embodiment of spiritual values and practices within an organization. Similarly, Kinjerski and Skrypnek (2006) conceptualize it as a spiritually grounded culture marked by a values-based mission, responsible leadership, and recognition of individual contributions. In church settings,

these attributes translate into congregational practices that promote spiritual formation, mutual care, and mission-oriented service. The operationalization of congregational spirituality thus draws heavily from organizational spirituality literature to provide a structured lens for analysis.

To address the lack of conceptual clarity around organizational spirituality, scholars like Karakas (2010) and Pawar (2014) advocate for clearly defining its dimensions. Ashmos and Duchon (2000) propose seven dimensions of organizational spirituality, but Milliman et al. (2003) selected three practical dimensions for empirical research: meaningful work (individual level), sense of community (group level), and alignment with organizational values (organizational level). These dimensions are particularly relevant to church contexts, where both individual and collective spiritual experiences converge. The figure below gives a picture of the Conceptualization of spirituality in the work environment in three levels: individual (meaningfulness), group (connectedness), and organizational (compassion)

**Figure 3**

*Conceptualization of Spirituality in the Work Environment in Three Levels*



Source: Milliman (2003)

### **Meaningfulness – Individual Spirituality in the Congregation**

Personal and congregational vitality stems from individual and corporate spirituality (Brubaker, 2016). In the congregational context, individual spirituality serves as the foundation upon which collective spiritual expression is built. Individual spirituality involves a person's deeply held values, their pursuit of meaning and purpose, and their experience of transcendence, which collectively shape their internal transformation and behavioral patterns (Geh, 2014; Lean & Ganster, 2017). These internal dynamics not only define a person's spirituality but also contribute to the broader spiritual environment in which they operate, particularly within the church community.

In organizational settings, and by extension in congregational life, individual spirituality is the primary driver of organizational spirituality (Kökalan, 2019; Rego et al., 2008). Within the church, this principle is especially significant, as the spirituality of leaders often sets the tone for the congregation's overall spiritual climate.

Ahangaran et al. (2016) and Pawar (2017) argue that leaders' spirituality exerts a significant influence on organizational spiritual well-being. Leaders who embody spiritual principles in their personal and ministerial lives model spiritual vitality, which becomes contagious to the members they serve. This dynamic mirrors the theological and ecclesial concept of pastoral influence, where the spiritual authenticity of church leaders deeply affects the congregation's spiritual depth (Brubaker, 2016).

Spirituality at the individual level within congregations can also be seen through the lens of meaningful work. Rocha (2021) describes meaningful work as an essential expression of workplace spirituality, where individuals perceive purpose and value in what they do. In congregations, this translates into active participation in ministry, evangelism, community service, worship, and other forms of spiritual engagement. Through these activities, congregants find alignment between their inner spiritual convictions and their external religious expressions. Crossman (2016) and Heaton et al. (2004) assert that individuals are motivated when their work or service—is aligned with personal values and adds meaning to their lives. This concept is especially relevant in churches, where believers often perceive their service as a divine calling rather than a routine task. For Seventh-day Adventist congregants, meaningfulness is often anchored in the church's mission to prepare people for the Second Coming of Christ, making every activity, whether teaching, hospitality, preaching, or community outreach, an avenue for spiritual fulfillment and purpose.

In addition, the desire for meaningfulness is rooted in intrinsic motivations. According to Duchon and Plowman (2005), spiritually inclined individuals seek work environments—and by extension, congregations—that allow them to express integrity, compassion, and a sense of purpose. These individuals thrive where their values resonate with the community's ethos. Milliman et al. (2003) explain that meaningful work contributes not only to personal satisfaction but also to organizational health, as members who feel spiritually connected to their duties are more engaged, committed, and cooperative. Moreover, individual spirituality contributes to congregational spirituality by fostering a sense of calling and inner fulfillment. Wrzesniewski et al. (1997) distinguish between jobs, careers, and callings, arguing that when people perceive their roles as callings, they experience deeper satisfaction and connection. In a congregational context, this sense of calling leads members to view their involvement in church life as a sacred obligation rather than a mere duty. This perception deepens their commitment and amplifies their contributions to the overall spiritual vitality of the congregation.

As organizational members seek to fulfill spiritual needs through communal worship and service, their actions reinforce the organization's spiritual identity. Karakas and Sarigollu (2017) suggest that individual spirituality, when aligned with organizational goals, enhances collective meaning-making and resilience. In churches, when congregants experience this alignment between personal faith and church mission, it results in greater cohesion, purpose, and sustained spiritual growth. Additionally, spirituality fosters ethical behavior and emotional well-being. Benefiel (2007) emphasizes that spiritual individuals tend to exhibit high levels of integrity, compassion, and servant-heartedness, which positively impact organizational culture. These traits are foundational in churches where spiritual leaders are expected to model

Christ-like behavior, thereby reinforcing meaningful spiritual experiences for the congregation. Similarly, Reave (2005) found that leaders who demonstrated spiritual values such as humility, empathy, and service were more effective in nurturing trust and meaning among their followers.

In the Seventh-day Adventist context, spiritual vitality at the individual level also includes practices such as personal devotion, Sabbath observance, Bible study, and prayer. These spiritual disciplines not only sustain the believer's faith but also contribute to a culture of spiritual growth within the congregation. According to Brubaker (2016), such practices nurture the individual while simultaneously enhancing the collective spirituality of the church. To summarize, individual spirituality in congregational settings is both personal and communal in its impact. It drives meaningful participation, motivates service aligned with spiritual values, and fosters a sense of calling. Leaders, as spiritual exemplars, play a crucial role in cultivating meaningful experiences for members, thereby contributing significantly to congregational spirituality. This dynamic supports the premise of your dissertation that the spirituality of church leaders—through their behaviors and influence—affects the broader spiritual vitality of the congregation.

### **Connectedness – Group-Level Spirituality**

At the group level, spirituality finds expression through communal relationships, shared beliefs, and collective practices that bind members together in a spiritually cohesive community (Pavlovich & Corner, 2009). In the congregational context, connectedness is not merely a social construct but a spiritual imperative. Congregational spirituality thrives when members experience a profound sense of belonging—not only to one another but also to a shared vision of faith, divine purpose, and communal spiritual goals (Malik & Naeem, 2011). This sense of

spiritual community is sustained through shared rituals, worship services, prayer meetings, small group fellowships, and collaborative ministry activities.

According to Milliman et al. (2003), group-level spirituality is significantly enhanced when individuals feel part of a supportive and values-driven community. This community-oriented spirituality provides emotional and spiritual safety where members can express themselves, find encouragement, and grow spiritually. It is in such spaces that theological and experiential knowledge is exchanged, deepening collective faith and unity. Rocha (2021) adds that group spirituality is enriched through emotional and spiritual communication—acts of mutual sharing, listening, praying, and testifying—that enhance connectedness and spiritual vitality.

In congregational life, connectedness creates a spiritual environment where personal and collective transformation is possible. Brubaker (2016) emphasizes that spiritual disciplines such as communal prayer, silence, fasting, reading of Scripture, and singing play a vital role in nurturing the spiritual identity of a church. These disciplines, when practiced collectively, foster spiritual intimacy among members and reinforce a shared sense of purpose. This shared spirituality leads to a spiritual synergy that benefits the entire congregation, as the presence and activity of God are discerned and celebrated together.

Research by Kinjerski and Skrypnik (2006) on workplace spirituality confirms that experiences of connectedness at the group level are strongly associated with spiritual well-being and enhanced commitment. Translated into a congregational setting, this suggests that when members feel relationally and spiritually connected to others, they are more likely to be actively involved, spiritually energized, and emotionally engaged in the life of the church. This supports your study's premise that leaders who cultivate connectedness through spiritual behaviors, such as fostering

inclusive worship, facilitating small group fellowship, and encouraging prayer partnerships, play a critical role in shaping the congregation's spiritual climate.

Theologically, this connectedness aligns with biblical metaphors such as the “body of Christ,” which highlight interdependence and unity within the church. As Paul emphasizes in 1 Corinthians 12:12–27, the church is one body with many members, and spiritual vitality flows when each part is connected and contributing. Leaders serve as facilitators of this spiritual connectedness, ensuring that each member is valued, equipped, and engaged in the spiritual life of the community. Furthermore, spiritually connected congregations develop a shared spiritual language—a set of symbols, values, stories, and rituals that provide meaning and continuity. According to Fry (2003), such spiritual coherence contributes to a sense of spiritual wholeness and authenticity. In the Seventh-day Adventist context, this includes shared beliefs in the Second Coming, Sabbath observance, health principles, and prophetic heritage. When these shared beliefs are celebrated communally, they form a unique spiritual culture that both grounds and energizes the congregation.

Connectedness is also critical for spiritual resilience. Pargament (2007) notes that spiritual communities provide essential support in times of crisis, helping members cope with life's challenges through prayer, encouragement, and practical care. This resilience is often facilitated by spiritually attuned leaders who model and nurture trust, empathy, and relational authenticity. Such leaders are instrumental in creating a climate where members feel spiritually safe and relationally supported, contributing to sustained congregational spirituality. Moreover, the influence of leaders in fostering connectedness is not limited to facilitating activities, it extends to modeling relational spirituality. Reave (2005) found that leaders who exhibit spiritual characteristics such as empathy, humility, and authenticity enhance relational

harmony and spiritual engagement in their communities. In congregational settings, leaders who embody these traits are more likely to cultivate a spiritually cohesive and vibrant church culture.

Spiritual connectedness also influences collective meaning-making within the church. Karakas (2010) argues that when individuals work together toward a transcendent purpose, their collective experience becomes a source of spiritual nourishment. In congregations, this is often seen when members rally around outreach missions, community service, evangelism, or other ministry goals that transcend individual interests and reflect a shared calling.

In sum, group-level spirituality, manifested through connectedness, is a central pillar of congregational vitality. It is fostered through shared spiritual practices, relational warmth, common beliefs, and communal experiences that bind the congregation into a spiritually unified body. Leaders who are spiritually grounded have the capacity to nurture this connectedness by promoting inclusive participation, modeling authentic relationships, and creating spaces where members can experience divine presence in community. This reinforces the theoretical foundation of your dissertation—that congregational spirituality is significantly influenced by the spiritual experience and behavior of church leaders.

### **Compassion – Alignment with Organizational Values**

The third level is organizational and relates to value alignment. Spirituality at this level occurs when individual and group values resonate with the mission and culture of the organization (Azad Marzabadi, 2012; Rocha, 2021). In churches, this means that members identify with the church's spiritual vision, doctrinal beliefs, and ministry goals. When this alignment is achieved, congregational spirituality becomes a powerful force for transformation, mission, and communal well-being.

Honiball et al. (2014) and K kalan (2019) argue that value alignment reduces cynicism and enhances job satisfaction. In congregations, alignment fosters trust, loyalty, and engagement. Kamoche and Pinnington (2012) and Khari & Sinha (2018) emphasize that spirituality must be integrated into the organization's discourse and daily practices. This integration is particularly crucial in religious organizations, where misalignment between professed values and actual practices can damage spiritual credibility. Crossman (2016) and Karakas et al. (2017) assert that true organizational spirituality requires consistent alignment between members' values and the organization's spiritual mission. When this is achieved, congregational spirituality can be sustained and matured. Conversely, misalignment leads to disillusionment, disengagement, and a breakdown of spiritual community (Kolodinsky et al., 2008; Weitz et al., 2012).

External factors such as organizational culture, knowledge sharing, and environmental influences also affect organizational and congregational spirituality (Khari & Sinha, 2018; Lennerfors, 2015). Knowledge sharing, in particular, fosters a culture of trust and spiritual growth. Churches that cultivate open dialogue, mentorship, and shared learning create environments where spiritual development is encouraged (Konz & Quatro, 2004). Rocha (2021) emphasizes the enduring nature of spirituality as a connecting force across individuals, communities, and generations. This long-lasting impact is critical in the church context, where congregational spirituality should not only benefit current members but also shape future spiritual generations. The church, as a spiritual organization, must therefore be intentional in nurturing a spirituality that is inclusive, purpose-driven, and aligned with its mission (Khari & Sinha, 1999; Pawar, 2017).

In conclusion, congregational spirituality, as conceptualized through the lens of organizational spirituality, offers a robust framework for understanding the spiritual life of a church community. Grounded in the dimensions of individual meaningfulness, group connectedness, and organizational compassion, this framework aligns well with the Seventh-day Adventist Church's mission to foster wholistic spiritual development. As highlighted in the literature, leaders' spirituality significantly shapes the spiritual climate of the congregation, underscoring the importance of spiritually mature leadership in promoting congregational vitality. This foundational insight affirms the relevance of the present study, which explores the influence of leaders' spirituality on congregational spirituality through leadership behavior in the Botswana Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

### **Biblical and Theological Perspectives**

A robust understanding of spiritual leadership within the context of congregational life must be grounded in a biblical and theological worldview. For Seventh-day Adventist congregations, as with many Christian communities, Scripture serves as the ultimate authority on matters of faith, leadership, and community life. Therefore, exploring the biblical and theological foundations of spirituality, leadership, and congregational dynamics provides essential grounding for this study. This section introduces key biblical and theological principles that inform the conceptual framework of this research, focusing on the nature of spiritual leadership, the call to servant leadership, and the corporate spiritual formation of the body of Christ.

The Bible offers rich insight into the spiritual and moral responsibilities of leaders within God's people. Leadership in Scripture is inherently spiritual, characterized not by positional power but by humility, service, and deep communion

with God. Throughout the Old and New Testaments, spiritual leaders are portrayed as individuals called by God, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and entrusted with the sacred task of guiding others into covenant faithfulness and communal holiness (Exodus 18:21; Numbers 27:16-17; Acts 6:3; Ephesians 4:11-13).

One of the most prominent biblical models of leadership is that of servant leadership, embodied in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. In Matthew 20:26-28, Jesus taught His disciples that “whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant.” He further exemplified this principle in John 13:1-17 when He washed the disciples’ feet, illustrating that true leadership is grounded in humility, love, and self-sacrifice. These teachings provide a foundational ethic for spiritual leadership in the church, emphasizing that spiritual authority is exercised through service and relationship rather than domination or control. In the Old Testament, figures such as Moses, David, and the prophets modeled spiritual leadership as dependence on divine guidance, moral integrity, and intercession for the people. Moses, for instance, regularly sought God’s direction (Exodus 33:11), while David was described as a man after God’s own heart (1 Samuel 13:14), exemplifying spiritual alignment with divine purpose. The prophets, meanwhile, spoke truth to power and called the community back to covenant faithfulness, underscoring the leader’s role in shaping corporate spirituality.

The New Testament reinforces this spiritual orientation through its ecclesiology. The apostle Paul describes the church as the “body of Christ” (1 Corinthians 12:12–27), where every member has a role and function, but leaders are especially tasked with equipping the saints for ministry and building up the body (Ephesians 4:11–16). Paul’s pastoral letters to Timothy and Titus also emphasize the character requirements for spiritual leaders, such as being “above reproach, temperate,

self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach” (1 Timothy 3:2), highlighting that effective leadership is inseparable from personal spiritual maturity. In the context of this study, biblical texts affirm that congregational spirituality is significantly shaped by the spirituality of its leaders. Leaders who cultivate their inner life and model Christlike character foster an environment in which congregational members are spiritually nurtured and encouraged to grow in their relationship with God and one another.

The theology of the priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:9) also informs this study by emphasizing that while leaders play a crucial role in shaping the spiritual life of the congregation, every believer is called to spiritual growth and ministry. However, leaders serve a catalytic role in facilitating this process through spiritual modeling, teaching, and mentoring. This underscores the importance of spiritually mature leadership that inspires and enables congregational spirituality.

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is also central to understanding spiritual leadership. It is the Spirit who gifts, empowers, and guides leaders in their ministry (Acts 1:8; Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11). A Spirit-led leader discerns God’s will, shepherds the flock with compassion, and nurtures the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) within the community. Such leaders do not rely solely on human wisdom or administrative skill, but on divine direction and empowerment, making their leadership a theological act rooted in ongoing spiritual experience.

Seventh-day Adventist theology, in particular, emphasizes wholistic spirituality, integrating beliefs, lifestyle, and mission. The Adventist understanding of remnant identity, Sabbath rest, and healthful living contributes to a distinct congregational spirituality (Baker, 2020). Leaders within this tradition are called not only to doctrinal fidelity but to model an integrated life that embodies the Adventist

message. Their spirituality, therefore, is not private or peripheral; it is central to the life of the church and has a direct impact on how congregants understand and live out their faith. Additionally, the theological concept of spiritual formation, the process of being conformed into the image of Christ for the sake of others (Willard, 2002), is particularly relevant. Congregational spiritual formation occurs through intentional practices, teaching, and communal experiences. The role of the leader in guiding this process is theological as much as practical, requiring spiritual sensitivity, biblical literacy, and relational integrity.

In sum, a biblical and theological framework establishes the foundational premise of this study: that spiritual leadership is a divine calling characterized by servant-heartedness, Spirit-empowerment, and moral integrity, and that such leadership is instrumental in shaping the spiritual life of the congregation. Understanding this interrelationship is vital for evaluating how the spirituality of leaders within Seventh-day Adventist churches in Botswana influences the congregational spiritual experience, health, and vitality.

## **Old Testament**

As already stated, the Bible is considered the sacred book for Christians, and it gives instructions for all situations, including leadership. Leadership principles are woven throughout this book, and scholars continue searching for and discovering new leadership perspectives. The Old Testament is the Bible's first section, containing varied narratives of exemplary leadership. Our research primarily addresses spirituality in leadership within a religious context. Having identified spirituality as an individual's connectedness, and in this context, connection with the triune Divine God, we will give narration and discuss characters that project this principle.

Joseph, the dreamer (Genesis 37:19), knew at a young age that he would be a leader. Joseph shared this revelation with his brothers and parents, who were intimidated by the thought (Gen 37:5-11). Critical stakeholders in his leadership were his family (Gen 37:11), Potiphar's household (Gen 39:5), the prison (Gen 39:23), and the country of Egypt (Gen 41:41). Joseph defined what was to happen and further reflected high ideals. When the whole nation was to perish, his visionary leadership was valuable (Gen 41:39, 40). The rescue plan for the oncoming season won Pharaoh's confidence because of the standard of excellence in the plan (Gen 41:37). In spiritual leadership, these qualities are identified as vision, and that defined Joseph's leadership.

Spiritual leadership encompasses the concept of altruistic love, a quality seen in Joseph's life. After being sold, first to the merchants (Gen 37:28), then to Potiphar (Gen 37:36), one would have good reason to be bitter and revengeful. Joseph showed a different character; he forgave his brothers after a series of tests (Gen 45:1-7) and showed them kindness, compassion, and empathy. Joseph was separated from his family and isolated for a purpose, a journey that most leaders have to travel (Gen 45:8). It was also for him being set apart to exercise faith and hope in God (Gen 39:2), a necessary step for leadership.

In a secular society, far from home, in a strange land where nobody knew him, he maintained his integrity because he would not disappoint his God. He was faithful, honest, and meticulous, and God blessed everything he touched (Gen 39:3-6). Even when, though loyal to his master, Joseph was wrongly accused and imprisoned (Gen 39:8-20), he stayed patient and maintained humility of character. Because of his faithfulness, Joseph was trusted with the keys to the jail (Gen 39:20-23), and God made him prosper because of their intimate relationship.

Joseph also exercised hope/faith and stood as an example of this aspect of spiritual leadership. Without endurance and perseverance, Joseph would not have been elevated to the highest position in a foreign land (Gen 41:15-39, 43-44). He had a close relationship with God, and God used him to accomplish mighty things (Gen 41:55-57). He also played his part in doing what was necessary to get work done. Considering his journey and experience, Joseph had intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. He had the character, and God blessed and added to his effort.

Joseph's brothers and families moved to Egypt (Gen 46 and 47) during the drought, and 430 years later, a pharaoh who did not know Joseph ascended the throne and made life miserable for the children of Israel. This is where Moses, a leader of note, comes into the picture. Moses was tasked with the responsibility of delivering God's children from oppression and captivity (Exod 1:10-22, 2:23) in Egypt and leading them to Canaan. Throughout his leadership, Moses' work was marked with the guidance of God (Exod 3:15). From the burning bush, where he was instructed to take off His shoes for the place he stood was holy (Exod 3:2-15), until he breathed his last breath, Moses was to keep in communion with God.

God prepared Moses for the task ahead when he was employed as a shepherd in the wilderness (Exod 3:1). It was a moment of unlearning and learning to be God's representative as he tended to his father-in-law's flock (Gen 3:1-17). He learned the values of faith, meekness, patience, humility, and self-forgetfulness (White, 1905). In this work, Moses was drawn nearer to the Chief Shepherd (Exod 4:1-17). This is where the connection was established and would continue throughout Moses' ministry.

Moses' first stop after receiving the calling to deliver the children of Israel from Egypt was with the elders of the community (Exod 4:29-31). He needed to

inform them of God's intent for his children who had suffered in bondage for 430 years (Exod 1:18). The leaders, who were key stakeholders, believed the whole plan (Exod 4:31). The project was too big, risky, and almost impossible (Exod 5:22-23). It was Moses' responsibility to define the journey and destination, encourage the weary and reluctant followers, and raise high standards.

Pharaoh was the next stop to deliver the message from God about His plans for his children, another stakeholder. Pharaoh's response required Moses to encourage the children of Israel, whose burden was multiplied (Exod 1:19). Hope and faith were required for the Israelites to appreciate God's ideal. At the Red Sea, by the Marra, in the wilderness, even at the verge or entrance into Canaan, Moses needed to keep reminding the people about the vision, articulating it at each stage of their journey. Spiritual leaders are responsible for projecting the vision for the motivation of followers.

In addition to providing vision to followers, spiritual leaders exercise altruistic love. In Moses' leadership, he had to exercise patience throughout his journey in the wilderness. In addition to that he needed courage as when in the court of Pharaoh (Exod 5:1-4); kindness and empathy when the load was increased (Exod 5:22,23); the encounter by the Red Sea (Exodus 14:10-31) required compassion in addition to stated qualities; at Mount Sinai where the 10 Commandments were ushered (Exod 20:1-21) he pleaded with God for mercy on behalf of his people; when his siblings challenged him (Numbers 12:1-16), and when challenged by Korah and friends (Num 16:1-34) just to mention a few he showed forgiveness, integrity and humility.

Remarkable and memorable incidents are seen when Moses came down from Mount Sinai and when he came to meet the assembly from his tent of meeting with God, evidence of experience with God. Moses' face is recorded to have shone so

bright that the congregation, in both instances, ran away from him (Exod 34:29-35). The time Moses spent with God in private was evidenced and marked by the glory of God's approval through the shining face (Exod 34:29). Moses even had to veil himself for the sake of the children of Israel who could not face this bright glow (Exod 34:35). This was assurance that there was a reward ahead and something to help maintain perseverance, endurance, and personal effort to keep going, qualities of spiritual leadership.

Moses' leadership was effective because of his connectedness with the Divine God and his subjects. However, change was inevitable. When it was time to pass on the baton, God chose Joshua to lead the Children of Israel into the promised land (Num 14:30, Deut 31:3-8). God approved this young man through Moses' blessing (Deut 34:9, Josh 3:7) because he trusted God.

With God's blessing and enabling, a spiritual leader must have a vision and articulate it to the followers. Joshua called the key stakeholders' officers to define the direction and destination and provide leadership (Josh 1:10-15). In his instruction, he encouraged hope and faith, and the standards were raised concerning conduct and communal responsibility (Josh 1:1-18, 3:9-13). A stamp of approval was necessary to encourage the young soldier, and a word of assurance of the presence of God and His blessing was given (Josh 5:1) and shown through the parting of the river Jordan. It was evident that in the same manner God was with Moses, he was also with Joshua.

All that was required from Joshua was total surrender to God's guidance, and he was assured of success (Josh 5:9). On altruistic love, Joshua showed courage (Josh 7:10, 11, 16-25, 8:5-19), trust, and patience in the process of invading and occupying the Promised Land. He was kind to the prostitute and showed integrity in keeping his word (Josh 6:22-23).

Endurance and perseverance characterized the acquisition of the land of promise. Joshua and his men did all they could to pursue the reward and victory promised. When giving his last address to the children of Israel, Joshua challenged them. He made a vow, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord (Joshua 24:15).” Yet again, we see that connectedness to God is a crucial ingredient for spiritual leadership; hope and faith are qualities necessary and desirable for leadership.

In the season of Judges, we see some examples of spiritual leadership: leaders who showed that a connection with God was essential leadership with a vision, altruistic love, and hope/faith. Deborah, for example, was the first and only woman judge who was also a prophetess (Judg 4:4). Israel had been under oppression for 20 years, and God called her to deliver the nation from oppression. She fought alongside Barak, who refused to go to war without her presence (Judg 5:15) because he was confident that her presence would result in victory because of the assurance of the presence of God. She rejoiced for the Lord's victory (Judg 5:9-14) and revealed her experience with the Lord and His faithfulness.

Gideon is another judge with a remarkable story, evidence of God's presence, and a connection with the Divine God, who was a spiritual leader. Gideon's story and experience bring out important aspects of divine/human interaction (Judg 6:11) in leadership for direction, high ideals, and setting of standards. Gideon first sought proof of God's approval (Judg 6:14-16), and through miraculous acts of an angel burning the sacrifice on the altar (Judg 6:17-23), he took up the task.

Before embarking on the task, Gideon renewed the covenant with God by sacrificing a bull with material from Baal's alter (Judg 6:25-32), a show of courage, trust, and integrity. Before embarking on the battle (Judg 6:34-36), God made sure to

communicate to Gideon instructions of how the battle would be fought (Judg 7:2-8) and confirmed victory through a soldier in the enemy camp (Judg 7:13-15). This served as an encouragement to exercise faith and hope and to endure in perseverance. The expectation to achieve victory was good motivation to go on to fight. Gideon was available for use and was sensitive to God's voice; the same is argued to be necessary for spiritual leadership.

Samson is a unique judge whose life from birth was unique (Judg 13:2-24). His story signifies the impact of a spiritual leader's choices on the individual, family (Judg 14:2-7, 15:5,7), and nation (Judg 15:9-14), determining leadership legacy. The symbol of Samson's strength (Judg 13:5) would mark the connection with God. His calling was unique, and it required him to follow instructions given to his parents (Judg 13:12, 13) and to trust that obedience and surrender to guidance were his secrets to success. Unfortunately, Samson allowed himself to be seduced (Judg 16:4) and enticed to disobey and even to disclose (Judg 16:6-21) his secret of strength. Spiritual leaders can learn a lesson from this character: the secret to success is connecting with God, and sustaining it is through faithfulness to leadership call.

The story of Samuel is interesting because he depicts a leader whose leadership roles change and yet continues to exert influence as a leader. He served as the last judge before the introduction of kings. He had come to life in the temple at a young age in fulfillment of a promise made by his mother (1 Sam 1:24-28), a rich inheritance of faith and hope. He starts as a follower learning temple duties under Eli, a priest with unruly sons (1Sam 2:12. The sons did all kinds of abominable acts in the temple, and God did not approve of them (1 Sam 2:13-17, 27-36). One day, God called the young man Samuel in the middle of the night (1 Sam 1:1-10). This would serve as the beginning of a long life of faithful service to God and the people. His

visionary work resulted in establishing educational institutions for prophets and judging people righteously (1 Sam 7:15), setting a high moral tone, uplifting standards, and defining direction. God's favor was with Samuel, and he served God's people with his whole heart (1 Sam 8:21, 22, 10:25, 11:6- 8).

Samuel's leadership was not without challenges, as with any leader. His patience was tested when the nation requested a king. It was not easy for him to understand why the people wanted kings. His integrity, honesty, compassion, empathy, loyalty, and humility in serving the people were proven and attested to, as stated in his speech (1 Sam 12:1-25). He also vowed to continue teaching and praying for them. He was a man of perseverance and endurance and bore the qualities of a visionary, loving, and faithful leader. Samuel went on to anoint and serve King Saul, including working with God to choose King Saul's successor. It takes humility to do this, and that can be the call for spiritual leadership.

This entire period, from the time of leaving Egypt until the time of Samuel, the children of Israel were under the rulership of God (1 Sam 12:6-11), using his instrumentalities to lead His people. God was their king and leader, working closely with the Priests, Prophets, and Judges. The introduction of kings came with new dynamics (1 Sam 12:6, 12,13); however, the promise was given that so long as the leader and the people obeyed God (1 Sam 12:14,15) while on the throne and understood that God was the absolute ruler they prospered. Whenever a king was faithful to God, the people or nations prospered; if the king was evil, the people suffered.

We glean lessons from two kings of Israel, King David and King Solomon, his son. King David was a shepherd (1 Sam 16:11) who cared for his sheep with care and courage. We know he was a musician, occasionally called to play for the king (1 Sam

16:15-23), and a warrior who protected and killed any predators that threatened his flock (1 Sam 17:34-37). Like Moses, David was groomed and trained by God to lead his flock, and his introduction to leadership came through the victory over Goliath (1 Sam 17:45-58, 18:6-9). Samuel was sent to the house of Jesse to anoint a king of God's choice, one who had a relationship and a connection with God.

The story of David and Goliath can be cited as an example of the young man's relationship with God. David had holy wrath against the uncircumcised philistine who mocked God and did not care to think of this enemy's size, ammunition, or military experience. The relationship and connection with a mighty God were adequate to give him the courage to face this giant. David would go on to meet other challenges in his life, and all the time He was reminded of God's presence, he found courage. All through his Psalms is the evidence of a leader who was entirely dependent on God and sought to maintain this connection.

The heir to King David's throne was his son, King Solomon (1 Kgs 2:24), dubbed the wisest man who ever lived. King Solomon is a compelling example of what a spiritual leader should do and be. When God asked him what he wished for, Solomon did not ask for riches or fame but wisdom to rule God's people well (1 Kgs 3:5-9). God granted this request and crowned it with the things not asked for (1 Kgs 3:10-14). Spiritual leaders need wisdom and understanding to lead, have vision, and exercise altruistic love (1 Kgs 3:16-27). That was the secret to Solomon's success, and there was none as wise (1 Kgs 3:28) and wealthy as he was during his time and the years after.

Spiritual leadership, as stated, is about connection with the Divine, and we argue that maintaining this connection determines success. King Solomon's example and testimony are chronicled in the book of Ecclesiastes. Here, Solomon explains how

he strayed from God and tried all kinds of things, compromising his relationship with God (Eccl 2:1-11). He thought wealth (1 Kgs 2:8) and pleasures (1 Kgs 2:10) of wine and food would satisfy him. These were inadequate to keep and sustain him as a leader, but they negatively impacted his influence and impaired his vision. He is known to have had many wives and concubines (1 Kgs 11:3); these also served to separate him more from God and further introduced idolatry to the nation (1 Kgs 7:8, 11:1). King Solomon eventually concluded that the fear of God and obedience to His commandments was everything needed in life (Eccl 12:13,14).

Nehemiah serves as the last example in this chapter, of spiritual leadership connection with the Divine God. This inspirational leader was passionate about fulfilling God's will for Israel. A faithful servant in the king's court, trusted and predictable. He is known as a leader with a sense of calling from God (Nehemiah 2:12). Nehemiah waited patiently for God's timing (Nehemiah 1:1,2:1), and he made prayer a priority in his life (Neh 2:4). It is not surprising that this leader had clean hands and a pure heart (Neh 1:4-7). Like other biblical leadership models, Nehemiah always made time for prayer (Neh 2:11) to maintain his connection with God. After talking to God and God enabling him, he attributed his success to God (Neh 6:15-16). As a visionary leader, Nehemiah established reasonable and attainable goals (Neh 2:3), arranged his priorities (Neh 2:5), and ensured they were acted upon decisively at the right time (Neh 2:5-8). One thing very clear about Nehemiah is the vision he had and shared with the people (Neh 2:17). Because he valued excellence, Nehemiah used his time wisely (Neh 2:12-13) and also ensured that he motivated the participation of the people in teams (Neh 2:27)

As stated, spiritual leadership promotes altruistic love, qualities Nehemiah exemplifies in his leadership. For a start, Nehemiah was visible and approachable; his

kindness and love were evident (Neh 4:12), a great motivator of people (Neh 4:14), and he sought to live among the people and at their level (Neh 5:14-16). That way, he sought to ensure that the financial status of the people was catered for and in a dignified manner (Neh 5:1-11). To exude altruistic love, a leader must be a person of integrity (Neh 6:5-8), showing discernment when dealing with people (Neh 6:12-13), and be known to keep promises (Neh 2:6). His courage characterizes the leadership of Nehemiah, how he was able to face opposition (Neh 2:19-20) and be willing to discipline inappropriate behavior (Neh 5:6-8). Nehemiah was a leader willing to take action in emergencies (Neh 4:8-9,22) and had the wisdom to know how to surround himself with trusted allies (Neh 2:12-16).

Nehemiah was a focused leader with a goal in mind. He executed his plan to achieve the desired goal (Neh 3:1-18). He was not afraid to sacrifice in order to accomplish the goal ahead (Neh 5:17). The value worth of the work he had to do was evident in his mind (Neh 6:1-3), and he was not afraid to get dirty for this work to be done (Neh 4:22-23). Everything needed to be done at all costs, requiring proper management of available resources. Nehemiah is an excellent example of a spiritual leader.

## **New Testament**

The New Testament, like the Old Testament, has many characters who reflect spiritual leadership. We will look at a couple of examples of characters to glean lessons on the spiritual leadership principles concerning spiritual leadership. Feddes (2008) states that Church leaders may be similar to leaders in other spheres, however, they are to pursue a leadership that is aligned with biblical values rather than circular unbiblical values. Biblical characters serve as good examples to emulate in spiritual leadership.

A leader that stands out in the New Testament for various spiritual leadership qualities is Paul. Ascough & Cotton (2005) argue that Paul was known to be a passionate visionary leader who, because of his compassion and concern for the people, inspired and nurtured people at both individual and community levels. Like Jesus, Paul was a gifted teacher who emphasized truths that centered on a life united and complete in Christ (Phil 1:2; 2 Cor 13:5; Rom 8:9; Col 1:27), a lesson he emulated in life and practice. The teaching of a life centered on Jesus sets a tone for Christianity in Paul's time and today.

It is essential to highlight that this teaching of Jesus was revolutionary during the time of Paul and so much more in the current generation. This teaching was revolutionary considering that the religious teachers of the time, including the Pharisees, Sadducees and Priests hated Jesus so much that they were instrumental in orchestrating his death (Mark 12:12-18). Therefore, for Paul to boldly stand up and teach about Jesus who had just been crucified for claiming to be the king of the Jews, and the Messiah (Mark 14:62), this emphasis on Jesus's divinity reveals his courage and boldness.

Paul presents two sacred ordinances that are essential to the Christian faith, and instrumental in the subject of spirituality and connection with divinity. Firstly, baptism, if summarized in one word, would be identification (Pritchard, 2024), which addresses a personal choice of an individual to publicly identify themselves with Jesus. Paul describes it as dying, being buried, and being resurrected with Christ (Rom 6:4-5). This is a very radical position to take. He further states that this process means being made new, being united and assuming a new life being right with God (Rom 8:10). This first ordinance is considered as the initiation into the relation with God and the body of believers that is usually done once in a lifetime.

The second ordinance is the Holy Communion, which is a regular activity. Jesus initiated this ordinance when with the disciples, and is also known as the Lord's Supper. Paul encourages believers to do it often in remembrance of Christ and for renewed connection with God and the body of believers (1 Cor 11:17-34). This practice enhances a believer's experience with God and promotes a strong relationship with God.

The idea of being right with God presents several issues that speak to intrinsic motivation, as we observe in the life of Paul. As Zuck (1998) noted, Paul was passionate about God, and his whole life was centered on Christ. Paul was committed to prayer, and he regularly interceded for churches and individuals alike. As a man of uncompromising integrity and humility who spoke truth in love, Paul also understood the need for cultural and religious sensitivity.

Paul emulated characteristics worth noting, such as a commitment to relationships, leadership development, teamwork, and networking. Whereas his life was transparent, Paul was an authentic source of encouragement and affirmation, a model worthy of imitation (Zuck, 1998). According to Watson (2016), "Paul's most outstanding characteristics were his genuine love, affection, and appreciation for people, all of which testify to a truly transformed life, and he would not hesitate to confront deception and wrongdoing." These leadership qualities are to be envied by church leaders and, where possible, emulated.

As alluded to in this study, Jesus is the founder of the Christian Church. The objective of the spiritual leadership is for leaders to have a relationship with Jesus. Ideally, spiritual leaders should emulate Jesus and find inspiration from His example. Jesus influences the leader's vision, faith, and hope are strengthened by a relationship

with Jesus, and the love of Jesus is the source of the leader's love. The spiritual leader is expected to love as Jesus loved, for God is love.

Jesus has set a standard that He desires and expects the leaders to reach. As an example, Pritchard (2024) states that Jesus ends His earthly mission by spelling out a mandate to anyone who would follow him, "Go and do likewise." Not only is the expectation set before the followers, but Jesus always prepared his subjects to "do likewise." Near the close of his ministry, Jesus emphatically presented these words to his disciples (John 17, 18). During the last meal with his friends before his death, Jesus got up from the table and washed their feet, an act of service usually performed by a household enslaved person (John 13:3-17). This action and his words, "For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you," summed up Jesus' whole way of being (John 13:15). It also marked a transition in leadership at the end of a three-year leadership development program.

Jesus' message and teachings were unconventional, and his approach included healing and wholeness, unity and communion. Pritchard (2024) assert that Jesus' leadership messaging focused on values that were unpopular and usually not acceptable, such as statements like, last shall be first (Matthew 20:16), the meek will inherit the earth (Matthew 5:5), and the one who wishes to lead must serve (Matthew 20:26). Jesus taught the disciples these values, forming them through his words and deeds, and He did so utilizing all opportunities in the time He was with them.

As stated, Jesus led by example in the process of developing spiritual leaders. How he interacted with the disciples illustrates several qualities of spiritual leadership development (John 17). The process of leadership development involves a change of heart, the process takes place over time, leadership is practical as it takes place in the community, spiritual leadership combines knowledge and information with

experience and reflection (Blackby, 20), and this process is enhanced by example and mentoring. Jesus went beyond just attracting disciples; He invested in equipping, empowering, and guiding them throughout his life (Pritchard, 2024).

### **Spirit of Prophecy**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a movement that started in the 1800s, with pioneers coming from different contexts, including churches and streets (Spalding, 1961). One of the founding pioneers was Ellen G. White, who had a prophetic gift and published many books, letters, and publications in the printing press. We look at the different counsels regarding various aspects of spiritual leadership.

### **Prayer - Spiritual Connection with God**

In her book *Prophets and Kings*, White (1917) highlights that the path of men who are placed as leaders is not easy, yet they are to look at the challenges they face as a call to prayer. Emphasis is placed on these leaders, who should always consult the great Source of all wisdom (White, 1917). Doing so helps the leader to find strength and enlightenment through the Master Worker so they can withstand influences for wrongdoing and tell apart what is right from wrong and good from evil (Tutsch, 2006). The argument is that leadership should appreciate prayer as an opportunity to get to know God's will and be strengthened to do that will.

In *Testimonies for the Church* volume 5, the emphasis is on that leaders must be in touch with God. The expectation emphasizes that leaders have a privilege to serve that comes with accountability only possible through a relationship with God. An analogy of a tree is used to emphasize the point, "We are as trees planted in the garden of the Lord, and He comes to us seeking the fruit He has a right to expect. His

eye is upon each of us; He reads our hearts and understands our lives” White (1882).

The search alluded to is a solemn one, and it relates to duty and destiny and must, therefore, be executed faithfully.

Trust in leaders determines destinies and reputation, not only for the work of God but also for God. Leaders who know and appreciate this are encouraged to ask themselves, "How do I meet the inspecting eye of God? Is my heart cleansed from its defilement? or have its temple courts become so desecrated, so occupied with buyers and sellers, that Christ finds no room?" White (1882). The reason for such inquiry is the understanding that spiritual leadership can be so busy with the day-to-day business that it eventually dries up spiritually and, even worse, leaves the soul Christless.

The dangers of religious leadership that neglects to nurture a relationship with God cannot be understated. White (1882) emphasizes that although leaders may profess the truth, if they continue to go on daily with no living connection with God, they will be led to do strange things; they will make decisions that are not per the will of God. The highlight of the counsel is that "there is no safety for our leading brethren while they shall go forward according to their impulses. They will not be yoked up with Christ or move in harmony with Him. They will be unable to see and realize the wants of the cause, and Satan will move upon them to take positions that will embarrass and hinder" White (1882). God's work will suffer due to leaders who claim to do His work without His guidance.—*Testimonies for the Church* 5.

We, therefore, can establish that success in God's work should be seen in the context of constant consultation with him. In Manuscript 140, White (1902) states that the devil seeks to control and influence leaders and target those in positions of influence. The assaults for these leaders are fiercer, particularly considering the positions of influence. The counsel given to leaders in positions of trust is that they

should study God's work and look constantly to Jesus to be changed into His likeness. The promise is that Christ will be readily waiting and available to leaders who want to come before Him in humility and contrition (*Manuscript 140*, 1902).

A connection with God benefits spiritual leaders; as stated, this connection is through prayer. When giving counsel to Presidents of conferences, White (1923) reminds them that they will be wise if they decide to come to God and believe in Him. God will hear the prayers of these leaders and come to their assistance swiftly, save them money from invited counselors from far away distances because God will come to their aid and give them the wisdom to make good decisions. This assurance is based on the biblical promise, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:5). White (1923) reiterates that if leaders would sincerely humble their hearts before God, empty their souls of self-esteem, put away the natural defects of their character, overcome their love of supremacy, and come to God as little children, He will bestow on them the Holy Spirit. The assurance is that when leaders collectively come together and present everything to God in trust, whatever they call in the name of Jesus, it shall be done for them.

### **Spiritual Leadership Qualities**

Spiritual leadership qualities from a Christian worldview tend to want to stay away from circular theories and mindsets. Blackaby (2001) emphasizes that people are looking for leaders who will lead them into God's purposes and God's way, leaders who believe in God and do what He says, and leaders who truly believe God will do what He says. This section considers aspects of spiritual leadership from a Christian viewpoint.

## Vision

Counsel to Individuals. In spiritual leadership, a leader's quality includes vision, which assumes the ability to give direction and instill faith to move toward the vision. White (1896), in a letter to O. A. Olsen, clearly articulates that men who feel that they need wisdom from above, men converted in their heart, and understand that they are but sinful, need to learn their lessons in Christ's school before they are prepared to influence other minds. Having learned to depend on God and having faith that works by love and purifies their souls, leaders will not lay burdens that are grievous to be borne on other's shoulders. Leaders will lead with love as the motivating factor to achieve great things informed by faith. (*Letter* 83, May 22, 1896, To O. A. Olsen).

In a letter to another leader, strong counsel/rebuke is given to a leader who is interested in personal praise without any leadership provided. White (1882) stated,

You love to praise and excitement and to bring yourself to the front. You are far more for the approbation and praise of men than for the approval of God. You lead others. They do not know where you are leading them, nor do you, because you go on haphazard, heedless, impulsive, without sound judgment or heavenly wisdom. God has warned you. God has counseled you. Have you trembled at His word? Have you resisted temptations? Have you separated yourself more from worldly influences?

This is a stern rebuke for any religious leader responsible for directing God's work and mobilizing members in that direction (*Letter* 3, 1882, p. 3 (April 1, 1882)).

Leaders who cannot accept counsel and may feel self-sufficient should be changed. In Manuscript 55, White (1897) stated that leaders in responsible positions have much to learn. However, when leaders feel that their ideas are without any flaws,

they need to be changed from their position (President) to that of a learner. When leaders think their ideas and judgment should be accepted without question, they show they are unfit for their position. Further, caution and admonition are given to fellow workers that such leaders who considered themselves without error should be changed for the sake of the work and the positions (*Manuscript 55*, June 3, 1897, "Development of Workers").

Discernment is a characteristic of vision in leadership, and it is promoted as something that leaders must be eager to acquire (Spalding, 1961). White (1917) emphasized that for as long as a leader remains consecrated, the one to whom God has given discernment and abilities will not desire higher positions nor show eagerness for those positions. Further highlights that leaders must seek to carry responsibilities, and instead of striving for supremacy, prayer for understanding and discernment will characterize a true leader. A true spiritual leader will understand that discernment and understanding come from God and must diligently request it. (*Prophets and Kings*, 30, 31.)

The familiar words of counsel to leaders in the church repeatedly emphasized how a leader must have a connection with God to work in union with him. In a letter to J. A. Burden (1907), White said, "that man is unfit to be the president of a conference or a leader among God's people" because the man possessed no broad ideas and views. Professed followers of Christ are admonished from pursuing personal will but are trained to think Christ's thoughts and be enlightened to comprehend God's will and way. Such a believer will be a learner of Christ's work methods. (*Letter 276* pp. 1, 2, September 5, 1907, to J. A. Burden). Spiritual leadership must provide leadership in tune with God's will, which requires leaders to have the mind of God and seek to elevate their thoughts to His.

There were many instances in which Ellen White wrote letters of counsel to leaders in the church, and one such example is a letter to Brother Butler in which she said,

Your position binds you under the most sacred obligations to be very careful what kind of a spirit you entertain towards your brethren. They are acting a part in God's cause as well as yourself. Will not God teach them and guide them as well as yourself? You are not to allow yourself to think unkindly of them, much less to climb upon the judgment seat and censure and condemn your brethren when you may be yourself, in many respects, more deserving of censure than they. Your work is bearing the inspection of God." (*Letter 21*, 1888, pp. 10, 11, October 14, 1888, to Brother Butler).

This counsel was direct and sought to bring the leader to appreciate that their leadership role was required to exemplify the humble character of Christ. Leaders are not to see themselves as better than others but as one with them under God's guidance.

#### Counsel to Committees

Counsel to committees starts with the need to recognize the primary purpose of the gathering. White (1902) advises that those who attend committee meetings should remember that they are meeting with God, who has given them their work. Further emphasizes that the members of the committees must come together with reverence and consecration of heart. This mindfulness and attitude in approaching the work is because the committees meet to consider important matters connected with the Lord's cause. The committees' actions show that they desire to understand God's will regarding plans for advancing His work (*Testimonies for the Church 7*, 1902).

Secondly comes the element of accountability to God, which many committees often forget. White (1902) counseled that everyone in council and

committee meetings should be conscious that they are working for time and eternity and are accountable to God for the motives that prompt them to action. White rightly advised that the statements above should be in the leader's motto and the psalmist's prayer be the leader's prayer that the Lord should set a watch before the leader's mouth and keep the door of their lips and assist the leader's heart to shun any evil thing (Psalm 141:3, 4). Leaders must understand that meeting is a moment of seeking to accomplish God's will, and their inputs affect the collective output.

An appreciation of the sacred role will dictate how the meetings are conducted and what is discussed. White (1902) counseled that the Lord's business must be conducted in a business-like manner. Frequently times, conversations in meetings focus on matters that are not important, and time will be wasted in the process. Furthermore, the Lord's business needs to be conducted business-like, perfect. Some members will, at times, be careless and irreverent. They need to be reminded that Christ is present in the meetings and a witness to all their actions and attitudes. (*Testimonies for the Church* 7) The Lord is very much interested in what happens in committees that make decisions that will impact His work and will.

In *Gospel Workers*, White (1915) reminded the leaders to avoid wasting precious time debating insignificant issues in business meetings. Further, she counseled that habits of petty criticism should not be allowed because they tend to confuse minds and disturb meetings, resulting in clouding simple and fundamental issues. (*Gospel Workers*). The result will be that decisions are made contrary to the will of God.

The role of committees in deciding the direction of God's work cannot be understated. White (1904) stated that more prayer in the councils of those bearing responsibilities and more humbling of the heart before God will result in abundant

evidence of divine leadership, and God's work will progress rapidly. Prayer is essential in meetings, and there are constant reminders that the work belongs to God, not man. Human wisdom must be subject to God's guidance and counsel.

### **Altruistic Love**

Kindness. One of the qualities of leadership in spiritual leadership is exercising altruistic love in leadership. This includes several attributes, including kindness. White (1892) highlights that we may never know until the judgment the influence of a kind, considerate course of action on the inconsistent, the unreasonable, and the unworthy. In a letter to J. H Kellogg are some profound words where she stated:

If after a course of provocation and injustice on their part, you treat them as you would an innocent person, you even take pains to show them unique acts of kindness, then you have acted the part of a Christian, and they become surprised and ashamed and see their course of action and meanness more clearly than if you plainly stated their aggravated acts to rebuke them." (Letter 20, October 17, 1892, to J. H. Kellogg).

This approach is a contrast to direct rebuke, which in some cases results in stubbornness, defiance, and hardening of one's heart. Such a show of kindness will likely help a leader win followers' confidence.

The words of this statement above are packed and describe Christ's attitude towards erring people. If spiritual leaders accepted this strong appeal and took up the challenge, realizing that time is not of the essence, much work would be done. White (1868) further appeals that leaders must appreciate the times of peril at hand, signaling the last days (*Testimonies for the Church 2*).

The letter above shows that kindness is given to those who do not "deserve" it. In a publication of the Review and Herald (1907), White reiterates this important virtue of kindness. The point of emphasis is that, for the work of God to move on, religious leaders will be appointed to deal with the erring who will be kind and considerate, revealing the character of Christ. Further, these leaders show Christ's wisdom in dealing with matters that should be kept private. When discipline is needed, the leader will be discreet and exercise confidentiality. The strong word of rebuke is that God's people should not be found suspect or unrighteous by those who are unbelievers (White, 1907). Human beings have not been given the responsibility to judge but to show mercy and kindness to the unbelievers so they know they have a chance with God.

Most people who suffer judgment and ridicule are young, and there is also a counsel on this. White (1903), in the Review and Herald, called attention to leaders, saying that God holds them responsible for how they treat the youth under their care and leadership. God wants to see if the youth will be treated with courtesy, respect, and kindness. Leaders are to deal with youth as they wish to be dealt with by Christ. As a matter of emphasis, leaders should know that their first work is to be so kind and thoughtful to the interests of the youth that their presence will feel like home.

Humility. Humility is a subject of interest in leadership and is considered a desirable attribute. In a letter to the brethren in Africa, White (1890) said the following

vital words, "Love of self, pride, and self-sufficiency lie at the foundation of the greatest trials and discords that have ever existed in the religious world.

" When leaders fail to exercise humility, they disconnect themselves from divinity and deprive themselves of the benefits that come with that connection:

divine love, power, and wisdom. The outcome also includes self-glorification, self-perfection, and self-righteousness (Fourth Letter, March 9, 1890, to Brethren in Africa).

This letter is especially poignant because it gives a glimpse of the genesis of the work in Africa. Such counsel supported the establishment of institutions and churches. At the foundation of the work was humility, a key variable in spiritual leadership.

Leaders who are humble in heart are fearless in examining themselves and checking if they are well-positioned for the work. When approaching humility in service, leaders must ask whether one is qualified for a position and whether the leader has learned to walk in the Lord's way to do justice and judgment?" White (1909). Jesus could humble himself and subject himself to humiliation as an example that we should not depend on ourselves but consider ourselves less than others. (*Testimonies for the Church* 9).

Failure to acknowledge our natural position in the work and exalting ourselves is dangerous to leaders and those they are to serve. White (1923) emphasizes that the most fearful, fatal deception upon human minds is that because a leader is in a position of trust connected to God, the leader is above everyone in their estimation. That way, they become oblivious to the fact that other people are equally precious and unique in God's sight and go on to neglect, mishandle, bruise, wound them, and leave them to die. (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*). Humility is a critical attribute of leadership and is an antidote to narcissism, which we will discuss later.

#### Trust/Truth

Trust and truth are essential ingredients in any relationship, and the first level and test of trust is in the relationship between God and man. White (1913) points out that when God raises leaders to do His work, they betray their trust if they seek to

please people at the expense of truth. Further, it highlights that God will prepare leaders for the times who will be "humble, God-fearing, not conservative, not policy leaders; but leaders who have moral independence and will move forward in the fear of the Lord." These kind, noble, courteous leaders will not be swayed from the right path; God will trust them to proclaim the truth in righteousness whether men will hear or they will reject. (*Testimonies for the Church*).

Patience as a leadership virtue is also introduced in the counsel concerning trust. Patience finds its strength in the element of trust. According to White (1917), leaders in God's work must learn to wait patiently and trust when everything looks dark because heaven will not fail them on their day of trial. The word of encouragement is knowing that nothing is more helpless yet more invincible and powerful than the soul that relies on God because it feels its nothingness (*Prophets and Kings*).

The reason why leaders need to rely entirely on Christ is because they are a particular target for Satan. White (1890) said that David knew that humility of heart, constant trust in God, and unceasing watchfulness were required to overcome the temptations before Solomon in his high position, knowing that he was a target of Satan's tests. (*Patriarchs and Prophets*). Leaders who understand that they are a primary target of Satan will appreciate the need to rely entirely on God for power to withstand the darts and arrows of Satan.

Integrity. In society today, including in religious contexts, leadership positions are a real temptation and seemingly define leaders. Should that be the case? White (1923) clearly articulates that integrity of character, the spirit of Christ that makes a leader thankful, unselfish, and without partiality and hypocrisy, is valuable to God. Leaders are to be like Daniel, seeking the power that comes alone from God, to

represent not self, one's imperfections in selfish and fraudulent practices, but the truth in righteousness. A leader is not to possess a trace of pride or self-importance but should be found with the spirit of wisdom from God. (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*).

Loyalty. Loyalty is a virtue that should be cultivated among the people of God, such as loyalty to God and man. In The Acts of the Apostles, while commenting on Paul's ministry, White (1911) highlights how Paul, throughout his ministry, looked to God for direct guidance, being loyal to both God and the body of believers. He ensured that he worked in harmony with the council's decisions in Jerusalem, exemplifying it by establishing the teachings and encouraging a spirit of loyalty, generosity, and brotherly love amid opposition. (*The Acts of the Apostles*). A leader will be loyal to a course as a matter of principle and further promote loyalty, encouraging all to exercise.

### **Hope/Faith**

Spirituality leadership promotes hope/faith as a critical factor in the effort required for leadership. White (1907) advised the workers in Southern California that there are independent responsibilities for both the individual and the church. Furthermore, White (1907) states that God has given every human some talent or talents to use and improve. There is a reward to using these talents, and God will increase service capabilities. (*Letter 340, 1907. (October 3, 1907, Workers in Southern California)*).

One of the most significant goals in the work of God is what the work does for those handling it. In 1897, Brothers Daniells, Colcord, Faulkhead, Palmer, and Salisbury received words of admonition from Ellen White, saying:

Whatever our duties in the various lines of work may be, remember that God is the General. You must not withdraw from Him to make flesh your arm."

Further admonition emphasized that there should not be competition or comparisons among the leaders but focus on what the work reveals about Christ (*Letter* 49, September 1897, To Brn. Daniells, Colcord, Faulkhead, Palmer, Salisbury).

According to the letter, these leaders' work was to reveal Christ's likeness and not reveal weakness among them.

Often, work needs more continuity and the availability of counsel from experienced workers. White (1911) counseled that leaders must see the need to seek counsel from those who have long worked in the field and gained deep experience in the ways of the Lord. This helps avoid a situation where a leader is stuck, and needs help dealing with work issues. Further, this kind of working independently must be corrected and not encouraged or followed. Emphasis is made in the text that ministers and teachers work with a spirit of unity, with experienced leaders taking advantage of their counsel and advice *from experience*. Leadership in God's work is not a solo mission, and it is strengthened by an appreciation of a strong foundation and the counsel of those with experience.

The work of God given to the church is so great that it needs men and women to humble themselves and share the burden. White (1904) stated that God had not set kingly power in the Seventh-day Adventist Church to control the whole work. Neither has God determined that a few leaders should carry leadership. Counsel is that there should be delegation and distribution of responsibilities among many competent leaders (*Testimonies for the Church* 8). The emphasis is still on the need to spread the work among men and women with the competencies to accomplish the work.

## Do What It Takes

One of the qualities of leadership is the ability to take action to accomplish a task—a quality promoted in *Gospel Workers*. White (1911) states that God's cause needed leaders who could act quickly and instantaneously with power at the time. At times, waiting to first examine everything before action will lead to failure to accomplish tasks and eventually accomplish little. There will be times when caution should be exercised. However, swift decision-making and implementation are critical because risks and difficulties will always exist. White further emphasizes that golden moments should be utilized to accomplish the purpose. Opportunities should be *used as soon as they are available to make decisions*. Intriguingly, angels get tired of long delays in accomplishing the task.

Leaders, at times, are afraid to make mistakes because that may impact the perception of their leadership. However, White (1911) states that it is even more excusable to make wrong decisions at times than to fail to make a decision. Further argues that wretchedness and perplexity result from hesitation and failure to take action. White continues to reveal, "I have been shown that the most signal victories and the most fearful defeats have been on the turn of minutes. God requires promptness of action. Delays, doubtings, hesitation, and indecision frequently give the enemy every advantage." (*Gospel Workers*, 1911). Is there a possibility that these delays may be informed by human inclinations and personal strife among the leaders?

It is interesting to note that leaders sometimes fail to make decisions because of dependence on someone. In Manuscript 11 (1883), White cautioned that work was not done because of dependence on the President of the Conference or the President of the General Conference to think. Leaders are advised that God has given work to

every person and desire all to seek counsel from God in their perplexities rather than look to man for answers. (*Manuscript 11*).

One of the best promises to leaders is the knowledge of victory and a reward available to those who labor. In a letter (1897), White gave words of encouragement to leaders, encouraging them to hold fast to the precious and sanctifying truth and arguing that leaders are in the company of the highest intelligences that do see their course of action. Further asserting that leaders are, in the eyes of the world, angels and men. (*Letter 17*, April 7, 1897). These words of encouragement and assurance of the presence of the Divine in accomplishing this task stand as a reward for God's workers.

### **Seventh-day Adventists and Leadership**

Leadership within the Seventh-day Adventist Church is uniquely shaped by the denomination's theological, missional, and eschatological worldview. Unlike many secular or even some religious leadership paradigms, Adventist leadership is not primarily about hierarchy or administrative control, but about spiritual stewardship, theological fidelity, and mission-driven service. The guiding ethos is that leaders are called by God to fulfill a sacred purpose, spiritually nurturing congregants while also advancing the church's mission of proclaiming the gospel in the context of the imminent return of Christ (White, 1948; Knight, 2000).

At the heart of Adventist leadership is the church's eschatological outlook. According to Baker (2018), a "Last Day Leader" is any Spirit-filled, biblically grounded individual who embraces and leads with the conviction that Christ's second coming is near. This perspective frames leadership as a spiritual calling motivated by urgency, hope, and sacrificial service. It distinguishes Adventist leadership from broader Christian and secular models by its firm anchoring in end-time theology,

which in turn shapes how leaders view their responsibilities to both God and the congregation.

A strong Adventist leader is first and foremost a spiritually mature disciple of Christ who embodies love for God and people. Ludwig (2015) emphasizes that such a leader integrates biblical principles into personal and professional life, living out faith in tangible ways that inspire others. This spiritual authenticity aligns closely with the framework of servant leadership, which views leadership as a function of selfless service and relational influence (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 2010). Ochorokodi (2023) reinforces this idea by noting that Christian leadership in the Adventist context is not about control but about enabling others to grow in their relationship with God through compassionate, mission-centered guidance. This connection between spirituality and leadership behavior is central to the current study, which postulates that the spiritual experience of a leader functions as a key driver of leadership behavior, which then affects congregational spirituality.

Moreover, spiritual leadership in the SDA Church is inseparable from the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18–20). Accepting Christ is seen not only as a personal decision but also as a commissioning to engage in disciple-making. This theological imperative places every believer, particularly church leaders, in a position of spiritual responsibility. Leaders are seen as co-workers with Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit to teach, guide, and nurture spiritual growth among congregants (Nichol, 1978; Paulien, 2008). The biblical model of leadership in this sense transcends organizational tasks, calling leaders to be spiritual exemplars whose personal piety is mirrored in their leadership practice.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church also emphasizes that true leadership must be grounded in a personal relationship with God. White (1948) asserts that “The

greatest want of the world is the want of men... who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest... men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole.” This emphasis on moral integrity and spiritual conviction highlights that effective spiritual leadership begins with the inner life of the leader, which this study reconceptualizes as spiritual experience. As such, this study’s focus on how leaders’ spirituality influences congregational spirituality finds strong support in both Adventist theology and leadership praxis.

In addition to spiritual authenticity and theological conviction, Adventist leadership is defined by shared responsibility and participatory governance. Unlike autocratic leadership models, the Seventh-day Adventist Church operates through a representative form of governance that promotes accountability, consultation, and teamwork. As Ochorokodi (2023) notes, shared leadership is vital to ensuring transparency and removing undue personal dominance in decision-making. Leaders are accountable to both their peers and their congregations, fostering a culture of mutual respect and collective discernment.

This collective leadership approach is consistent with the findings of Schein (2010) and Kusek and Rist (2004), who argue that team-based decision-making encourages broader input, diversity of perspectives, and ultimately better-informed outcomes. In this context, leadership behavior, such as vision sharing, modeling altruistic love, and inspiring faith, is not exercised in isolation but collaboratively, enhancing its potential impact on congregational life. These behaviors were operationalized in the current study as mediators of the relationship between the leader’s spirituality and the spiritual climate of the congregation.

Additionally, Adventist leaders are expected to adhere to a biblically informed lifestyle guided by the Spirit of Prophecy—the inspired writings of Ellen G. White.

Baker (2018) notes that Adventist leaders in the 21st century are called not only to follow biblical principles but also to embody the lifestyle standards articulated in church teachings. This includes a commitment to temperance, Sabbath observance, ethical living, and service. Such expectations frame leadership not as a position of privilege but as a role of spiritual responsibility.

The SDA philosophy of leadership also reflects a global and intercultural awareness, recognizing that spiritual leadership must be contextually relevant. In regions like Botswana, where this study was conducted, cultural values such as communalism, respect for elders, and harmony are often harmonized with biblical leadership principles. African Adventist leadership must thus navigate the intersection of spiritual mandate and cultural expectations (Mbiti, 1991). This contextual understanding reinforces the need for leadership models—such as the one developed in this study—that are theologically sound, empirically valid, and culturally sensitive.

In conclusion, leadership within the Seventh-day Adventist Church is deeply spiritual, theologically motivated, and missionally oriented. It values service over control, community over hierarchy, and faithfulness over fame. These distinctives resonate strongly with the findings of this study, which demonstrated that leaders' spirituality significantly influenced congregational spirituality through leadership behavior. By grounding leadership in spiritual experience and collaborative practice, the Adventist Church offers a rich and biblically consistent model of leadership well suited for fostering spiritual growth in faith communities.

### **Perspectives on Leadership from Broader Literature**

Leadership has long been a topic of dynamic inquiry and scholarly interest, with varied definitions and conceptual frameworks proposed across different contexts. Blanchard and Hodges (2009) define leadership as a process of influence,

emphasizing that it involves the ability to shape others' thinking, behavior, or development toward achieving personal or collective goals. This approach to leadership underscores the relational nature of the leadership process and its impact on both leaders and followers.

Importantly, this definition acknowledges that influence can be positive or negative, overt or covert, intentional or incidental. Blanchard and Hodges (2009) argue that leadership is not restricted to formal positions or hierarchical authority, but can emerge wherever there is the will to serve or guide others, whether toward self-serving ends or noble, service-oriented causes. They thus advocate for leaders to “lead like Jesus,” aligning the internal domains of motivation and perception (the heart and head) with external domains of behavior and practice (hands and habits). This holistic approach is particularly relevant in spiritual leadership within faith communities, where inner spiritual experience and outward behavior must harmonize to inspire trust, loyalty, and spiritual transformation.

Northouse (2019), in his influential text on leadership theory, defines leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. He identifies four core components: leadership is (a) a process, (b) involves influence, (c) occurs in groups, and (d) involves shared goals. These components reinforce the dynamic, interpersonal, and intentional nature of leadership, which is consistent with the definition of leadership as a spiritual function in the church, as seen in this study. Northouse's emphasis on process and shared goals aligns with the collaborative and spiritually motivated leadership ethos promoted in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Further contributions to leadership literature highlight the evolution of leadership toward more participatory and transformational models. Eddy, Randall,

and Bracken (2023) argue that modern leadership increasingly favors collaborative engagement, shared vision, and mutual accountability. Such trends are evident in faith-based leadership, where effective leadership entails more than authority, it includes the capacity to inspire and nurture others through vision, integrity, and shared spiritual purpose. This insight supports the theoretical framing of your study, which views leadership behavior as a mediating mechanism between the leader's spirituality and congregational spirituality.

The leadership-as-influence perspective is echoed in the works of Yukl (2013), who defines leadership as “the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives” (p. 7). Yukl also highlights the variability in leadership effectiveness based on contextual and interpersonal dynamics, further emphasizing that leadership is not merely positional but behavioral and relational.

Leadership within religious organizations such as the Seventh-day Adventist Church introduces additional complexity. Leaders often deal with spiritual, emotional, and relational responsibilities that extend beyond administrative roles. Such contexts expose leaders to emotional fatigue, compassion fatigue, and even vicarious trauma due to constant engagement with the needs and struggles of others (“Defining Compassion Fatigue, Vicarious Trauma, and Burnout,” n.d.; Dryer, 2015). For volunteer leaders in the church, this can lead to burnout and diminished motivation. Consequently, spiritual grounding and intrinsic motivation—key components of spiritual leadership—become essential for sustained engagement and resilience (Fry, 2003; Benefiel et al., 2014).

The servant leadership model, developed by Greenleaf (1977), also aligns with this study's framework, proposing that true leadership begins with the desire to serve. The servant leader prioritizes the well-being of followers, focusing on empathy, listening, stewardship, and community building—traits deeply embedded in biblical leadership narratives. Spears (2010) further delineates servant leadership into ten characteristics, including listening, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community—all of which are highly applicable to spiritual leadership in faith-based settings.

Moreover, Goleman (1998) highlights the importance of emotional intelligence (EI) in leadership. EI encompasses self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills—competencies that closely parallel the spiritual and relational capacities required in pastoral and congregational leadership. Emotional intelligence enhances a leader's capacity to lead with empathy and authenticity, contributing to healthier church climates and more effective spiritual guidance.

In sum, contemporary leadership theories converge on the idea that effective leadership is not merely about authority or decision-making, but about the ability to inspire, influence, and elevate others toward common values and goals. This notion is particularly salient in the context of spiritual leadership, where the leader's personal spirituality, leadership behavior, and capacity for relational influence intersect to foster congregational spiritual growth. As this study explored, the spirituality of the leader is foundational to their leadership behavior, which in turn influences congregational outcomes—a process that is well-theorized in both secular and spiritual leadership literature.

## **Role of Demographic Characteristics**

The discussion on the need for demographic consideration in research projects has developed over time, emphasizing its importance in research. For example, the National Institutes of Health issued guidelines requiring the inclusion of "minority groups" in funded research projects (National Institutes of Health, 2001). This increased emphasis on varied research participants and description of the demographic characteristics of participants when presenting findings in journal articles like the 2001 fifth edition of the American Psychological Association's Publication Manual requiring the provision of specific information about participants' characteristics, including their racial/ethnic group membership and socioeconomic status (SES) (Hammer, 2011). The inclusion of demographic considerations is still to gain ground, as revealed in some reviews that less than half of the articles published over ten years provided information about the race/ethnicity and SES of participants (Ellis, 2009; Ingelbret et al., 2010). This study will include demographic considerations following this guidance.

We must recognize the importance of collecting and describing the characteristics of study participants. Hammer (2011) emphasizes that, at a minimum, information about participants' age, gender, race/ethnicity, SES/educational level, and languages spoken needs to be provided, with additional information as determined by research. Exclusion of such information risks a position of assuming that phenomena of interest are the same, "absolutism." Inclusion of this information leads towards "universalism," a recognition that "there may be universal psychological processes that I manifest differently" as determined by culture, race/ethnicity, and or SES of participants (Beins, 2009, p. 356). Such must be proven to avoid making wrong conclusions on wrong assumptions about differences among groups.

With an appreciation of demographics, information in research follows its role in the study of leadership. Research highlights the importance of organizational demographics and their impact on leadership attitudes and practice (Korac-Kakabadse et al., 1998). Mukherjee & Joseph, (2018) state that demographic facts such as age and gender can be a factor in organizational spirituality. Further, generalizability can be enhanced by describing participants and may enable comparison across the replication of studies (Bein, 2009). Hammer (2011) adds that demographic data can enable the identification of gaps within existing studies, including variations within and between populations. To enhance our study and to provide information to add to the body of research, we will examine demographic data such as gender, age, years in leadership, and years in the church since baptism as moderating variables.

### **Age, Spirituality, and Religion**

When examining the interplay between age, spirituality, and religion, it becomes evident that several factors are in motion. Researchers have noted that spirituality or religious involvement is not as prevalent among young people as it is among older adults (Roehlkepartain et al., 2005), indicating a more secular outlook among younger generations. However, it is also observed that younger individuals are not just less religious, but are developing new concepts and contexts for religious and spiritual practice, suggesting that traditional religious terms may not fully resonate with them (Johnson & Walker, 2016). This dynamic evolution of spirituality and religion among different age groups is a fascinating area of study that keeps us intrigued and engaged.

A unique scenario is observed about young people and their attitude toward religion. The importance of religion among all age groups was observed to be higher, universally, in Islamic societies (Roehlkepartain et al., 2005). In addition, the

economic conditions of countries have a bearing on the spirituality and religiosity of young adults. Less economically developed countries have more spiritual and religious young adults than those in more economically developed countries. Countries in regions such as South America, Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia reported higher proportions of young adults who reported a belief in God. They reported that religion and God were more important in their lives than those living in more developed countries (Roehlkepartain et al., 2005). The younger generations may seem religious and then lose their religiosity when they grow older. A possible cause for this development is that youth younger than 19 may conform to family tradition and practice religion because they are still in the family house and leave practicing when they move out of the family.

A qualitative study conducted by Johnson and Walker (2016) revealed several findings. What emerged in the study were several themes, the differences in perspectives among different generations or cohorts, and the impact on religion and spiritual life. The three central themes that emerged are “(1) changing conceptualizations of God, (2) the increasing separation of religious practice from religious institutions, and (3) the growing differentiation between 'religion,' particularly organized religion, and 'spirituality (Johnson & Walker, 2016. p101).”

### **Gender, Spirituality and Religion**

It can be generally observed that church attendance and membership show women as the majority in attendance and participation. According to Roehlkepartain et al. (2005), women are more likely to attach greater importance to religion in their lives across most countries. Further, women are more likely to be practicing believers than men, who are nearly 50% more likely than women to be agnostic or atheists. Rodrigues et al. (2017) also assert that females, like older adults, presented greater

dimensions of religiosity and spirituality. These statistics were confirmed by Ibraheem & Ibraheem (2015), who established that spirituality among females was significantly higher than that of their male counterparts.

### **Education, Spirituality, and Religion**

Education is important in life. However, it has been noted as a cause for the decline in religiosity. Roehlkepartain et al. (2005) observe that the more highly educated and higher income groups in advanced industrial societies are less likely to attach high importance to religion. Further, education level also plays a significant role in shaping religious belief and practice (European Commission, 2001), meaning that the more education a person has, the less likely he or she is to be a practicing believer and the more likely he or she is to be a nonpracticing believer (Vahia et al., 2011). This insight into the influence of education on religious belief and practice enlightens and informs us, adding depth to our understanding of spirituality.

Researchers have found that social demographic factors are independent predictors of spirituality (Ibraheem & Ibraheem, 2015). In this new era, religious and spiritual experiences have become more intricate, moving away from the clear-cut boundaries of religion in the past. Nevertheless, religion remains a significant aspect of life for individuals in our complex society (Johnson & Walker, 2016). This study underscores the importance of considering the leader's education as a moderating variable, highlighting the weight of our research in understanding spirituality and its societal implications.

## **Church Demographics**

### **Conference**

Within the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the conference structure refers to administrative regions that govern and support local congregations. Each conference typically oversees pastoral assignments, church resources, ministerial development, and mission strategy. Differences in administrative leadership styles, spiritual emphases, and developmental priorities across conferences can affect how leadership is exercised and how congregational spirituality is nurtured (Klingbeil, 2010).

Research in church administration has shown that denominational or regional governance bodies can influence local church culture and member engagement. For example, Thompson (2018) found that variations in conference-level strategic focus, such as emphasis on evangelism, youth ministry, or community outreach, may trickle down to shape the vision and behaviors of local church leaders. Furthermore, Wagner (2020) notes that theological orientation, leadership training models, and support services provided by different conferences can foster varying expectations of spiritual leadership, which in turn influence how congregations experience spirituality.

In the context of Botswana, conference distinctions may reflect regional cultural dynamics, resource disparities, and differing pastoral support structures. These factors could influence how spiritual leadership is developed and experienced at the grassroots level. Thus, including conference as a demographic variable allows the study to account for administrative and cultural nuances that may shape the leaders' behavior and congregational spirituality.

### **Church Size**

Church size is another important demographic variable in religious leadership studies, as it significantly influences organizational structure, leadership style, and

congregational engagement. According to Chaves (2006) and Olson (2008), larger churches tend to have more complex administrative structures, paid staff, and programmatic activities, while smaller churches are often more relational and leader-dependent. These structural differences can affect how leadership is enacted and how spirituality is cultivated within the congregation.

Larger congregations may benefit from scale and specialization, but can also face challenges in maintaining a close-knit spiritual atmosphere. In contrast, smaller congregations often allow for more intimate spiritual experiences and direct pastoral care, but may be limited in resources and ministry variety (Carroll & Roozen, 2002). McIntosh (2009) posits that leaders of small churches must often serve multiple roles, preacher, counselor, administrator, which places high demands on their personal spirituality and servant leadership capacity.

In the Adventist context, Kis (2010) notes that church size often influences leadership expectations. For instance, in smaller congregations, members may expect the pastor to be deeply involved in their personal lives, making relational and spiritual leadership more immediate and visible. In larger congregations, leadership may become more organizational and delegative, with spirituality being fostered through teams and programs. Considering church size as a variable in this study is therefore important, as it may moderate the expression and perceived impact of leaders' spiritual experience and behavior on congregational spirituality.

### **Church Location**

Church location, whether rural, urban, or peri-urban, is also a vital demographic variable that influences the character of religious life, access to resources, and the style of leadership required. The socio-economic, cultural, and infrastructural context of a church's location often shapes both congregational

expectations and the leader's approach to ministry (Bama & Togarasei, 2014). Urban churches, for instance, are typically embedded in more diverse and mobile populations, offering greater opportunities for outreach, but also facing challenges such as member transience and cultural plurality. In such settings, leadership may need to be more strategic, vision-oriented, and adaptive (Ammerman, 2005). In contrast, rural churches are often more homogeneous and stable, fostering deeper relational bonds but potentially resisting innovation or change. Leadership in rural areas may emphasize pastoral presence, familiarity, and community integration (Frost, 2011).

In Botswana, differences between urban and rural Adventist congregations can be pronounced due to disparities in access to education, technology, and pastoral visitation. Leaders in remote areas may rely more heavily on personal spirituality and relational leadership to sustain congregational vitality, whereas urban leaders may need to manage diverse spiritual expectations and institutional complexity. As Van der Merwe (2018) notes, church location significantly shapes the ecclesiological identity and functional demands placed on spiritual leaders in African contexts. Including church location in this study acknowledges that geographical context matters, not only for understanding how spirituality is expressed and experienced, but also for analyzing the real-life conditions under which spiritual leadership is practiced.

In sum, the inclusion of conference affiliation, church size, and church location as demographic variables allows for a more nuanced understanding of the factors that influence spiritual leadership and congregational spirituality in the Botswana Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. These variables provide essential context for interpreting how spiritual experience and leadership behavior are shaped, expressed, and received across different ministry environments.

Recognizing their potential moderating role enhances the explanatory power and contextual sensitivity of the study's theoretical framework and empirical analysis.

### **Empirical Studies**

Following a growing interest in organizational spirituality, a study (Lean, 2012) was conducted to delineate the construct of spiritual leadership and provide theoretical guidelines for future research. Lean (2012) offered a conceptual definition of spiritual leadership and a list of behaviors relevant to a spiritual leader. According to Lean (2012), using an inductive approach, this mixed method study was among the first to consider the knowledge and opinions of academic and practitioner subject matter experts. The research played a role in developing a measure of spiritual leadership. It attempted to develop a scale using an empirically-based method, such as defining the focus, generating, rating, and selecting items (Lean, 2012). The study aimed to aid in the development of the field and satisfy those not familiar with or may have reservations about spirituality (Lean, 2012), and this study follows the groundwork done to make adjustments to strengthen the study on leadership spirituality.

Kaya (2015) conducted a quantitative study aimed at examining the relationship between Spiritual Leadership and the dimensions of Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCB) of school principals from the perspectives of primary school teachers (Kaya, 2015). Spiritual leadership was an independent variable, and the subscales for organizational citizenship behavior (Altruism, Conscientiousness, Sportsmanship, Courtesy, and Civic Virtue) inter-correlations were checked. Significant correlations among all the variables were observed, and the findings indicated that the dimensions of OCB, particularly civic virtue, are predicted by spiritual leadership. The study concluded that spiritual leadership may strongly

contribute to forming more solid ground for OCB to pervade an organization (Kaya, 2015).

A qualitative study was done among educational leaders who indicated they have a spiritual practice and are responsible for overseeing personnel and student policy and forming connections to social equity and community building (O'Brien, 2019). The project involved reviewing how educational leaders apply spirituality in their ethical decision-making process and review of spiritual leadership and critical spirituality theories (O'Brien, 2019). Having addressed research questions that include a review of spiritual leadership models, a review of specific spiritual principles that guide educational leaders, as well as how they apply principles to promote social justice, create a sense of connectedness, and build a sense of community within their organization O'Brien (2019) concluded that the participants utilize varied spiritual practices for decision making in the absence of policy (Hedger, 2021).

Using a systematic review of the literature, Daud (2021) aims to shed light on the role and significance of spiritual leadership in organizational performance. Drawing evidence from empirical and conceptual studies, the research advocates for integrating spirituality into leadership and enhancing organizational performance (Daud, 2021). The study posits spiritual leadership as the key to fostering healthy and inclusive organizations and the need to bolster employee capabilities. The study's recommendation is clear, organizations should incorporate spiritual leadership into their daily management (Daud, 2021) by providing a practical roadmap for organizational leaders.

Another recent study was that done by Byiringiro and Ganu (2024) on pastors' leadership behaviors (perceived), leadership skills, and member well-being.

The relationships between perceived spiritual leadership behavior, leadership skills, and spiritual well-being are investigated in this quantitative study conducted among Seventh-day Adventist congregations in Rwanda (Byiringiro & Ganu, 2024). The significant findings from the study are correlations between spiritual leadership, leadership skills (leading by example, integrity, spiritual caregiving, and counseling), age, and spiritual well-being, except demographic variables (age, educational level, and gender) having little impact on spiritual well-being. The summary of the findings emphasized that, overall, spiritual leadership significantly predicted congregational spiritual well-being, thus showing the importance of spiritual leadership behaviors in enhancing congregational spiritual well-being (Byiringiro & Ganu, 2024).

A study by Samul (2024) shows the relationship between spiritual leadership and leadership theories and other positive leadership concepts based on ethical and moral values. The literature review analysis in the study showed that spiritual values in the past decade permeate the current leadership approaches (Samul, 2024). Common constructs of leadership theories included factors like spiritual, moral, and ethical values, attitudes, and behaviors of leaders expressed by spreading a vision, giving hope for its realization, expressing trust in its achievement, loving approach to others, caring for well-being to achieve individual and organizational outcomes (Samul, 2024). Spirituality is a regular occurrence in previous definitions of leadership. It is a reminder of the crux of leadership (Samul, 2024), parallel to adding value in current new contexts. This paper emphasizes the uniqueness of considering the spiritual side of leaders (Samul, 2024).

## **Research Gaps**

Although the concept of spiritual leadership has garnered increasing academic and practical interest globally, empirical research that critically investigates the interplay between leaders' spirituality, leadership behavior, and congregational spirituality remains underdeveloped—particularly within the African ecclesiastical landscape. This research aims to address three key gaps in the literature: contextual, conceptual, and methodological. Through an emphasis on leaders' spiritual experience as the core construct, this study contributes to leadership theory and offers practical implications for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Botswana and beyond.

Much of the extant literature on spiritual leadership originates from Western or secular organizational contexts, often situated within business, healthcare, or educational settings (Fry, 2003; Reave, 2005). While these studies have significantly shaped the theoretical development of spiritual leadership, their application to religious organizations—especially in non-Western environments—remains limited. In the African context, few studies have examined spiritual leadership in church settings with sufficient depth, scope, and empirical rigor. This is particularly true within the Seventh-day Adventist Church, where leadership studies have traditionally focused on theological training, pastoral effectiveness, or evangelism strategies, rather than on the lived spiritual experience of leaders and its organizational impact.

A comprehensive literature review by this researcher found no known quantitative studies that explore the relationship between leaders' spirituality, leadership behavior, and congregational spirituality within the SDA Church in Africa—Botswana included. The only closely related study was conducted by

Byiringiro and Ganu (2024), who examined the relationships between spiritual leadership, leadership skills, and spiritual well-being in the SDA Church in Rwanda. While insightful, their study focused on leaders' personal well-being and competency, not on how spirituality influences the spiritual dynamics of the congregation as a collective spiritual body.

Furthermore, most prior African studies have adopted qualitative methodologies, such as case studies or interviews, which, while contextually rich, do not provide generalizable or statistically grounded insights into the broader population of church leaders and members. The present study addresses this geographical and cultural research gap by focusing on local church leaders and congregants in the Botswana Union Conference. This specificity offers an authentic and locally grounded contribution to understanding how leadership spirituality is experienced and practiced within the unique sociocultural and theological fabric of Southern African Adventism.

In addition to the contextual vacuum, this study addresses significant conceptual limitations in the prevailing models of spiritual leadership. The widely cited model by Fry (2003) defines spiritual leadership as a values-based framework grounded in vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love, driven by an inner life of spiritual practices such as meditation or self-reflection. However, this model, while comprehensive in secular settings, tends to adopt a pluralistic or generic understanding of spirituality that may not adequately reflect the distinct biblical-theistic worldview of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (Fernando, 2005; Reave, 2005).

The present study reinterprets and extends Fry's model by substituting the "inner life" construct with spiritual experience, defined in this study as a leader's

active and personal relationship with God expressed through prayer, Bible study, obedience, and communal worship. This shift aligns more closely with the Adventist theological understanding of spiritual formation, where spirituality is not merely internal reflection but is demonstrated through visible acts of faith, moral integrity, and service (Blackaby & Blackaby, 2011). This reconceptualization addresses a gap in the theoretical literature by integrating an experiential and scripturally grounded perspective of spirituality into leadership theory.

Moreover, the present study introduces a mediational model where leadership behavior serves as the mechanism through which the leader's spirituality influences congregational spirituality. This addresses another underexplored area in the literature—namely, how spiritual influence is transmitted from leaders to followers. While many studies have confirmed that spiritual leaders have positive impacts on follower outcomes (Reave, 2005; Winston & Fields, 2007), few have empirically examined the behaviors that mediate this influence in religious organizations.

By operationalizing leadership behavior through observable dimensions such as sharing the vision, inspiring faith/hope, and expressing altruistic love, this study clarifies the behavioral expressions of spiritual leadership within a faith community. These constructs, although drawn from existing theories, are applied and interpreted through a biblical and ecclesiological lens, which has been largely absent in empirical leadership research.

A further limitation in the current body of knowledge is the dominance of qualitative research methods in studies on spiritual leadership. While valuable for exploring individual experiences and organizational culture, such approaches often lack the empirical robustness required to establish causality or test complex

theoretical models. This study addresses this methodological gap by employing a quantitative, cross-sectional design that allows for statistical testing of relationships between variables using data collected from a large sample of church leaders and congregants. Specifically, this study used:

- Descriptive statistics to examine the levels and patterns of leaders' spirituality, leadership behavior, and congregational spirituality.
- Simple linear regression to test the direct effect of leaders' spirituality on congregational spirituality.
- Multiple regression analysis to test the mediating role of leadership behavior in the relationship between leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality.
- Moderation analysis to assess how demographic factors (e.g., age, gender, education, and experience) influence the strength or direction of the main relationships.
- PROCESS macro by Hayes (2022) and the Sobel test (Sobel, 1982) to confirm the statistical significance of indirect effects.

This methodological approach not only enhances the validity and reliability of the findings but also contributes a statistically grounded perspective to a field that has traditionally been dominated by qualitative insights. By integrating mediation and moderation analysis within a faith-based organizational context, the study represents a methodological advancement in how spiritual leadership is measured and understood.

Furthermore, the study controlled for potential confounding variables such as church size and location, thereby increasing the precision of its findings. This

rigorous design strengthens the internal validity of the study and provides a replicable framework for future research in similar religious or cultural contexts.

In light of the above gaps, this study contributes to the advancement of leadership studies in several significant ways:

1. **Contextual Contribution:** It is one of the first quantitative studies to empirically investigate the triadic relationship between leaders' spirituality, leadership behavior, and congregational spirituality within the SDA Church in Botswana. This provides context-specific knowledge that is currently lacking in both African and Adventist scholarship.
2. **Theoretical Extension:** It reinterprets existing models of spiritual leadership from a biblically grounded Adventist worldview, thus expanding the applicability of leadership theory to religious institutions that operate with a theistic epistemology.
3. **Model Refinement:** It integrates a mediational framework by positioning leadership behavior as the conduit through which spiritual experience impacts congregational spirituality. This clarifies how leaders' personal faith translates into organizational transformation.
4. **Methodological Advancement:** It employs a robust quantitative design, incorporating PROCESS macro and the Sobel test, to test direct and indirect effects. This enhances the empirical rigor of spiritual leadership research and offers a model that can be replicated in other ecclesiastical settings.

By addressing these multi-level research gaps, the study not only enriches the academic literature but also provides practical implications for leadership

training, policy development, and spiritual formation in the SDA Church and broader Christian communities.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter considers the research methods that were employed for the study. Information on the participants is provided: the target population, who the participants were, and the specific grouping from which the sample was drawn. The philosophy and the design chosen for this study are described, and the reasons for the choice are proffered. The procedures followed in carrying out this study are considered, including the instrument used for data collection. Data analysis methods are also discussed in this chapter. Lastly, the ethical considerations that were followed in the process are also discussed.

#### **Research Philosophy and Design**

This study's research philosophy is grounded in the positivist paradigm (Park, Konge, & Artino, 2020), emphasizing a deductive approach to collecting and analyzing data (Reyes, 2004). Positivism is a research philosophy that holds that reality is objective, external, and independent of human perception. It asserts that knowledge is acquired through sense experience, empirical observation, and logical reasoning (Wilson, 2010; Joseph, 2020). Positivism further claims that "true knowledge means authentic knowledge," and that such knowledge is derived from the scientific affirmation of theories through observable, measurable evidence (Joseph, 2020, p. 123). Thus, truth is verifiable through data, and interpretation is approached through rational and logical processes.

This study employed a quantitative, non-experimental, correlational research design to examine the relationship between leaders' spirituality, leadership behavior, and congregational spirituality within the Seventh-day Adventist churches in the Botswana Union Conference. This design was appropriate for identifying the degree and direction of relationships among the variables without manipulating the study environment (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

To provide a more nuanced understanding of the philosophical assumptions underpinning this study, the framework outlined by Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) is adopted. According to these scholars, four philosophical dimensions shape a research paradigm: ontology (nature of reality), epistemology (nature of knowledge), axiology (role of values), and methodology (research strategy). These dimensions are inherently interconnected and provide the philosophical coherence necessary for effective research design.

Ontologically, the study assumes that reality is singular, fixed, and can be objectively studied. Constructs such as spiritual experience, leadership behavior, and congregational spirituality are understood as phenomena that exist independently of the researcher and can therefore be measured through empirical means.

Epistemologically, this study aligns with the positivist stance that knowledge is best acquired when the researcher remains detached and objective, thus allowing for the collection of unbiased, quantifiable data (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Axiologically, although the study investigates spiritual constructs within a religious context, it maintains a value-neutral stance in the research process. The researcher's personal beliefs are bracketed to ensure impartiality in instrument development, data collection, and analysis (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Park et al., 2020).

From a methodological perspective, the study employs a deductive approach, beginning with an established theoretical framework, Spiritual Leadership Theory (SLT), and proceeding to formulate and empirically test hypotheses. The deductive method moves from the general (theory) to the specific (observations), making it an ideal strategy when the research is guided by existing models and seeks to test the validity of those models in a new context (Soiferman, 2010; Reyes, 2004).

The primary aim of this quantitative study is to examine the influence of the leader's spiritual experience on congregational spirituality, while assessing the mediating role of leadership behavior and the moderating effect of demographic variables. SLT emphasizes the foundational role of the leader's inner life (which this study substitutes with spiritual experience from a theistic perspective) as a driver of spiritual leadership behavior, which subsequently influences organizational outcomes such as follower well-being and group spiritual climate (Fry, 2003; Fry & Kriger, 2009). This adaptation preserves the theory's structure while aligning it with the theological commitments of the research context.

To test these relationships, a cross-sectional survey design was utilized. A cross-sectional design involves the collection of data at a single point in time to assess the relationships among variables across a population (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This approach allows for the identification of patterns and correlations without requiring longitudinal observation. It is particularly suitable for this study, as it provides a snapshot of leadership dynamics and spiritual climate within the Seventh-day Adventist churches of the Botswana Union Conference. According to Bhandari (2020) and Fleetwood (2018), cross-sectional designs are efficient for assessing large populations and evaluating theoretical models quantitatively. Hall (2008) further notes

that such designs are effective in capturing differences across individuals or groups, which is essential for examining the moderating influence of demographic variables.

In sum, the research design reflects philosophical coherence by aligning the ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological assumptions of positivism (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017) with a quantitative, deductive, and cross-sectional approach. This alignment ensures that the study's design is not only theoretically robust but also methodologically appropriate for examining how leaders' spiritual experiences shape congregational spirituality through their leadership behaviors.

### **Target Population and Sampling Techniques**

The target population for this study is the local churches in Botswana Union Conference. The targeted study area is the Botswana Union Conference territory. As of the third quarter of 2023, the Botswana Union Conference had 167 organized churches from the two Conferences. The Central Limit Theorem considers 30% as a large enough sample in correlational research (Turney, 2022) , arguing that a 30% sample size can be justified for small populations or when seeking higher precision. Leaders and members from 49 churches in both North and South Botswana Conferences participated in the study. North Botswana Conference has more churches than South Botswana Conference, with approximately a 55%:45% ratio. Consequently 26 churches from North Botswana Conference and 23 Churches from South Botswana Conference were sampled for the study.

The respondents for the study hailed from among the large churches, medium churches, in rural and urban areas. The samples were drawn from current serving church leaders and local church members. The leaders identified for participation emanated from the ranks of church elders, church treasurers, church clerks and

departmental leaders. The elders were chosen because they regularly interact with members, and members see them more than they do other local church officers. The church treasurers were included in the sample because they handle the finances of the church and get to interact with members in relation to this sensitive aspect of church life. Church clerks are responsible for official communication on behalf of the church through announcements and handling of membership issues, which give them regular access and interaction with the church. Departmental leaders enjoy regular interaction with members and are often influential. By virtue of their regularity in the view of church members, departmental leaders' actions and conduct are likely to be perceived as representative of church leadership. The local church members' participation provided insight into the leadership behaviors that may impact the congregational spirituality.

A multi-stage sampling design was used to select participants for collection of data from the large geographical area of the Botswana Union Conference. The Union Conference has two Conferences.

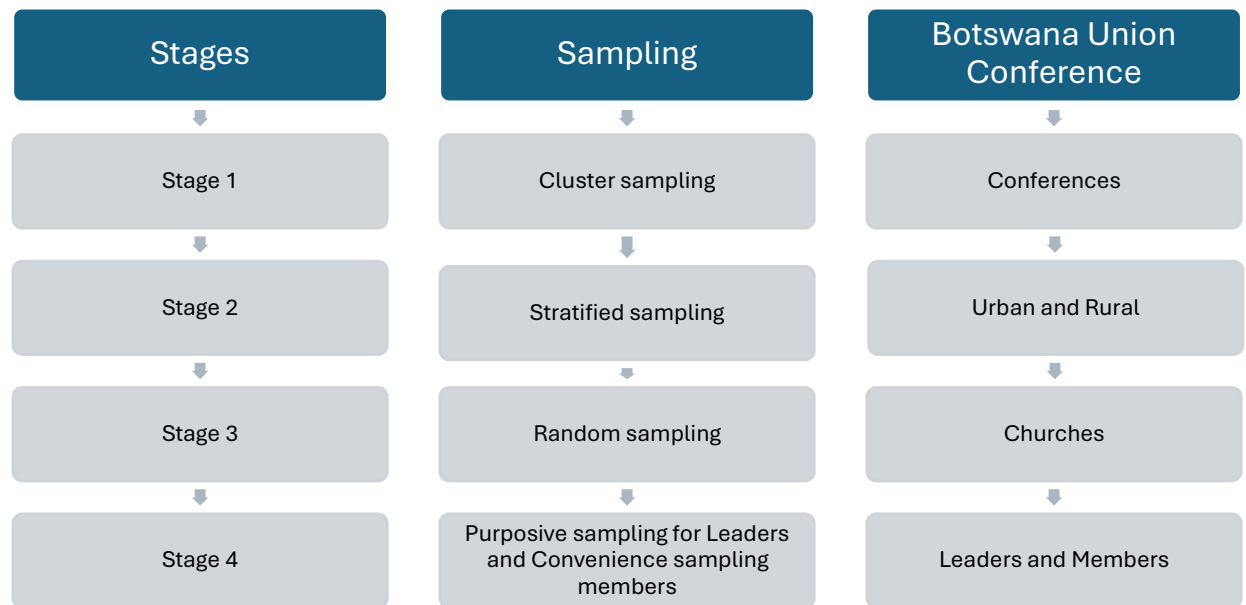
The sampling process is outlined below:

1. The local conferences (NBC & SBC) formed the sample clusters for the study.
2. The cluster population was divided into urban and rural church groups/strata.
3. Using the random sampling technique and the RAND() function in Excel, 49 churches (26 churches for NBC, and 23 churches for SBC) were selected. This process gave equal chances to all churches for inclusion in the study to remove any bias (Fleetwood, 2018).

4. Purposive sampling technique was used to select leaders, while convenience sampling was used to choose members that comprised the sample size to cater to the leader and member ratios. Table 2 provides the details for the multi-stage sampling.

**Figure 4**

*Multi-stage Sampling*



Four (4) church leaders were selected as respondents from each of the 49 churches: the first elder, the church clerk, the church treasurer, and one departmental leader for each church. Respondents were chosen based on a purposive sampling procedure, following the criteria below.

**Inclusion Criteria for Leaders**

The following inclusion criteria were applied in selecting the local church leaders for participation in the study:

1. Subjects were included if they were local church leaders who were currently serving on the Church Board, irrespective of when the elections that brought them in happened.
2. Subjects were included if they were local church leaders who met the above criterion and were available and willing to participate.

Regarding the church members, four (4) of them were chosen: a youth, two adults and an older person. These categories ensured a fair representation of the different age cohorts of the church membership. Within each category, the participants were selected according to their availability.

### **Inclusion Criteria for Members**

The inclusion criteria were:

1. 1 youth 18-30; the adult 31-55; older persons above 55.
2. Regular baptized member, irrespective of when they were baptised.
3. At least one year worshipping in the particular local church.
4. Available and willing to participate.

### **Exclusion Criteria**

Exclusion:

1. Member under disciplinary action.
2. Member less than one year worshipping in particular church.
3. Irregular worshipper at particular church.

For the North Botswana Conference, we anticipated 30 Churches with 240 participants in all, and for the South Botswana Conference, we anticipated 20 churches with 160 participants in all. Table 3 below shows the anticipated sample size for the study. Various factors, including the willingness to participate, technological

challenges, and other unknown reasons, inform the changes in the final respondents as reported in Chapter 4.

**Table 2.**

*Target Sample Size*

| Target            | North Botswana<br>Conference<br>30 churches                                             | South Botswana<br>Conference<br>20 churches                                             | Total |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Church<br>members | 30 youths<br>60 adults<br>30 older persons                                              | 20 youths<br>40 adults<br>20 older persons                                              |       |
| Total             | 120                                                                                     | 80                                                                                      | 200   |
| Leaders           | 30 church elders<br>30 church clerks<br>30 church treasurers<br>30 departmental leaders | 20 church elders<br>20 church clerks<br>20 church treasurers<br>20 departmental leaders |       |
| Total             | 120                                                                                     | 80                                                                                      | 200   |

### **Instruments for Data Collection**

The study used two questionnaires for data collection, one for leaders and the other for members, and the data collection instruments had two sections with six segments. Section one focused on the Demographics, while section two covered Daily Spiritual Experience (for leaders only), Spiritual leadership behavior, and Organizational spirituality. To measure relationship experiences with the Divine and awareness thereof, and how understandings and beliefs formed part of daily moment features of life from a spiritual or religious perspective, the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (Underwood, 2011), which had 16 items, and Likert scale with response range of 1 to 6. The items were reduced to 15 to avoid redundancy, and the Likert scale was adjusted to a scale of 1 to 4 to facilitate a clearer differentiation and to avoid neutrality. Self-performed spiritual leadership behaviors used a scale based on Fry's

spiritual leadership theory (Fry, 2003) designed for self-assessment to determine the scale's perception levels. This section had three dimensions: Vision with six items, Hope/Faith with 4 items, and Altruistic love with six items. The scale has 15 items, while the Likert scale ranged 1 to 4. Milliman et al.'s (2003) questionnaire was used to measure organizational spirituality, and this had 12 questions and three components: 4 items for connection, four items for compassion, and four items for meaningfulness. The scale used a Likert scale of 1 to 4. The interpretation of the scale used the proposed scale supported by Boone & Boone, (2012) which supports categorizing means scores into descriptive ranges as shown in Table 4 below.

**Table 3**

*Interpretation of Scale*

| Scale | Responses         | Mean Interval | Leaders' and Congregation's Spiritual Experience/ Leaders' Behavior |
|-------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.    | Strongly Disagree | 1.00 – 1.74   | Very low level/Very rarely exhibited                                |
| 2.    | Disagree          | 1.75 – 2.49   | Low level/Rarely exhibited                                          |
| 3.    | Agree             | 2.50 – 3.24   | High level/Often exhibited                                          |
| 4.    | Strongly Agree    | 3.25 – 4.00   | Very high level/Very often exhibited                                |

### **Instrument Validity and Reliability**

Instrument validity refers to the instrument's ability to measure what it sets out to measure. Creswell and Creswell (2018) further indicate that there are three types of validity, "(a) content validity (Do the items measure the content they were intended to measure?), (b) predictive or concurrent validity (Do scores predict a criterion measure? Do results correlate with other results?), and (c) construct validity (Do items measure hypothetical constructs or concepts?)." (p. 153). A content expert tested the questionnaire for content validity. Concurrent and construct validity was also tested

by the content experts using the original and adjusted questionnaire (Frost, 2022). After looking at each question, to evaluate the internal consistency of items, and to improve instrument format, questions, and instructions, all comments were taken into consideration and necessary adjustments made.

The questionnaire was tested for reliability through a pilot test (Cotter et al., 2018) done in a local church in Gaborone with 20 participants. Further, the reliability of the research instrument was checked using Cronbach's coefficient alpha. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), the reliability coefficient shows the extent to which the items in a set are positively correlated to each other, and its standard measure up to 0.6 and higher. Cronbach's alpha values above 0.7 are considered acceptable for research purposes, with higher values up to 0.9 indicating stronger internal consistency (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011; George and Mallery, 2019). The reliability for the Leaders' questionnaire was tested, and it demonstrated a Cronbach's alpha ranging from .688 (Altruistic Love) to .857 (Vision) as seen in Table 5 and Table 6 below.

**Table 4**

*Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients (Leaders' Questionnaire)*

| Variable                   | Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient | Number of Items |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Daily spiritual experience | .724                         | 15              |
| Vision                     | .857                         | 6               |
| Hope/Faith                 | .723                         | 4               |
| Altruistic love            | .688                         | 6               |
| Connection                 | .758                         | 4               |
| Compassion                 | .800                         | 4               |
| Meaningfulness             | .693                         | 4               |

The reliability for the Members' questionnaire was tested and it demonstrated a Cronbach's alpha ranging from .671 (Altruistic Love) to .947 (Vision) as seen in tables below.

**Table 5**

*Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients (Members' Questionnaire)*

| Variable        | Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient | Number of Items |
|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Vision          | .911                         | 6               |
| Hope/Faith      | .912                         | 4               |
| Altruistic love | .866                         | 6               |
| Connection      | .947                         | 4               |
| Compassion      | .832                         | 4               |
| Meaningfulness  | .671                         | 4               |

### **Method of Data Collection Procedure**

The questionnaire was administered online using Google Forms. The online option helped reduce costs and time spent entering information into a database; however, close monitoring was done to handle the limitations of online data collection platforms, such as data security or low response rates. These approaches enabled all respondents to participate, taking into consideration the distances between sites in the Conference districts and the availability of resources, including access to the Internet. Permission was sought through the Botswana Union Conference Administration, South Botswana Conference Administration and North Botswana Conference Administration, to administer the questionnaire in local churches in the various sites. Further, a request for church members to participate in the study explaining the objectives of the study, was made through email and WhatsApp groups created for leaders and members. District pastors added willing respondents to their respective groups, leaders to the leaders' group and members to their group. Data collection was

completed in three weeks. The online responses were then downloaded into a Microsoft Excel sheet and exported to IBM's Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 30 for data cleaning and analysis.

### **Harmonizing Research Questions and Hypotheses**

In this study, both the research questions and hypotheses were designed to examine the influence of leaders' spirituality on congregational spirituality, with leadership behavior serving as a mediating or explanatory construct. Although research questions typically serve a descriptive and exploratory purpose, and hypotheses serve a confirmatory and inferential function, both were aligned to explore the same central relationships within the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study.

To ensure conceptual and analytical harmony, the instruments administered to leaders and members were aligned to capture corresponding constructs, albeit from different perspectives. The leaders' questionnaire included the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES) to measure leaders' personal spirituality, demographic items such as years of service and position in church, and items measuring leadership behavior and congregational spirituality. In contrast, the members' questionnaire excluded the DSES and demographic items specific to leadership roles but maintained similar scales to assess perceptions of leadership behavior and congregational spirituality.

Data collected from leaders were thus corroborated with corresponding data collected from members, particularly on shared constructs such as leadership behavior and congregational spirituality. The comparison of self-reported leadership behavior and spirituality from leaders with members' perceptions enabled triangulation and strengthened the internal validity of the findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Cohen,

Manion, & Morrison, 2018). Descriptive statistical analyses were used to answer the research questions, offering insight into the central tendencies and variability within responses. Inferential analyses, including simple and multiple linear regression, were employed to test the study's hypotheses and assess the statistical significance and predictive strength of relationships among the core variables—leaders' spiritual experience, leadership behavior, and congregational spirituality. For instance, the fourth research question sought to determine whether a significant relationship existed between leaders' spiritual experience (as measured by DSES) and congregational spirituality. This was addressed using simple linear regression, ensuring that both the research question and hypothesis led to a unified analytical outcome.

By integrating descriptive and inferential methods in a logically coherent framework, the analysis ensured that findings related to both questions and hypotheses were mutually reinforcing and conceptually aligned. This harmonized approach not only ensured methodological rigor but also strengthened the study's capacity to draw meaningful conclusions regarding the influence of leaders' spiritual experience and leadership behavior on congregational spirituality (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Punch & Oancea, 2014).

### **Corroboration of Data from Leaders and Members**

In this study, data were collected from two distinct groups: church leaders and congregational members. This dual-sample approach was essential to examine the hypothesized relationship between leaders' spiritual experience and congregational spirituality. While the two groups responded to similar instruments, key variations were made to accommodate the role-specific characteristics of each population. The instruments administered were designed to assess common constructs, specifically spiritual experience and congregational spirituality, while maintaining contextual

relevance for each group. The primary variation between the tools was found in the first section of the leaders' questionnaire, which included the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES; Underwood, 2006), years of service, and church position, none of which were applicable to members. The members' questionnaire, therefore, omitted these items and focused instead on perceptions and expressions of congregational spirituality.

To ensure conceptual alignment between the datasets, both instruments included items addressing congregational spirituality using the same Likert-scale format, adapted from validated instruments and the literature (e.g., Kinjerski & Skrypnik, 2006; Milliman et al., 2003; Brubaker, 2016). This allowed for direct comparison and correlation of members' perceptions of spirituality within the congregation and leaders' self-reported spiritual experience and leadership behaviors. The data collected were corroborated at the analytical level through statistical procedures. Specifically, simple linear regression analysis was used to determine whether a statistically significant relationship existed between the spiritual experience of leaders (as measured by the DSES) and the congregational spirituality scores provided by members. The use of regression enabled testing whether the independent variable (leaders' spirituality) could predict variations in the dependent variable (congregational spirituality), thus allowing for empirical triangulation between the two datasets.

Further, internal consistency checks and preliminary descriptive comparisons ensured that responses from both groups conformed to the expected distribution patterns, increasing confidence in the findings. This corroborative design enhanced the internal validity of the study by enabling a more holistic understanding of how leadership spirituality influences the wider congregational spiritual environment. As

Creswell and Creswell (2018) note, multi-group corroboration strengthens the trustworthiness of quantitative findings by capturing different perspectives on shared constructs. In conclusion, while the leader and member instruments had slight structural differences, the parallelism in their core constructs permitted meaningful comparison and inferential analysis. This approach ensured the integrity of the conclusions drawn regarding the influence of leaders' spiritual experience on congregational spirituality.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Different statistical analysis procedures were employed to address the specific research questions of this study, utilizing IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 30) as the primary tool for quantitative data analysis. Both descriptive and inferential statistical methods were applied, aligned with the nature of the variables and the research objectives. Analyses were conducted to assess the spiritual experience of church leaders, the level of congregational spirituality, the mediating role of leadership behavior, and the moderating influence of demographic factors such as Conference, Church size, and Church location. The use of SPSS ensured rigorous and standardized analysis, enhancing the validity and reliability of the results (Field, 2018).

Research Question One focused on establishing the spiritual experience level of local church leaders in the Botswana Union Conference. To address this, descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages, were used to summarize responses and identify trends and distributions across the sampled population (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2017).

Research Question Two examined the level of congregational spirituality. Similarly, descriptive statistics were employed to explore central tendencies and

dispersion measures, allowing for the identification of spirituality trends and characteristics within local congregations.

Research Question Three sought to assess the leadership behavior of local church leaders, including dimensions such as Sharing the Vision, Inspiring Faith/Hope, and Exhibiting Altruistic Love. To examine this, descriptive statistical analysis was used to evaluate participants' responses to each leadership behavior dimension. This helped determine how frequently these behaviors were perceived and how they varied across respondents.

Research Question Four aimed to determine whether a relationship existed between leaders' spiritual experience and congregational spirituality. A simple linear regression analysis was performed to test this relationship, establishing whether leaders' spirituality significantly predicted congregational spirituality. This analysis quantified the strength and direction of the association, providing preliminary evidence for the hypothesized effect (Cohen et al., 2018).

Research Question Five tested whether leadership behavior mediated the relationship between leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality. A multiple linear regression analysis using the PROCESS macro (Model 4) developed by Hayes (2022) was conducted. The mediation effect was assessed by estimating the indirect effect of spiritual experience on congregational spirituality through leadership behavior. Additionally, to test the hypothesized mediating effect of leadership behavior on the relationship between leaders' spiritual experience and congregational spirituality, this study employed both Baron and Kenny's (1986) mediation framework and the Sobel test (Sobel, 1982). The Sobel test was used to assess the statistical significance of the indirect effect, which represented the product of the path from the independent variable (spiritual experience) to the mediator (leadership

behavior), and the path from the mediator to the dependent variable (congregational spirituality). The test computed a Z-score based on the unstandardized regression coefficients and their standard errors. A Z-value exceeding  $\pm 1.96$  indicated a statistically significant mediation effect at the 0.05 level (Preacher & Leonardelli, 2001). The application of the Sobel test added rigor to the mediation analysis by providing a formal statistical test for the significance of the indirect pathway.

Research Question Six explored whether demographic factors moderated the relationship between leaders' spiritual experience and congregational spirituality. Moderated regression analysis was performed using the PROCESS macro (Model 1) to identify any interaction effects between demographic variables (e.g., conference, church size, church location) and spiritual experience on the outcome variable. This analysis tested whether the strength or direction of the relationship varied across demographic subgroups, enhancing the contextual understanding of spiritual leadership's effects.

Finally, regression analysis was used to control for potential confounding variables such as church size and church location. These control variables were included to ensure that the observed effects were not spuriously influenced by structural or geographic factors. Collectively, the analytic methods provided a comprehensive approach to answering the research questions and testing the proposed relationships, supporting the study's overall objective of examining the influence of leaders' spirituality on congregational spirituality through leadership behavior in local Seventh-day Adventist churches of the Botswana Union Conference.

### **Assumptions of Simple Linear Regression**

To determine whether a statistically significant relationship exists between leaders' spiritual experience (independent variable) and congregational spirituality

(dependent variable), simple linear regression was used. The validity and reliability of regression analysis are contingent upon certain statistical assumptions being satisfied (Field, 2018; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). The following assumptions were assessed and confirmed:

### **Linearity**

The assumption of linearity posits that the relationship between the independent and dependent variables is linear. That is, the change in the dependent variable is directly proportional to the change in the independent variable (Keith, 2015).

Assessment: A scatterplot of leaders' spiritual experience against congregational spirituality indicated a reasonably linear pattern. This visual inspection supported the linearity assumption.

### **Independence of Observations**

Linear regression requires that the residuals are independent, meaning the responses from participants are not influenced by one another.

Assessment: The Durbin-Watson statistic was 1.89, which falls within the acceptable range of 1.5 to 2.5, suggesting no autocorrelation and thus confirming the independence of residuals (Field, 2018).

### **Homoscedasticity (Equal Variance of Errors)**

Homoscedasticity refers to the assumption that the residuals exhibit constant variance across all levels of the independent variable.

Assessment: A plot of standardized residuals versus predicted values showed no discernible funnel or curvature pattern, indicating consistent variance across the

range of values. This confirmed the assumption of homoscedasticity (Osborne & Waters, 2002).

### **Normality of Residuals**

This assumption requires that the residuals of the model be approximately normally distributed to allow for valid hypothesis testing and accurate confidence intervals.

Assessment: A histogram and normal Q-Q plot of standardized residuals showed no major deviations from normality. The Shapiro-Wilk test produced a p-value of .066, which is greater than the conventional alpha level of .05, indicating no significant departure from normality (Razali & Wah, 2011).

### **Absence of Outliers and Influential Points**

Outliers and high-leverage points can disproportionately influence regression results and distort interpretations.

Assessment: Standardized residuals were all within  $\pm 3$ , indicating no extreme outliers. Additionally, Cook's Distance values were all less than 1.0, and leverage values fell within acceptable ranges, confirming that no data points had undue influence on the model (Stevens, 2009).

All the required assumptions for simple linear regression were evaluated and found to be satisfactorily met. This ensured that the analysis appropriately assessed the relationship between leaders' spiritual experience and congregational spirituality. The results of the regression analysis can therefore be interpreted with statistical confidence and conceptual relevance to the study.

## **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations were adhered to protect the dignity, rights, and welfare of research participants (George MS et al., 2023). For a start, ethical clearance from The Adventist University of Africa Institutional Scientific and Ethics Review Committee (AUA, ISERC and approval of the research instruments before data collection began were requested. Data collection started following that approval. Further, permission was requested from the authors or originators for the use of assessment tools, and in this study the Underwood was contacted for permission to use the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES).

The individual participants was informed of their right to choose to participate or not. The participants completed the questionnaire once they signed the informed consent. Even after signing the form, participants were informed that they are allowed not to continue the process if they so wish, with no penalty whatsoever. An effort was made to ensure no harm is caused to participants and the churches they serve during and after research by handling data and all documentation professionally and in a scholarly manner (Flanagin et al., 2020). For churches that agreed to participate in the survey, the participants were added to the WhatsApp groups where questionnaires were sent with consent form requirement set a mandatory to proceed with the survey. Participants were also assured of confidentiality and anonymity as questionnaires had no identifying markers, and no data on personal identity, such as names, were required.

Best practices for keeping data confidential were followed by taking steps to safeguard the data (*Best Practices for Data Analysis of Confidential Data*, n.d.) and prevent any threats to data privacy (Bhandari, 2021). All signed responses, written

records, and research materials were stored in secured files, and all software files with survey data were password-protected (Jenkins, 2009).

The researcher ensured the work is as original as possible and free from plagiarism, making certain to credit all sources that were used in the writing of the dissertation. The researcher conducted the research with the guidance of advisors and the methodologist and made all necessary improvements and corrections during the research process.

### **Researcher Positionality**

In research, positionality refers to the researcher's social, cultural, spiritual, and professional standpoint in relation to the research context, participants, and inquiry process. It involves self-reflection on the ways in which the researcher's identity, values, experiences, and power dynamics may influence the research design, data interpretation, and knowledge production (Holmes, 2020). Positionality is essential in faith-based research, where the boundaries between insider and outsider roles may directly shape access, trust, and interpretation (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

As the researcher conducting this study within the context of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Botswana, I occupy an "insider" positionality. I am both a member of the church and a participant in its ecclesial culture, which grants me familiarity with its theological frameworks, leadership structures, and spiritual practices. This insider status offers unique advantages, including access to research sites, shared language and values with participants, and a deep contextual understanding of the dynamics being studied (Chacko, 2004). It enhances the credibility and depth of interpretation, particularly in examining how leaders' spiritual experiences shape congregational spirituality within a specific denominational and cultural framework.

At the same time, this positionality demands careful reflexivity. As Denzin and Lincoln (2018) argue, researchers must continually interrogate how their assumptions and affiliations may introduce bias or over-identification with participants. Being an insider may lead to assumptions of shared understanding or uncritical acceptance of spiritual norms that require objective scrutiny. To mitigate such risks, I have implemented ethical and methodological safeguards, including the careful choice of the participants (both church elders and regular church members) to ensure a good representation of the population, the use of standardized instruments, and transparent reporting of the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Theologically, my own spiritual worldview aligns with the Christian theistic orientation that undergirds this study. I believe that spirituality is central to effective leadership and that leaders' connection with God profoundly impacts their influence on others. While this belief informs the theoretical framing of spiritual experience and spiritual leadership in this study, care has been taken to base the research model on scholarly literature and empirical methods, ensuring academic rigor and validity.

In summary, my positionality as a spiritually invested member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church shapes both my motivation and perspective in conducting this study. By openly acknowledging this positionality, I aim to enhance the trustworthiness, transparency, and contextual sensitivity of the research while contributing meaningful insights to the discourse on spiritual leadership in African faith communities.

## CHAPTER 4

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS FINDINGS

This chapter presents and analyses the findings of the study. The purpose of this study was to establish the effects of the leaders' spirituality on congregational spirituality through leaders' behavior in the Botswana Union Conference, and specifically at the local Church level. To achieve this objective, the data analysis process is clearly outlined, and the hypotheses formulated in Chapter One are tested in light of the findings. Statistical analysis was conducted using the appropriate tools available in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), ensuring both rigor and reliability in the interpretation of results. The chapter begins with a brief overview of the study setting, followed by a discussion of the response rate, data screening procedures, and assessments of data accuracy. It then presents the demographic profile of the respondents and participating churches. The chapter proceeds with an analysis of responses to survey Questions 1 through 6, which form the foundation for evaluating the relationships among leaders' spirituality, leadership behavior, and congregational spirituality moderated by the church as a unit.

#### **Study Area Setting**

The Botswana Union Conference (BUC) comprises two Conferences that cover the entire territory of Botswana. As a regional administrative entity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, BUC serves as a critical organizational framework that oversees the church's spiritual, administrative, and developmental activities in the

country. Botswana itself is a landlocked country located in the southern part of Africa, geographically surrounded by South Africa to the south and southeast, Namibia to the west and north, Zambia to the north, and Zimbabwe to the northeast (Central Intelligence Agency [CIA], 2024). This central positioning within the Southern African region places Botswana at a strategic intersection for socio-economic and religious interaction with neighboring countries, enhancing cross-border cultural and religious influences (Chitando, 2005).

Botswana is a recognized member state of both the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), with the SADC Secretariat headquartered in Gaborone, the capital city of Botswana. These memberships reflect the nation's commitment to regional development and integration. The objectives of the SADC are multifaceted, aiming to enable economic development, foster peace and security, alleviate poverty, support vulnerable groups, and enhance the overall quality of life for the people of Southern Africa. A notable focus of the SADC is on empowering the socially disadvantaged through regional integration initiatives (Southern African Development Community [SADC], 2012). These socio-political and economic objectives inevitably influence the context within which religious institutions, including the Seventh-day Adventist Church, operate. Religious leadership in Botswana, therefore, functions within a broader environment shaped by regional policies and socio-economic priorities, which often require leaders to provide not only spiritual guidance but also community support and leadership on developmental issues (Togarasei, 2010).

The Southern African region, including Botswana, is predominantly inhabited by Bantu ethnic groups. These tribes form the majority of the population and share historical, linguistic, and cultural ties that have significantly shaped the religious

landscape of the region (Mazonde & Thomas, 2007). Historically, the Bantu peoples accepted Christianity around the colonial era, a time marked by increased missionary activity and Western influence. The missionary movement, spearheaded by European and American missions, introduced Christian doctrines and practices while also establishing schools, hospitals, and other institutions to serve local communities (Walls, 2002). These institutions played a pivotal role in embedding Christian values into the societal fabric, thereby laying a strong foundation for the growth and influence of various Christian denominations, including the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is among the Christian denominations that expanded significantly during and after the colonial period in Southern Africa. In Botswana, the growth of the church can be largely attributed to the compassionate outreach of medical missionaries. These missionaries not only provided physical healing but also introduced many to the Christian faith through practical demonstrations of love and service (Bediako, 1995). The blending of medical ministry with evangelism proved effective in winning converts and establishing a lasting religious presence in the country. Today, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Botswana has a membership of 50,337 as of June 2024, reflecting its continued growth and the enduring impact of its early mission work (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2024).

Despite this numerical growth, the impetus for this study stems from a perceived spiritual stagnation or decline in the quality of spiritual life within the church. This perceived lack of spiritual fervor has become a matter of concern among members and leaders alike, suggesting a potential disconnect between organizational growth and spiritual vitality. It is assumed that one of the contributing factors to this

spiritual shortfall is the leadership challenges that have emerged in recent years. These challenges may include issues related to leadership behavior, decision-making practices, and the spiritual maturity or orientation of leaders serving in various capacities within the church (Mutero, 2017).

Given this context, the study seeks to explore how the spirituality of leaders within the Botswana Union Conference influences the overall spirituality of their congregations, particularly through the lens of their leadership behavior. The local church setting within Botswana offers a unique context for examining the interplay between spiritual leadership and congregational spiritual outcomes, especially considering the historical, cultural, and organizational dynamics at play. This setting is not only geographically and demographically distinct but also spiritually complex, offering fertile ground for investigating how leadership rooted in a theistic worldview can foster or hinder spiritual development within a faith community.

Understanding the setting of the Botswana Union Conference is thus crucial for appreciating the broader implications of this study. By situating the research within this specific geographical and socio-cultural context, the study aims to provide insights that are both locally grounded and potentially applicable to similar church settings across the Southern African region and beyond.

### **Response Rate**

The study used an online method utilizing *Google Forms* to gather data. To address the issues around the figure that constitutes an acceptable response rate for any given study, I observe that a 60 +/- response rate is acceptable for a scientific study (Baruch, 1999). For the current study, a total of 142 leaders and 167 members responses were garnered out of the 400 links that had been sent to the respondents of our study population. The 142 over 200 responses for leaders constituted a response

rate of 71%, while the 167 over 200 responses for members constituted a response rate of 83.35%, a rate which fell within the acceptable scientific range.

**Table 6**

*Response Rate*

| Target         | Botswana Union<br>Conference<br>49 churches                                             | Links<br>Distributed | Response rate                                                                           |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Church members | 49 youths<br>97 adults<br>21 older persons                                              |                      |                                                                                         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>167 responses received</b>                                                           | <b>200</b>           | <b>83.35%</b>                                                                           |
| Leaders        | 72 church elders<br>27 church clerks<br>17 church treasurers<br>26 departmental leaders |                      | 20 church elders<br>20 church clerks<br>20 church treasurers<br>20 departmental leaders |
| Total          | 142 responses received                                                                  | 200                  | 71%                                                                                     |

### **Data Screening**

Screening of the data was done to facilitate the analysis of the information obtained in the course of this study. This involved checking for errors and finding and then correcting them. This first step was also necessitated by the huge volume of data gathered. Data screening gives both the researcher and readers confidence about the study results. According to Mertler and Reinhart (2016), to ascertain the correctness of the collected data, assess the processing of missing data, evaluate the effect of extreme values, and confirm the adequacy of the data and analysis procedures, data screening must be done. This protocol must be done regardless of its tedious and time-consuming exercise nature. To enhance the accuracy of results, the software package, SPSS (version 30) was used to determine missing data, reliability, linearity, and univariate and multivariate outliers.

## **Data Accuracy**

Data were collected through an online data collection tool called *Google Forms*. The online tool results output is considered secure, When it comes to safety, Google Forms is generally considered secure. Google employs strong encryption methods to protect data, both while it's being sent and when it's stored. This means that information is safeguarded against unauthorized access. Therefore, its accuracy can be deemed reliable. After downloading the data to Microsoft Excel, the data were filtered, cleaned, and carefully exported to SPSS.

## **Testing Multiple Linear Regression Assumptions**

### **Linearity of Relationship between Independent and Dependent Variables**

The linearity assumption was tested with scatterplots. All scatterplots depict linear relationship.

### **Normality of Distribution**

The multiple linear regression analysis requires that the errors between observed and predicted values (i.e., the residuals of the regression) should be normally distributed. Normality was checked with a goodness of fit test, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, conducted on the residuals themselves. It was found that the residuals of the regression follow a normal distribution,  $p = .200 > .05$  and  $p = .115 > .05$ , respectively.

### **Multicollinearity**

Multiple linear regression assumes that there is no multicollinearity in the data. Multicollinearity occurs when the independent variables are highly correlated with each other.

Multicollinearity was checked by analyzing the variance inflation factor (VIF) of the linear regression, which indicate the degree that the variances in the regression estimates are increased due to multicollinearity, that is, when VIF values are higher than 5. As shown in the table 8 below, the VIFs are both 1.155, which are less than 5, therefore, multicollinearity is not found in the data.

**Table 7**

*Collinearity Statistics*

| Coefficients <sup>a</sup>                          |                              |                |       |             |       |       |              |       |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|-------|-------------|-------|-------|--------------|-------|
| Model                                              |                              | Unstandardize  |       | Standardize | T     | Sig.  | Collinearity |       |
|                                                    |                              | d Coefficients |       | d           |       |       | Statistics   |       |
|                                                    |                              | B              | Std.  | Beta        |       |       | Tolerance    | VIF   |
|                                                    |                              |                | Error |             |       |       |              |       |
| 1                                                  | (Constant)                   | .827           | .478  |             | 1.732 | .090  |              |       |
|                                                    | Church Leaders' Spirituality | .222           | .147  | .167        | 1.509 | .138  | .866         | 1.155 |
|                                                    | Leadership Behavior          | .466           | .081  | .636        | 5.734 | <.001 | .866         | 1.155 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality |                              |                |       |             |       |       |              |       |

### **Homoscedasticity**

The assumption of homoscedasticity (meaning “same variance”) is central to linear regression models. Homoscedasticity describes a situation in which the error term (random disturbance in the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable) is the same across all values of the independent variables.

To check for homoscedasticity, a scatterplot of residuals versus predicted values was obtained. The scatterplot shows no clear pattern in the distribution, that is the points in the residual plots are randomly scattered. There is no cone-shaped

pattern which is a sign of heteroscedasticity. Thus, the assumption of homoscedasticity is met.

### **Demographic Characteristics**

Demographic characteristics are distinct criteria of the given sample population. They may be used to control for the demographic variables to establish a significant contribution in explaining variance among the independent variables. In the current study, demographic characteristics included, age, gender, position in the local church, marital status, years of membership, and education. Descriptive statistics using SPSS were used to analyze the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

#### **Age**

The respondents comprised local church leaders, Table 8, and church members, Table 9, of 18 years and above. In the current study, it emerged that the majority of the leaders who responded were aged 46-55 (36 %), while the majority of church members who responded were aged 36-45, constituting 27.5% of the total number of respondents, as seen in Tables 9 (leaders) and Table 10 (members) below. This age distribution of the respondents was not surprising, as these are individuals who are active in the church and at a stage where the church still entrusts them with leadership opportunities.

**Table 8**

*Age Statistics (Leaders)*

|            |                    | Frequency | Percent |
|------------|--------------------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Age</b> | 18-21 years        | 6         | 4.2     |
|            | 22-35 years        | 28        | 19.7    |
|            | 36-45 years        | 41        | 28.9    |
|            | 46-55 years        | 52        | 36.6    |
|            | 56 years and above | 15        | 10.6    |
|            | Total              | 142       | 100.0   |

**Table 9***Age Statistics (Members)*

|            |                    | Frequency | Percent |
|------------|--------------------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Age</b> | 18-21 years        | 11        | 6.6     |
|            | 22-35 years        | 38        | 22.8    |
|            | 36-45 years        | 46        | 27.5    |
|            | 46-55 years        | 51        | 30.5    |
|            | 56 years and above | 21        | 12.6    |
|            | Total              | 167       | 100.0   |

**Gender**

According to Table 11 (leaders) and Table 12 (members) below, of the 142 leaders respondents in the final sample, 43.7% were females, and 56.3% were males, while for the member respondents, 57.5% were females, and 42.5% were males. Even though more males (56%) responded to the leaders' questionnaire it seems that of the total percentage of respondents more females (43.7% for leaders + 57.5% for members) than males (56.3% leaders + 42.5% members) participated in this study. Studies have shown that more females than males tend to join the Church. The Gender Statistics (2021) reveal that females are more by 17% in the church reporting 57% females, and 43% males in the global Seventh Day Adventist Church membership. This study is consistent with and supports the gender statistics of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, showing a fair representation of the Church.

**Table 10***Gender Statistics (Leaders)*

|        |        | Frequency | Percent |
|--------|--------|-----------|---------|
| Gender | Male   | 80        | 56.3    |
|        | Female | 62        | 43.7    |
|        | Total  | 142       | 100.0   |

**Table 11***Gender Statistics (Members)*

|        |        | Frequency | Percent |
|--------|--------|-----------|---------|
| Gender | Male   | 71        | 42.5    |
|        | Female | 96        | 57.5    |
|        | Total  | 167       | 100.0   |

**Positions**

In Table 13, of the 142 leader respondents, more than half of the leaders who were respondents in this study 50.7% reported that they were first elders while 19% were church clerks, 18.3% departmental leaders and 12% were treasurers in the local churches. This likely explains the variance between males and females leader respondents, the majority of whom were males. The role of an elder is mostly filled by males in the church in Botswana.

**Table 12***Leader Positions*

|          |                   | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| Position | First Elder       | 72        | 50.7    |
|          | Treasurer         | 17        | 12.0    |
|          | Clerk             | 27        | 19.0    |
|          | Department Leader | 26        | 18.3    |
|          | Total             | 142       | 100.0   |

## Marital Status

According to Table 14 (leaders) and Table 15 (member) below, the respondents were predominantly married 66.9% (leaders) and 50.9% (members), followed by those who were single 29.6% (leaders) and 40.7% (members). Those who are widowed formed 2.1% (leaders) and 5.4% (members), while the divorced constituted 1.4% (leaders) and 2.4% (members) of the total sample. It makes sense that the majority of the respondents turned out to be married because, in most instances, the role of leaders and particularly that of elders, clerks, and treasurers, is given much attention during officer elections. Oftentimes, marriage is considered essential for these church leadership roles amidst a decline in statistics of registered marriages in Botswana, which does affect the church statistics. This is seen in the differences in percentages of married participants between leaders and members.

**Table 13**

### *Marital Status (Leaders)*

|                |          | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------|----------|-----------|---------|
| Marital Status | Single   | 42        | 29.6    |
|                | Married  | 95        | 66.9    |
|                | Widow/er | 3         | 2.1     |
|                | Divorced | 2         | 1.4     |
|                | Total    | 142       | 100.0   |

**Table 14***Marital Status (Members)*

|                |             | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------|-------------|-----------|---------|
| Marital Status | Single      | 68        | 40.7    |
|                | Married     | 85        | 50.9    |
|                | Widow/er    | 9         | 5.4     |
|                | Divorced    | 4         | 2.4     |
|                | Total       | 166       | 99.4    |
|                | No response | 1         | .6      |
| Total          |             | 167       | 100.0   |

**Years of Service**

The majority of the leaders who were respondents in this study, as seen in Table 16, 41.8% reported that they had served 6-10 years, while 30.5% served for 11 years and above, and 27.7% served 1-5 years. This picture indicates that the church has experienced leadership that still has more years to serve.

**Table 15***Years of Service*

|                  |                    | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Years of Service | 1-5 years          | 39        | 27.5    | 27.7          |
|                  | 6-10 years         | 59        | 41.5    | 41.8          |
|                  | 11 years and above | 43        | 30.3    | 30.5          |
|                  | Total              | 141       | 99.3    | 100.0         |
|                  | No Response        | 1         | .7      |               |
| Total            |                    | 142       | 100.0   |               |

**Years of Membership**

According to Table 17 below, the majority, 66.9% of the leader participants reported that they have been members of the church for 6-10 years, and for member participants, 63.5% stated they have been members for 11 years and above. Only

19.7% of leaders indicated that they were 11 years and above in the church, and leaders with the lowest percentage, 13.4%, are relatively new in the church, with 1-5 years since baptism. Table 17 indicates that the member participants have 21% with 6-10 years since baptism, and 15% accounted for 1-5 years of membership in the church. In most cases, the church tends to select for leadership individuals who have been in membership for longer years, and this is likely due to the policy guidance that counsels on consideration of experience and religious/spiritual maturity.

**Table 16**

*Years Baptized (Leaders)*

|                          |                    | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-----------|---------|
| Years as baptized member | 1-5 years          | 19        | 13.4    |
|                          | 6-10 years         | 95        | 66.9    |
|                          | 11 years and above | 28        | 19.7    |
|                          | Total              | 142       | 100.0   |

**Table 17**

*Years Baptized (Members)*

|                          |                    | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-----------|---------|
| Years as baptized member | 1-5 years          | 25        | 15.0    |
|                          | 6-10 years         | 35        | 21.0    |
|                          | 11 years and above | 106       | 63.5    |
|                          | Total              | 166       | 99.4    |
|                          | No response        | 1         | .6      |
| Total                    |                    | 167       | 100.0   |

## Education

From the study findings, according to Table 19, it emerged that 6.3% leaders held a secondary school certificate. Leaders with tertiary education constituted 75.4% of the total sample, while those with “other” level of education accounted for 18.3%

of the sample. This suggests that many leaders are attaining tertiary education. The member educational attainment, Table 20, indicated that the majority respondents of 73.1% had tertiary education, and “other” level of education were 17.4%, while 7.2% accounted for secondary certificate and 1.2% primary certificate. Education in Botswana is free until tertiary level, it is not surprising to see a good number of participants who have achieved this level of education. This suggests that the church leadership in the Botswana Union Conference is educated, and this serves well for a well-read and informed leadership.

**Table 18**

*Education Attainment (Leaders)*

|                           |           | Frequency | Percent |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Educational<br>Attainment | Secondary | 9         | 6.3     |
|                           | Tertiary  | 107       | 75.4    |
|                           | Other     | 26        | 18.3    |
|                           | Total     | 142       | 100.0   |

**Table 19**

*Education Attainment (Members)*

|                           |             | Frequency | Percent |
|---------------------------|-------------|-----------|---------|
| Educational<br>Attainment | Primary     | 2         | 1.2     |
|                           | Secondary   | 12        | 7.2     |
|                           | Tertiary    | 122       | 73.1    |
|                           | Other       | 29        | 17.4    |
|                           | Total       | 165       | 98.8    |
|                           | No response | 2         | 1.2     |
| Total                     |             | 167       | 100.0   |

## Church Demographics

The demographic characteristics of the churches included in this study were classified by location, size (in terms of membership), and conference affiliation.

### Church Location

Table 21 indicates that, of the 49 churches that participated in the study, 28 (57.1%) were located in rural areas (villages), while 21 churches (42.9%) were situated in urban areas (cities or towns).

**Table 20**

#### *Church Location*

|                      | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|
| Urban (City or Town) | 21        | 42.9    |
| Rural (Village)      | 28        | 57.1    |
| Total                | 49        | 100.0   |

### Church Size in Terms of Membership

Church size was categorized as small (less than 100 members), medium (100–500 members), and large (more than 500 members). The distribution of churches by size, Table 22, indicated that 24 churches (49.0%) were small, 19 churches (38.8%) were medium-sized, and 6 churches (12.2%) were large.

**Table 21**

#### *Church Size*

|                               | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Small (Less than 100 members) | 24        | 49.0    |
| Medium (100-500 members)      | 19        | 38.8    |
| Large (More than 500 members) | 6         | 12.2    |
| Total                         | 49        | 100.0   |

## Conference

**Table 22**

### *Conference Affiliation*

|       | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|-----------|---------|
| SBC   | 23        | 46.9    |
| NBC   | 26        | 53.1    |
| Total | 49        | 100.0   |

Regarding conference affiliation, Table 23 shows that 23 churches (46.9%) belonged to the South Botswana Conference (SBC), while 26 churches (53.1%) were part of the North Botswana Conference (NBC).

## **Results and Discussions Based on the Research Questions**

### **Research Question One**

What is the level of spirituality of church leaders in the local churches of the Botswana Union Conference?

To address this research question, descriptive statistics were calculated for items measuring the daily spiritual experiences among church leaders. The instrument used aligns with the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES) developed by Underwood and Teresi (2002), which assesses ordinary experiences of connection with the Divine in daily life.

Leaders' self-evaluation of spiritual experiences presented in the table 24 below indicated their level of spirituality/spiritual experience and connection with the Divine in their daily lives.

Table 24 presents the descriptive statistics for each item. The majority of the items had mean scores within the range of 3.25 to 4.00 and an overall mean score of

3.46, indicating that participants experienced these aspects of spirituality at a very high level.

**Table 23**

*Leaders' Spiritual Experience*

|                                                                                                                 | Mean | Std.<br>Deviation | Interpretation |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------|----------------|
| I feel God's presence.                                                                                          | 3.33 | .592              | Very high      |
| I experience a connection to all of life.                                                                       | 3.23 | .623              | High           |
| During worship, or at other times when connecting with God, I feel joy which lifts me out of my daily concerns. | 3.54 | .566              | Very high      |
| I find strength in my religion or spirituality.                                                                 | 3.63 | .552              | Very high      |
| I find comfort in my religion or spirituality.                                                                  | 3.61 | .607              | Very high      |
| I feel deep inner peace or harmony.                                                                             | 3.26 | .615              | Very high      |
| I ask for God's help in the midst of daily activities.                                                          | 3.54 | .528              | Very high      |
| I feel guided by God in the midst of daily activities.                                                          | 3.39 | .571              | Very High      |
| I feel God's love for me directly.                                                                              | 3.57 | .612              | Very high      |
| I feel God's love for me through others.                                                                        | 3.27 | .651              | Very high      |
| I am spiritually touched by the beauty of creation.                                                             | 3.57 | .588              | Very high      |
| I feel thankful for my blessings.                                                                               | 3.68 | .499              | Very high      |
| I feel a selfless caring for others.                                                                            | 3.33 | .604              | Very high      |
| I accept others even when they do things I think are wrong.                                                     | 3.24 | .641              | High           |
| I desire to be closer to God                                                                                    | 3.79 | .459              | Very high      |
| Daily Spiritual Experience                                                                                      | 3.46 | .338              | Very high      |

The highest mean score was observed for the item “I desire to be closer to God” ( $M = 3.79$ ,  $SD = 0.459$ ), indicating a strong and consistent spiritual longing among respondents. Other highly rated items included “I feel thankful for my blessings” ( $M = 3.68$ ,  $SD = 0.499$ ), “I find strength in my religion or spirituality” ( $M = 3.63$ ,  $SD = 0.552$ ), and “I find comfort in my religion or spirituality” ( $M = 3.61$ ,  $SD = 0.607$ ), all of which reflect the central role of spirituality in participants’ daily lives.

The lowest mean score was found for the item “I experience a connection to all of life” ( $M = 3.23$ ,  $SD = 0.623$ ), which falls within the high level category. Although it was the lowest, it still suggests a frequent spiritual awareness among church leaders. The overall composite score for Daily Spiritual Experience was  $M = 3.46$  ( $SD = 0.338$ ), which further confirms that, on average, church leaders in the Botswana Union Conference regularly engage in meaningful spiritual experiences. These findings suggest that spirituality is not only present but consistently integrated into the lives of the church leaders surveyed. The consistently high mean scores across the items demonstrate a deep and frequent engagement with spiritual practices and beliefs and thus indicate a high level of spirituality.

These high levels of spirituality are consistent with the findings from other studies using the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale in religious contexts and also within the African context. A study in Indonesia validated the DSES-Ina among Muslim religious individuals, showing high internal consistency (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = 0.916$ ). Higher DSES scores correlated with the frequency of worship and prayer, indicating that active religious engagement enhances daily spiritual experiences (Qomaruddin, 2019). Studies in the African context confirmed the reliability for measuring daily spiritual experiences among African young people, and the findings support the use of DSES for evaluating spirituality among young adults in African

contexts (Shube, 2022). Further, the DSES was also established as a meaningful tool in the South African religious context by Counted (2024), a country that shares borders with Botswana and shares commonalities including religion, language, and culture.

### Research Question Two

What is the level of congregational spirituality in the local churches of the Botswana Union Conference?

To answer this question, descriptive statistics were computed for both ‘leaders’ and ‘members’ evaluations of congregational spirituality. Three dimensions were assessed: Connection, Compassion, and Meaningfulness. The perception of the leaders and members of the congregational spirituality is presented in the tables below.

**Connection.** For Connection, Table 25, the mean score was 2.94 (SD = 0.553), suggesting that leaders often perceived a sense of connection within their congregations.

**Table 24**

*Connection (Leaders’ Evaluation)*

|                                                             | Mean | Std.<br>Deviation | Interpret<br>ation |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------|--------------------|
| There is a sense of connection in my congregation.          | 2.94 | .702              | High               |
| There is a level of trust in my congregation                | 2.84 | .769              | High               |
| There is a sense of community in my congregation            | 3.06 | .661              | High               |
| Everyone has a sense that he/she belongs to my congregation | 2.92 | .689              | High               |
| Congregational Spirituality: Connection                     | 2.94 | .553              | High               |

The connections between members are an identifying mark of spirituality (Pavlovich & Corner, 2009) in the congregation, and the findings are that the church leaders perceive these connections on a high level, with a mean of 2.94. According to Malik and Naeem (2011), linkages among members enhance a sense of community, which, in our findings, is observed to be at a very high level, with a mean of 3.06. This facet of spirituality in the church environment occurs at the group level of human behavior and shows the interactions between individuals (Rocha, 2021), and trust is essential in such interactions, which has the lowest mean of 2.84, though on a high level, is an area of concern. When people believe they are linked with others and their inner self and that of others relate, there is a sense of community (Milliman et al., 2003) in another way, a sense of belonging, and the findings indicate that leaders perceive this at a high level albeit, second lowest mean of 2.92. Even though the perceptions of connection are relatively high level, with a mean score of 2.94, it is interesting that the members have a lower perception of this aspect of congregational spirituality, with a mean score of 2.84.

**Compassion.** The Compassion dimension, Table 26, yielded a mean of 3.04 (SD = 0.600), which falls in the higher level category.

**Table 25**

*Compassion (Leaders' Evaluation)*

|                                                                    | Mean | Std.<br>Deviation | Interpr<br>etation |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------|--------------------|
| The members in my congregation exhibit sympathy towards each other | 3.05 | .688              | High               |
| Church members show a sense of awareness of others' needs          | 3.01 | .724              | High               |
| Church members sympathize with fellow members                      | 3.07 | .769              | High               |
| Church members try to help others relieve their suffering.         | 3.04 | .723              | High               |
| Congregational Spirituality: Compassion                            | 3.04 | .600              | High               |

This reflects that sympathy and helpfulness were regularly observed among members. The responsibility lies in leadership to create a positive and supportive environment (Crossman, 2016), and this can be done through flexible structures that support self-realization and spiritual expression (Karakas & Sarigollu, 2017). Leaders' perceptions of compassion in all aspects rate a mean above 3.00, while members' mean average is below 3.00, which is interesting to observe. Compassion is an aspect of congregational spirituality that is visible in the members' actions. Organizations benefit from the fruits of their members' spirituality since only individuals can pursue this ineffable mission (Smith, 2008). This suggests that members may either be influenced by the leaders to display such positive attributes, or they are intrinsically motivated.

**Meaningfulness.** Church leaders' evaluation of congregational spirituality revealed moderate levels of perceived spiritual vitality across all three dimensions. Meaningfulness, Table 27, had a slightly lower mean of 2.99 (SD = 0.597), also indicating that leaders often recognized joy, engagement, and societal impact through worship and ministry.

**Table 26**

*Meaningfulness (Leaders' Evaluation)*

|                                                                                                    | Mean   | Std.<br>Deviation | Interpret<br>ation |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-------------------|--------------------|
| The atmosphere at my church is joyful during the worship services                                  | 3.21   | .723              | High               |
| My church members look forward to coming to the church services                                    | 3.07   | .721              | High               |
| My congregation seems energized by the ministry of its members                                     | 2.97   | .734              | High               |
| A connection between the work of the church and the larger social good of my community can be seen | 2.73   | .752              | High               |
| Congregational Spirituality: Meaningfulness                                                        | 2.9965 | .59697            | High               |

Of interest is the lowest rating of the leaders' perception of the connection between the work of the church and the larger social good of the community, with a mean of 2.73. Rocha (2021) argues that the moment spirituality serves as a phenomenon that connects individuals and, in essence, enlightens their life's purpose, it further connects individuals with other communities and generations. In that way, organizational spirituality must create social good (Khari & Sinha, 1999; Kökalan, 2019; Pawar, 2017), which asserts it must generate value. The benefits to organization members are unquestionable (Thakur & Singh, 2016; Van Der Walt & De Klerk, 2015), but they ought to be extended to society as a whole and future generations, not just to stakeholders. The benefits of organizational spirituality are to be far-reaching for good. That this aspect rates lowest is an issue to be visited with intentionality.

Generally, these findings suggest that church leaders in Botswana who responded to the questionnaire generally have a positive perception of the spiritual condition of the congregation. A study in Karachi utilizing the same tool in an organization examined how dimensions like meaningful work, compassion, and job satisfaction were. Results indicated all dimensions positively impacted job satisfaction (Sapra & Ali, 2020). Congregational spirituality, grounded in organizational or workplace spirituality, indicates that serving in an environment that is perceived to support individual spirituality is motivating to leadership.

**Connection.** For Connection, Table 28, the mean was 2.87 (SD = 0.675), suggesting participants slightly agreed with statements related to feeling connected in their congregation.

**Table 27***Connection (Members' Evaluation)*

|                                                             | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpretation |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------------|----------------|
| There is a sense of connection in my congregation.          | 2.96 | .735           | High           |
| There is a level of trust in my congregation                | 2.74 | .845           | High           |
| There is a sense of community in my congregation            | 2.96 | .791           | High           |
| Everyone has a sense that he/she belongs to my congregation | 2.83 | .776           | High           |
| Congregational Spirituality: Connection                     | 2.87 | .675           | High           |

The highest mean (2.96) was shared between a sense of connection and a sense of community, indicating relatively strong agreement. Trust received the lowest score ( $M = 2.74$ ,  $SD = 0.85$ ), showing more variability and suggesting room for improvement in relational trust among members.

**Compassion.** Table 29, had a mean of 2.96 ( $SD = 0.657$ ), indicating general agreement among respondents that their congregation embodies compassionate behavior. The highest scoring item, “sympathize with fellow members” ( $M = 3.02$ ), reflects strong interpersonal support, while awareness of others’ needs ( $M = 2.87$ ) slightly lagged behind, suggesting a potential area for growth in proactive support and sensitivity.

**Table 28***Compassion (Members' Evaluation)*

|                                                                    | Mean | Std.<br>Deviation | Interpr<br>etation |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------|--------------------|
| The members in my congregation exhibit sympathy towards each other | 2.99 | .736              | High               |
| Church members show a sense of awareness of others' needs          | 2.87 | .833              | High               |
| Church members sympathize with fellow members                      | 3.02 | .719              | High               |
| Church members try to help others relieve their suffering.         | 2.97 | .740              | High               |
| Congregational Spirituality: Compassion                            | 2.96 | .657              | High               |

**Meaningfulness.** From the members' perspective, the overall assessment was consistent with the leaders', albeit slightly lower in some aspects, with none of them reaching a mean of 3.00. Meaningfulness, Table 30, was rated with a mean of 2.96 (SD = 0.625), showing that participants generally agreed that their worship and ministry experiences held significance.

**Table 29***Meaningfulness (Members' Evaluation)*

|                                                                                                    | Mean | Std.<br>Deviation | Interpretation |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------|----------------|
| The atmosphere at my church is joyful during the worship services                                  | 3.16 | .744              | High           |
| My church members look forward to coming to the church services                                    | 2.93 | .765              | High           |
| My congregation seems energized by the ministry of its members                                     | 2.91 | .743              | High           |
| A connection between the work of the church and the larger social good of my community can be seen | 2.84 | .898              | High           |
| Congregational Spirituality: Meaningfulness                                                        | 2.96 | .625              | High           |

Joyful atmosphere scored highest ( $M = 3.16$ ), affirming the emotional and spiritual positivity during services. Conversely, the item connecting church work to the broader community scored lowest ( $M = 2.84$ ,  $SD = 0.90$ ), indicating potential variability and a need for stronger alignment between church activities and social engagement.

Overall, both leaders and members perceived a healthy level of congregational spirituality, characterized by frequent experiences of connection, compassion, and meaning. Of interest in the findings is the consistently lower aspect of connection, followed by meaningfulness for both leaders and members. The element of trust in the church and a sense of belonging seem to be areas that need to be addressed to improve on the aspect of connection. When it comes to meaningfulness, both leaders and members perceived the church to lack that connection with the community for the good of the community.

### **Research Question Three**

To what extent do the church leaders in the Botswana Union Conference engage in the following behaviours?

- a. Sharing the Vision
- b. Inspiring Faith/Hope
- c. Exhibiting Altruistic Love

To address this question, descriptive statistics were used to measure the self-evaluation of leaders and the perceptions of members regarding spiritual leadership behaviours.

## Leaders' Evaluation

**Sharing the Vision.** For Sharing the Vision, Table 31, the mean was 3.33 (SD = 0.530), indicating strong agreement with statements about understanding and committing to the church's vision.

**Table 30**

*Sharing Vision (Leaders' Evaluation)*

|                                                                  | Mean | Std.<br>Deviation | Interpretation       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------|----------------------|
| I understand my church's vision                                  | 3.39 | .640              | Very often exhibited |
| I am committed to my church's vision                             | 3.44 | .590              | Very often exhibited |
| My church has a vision statement that brings out the best in me. | 3.31 | .726              | Very often exhibited |
| My church's vision inspires my best performance                  | 3.23 | .701              | Often exhibited      |
| I have faith in my church's vision for its members               | 3.35 | .686              | Very often exhibited |
| My church's vision is clear and compelling to me                 | 3.28 | .718              | Very often exhibited |
| Spiritual Leadership Behaviour: Sharing the Vision               | 3.33 | .530              | Very often exhibited |

Leaders have a very high level perception on Sharing vision. All components of this aspect are at a very high level with the lowest being at a mean of 3.23 related to performance being inspired by the church's vision. Leadership without vision is likely to fail the followers, and it is interesting to observe the leaders' view on this aspect.

**Inspiring Faith/Hope.** Table 32, had a mean of 3.54 (SD = 0.445), suggesting that leaders strongly agreed they demonstrated perseverance, service, and mission-focused dedication. To inspire Faith/Hope means that the leaders must have endurance, perseverance, do what it takes, stretch goals, and communicate expectations for reward and victory, which is a message that resonates with the Adventist faith.

**Table 31**

*Inspiring Faith/Hope (Leaders' Evaluation)*

|                                                                                                   | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpretation       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------------|----------------------|
| I am willing to “do whatever it takes” to ensure that my church accomplishes its mission.         | 3.47 | .592           | Very often exhibited |
| I persevere and exert extra effort to help my church succeed.                                     | 3.45 | .602           | Very often exhibited |
| I always do my best to serve in my church.                                                        | 3.66 | .531           | Very often exhibited |
| I demonstrate my faith in my church and its mission by doing everything I can to help us succeed. | 3.56 | .564           | Very often exhibited |
| Spiritual Leadership Behaviour: Inspiring Faith/Hope                                              | 3.54 | .445           | Very often exhibited |

What is interesting is that this aspect is the highest rating, with a very high level mean score of 3.54. The findings suggest that leaders in the church believe they are very strong in Inspiring Faith/Hope.

**Exhibiting altruistic love.** Leaders reported high levels of engagement in all three spiritual leadership behaviours. Exhibiting Altruistic Love, Table 33, was rated at 3.36 (SD = 0.390), indicating strong agreement regarding expressions of care, kindness, integrity, and fairness.

**Table 32**

*Exhibiting Altruistic Love (Leaders' Evaluation)*

|                                                                                         | Mean | Std.<br>Deviation | Interpretation       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------|----------------------|
| I care about the members in my congregation.                                            | 3.58 | .537              | Very often exhibited |
| I want to do something when some member is suffering to show kindness and consideration | 3.51 | .555              | Very often exhibited |
| As a leader in the church, I “walk the walk” as well as “talk the talk”.                | 3.25 | .589              | Very often exhibited |
| I believe the church disciplines members fairly                                         | 3.00 | .816              | Often exhibited      |
| I consider myself honest without false pride as a leader                                | 3.38 | .627              | Very often exhibited |
| I have the courage to stand up for what is right                                        | 3.45 | .578              | Very often exhibited |
| Spiritual Leadership Behaviour: Exhibiting Altruistic Love                              | 3.36 | .390              | Very often exhibited |

The lowest level of engagement is sharing of vision, while the highest level of engagement is inspiring faith/hope. Leaders' engagement indicates that Exhibiting Altruistic Love is between the other two aspects of spiritual leadership behaviors. However, an observation is made that this aspect is the lowest of the three in the member evaluation.

## Members' Evaluation

Members' evaluations were generally positive, though significantly lower than those of the leaders.

**Sharing the Vision.** Table 34, members reported a mean of 2.88 (SD = 0.676), indicating agreement that their leaders engage with and communicate the church's vision.

**Table 33**

*Sharing Vision (Members' Evaluation)*

|                                                                                           | Mean | Std.<br>Deviation | Interpretation  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------|-----------------|
| My local church leaders show that they understand the church's vision by communicating it | 3.03 | .740              | Often exhibited |
| My local church leaders show commitment to the church's vision in their activities        | 2.91 | .835              | Often exhibited |
| My local church has a vision statement that makes good leaders                            | 2.79 | .877              | Often exhibited |
| My local church's vision inspires leaders to performance                                  | 2.82 | .838              | Often exhibited |
| Local church leaders show that the church's vision is good for its members                | 2.87 | .803              | Often exhibited |
| Spiritual Leadership Behaviour: Sharing the Vision                                        | 2.88 | .676              | Often exhibited |

The members' report indicates that there is likely dissonance in the communication of the vision and the evidence that the vision makes good leaders. All the means record a high level; however, most of the components are below a mean of 3.00, with the exception of one, "My local church leaders show that they understand the church's vision by communicating it," with a mean of 3.03.

**Inspiring Faith/Hope.** For Inspiring Faith/Hope, Table 35, received a mean of 3.02 (SD = 0.639), showing that members agreed their leaders were committed and faithful to the church’s mission.

**Table 34**

*Inspiring Faith/Hope (Members' Evaluation)*

|                                                                                                                                  | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpretation  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------------|-----------------|
| My local church leaders are willing to “do whatever it takes” to ensure that the church accomplishes its mission.                | 2.82 | .845           | Often exhibited |
| My local church leaders show perseverance in service                                                                             | 2.97 | .810           | Often exhibited |
| My local church leaders exert extra effort to help the church succeed.                                                           | 3.04 | .747           | Often exhibited |
| My local church leaders do their best to serve in the church.                                                                    | 3.22 | .704           | Often exhibited |
| My local church leaders demonstrate faith in the church and its mission by doing everything they can to help the church succeed. | 3.07 | .793           | Often exhibited |
| Spiritual Leadership Behaviour: Hope/Faith                                                                                       | 3.02 | .639           | Often exhibited |

Members’ view on the leaders’ Inspiring Faith/Hope reported favorably and better than the other two aspects of leadership behaviors. All components were above the mean of 3.00 except for two, “My local church leaders show perseverance in service”, with a mean of 2.97 and, “My local church leaders are willing to do “whatever it takes” to ensure that the church accomplishes its mission”, with the lowest mean of 2.82. Even though these mean measure on a “high level”, it is of

interest to note that leaders may have the commitment and desire to accomplish the mission, but not have the endurance and the drive to do whatever it takes to do it.

**Exhibiting Altruistic Love.** Table 36, had a mean score of 2.86 (SD = 0.640). From the members view, Exhibiting Altruistic Love was the lowest aspect of leadership behavior while Inspiring Faith/Hope was the highest.

**Table 35**

*Exhibiting Altruistic Love (Members' Evaluation)*

|                                                                                                               | Mean | Std.<br>Deviation | Interpretation  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------|-----------------|
| My local church leaders care about the members in the congregation.                                           | 2.99 | .791              | Often exhibited |
| My local church leaders want to do something when some member is suffering to show kindness and consideration | 3.00 | .814              | Often exhibited |
| My local church leaders, “walk the walk” as well as “talk the talk”.                                          | 2.72 | .855              | Often exhibited |
| I believe the church disciplines members fairly                                                               | 2.67 | .888              | Often exhibited |
| My local church leaders are honest and have no pride                                                          | 2.93 | .793              | Often exhibited |
| My local church leaders have the courage to stand up for what is right                                        | 2.86 | .835              | Often exhibited |
| Spiritual Leadership Behaviour: Exhibiting Altruistic Love                                                    | 2.86 | .640              | Often exhibited |

All components of Exhibiting Altruistic Love measured below 3.00 with the exception of one, “My local church leaders want to do something when some member is suffering to show kindness and consideration”, with a mean of 3.00. The lowest mean of 2.67, “I believe the church disciplines members fairly”, was notably low, lower than any other mean. This is an indicator for a cry of some level of love in the

way the church handles members who may have erred or faltered in the faith. Further, that the leaders have performed poorly in this segment needs the church to see how to support the leadership to perform better in Exhibiting Altruistic Love.

Leaders' responses showed Sharing vision as lowest aspect of leadership behavior and Faith/Hope being the highest as is for the members. For the members, church discipline seemed to be an area of concern as well as the leader's inability to "walk the walk" and "talk the talk". The leaders may hold similar views but for them the issue of sharing the vision seems to be a challenge. That may imply intentionality on empowering the leaders to be confident about the church's vision and the ability to share it with confidence. Overall, the findings indicate that church leaders of the Botswana Union Conference engage consistently in spiritual leadership behaviours, as recognized both by themselves and their congregants. However, the question of alignment between leaders' self-perceptions and members' evaluations may need to be examined to develop and support the presence of strong, mission-driven leadership within the church communities.

#### **Research Question Four**

Is there a significant relationship between the spirituality of church leaders and congregational spirituality in the churches of the Botswana Union Conference?

To answer this question, a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between the spirituality of church leaders and congregational spirituality. Both variables were measured as continuous scales derived from aggregated scores of relevant questionnaire items. The coefficient of determination of ( $r$ ) 0 – 0.10 is considered a negligible correlation, 0.10 – 0.39 is a weak correlation, 0.40 – 0.69 indicates a moderate correlation, 0.70 – 0.89 indicates a high correlation and 0.90 – 1 denote a very high correlation (Schober et al., 2018).

## Correlations

A moderate, positive correlation, Table 37, was found between the spirituality of church leaders and congregational spirituality,  $r(47) = .401$ ,  $p = .004$ .

**Table 36**

*Correlation (Leaders' Spirituality and Congregational Spirituality)*

|                              |                     | Congregational Spirituality |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Church Leaders' Spirituality | Pearson Correlation | .401 **                     |
|                              | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .004                        |
|                              | N                   | 49                          |

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

This correlation was statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), indicating that higher levels of church leaders' spirituality are associated with higher levels of congregational spirituality. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, which states that there is no significant relationship between the spirituality of church leaders and congregational spirituality in the local churches of the Botswana Union Conference. This simply implies that when the church leaders' spirituality is strong, the spirituality of the congregation tends to be strong because leaders are likely to effectively foster spiritual growth within the congregation (Sironen, 2020).

These findings align well with several empirical studies that have identified similar relationships between leadership spirituality and follower or organizational spirituality.

1. Reave (2005) conducted a meta-analysis of over 150 studies on leadership and spirituality and found that leaders who demonstrate personal spiritual disciplines (e.g., prayer, integrity, humility, service) tend to foster more spiritually attuned and ethically grounded environments. The present study supports this conclusion,

particularly as the DSES captures the personal and relational aspects of spirituality, including perceptions of divine presence, guidance, and worship.

2. Milliman et al. (2003), whose scale was used to measure congregational spirituality in this study, conceptualized workplace spirituality through the constructs of meaningful work, sense of community, and alignment with organizational values. They conducted a study within a large American restaurant chain. Though originally designed for business contexts, the use of this instrument in congregational settings has been justified by other studies (e.g., Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2006) that adapted workplace spirituality to faith-based organizations. The current study, therefore, contributes to this ongoing scholarly adaptation by showing that congregants' sense of shared spiritual purpose and community is moderately associated with the spiritual life of their leaders.

Fry et. al, (2005) also found a positive relationship between spiritual leadership and follower commitment and productivity in organizational settings, using the same theoretical framework. Although their work was not specifically related to churches, it demonstrated how the inner spiritual state of a leader has observable effects on others' sense of meaning and belonging, concepts that parallel congregational spirituality.

While the aforementioned studies generally support the notion that spiritual leaders foster spiritual environments, few have focused directly on the empirical correlation between leaders' personal spirituality (as inner life or daily spiritual experience) and congregational spirituality using validated measurement tools. In this respect, the current study offers a unique contribution, particularly within the context of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Botswana, by providing context-specific evidence of this dynamic. The use of the DSES, which captures the lived and

experiential dimensions of spirituality (Underwood & Teresi, 2002), in combination with Milliman's organizational spirituality framework, allows for a robust examination of how personal spirituality translates into communal spiritual experience. This alignment supports the assertion made by Benefiel (2005) and Blackaby & Blackaby (2011) that spiritual leadership begins with the leader's own spiritual formation and manifests in the collective spirituality of the faith community.

The observed correlation suggests that leaders who report higher frequencies of spiritual experiences (e.g., feeling God's presence, experiencing divine guidance, engaging in worship) are likely to foster congregational cultures characterized by purpose, community, and shared values. It also aligns with the spiritual formation literature, including Fowler's (1981) faith development theory, which posits that leaders, particularly those at more advanced stages of faith, play pivotal roles in nurturing others' faith journeys.

In conclusion, the significant positive correlation identified in this study supports and extends prior empirical research by demonstrating that a leader's spirituality is not merely a private matter but has communal and organizational ramifications. By using empirically validated tools (DSES and Milliman et al.'s scale), this study contributes meaningful data to the limited body of research on the direct relationship between leaders' and congregational spirituality, especially within an African ecclesiastical context. Future research may build on these findings by exploring mediating variables such as leadership behaviors, spiritual practices, or organizational climate.

### Research Question Five

To what extent does leadership behavior mediate the relationship between the spirituality of church leaders and congregational spirituality in the churches of the Botswana Union Conference?

A mediation analysis was conducted to determine whether leadership behavior mediates the relationship between church leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality. This was tested using a series of regression analyses, following Baron and Kenny's (1986) causal steps approach.

#### Total effect of church leaders' spirituality on congregational spirituality

**Table 37**

*Effect of Leaders' Spirituality on Congregational Spirituality*

| Model Summary                                           |                   |          |                   |                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Model                                                   | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1                                                       | .401 <sup>a</sup> | .160     | .143              | .26390                     |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Church Leaders' Spirituality |                   |          |                   |                            |

**Table 38**

*ANOVA (Church Leaders' Spirituality on Congregational Spirituality)*

| ANOVA <sup>a</sup>                                      |            |                |    |             |       |                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| Model                                                   |            | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F     | Sig.              |
| 1                                                       | Regression | .625           | 1  | .625        | 8.981 | .004 <sup>b</sup> |
|                                                         | Residual   | 3.273          | 47 | .070        |       |                   |
|                                                         | Total      | 3.899          | 48 |             |       |                   |
| a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality      |            |                |    |             |       |                   |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), Church Leaders' Spirituality |            |                |    |             |       |                   |

**Table 39***Coefficients (Leaders' Spirituality on Congregational Spirituality)*

|                                                    |                              | Coefficients <sup>a</sup>   |                           |      |       |      |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|------|-------|------|
| Model                                              |                              | Unstandardized Coefficients | Standardized Coefficients | t    | Sig.  |      |
|                                                    |                              | B                           | Std. Error                | Beta |       |      |
| 1                                                  | (Constant)                   | 1.144                       | .615                      |      | 1.861 | .069 |
|                                                    | Church Leaders' Spirituality | .530                        | .177                      | .401 | 2.997 | .004 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality |                              |                             |                           |      |       |      |

***Step 1: Effect of Church Leaders' Spirituality on Congregational***

***Spirituality.*** In the first regression model, Table 38 entered the regression analysis with a coefficient of determination, R-square of .160. The adjusted R-square is .143, meaning that approximately 14.3% of the total variation in congregational spirituality can be explained by church leaders' spirituality. The church leaders' spirituality significantly predicted congregational spirituality,  $B = 0.530$ ,  $SE = 0.177$ ,  $t(47) = 2.997$ ,  $p = .004$ , indicating that higher spirituality among church leaders is associated with higher levels of spirituality among congregants.

**Analysis of the mediating role of leadership behavior*****Effect of Church Leaders' Spirituality on Leadership Behavior.*****Table 40***Model Fit Statistics for Leaders' Spirituality and Leadership Behavior*

| <b>Model Summary</b> |                   |          |                   |                            |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Model                | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1                    | .367 <sup>a</sup> | .134     | .116              | .36548                     |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Church Leaders' Spirituality

**Table 41***One-Way ANOVA Summary for Leadership Behavior by Spirituality*

| Model        | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F     | Sig.              |
|--------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1 Regression | .975           | 1  | .975        | 7.301 | .010 <sup>b</sup> |
| Residual     | 6.278          | 47 | .134        |       |                   |
| Total        | 7.253          | 48 |             |       |                   |

a. Dependent Variable: Leadership Behavior

b. Predictors: (Constant), Church Leaders' Spirituality

**Table 42***Coefficients Table for Regression Model Predicting Leadership Behavior*

| Model                        | Coefficients <sup>a</sup>   |            |                           | t     | Sig. |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
|                              | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients |       |      |
|                              | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |       |      |
| 1 (Constant)                 | .680                        | .851       |                           | .798  | .429 |
| Church Leaders' Spirituality | .662                        | .245       | .367                      | 2.702 | .010 |

a. Dependent Variable: Leadership Behavior

**Step 2: effect of church leaders' spirituality on leadership behavior.** The second regression Table 41 entered the regression analysis with a coefficient of determination, R-square of .134. The adjusted R-square is .116, meaning that approximately 11.6% of the total variation in leadership behavior can be explained by church leaders' spirituality. Further, showed that church leaders' spirituality significantly predicted leadership behavior,  $B = .662$ ,  $SE = .245$ ,  $\beta = .367$ ,  $t(47) = 2.70$ ,  $p = .010$ . This means that church leaders with higher levels of spirituality tend to exhibit positive leadership behavior in Botswana.

**Effect of leadership behavior on congregational spirituality (mediated model)**

**Table 43.**

*Model Fit Statistics for Leadership Behavior, Church Leaders' Spirituality, and Congregational Spirituality*

| <b>Model Summary</b> |                   |          |                   |                            |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Model                | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1                    | .714 <sup>a</sup> | .510     | .489              | .20370                     |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership Behavior, Church Leaders' Spirituality

**Table 44**

*Two way ANOVA: Interaction Between Leaders' Spirituality and Leaders' Behavior on Congregational Spirituality*

| ANOVA <sup>a</sup> |            |                |    |             |        |                    |
|--------------------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|--------|--------------------|
| Model              |            | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F      | Sig.               |
| 1                  | Regression | 1.990          | 2  | .995        | 23.978 | <.001 <sup>b</sup> |
|                    | Residual   | 1.909          | 46 | .041        |        |                    |
|                    | Total      | 3.899          | 48 |             |        |                    |

a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality

b. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership Behavior, Church Leaders' Spirituality

**Table 45***Regression Coefficients Predicting Congregational Spirituality*

| Model                        | Coefficients <sup>a</sup>   |            |                           | t     | Sig.  |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|
|                              | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients |       |       |
|                              | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |       |       |
| 1 (Constant)                 | .827                        | .478       |                           | 1.732 | .090  |
| Church Leaders' Spirituality | .222                        | .147       | .167                      | 1.509 | .138  |
| Leadership Behavior          | .466                        | .081       | .636                      | 5.734 | <.001 |

a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality

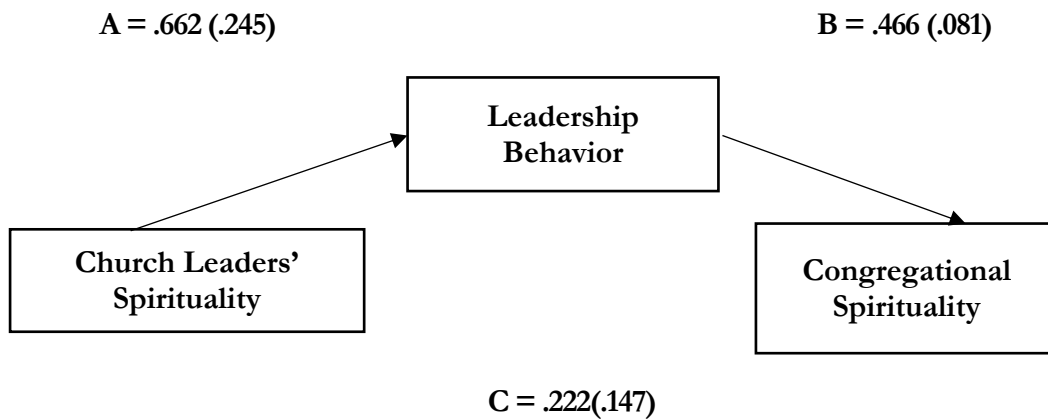
**Step 3: Effect of Leadership Behavior and Church Leaders' Spirituality on Congregational Spirituality.** In Table 44, the third regression model, both church leaders' spirituality and leadership behavior were used to predict congregational spirituality. The overall model was significant,  $F(2, 46) = 23.98$ ,  $p < .001$ , and explained 51.0% of the variance,  $R^2 = .510$ . Leadership behavior was a significant predictor,  $B = .466$ ,  $SE = .081$ ,  $\beta = .636$ ,  $t(46) = 5.73$ ,  $p < .001$ , while church leaders' spirituality was not a significant predictor when leadership behavior was included,  $B = .222$ ,  $SE = .147$ ,  $\beta = .167$ ,  $t(46) = 1.51$ ,  $p = .138$ . The insignificant effect of church leaders' spirituality on congregational spirituality when controlling for leadership behavior suggests partial mediation. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, which states that leadership behavior does not significantly mediate the relationship between local church leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality in the Botswana Union Conference. This finding is consistent with a study conducted among Seventh-day Adventist congregations in Rwanda which found that spiritual leadership behaviors (e.g., leading by example, spiritual caregiving) significantly influenced congregational spiritual well-being. These behaviors fully mediated the relationship between leaders' spirituality and congregants' spiritual well-being Niyigena &

Omulokoli, 2023), where leadership behavior predicted 47% of the variance in spiritual well-being (adjusted  $R^2 = 0.47$ ;  $\beta = 0.69$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

$$\text{Indirect Effect} = .662 \times .466 = .308$$

**Figure 5**

*Indirect Effect*



**Figure 6**

*Sobel Test Association between Leaders' Spirituality and Congregational Spirituality*

*Introducing Leaders' Behavior*

| Input:         |      | Test statistic:          | Std. Error: | p-value:   |
|----------------|------|--------------------------|-------------|------------|
| a              | .662 | Sobel test: 2.44572344   | 0.12613528  | 0.01445618 |
| b              | .466 | Aroian test: 2.41600446  | 0.12768685  | 0.01569187 |
| s <sub>a</sub> | .245 | Goodman test: 2.47656682 | 0.12456438  | 0.01326528 |
| s <sub>b</sub> | .081 | Reset all                | Calculate   |            |

### Indirect Effect

The indirect effect, Figure 4, of church leaders' spirituality on congregational spirituality through leadership behavior was calculated as  $.662 \times .466 = .308$ , indicating a moderate mediation effect. These results suggest that leadership behavior

partially mediates the relationship between church leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality.

A Sobel test, Table 47, serves to test if the introduction of a mediating variable affects the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable (Sobel, 1982). The test confirmed that the indirect effect was statistically significant ( $t = 2.446$ ,  $p = .014$ ), supporting the hypothesis that leadership behavior mediates the relationship between church leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality. The effect of church leaders' spirituality on congregational spirituality occurs entirely through leadership behavior.

These findings imply that church leaders' spirituality affects congregational spirituality primarily through the way they behave as leaders, rather than directly. In other words, spirituality must be enacted behaviorally to exert influence. Without observable, spiritually aligned behavior, the effect of a leader's inner spirituality on the congregation is not fully realized. This supports the principle that in a congregational setting, "being spiritual" alone is insufficient to transform the spiritual life of the community unless it is translated into visible, consistent, and ethical leadership behaviors.

The finding of full mediation aligns well with a number of empirical studies: Fry's (2005) Spiritual Leadership Theory posits that leaders influence others spiritually through values, vision, and altruistic love, operationalized in their behavior. He emphasized that leadership behaviors are the mechanisms by which inner life (spirituality) impacts follower outcomes. This study confirms this, demonstrating that behavioral enactment of spirituality is the actual vehicle through which congregational spirituality is affected. In a meta-analysis of over 150 studies, Reave (2005) found that spiritually grounded leadership is only effective when aligned with

consistent ethical behavior, such as integrity, humility, and service. Reave concluded that spiritual values must be manifested behaviorally to have measurable effects on followers, precisely what these findings affirm.

Duchon and Plowman (2005) study in hospital settings found that spiritual leadership affects unit performance and meaning in work only through leaders' behavior, not merely through the presence of spirituality. This underscores the point that observable leadership conduct mediates the internal spirituality-performance linkage, consistent with this study findings. While Milliman et al. (2003) study focused on spirituality at work, it also noted that leaders who fail to model spiritual values through their behavior are often less effective in influencing organizational culture. They argued that leadership behavior is a key explanatory link between personal spirituality and organizational outcomes.

Theoretical implications of this finding are:

1. These results strongly reinforce the Baron and Kenny (1986) causal mediation framework, where the mediator (leadership behavior) explains the underlying mechanism by which the independent variable (leaders' spirituality) influences the dependent variable (congregational spirituality).
2. The results also affirm the modification this study made to Spiritual Leadership Theory, replacing "inner life" with "spiritual experience." This study's empirical data shows that this spiritual experience alone is insufficient to elevate congregational spirituality, it must be behaviorally expressed in line with spiritual values such as love, humility, and service.

The practical and ministerial implications include;

1. Leadership Development Programs should not only cultivate spiritual disciplines in leaders but also focus on training behavioral competencies-

such as servant leadership, ethical decision-making, and compassionate engagement.

2. Pastoral Evaluations could incorporate behavioral markers of spiritual leadership, as observable conduct is the bridge between personal faith and congregational growth.
3. Congregational Transformation Strategies must include role-modeling by leadership, since followers tend to mirror the behaviors rather than simply absorb the spiritual aura of the leader.

In conclusion, the findings present strong evidence for full mediation: the impact of church leaders' spirituality on congregational spirituality occurs through leadership behavior. This adds to the growing consensus in leadership and spirituality literature that spiritual influence must be behavioral to be organizationally effective. It affirms that in spiritual communities, leadership behaviors that reflect internal convictions are what truly transform others.

### **Research Question Six**

This section presents the results of the analysis for Research Question 6: To what extent do the church demographic factors (conference, church location, and church size in terms of membership) moderate the relationship between the spirituality of church leaders and congregational spirituality in the churches of the Botswana Union Conference? Three separate moderation analyses were conducted.

**Moderating effect of the conference where the church belongs on the relationship between church leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality**

**Table 46***Model Summary of Linear Regression Predicting Congregational Spirituality*

| Model | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1     | .401 <sup>a</sup> | .161     | .124              | .26673                     |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Interaction between Church Leaders' Spirituality and Conference, Church Leaders' Spirituality

**Table 47**

*One-Way ANOVA Summary for Congregational Spirituality by Leaders' Spirituality and Conference*

| ANOVA <sup>a</sup> |            |                |    |             |       |                   |
|--------------------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| Model              |            | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F     | Sig.              |
| 1                  | Regression | .626           | 2  | .313        | 4.399 | .018 <sup>b</sup> |
|                    | Residual   | 3.273          | 46 | .071        |       |                   |
|                    | Total      | 3.899          | 48 |             |       |                   |

a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality

b. Predictors: (Constant), Interaction between Church Leaders' Spirituality and Conference, Church Leaders' Spirituality

**Table 48***Regression Coefficients Predicting Congregational Spirituality*

|       |                                                                 | Coefficients <sup>a</sup>   |            |                           |       |      |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| Model |                                                                 | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | t     | Sig. |
|       |                                                                 | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |       |      |
| 1     | (Constant)                                                      | 1.161                       | .656       |                           | 1.771 | .083 |
|       | Church Leaders' Spirituality                                    | .526                        | .188       | .397                      | 2.797 | .008 |
|       | Interaction between church leaders' spirituality and conference | .003                        | .043       | .011                      | .080  | .936 |

a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality

**Moderating effect of conference.** A moderation analysis was conducted to examine whether the conference to which a church belongs moderates the relationship between church leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality. The regression model, Table 48, was statistically significant,  $F(2, 46) = 4.40$ ,  $p = .018$ ,  $R^2 = .161$ , indicating that the predictors explained 16.1% of the variance in congregational spirituality. Church leaders' spirituality significantly predicted congregational spirituality ( $B = .526$ ,  $p = .008$ ). However, the interaction term between church leaders' spirituality and conference was not significant ( $B = .003$ ,  $p = .936$ ), suggesting that conference does not moderate the relationship.

This indicates that the strength of the relationship between leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality does not significantly vary across different conferences. The association between church leaders' spirituality and the spirituality of the congregation appears consistent, regardless of the church's conference affiliation. This further implies that the positive influence of leaders' spirituality on congregational spirituality is consistent across all Conferences within the Botswana Union Conference, regardless of administrative differences. This finding aligns with studies like Fry et al. (2005) and Reave (2005), which emphasize that the effectiveness of spiritual leadership may be relatively stable across institutional settings, especially in values-driven organizations like churches where core spiritual values are shared across units. It also echoes Milliman et al. (2003), who observed that spirituality at work can transcend organizational boundaries when shared purpose and faith are present.

**Moderating effect of the church location on the relationship between church leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality**

**Table 49**

*Model Summary of Linear Regression Predicting Congregational Spirituality*

| <b>Model Summary</b> |                   |          |                   |                            |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Model                | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1                    | .409 <sup>a</sup> | .167     | .131              | .26572                     |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Interaction between Church Leaders' Spirituality and Location, Church Leaders' Spirituality

**Table 50**

*One-Way ANOVA Summary for Congregational Spirituality by Church Leaders' Spirituality and Church Location*

| <b>ANOVA<sup>a</sup></b> |            |                |    |             |       |                   |
|--------------------------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| Model                    |            | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F     | Sig.              |
| 1                        | Regression | .651           | 2  | .325        | 4.609 | .015 <sup>b</sup> |
|                          | Residual   | 3.248          | 46 | .071        |       |                   |
|                          | Total      | 3.899          | 48 |             |       |                   |

a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality

b. Predictors: (Constant), Interaction between Church Leaders' Spirituality and Location, Church Leaders' Spirituality

**Table 51***Regression Coefficients Predicting Congregational Spirituality*

| Model                                                         | Coefficients <sup>a</sup>   |            |                           | t     | Sig. |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
|                                                               | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients |       |      |
|                                                               | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |       |      |
| 1 (Constant)                                                  | .991                        | .670       |                           | 1.480 | .146 |
| Church Leaders' Spirituality                                  | .574                        | .192       | .433                      | 2.983 | .005 |
| Interaction between Church Leaders' Spirituality and Location | .024                        | .040       | .087                      | .599  | .552 |

a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality

**Moderating effect of church location.** A second analysis, Table 50, tested whether church location (urban vs. rural) moderated the relationship between church leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality. The model was also statistically significant,  $F(2, 46) = 4.61$ ,  $p = .015$ ,  $R^2 = .167$ . Church leaders' spirituality again had a significant effect ( $B = .574$ ,  $p = .005$ ), but the interaction between church leaders' spirituality and location was not statistically significant,  $B = .024$ ,  $p = .552$ . This indicates that the church location does not significantly moderate or influence the strength of the relationship between the two variables. The positive association between church leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality holds consistently across both urban and rural churches as seen in the study by Niyigena, & Omulokoli, (2023) in Seventh-day Adventist churches in Rwanda.

This result contrasts somewhat with the literature suggesting contextual differences between urban and rural churches. For example, Neal & Biberman (2003) and Chaves (2004) argued that social density and relational proximity in rural areas might intensify spiritual influence. However, the findings in the current study imply that leaders' spiritual impact remains effective regardless of geographic location,

possibly due to a shared religious culture and the standardized spiritual expectations across Adventist congregations.

**Moderating effect of the church size in terms of membership on the relationship between church leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality**

**Table 52**

*Model Summary of Linear Regression Predicting Congregation Spirituality*

| <b>Model Summary</b> |                   |          |                   |                            |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Model                | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1                    | .411 <sup>a</sup> | .169     | .133              | .26540                     |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Interaction between Church Leaders' Spirituality and Size, Church Leaders' Spirituality

**Table 53**

*One-Way ANOVA Summary for Congregational Spirituality by Leaders' Spirituality and Church Size*

| ANOVA <sup>a</sup> |            |                |    |             |       |                   |
|--------------------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| Model              |            | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F     | Sig.              |
| 1                  | Regression | .659           | 2  | .329        | 4.675 | .014 <sup>b</sup> |
|                    | Residual   | 3.240          | 46 | .070        |       |                   |
|                    | Total      | 3.899          | 48 |             |       |                   |

a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality

b. Predictors: (Constant), Interaction between Church Leaders' Spirituality and Size, Church Leaders' Spirituality

**Table 54***Regression Coefficients Predicting Congregational Spirituality*

| Model                                                     | Coefficients <sup>a</sup>   |            |                           | t     | Sig. |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
|                                                           | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients |       |      |
|                                                           | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |       |      |
| 1 (Constant)                                              | 1.145                       | .618       |                           | 1.852 | .070 |
| Church Leaders' Spirituality                              | .530                        | .178       | .401                      | 2.980 | .005 |
| Interaction between Church Leaders' Spirituality and Size | .029                        | .043       | .092                      | .685  | .497 |

a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality

**Moderating effect of church size.** The third analysis, Table 53, a moderation analysis was conducted to determine whether church size in terms of membership moderates the relationship between church leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality. The regression model was significant,  $F(2, 46) = 4.68$ ,  $p = .014$ ,  $R^2 = .169$ . Church leaders' spirituality remained a significant predictor ( $B = .530$ ,  $p = .005$ ), but again, the interaction between spirituality and church size was not statistically significant,  $B = .029$ ,  $p = .497$ . This suggests that church size does not significantly affect the strength of the relationship between leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality. This finding is noteworthy because existing research, such as Reave (2005) and Chaves (2004), has shown that smaller churches tend to foster stronger interpersonal relationships, potentially enhancing the leader's influence. However, the present findings suggest that the strength of leaders' spirituality remains impactful across churches of different sizes, possibly due to structured spiritual formation programs, homogeneity in worship practices, or standardized pastoral roles in Adventist congregations.

This study examined whether organizational and contextual variables, Conference affiliation, church location, and church size, moderated the relationship

between church leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality. While the overall models for all three moderators reported moderate  $R^2$  values, the interaction terms were not statistically significant, indicating no moderation effect. However, the findings still offer important insights into the robustness of the relationship across varying contexts.

Collectively, the findings indicate that none of the three contextual variables significantly moderated the relationship between leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality. This consistency across Conference lines, geographical contexts, and church sizes suggests that spiritual leadership has a broad, stable influence in the Botswana Union Conference context. These results contribute to the growing body of literature, such as Fry et al. (2017) and van Dierendonck (2011), which emphasizes the universal impact of spiritual values on organizational outcomes when leaders embody integrity, faith, and altruistic love. The implication is that spiritual leadership transcends structural and demographic boundaries, making it a potent force for congregational transformation in diverse settings.

Implications for the findings may include recommendations such as:

- **Standardized Spiritual Training:** Since the relationship remains strong across settings, SDA leadership training programs can implement universal spiritual leadership frameworks applicable to all churches, regardless of size or location.
- **Flexible Ministry Models:** While context matters in operational aspects, spiritual influence remains robust, suggesting that leadership development should emphasize core spiritual competencies over localized adaptations.

- Conference-Level Integration: Uniformity in spiritual influence across Conferences supports the integration of shared leadership benchmarks across administrative regions.

While Conference affiliation, church location, and church size were theoretically expected to moderate the relationship between leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality, the empirical data showed no significant moderating effects. The influence of spiritual leadership appears consistent and stable across contexts, affirming the centrality of spiritual integrity and modeling in shaping congregational spirituality. Overall, while church leaders' spirituality consistently predicted congregational spirituality, none of the demographic variables (conference, location, or size) significantly moderated this relationship. This implies that the positive impact of leaders' spirituality on congregational spirituality is relatively stable across these different church contexts.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a discussion of the key findings from the study, which examined the influence of leaders' spirituality on congregational spirituality through the mediating role of leadership behavior in local Seventh-day Adventist churches within the Botswana Union Conference. The study further considered the moderating effects of demographic factors and controlled for contextual variables such as church size and location. The primary objective was to determine how the spiritual experiences of church leaders shaped the spiritual atmosphere and growth of their congregations, and to identify the mechanisms and conditions under which this influence was most effectively transmitted.

The chapter begins by summarizing the major findings in relation to the research questions and hypotheses. These findings were interpreted through the lens of relevant theories, including Servant Leadership Theory and Spiritual Leadership Theory, as well as biblical and theological perspectives consistent with the Seventh-day Adventist worldview. This provided a wholistic interpretation that bridges empirical data with spiritual and contextual meaning.

Following the discussion, the chapter offers conclusions based on the results, highlighting the theoretical, practical, and contextual implications of the study. Finally, informed by the findings, the chapter concludes with specific recommendations for leadership practice, policy formation, and future research, with

the aim of contributing to the ongoing development of spiritually grounded leadership in the Adventist church in Botswana and similar contexts.

### **Summary**

The study focused on the influence of leaders' spirituality on congregational spirituality through the mediating variable of leadership behavior in local Seventh-day Adventist Churches of the Botswana Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It empirically assesses whether spirituality influences congregational spirituality, and how the spirituality of local church leaders influences congregational spirituality through leadership behaviors such as sharing vision, inspiring faith/hope, and exhibiting altruistic love. Given the limited research on spiritual leadership in African religious contexts, this work offers essential insights into the role of leaders and the spiritual health of the local congregation.

A quantitative, cross-sectional, correlational research design was used for the study. A total of 309 participants (church leaders and members) from selected churches in the North and South Botswana Conferences participated. The instruments used were: Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES) for assessing leaders' spirituality, Leadership behavior measures for vision, faith/hope, and altruistic love adapted from Fry's Spiritual Leadership Theory, Congregational spirituality measures focusing on meaningfulness, connection, and compassion. Statistical analyses included descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, mediation analysis, and moderation analysis using SPSS version 30.

Concerning levels of spirituality and leadership behavior, the study findings established that, leaders rated themselves highly on leadership behaviors: Inspiring Faith/Hope ( $M = 3.54$ ,  $SD = 0.445$ ), Sharing the Vision ( $M = 3.33$ ,  $SD = 0.530$ ), and Exhibiting Altruistic Love ( $M = 3.36$ ,  $SD = 0.390$ ). Members' ratings of leadership

behaviors were slightly lower overall, with Exhibiting Altruistic Love rated the lowest ( $M = 2.86$ ,  $SD = 0.640$ ).

On the aspect of relationship between leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality, a moderate, positive correlation was found ( $r(47) = .401$ ,  $p = .004$ ) between leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality. Approximately 16% of the variance in congregational spirituality was explained by leaders' spirituality ( $R^2 = .160$ ), meaning that leaders' spirituality alone accounted for about 16% of the differences in congregational spirituality, indicating a moderate explanatory power. Leaders' spirituality significantly predicted leadership behavior, explaining about 13.4% of the variance ( $R^2 = .134$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .116$ ). This means the leaders' spirituality accounts for approximately 13.4% of the variation in leadership behaviors.

Leadership behavior fully mediated the relationship between leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality. The mediation was confirmed with an indirect effect of .308 and a Sobel test result ( $t = 2.446$ ,  $p = .014$ ). In the mediation model, leadership behavior was a significant predictor ( $\beta = .636$ ,  $p < .001$ ), while leaders' spirituality was no longer significant ( $\beta = .167$ ,  $p = .138$ ). The final mediated model explained 51% of the variance in congregational spirituality ( $R^2 = .510$ ). This implies that over half (51%) of the differences in congregational spirituality can be explained when both leader spirituality and leadership behaviors are considered. Moderation analyses showed that demographic factors accounted for only 16.1% of the variance in congregational spirituality ( $R^2 = .161$ ), but they did not significantly moderate the relationships.

This study's findings show that leaders' spiritual experiences influence congregational spirituality primarily through leadership behavior rather than through direct influence. It highlights the importance of developing leaders' spiritual practices

for fostering a vibrant congregational life and expands spiritual leadership research into the African nonprofit religious context. Further, it provides practical insights for policymakers, Union administration and departmental leaders, Conference administration and departmental leaders, Local Church Pastors, and other stakeholders for leadership development strategies, programs, and material.

### **Conclusion**

The findings confirm that a leader's spiritual development and experiences directly and indirectly impact the congregation's spiritual vitality. Leadership behavior serves as a bridge connecting personal faith to collective spiritual experiences. Integrating Fowler's stages of faith development enriches the understanding of how leaders' evolving spirituality affects their leadership influence. The findings support the view that leaders at higher stages (especially stages 5 – Individuative-Reflective Faith and Stage 6 – Conjunctive Faith) are better equipped to exhibit behaviors such as vision sharing, hope inspiration, and altruistic love as found by the study. The findings of this study also support key elements of Servant Leadership Theory, particularly in showing that leadership behavior characterized by vision-sharing, altruistic love, and the fostering of hope and faith significantly mediated the relationship between leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality. This aligns with Greenleaf's (1977) foundational claim that servant leaders prioritize the growth and well-being of their followers, suggesting that spiritually grounded leadership behavior may foster spiritual vitality within the congregation.

Adventist theology calls for leadership grounded in service, humility, and divine connection. Ellen White emphasized that “the greatest want of the world is the want of men, men who will not be bought or sold...men who in their inmost souls are true and honest” (White, 1903). Leaders must exemplify the character of Christ,

modeling spiritual integrity and compassion. The members' perceptions have been noted to vary from those of the leaders. Modeling spirituality and emulating Christ in behavior could serve to address the differences in what the members see and what the leaders see. It is essential to bridge the glaring perceptual gap.

The observation that only 13.4% of leadership behavior is explained by the personal spiritual experience of these leaders implies that 86.6% of the variance in leadership behavior could be explained by other factors such as emotional intelligence, leadership training, personality, and organizational culture as possible contributors. This is a significant insight for future leadership development initiatives. Further, this could be an invitation for leaders to intentionally pursue wholistic development, blending spiritual disciplines with professional competencies as proposed by the Faith Development theory. Spirituality remains the cornerstone of authentic leadership within the Adventist context. However, effective leadership must be multidimensional, reflecting a wholistic development that mirrors Christ's own balanced growth "in wisdom, and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52). The dynamic interaction between faith maturity, leadership behavior, and congregational spirituality underscores the necessity of intentional spiritual formation and professional development pathways.

As the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Botswana and beyond continues to grow and face new challenges, the cultivation of spiritually mature, emotionally intelligent, and mission-driven leaders will be essential. Adventist philosophy emphasizes wholistic spirituality involving the integration of the mind, body, and soul, as essential to Christian living. Ellen G. White reinforces the notion that leaders should be "men and women of prayer," whose leadership is grounded in the Word of God and characterized by selfless service (White, 1915). Her writings stress that true

leadership influences others not merely by directive authority but by the silent witness of a sanctified life.

Clearly, there is a link between leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality through leadership behaviors. Leadership that mirrors Christ's character, infused with the principles of altruistic love, unwavering hope, and visionary purpose, will not only nurture healthier congregations but will also advance the mission of the church in profound and lasting ways.

The integration of faith development stages, particularly Fowler's model, reveals that spiritual leadership is not static but developmental. Leaders in the earlier stages may rely heavily on institutional authority, whereas those in more advanced stages embody the principles of self-critical reflection and a deep sense of universal compassion. For Seventh-day Adventist leaders, this developmental progression should be encouraged through ongoing spiritual mentorship and exposure to diverse ministry contexts. Leadership development ought to be done from a very young age, through all stages of life until maturity.

Moreover, spirituality in leadership cannot be isolated from the ecclesiological vision of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Leadership is seen not merely as an administrative function but as a pastoral and prophetic calling. Ellen G. White's vision of leadership emphasizes humility, service, and an unwavering commitment to God's mission (White, 1948). Thus, leaders should be cultivated not only for organizational efficiency but for spiritual depth and prophetic courage.

Demographic factors such as conference, location, and size explained only 16.1% of the variance in congregational spirituality ( $R^2 = .161$ ) and did not significantly moderate the main relationships. Implications for the Adventist Church in Botswana include a need for investing in focused leadership formation and spiritual

formation for leaders across the board, irrespective of where they are stationed, and irrespective of the size of their congregations. Training should emphasize spiritual disciplines alongside administrative skills. Leadership behavior development, training, and assessment must highlight Christlike leadership behaviors that foster hope, vision, and love among members. Discipleship focus in congregational programs should nurture members' spiritual maturity, helping them advance in their faith journey. The church should be intentional in leadership selection and evaluation, and should emphasize spiritual maturity, Christlike character, and observable leadership behavior as core criteria for leadership selection and review.

There ought to be a shift in the leadership culture from mere administrative management to spiritual mentorship and hip. The study extends Servant Leadership Theory by demonstrating its applicability within a theological framework rooted in Adventist beliefs. It illustrates how servant leadership behaviors can serve as conduits through which a leader's personal spirituality becomes an instrument of communal spiritual transformation.

Leadership in the Adventist Church must be deeply rooted in a personal experience with God. Leaders who embody Christlike values will nurture congregations that are vibrant, connected, and compassionate. As Ellen White aptly states, "Success in any line demands a definite aim" (Education, p. 262). That aim for Adventist leaders is clear: to reflect Christ's character, to lead God's people into deeper spiritual experience, and prepare them for the second coming of Jesus Christ.

### **Contribution to Knowledge**

This study advances several critical contributions to the field of spiritual leadership and congregational spirituality, particularly within the context of Seventh-day Adventist (Advenntist) congregations in Botswana. Drawing on the theoretical

foundation of Spiritual Leadership Theory (Fry, 2003), adapted to a theistic worldview, and supported by empirical data, the findings of this study provide new knowledge in five key areas.

### **Empirical Validation of the Relationship between Leaders' Spirituality and Congregational Spirituality**

Although prior literature has proposed a conceptual link between leaders' spirituality and follower or organizational outcomes (Fry, 2003; Reave, 2005), there has been a paucity of empirical research examining this relationship in ecclesial contexts, particularly within the African religious landscape. This study empirically established a statistically significant positive correlation ( $r = .40$ ,  $p = .004$ ) between church leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality. This finding confirms that leaders' personal spiritual experience is meaningfully associated with the collective spiritual life of their congregations. By focusing on the Botswana Union Conference of the SDA Church, the study situates this relationship within a cultural and organizational context that has been historically underexplored in leadership literature. Thus, the study contributes empirical validation to the theorized relationship in a non-Western, faith-based organizational setting.

### **Full Mediation of Leadership Behavior in the Spirituality - Congregational Spirituality Relationship**

A significant theoretical contribution of the study lies in its identification of leadership behavior as a full mediator in the relationship between leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality. Utilizing Baron and Kenny's (1986) mediation model and the Sobel test ( $t = 2.446$ ), the findings demonstrated that while leaders' spirituality initially predicted congregational spirituality ( $R^2 = .143$ ), this direct

relationship became statistically non-significant when leadership behavior was included in the model ( $\beta = .167$ ,  $p = .138$ ), with the mediator (leadership behavior) showing a strong predictive power ( $\beta = .636$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The combined model accounted for 48.9% of the variance in congregational spirituality ( $R^2 = .489$ ).

This full mediation suggests that the influence of a leader's spiritual life is not directly transmitted to the congregation but is instead expressed and transmitted through observable leadership behavior. This supports the theoretical position of Fry et al. (2005) and Reave (2005) that spiritual leadership requires behavioral enactment, such as modeling integrity, humility, and service, for it to be transformational. This nuanced empirical confirmation adds clarity to the theoretical mechanisms within Spiritual Leadership Theory and deepens the understanding of how spirituality impacts followers in religious communities.

### **Non-Significant Moderation by Organizational Contextual Variables**

The study further explored whether contextual factors, specifically conference affiliation, church size, and church location, moderated the relationship between leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality. While  $R^2$  values for these models were moderate (conference:  $R^2 = .161$ ; location:  $R^2 = .167$ ; size:  $R^2 = .169$ ), the predictors for the contextual variables themselves were non-significant. For instance, in the conference moderation model, spirituality significantly predicted congregational spirituality ( $\beta = .526$ ,  $p = .008$ ), while the interaction with conference affiliation was non-significant ( $\beta = .003$ ,  $p = .936$ ). These results suggest that the spiritual influence of church leaders on congregational spirituality is robust across different organizational and geographical contexts within the Botswana Union Conference. This challenges assumptions in leadership literature that contextual

variables invariably shape leadership effectiveness and instead supports the notion of cross-contextual applicability of spiritually grounded leadership. It underscores the universality of spiritual leadership principles, affirming their relevance across varying church settings.

### **Contextual Reinterpretation of the “Inner Life” Construct**

Another theoretical advancement of this study lies in its adaptation of the “inner life” construct in Fry’s Spiritual Leadership Theory to the construct of “spiritual experience.” The original concept of “inner life” emphasizes meditative and self-reflective practices often rooted in Western spiritual expressions. In contrast, this study redefined the concept to reflect the experiential and theistic expressions of spirituality more consistent with Christian theological perspectives and practices, particularly within the Seventh-day Adventist tradition. This recontextualization enhances the applicability of Spiritual Leadership Theory in Christian and African contexts by grounding the model in biblical spirituality and lived religious experience. It offers a more culturally and theologically coherent framework for assessing spiritual leadership in religious organizations, thus advancing both theoretical refinement and contextual sensitivity.

### **Methodological Innovation in an Understudied Region**

Finally, this research contributes methodologically by employing robust quantitative analyses (correlational analysis, hierarchical regression, mediation and moderation tests) to examine constructs that are often approached qualitatively in religious leadership research. The use of validated instruments such as the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES) further strengthens the reliability and validity of

the findings. Given that much of the existing research on church leadership in Africa is anecdotal, theological, or exploratory in nature, this study establishes a data-driven, empirically testable framework for investigating leadership dynamics in ecclesial contexts. It opens the door for further empirical studies in the African context and provides a foundational model upon which future research can build.

In conclusion, this study advances the field of spiritual leadership by providing empirical support for the theoretical propositions of Spiritual Leadership Theory within a religious and African context. It introduces significant conceptual refinements, establishes leadership behavior as a critical mediating variable, and affirms the cross-contextual applicability of spiritually grounded leadership. These contributions offer both academic insight and practical guidance for church leadership development and congregational vitality in faith-based organizations.

### **Recommendations**

#### **1. Spiritual Formation Programs**

Church leadership at all levels should prioritize and institutionalize spiritual formation programs, embedding retreats, personal devotion practices, and mentorship grounded in Adventist principles.

This can be achieved by:

- Botswana Union Conference: Develop Union-wide policies mandating annual spiritual retreats and quarterly devotional workshops.
- Conferences: Implement the Union guidelines through localized spiritual formation initiatives for all church leaders.
- Local Churches: Facilitate monthly personal devotion workshops and small group mentorship programs at the congregation level.

## 2. Wholistic Leadership Formation

Develop programs that intentionally blend spiritual formation, emotional intelligence development, and leadership skills training. Based on the findings, it is recommended that leadership development programs within the Botswana Union Conference emphasize servant leadership behaviors such as empathy, listening, and community building (Spears, 2010), framed through the lens of spiritual experience and biblical leadership. This can be achieved by:

- BUC Ministerial Association: Design integrated leadership curricula combining spirituality and leadership competencies.
- Conference Training Departments: Conduct semi-annual leadership academies focusing on wholistic leader development.

## 3. Mentorship and Spiritual Companionship

Establish a mentorship system where experienced, spiritually mature leaders guide younger leaders through structured faith and leadership development pathways.

This can be achieved by:

- BUC and Conferences: Appoint and train mentors across all leadership levels.
- Local Church Boards: Implement mentorship pairings with set goals and regular meetings.

## 4. Faith Stage Assessment Tools

Create and utilize assessment tools to help leaders self-identify their stage of faith development and areas needing growth.

This can be achieved by:

- BUC Research and Training Department: Develop the Faith Stage Assessment Tool and training materials.
- Conferences: Train pastors and leaders to administer assessments annually.

#### 5. Faith Development Awareness

Training for leaders should help leaders assess and cultivate their own faith maturity and tailor leadership behaviors appropriately.

This can be achieved by:

- Conferences: Organize biannual workshops focused on faith maturity self-assessment and behavioral adaptation.
- Local Churches: Encourage leaders to maintain and annually review personal spiritual growth plans.

#### 6. Ellen White's Counsel on Leadership

Include structured studies of Ellen White's counsel on spirituality and leadership in all ministerial training programs to reinforce spiritual authenticity as foundational to leadership.

This can be achieved by:

- BUC Ministerial Association and Adventist Universities: Mandate curriculum modules and reading seminars based on Ellen White's writings.

#### 7. Bridging Perceptual Gaps

Develop feedback mechanisms, such as confidential surveys and peer reviews, to align leaders' self-perceptions with members' experiences of leadership behavior.

Then conduct a gap analysis and address those gaps collaboratively with

all stakeholders.

This can be achieved by:

- BUC Human Resources Department: Develop standard feedback tools (surveys, peer reviews).
- Conferences: Facilitate annual feedback collection and follow-up gap analysis sessions.

#### 8. Wholistic Leadership

Recognizing that the personal spiritual experience of the leaders alone is not sufficient for exemplary leadership behaviour, it is recommended that leaders' training should also focus on emotional intelligence, communication skills, and organizational management aligned with Adventist values.

This can be achieved by:

- BUC Training Units: Design leadership training that integrates emotional, administrative, and relational competencies.
- Conferences: Ensure leaders complete certifications covering both spiritual and operational skills.

#### 9. Contextual Theology Resources

Foster the creation of culturally sensitive leadership resources that reflect the spiritual realities of the Botswana context.

This can be achieved by:

- BUC-appointed Contextualization Task Force: Develop theology and leadership resources grounded in Botswana's cultural realities.
- Training Schools and Pastors: Utilize these resources in leadership workshops and church training events.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

1. This study focused only on the spirituality of the leaders and its influence on leadership behavior. As it was found that other factors can also contribute to the behavior, these factors (such as emotional intelligence and others), can be fully explored through a longitudinal study to establish what is happening in the local churches.
2. **Spiritual Practices and Leadership Effectiveness:** Another important aspect to consider is to investigate the specific spiritual disciplines that are being practiced in the church. Factors such as fasting, meditation and community service and how they impact the leaders' behavior can be investigated. Creative ways especially suited for the Botswana congregations can be explored. Furthermore, the challenges related to those spiritual disciplines can be identified.
3. **Cross-Cultural Comparisons:** Acknowledging the global nature of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, further studies could conduct comparative studies across different cultural contexts within the Adventist Church to understand how cultural dynamics interact with spiritual leadership.
4. Future research may consider developing an indigenous model of Servant Leadership that integrates biblical theology with African communal values to further contextualize the theory for use in African church leadership settings.
5. **Personal demographic characteristics and Spiritual Leadership:** Examine how the personal demographic characteristics (such as for example: age, gender, and level of education) influence the practice and perception of spiritual leadership within the Botswana Union Conference.

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

### INFORMED CONSENT

You are being asked to participate in a research study entitled: The Influence of Spiritual Leadership on Congregational Spirituality Through Leadership Behavior in Local Seventh-Day Adventist Churches in Botswana Union Conference. The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between a leader's spirituality and congregational spirituality.

In order to participate in the study, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire that has 42 items. Finishing the questionnaire should take approximately 10 minutes. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you sign the bottom of this Form, it means that you are giving your consent to be in the study. You will NOT write your name on the questionnaire and this Form is separate from the questionnaire this ensures that your identity will not be revealed. No one other than the researcher(s) and advisers will have access to the data. All data will be kept on a password-protected computer.

If you do not want to participate in the study, do not begin filling the questionnaire or participating in other research activities. If you start to fill the questionnaire and decide you do not want to participate, stop filling it and give it to the researcher.

There is no penalty for not participating and your questionnaire will not be used.

If you participate, you will contribute to knowledge about the influence of a leader's spirituality on congregational spirituality through the leadership behavior in the Botswana Union Conference, which may help to make recommendations that can impact decision-making by administrators and better support for local church leaders. There are no identifiable risks in participation.

The researcher will answer any questions that you have about the study and you should ask them now.

If you have complaints or concerns about this research, please contact the Chair of the AUA Institutional Ethics Review Committee:

*(Give the name of the AUA IERC Chair and his/her email address here. You can get this information from your Programme Leader.)*

Thank you.

*Tapologo Kago Simankane – Organizational Leadership (PhD Student)*

By signing below, I agree to participate in this research.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B

### QUESTIONNAIRES

#### Questionnaire (Leader)

##### Leader Questionnaire

**Instruction:** tick (✓) where appropriate

1. What is your age? 18-21 [ ] 22-35 [ ] 36-45 [ ] 46-55 [ ] Over 56 [ ]
2. What is your gender? Male [ ] Female [ ]
3. What is your position in the local church? Elder [ ] Treasurer [ ] Clerk [ ]
4. Marital Status: Single [ ] Married [ ] Widow/er [ ] Divorced [ ]
5. How many years have you served in the church cumulatively? 1-5 [ ] 6-10 [ ]  
Over 11 [ ]
6. How many years have you been baptized in the church? 1-5 [ ] 6-10 [ ] Over 11 [ ]
7. Educational attainment? Primary [ ] Secondary [ ] Tertiary [ ] Other [ ]
8. What is the location of your church? 1. Urban [ ] 2. Rural [ ]
9. Church Size in terms of membership: 1. Large (More than 500 members) [ ] 2.  
Medium (100-500 members) 3. Small (less than 100 members) [ ]
10. Nam of Church? \_\_\_\_\_

#### SECTION: B

**Instruction:** Think in terms of your everyday experiences and put the most appropriate response number for you beside each item, using the scale below.

**Scale:** Tick 1 for “Never” in response to the statement

Tick 2 for “Rarely” in response to the statement

Tick 3 for “Often” in response to the statement

Tick 4 for “Every Time” in response to the statement.

|    | Daily Spiritual Experience                                                                                      | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 1  | I feel God’s presence.                                                                                          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2  | I experience a connection to all of life.                                                                       | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3  | During worship, or at other times when connecting with God, I feel joy which lifts me out of my daily concerns. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4  | I find strength in my religion or spirituality.                                                                 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5  | I find comfort in my religion or spirituality.                                                                  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6  | I feel deep inner peace or harmony.                                                                             | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7  | I ask for God’s help in the midst of daily activities.                                                          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8  | I feel guided by God in the midst of daily activities.                                                          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9  | I feel God’s love for me directly.                                                                              | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10 | I feel God’s love for me through others.                                                                        | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

|    |                                                                                                   |   |   |   |   |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 11 | I am spiritually touched by the beauty of creation.                                               | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 12 | I feel thankful for my blessings.                                                                 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13 | I feel a selfless caring for others.                                                              | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 14 | I accept others even when they do things I think are wrong.                                       | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 15 | I desire to be closer to God                                                                      | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|    | <b>Spiritual Leadership Behaviour</b>                                                             |   |   |   |   |
|    | <b>Vision</b>                                                                                     |   |   |   |   |
| 16 | I understand my church's vision                                                                   | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 17 | I am committed to my church's vision                                                              | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 18 | My church has a vision statement that brings out the best in me.                                  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 19 | My church's vision inspires my best performance                                                   | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 20 | I have faith in my church's vision for its members                                                | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 21 | My church's vision is clear and compelling to me                                                  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|    | <b>Hope/Faith</b>                                                                                 |   |   |   |   |
| 22 | I am willing to "do whatever it takes" to ensure that my church accomplishes its mission.         | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 23 | I persevere and exert extra effort to help my church succeed.                                     | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 24 | I always do my best to serve in my church.                                                        | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 25 | I demonstrate my faith in my church and its mission by doing everything I can to help us succeed. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|    | <b>Altruistic Love</b>                                                                            | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 26 | I care about the members in my congregation.                                                      | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 27 | I want to do something when some member is suffering to show kindness and consideration           | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 28 | As a leader in the church, I "walk the walk" as well as "talk the talk".                          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 29 | I believe the church disciplines members fairly                                                   | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 30 | I consider myself honest without false pride as a leader                                          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 31 | I have the courage to stand up for what is right                                                  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

**Instruction: Think in terms of your everyday experiences and accomplishments on the job as a church leader, and put the most appropriate response number for you beside each item, using the scale below.**

**Scale:** Tick 1 if you Strongly Disagree with the statement

Tick 2 if you Disagree with the statement

Tick 3 if you are Agree with the statement

Tick 4 if you Strongly Agree with the statement

|    |                                                             |   |   |   |   |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
|    | <b>Congregational Spirituality</b>                          |   |   |   |   |
|    | <b>Connection</b>                                           |   |   |   |   |
| 32 | There is a sense of connection in my congregation.          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 33 | There is a level of trust in my congregation                | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 34 | There is a sense of community in my congregation            | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 35 | Everyone has a sense that he/she belongs to my congregation | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

|    |                                                                                                    |   |   |   |   |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
|    | <b>Compassion</b>                                                                                  |   |   |   |   |
| 36 | The members in my congregation exhibit sympathy towards each other                                 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 37 | Church members show a sense of awareness of others' needs                                          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 38 | Church members sympathize with fellow members                                                      |   |   |   |   |
| 39 | Church members try to help others relieve their suffering.                                         | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|    | <b>Meaningfulness</b>                                                                              |   |   |   |   |
| 40 | The atmosphere at my church is joyful during the worship services                                  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 41 | My church members look forward to coming to the church services                                    | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 42 | My congregation seems energized by the ministry of its members                                     | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 43 | A connection between the work of the church and the larger social good of my community can be seen | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

## Questionnaire (Member)

### Church Member Questionnaire

**Instruction:** tick (✓) where appropriate

1. What is your age? 18-21 [ ] 22-35 [ ] 36-45 [ ] 46-55 [ ] Over 56 [ ]
2. What is your gender? Male [ ] Female [ ]
3. Marital Status: Single [ ] Married [ ] Widow/er [ ] Divorced [ ]
4. How many years have you been baptized in the church? 1-5 [ ] 6-10 [ ] Over 11 [ ]
5. What is the location of your church? 1. Urban [ ] 2. Rural [ ]
6. Church Size in terms of membership: 1. Large (More than 500 members) [ ] 2. Medium (100-500 members) [ ] 3. Small (less than 100 members) [ ]
7. Name of Church? \_\_\_\_\_

**Instruction: Think in terms of your everyday experiences and the accomplishments of your church leaders, and put the most appropriate response number for you beside each item, using the scale below.**

**Scale:** Tick 1 if you Strongly Disagree with the statement

Tick 2 if you Disagree with the statement

Tick 3 if you Agree with the statement

Tick 4 if you Strongly Agree with the statement

|    | <b>Spiritual Leadership Behaviour</b>                                                                                            |   |   |   |   |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
|    | <b>Vision</b>                                                                                                                    |   |   |   |   |
| 1  | My local church leaders show that they understand the church's vision by communicating it                                        | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2  | My local church leaders show commitment to the church's vision in their activities                                               | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3  | My local church has a vision statement that makes good leaders                                                                   | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4  | My local church's vision inspires leaders to performance                                                                         | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5  | Local church leaders show that the church's vision is good for its members                                                       | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6  | I see in my local church leaders actions that the church's vision is clear and compelling to them                                | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|    | <b>Hope/Faith</b>                                                                                                                |   |   |   |   |
| 7  | My local church leaders are willing to "do whatever it takes" to ensure that the church accomplishes its mission.                | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8  | My local church leaders show perseverance and exert effort in service to help the church succeed.                                | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9  | My local church leaders do their best to serve in the church.                                                                    | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10 | My local church leaders demonstrate faith in the church and its mission by doing everything they can to help the church succeed. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

|    |                                                                                                               |   |   |   |   |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
|    | <b>Altruistic Love</b>                                                                                        | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 11 | My local church leaders care about the members in the congregation.                                           | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 12 | My local church leaders want to do something when some member is suffering to show kindness and consideration | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13 | My local church leaders, “walk the walk” as well as “talk the talk”.                                          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 14 | I believe the church disciplines members fairly                                                               | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 15 | My local church leaders are honest and have no pride                                                          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 16 | My local church leaders have the courage to stand up for what is right                                        | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|    | <b>Congregational Spirituality</b>                                                                            |   |   |   |   |
|    | <b>Connection</b>                                                                                             |   |   |   |   |
| 17 | There is a sense of connection in my congregation.                                                            | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 18 | There is a level of trust in my congregation                                                                  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 19 | There is a sense of community in my congregation                                                              | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 20 | Everyone has a sense that he/she belongs to my congregation                                                   | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|    | <b>Compassion</b>                                                                                             |   |   |   |   |
| 21 | The members in my congregation exhibit sympathy towards each other                                            | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 22 | Church members show a sense of awareness of others’ needs                                                     | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 23 | Church members sympathize with fellow members                                                                 |   |   |   |   |
| 24 | Church members try to help others relieve their suffering.                                                    | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|    | <b>Meaningfulness</b>                                                                                         |   |   |   |   |
| 25 | The atmosphere at my church is joyful during the worship services                                             | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 26 | My church members look forward to coming to the church services                                               | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 27 | My congregation seems energized by the ministry of its members                                                | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 28 | A connection between the work of the church and the larger social good of my community can be seen            | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

## APPENDIX C

### LETTERS

#### Adventist University of Africa Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee Approval



Adventist University of Africa  
*Developing Leaders for Service*

A Private Chartered University Accredited by Commission for University Education, Kenya



24<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Tapologo Kago Simankane  
School of Postgraduate Studies  
Adventist University of Africa  
Kenya

**Reference: AUA/ISERC/05/03/2025**

Dear Tapologo Kago Simankane

**RE: The Influence of Leaders Spirituality on Congregational Spirituality Through Leadership Behavior in Local Seventh-day Adventist Churches of Botswana Union Conference**

This is to inform you that the Adventist University of Africa Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee (AUA-ISERC) has reviewed and approved your research proposal titled above. Your application approval number is AUA/ISERC/2025/0022. The approval period is 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025 – 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

- i. Only approved documents (including informed consent and study instruments) will be used.
- ii. All changes, including amendments, deviations, and violations, are submitted for review and approval by AUA-ISERC.
- iii. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to AUA-ISERC within 72 hours of notification.
- iv. Any changes anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affect the safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to AUA-ISERC within 72 hours.
- v. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to the expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.
- vi. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to AUA-ISERC.

Prior to commencing your study, you are expected to obtain permissions or any other clearances needed.

Yours Sincerely

Josephine Ganu, Ph.D.  
Chair, Institutional Scientific Ethics Review C'ttee  
[ethics@aua.ac.ke](mailto:ethics@aua.ac.ke)

ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY OF AFRICA  
ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE  
PRIVATE BAG MBAGATHI - 00503,  
NAIROBI - KENYA

## Botswana Union Conference Approval

Botswana Union Conference  
[Seventh-day Adventist Church]

Secretariat Department

Shashe South Road  
Plot # 54859, Village  
P O Box 46326  
Gaborone, Botswana  
Tel: 3170903/4  
Fax: 3170907



24 March, 2025

Dear Leaders: SOUTH BOTSWANA CONFERENCE  
NORTH BOTSWANA CONFERENCE

**RE: RESEARCH - THE INFLUENCE OF LEADERS SPIRITUALITY ON  
CONGREGATIONAL SPIRITUALITY THROUGH LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR IN LOCAL  
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCHES OF BOTSWANA UNION CONFERENCE –  
TAPOLOGO KAGO SIMANKANE**

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

This is to inform you that the Botswana Union Conference Executive Committee at its sitting during 2024 year end EXCOM meeting, after reviewing the request of Pastor Tapologo Kago Simankane's request to collect data for his research on the above mentioned topic and seeing that the findings of his research will be of help to the church in Botswana, took the following actions:

- I. To authorize him carry on his research in BUC territory
- II. Request conferences to communicate this action to the local churches and request them to allow Pastor Simankane to collect data from them for academic purposes only.

Any assistance that will be given to Pastor Simankane will be highly appreciated.

Thank you

Kefa Ntenga N. Matwetwe - *Executive Secretary*  
Botswana Union Conference

Cc: Ps Strike M Ben – *President, BUC*  
Ms Sebonile Mogojwa – *CFO, BUC*





**Lynn Underwood**

To: Tapologo Simankane >

20/11/23



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## Re: Request to Use DSES

You have my permission to use the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale for non-profit use if you return the attached registration form to me and agree to the terms of use.

Make sure you are using the accurate form of the scale. The best place for resources on the scale and links to formats and scoring is:

<http://www.dsescscale.org>

I have written a book on the scale designed for personal and professional use, *Spiritual Connection in Daily Life: 16 Little Questions That Can Make a Big Difference*, and it has been published in paperback.

Information on it and some further resources can be found at:

<http://www.lynnunderwood.com/book>

I think it would be helpful in your work with the scale. It is not expensive, and is on Amazon and in bookstores. In 2016 an international ebook is now available on Amazon international sites.

---

APPENDIX D

OUTCOMES FROM ANALYSIS

**Reliability (Daily Spiritual Experience)**

**Reliability Statistics**

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
| .724             | 15         |

**Item-Total Statistics**

|                                                                                                                 | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| I feel God's presence                                                                                           | 48.06                      | 12.729                         | .079                             | .740                             |
| I experience a connection to all of life                                                                        | 48.44                      | 10.929                         | .510                             | .686                             |
| During worship, or at other times when connecting with God, I feel joy which lifts me out of my daily concerns. | 47.88                      | 12.117                         | .304                             | .712                             |
| I find strength in my religion or spirituality                                                                  | 47.75                      | 12.333                         | .268                             | .715                             |
| I find comfort in my religion or spirituality.                                                                  | 47.50                      | 12.533                         | .490                             | .707                             |
| I feel deep inner peace or harmony.                                                                             | 48.31                      | 11.963                         | .261                             | .718                             |
| I ask for God's help in the midst of daily activities.                                                          | 48.19                      | 11.363                         | .454                             | .694                             |
| I feel guided by God in the midst of daily activities.                                                          | 48.19                      | 11.096                         | .529                             | .685                             |
| I feel God's love for me directly.                                                                              | 47.69                      | 11.696                         | .512                             | .693                             |
| I feel God's love for me through others.                                                                        | 48.38                      | 10.917                         | .464                             | .691                             |

|                                                             |       |        |       |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------|-------|------|
| I am spiritually touched by the beauty of creation.         | 47.88 | 11.050 | .482  | .690 |
| I feel thankful for my blessings.                           | 47.69 | 12.362 | .286  | .714 |
| I feel a selfless caring for others.                        | 48.19 | 11.763 | .489  | .695 |
| I accept others even when they do things I think are wrong. | 48.50 | 12.933 | .014  | .751 |
| I desire to be closer to God                                | 47.50 | 13.600 | -.108 | .736 |

#### Scale Statistics

| Mean  | Variance | Std. Deviation | N of Items |
|-------|----------|----------------|------------|
| 51.44 | 13.463   | 3.669          | 15         |

#### Reliability (Vision)

#### Reliability Statistics

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|------------------|------------|
| .857             | 6          |

#### Item-Total Statistics

|                                                                  | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| I understand my church's vision                                  | 16.63                      | 5.583                          | .513                             | .858                             |
| I am committed to my church's vision                             | 16.50                      | 6.267                          | .361                             | .878                             |
| My church has a vision statement that brings out the best in me. | 16.88                      | 5.183                          | .674                             | .828                             |
| My church's vision inspires my best performance                  | 16.75                      | 5.133                          | .764                             | .812                             |
| I have faith in my church's vision for its members               | 16.63                      | 4.917                          | .789                             | .805                             |
| My church's vision is clear and compelling to me                 | 16.63                      | 4.917                          | .789                             | .805                             |

#### Scale Statistics

| Mean  | Variance | Std. Deviation | N of Items |
|-------|----------|----------------|------------|
| 20.00 | 7.467    | 2.733          | 6          |

### Reliability (Hope/Faith)

#### Reliability Statistics

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|------------------|------------|
| .723             | 4          |

#### Item-Total Statistics

|                                                                                                   | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| I am willing to "do whatever it takes" to ensure that my church accomplishes its mission.         | 10.44                      | 1.329                          | .670                             | .564                             |
| I persevere and exert extra effort to help my church succeed.                                     | 10.63                      | 1.717                          | .220                             | .837                             |
| I always do my best to serve in my church.                                                        | 10.19                      | 1.362                          | .708                             | .550                             |
| I demonstrate my faith in my church and its mission by doing everything I can to help us succeed. | 10.38                      | 1.450                          | .536                             | .647                             |

#### Scale Statistics

| Mean  | Variance | Std. Deviation | N of Items |
|-------|----------|----------------|------------|
| 13.88 | 2.383    | 1.544          | 4          |

### Reliability (Altruistic Love)

#### Reliability Statistics

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|------------------|------------|
| .489             | 6          |

#### Item-Total Statistics

|  | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|

|                                                                                         |       |       |      |      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|------|------|
| I care about the members in my congregation.                                            | 15.81 | 3.229 | .312 | .419 |
| I want to do something when some member is suffering to show kindness and consideration | 15.94 | 3.529 | .077 | .525 |
| As a leader in the church, I “walk the walk” as well as “talk the talk”.                | 16.31 | 3.296 | .358 | .411 |
| I believe the church disciplines members fairly                                         | 16.31 | 2.096 | .502 | .249 |
| I consider myself honest without false pride as a leader                                | 15.94 | 2.996 | .236 | .452 |
| I have the courage to stand up for what is right                                        | 15.94 | 3.529 | .077 | .525 |

#### Scale Statistics

| Mean  | Variance | Std. Deviation | N of Items |
|-------|----------|----------------|------------|
| 19.25 | 4.067    | 2.017          | 6          |

#### Reliability (Connection)

#### Reliability Statistics

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|------------------|------------|
| .758             | 4          |

#### Item-Total Statistics

|                                                    | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| There is a sense of connection in my congregation. | 8.19                       | 2.829                          | .793                             | .570                             |
| There is a level of trust in my congregation       | 8.63                       | 3.183                          | .597                             | .679                             |
| There is a sense of community in my congregation   | 8.00                       | 3.867                          | .349                             | .798                             |

|                                                             |      |       |      |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------|------|------|
| Everyone has a sense that he/she belongs to my congregation | 8.38 | 2.917 | .531 | .724 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------|------|------|

#### Scale Statistics

| Mean  | Variance | Std. Deviation | N of Items |
|-------|----------|----------------|------------|
| 11.06 | 5.263    | 2.294          | 4          |

#### Reliability (Compassion)

##### Reliability Statistics

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|------------------|------------|
| .800             | 4          |

#### Item-Total Statistics

|                                                                    | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| The members in my congregation exhibit sympathy towards each other | 9.19                       | 3.096                          | .589                             | .763                             |
| Church members show a sense of awareness of others' needs          | 9.50                       | 2.267                          | .717                             | .700                             |
| Church members sympathize with fellow members                      | 9.25                       | 2.867                          | .622                             | .746                             |
| Church members try to help others relieve their suffering.         | 9.00                       | 3.200                          | .557                             | .777                             |

#### Scale Statistics

| Mean  | Variance | Std. Deviation | N of Items |
|-------|----------|----------------|------------|
| 12.31 | 4.763    | 2.182          | 4          |

### Reliability (Meaningfulness)

#### Reliability Statistics

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
| .693             | 4          |

#### Item-Total Statistics

|                                                                                                    | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| The atmosphere at my church is joyful during the worship services                                  | 8.50                       | 3.200                          | .255                             | .738                             |
| My church members look forward to coming to the church services                                    | 9.13                       | 1.983                          | .621                             | .523                             |
| My congregation seems energized by the ministry of its members                                     | 9.25                       | 1.933                          | .687                             | .472                             |
| A connection between the work of the church and the larger social good of my community can be seen | 9.31                       | 2.629                          | .376                             | .689                             |

#### Scale Statistics

|       |          |                |            |
|-------|----------|----------------|------------|
| Mean  | Variance | Std. Deviation | N of Items |
| 12.06 | 3.929    | 1.982          | 4          |

### Reliability (Vision)

#### Reliability Statistics

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
| .911             | 6          |

**Item-Total Statistics**

|                                                                                                   | Scale Mean if<br>Item Deleted | Scale<br>Variance if<br>Item Deleted | Corrected<br>Item-Total<br>Correlation | Cronbach's<br>Alpha if Item<br>Deleted |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| My local church leaders show that they understand the church's vision by communicating it         | 13.54                         | 8.769                                | .855                                   | .881                                   |
| My local church leaders show commitment to the church's vision in their activities                | 13.92                         | 8.910                                | .761                                   | .894                                   |
| My local church has a vision statement that makes good leaders                                    | 14.08                         | 8.410                                | .707                                   | .907                                   |
| My local church's vision inspires leaders to performance                                          | 13.92                         | 9.577                                | .754                                   | .897                                   |
| Local church leaders show that the church's vision is good for its members                        | 13.92                         | 10.077                               | .603                                   | .914                                   |
| I see in my local church leaders actions that the church's vision is clear and compelling to them | 14.08                         | 8.244                                | .884                                   | .875                                   |

**Scale Statistics**

| Mean  | Variance | Std. Deviation | N of Items |
|-------|----------|----------------|------------|
| 16.69 | 12.731   | 3.568          | 6          |

**Reliability (Hope/Faith)****Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's<br>Alpha | N of Items |
|---------------------|------------|
| .912                | 4          |

**Item-Total Statistics**

|                                                                                                                                  | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| My local church leaders are willing to “do whatever it takes” to ensure that the church accomplishes its mission.                | 9.31                       | 3.231                          | .772                             | .911                             |
| My local church leaders show perseverance and exert effort in service to help the church succeed.                                | 9.00                       | 3.667                          | .800                             | .886                             |
| My local church leaders do their best to serve in the church.                                                                    | 8.77                       | 4.026                          | .811                             | .889                             |
| My local church leaders demonstrate faith in the church and its mission by doing everything they can to help the church succeed. | 8.92                       | 3.744                          | .879                             | .863                             |

**Scale Statistics**

| Mean  | Variance | Std. Deviation | N of Items |
|-------|----------|----------------|------------|
| 12.00 | 6.333    | 2.517          | 4          |

**Reliability (Altruistic Love)****Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|------------------|------------|
| .866             | 6          |

**Item-Total Statistics**

|                                                                                                               | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| My local church leaders care about the members in the congregation.                                           | 13.85                      | 10.974                         | .724                             | .834                             |
| My local church leaders want to do something when some member is suffering to show kindness and consideration | 13.85                      | 9.974                          | .821                             | .813                             |

|                                                                        |       |        |      |      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------|------|------|
| My local church leaders, “walk the walk” as well as “talk the talk”.   | 14.23 | 9.526  | .792 | .818 |
| I believe the church disciplines members fairly                        | 14.15 | 11.974 | .495 | .870 |
| My local church leaders are honest and have no pride                   | 13.92 | 11.244 | .752 | .832 |
| My local church leaders have the courage to stand up for what is right | 13.85 | 11.308 | .464 | .883 |

#### Scale Statistics

| Mean  | Variance | Std. Deviation | N of Items |
|-------|----------|----------------|------------|
| 16.77 | 15.192   | 3.898          | 6          |

#### Reliability (Connection)

##### Reliability Statistics

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
| .947             | 4          |

#### Item-Total Statistics

|                                                             | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| There is a sense of connection in my congregation.          | 7.62                       | 6.090                          | .839                             | .941                             |
| There is a level of trust in my congregation                | 7.77                       | 5.859                          | .904                             | .922                             |
| There is a sense of community in my congregation            | 7.54                       | 5.436                          | .926                             | .913                             |
| Everyone has a sense that he/she belongs to my congregation | 7.77                       | 5.192                          | .846                             | .944                             |

#### Scale Statistics

| Mean  | Variance | Std. Deviation | N of Items |
|-------|----------|----------------|------------|
| 10.23 | 9.859    | 3.140          | 4          |

### Reliability (Compassion)

#### Reliability Statistics

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
| .832             | 4          |

#### Item-Total Statistics

|                                                                    | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| The members in my congregation exhibit sympathy towards each other | 8.08                       | 4.244                          | .510                             | .847                             |
| Church members show a sense of awareness of others' needs          | 8.38                       | 3.090                          | .704                             | .772                             |
| Church members sympathize with fellow members                      | 8.23                       | 3.859                          | .757                             | .762                             |
| Church members try to help others relieve their suffering.         | 8.31                       | 3.064                          | .737                             | .753                             |

#### Scale Statistics

|       |          |                |            |
|-------|----------|----------------|------------|
| Mean  | Variance | Std. Deviation | N of Items |
| 11.00 | 6.000    | 2.449          | 4          |

### Reliability (Meaningfulness)

#### Reliability Statistics

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
| .671             | 4          |

#### Item-Total Statistics

|  | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|

|                                                                                                    |      |       |      |      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------|------|------|
| The atmosphere at my church is joyful during the worship services                                  | 8.54 | 2.269 | .557 | .525 |
| My church members look forward to coming to the church services                                    | 8.69 | 3.397 | .233 | .725 |
| My congregation seems energized by the ministry of its members                                     | 8.92 | 2.744 | .712 | .484 |
| A connection between the work of the church and the larger social good of my community can be seen | 9.15 | 2.474 | .412 | .645 |

#### Scale Statistics

| Mean  | Variance | Std. Deviation | N of Items |
|-------|----------|----------------|------------|
| 11.77 | 4.359    | 2.088          | 4          |

#### Reliability

##### Reliability Statistics

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|------------------|------------|
| .688             | 6          |

##### Item-Total Statistics

|                                                                                         | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| I care about the members in my congregation.                                            | 16.60                      | 4.299                          | .401                             | .654                             |
| I want to do something when some member is suffering to show kindness and consideration | 16.66                      | 4.211                          | .421                             | .648                             |
| As a leader in the church, I “walk the walk” as well as “talk the talk”.                | 16.92                      | 3.902                          | .529                             | .612                             |

|                                                          |       |       |      |      |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|------|------|
| I believe the church disciplines members fairly          | 17.18 | 3.763 | .331 | .695 |
| I consider myself honest without false pride as a leader | 16.80 | 3.724 | .563 | .597 |
| I have the courage to stand up for what is right         | 16.73 | 4.357 | .327 | .675 |

#### Scale Statistics

| Mean  | Variance | Std. Deviation | N of Items |
|-------|----------|----------------|------------|
| 20.18 | 5.479    | 2.341          | 6          |

#### Demographic Profile of Respondents

##### Church Leaders

|            |                    | Frequency | Percent |
|------------|--------------------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Age</b> | 18-21 years        | 6         | 4.2     |
|            | 22-35 years        | 28        | 19.7    |
|            | 36-45 years        | 41        | 28.9    |
|            | 46-55 years        | 52        | 36.6    |
|            | 56 years and above | 15        | 10.6    |
|            | Total              | 142       | 100.0   |

|               |        | Frequency | Percent |
|---------------|--------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Gender</b> | Male   | 80        | 56.3    |
|               | Female | 62        | 43.7    |
|               | Total  | 142       | 100.0   |

|                 |                   | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Position</b> | Elder             | 72        | 50.7    |
|                 | Treasurer         | 17        | 12.0    |
|                 | Clerk             | 27        | 19.0    |
|                 | Department Leader | 26        | 18.3    |
|                 | Total             | 142       | 100.0   |

|                       |         | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------------------|---------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Marital Status</b> | Single  | 42        | 29.6    |
|                       | Married | 95        | 66.9    |

|  |          |     |       |
|--|----------|-----|-------|
|  | Widow/er | 3   | 2.1   |
|  | Divorced | 2   | 1.4   |
|  | Total    | 142 | 100.0 |

|                         |                    | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| <b>Years of Service</b> | 1-5 years          | 39        | 27.5    | 27.7          |
|                         | 6-10 years         | 59        | 41.5    | 41.8          |
|                         | 11 years and above | 43        | 30.3    | 30.5          |
|                         | Total              | 141       | 99.3    | 100.0         |
|                         | No Response        | 1         | .7      |               |
| Total                   |                    | 142       | 100.0   |               |

|                                 |                    | Frequency | Percent |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Years as baptized member</b> | 1-5 years          | 19        | 13.4    |
|                                 | 6-10 years         | 95        | 66.9    |
|                                 | 11 years and above | 28        | 19.7    |
|                                 | Total              | 142       | 100.0   |

|                               |           | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Educational Attainment</b> | Secondary | 9         | 6.3     |
|                               | Tertiary  | 107       | 75.4    |
|                               | Other     | 26        | 18.3    |
|                               | Total     | 142       | 100.0   |

### Church Members

|            |                    | Frequency | Percent |
|------------|--------------------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Age</b> | 18-21 years        | 11        | 6.6     |
|            | 22-35 years        | 38        | 22.8    |
|            | 36-45 years        | 46        | 27.5    |
|            | 46-55 years        | 51        | 30.5    |
|            | 56 years and above | 21        | 12.6    |
|            | Total              | 167       | 100.0   |

|               |        | Frequency | Percent |
|---------------|--------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Gender</b> | Male   | 71        | 42.5    |
|               | Female | 96        | 57.5    |
|               | Total  | 167       | 100.0   |

|                       |          | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------------------|----------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Marital Status</b> | Single   | 68        | 40.7    |
|                       | Married  | 85        | 50.9    |
|                       | Widow/er | 9         | 5.4     |

|       |             |     |       |
|-------|-------------|-----|-------|
|       | Divorced    | 4   | 2.4   |
|       | Total       | 166 | 99.4  |
|       | No response | 1   | .6    |
| Total |             | 167 | 100.0 |

|                                 |                    | Frequency | Percent |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Years as baptized member</b> | 1-5 years          | 25        | 15.0    |
|                                 | 6-10 years         | 35        | 21.0    |
|                                 | 11 years and above | 106       | 63.5    |
|                                 | Total              | 166       | 99.4    |
|                                 | No response        | 1         | .6      |
| Total                           |                    | 167       | 100.0   |

|                               |             | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Educational Attainment</b> | Primary     | 2         | 1.2     |
|                               | Secondary   | 12        | 7.2     |
|                               | Tertiary    | 122       | 73.1    |
|                               | Other       | 29        | 17.4    |
|                               | Total       | 165       | 98.8    |
|                               | No response | 2         | 1.2     |
| Total                         |             | 167       | 100.0   |

## Church Demographics

### Church Location

|                      | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|
| Urban (City or Town) | 21        | 42.9    |
| Rural (Village)      | 28        | 57.1    |
| Total                | 49        | 100.0   |

### Church Size in Terms of Membership

|                               | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Small (Less than 100 members) | 24        | 49.0    |
| Medium (100-500 members)      | 19        | 38.8    |
| Large (More than 500 members) | 6         | 12.2    |
| Total                         | 49        | 100.0   |

## Conference

|       | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|-----------|---------|
| SBC   | 23        | 46.9    |
| NBC   | 26        | 53.1    |
| Total | 49        | 100.0   |

Research question 1. What is the level of spirituality of church leaders in the local churches of the Botswana Union Conference?

|                                                                                                                 | Min         | Max         | Mean        | Std. Deviation |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| I feel God's presence.                                                                                          | 2           | 4           | 3.33        | .592           |
| I experience a connection to all of life.                                                                       | 1           | 4           | 3.23        | .623           |
| During worship, or at other times when connecting with God, I feel joy which lifts me out of my daily concerns. | 2           | 4           | 3.54        | .566           |
| I find strength in my religion or spirituality.                                                                 | 2           | 4           | 3.63        | .552           |
| I find comfort in my religion or spirituality.                                                                  | 1           | 4           | 3.61        | .607           |
| I feel deep inner peace or harmony.                                                                             | 2           | 4           | 3.26        | .615           |
| I ask for God's help in the midst of daily activities.                                                          | 2           | 4           | 3.54        | .528           |
| I feel guided by God in the midst of daily activities.                                                          | 2           | 4           | 3.39        | .571           |
| I feel God's love for me directly.                                                                              | 2           | 4           | 3.57        | .612           |
| I feel God's love for me through others.                                                                        | 2           | 4           | 3.27        | .651           |
| I am spiritually touched by the beauty of creation.                                                             | 2           | 4           | 3.57        | .588           |
| I feel thankful for my blessings.                                                                               | 2           | 4           | 3.68        | .499           |
| I feel a selfless caring for others.                                                                            | 1           | 4           | 3.33        | .604           |
| I accept others even when they do things I think are wrong.                                                     | 2           | 4           | 3.24        | .641           |
| I desire to be closer to God                                                                                    | 2           | 4           | 3.79        | .459           |
| <b>Daily Spiritual Experience</b>                                                                               | <b>2.33</b> | <b>4.00</b> | <b>3.46</b> | <b>.338</b>    |

### *Scale of Interpretation of the Mean*

|             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| 1.00 – 1.74 | Never      |
| 1.75 – 2.49 | Rarely     |
| 2.50 – 3.24 | Often      |
| 3.25 – 4.00 | Every time |

Research question 2. What is the level of congregational spirituality in the local churches of the Botswana Union Conference?

### *Scale of Interpretation of the Mean*

|             |        |
|-------------|--------|
| 1.00 – 1.74 | Never  |
| 1.75 – 2.49 | Rarely |
| 2.50 – 3.24 | Often  |

3.25 – 4.00 Every time

### Leaders' Evaluation

#### Connection

|                                                             | Min         | Max         | Mean        | Std.<br>Deviation |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| There is a sense of connection in my congregation.          | 1           | 4           | 2.94        | .702              |
| There is a level of trust in my congregation                | 1           | 4           | 2.84        | .769              |
| There is a sense of community in my congregation            | 1           | 4           | 3.06        | .661              |
| Everyone has a sense that he/she belongs to my congregation | 1           | 4           | 2.92        | .689              |
| <b>Congregational Spirituality: Connection</b>              | <b>1.25</b> | <b>4.00</b> | <b>2.94</b> | <b>.553</b>       |

#### Compassion

|                                                                    | Min         | Max         | Mean        | Std.<br>Deviation |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| The members in my congregation exhibit sympathy towards each other | 1           | 4           | 3.05        | .688              |
| Church members show a sense of awareness of others' needs          | 1           | 4           | 3.01        | .724              |
| Church members sympathize with fellow members                      | 1           | 4           | 3.07        | .769              |
| Church members try to help others relieve their suffering.         | 1           | 4           | 3.04        | .723              |
| <b>Congregational Spirituality: Compassion</b>                     | <b>1.00</b> | <b>4.00</b> | <b>3.04</b> | <b>.600</b>       |

#### Meaningfulness

|                                                                                                    | Min         | Max         | Mean          | Std.<br>Deviation |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|-------------------|
| The atmosphere at my church is joyful during the worship services                                  | 1           | 4           | 3.21          | .723              |
| My church members look forward to coming to the church services                                    | 1           | 4           | 3.07          | .721              |
| My congregation seems energized by the ministry of its members                                     | 1           | 4           | 2.97          | .734              |
| A connection between the work of the church and the larger social good of my community can be seen | 1           | 4           | 2.73          | .752              |
| <b>Congregational Spirituality: Meaningfulness</b>                                                 | <b>1.00</b> | <b>4.00</b> | <b>2.9965</b> | <b>.59697</b>     |

### Members' Evaluation

#### Scale of Interpretation of the Mean

|             |                   |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 1.00 – 1.74 | Strongly Disagree |
| 1.75 – 2.49 | Disagree          |
| 2.50 – 3.24 | Agree             |
| 3.25 – 4.00 | Strongly Agree    |

#### Connection

|                                                             | Min         | Max         | Mean        | Std.<br>Deviation |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| There is a sense of connection in my congregation.          | 1           | 4           | 2.96        | .735              |
| There is a level of trust in my congregation                | 1           | 4           | 2.74        | .845              |
| There is a sense of community in my congregation            | 1           | 4           | 2.96        | .791              |
| Everyone has a sense that he/she belongs to my congregation | 1           | 4           | 2.83        | .776              |
| <b>Congregational Spirituality: Connection</b>              | <b>1.00</b> | <b>4.00</b> | <b>2.87</b> | <b>.675</b>       |

### Compassion

|                                                                    | Min         | Max         | Mean        | Std.<br>Deviation |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| The members in my congregation exhibit sympathy towards each other | 1           | 4           | 2.99        | .736              |
| Church members show a sense of awareness of others' needs          | 1           | 4           | 2.87        | .833              |
| Church members sympathize with fellow members                      | 1           | 4           | 3.02        | .719              |
| Church members try to help others relieve their suffering.         | 1           | 4           | 2.97        | .740              |
| <b>Congregational Spirituality: Compassion</b>                     | <b>1.25</b> | <b>4.00</b> | <b>2.96</b> | <b>.657</b>       |

### Meaningfulness

|                                                                                                    | Min         | Max         | Mean        | Std.<br>Deviation |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| The atmosphere at my church is joyful during the worship services                                  | 1           | 4           | 3.16        | .744              |
| My church members look forward to coming to the church services                                    | 1           | 4           | 2.93        | .765              |
| My congregation seems energized by the ministry of its members                                     | 1           | 4           | 2.91        | .743              |
| A connection between the work of the church and the larger social good of my community can be seen | 1           | 4           | 2.84        | .898              |
| <b>Congregational Spirituality: Meaningfulness</b>                                                 | <b>1.00</b> | <b>4.00</b> | <b>2.96</b> | <b>.625</b>       |

Research question 3. To what extent do the church leaders in the Botswana Union Conference engage in the following behaviours?

- a. Sharing the Vision
- b. Inspiring Faith/Hope
- c. Exhibiting Altruistic Love

### **Scale of Interpretation of the Mean**

- 1.00 – 1.74 Strongly Disagree  
1.75 – 2.49 Disagree  
2.50 – 3.24 Agree  
3.25 – 4.00 Strongly Agree

### **Leaders' Self-evaluation**

#### **Sharing the Vision**

|                                                                  | Min         | Max         | Mean        | Std.<br>Deviation |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| I understand my church's vision                                  | 1           | 4           | 3.39        | .640              |
| I am committed to my church's vision                             | 2           | 4           | 3.44        | .590              |
| My church has a vision statement that brings out the best in me. | 1           | 4           | 3.31        | .726              |
| My church's vision inspires my best performance                  | 1           | 4           | 3.23        | .701              |
| I have faith in my church's vision for its members               | 1           | 4           | 3.35        | .686              |
| My church's vision is clear and compelling to me                 | 2           | 4           | 3.28        | .718              |
| <b>Spiritual Leadership Behaviour: Sharing the Vision</b>        | <b>1.83</b> | <b>4.00</b> | <b>3.33</b> | <b>.530</b>       |

### Inspiring Faith/Hope

|                                                                                                   | Min         | Max         | Mean        | Std.<br>Deviation |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| I am willing to "do whatever it takes" to ensure that my church accomplishes its mission.         | 2           | 4           | 3.47        | .592              |
| I persevere and exert extra effort to help my church succeed.                                     | 2           | 4           | 3.45        | .602              |
| I always do my best to serve in my church.                                                        | 2           | 4           | 3.66        | .531              |
| I demonstrate my faith in my church and its mission by doing everything I can to help us succeed. | 2           | 4           | 3.56        | .564              |
| <b>Spiritual Leadership Behaviour: Inspiring Faith/Hope</b>                                       | <b>2.00</b> | <b>4.00</b> | <b>3.54</b> | <b>.445</b>       |

### Exhibiting Altruistic Love

|                                                                                         | Min         | Max         | Mean        | Std.<br>Deviation |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| I care about the members in my congregation.                                            | 2           | 4           | 3.58        | .537              |
| I want to do something when some member is suffering to show kindness and consideration | 2           | 4           | 3.51        | .555              |
| As a leader in the church, I "walk the walk" as well as "talk the talk".                | 2           | 4           | 3.25        | .589              |
| I believe the church disciplines members fairly                                         | 1           | 4           | 3.00        | .816              |
| I consider myself honest without false pride as a leader                                | 2           | 4           | 3.38        | .627              |
| I have the courage to stand up for what is right                                        | 2           | 4           | 3.45        | .578              |
| <b>Spiritual Leadership Behaviour: Exhibiting Altruistic Love</b>                       | <b>2.33</b> | <b>4.00</b> | <b>3.36</b> | <b>.390</b>       |

## Members' Evaluation

### Sharing the Vision

|                                                                                           | Min         | Max         | Mean        | Std.<br>Deviation |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| My local church leaders show that they understand the church's vision by communicating it | 1           | 4           | 3.03        | .740              |
| My local church leaders show commitment to the church's vision in their activities        | 1           | 4           | 2.91        | .835              |
| My local church has a vision statement that makes good leaders                            | 1           | 4           | 2.79        | .877              |
| My local church's vision inspires leaders to performance                                  | 1           | 4           | 2.82        | .838              |
| Local church leaders show that the church's vision is good for its members                | 1           | 4           | 2.87        | .803              |
| <b>Spiritual Leadership Behaviour: Sharing the Vision</b>                                 | <b>1.00</b> | <b>4.00</b> | <b>2.88</b> | <b>.676</b>       |

### Inspiring Faith/Hope

|                                                                                                                                  | Min         | Max         | Mean        | Std.<br>Deviation |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| My local church leaders are willing to "do whatever it takes" to ensure that the church accomplishes its mission.                | 1           | 4           | 2.82        | .845              |
| My local church leaders show perseverance in service                                                                             | 1           | 4           | 2.97        | .810              |
| My local church leaders exert extra effort to help the church succeed.                                                           | 1           | 4           | 3.04        | .747              |
| My local church leaders do their best to serve in the church.                                                                    | 1           | 4           | 3.22        | .704              |
| My local church leaders demonstrate faith in the church and its mission by doing everything they can to help the church succeed. | 1           | 4           | 3.07        | .793              |
| <b>Spiritual Leadership Behaviour: Hope/Faith</b>                                                                                | <b>1.00</b> | <b>4.00</b> | <b>3.02</b> | <b>.639</b>       |

### Exhibiting Altruistic Love

|                                                                                                               | Min | Max | Mean | Std.<br>Deviation |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|------|-------------------|
| My local church leaders care about the members in the congregation.                                           | 1   | 4   | 2.99 | .791              |
| My local church leaders want to do something when some member is suffering to show kindness and consideration | 1   | 4   | 3.00 | .814              |

|                                                                        |             |             |             |             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| My local church leaders, “walk the walk” as well as “talk the talk”.   | 1           | 4           | 2.72        | .855        |
| I believe the church disciplines members fairly                        | 1           | 4           | 2.67        | .888        |
| My local church leaders are honest and have no pride                   | 1           | 4           | 2.93        | .793        |
| My local church leaders have the courage to stand up for what is right | 1           | 4           | 2.86        | .835        |
| <b>Spiritual Leadership Behaviour: Exhibiting Altruistic Love</b>      | <b>1.00</b> | <b>4.00</b> | <b>2.86</b> | <b>.640</b> |

Research question 4. Is there a significant relationship between the spirituality of church leaders and congregational spirituality in the churches of the Botswana Union Conference?

#### Correlations

|                              |                     | Congregational Spirituality |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Church Leaders' Spirituality | Pearson Correlation | .401**                      |
|                              | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .004                        |
|                              | N                   | 49                          |

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

**Basic Interpretation:** Church leaders’ spirituality was found to be directly and moderately correlated with congregational spirituality,  $p(47) = .401$ ,  $p = .004$ . This implies that when the church leaders’ spirituality is strong, the spirituality of the congregation tends to be strong.

Research question 5. To what extent does leadership behavior mediate the relationship between the spirituality of church leaders and congregational spirituality in the churches of the Botswana Union Conference?

#### Analysis of the Mediating Role of Leadership Behavior

##### Effect of Church Leaders’ Spirituality on Leadership Behavior

| Model Summary |                   |          |                   |                            |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Model         | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1             | .367 <sup>a</sup> | .134     | .116              | .36548                     |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Church Leaders' Spirituality

| ANOVA <sup>a</sup> |            |                |    |             |                   |
|--------------------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------------------|
| Model              |            | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | Sig.              |
| 1                  | Regression | .975           | 1  | .975        | .010 <sup>b</sup> |
|                    | Residual   | 6.278          | 47 | .134        |                   |
|                    | Total      | 7.253          | 48 |             |                   |

a. Dependent Variable: Leadership Behavior

b. Predictors: (Constant), Church Leaders' Spirituality

|       |                              | <b>Coefficients<sup>a</sup></b> |            |                           |       |
|-------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|
|       |                              | Unstandardized Coefficients     | Std. Error | Standardized Coefficients |       |
| Model |                              | B                               |            | Beta                      | t     |
| 1     | (Constant)                   | .680                            | .851       |                           | .798  |
|       | Church Leaders' Spirituality | .662                            | .245       | .367                      | 2.702 |
|       |                              |                                 |            |                           | Sig.  |
|       |                              |                                 |            |                           | .429  |
|       |                              |                                 |            |                           | .010  |

a. Dependent Variable: Leadership Behavior

### Effect of Leadership Behavior on Congregational Spirituality (Mediated Model)

#### Model Summary

| Model | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1     | .714 <sup>a</sup> | .510     | .489              | .20370                     |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership Behavior, Church Leaders' Spirituality

#### ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

| Model |            | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F      | Sig.               |
|-------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|--------|--------------------|
| 1     | Regression | 1.990          | 2  | .995        | 23.978 | <.001 <sup>b</sup> |
|       | Residual   | 1.909          | 46 | .041        |        |                    |
|       | Total      | 3.899          | 48 |             |        |                    |

a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality

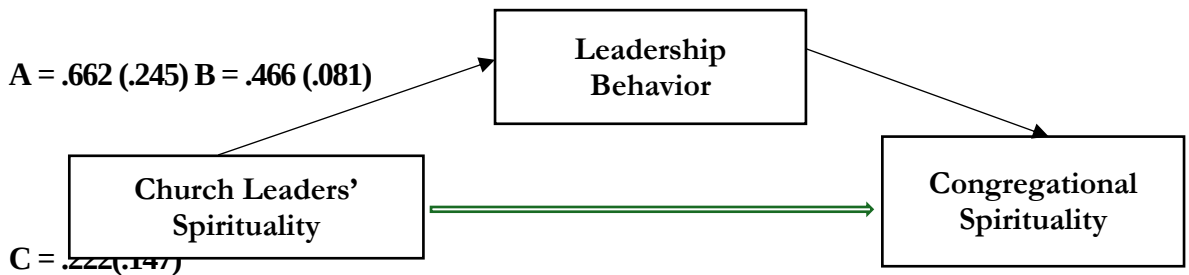
b. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership Behavior, Church Leaders' Spirituality

#### Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

|   |                              | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients |       |       |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|
|   |                              | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      | t     | Sig.  |
| 1 | (Constant)                   | .827                        | .478       |                           | 1.732 | .090  |
|   | Church Leaders' Spirituality | .222                        | .147       | .167                      | 1.509 | .138  |
|   | Leadership Behavior          | .466                        | .081       | .636                      | 5.734 | <.001 |

a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality

Indirect Effect = .662\*.466 = .308



| Input:         |      | Test statistic: | Std. Error: | p-value:   |
|----------------|------|-----------------|-------------|------------|
| a              | .662 | Sobel test:     | 2.44572344  | 0.12613528 |
| b              | .466 | Aroian test:    | 2.41600446  | 0.12768685 |
| s <sub>a</sub> | .245 | Goodman test:   | 2.47656682  | 0.12456438 |
| s <sub>b</sub> | .081 | Reset all       | Calculate   |            |

Research question 6. To what extent do the church demographic factors (conference, church location, and church size in terms of membership) moderate the relationship between the spirituality of church leaders and congregational spirituality in the churches of the Botswana Union Conference?

**Moderating effect of the conference where the church belongs on the relationship between church leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality**

#### Model Summary

| Model | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1     | .401 <sup>a</sup> | .161     | .124              | .26673                     |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Interaction between Church Leaders' Spirituality and Conference, Church Leaders' Spirituality

#### ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

| Model |            | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F     | Sig.              |
|-------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1     | Regression | .626           | 2  | .313        | 4.399 | .018 <sup>b</sup> |
|       | Residual   | 3.273          | 46 | .071        |       |                   |
|       | Total      | 3.899          | 48 |             |       |                   |

a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality

b. Predictors: (Constant), Interaction between Church Leaders' Spirituality and Conference, Church Leaders' Spirituality

|       |                                                                 | <b>Coefficients<sup>a</sup></b> |            |                           |       |      |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
|       |                                                                 | Unstandardized Coefficients     |            | Standardized Coefficients |       |      |
| Model |                                                                 | B                               | Std. Error | Beta                      | t     | Sig. |
| 1     | (Constant)                                                      | 1.161                           | .656       |                           | 1.771 | .083 |
|       | Church Leaders' Spirituality                                    | .526                            | .188       | .397                      | 2.797 | .008 |
|       | Interaction between Church Leaders' Spirituality and Conference | .003                            | .043       | .011                      | .080  | .936 |

a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality

### **Moderating effect of the church location on the relationship between church leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality**

| <b>Model Summary</b> |                   |          |                   |                            |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Model                | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1                    | .409 <sup>a</sup> | .167     | .131              | .26572                     |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Interaction between Church Leaders' Spirituality and Location, Church Leaders' Spirituality

| ANOVA <sup>a</sup> |            |                |    |             |       |                   |
|--------------------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| Model              |            | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F     | Sig.              |
| 1                  | Regression | .651           | 2  | .325        | 4.609 | .015 <sup>b</sup> |
|                    | Residual   | 3.248          | 46 | .071        |       |                   |
|                    | Total      | 3.899          | 48 |             |       |                   |

a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality

b. Predictors: (Constant), Interaction between Church Leaders' Spirituality and Location, Church Leaders' Spirituality

|       |                              | <b>Coefficients<sup>a</sup></b> |            |                           |       |      |
|-------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
|       |                              | Unstandardized Coefficients     |            | Standardized Coefficients |       |      |
| Model |                              | B                               | Std. Error | Beta                      | t     | Sig. |
| 1     | (Constant)                   | .991                            | .670       |                           | 1.480 | .146 |
|       | Church Leaders' Spirituality | .574                            | .192       | .433                      | 2.983 | .005 |

|                                                               |      |      |      |      |      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Interaction between Church Leaders' Spirituality and Location | .024 | .040 | .087 | .599 | .552 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|

a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality

**Moderating effect of the church size in terms of membership on the relationship between church leaders' spirituality and congregational spirituality**

**Model Summary**

| Model | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1     | .411 <sup>a</sup> | .169     | .133              | .26540                     |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Interaction between Church Leaders' Spirituality and Size, Church Leaders' Spirituality

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

| Model |            | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F     | Sig.              |
|-------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1     | Regression | .659           | 2  | .329        | 4.675 | .014 <sup>b</sup> |
|       | Residual   | 3.240          | 46 | .070        |       |                   |
|       | Total      | 3.899          | 48 |             |       |                   |

a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality

b. Predictors: (Constant), Interaction between Church Leaders' Spirituality and Size, Church Leaders' Spirituality

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

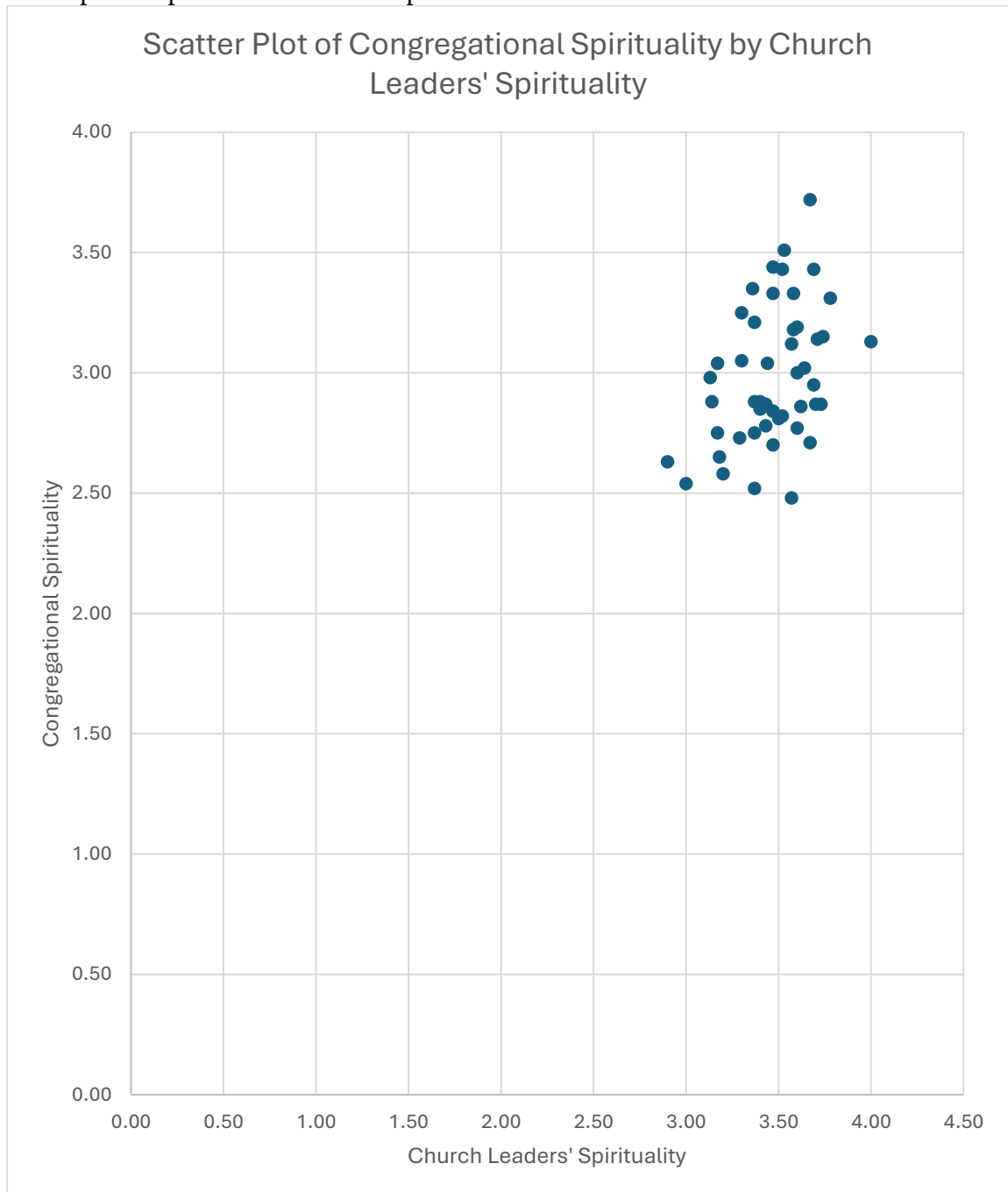
| Model |                                                           | Unstandardized Coefficients<br>B | Std. Error | Standardized Coefficients<br>Beta | t     | Sig. |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|-------|------|
| 1     | (Constant)                                                | 1.145                            | .618       |                                   | 1.852 | .070 |
|       | Church Leaders' Spirituality                              | .530                             | .178       | .401                              | 2.980 | .005 |
|       | Interaction between Church Leaders' Spirituality and Size | .029                             | .043       | .092                              | .685  | .497 |

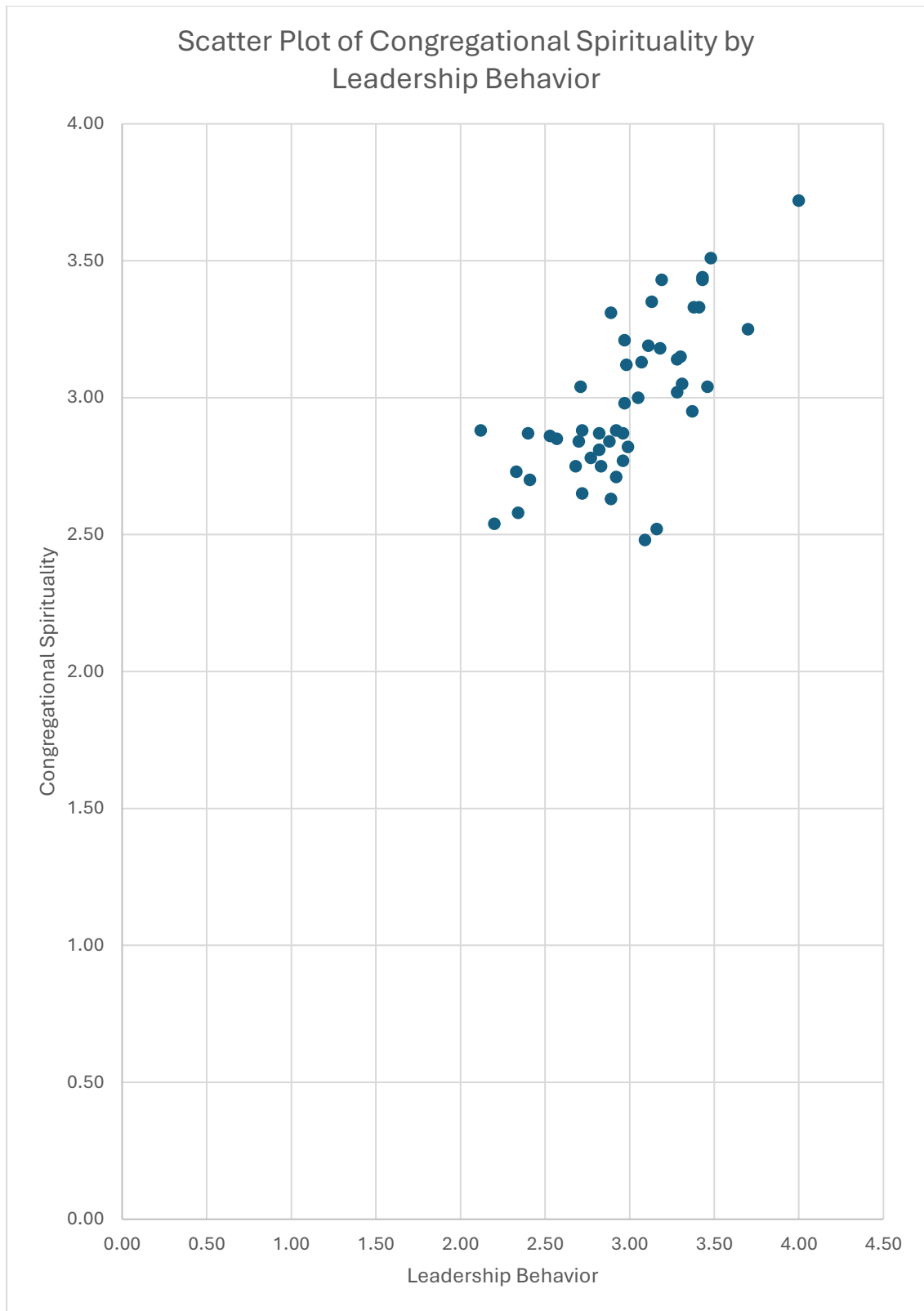
a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality

### Testing Multiple Linear Regression Assumptions

Linearity of Relationship Between Independent and Dependent Variables

The linearity assumption was tested with scatterplots shown below. All scatterplots depict linear relationship.





### **Normality of Distribution**

The multiple linear regression analysis requires that the errors between observed and predicted values (i.e., the residuals of the regression) should be normally distributed. Normality was checked with a goodness of fit test, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, conducted on the residuals themselves.

It was found that the residuals of the regression follow a normal distribution,  $p = .200 > .05$  and  $p = .115 > .05$ , respectively.

| <b>Tests of Normality</b> |                                 |    |       |              |    |      |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|----|-------|--------------|----|------|
|                           | Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup> |    |       | Shapiro-Wilk |    |      |
|                           | Statistic                       | df | Sig.  | Statistic    | df | Sig. |
| Unstandardized Residual   | .091                            | 49 | .200* | .962         | 49 | .115 |

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

### Multicollinearity

Multiple linear regression assumes that there is no multicollinearity in the data. Multicollinearity occurs when the independent variables are highly correlated with each other.

Multicollinearity was checked by analyzing the variance inflation factor (VIF) of the linear regression, which indicate the degree that the variances in the regression estimates are increased due to multicollinearity, that is, when VIF values are higher than 5. As shown in the table of coefficients, the VIFs are both 1.155, which are less than 5, therefore, multicollinearity is not found in the data.

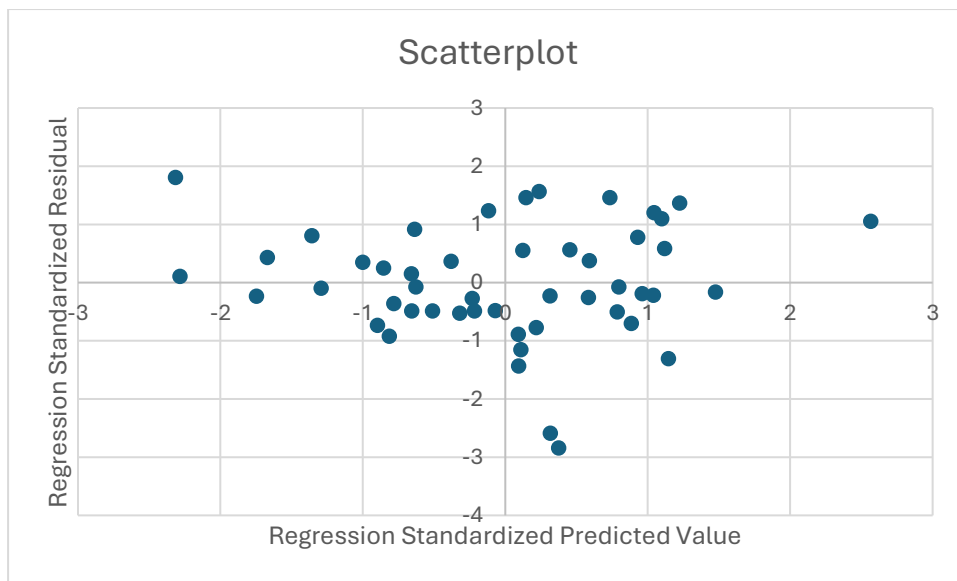
| <b>Coefficients<sup>a</sup></b> |                              |                             |            |                                |       |       |                         |       |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| Model                           |                              | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients Beta | t     | Sig.  | Collinearity Statistics |       |
|                                 |                              | B                           | Std. Error |                                |       |       | Tolerance               | VIF   |
| 1                               | (Constant)                   | .827                        | .478       |                                | 1.732 | .090  |                         |       |
|                                 | Church Leaders' Spirituality | .222                        | .147       | .167                           | 1.509 | .138  | .866                    | 1.155 |
|                                 | Leadership Behavior          | .466                        | .081       | .636                           | 5.734 | <.001 | .866                    | 1.155 |

a. Dependent Variable: Congregational Spirituality

### Homoscedasticity

The assumption of homoscedasticity (meaning “same variance”) is central to linear regression models. Homoscedasticity describes a situation in which the error term (random disturbance in the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable) is the same across all values of the independent variables.

To check for homoscedasticity, a scatterplot of residuals versus predicted values was obtained. The scatterplot shows no clear pattern in the distribution, that is the points in the residual plots are randomly scattered. There is no cone-shaped pattern which is a sign of heteroscedasticity. Thus, the assumption of homoscedasticity is met.



## CURRICULUM VITAE

### **Tapologo Kago Simankane**

Pastor | Author | Organizational Leader

Email: tapologo.simankane@gmail.com | Phone: +267 71817977

### **Professional Summary**

Seasoned Seventh-day Adventist pastor and organizational leader with over two decades of diverse ministry experience. Demonstrates strategic leadership in church administration, youth development, education, music ministry, and communication. Known for integrating emotional intelligence and project management skills to develop systems, implement impactful programs, and inspire spiritual growth. Passionate about shaping future leaders and enhancing organizational effectiveness through service and innovation.

### **Education**

- PhD (Candidate), Organizational Leadership – Adventist University of Africa – In Progress
- Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry – Adventist University of Africa, Kenya – 2006–2009
- Bachelor of Arts in Theology – Solusi University, Zimbabwe – 1997–2001
- High School Certificate – Anderson High School, Zimbabwe – Graduated 1996

### **Professional Experience**

- Pastor – Gaborone District 1
  - 2022 – Present
  - Leading a prominent urban congregation with emphasis on spiritual renewal, strategic planning, and leadership empowerment.
- Youth Director | Music Director | PAKIA Director – South Botswana Conference
  - 2016 – 2022
  - Oversaw regional youth ministry, organized national congresses and training programs, coordinated music ministries, and led initiatives for children of pastors (PAKIA).
- Education Director | Communication Director | Music Director | PAKIA Director
  - 2016 – 2016
  - Advanced Adventist education standards, managed Union-wide communications, fostered creative worship through music, and supported pastoral families.
- Stewardship Director – South Botswana Conference
  - 2015 – 2016
  - Promoted faithful financial and life stewardship; trained church leaders on biblical resource management.
- Pastor – MoThaMa District (Moshupa, Thamaga, Manyana)

- 2011 – 2014
- Strengthened church growth and lay participation; led impactful evangelistic outreach.
- Pastor – Tsabong (Kgalagadi South District)
  - 2004 – 2011
  - Built spiritual resilience in remote communities; initiated youth and family ministries.
- Pastor – Lobatse District (Otse to Goodhope)
  - 2001 – 2004
  - Began ministry with pastoral duties across multiple congregations, developing foundational leadership and preaching skills.

#### **Books and Publications**

- Born to Lead (9-Book Series): A character development collection for children rooted in botho, exploring values such as respect, gratitude, sharing, kindness, and community.
- Complementary Facilitator’s Manual for the Born to Lead Series
- Activity Workbook “Born to Lead”
- Deadly Happiness – Drugs and Substance Abuse Awareness for Children.

#### **Core Competencies**

- Pastoral Leadership & Preaching
- Organizational Management & Strategic Planning
- Project Management & Systems Development
- Youth & Family Ministry
- Public Speaking & Communication
- Education & Curriculum Oversight
- Music Ministry & Worship Leadership
- Emotional Intelligence & Mentorship

#### **Professional Affiliations**

- Seventh-day Adventist Church
- Pastor’s Kids Association (PAKIA)

#### **References**

Available upon request.