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## SPIRITUALITY AS A FOUNDATION FOR SME RESILIENCE IN THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR: EVIDENCE FROM MALAYSIAN OGSE SMES

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### Abstract:

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) operating in project-based industries such as the construction sector and the oil and gas services and equipment (OGSE) sector often face market instability, uncertain operating environments, and limited resources. This affects the resilience of the company and forces it to modify its structure, strategy, and operational practices to survive in the market. Past studies are seen to pay less attention to ethical and value factors and spirituality as factors of organizational resilience when facing a crisis. Therefore, this study aims to explore the aspect of spirituality as a source of resilience among Malaysian OGSE SMEs and examine how it can be applied in the construction sector. Guided by a qualitative research approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven SME leaders who met clear criteria, including a minimum of ten years of business experience and compliance with PETRONAS licensing requirements. The thematic analysis revealed that there are three interconnected spiritual values, namely the charity, religion, and honesty, as practices, which are significant to organizational resilience. These values should be incorporated in the leadership practices, workplace culture, and crisis management practices. Their philanthropic engagements, particularly the zakat and social engagement fostered social affiliations, and sparked off organizational legitimacy. In the meantime, the religious practices provided mental relaxation, moral support and solidarity during uncertain periods and the concept of honesty was defined as the source of trust, transparency and sustenance of long-term relations with

stakeholders. In general, this paper can be related to the literature on resilience because it shows that spirituality is a practical and value-based approach that enhances organisational stability and stakeholder trust, which has provided construction SMEs with a culturally based avenue through which they can improve resilience in unstable and risky contexts.

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Charity; Construction SMEs; Honesty; Malaysia; OGSE Industry; Resilience; Religion; Spirituality



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## Introduction

Small and medium-sized business firms (SMEs) have been significantly described as a major economic development driver because they provide employment, innovation, and sustainable growth (Saad et al., 2021; Erdiaw-Kwasie et al., 2023). The significance of SMEs is especially clear in the Malaysian context of project-based industries, like construction and the oil and gas services and equipment (OGSE) industry, where SMEs are a key factor in supporting local ecosystems and supply chains and boosting the competitiveness of the country (Marimuthu et al., 2023; Ruslan et al., 2023). Although they are important, the environments in which these firms operate can be described as volatile demand and a complex stakeholder structure, stringent regulatory demands, and vulnerability to external shocks, which all drive up operational uncertainty (Adan et al., 2020; Piya et al., 2022).

This susceptibility is further aggravated by the internal inherent constraints of SMEs such as financial resources, slim organization structures, and informal management behaviors that constrain their response capability to disruptions, in comparison to bigger firms (Ozanne et al., 2022; Roffia & Dabic, 2023). Recent crises have aggravated such challenges. To illustrate, in the case of the COVID-19 pandemic, most SMEs have faced extreme disruptions in their supply chain, delays in projects, and limited cash flow. However, as it has been shown, resilience was also a key to helping these firms continue their operations and survive over the long run (Zutshi et al., 2021; Ahmad et al., 2023). Here, resilience has been considered the ability of an organization to absorb shocks, adjust in accordance with changing conditions, and come out intact without losing its strategic direction (Iborra, Safon, & Dolz, 2020; Kotsios, 2023).

The current literature on organizational resilience has placed a major emphasis on strategic, structural, and technological aspects, including the connection to innovation, digitalization, ambidexterity, and access to external resources and networks (Khurana, Dutta, & Ghura, 2022; Trieu et al., 2023). Although these schools of thought are thought-provoking, they only give partial explanations in project-based organizations like construction and OGSE, where informal collaboration, trust, and social validation are core to organizational processes (Sullivan-Taylor & Branicki, 2011; Ozanne et al., 2022). As a result, moral and value-based foundations of organizational behavior should receive more academic attention (Arham et al., 2024).

Recent literature also tends to indicate that the conceptualization of spirituality is as a value-based orientation that includes ethical conduct, compassion, meaning, and responsibility that lead to prosocial organizational cultures, moral leadership, and cohesive groups, thereby enhancing the resilience of cognitive, emotional, and relational levels (DiBella et al., 2022; Arham et al., 2024; Goncalves et al., 2024). These factors in the Malaysian context overlap with the dominant religious and cultural influences, with the Islamic values directing managerial logic, workforce conduct, and relationships with stakeholders (Ismail et al., 2024; Seo, Mahudin, & Sohn, 2022). Prayer, reflection, and zakat are some of the practices linked to improved psychological stability, ethical behavior, and social connectedness, which contribute to organizational flexibility in situations of stress (Dorais and Gutierrez, 2021; Kamaruding, Mokhtar & Rahman, 2022).

Although there is an increasing interest in spirituality and resilience, there is a lack of empirical studies on spirituality as a resilience tool in Malaysian project-based SMEs. To fill this gap, this paper explores how spirituality can support organizational resilience among Malaysian OGSE SMEs and the applicability of this idea to a project-based construction environment. The analysis is based on the spiritual values of charity, religiosity, and honesty that are expressed in the leadership practices, organizational culture, and capability to manage crises among key stakeholders who have recognized these values as positive. This study provides context-specific information on how SMEs cope with uncertainty and risk in challenging project settings by adding spirituality to strategic drivers and organizational structures.

## **Literature Review**

The literature review is a compilation of previous research into SME resilience that takes into account both long-standing and new streams of research. It starts by looking at how resilience helps SME survival in spaces characterized by uncertainty, chaos, and scarcity of resources. Next, the focus is on the internal and external drivers of organizational resilience, and the structural and strategic explanations that are widely used are given special consideration. The review ends by proposing spirituality as an emerging but under-researched approach to resilience in the context of the Malaysian SME setting, and its potential to complement and diversify existing approaches to resilience.

### ***SME Resilience and Survival in Project-Based Sectors***

SMEs are traditionally considered as strategic drivers of economic growth, job creation, and innovation on the domestic and international scales (Saad et al., 2021; Erdiaw-Kwasie et al., 2023). The SMEs in Malaysia have a very significant role in various projects related to industries, with the construction industry and the OGSE industry being the most appropriate

examples of such industries. The main characteristics of such sectors are the huge capital requirements, the complexity of the interactions between the different stakeholders, and the elevated sensitivity to the changes in the external environment, which increase the operational risks and uncertainty (Adan et al., 2020). These industries have a tendency to have SMEs, which are the most vulnerable organisations, thus important even in enhancing the development of industries. Limitations in capture shock and responsiveness to disturbance: SMEs have constraints in their capacity to accommodate shocks as well as respond positively to disturbances, not only in financial resources, but also in less complex organizational structures and less formal management styles compared to larger companies (Roffia & Dabic, 2023). All these weaknesses were more pronounced during the COVID-19 pandemic that led to supply chain disruption, project delays, and financial strains. It is also associated with the importance of resilience to SME survival; the ability of the organization to take in shock and respond to the new conditions, recuperate, and proceed with operations in the event of a crisis can be viewed as resilience in this instance (Ahmad et al., 2023; Kotsios, 2023).

### ***Determinants of Organizational Resilience in SMEs***

Generally, the body of literature on factors of organizational resilience is categorized into two, internal abilities and external enablers. Inside the firm, the resilience of SMEs is based on innovation, ambidexterity, and consistency that enable firms to efficiently explore and exploit, and are organized with congruence in disruptions (Iborra, Safón, and Dolz, 2020; Trieu et al., 2023). The capabilities embrace uncertainty with an impact on SMEs without altering their long-term strategic focus. On a social level, resilience is aided by various resources such as social, financial, and other means enabling the investment of what is required to be done during a crisis (Dias et al., 2022; Ozanne et al., 2022; Makmor et al., 2023). Empirical literature on resilience in the COVID-19 pandemic characterizes digital, business model, and technological changes as the ones that help to maintain SMEs in times of trouble (Zutshi et al., 2021; Khurana, Dutta, & Ghura, 2022). Nonetheless, even the most popular vision of such studies is still largely dependent on technical, structural, and economic reasons. Although these are such characteristics that cumulate towards resilience, they still remain incomplete in elucidating it within environments that take place in project frameworks and multiplier cultural trends. The leadership permitting moral, cultural, and values-based aspects, among others that enable shared meaning, and such like environments are not studied despite their ability to permit action and change in response to the stress.

### ***Spirituality as a Foundational Source of Organizational Strength***

Currently, scholars have begun to trace spirituality as the unknown yet very important foundational element of organisational resilience, but it has not been well researched yet. Spirituality fosters moral conduct, compassion, a common purpose, and a sense of unity that may add to the strengthening of the capacity to stand resistant to uncertainty and establish resilience (DiBella et al., 2022; Arham et al., 2024; Goncalves et al., 2024). Spirituality is practical at the cognitive, emotional, and relationship levels of the lives of people as opposed to pure instrumental mechanisms of resilience and determines how the individual perceives crises and reinvents the responses that follow as a group. Spirituality in the Malaysian cultural and religious context is a major factor of cultural and religious heritage where the predominant Islamic values of justice, efficacy, compassion, and the feeling of responsibility towards the well-being of others are central (Kamaruding, Mokthar, and Rahman, 2022; Ismail et al., 2024). Such workplace practices as prayer, reflection, and zakat reinforce emotional security, mutual

trust, and obligations between co-workers. The responses offer psychological and moral benchmarks in the crisis and form resilience on an individual and collective scale (Dorais & Gutierrez, 2021; Li & Hu, 2025).

### ***Integrating Spirituality into SME Leadership and Management***

The recent investigation also shows that the incorporation of spirituality in the leadership and management systems can help to increase resilience in SMEs. In case of crisis response, values-oriented leadership that is based on spirituality promotes ethical decisions and, simultaneously, motivates employees to be engaged and trusted (Kamaruding et al., 2023). Furthermore, strategies relying on spirituality to build ethics in stakeholder involvement, branding, and marketing to achieve social responsibility may raise the legitimacy and relationship capital in the long term (Pinto et al., 2024). Risk, dependency, and uncertainty, which are predominant in project-driven industries like construction (with OGSE), tend to promote teamwork, accountability, and common sense-making, and are given spiritual support in spirituality (Kamaruding, Mokhtar, & Rahman, 2022). The culture and leadership behaviour of an organization is formed by spirituality, which is associated with absorptive, adaptive, and transformative resilience and, in fact, enables SMEs to not only overcome the crisis but also become stronger and more cohesive (Arham et al., 2024).

### **Methodology**

This qualitative research takes the case study method to understand how spirituality affects organizational resilience in SMEs in the OGSE sector. The qualitative design will suit the study as the researcher aims to study values, meanings, and sense-making processes used to support leadership behavior and organizational response to crisis or contextually embedded phenomena that can hardly be identified using a quantitative technique (Sandelowski, 1995; Marshall, 1996). Case study methodology especially helps to explore such complex phenomena in an organization in a real-life situation where the purpose is explanatory depth, and not representativeness in a statistical sense. The OGSE industry is a theoretically pertinent context because the industry is project-based, faces environmental uncertainty, and has very high regulatory demands that amplify the role of organizational resilience. This study, therefore, aims at analytical generalization, the behavior of which findings formed in this context are generalized in theory and applicable in similar project-based SMEs, like those in the construction sector, and not to seek statistical generalization (Marshall, 1996).

The data were gathered based on semi-structured interviews of seven SME leaders sampled with the help of purposive criteria: at least 10 years of operational experience in the business, active operation in the OGSE industry, and holding a PETRONAS license. PETRONAS certification is a measure of credibility in the organization, industry position, and adherence to segment standards (Table 1). In qualitative studies, a sufficient sample is one that has adequate information and is not numerical, but smaller samples can be used when participants are very knowledgeable, the objective of the study is limited, and the research situation is relatively homogeneous (Boddy, 2016; Malterud et al., 2016). Methodological research also focuses on the idea that qualitative sample sizes are justified compared to the objectives of analysis, the power of information, and saturation, not based on set numerical guidelines (Marshall et al., 2013; Lim, 2025).

The interview protocol was used to offer structure and flexibility at the same time, where the participants could expound more on insights based on their experience and also bring forth new insights. Interview questions were aimed at the analysis of the spiritual values, namely, charity, religious commitment, and integrity, in terms of the way they are exercised in leadership practices, organizational climate, and organizational responses to crises. Transcripts of all interviews were analyzed through thematic analysis, which is an adequate approach to determining patterned meaning, as is applicable to qualitative data sets (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Triangulation was used to improve the methodology rigor by comparing the findings with the available literature and by validating the emerging themes based on the respondents' feedback. The practices enhance credibility and dependability because they keep the interpretations based on empirical evidence as well as on the theoretical knowledge that is supported by the best practices of qualitative research (Bowen, 2008; Saunders et al., 2018; Lim, 2025).

**Table 1: Profile of Informants**

Informant	Position/Role	Years of Experience	SME Focus Area
01	Chairman (Upstream services)	15+ years	Oil & Gas upstream services
02	Director (Midstream SME)	10+ years	Community engagement focus
03	Leader (Downstream SME)	12 years	Downstream operations
04	General Manager (Multidisciplinary SME)	15+ years	Multidisciplinary OGSE services
05	Founder (Technical support SME)	10+ years	Technical support services
06	Entrepreneur (Supplier SME)	12+ years	Supplier & distribution
07	Executive (Senior leadership role in SME)	20+ years	OGSE operations

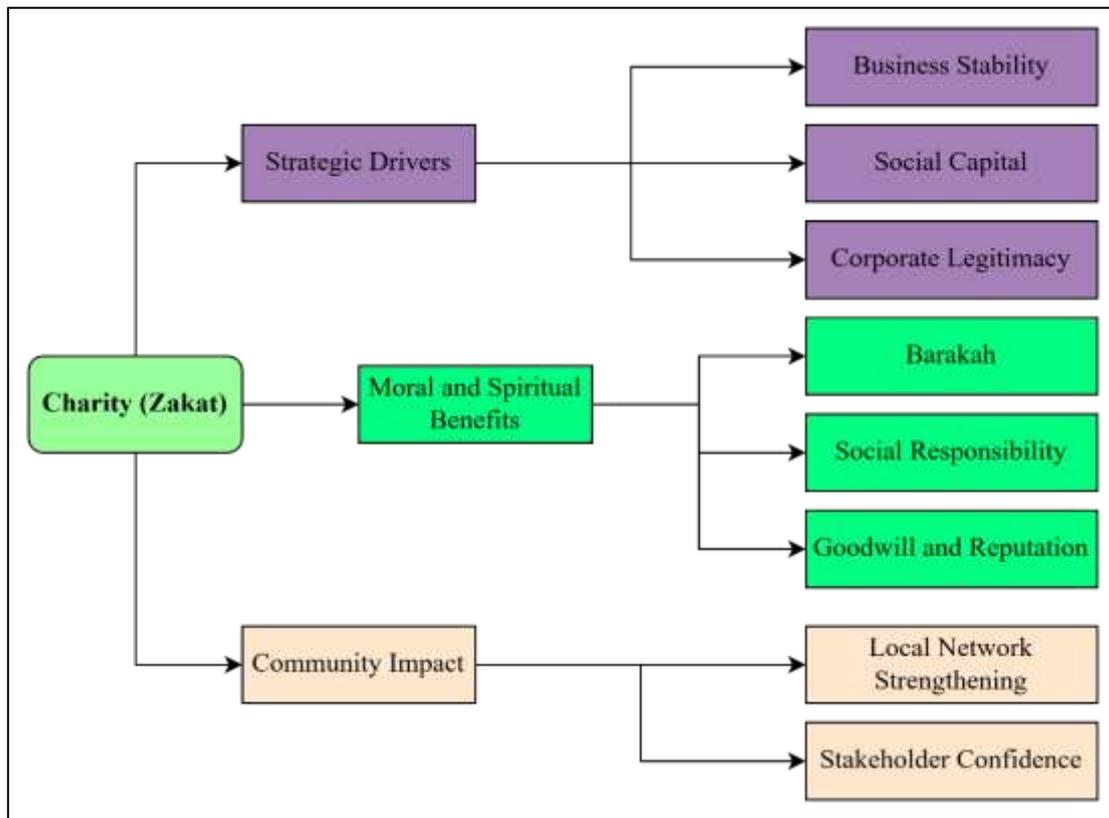
## Findings

The study's findings indicate that a focus on spirituality significantly contributes to the resilience of OGSE SMEs, presenting insights that construction SMEs can either adopt or adapt. Based on the perspectives of SME leaders, spirituality is best understood through three related values: charity, religion, and honesty. These values, when combined, shape how leaders behave, influence the culture of the workplace, guide marketing strategies, and affect how organizations respond to crises. The results consistently show that resilience goes beyond just technical skills or financial success. It also includes a moral and cultural resource that is built into the organization's daily operations.

### *Charity as a Moral and Strategic Driver of Organizational Resilience*

Figure 1 demonstrates that charity (zakat) was the main driver of resilience through strategic, moral–spiritual, and community pathways, respectively. For the informants, charity was a nonfinancial cost that created long-term business resilience. Through the strategic pathway, business resilience, social capital, and corporate legitimacy improved through charity.

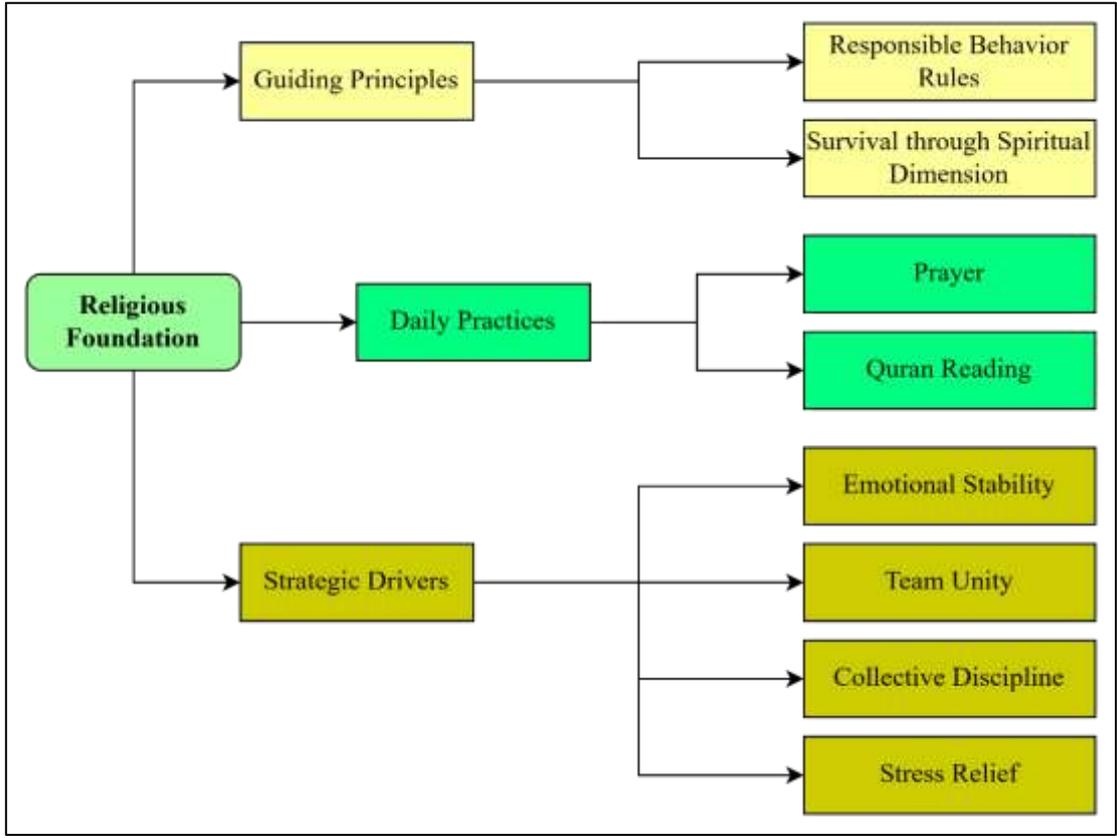
According to Informant 04, “More donations will help the business gain stability,” which means that financial and nonfinancial generosity support trust-based relationships that allow for resilience through the repeated positive outcomes of activities in unforeseeable conditions. At the same time, charity made moral and spiritual impacts by specifically increasing the business leaders’ religious and ethical motivations, respectively. Charity as Informant 02 described became an obligation and a form of social responsibility that produced such outcomes as barakah or goodwill and reputation. The moral drivers were critical to business conduct through which decisions were made and trusted based on the organization’s outcomes that were beyond the economic value. Finally, charity emerged as a relational mechanism through which SMEs strengthened community ties and generated stakeholder confidence that enabled collective action during periods of disruption.



**Figure 1: Charity as a Moral and Strategic Driver of Organizational Resilience**

***Religion as the Spiritual Foundation of Psychological and Organizational Resilience***

Figure 2 lays religion as the bedrock of resilience, which informs the cognitive orientations, behavioral response, and adaptive capacity of SME leaders in the face of adversity. Throughout the data sample, all respondents repeatedly referred to Islam not only as a belief system but as a holistic guide to life that gives proper ethical direction and operational methods to continue business continuity. Religious doctrines were largely linked with clarity of morality, order, and a great sense of responsibility, which provided the leaders with some form of certainty and guidelines during times of turmoil. According to Informant 02, the business incorporates the religious aspect into the business in case the practice is made to comply with what the religion demands. Nevertheless, doing what is right keeps the business alive.



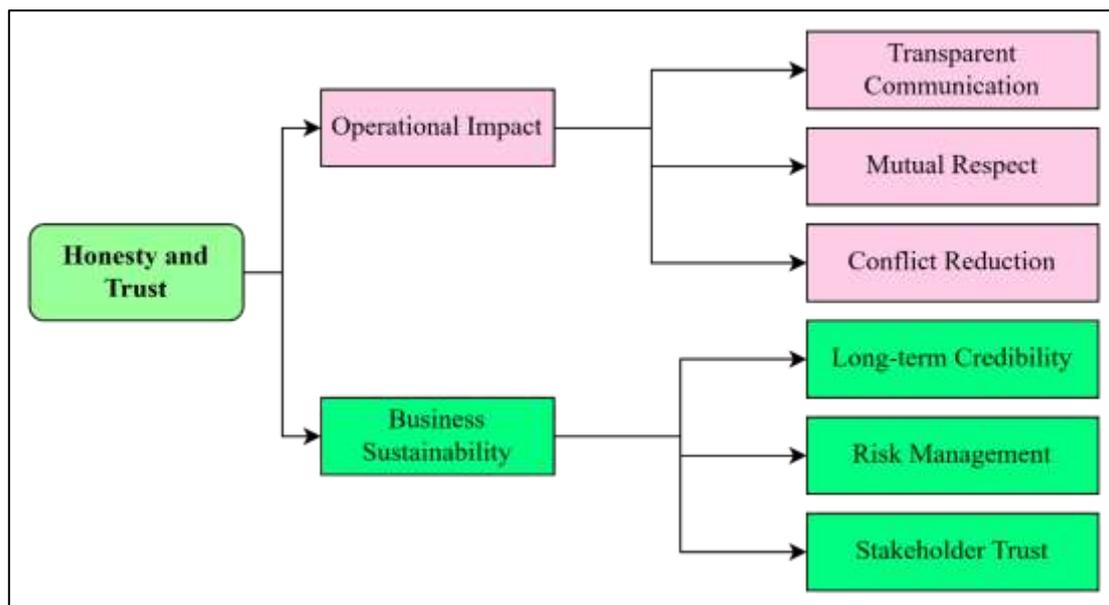
**Figure 2: Religion as the Spiritual Foundation of Psychological and Organizational Resilience**

Religion was practiced as a part of normal organizational daily activity, such as regular prayers in Islam and reciting the Quran. These practices were not considered as symbolic and ceremonial practices but as stabilizing practices that arranged time, controlled emotional conditions, and purposeful contemplation on hard-working days. Informants explained prayer as a way of tension relief and refocusing under pressure, and Quran recitation as a way of inner peace and moral guidance when dealing with complicated or uncertain situations. Those practices were living as persistent but not sporadic, influencing everyday coping strategies of both the leaders and the employees. At the individual level, the respondents indicated that long-term involvement in religion also helped them to be more emotionally stable, less anxious, and more psychologically stable in the face of uncertainty. The same religious practices at the organizational level created discipline, understanding, and team cohesion that helped to cooperate and respect each other despite differences. These effects were especially acute in risky and high-pressure settings, which applied to the construction-related context, where the informant stressed the fact that religious grounding was more likely to strengthen the resolve to collectivity and solidarity and allowed the teams to hold together and stay calm in the conditions of increased risk and operational pressure.

### ***Honesty and Trust as Drivers of Resilient SME Operation***

As shown in Figure 3, honesty and trust were found to be central pillars of resilience, which influenced how SMEs operated in their day-to-day activities and the long-term sustainability of such firms. Honesty was always a core element of communication, decision-making as well as relationship management as the leaders accentuated. Instead of being viewed as abstract ethical ideals, honesty and trust were explained as material organizational resources that helped firms operate well in such circumstances of uncertainty. The fundamental value, according to Informant 03, was honesty. It helps in all our business transactions and that there is interdependence among the partners.

Leaders were also honest, especially in the way they handled operational hiccups and project issues. Transparent and ethical communication was emphasized by the respondents as the key to mutual respect and the reduction of misunderstandings in situations when plans went wrong or problems appeared. Managers indicated that they focused on open communication and blame rather than criticizing each other as a way of minimizing conflicts and resolving problems as a team. Informant 01 clarified that honesty in communication meant a straightforward and sincere expression without hiding or exaggerating, which, according to him, enhanced trust, instead of its defunding at times of stress.

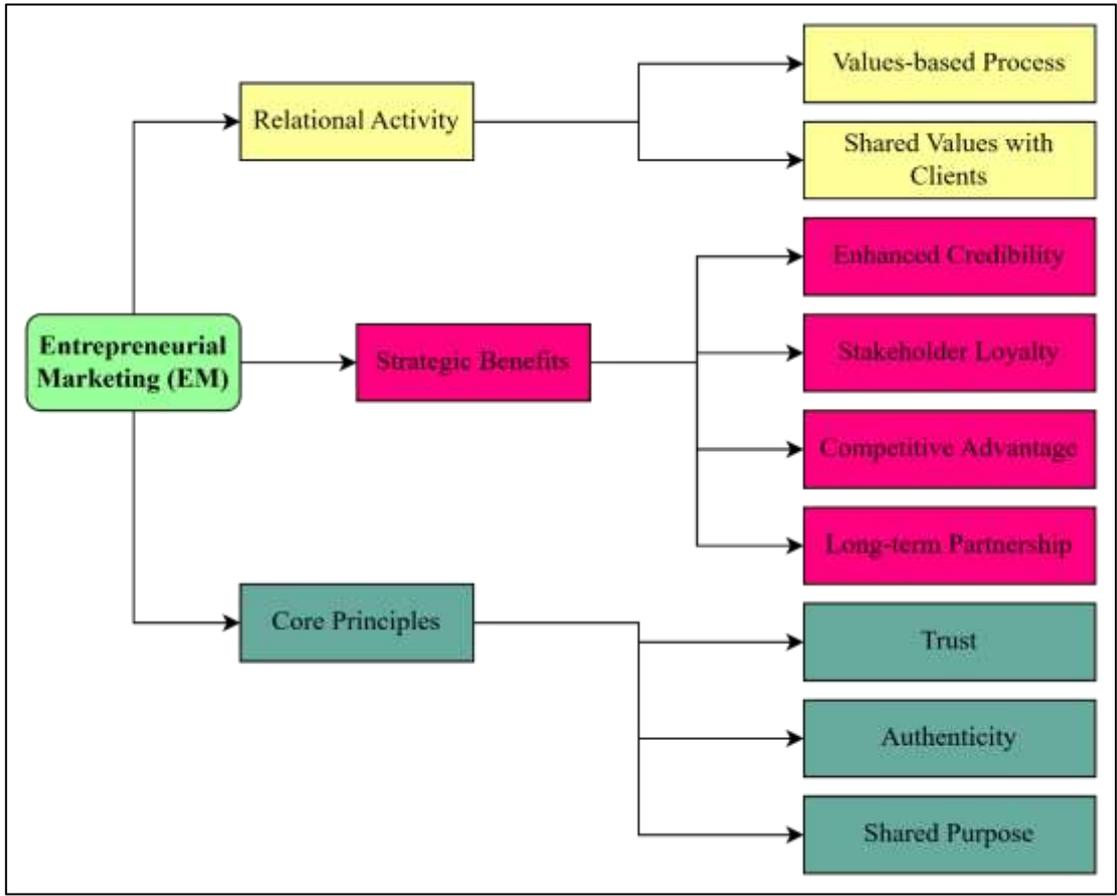


**Figure 3: Honesty and Trust Emerged as Core Foundations of Resilience**

In addition to the short-term operational advantages, honesty led to resilience by enhancing long-term reliability and risk mitigation. Respondents characterized trust as cumulative and built up when people behave consistently and honestly, and not due to the formal contractual agreement. An honesty-based reputation was seen to act as informal security in some of the volatile and complex industry settings where contracts were usually unfinished, and terms were frequently changed. This security was based on trust, which allowed SMEs to be supported, flexible, and cooperate with the partners during the difficult times, which further increased its ability to survive and adapt to the changes with time.

**Integration of Spirituality and Entrepreneurial Marketing**

The main discovery of this research is the incorporation of the concept of spirituality in entrepreneurial marketing (EM). Respondents (as depicted in Figure 4) did not consider EM as a pure transactional or profit-making activity. Rather, they theorized marketing as a value-based practice with roots in ethical and spiritual values and maintained by the relational practice. The leaders of SMEs stressed that marketing was not directed at direct sales but at developing relations with clients and other stakeholders holding the same moral and spiritual values. It is not just the sale of the product, as Informant 04 explained, marketing is about demonstrating to the clients and partners that we both have similar values. This viewpoint is a relational approach to EM where long-term business relationships are founded on trust, authenticity, and shared beliefs as opposed to a one-off relationship.



**Figure 4: Integration of Spirituality into Entrepreneurial Marketing**

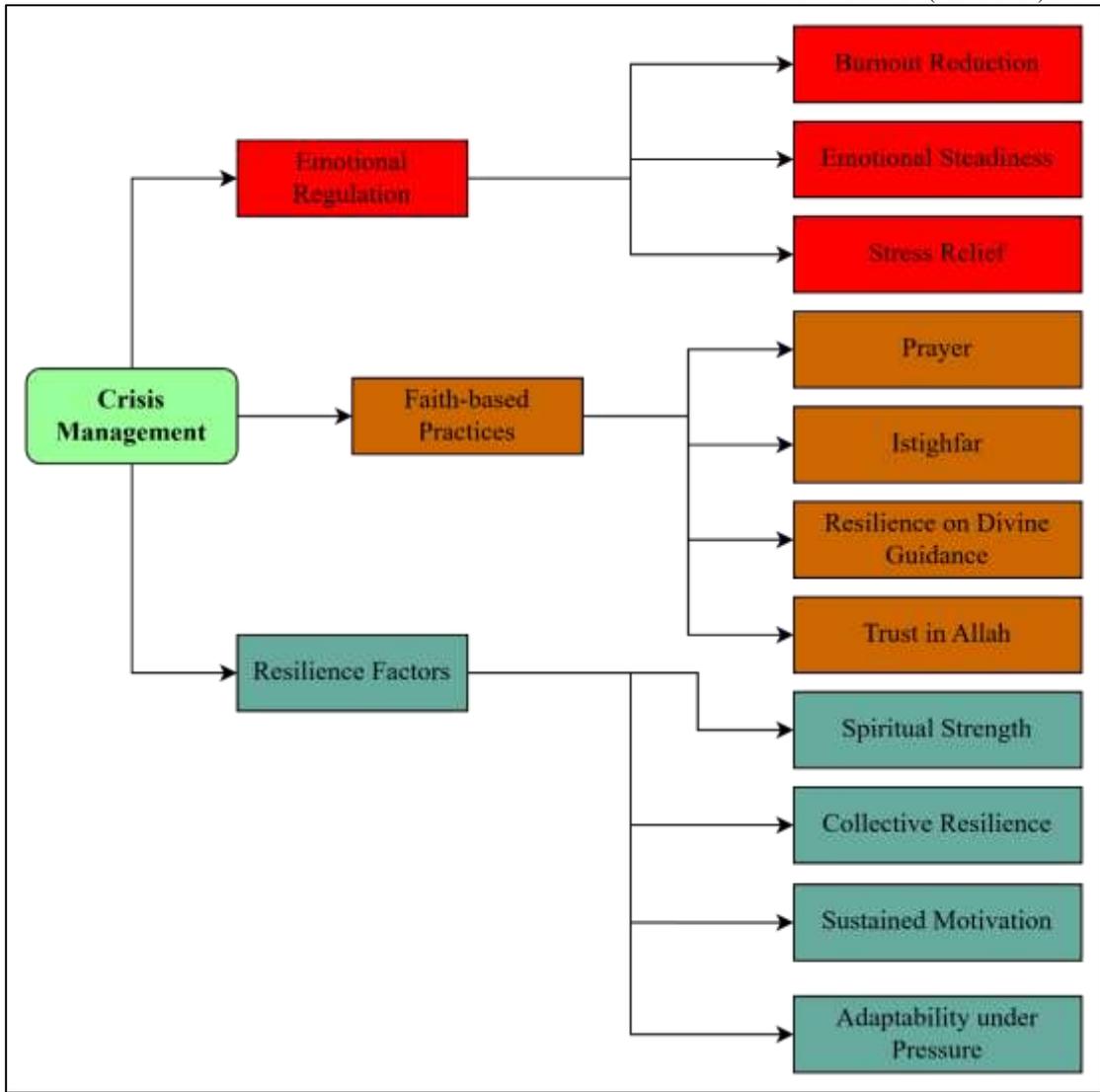
The results also indicate that spiritually-informed EM influences the relationship between stakeholders based on the core values, such as trust, authenticity, and purpose-goal congruence. These values not only operate as ethical principles but also as relational regulation tools that enhance credibility and build on the trust of stakeholders. This is especially relevant in industries with a lot of coordination needs and interdependency, like construction. Cultivating a sense of authenticity and ethical steadiness in marketing, spiritually oriented EM creates trustful relationships that go beyond economic short-term results, which serve to build

relational sustainability, committed relationships, and resiliency to operational and environmental vagaries.

### ***Spirituality as a Medium for Crisis Management***

The phenomenon of spirituality became an important tool that will help SME leaders to manage the crisis and be more emotionally resilient. Spirit-based practices were found to help stabilize the emotional state, as shown in Figure 5, and the activities, including meditation, prayer, and reflection, helped to eliminate stress and reduce burnout. Respondents always reiterated that their spiritual identity helped them to stay strong and straight in stressful circumstances and stay balanced despite ambiguity and turbulent operations. Religious customs, such as istighfar, prayer, and dependency on the guidance of Allah, and trust in Allah, were cited as some of the key methods of overcoming the hurdles and to offer a sense of psychological comfort as well as a moral compass during the crisis.

Spiritual strength and managerial expertise were tangible, with spiritual power contributing a larger share of success, and in this case, Informant 03 noted that seventy percent of the success comes due to the skills and knowledge, and the other thirty percent of success was due to spiritual power. The results suggest that a person can become more resilient in leadership with the support of spirituality that improves spiritual resilience, can motivate and help people to make sense collectively in stress. The presence of shared spiritual norms served as both cognitive and emotional anchors that helped the leaders remain calm in the face of adversity, have a constructive interpretation of it, and assemble coordinated responses amidst long-term disruptions. In addition to providing personal comfort, spirituality played the role of emotional regulation, the way leaders monitor stress, make decisions, and model adaptive behavior when confronted with an organizational crisis. These practices highlight the integration of inner ethical and spiritual resources as essential components of SME resilience frameworks.



**Figure 5: Spirituality and Crisis Management**

**Discussion**

The research contributes to the SME resilience literature by showing that spirituality is a practical, organizational resilience process, and not a marginal or symbolic concept. Although the literature highlights strategic capabilities, technological capabilities, and structural capabilities as the main drivers of resilience (Iborra et al., 2020; Khurana et al., 2022; Trieu et al., 2023), the results indicate that the moral and cultural background of decision-making, emotional responses, and stakeholder relationships in project-based settings is based on spiritual values, including charity, religion, and honesty. This fills one of the major gaps noted in the resilience scholarship, which demanded increased consideration of values, ethics, and informal social processes, especially in the context of SMEs that operate in uncertainty (Sullivan-Taylor & Branicki, 2011; Saad et al., 2021).

Charity role is a supplementary concept to the social capital existing explanations of SME resilience, since giving in faith creates legitimacy, trust, and mutual stakeholder support. In line with DiBella et al. (2022) and Ozanne et al. (2022), the results reveal that relational resources play a pivotal role in times of disruption; nevertheless, this research carries the idea that charity is a strategic moral investment, which enhances community relationships and informal safety nets. In the case of highly dependent construction SMEs, where local authorities, community acceptance, and subcontractors are important, coordinated charitable participation may serve as a resilience buffer, which improves cooperation, minimizes conflict, and allows continuity when projects are stalled or financially stressed.

Another psychological and collective infrastructure outlined by the findings is religion. In line with Dorais and Gutierrez (2021) and Arham et al. (2024), the support of religious practices was found to aid emotional regulation, moral clarity, and meaning making in the presence of stress. Notably, religion was not a religion that remained a personal belief system but was an element of the day-to-day organization operations. Shared spiritual practices in a construction environment where safety hazards, time constraints, and uncertainty prevail may bring about discipline, emotional stability, and cohesion of a team, strengthening adaptive capacity without necessitating any extra financial or technological resources.

Honesty was found to be a fundamental governance tool, which supports resilience by promoting trust-based relationship within uncertain project settings. This is in line with relational governance views (Sullivan-Taylor and Branicki, 2011) but goes a step further in terms of defining honesty as a spiritually informed duty, and not a strategy of transacting. In the case of construction SMEs working with incomplete contracts and changing conditions of the project, honesty can decrease the costs of coordination and ease the resolution of problems, as well as long-term partnerships. The stock of trust developed through a pattern of ethical behavior is therefore an informal resilience capital, which enables firms to absorb shocks without losing the confidence of the stakeholders.

In general, the results indicate that spirituality complements do not substitute the current resilience abilities by enhancing the moral integrity, emotional and relationship stability, where the efficient response to the crisis relies. In the case of construction SMEs, integrating charity, religion, and honesty within a leadership practice and organizational culture is a culturally compatible low-cost approach to resilience, which increases legitimacy, collaboration, and adaptability. Theoretically, this paper builds on resilience frameworks with the introduction of spirituality as a value-based dynamic capability, and in practice, it offers practical knowledge on actionable insights of SMEs that aim at achieving sustainable performance in volatile, project-based settings.

## **Implications**

This part will dwell on the expanded importance of findings in the study by elaborating on the role of spirituality in enhancing SME resilience in project-based industries. It also underscores the theoretical contribution made through the incorporation of the spiritual values into the resilience models and the practical lessons that the findings will give to the construction SMEs that are interested in the cheap, culturally aligned methods to improve the stability, adaptability, and trustworthiness of stakeholders.

### ***Theoretical Implications***

The research makes a contribution towards understanding the resilience of SMEs by placing spirituality as a substantive functional dimension of resilience theory as opposed to a peripheral or symbolic dimension. Although the current frameworks focus on structural, technological, and strategic capabilities, the results show that the spiritual values like charity, religion, and honesty form another moral-cultural layer that contributes to adaptive behaviour, consistency of decision making, and shared sensemaking in high-risk project setups. The study broadens the conceptual framework of resilience, adding value-driven mechanisms (at cognitive, emotional, and relational levels) by determining the ways these values are reflected by the leadership behaviour, organisational culture, and stakeholder engagement. This adds to the continued academic activities of relating ethical and cultural constructs to organisational resilience theories and enhances the demands of contextually grounded, culturally ingrained models that apply to SMEs in non-Western environments.

### ***Practical Implications***

In a practical sense, the results provide the construction SME with, and other organisations that are project-based with, tangible avenues towards inculcating spiritual values in the routine operations and management of crises. First, charity can be integrated into organisations by organised community programmes and zakat projects, which in turn can boost organisational legitimacy, reinforce stakeholder confidence, and provide mutual support systems that serve as informal shock absorbers in the event of disruption. Second, adding religious or spiritually based practices, e.g., reflective practices, prayer, or value-based team conversations, may enhance emotional stability, team cohesion, and help to make ethically oriented decisions when under pressure. Third, honesty as a value of an organisation may be encouraged to limit the relational conflicts, improve the transparency of the project implementation, and maintain the long-term relationships with the clients, suppliers, and the regulators. All these practices provide SMEs with culturally appropriate and low-cost strategies of resiliency, which align with technical and financial competencies.

### ***Conclusion***

In general, this research shows that spirituality is a pragmatic and inherently rooted tool of resilience in the OGSE SMEs and can be highly applicable to construction SMEs pursuing their business ventures in the same uncertainty and risk environment. The empirical demonstration of the effects that charity, religion, and honesty have on leadership choices, the organisational behaviours and responses to crises make the study more comprehensive in explaining resilience that transcends traditional structural interpretation. Spiritual values are not solely abstract ideals; they are practised organisational practices that make organisations become stable, consistently moral, and have better stakeholder relations. To construction SMEs, the incorporation of such spiritual values into daily management and long-term strategic behaviour provides a culturally informed method of building resilience, organisational integrity as well as performance in unstable situations. Further studies are needed to apply these findings to various kinds of industries and cultural contexts to narrow down the theory and increase the scope of spirituality-based resilience models.

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