

LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT FOR THE FLOURISHING OF LIFE, WORK, AND SOCIETY

Today's world faces profound challenges—ranging from environmental crises to social inequality—that call for a shift in how we approach management and leadership (Laszlo et al., 2020). Traditional business approaches focused on profit and material success are inadequate for addressing the complex needs of our interconnected world (Ahmad, 2024; Ghoshal, 2005; Lips-Wiersma & Nilakant, 2008). Instead, we need an integrated approach that fosters the flourishing of life, work, society, humanity, and the environment (Ehrenfeld & Hoffman, 2013; Laszlo & Brown, 2014). Such a vision calls for integrating spiritual capital with conventional forms of capital, such as financial and human resources, to create frameworks that promote business success and societal well-being (Abbas et al., 2024; Alewell & Rastetter, 2020; Luthans et al., 2024; Rima, 2013). This path frames the journey for change from 'I' to 'We' (Doppelt, 2012).

Movements like conscious capitalism (Mackey & Sisodia, 2014; O'Toole & Vogel, 2011) and impact investing (Agrawal & Hockerts, 2021; Bugg-Levine & Emerson, 2011) are emerging that take an integrated approach to business. Such models emphasize values, ethics, and social responsibility and suggest that businesses can be powerful agents for positive change, integrating profit with purpose. However, there is still much to explore in terms of developing comprehensive frameworks that guide organizations toward these broader goals. Measuring the true impact of such efforts and fostering organizational structures that support this kind of holistic growth remain ongoing challenges (Fyke, 2013; Ormiston et al., 2015; Thompson & Kumar, 2022)

Leadership plays a key role in this transformation. Moving beyond traditional leadership models that prioritize control and profit, holistic leadership requires a commitment to stewardship, empathy, and a sense of interconnectedness (Fry & Nisiewicz, 2013; Laszlo, 2020; Maheshwari, 2021; Pavlovich, 2020). Practices like mindfulness and meditation, rooted in both modern psychology and ancient spiritual traditions (Trammel, 2017; Wallace & Shapiro, 2006), offer powerful tools for developing leaders who can inspire collective action and lead with compassion (Culham, 2024; McGhee & Grant, 2021; Urrila, 2022). The wisdom of global Indigenous traditions also provides valuable insights into ethical decision-making, guiding businesses toward practices that promote the common good (Pio & Waddock, 2021; Salmon et al., 2023; Spiller, 2021)

Ultimately, reimagining business for a flourishing world involves integrating spiritual, social, and environmental considerations into the core of organizational strategy. This Special Issue seeks to explore how these elements can be harmonized to create a sustainable future where businesses not only thrive economically but also contribute to the greater good of society and the planet.

Call Focus Areas

This Special Issue invites contributions to explore a holistic business approach that integrates spiritual capital with traditional forms of capital. The goal is to shift to purpose-led, for-profit business institutions that foster the well-being of life, work, society, humanity, and the environment.

Topics may include, but are not limited to:

Strategy, holistic management, and basic conceptualizations

1. Integrated and holistic frameworks that measure the effectiveness of a range of alternative initiatives such as impact investing, the UN SDGs, etc. For example, how could the 17 UN SDGs and the common good be integrated to measure ESG efforts and their associated impact?
2. Understanding how organizational orientation creates holistic pathways that generate impact and contribute to the common good. For example, how conscious capitalism focuses on values and purpose over profit.
3. How can economic actors like businesses, governments, academia, and social organizations (e.g., NGOs) collaborate to manage for impact? Which connections are crucial in achieving desired outcomes in social impact investing management?
4. What approaches can be used to harness spiritual capital and global consciousness to create positive impact for the common good and flourishing? For instance, are there individual or collective meditation and awareness training methods that can be implemented within organizations?
5. How could we formulate “impact investing management” as an organizational paradigm? Does impact investing involve deploying resources ethically and thus redistribution, co-creation, and accessibility to resources at every level of any system?
6. How would we manage the world differently if we view it as arising from consciousness vs matter and interconnectedness vs separation? How would we define success and performance differently if we manage from a holistic perspective?

Wisdom Traditions and Religions

1. What can be learned from the Religious Traditions (including, but not limited to Buddhism, Daoism, Hinduism, Christian, Islam, etc.) from around the world that contribute to business and organizational leadership?
2. What challenges arise when attempting to align Wisdom Traditions or religious principles, such as those found in Islamic finance or Catholic social teaching, with modern business practices?

3. What insights does the wisdom of First Nations Peoples from around the world contribute to organizational and inner flourishing?
4. Which assessment methodologies and tools for measuring impact can be applied in business organizations? Can we integrate spiritual awareness practices and related competency evaluations in such measurement?

Inner Work and Inner Development goals

1. What resources are necessary to foster inner work that meets the VUCA challenges of today's work environment?
2. How does inner work contribute to holistic organizational flourishing? How can inner work be developed in individuals and organizations? What measures or goals should be adopted in organizations to track inner development of personnel and its impact on the holistic performance of the organization
3. How do organizations frame and where do they "locate" inner work and inner development conceptually? Do we find such activities in corporate health management, in employee benefits and well-being, or in sustainability strategy? How does this change the character of these activities?

Leadership

1. How do spiritual leadership and stewardship play a role in creating economic impact and wider cultural and social change? Under what conditions do they have an impact?
2. How does research on meditation suggest we change leadership and business?
3. What can business learn from neuroscience on how we may lead people to transform to a less materialistic lifestyle and experience abundance more independent of materialistic claims?
4. What role does love, and loving kindness play in transforming leaders, followers, and organizations?
5. How can leaders integrate spiritual and ethical values into organizational strategy to create long-term societal and environmental flourishing?
6. What would leadership look like if it embraced consciousness as the fundamental reality of business, prioritizing inner development, collective wisdom, and spiritual growth as core drivers of innovation and impact?

Key Words

Organizational flourishing, Conscious capitalism, Impact investing, Spiritual capital, Common good, Holistic approach, Relational ethics, Religious and wisdom traditions, Sustainability, Indigenous wisdom, and Leadership.

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Please let us know if you have any questions and feel free to share this Call for Papers with colleagues who might be interested in submitting!

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