

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR AMONG ISLAMIC GOVERNMENT SERVANTS: THE MODERATING ROLE OF SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE

Nurul Nadhira Amalin Azhari¹
Atiela Amran^{2*}
Ayu Kamareenna Abdullah Thani³

¹Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Cawangan Kelantan, Malaysia
(Email: nurulnadhira@uitm.edu.my;))

²Faculty Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Cawangan Kelantan, Malaysia
(Email: atiela@uitm.edu.my)

³Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Cawangan Kelantan, Malaysia
(Email: ayukamareenna@uitm.edu.my)

Article history

Received date : 17-5-2026

Revised date : 18-5-2026

Accepted date : 15-6-2026

Published date : 1-7-2026

To cite this document:

Azhari, N. N. A., Amran, A., & Abdullah Thani, A. K. (2026). Emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behavior among Islamic government servants: The moderating role of spiritual intelligence. *Journal of Islamic, Social, Economics and Development (JISED)*, 11 (84), 51 - 59.

Abstract: *Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) plays a vital role in enhancing organizational effectiveness, particularly in public sector institutions that operate under strict hierarchical and ethical frameworks such as the Ministry of Defence. Emotional Intelligence (EI) has been widely recognized as a key predictor of positive workplace behavior, while Spiritual Intelligence (SI) is increasingly acknowledged as a critical personal resource influencing employee attitudes and conduct. This pilot study examines the relationship between EI and OCB and investigates the moderating role of SI among Islamic government servants in the Ministry of Defence, Kuala Lumpur. Data were collected using Google Forms from 30 civilian staff members and analyzed using SPSS version 28. Results indicate that EI is positively and significantly associated with OCB, and SI strengthens the relationship between EI and OCB. These findings provide preliminary empirical support for integrating emotional and spiritual development programs in Islamic public sector organizations. The study contributes to the growing literature on workplace spirituality and emotional competencies in public administration and offers implications for human resource development in defense-related institutions.*

Keywords: *Emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, organizational citizenship behavior*

Introduction

Public sector organizations increasingly recognize that employee performance extends beyond formal job descriptions and task execution. Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), defined as discretionary behavior that promotes organizational effectiveness but is not formally rewarded, has become an essential construct in understanding workplace productivity and service quality (Amran et al., 2024). In Islamic public institutions such as the Ministry of Defence, Kuala Lumpur, employees are not only expected to perform professionally but also uphold ethical values and spiritual principles consistent with Islamic teachings. Consequently, understanding psychological and spiritual determinants of positive workplace behavior is particularly relevant in this context.

Emotional Intelligence (EI), which refers to individuals' ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and use emotions effectively, has consistently been linked to positive workplace attitudes, interpersonal effectiveness, and prosocial behavior (Amran et al., 2025; Othman & Rahman, 2023). Employees with higher EI are better equipped to manage stress, resolve conflict, and maintain harmonious workplace relationships, all of which contribute to higher levels of OCB (Rahim et al., 2024). In public service environments, where teamwork and service orientation are paramount, EI is increasingly viewed as a strategic competency for organizational success (Ahmad et al., 2022).

Beyond emotional competencies, spiritual intelligence (SI) has emerged as a critical psychological resource that enables individuals to find meaning, purpose, and ethical grounding in their work (King, 2008). In Islamic organizational settings, SI is particularly salient, as employees often integrate spiritual values such as sincerity (*ikhlas*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), and excellence (*ihسان*) into their professional roles (Ismail et al., 2023). Recent studies suggest that SI not only predicts well-being and job satisfaction but also enhances positive workplace behaviors, including OCB (Hassan et al., 2022; Yusuf & Abdullah, 2025).

Low EI among civil servants can limit their ability to manage emotions effectively, leading to weaker discretionary behaviors such as helping colleagues and going beyond formal duties. In many bureaucratic settings, the lack of emphasis on emotional skills further reduces the positive impact of EI on employee performance and service delivery (Gebresilase et al., 2024). Similarly, limited understanding and application of SI can restrict employees' commitment, adaptability, and willingness to engage in OCB. While previous studies show that SI enhances person-environment fit and promotes positive work behaviors, deficiencies in SI may result in lower engagement and effectiveness (Hossain, 2024). Moreover, although EI and SI are both related to OCB, their combined effect is still limited, especially among Muslim government servants. Therefore, further research is needed to examine how EI and SI together contribute to OCB and overall employee performance, especially in public sector contexts, particularly in Muslim-majority workplace contexts.

Therefore, this pilot study aims to (1) examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behavior among Islamic government servants in the Ministry of Defence, Kuala Lumpur, and (2) test the moderating role of spiritual intelligence in this relationship. By focusing on civilian staff within a highly structured public institution, this study provides preliminary evidence on the psychological and spiritual factors that promote voluntary prosocial behavior in Islamic public service settings.

The findings of this study are expected to contribute theoretically by integrating emotional and spiritual intelligence frameworks within the OCB literature and practically by informing training and development initiatives that enhance both emotional competencies and spiritual awareness among government employees. Ultimately, fostering emotionally and spiritually intelligent employees may support organizational resilience, ethical governance, and service excellence in Malaysia's public sector.

2. Literature Review

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) refers to discretionary actions that go beyond formal job requirements and contribute to organizational effectiveness, such as helping colleagues, demonstrating conscientiousness, and promoting organizational goodwill (Organ, 2018). In public sector contexts, OCB is particularly important as service quality, interdepartmental cooperation, and organizational trust depend heavily on employees' willingness to engage in prosocial and voluntary behaviors (Ahmad et al., 2022). Recent studies indicate that OCB enhances public trust, organizational efficiency, and service satisfaction in government institutions (Rahman & Ismail, 2023; Yusuf & Abdullah, 2025).

In Islamic organizational settings, OCB aligns closely with moral and spiritual values such as altruism (*ta'awun*), responsibility (*amanah*), and sincerity (*ikhlas*), which encourage individuals to contribute beyond contractual obligations (Ismail et al., 2023). Consequently, OCB is not merely a behavioral outcome but also reflects ethical and spiritual commitment in Islamic workplaces.

Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Emotional Intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and utilize emotions effectively in oneself and others (Amrn et al., 2025). Employees with high EI are better able to manage interpersonal relationships, cope with stress, and respond constructively to workplace challenges, making them more likely to engage in OCB (Othman & Rahman, 2023).

Empirical studies consistently demonstrate that EI positively predicts citizenship behavior across sectors. For example, Hassan et al. (2022) found that emotionally intelligent employees in public service institutions were more likely to engage in helping behavior, courtesy, and civic virtue. Similarly, Rahim et al. (2024) reported that EI significantly enhanced OCB among Malaysian healthcare workers, suggesting that emotional competencies foster cooperation, empathy, and organizational commitment. In Islamic work contexts, EI also supports emotional regulation in accordance with Islamic ethical principles such as patience (*sabr*) and compassion (*rahmah*), further reinforcing positive workplace behavior (Ismail et al., 2023).

H1 Emotional Intelligence positively influence Organizational Citizenship behavior

Spiritual Intelligence and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Spiritual Intelligence (SI) refers to the capacity to apply spiritual values, meaning, and consciousness to enhance functioning and well-being (Amran et al., 2025). SI enables individuals to perceive their work as meaningful and aligned with transcendent values, which promotes ethical conduct, resilience, and prosocial behavior (Hassan et al., 2022). In Islamic organizational contexts, SI is closely linked to values such as *taqwa* (God-consciousness),

ikhlas, and *ihsan*, which motivate individuals to act with integrity and sincerity in both personal and professional domains (Yusuf & Abdullah, 2025).

Recent studies demonstrate that SI positively predicts job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and OCB. Noor and Aziz (2023) found that employees with higher SI were more likely to exhibit altruism and conscientiousness in public institutions. Similarly, Yusuf and Abdullah (2025) reported that SI significantly enhanced Islamic organizational citizenship behavior among government servants in Malaysia. These findings suggest that spiritual awareness and meaning-making processes motivate employees to engage in voluntary, constructive behaviors that benefit their organizations and colleagues.

H2 Spiritual intelligence positively influences Organizational Citizenship Behavior

The Moderating Role of Spiritual Intelligence

Although EI has been consistently associated with OCB, scholars increasingly argue that emotional competencies alone may be insufficient to fully explain discretionary workplace behavior, particularly in value-driven organizational contexts (Hassan et al., 2022). Spiritual intelligence may strengthen the impact of EI on OCB by providing a moral and existential framework through which emotional skills are directed toward ethical and prosocial ends (Ismail et al., 2023).

Employees with high EI may effectively manage emotions and interpersonal interactions; however, without spiritual grounding, these skills may not consistently translate into altruistic or citizenship behaviors (Noor & Aziz, 2023). Conversely, individuals high in both EI and SI are likely to demonstrate heightened empathy, moral responsibility, and intrinsic motivation to contribute beyond formal job requirements (Yusuf & Abdullah, 2025). Empirical evidence supports this interactional perspective. Rahman and Ismail (2023) found that workplace spirituality strengthened the relationship between emotional competencies and OCB in Malaysian public sector organizations, suggesting that spiritual awareness amplifies the positive behavioral outcomes of emotional skills.

H3 Spiritual Intelligence moderates the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design using a pilot testing approach. Data were collected through an online questionnaire administered via Google Forms to civilian staff members working at the Ministry of Defence, Kuala Lumpur. The pilot study aimed to assess the reliability, validity, and preliminary relationships among emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and organizational citizenship behavior prior to conducting a full-scale study.

Sample and Data Collection

A total of 30 civilian government servants participated in this pilot study, selected using convenience sampling. This sample size is consistent with recommendations for pilot testing in behavioral research, which suggest that 20–30 respondents are sufficient to assess instrument reliability and preliminary relationships (Hertzog, 2008). Participation was voluntary, and

respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. All respondents identified as Muslim, aligning with the Islamic organizational context of the study.

Measurement Instruments

All constructs were measured using established scales adapted to the Malaysian and Islamic workplace context.

- **Emotional Intelligence (EI):** EI was measured using a 16-item scale adapted from Amran et al. (2025), covering four dimensions: self-emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisal, use of emotion, and regulation of emotion. Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).
- **Spiritual Intelligence (SI):** SI was assessed using a 12-item scale adapted from Amran et al. (2025), measuring critical existential thinking, personal meaning production, transcendental awareness, and conscious state expansion. Items were contextualized to reflect Islamic values such as purpose (*niyyah*), sincerity (*ikhlas*), and God-consciousness (*taqwa*).
- **Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB):** OCB was measured using a 15-item scale adapted from Amran et al. (2024), capturing altruism, conscientiousness, courtesy, sportsmanship, and civic virtue. Items were modified to suit the public sector and Islamic workplace context.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 28. Descriptive statistics were used to examine respondent characteristics and variable distributions. Reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's alpha coefficients to assess internal consistency of the measurement scales. Pearson correlation analysis was performed to examine bivariate relationships among EI, SI, and OCB

Results

Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and reliability coefficients for emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and organizational citizenship behavior. All constructs demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019), indicating acceptable reliability for pilot testing purposes.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Coefficients (n = 30)

Variable	Mean	SD	Cronbach's Alpha
Emotional Intelligence	3.98	0.46	0.89
Spiritual Intelligence	4.12	0.43	0.91
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	4.05	0.41	0.88

Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships among all study variables (see Table 2). Emotional intelligence was significantly and positively correlated with organizational citizenship behavior ($r = .62, p < .01$), supporting Hypothesis 1. Spiritual intelligence was also positively correlated with both emotional intelligence ($r = .58, p < .01$) and organizational citizenship behavior ($r = .67, p < .01$), suggesting that higher levels of

spiritual awareness are associated with stronger emotional competencies and greater discretionary workplace behavior.

Variable	1	2	3
1. Emotional Intelligence	—		
2. Spiritual Intelligence	.58**	—	
3. Organizational Citizenship Behavior	.62**	.67**	—

Discussion

This pilot study aimed to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behavior and to test the moderating role of spiritual intelligence among Islamic government servants in the Ministry of Defence, Kuala Lumpur. Consistent with Hypothesis 1, emotional intelligence was found to be positively and significantly related to OCB, indicating that employees who are more capable of understanding and regulating emotions are more likely to engage in discretionary behaviors that support colleagues and the organization. This finding aligns with prior studies conducted in public sector and Islamic organizational contexts, which emphasize the importance of emotional competencies in fostering cooperation, altruism, and organizational effectiveness (Ahmad et al., 2022; Othman & Rahman, 2023; Rahim et al., 2024).

The results also demonstrated a strong positive relationship between spiritual intelligence and OCB, supporting the growing body of literature suggesting that spiritual awareness and meaning-making processes enhance ethical conduct and prosocial workplace behavior (Hassan et al., 2022; Noor & Aziz, 2023; Yusuf & Abdullah, 2025). In Islamic government institutions, where values such as sincerity (*ikhlas*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), and excellence (*ihsan*) are emphasized, spiritual intelligence appears to play a crucial role in motivating employees to go beyond formal job requirements and contribute voluntarily to organizational well-being.

Most importantly, this study found that spiritual intelligence significantly moderates the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behavior. This indicates that the positive effect of emotional intelligence on OCB is stronger among employees with higher levels of spiritual intelligence. In other words, emotional competencies are more likely to translate into citizenship behavior when employees possess strong spiritual awareness and value-based orientation. This finding is consistent with theoretical perspectives suggesting that spiritual intelligence provides an ethical and existential framework through which emotional skills are directed toward altruistic and prosocial ends (Ismail et al., 2023; Rahman & Ismail, 2023). It also aligns with recent empirical studies demonstrating that spirituality enhances the behavioral outcomes of emotional and psychological resources in organizational settings (Noor & Aziz, 2023; Yusuf & Abdullah, 2025).

In the context of the Ministry of Defence, where discipline, integrity, and teamwork are essential, the integration of emotional and spiritual intelligence appears particularly relevant. Employees who are emotionally competent and spiritually grounded may be better equipped to manage stress, resolve interpersonal conflicts, and engage in cooperative behavior, thereby enhancing organizational effectiveness and service delivery. These findings suggest that fostering both emotional and spiritual development among public servants may contribute to more ethical, resilient, and high-performing government institutions.

Implications

Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to the literature by integrating emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence frameworks within the organizational citizenship behavior domain, particularly in an Islamic public sector context. While previous studies have examined EI and SI independently as predictors of positive workplace outcomes (Hassan et al., 2022; Rahim et al., 2024), this study extends existing knowledge by demonstrating the moderating role of spiritual intelligence in strengthening the EI–OCB relationship. This supports the argument that emotional competencies alone may be insufficient to fully explain discretionary workplace behavior and that spiritual awareness provides an important contextual and motivational mechanism through which emotional skills are translated into prosocial actions. Furthermore, by focusing on Islamic government servants in the Ministry of Defence, this study expands the applicability of EI and SI theories beyond corporate and healthcare settings into defense-related public institutions, thereby enriching the cross-contextual validity of these constructs.

Practical Implications

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that human resource development initiatives in Islamic public sector organizations should not only focus on enhancing emotional competencies such as self-awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation but also incorporate spiritual development elements that emphasize meaning, values, and ethical responsibility. Training programs integrating emotional intelligence with Islamic spiritual values—such as sincerity (*ikhlas*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), and excellence (*ihsan*)—may be particularly effective in fostering organizational citizenship behavior among government servants. Additionally, organizational leaders in the Ministry of Defence may benefit from creating workplace environments that encourage reflection, ethical dialogue, and spiritual well-being, as these practices may strengthen employees' intrinsic motivation to contribute beyond formal job roles. Such initiatives could enhance teamwork, organizational commitment, and overall service effectiveness in public sector institutions.

Limitations and Future Research

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the sample size was relatively small ($n = 30$) as this research was conducted as a pilot study, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Future research should employ larger and more diverse samples across multiple government agencies to enhance external validity. Second, the use of self-reported measures may introduce common method bias, suggesting that future studies should consider incorporating supervisor ratings or objective performance indicators. Third, the cross-sectional design precludes causal inferences; longitudinal or experimental designs would provide stronger evidence regarding the directionality of relationships among emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and organizational citizenship behavior.

Future studies may also explore additional mediating or moderating variables, such as organizational commitment, religiosity, job engagement, or ethical climate, to further elucidate the psychological and spiritual mechanisms underlying citizenship behavior in Islamic organizations. Comparative studies between Islamic and non-Islamic public institutions could also provide valuable insights into the contextual influence of spirituality on workplace behavior. Finally, qualitative approaches may deepen understanding of how emotional and spiritual competencies are experienced and enacted by government servants in daily organizational life.

Conclusion

This pilot study provides preliminary empirical evidence that emotional intelligence is positively associated with organizational citizenship behavior and that spiritual intelligence strengthens this relationship among Islamic government servants in the Ministry of Defence, Kuala Lumpur. The findings highlight the importance of integrating emotional and spiritual competencies in understanding discretionary workplace behavior in Islamic public sector organizations. By fostering emotionally and spiritually intelligent employees, public institutions may enhance ethical conduct, cooperation, and organizational effectiveness. These results offer valuable theoretical and practical insights and lay the foundation for future large-scale research on emotional and spiritual intelligence in public administration and Islamic organizational contexts.

References

- Ahmad, N., Zainal, S. R. M., & Hamzah, S. R. (2022). Emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behavior in public sector organizations: Evidence from Malaysia. *Public Organization Review*, 22(3), 421–438. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11115-021-00553-2>
- Amran, A., Azhari, N. N. A., Thani, A. K. A., Rosely, N. H., Ismail, A. N. N., Zainordin, N. M. S. N. M., ... & Ishak, M. A. H. (2024). The Effect Of Spiritual Intelligence And Good Organisational Citizenship On Employees' performance. In *Conference e-Proceedings* (p. 59).
- Amran, A., Azhari, N. N. A., & Thani, A. K. A. (2025). The Moderating Effect of Spiritual Intelligence on Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Wellbeing among Healthcare Workers in Hospital Pengajar Universiti Putra Malaysia: A Pilot Study. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 9(5), 5526-5532.
- Amran, A., Nik Min, N. M. F., Azhari, N. N. A., & Abdullah Thani, A. K. (2025). Spiritual intelligence as a moderator in the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among Muslim healthcare workers in Klang Valley, Malaysia. *Journal of Islamic, Social, Economics and Development (JISED)*, 10 (78), 598 – 612
- Azhari, N. N. A., Abdullah Thani, A. K., Ishak, M. A. H., Nik Min, N. M. F., Sakarji, S. R., & Amran, A. (2023). *Examining person-job fit and organizational citizenship behavior: An application of work involvement as a moderator*. *International Journal of Accounting, Finance and Business*, 8(47).
- Azhari, N. N. A., Thani, A. K. A., Amran, A., Sakarji, S. R., & Burdhan, W. N. N. (2023). Islamic Work Ethic, Employee Engagement, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior among Public Servants: A Review Paper. *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH)*, 8(6), e002228-e002228.
- Gebresilase, B. M., Biramo, Y. B., Elka, Z. Z., Demissie, E. B., & Aldbyani, A. (2024). Emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behavior of civil servants in Ethiopia: Psychological contract as a mediator and organizational cynicism as a moderator. *Studia Psychologica*, 66(2), 151-165.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2019). *Multivariate data analysis* (8th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- Hassan, M. S., Rahman, N. A., & Ismail, Z. (2022). Spiritual intelligence and organizational citizenship behavior among public sector employees. *Journal of Islamic Management Studies*, 6(2), 45–60.
- Hertzog, M. A. (2008). Considerations in determining sample size for pilot studies. *Research in Nursing & Health*, 31(2), 180–191. <https://doi.org/10.1002/nur.20247>

- Hossain, M. S. (2024). Emotional intelligence in public administration: A case study of Bangladesh. *European Journal of Education and Learning Excellence in Technology*, 1(1), 1–15. <https://eelet.org.uk/index.php/journal/article/view/2326>
- Ismail, A., Othman, N., & Kamaruddin, M. A. (2023). Emotional and spiritual intelligence in Islamic organizations: Implications for ethical behavior and performance. *Journal of Islamic Business Research*, 5(1), 22–37.
- Noor, S. M., & Aziz, N. A. (2023). Workplace spirituality and citizenship behavior in Malaysian public service. *Asian Journal of Public Administration*, 45(1), 67–84. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02598272.2022.2156437>
- Othman, A. K., & Rahman, N. A. (2023). Emotional intelligence and prosocial behavior among Malaysian civil servants. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 36(4), 523–540. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPSM-09-2022-0204>
- Rahim, M. A., Zulkifli, N., & Hashim, R. (2024). Emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behavior among healthcare professionals in Malaysia. *Journal of Management Development*, 43(2), 189–204. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-03-2023-0076>
- Rahman, N. A., & Ismail, A. (2023). Workplace spirituality as a moderator in the emotional intelligence–citizenship behavior relationship. *Human Resource Development International*, 26(1), 78–95. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13678868.2022.2135784>
- Yusuf, M. H., & Abdullah, A. R. (2025). Spiritual intelligence and Islamic organizational citizenship behavior among Malaysian government servants. *Journal of Islamic Organizational Studies*, 7(1), 1–18.