

## A Study on Workplace Spirituality and Organizational Commitment

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### Abstract

The concept of workplace spirituality is taking a new rise in today's businesses where the knowledge economy is said to be marginally utilized in the context of organizational commitment. Beyond a certain threshold, the hygiene factors and the tangible material motivation factors cease to stimulate employee inner power and the greater potential capacity especially in the services sector where the employees are the most important assets of the organization. The workplace spirituality could be one of the solutions for dispirited employees who manifest themselves in troubles creating workplace conflicts. This study takes a conceptual view of various dimensions of workplace spirituality and concludes with the importance of workplace spirituality in creating organizational commitment in current times and future research directions.

**KEYWORDS-** Workplace Spirituality, Organization commitment, Services Sector

### INTRODUCTION

Workplace spirituality is the paradigm dimensional concept in the field of management research gaining wide attention towards exploring the insightful contributions to foster progressive and prosperous workplace conditions.

It is said that the employees with high level of work place spirituality contribute better than the dispirited employees. However, if employees work in a dispirited workplace manifest themselves in various work troubles such as low morale, rising absenteeism, high turnover, burnout, frequent stress-related illness and the adoption of non-committed attitude to the organizations (Ashmos and Duncon 2000)

The workplace is turning more and more dynamic, turbulent and demanding which is increasing the work pressure to employees, posing severe threat to various psychological problems. Several corporate practices such as governance, management and social responsibility have their roots in great traditions proposed through spiritual philosophies.

spirituality at work is different from religion or about getting people converted to a specific belief system, not necessarily involve a connection to any specific religious traditional practices, but spirituality at work is based on personal values and philosophy, who view themselves as spiritual beings whose souls need nourishment at work, who experience a sense of purpose and meaning in their work and a sense of interconnectedness to one another and to their workplace community

People spend most of their adult lives and major part of their waking hours of the day at work. Creating a more compassionate, caring and ethical workplace provide a promising remedy to declining job satisfaction which is leading to higher rate of employee turnover rates.

Beyond certain threshold the hygiene factors and material motivation factors ceases to be the important thing for employee motivation towards improved performance and

higher needs prevail. Employees are able to express their total intelligence and their complete creativity significantly more than their- total emotions, feelings, complete soul or full humour

This is not surprising since it aligns with the prevalent design and expectation in current workplaces. What is unfortunate, however but still not surprising, is employees reports separation between their brains and feelings or emotions, which contrasts sharply with what gives them the most meaning in their jobs the opportunity to realize full potential as a person.

#### OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- The purpose of this research is to study the literature of theoretical research on workplace spirituality and performance
- To explore the outcomes of workplace spirituality
- To study the various components of organizational commitment
- To evaluate the impact of workplace spirituality over organization commitment

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

Workplace Spirituality: Themes, Impact and Research Directions (Ashish Pandey 2017) presented an overview of the workplace spirituality research in last four decades and distinction of religion and spirituality noticeable in the workplace spirituality literature. Also the empirical studies about the impact of workplace spirituality and importance of workplace spirituality research in current times.

Work place spirituality and employee wellbeing : An empirical examination Pawar (2016) found that workplace spirituality enhances the emotional, psychological, social and spiritual well-being of the employees and is tested using a survey design, each proposing a positive relationship between workplace spirituality with multiple forms of employee well-being. This research has created scope for future research to assess whether various forms of employee well-being result from specific dimensions of workplace spirituality.

Lawrence Wainaina, Mike Iravo & Anthony (2014) indicated a higher correlation between workplace spirituality and organization commitment among Academic staff and suggest that when people experience workplace spirituality, they feel more affectively attached to their organizations and experience a sense of loyalty to the organization

While workplace spirituality is considered a highly personal, nearly all of the academic definitions acknowledge that spirituality involves a sense of connectedness at work, and deeper values. Workplace spirituality involves the effort to find one's ultimate purpose in life, to develop a strong connection to co-workers and other people associated with work, and to have alignment between one's core beliefs and the values of their organization (Mitroff& Denton, 1999).

Mitroff and Denton (1999) in a book entitled A Spiritual Audit of Corporate America, based experiences and opinions of practicing managers and executives pose important findings as below:

- People want to realize their full potential as whole human beings, either on or off the job

- They wish to work for ethical organizations
- They want to perform interesting and meaningful work.
- Making money is important, but is not the most important goal for most people
- Organizations perceived as “more spiritual” were also viewed as more profitable

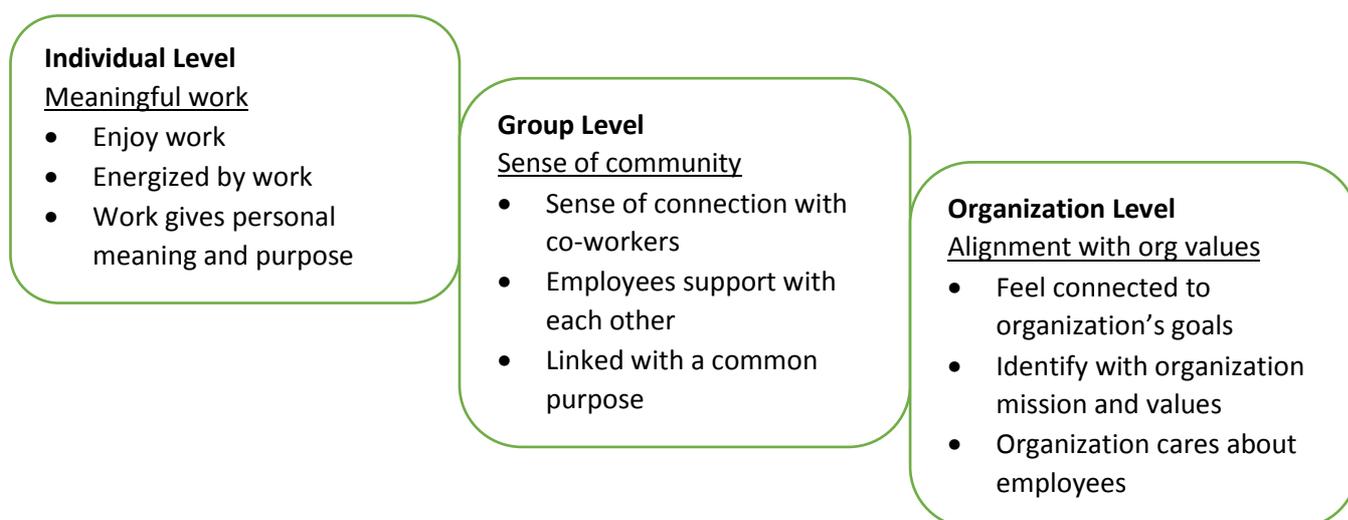
The major Findings of Milliman et al (2003) empirical examination of the relationship between workplace spirituality and five prevalent employee job attitudinal variables

- The meaningful work dimension explains affective commitment, intrinsic work satisfaction, job involvement and self-esteem.
- the sense of community dimension explains all the attitudes
- Value alignment explains commitment and intention to quit.

Dr.MikeIravo and Lawrence wainaina(2014) established a significant positive relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational commitment on focus group of academic staff in the public and private universities in Kenya. The findings were that when people experience workplace spirituality, they feel more affectively attached to their organizations and experience a sense of obligation. When the work is meaningful employees tend to be more committed and less likely to quit.

By improving spiritual climates, managers can promote organizational commitment and, thus, individual and organizational performance. The organizations and leaders may have a crucial role in promoting organizational commitment and its consequences for individual organizational performance. They can do so by respecting the inner life of their employees to express their whole persons creating a sense of joy, being fair and trustful, and building a sense of community.ArmenioRego and Miguel Pina e Cunha (2007).

Conceptualising spirituality in the workplace: Individual, group and organisation levels of interaction. Model of John Milliman; Andrew J Czaplewski; Jeffrey Ferguson (2003)



## CONTENTS AND FACTORS OF WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY

### Team sense of community

It is a sense of connection and positive social relations with coworkers and related to team spirit, shared care between members, sense of common purpose.

### **Alignment with organizational values**

Alignment between organizational and individual values includes representation of congruence between organizational values and the inner life of individuals. Involvement of leaders with community at large which makes employees feel more aligned, comfortable when they feel like working in organizations whose leaders seek the social good of affective commitment the community, and not just the “selfish” interests of the organization and its stakeholders.

### **Sense of contribution to society**

It is the dimension which measures whether the work done by the individual is congruent with his/her personal life values and is helpful for the community.

### **Enjoyment at work**

It comprises the sense of joy and pleasure at work. It represents a different way to achieve meaning at work. Meaningful work represents how employees interact with their day-to-day work at the individual level.

### **Opportunities for inner life**

It includes the way the organization respects the spirituality and spiritual values of the individual represents the absence/presence of the blocks to spirituality. It is also related to the “spiritual bonding” identified by Burroughs and Fry (2003).

## **FUNCTIONS AND INFLUENCES OF WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY**

In the discussions of spirituality and organisation science as irreconcilable foes, Benefiel (2003) mentions “Spirituality and management once thought incompatible have in the past decade fallen in love”. The appeal of spirituality may be for several reasons:

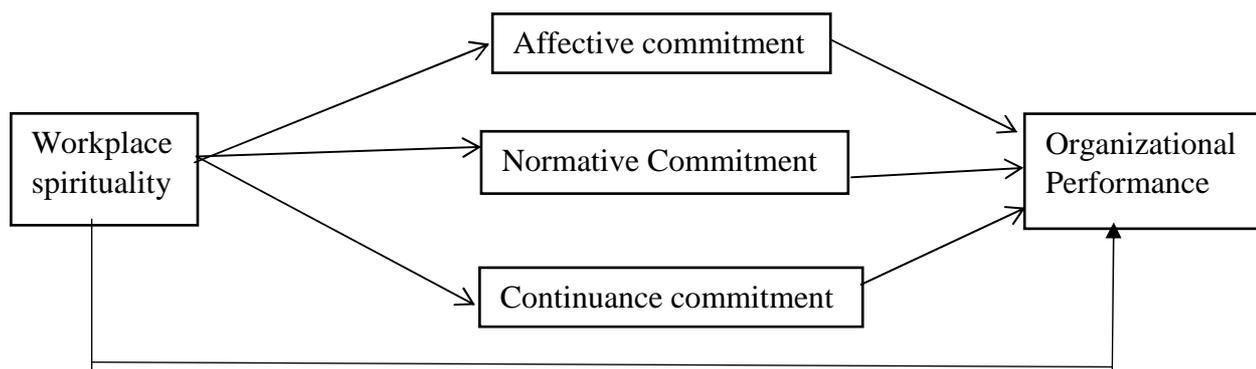
- Work is the prime part of most people’s lives, also the search for ultimate meaning(Mitroff,2003)
- Better performance of organizations can be passed on to the employees through improved working conditions, poorly managed organizations cannot grant “Spiritual richness” joy and meaningful work to employees
- Workplace spirituality has to be practiced for dignity of people, though it improves employee commitment and organizational performance
- For each individual person to develop themselves into a holistic human being, and to trigger the full creativity and to fullest potentiality employees have to bring their souls along with their arms and brains
- If workplace spirituality is inappropriately managed, it can turn to be a new and sophisticated forms of domination and control technology tool
- Correctly implemented workplace spirituality can remove the employee mental health, enslavement, people humiliation and destruction, dehumanized practices and serious threats to the “Human soul”
- Workplace spirituality provides interesting work that allows learning, development and that provides a sense of competence and mastery
- Meaningful work that instils some feeling of purpose

- A sense of connection and positive social relations with coworkers
- The ability to live an integrated life so that the work does not clash with the essential nature of the worker and his desire to live as a human being
- It creates Stimulation to contribute to common good of the organization
- It is the basic human Instinct to realize individual’s fullest potential and creativity
- People wish to work for ethical organizations with Honesty, trust, and self-realization
- Workplace spirituality can lead to organizational Commitment which could have implications on permanence or withdrawal.
- When an individual is committed to the organization Adaptability becomes smoother.

### CONSEQUENCES OF WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY

A number of successful organizations have started to reap benefits of associating spirituality with workplace. For having a strong influence over organizational commitment leading to organizational performance for the Meaningful work and meditative work, development of Sense of community, being authenticity (Being true and honest to self and to others), Alignment of individual’s values with the organizations values and mission, Fearless action, Being grateful, improved organizational performance, increased organizational commitment, higher work motivation, and quality Employee Engagement.

Organisational commitment generally means attachment and loyalty to an organisation. It refers to the relative strength of the individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organisation. One of the models that have generated most research on organisational commitment is that developed by Meyer and Allen (1990). They labelled them as Affective commitment (desire to stay), continuance commitment (perceived costs of leaving) and normative commitment (perceived obligation to stay) to distinguish the various types of commitment.



When a person has an affective commitment, he or she has the desire to follow a course of action. The findings of Duchon and Plowman, (2005) who found that when people find joy in their activities and feel involved in heavily spiritual organizational climates, they become healthier and happier, where they act in a more committed manner, become more engaged and are able to apply their full potential to work. Nasina and Doris (2011) supports the same findings that when work is meaningful or when its connected to what is important to an employee’s life then an employee can become committed. Meaningful work is an indicator of a spiritual workplace.

## CONCLUSIONS

Human beings are rational but also emotional and spiritual. Spirituality is more of a process than an end. It is about how things are performed instead of just achieving goals. The development of an individual and building on creativity will naturally require spiritual practices in the process of achieving an organisational goal. Spirituality in workplace also has a positive and significant relationship with organizational commitment received. Spirituality causality relationship of workplace and organizational commitment based overshadow awareness that not only relates to the job search material alone, so the award will work itself internally so as to increase of the commitment of the organization's members. We need to consider workers need for meaning and spirituality in order to unleash their full potential. Organisations are therefore expected to encourage the realisation of the needs of workplace spirituality.

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