



Exploring the Influence of Workplace Spirituality on Employee Engagement: A Comprehensive Literature Review

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Abstract. The purpose of literature review articles has become a commonly utilized research method. This paper aims to identify gaps among Employee involvement and workplace spirituality. The review aims to synthesize existing research to comprehensively understand Employee involvement and workplace spirituality which can lead to future directions for research. Design/Methodology- This study conducts an inclusive literature review of articles, books, journals, and other scholarly work on Employee involvement and workplace spirituality. This study uses the systematic manual review approach. Finding- The analysis strongly correlates workplace spirituality and employee engagement. However, there is a requirement for more empirical studies to create causal relationships and to discover the connection between spirituality in the workplace and employee involvement in diverse workplace context. Value/Originality- This literature review offers a wide-ranging combination of the studies on the relationship between spirituality in the workplace and participation in job activities, contributing valuable perceptions for scholars and experts. By detecting the gap areas in the research, this review contributes to a deep understanding of workplace spirituality that how it can be leveraged to advance employee engagement. It identifies upcoming studies examining the connection between spirituality in the workplace and contentment among workers, self-efficacy, innovative work behavior, and work performance.

Keywords: Workplace Spirituality, Employee Engagement, Literature Review.

1. Introduction

The era in which organizations served solely for its survival, devoid of opportunities for individual development, has become a thing of the past. In contemporary times, employment serves not only as a mean of subsistence but also as a mean of sustenance. Therefore, organizations have recently shown an expanding awareness of spirituality in the workplace to cultivate a conducive work environment that optimizes their employees' performance and productivity.

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The way persons practice spirituality at work is defined as “An acknowledgement of employees' inner life, nourished by and nourishing meaningful work in a communal context.”[1].

Workplace spirituality can be comprehended by considering several important dimensions as it is a complex concept that includes different aspects of meaning, purpose, and connection in the work environment. It revolves around the discovery of significance and objective in one's job, establishing strong relationships with coworkers and the company, nurturing a feeling of inclusion and overall welfare [2]. Multiple framework endeavours to encompass the various aspects of workplace spirituality. Three such notable instances consist of:

a) Transcendence, Connectedness, Completeness, and Joy[1]

Transcendence refers to pursuing something beyond one's individual existence, such as a more significant objective or an organization's mission which involves feelings of astonishment, curiosity, and appreciation. Connectedness involves a sense of affiliation and camaraderie with coworkers and the company, involving assistance and appreciation with collective understanding of objectives. Completeness involves achieving a state of fulfillment and satisfaction through working with a clear goal in mind and significance further using the skills and talents in a meaningful way. Joy is the happiness and contentment derived from one's work, characterized by increased energy, motivation, and involvement with a positive outlook towards work.

b) Meaningful Work, Spiritual Orientation, Compassion, and Alignment of Values [2]:

The term "meaningful work" describes the experience of finding fulfillment and direction in one's occupation where perceived job has an impact on a greater purpose and personal growth. Spiritual Orientation establishes a connection with fundamental values and beliefs while feeling clear objective, inner solid calling, or predetermined fate which further links to a more significant entity outside oneself. Compassion is to demonstrate a concern and understanding towards others, behaving with empathy and benevolence while demonstrating respect and dignity towards colleagues. Values Alignment is degree of congruence between individual's values and those upheld by the organization as a whole.

c) Purpose, Community, and Values [3]:

Purpose is collective understanding of a shared goal and vision, a sense of contribution towards achieving these goals. Community shall have strong connections of trust, admiration, and assistance among colleagues with a profound sense of inclusion and attachment to others for assistance and encouragement. Values are collective ideals and convictions that guide organizational conduct and decision-making. There is a perception of honesty and moral conduct which emphasizes upon its importance on employees and stakeholders. Workplace Spirituality is essential in confirming employee motivation [4]. It is described as searching for meaning and having faith or belief. There is a phenomenon that finds meaningful life and acquisition of deeper self-knowledge to a higher level where specific staff inspires to find the meaning and purpose to their existence[4].

Spirituality at the workplace is a crucial element as It has been associated with higher levels of work satisfaction, employee involvement, and loyalty to the organization[5]. A lot of people have been talking about spirituality at work recently. It refers to recognizing the human spirit at the workplace to establish an environment that promotes development. Hence, firms must foster a favourable climate that maximizes their employees' performance and output as it pertains to acknowledging the essence of humanity in the workplace and establishing a background that fosters its growth.

The idea of involving workers in their work was initially introduced by Khan. The implementation was carried out by the Gallup research group, demonstrating statistical significance that organizational productivity, profitability, employee welfare, and customer satisfaction have a relationship [6].

A systematic review is a manuscript that provides recent information regarding specific area. It starts with specific and clear outlined study question. By providing an overview of the study included in review. A strategy for answering a specific research issue by systematically reviewing and analyzing all relevant studies.

Need for Workplace Spirituality

The rapid inclination for workplace spirituality in today's demanding work environment promotes a sense of significance, intention, and overall welfare among employees, offering numerous benefits to individuals and organizations. It provides a multitude of advantages for both individuals and organizations.[7] Organizations can foster a more engaged, productive, and successful workforce by establishing a workplace that promotes meaning, purpose, and well-being[8].

- Enhanced Well-Being- It contributes to enhance the entire well-being of employees by improving their physical, psychological, mental, and spiritual health[9].
- Sustainable Development- It supports the sustainable development of individuals by providing purpose and meaning in work[10].
- Improved Job Outcomes- It is associated with better job-related outcomes, such as increased employee ambidexterity which combines explorative and exploitative activities[11].
- Positive Work Environment- It can lead to a more humane work environment, resulting in higher productivity, creativity, and job satisfaction[12].
- Employee Engagement- Workplace spirituality boosts dedication, loyalty, and performance by linking personal values with organizational aims[13].
- Reduce Turnover- A spiritually enriched workplace fosters a sense of connection and fulfilment, retaining employees longer[14].
- Improved Collaboration- Fostering Community and shared purpose improve teamwork, problem-solving, and success[15].
- Resilience and Adaptability- Meaning and purpose in work promotes resilience and adaptability, which is essential in today's fast-paced, ever-changing workplace[16].

2. Research Design and Methodology

Review of the literature highlight gaps and guide future research. This study conducts a comprehensive literature review of articles, books, journals, and other scholarly work on Spirituality at work and employee engagement. This study uses the systematic manual review approach.

3. Research Objective

- To study the existing literature and identify the relevant drivers.
- To identify the association of spirituality in the workplace and employee engagement
- To highlight the gaps among spirituality in the workplace and employee engagement for the future research.

4. Literature Review

The rise in workplace spirituality in India was attributed to societal trends such as economic downsizing, re-engineering, unemployment, and wage disparities[17]. The workplace serves as a constant means of connecting with others and fulfilling human needs worldwide. Eastern philosophies and Pacific Rim cultures, such as Zen Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, and Confucianism, are gaining interest due to their spiritual values [18]. The downfall of prominent corporates like Enron, WorldCom, and Satyam Computer in the past has highlighted the need to balance ethical conduct and financial success[19]. Profit was often considered as the sole metric for evaluating an organization's success. In the face of global competition, businesses have recognized that employee creativity requires undivided attention in the workplace, which was challenging when the work needs more significance[20].

Managing Spirituality at the Workplace - Practical Inference

The essence of workplace spirituality attracted a lot of scholarly attention by establishing a supportive atmosphere that enables personnel to achieve their utmost capabilities as one of the advantages on the topic of bringing spirituality to working environments. The integration might be realized when management executives implement effective communication strategies, embrace a particular work culture, and standardized work policies. Moreover, the administrators are intrigued by the comprehension and application of spiritual practices within businesses[21].

Prominent Corporates Like Boeing, Coca-Cola, and Intel, have effectively incorporated spiritual principles and practices in their organizational cultures, strategies, and internal operations.

Table 1. Various writers' works that explore the idea of workplace spirituality are included here:

| Author | Characterization of Workplace Spirituality |
|------------------------|---|
| Mitroff et al. (1999) | An experience of awe, wonder, and reverence in the workplace leading to a more profound meaningfulness and purpose. |
| Ashmos & Duchon (2000) | Recognizing and, nurturing employees' inner lives through meaningful employment in a community context. |

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Milliman et al. (2003) | Accommodating diverse values and beliefs within a single workplace can be complex and it requiring careful consideration and sensitivity to individual needs. |
| Giocalone et al. (2003) | It acts as a median to create a workplace that values and honours individuals, encouraging the expression of spirit in the workplace. |
| Kinjerski et al. (2004) | It involves a sense of the sacred, a connection to others, meaningful work, and self-transcendence for individuals and organizations. |
| Regine et al. (2007) | It involves finding meaning in work and building connections. |
| Petchsawang & Duchon, (2009) | Being compassionate towards others and maintaining a mindful inner consciousness while pursuing meaningful work that allows for transcendence. |
| Fry et al. (2011) | A framework of organizational values and practices that recognize and celebrate individuals' interconnectedness and promote their spiritual well-being. |
| Hudson et al. (2014) | A sense of calling or vocation, a desire to make a positive contribution to the world through one. |
| Regmi et al. (2019) | The manifestation of a deep-seated sense of purpose, interconnectedness, and meaning within the organizational context, leading to enhanced employee well-being and positive organizational outcomes |

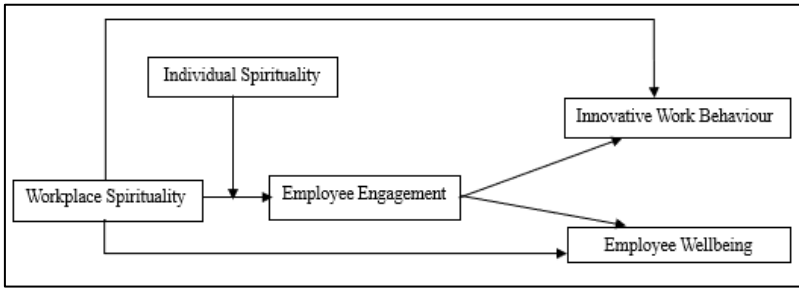
Source: Authour’s Own Work

4.1 Review of the Existing Models of Workplace Spirituality

4.1.1 Model by Salem

This study contributes to the increasing number of research on workplace spirituality, which advocates for the enhancement of creativity and the well-being of employees. The relationship between innovative work practices, workplace spirituality, and employee well-being is mediated by employee engagement. Workplace spirituality affects employee engagement depending on individual spirituality[3].

Fig. 1. Model by (Haj et al. 2022)

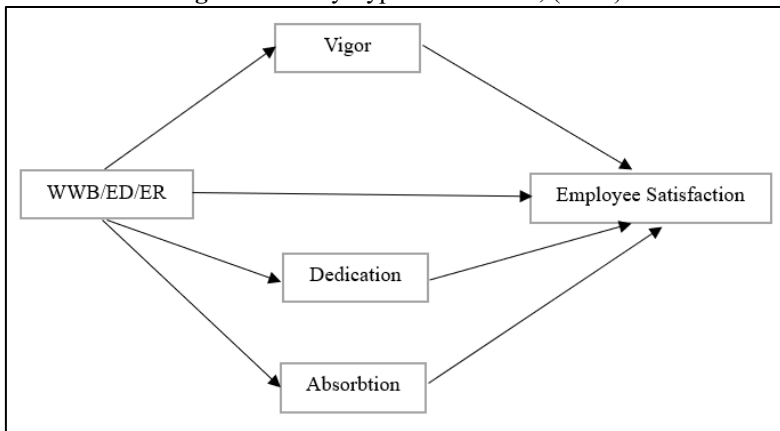


“Source: <https://doi.org/10.1111/beer.12463>”

4.1.2 Model by Sypniewska

The results reveal that employee engagement (vigor, devotion, and absorption) positively correlates with enhancing workplace well-being, fostering staff development, promoting retention, and ensuring satisfaction. Absorption does not affect job satisfaction[22].

Fig. 2.Model by Sypniewska et al., (2023)

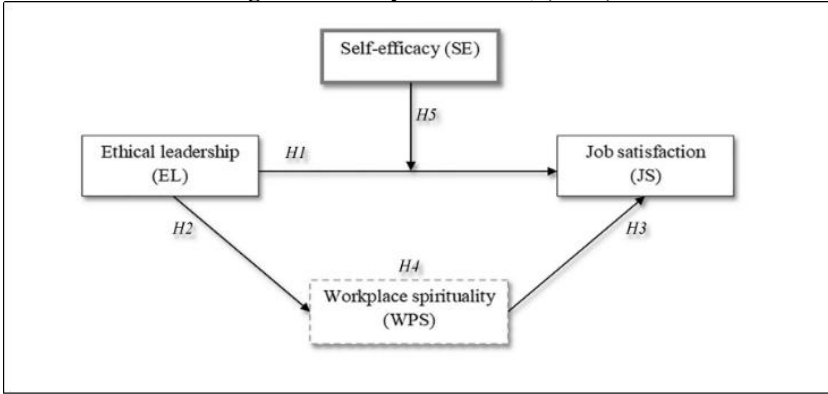


“Source: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11365-023-00834-9>”

4.1.3 Model by Aftab

This research aimed to examine how ethical leadership affects work satisfaction from Pakistan workplace. The findings shows that ethical leadership directly affects employees job satisfaction plus the relationship is mediated by workplace spirituality. Positive self-efficacy moderates ethical leadership and job happiness. Build ethical traits and workplace connectivity and fulfilment by workshops and seminars[23]

Fig. 3. Model by Aftab et al., (2023)

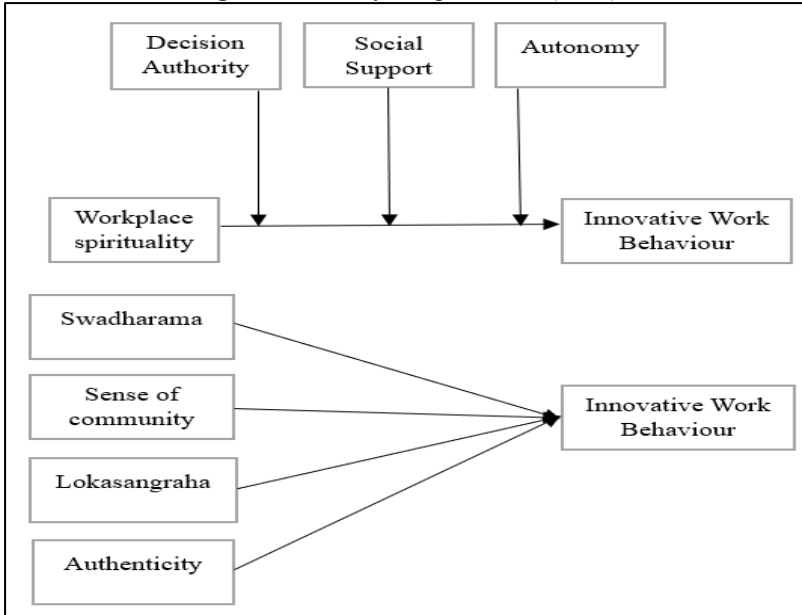


“Source: <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOEM-07-2021-1121>”

4.1.4 Model by Garg & Saini

The results show that four Workplace Spirituality measures—Swadharna, community, authenticity, and Lokasangraha—positively affect innovative work behavior among selected company personnel. Also, positively moderate the impacts agency, decision-making authority, and social support on workplace spirituality and innovation[24].

Fig. 4. Model by Garg & Saini, (2023)

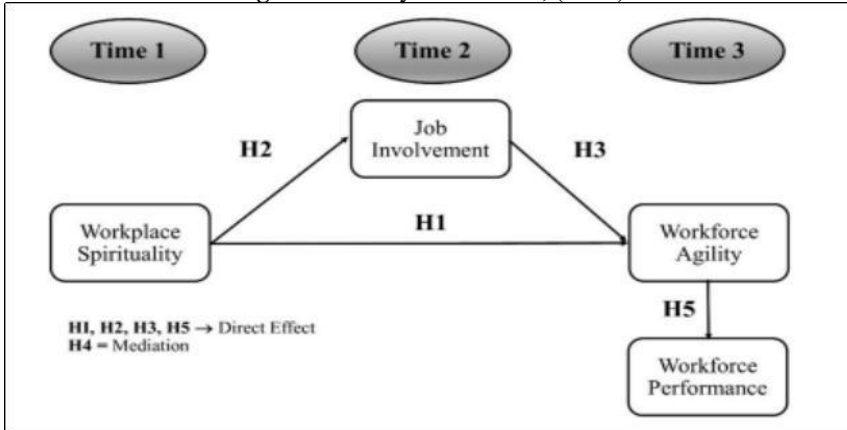


“Source: <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSSP-03-2023-0050>”

4.1.5 Model by Saeed

These findings suggest that fostering a sense of workplace spirituality among employees may lead to enhanced agility and performance in the workforce by positively mediated by Job Involvement [25].

Fig. 5. Model by Saeed et al., (2022)



“Source: <https://doi.org/10.2147/PRBM.S344651>”

Inference of Existing Models

| Authors | Other Parameters | Outcome |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| Salem et al., 2022 | “Individual Spirituality Employee Engagement Innovative Work Behaviour Employee Wellbeing” | Spirituality in workplace positively influences all variables. |
| Sypniewska et al., 2023 | “Employee workplace well-being Employee development Employee retention Engagement (vigor, dedication, absorption) Employee satisfaction” | The level of employee engagement is positively correlated with (energy, commitment, and immersion) and workplace well-being, employee development, retention, and satisfaction. |
| Aftab et al., 2022 | “Ethical Leadership Workplace Spirituality Job Satisfaction Self-efficacy” | Leadership that prioritizes ethics fosters a fulfilment and happiness in one's job. Ethical leadership and job satisfaction mediated by workplace |

| | | |
|--------------------|--|--|
| | | spirituality. Leadership in ethics and work satisfaction are mediated by one's sense of self-efficacy. |
| Garg & Saini, 2023 | “Decision Authority Social Support Autonomy Innovative Work Behaviour Swadharama Sense of Community Lokasangraha Authenticity” | Authority to make decisions, social support, and individual agency as moderators of innovative work behavior are mitigated by dimensions of workplace spirituality, which favorably benefit employees. |
| Saeed et al., 2022 | “Job Involvement Workforce Agility Workforce Performance” | Workplace spirituality positively influences workforce agility and workforce performance by mediating the effect of job involvement. |

Source: Authour’s Own Work

A systematic manual review of the existing models of spirituality at workplace, including employee involvement, employee satisfaction, self-efficacy, creative approach to work, and work performance, shortlisted five parameters to be studied further, as very few studies related to the select parameters were found.

5. Conclusion & Discussion

The study revealed how workplace spirituality affects employee engagement. Fostering community, providing meaningful tasks, and aligning with company values boost employee engagement. Despite these findings, workplace spirituality and employee involvement need more research. Importantly, employee participation and occupational spirituality literature on employee contentment, self-confidence, creative approach to work, and job performance is lacking. This gap suggests empirical study is needed to demonstrate these relationships and examine how they interact in different employment situations.

Results from the research have demonstrated valuable insights into employee participation and occupational spirituality. Practices such as promoting a feeling of community, provides chances for meaningful employment, and advances conformity with organizational principles contribute to advanced levels of engagement. This literature review aimed to uncover gaps regarding spirituality in the workplace and employee involvement in the present study. Through synthesizing the existing knowledge, this review offers a thorough insight into these concepts and how they interact. The findings highlight the need of promoting spiritual well-being in the workplace to enhance engagement, as there is a strong positive correlation between workplace spirituality and engagement.

Nevertheless, the review stresses the need for additional empirical studies to determine the impact on the role of spirituality and employee engagement in the workplace in different types of workplaces, and investigate the links between these factors. Through recognizing these gaps. This review sets the stage for future research and offers professionals and academics useful insights on the interplay of workplace spirituality, employee satisfaction, self-efficacy, innovative work behavior, and work performance.

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