



Impact of Spirituality at Workplace on Job Satisfaction: An Empirical Study of Employees of Prasar Bharti and All India Radio (New Delhi)

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ABSTRACT Job satisfaction has been an increasingly researched topic in the area of organizational behaviour as it has a direct impact on productivity. To understand the factors affecting job satisfaction, the relationship between spirituality and job satisfaction is being researched in this paper as a part of researchers' PhD coursework. The objective of the research is to find any potential links between the chosen dimensions of spirituality and job satisfaction via a cross-sectional study which was conducted in June, 2014 on 30 government employees (at different hierarchal levels) of Prasar Bharti and All India Radio. The results of the survey revealed that the chosen dimensions have a strong positive correlation with job satisfaction which can lead to an increased productivity in the workplace.

INTRODUCTION

People don't only work with their brain and their bodies but they use also use their spirit. The expression of self in the workplace cannot be achieved just by physical actions or abstract ideas without people putting their character into it. There are many benefits to be gained from this self-expression whether it is reducing stress and absenteeism, decreasing the number of conflicts or even enhancing the performance (Krahnke et al. 2003).

The concept of spirituality has long existed but the impact of it in the workplace has not been fully explored and is only at its conceptual stage. However, this topic has been gaining traction as the management research is now focusing on the concept and trying to find ways how spirituality can create value for businesses. Spirituality is slowly being utilized as a tool for change (Milliman et al. 2017). The main driver behind using spirituality is that people thrive for something more than just material gains in the workplace. Intrinsic motivation can help people focus harder and lead to more productive actions. Organisations may also inculcate this by having colleagues that bring motivation to the work, linking the work outcomes to impact in the community or contributing to an idea or a mission larger than the individual. All these ideas shape up the concept of spirituality at workplace.

There were numerous studies conducted by many different researchers (Komala and Ganesh 2007; Rego and Cunah 2007; Pawar 2009; Chawla and Guda 2010) that have shown a strong connection between work and spirituality. When compared, workplaces which have inculcated and recognized spirituality as an aspect of work, have outperformed in many areas such as increased level of employee's work satisfaction, increased productivity and decrease in rates of absenteeism.

While workplace spirituality is still in the exploratory stages, the impact of job satisfaction is not a new topic in the academia and could be one of the most researched components of job related attitudes (Judge et al. 2017). Numerous studies (including several recent ones) show that low job satisfaction can lead to many different negative aspects ranging from a high turnover rate to low productivity (Cho and Song 2017; Wnuk 2017; Leider et al. 2016; Huang et al. 2016).

Objective

The aim of this paper is to understand the impact of spirituality and job satisfaction in the public sector through an empirical study. The proposed definitions of spirituality and validated questionnaires are utilized in order to search for links between dimensions of spirituality, which are defined in the methodology part of this paper, and job satisfaction in public sector.

Hypotheses

Null Hypothesis 1

There is no relationship between feeling of transcendence at workplace and job satisfaction.

Null Hypothesis 2

There is no relationship between compassion at workplace and job satisfaction.

Null Hypothesis 3

There is no relationship between meaningful work and job satisfaction.

Null Hypothesis 4

There is no relationship between mindfulness at workplace and job satisfaction.

Literature Review

Spirituality

Spirituality has been discussed in the academia for many years and the topic has been studied extensively in different countries and cultures. Religion and spirituality often go hand in hand, however, for the purpose of this paper religion and religious activities have been excluded. The academic description of spirituality given by different researchers can be found in the Table 1.

Table 1: Definitions of spirituality

Definitions of spirituality

A transcendent dimension within human experience . . . discovered in moments in which the individual questions the meaning of personal existence and attempts to place the self within a broader ontological context (Shafranske and Gorsuch 1984: 231)
Containing a capacity to go beyond self-centrism and transcending further with increased love and knowledge (Chandler and Holden 1992)
Something that gives live a purpose and an aim and an inspiring force go beyond one's self (McKnight 1984: 142)
Spirituality is the full potential of a human that deals with the biggest purposes, with God, with life, with purpose (Tart 1975: 4)
Self-values, life and everything one considers ultimate characterizing a way of life and experiencing it in full awareness within a transcendent dimension (Elkins et al. 1988: 10)
Individual responding to the deepest truths of the universe in intimacy and living meaningfully (Bregman and Thierman 1995: 149)
Our yearning for self-transcendence and surrender, and response to a question to finding our own place (Benner 1989: 20)
Experiencing what is sacred in a subjective way (Vaughan 1991: 105)
A relationship with god coming from personal life principles (Emblen 1992: 45)
With ultimate personal truths involved (Wong 1998: 364)
Movement to what is divine, thriving for transformation that lies within life (Dale 1991: 5)
A person expressing their ultimate concern (Emmons 2000)

Workplace Spirituality

Spirituality has been related to an individual's journey of understanding oneself better, finding a purpose and transcending to a higher level by Dehler and Welsh (2013: 114). Individual's knowledge about his own self provides an intrinsic energy which is then communicated to outside world as character and behaviour.

Tepper (2003: 183) has built his arguments of spirituality without religion and defined spirituality as 'the extent to which an individual is motivated to find sacred meaning and purpose to his or her existence' which is in line with Mitroff and Denton's (1999) arguments. Ashmos and Duchon (2000) has included the experience of the individuals to their description of spirituality. They included the working environment's sense of community and how it enables individual's expression of their own character. Furthermore, they developed one of the very first scales to assess and quantify the spirituality in an organization. Later on these arguments have provided a base for Milliman et al. (2003) as they proposed meaningful community work is how a workplace can create spirituality. Following this statement, they added a connection between the values of the organization and spirituality instead of an intrinsic drive. This concept is also mentioned by Kinjerski and Skrypnek (2004).

Many researchers have offered their own versions of spirituality. Finding the work mean-

ingful and individual's own values and consciousness were proposed by Krishnakumar and Neck (2002). Guillory (1997) put the notion of consciousness at the core of his description. He described the spirituality as the outcome of inner conscience. Inner consciousness has been a focus point for following studies. It was defined as 'wakefulness... unmixed with images, thoughts, feelings or any other object of perception' by Heaton et al. (2004). However, they have included the religion in their arguments by stating that this can be accomplished with meditation and have referenced eastern religions traditions.

'Living by inner truth to produce positive attitudes and relationships', 'a transcendent personal state', and 'expressing a desire to find meaning and a purpose in life' were the definitions used by Neck and Milliman (1994: 9-10) as they put the concept of community in the centre of their arguments and addressed the connection between people in a commune which can lead to going further than self-interest and focusing on the community as a whole. Connection and unification was also used by Delgado (2005: 159) as he stated "the most common quality in descriptions of spirituality was transcendence, followed by meaning, mystery, animating or life-giving, connecting or unifying." Mahoney and Graci (1999) used connectivity in a society, purpose, forgiveness, and morality while developing their arguments about spirituality. Garg (2017) observed that experienced employees exhibited higher spirituality in workplace and posited that time spent in the workplace is also linked to spirituality.

Job Satisfaction

In the field of organizational research one the most important metric is the employee's job satisfaction. A simple description was offered as "the extent to which people like or dislike their jobs" by Spector (1997). A broader description was offered by Andrisani (1978) as 'an employee's overall evaluation of the job or specific components or tasks associated with job'. Locke (1976) had a more holistic definition as he used emotional states in his description; 'a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences'. Wnuk (2017) has described it as an emotional response derived from the environment.

There are several metrics such as salary and progress in the career that have been used while measuring job satisfaction and this has been

accepted as a stable way of evaluating job satisfaction. Mueller and McCloskey (1990) has shown that job satisfaction has a positive influence when managers consider employment. Researchers finding links between performance and job satisfaction (Petty et al. 1984; Fisher 2003) have accelerated the pace of research in organizational research and the link between performance and satisfaction has been described as the 'Holy Grail' (Weiss and Copranzone 1996). Several studies have also revealed the positive correlation between job satisfaction and lower turnover (Judge et al. 2017). The hypothesis of 'a happy worker is a productive worker' is still believed by many in the industry (Fisher 2003).

Performance of an employee directly impacts the value added to the organization and it has been one of the most important factors in organizational science and business (Spagnoli et al. 2012). Many scholars have tried to find a relation between performance and job satisfaction.

Quantification of working conditions has stayed as a contemporary topic in academia and within the industry because of its significant impact for the employees' performance (Spagnoli et al. 2012). Working conditions have implications spilling outside the working environment and relates to overall life satisfaction (Judge and Watanabe 1993). Job satisfaction can increase the level of service quality (Schneider and Bowen 1985) and satisfaction in the workplace is tightly linked to life satisfaction (Illies et al. 2009).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Initially, the dimensions of workplace spirituality have been defined through existing literature and measurements have been gathered. This was followed by a cross-sectional study in June 2014 in order to quantify the impacts of dimensions of workplace spirituality.

Sampling

Convenient sampling is used in this paper. Data is collected from 30 employees (at different hierarchical levels) of Prasara Bharti and All India Radio, Delhi, India. Profile of the respondents can be found in Table 2.

Source of Data

The current paper makes use of primary and secondary data for meeting its objectives. Prima-

Table 2: Profile of the respondents

<i>Personal details</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Sex</i>		
Man	20	66.67
Woman	10	33.33
<i>Age</i>		
21-25	2	6.67
26-30	1	3.33
31-35	4	13.33
36-40	5	16.67
41-45	3	10
46-50	4	13.33
51-55	4	13.33
56 and above	7	23.33
<i>Hierarchy</i>		
Junior	6	20
Middle	17	56.67
Senior	7	23.33
<i>Total Work Experience</i>		
00 to 05	4	13.33
06 to 10	3	10
11 to 15	5	16.67
16 to 20	1	3.33
21 to 25	8	26.67
26 to 30	2	6.67
30 and above	7	23.33

Source: Developed by the researchers using data from the respondents

ry data is collected through a survey questionnaire carried out in Delhi, India. Five point Likert

scales is used. Secondary data is gathered through research papers, journals and articles.

Research Tool

A two-part questionnaire containing 20 closed ended questions, divided into 4 categories under workplace spirituality and 16 questions under Job satisfaction was utilized to assess the respondents.

Measures

Two measures, namely, spirituality at workplace and job satisfaction are used in the paper. The items from each variable along with their corresponding descriptive statistics for spirituality and job satisfaction are shown in Tables 3 and 4 respectively. Each variable is constructed by computing the mean of the items comprising the scale.

Spirituality in the workplace have varying definitions, however, after a rigorous literature review this paper will focus on four selected themes; transcendence, compassion, meaningful work and mindfulness (Petchsawang and Duchon 2009). For this reason, workplace spiri-

Table 3: Spirituality at workplace: Content, means and standard deviations of the items

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Dimension 1: Transcendence</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
1	At times, I experience an energy or vitality at work that is difficult to describe	4.06	2.29
2	I experience moments at work where everything is blissful	4.13	2.43
3	At times, I experience happiness at work	4.53	2.47
4	At times, I experience happiness at work no sense of time or space	3.43	3.13
5	At moments, I experience complete joy and ecstasy at work	4.46	2.86
	<i>Dimension 2: Compassion</i>		
6	I can easily put myself in other people's shoes	3.73	1.45
7	I am aware of and sympathize with others	4.6	0.68
8	I try to help my co-workers relieve their suffering	4.66	0.62
9	I am aware of my co-workers' needs	4.13	0.85
	<i>Dimension 3: Meaningful Work</i>		
10	I experience joy in my work	4.46	1.02
11	I look forward to coming to work most days	4.5	1.17
12	I believe others experience joy as a result of my work	4.2	1.41
13	My spirit is energized by my work	4.53	1.45
14	I see a connection between my work and the larger social good of my community	4.53	1.62
15	I understand what gives my work personal meaning	4.26	1.86
16	The work I do is connected to what I think is important in life	4.36	2.05
	<i>Dimension 4: Mindfulness</i>		
17	I do jobs or tasks automatically, without being aware of what I'm doing	1.36	1.03
18	I find myself working without paying attention	1.53	1.17
19	At work, I break or spill things because of carelessness, not paying attention, or thinking of something else	1.3	1.12
20	I rush through work activities without being really attentive to them	1.43	1.38

Source: Developed by the researchers using data from the respondents

Table 4: Job satisfaction at workplace: Content, means and standard deviations of the items

S. No.	Job satisfaction questionnaire	Mean	SD
1	Being able to keep busy all the time	3.9	1.11
2	The chance to work alone on the job	3.57	1.03
3	The way my boss handles his/her workers	3.73	0.97
4	The competence of my supervisor in making decisions	4.07	0.93
5	The way my job provides for steady employment	4.1	0.76
6	The chance to tell people what to do	4.1	0.73
7	The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities	4.3	0.8
8	The way company policies are put into practice	3.5	1.4
9	My pay and the amount of work I do	3.73	1.37
10	The chances for advancement on this job	3.07	1.77
11	The freedom to use my own judgment	3.87	1.54
12	The chance to try my own methods of doing the job	3.67	1.73
13	The working conditions	4	1.72
14	The way my co-workers get along with each other	4.2	1.88
15	The praise I get for doing a good job	4.2	2.1
16	The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job	4.43	2.14

Source: Developed by the researchers using data from the respondents

tuality has been defined as follows: ‘workplace spirituality is about having compassion toward others, experiencing a mindful inner consciousness in the pursuit of meaningful work and that enables transcendence’ (Petchsawang and Duchon 2009). It is important to note that these dimensions are connected to each other and the results cannot be attributed to a single dimension.

Measuring Workplace Spirituality

Dimension 1 - Transcendence

In this research, transcendence is defined as a connection a superior power (Delaney 2005). However, it should not be mistaken for any religious statements connection with God as it is not related to religion. Delaney’s (2005) work on measuring spirituality was combined with the work of Kinjerski and Skrypnek (2006) to create a measurement system. Kinjerski and Skrypnek (2006: 12) described this dimension as a mystical experience and ‘a sense of perfection, transcendence, and experiences of joy and bliss’.

Dimension 2 - Compassion

Farlex (2007) defines compassion as a wish to relieve other people’s suffering and before him Twigg and Parayitam (2006) have used deep sympathy for others as a definition. Delgado (2005) states that compassion triggers a sense of responsibility for others who are suffering or less fortunate and furthermore, he states that it

is an ambition to help others. A spiritual person develops awareness for the needs of other people around them and offers help. The challenge for quantifying compassion has not been overcome as of this paper and there is not a scale that is validated. For this reason, items are adapted from the works of several authors (McCormick 1994; Mahoney and Graci 1999; Ingersoll 2003; Delgado 2005; Twigg and Parayitam 2006).

Dimension 3 - Meaningful Work

There are two meaningful characteristics of a work; adding a meaning to the employee’s life, such as doctors saving lives, and representing a significant portion of an employee’s activities. When a work offers something more than material rewards, individual will feel that it is meaningful which can lead to a higher energy and more joy in the workplace (Duchon and Plowman 2005). Meaningful work empowers the individual to express themselves and creates a reason for why the individual has to be in the workplace (Krishnakumar and Neck 2002: 156; Ashfort and Pratt 2003: 311). To assess this dimension Ashmos and Duchon’s (2000) seven criteria has been used.

Dimension 4 – Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a state of awareness of actions and thoughts of the individual. It requires the person to be focused on the moment and his or her surroundings. Mindfulness can be de-

defined as the exact opposite of ‘autopilot’ (Baer et al. 2004: 193). This state enables a stronger governance of the spirituality and emotions of the person. ‘Freiburg Mindfulness Inventory’ (FMI) (Walach et al. 2006) and ‘Mindful Attention Awareness Scale’ (MAAS) (Brown and Ryan 2003) have been combined to assess this dimension.

Measuring Job Satisfaction

Job Satisfaction

Upon studying various definitions, for the purpose of this paper, Job Satisfaction is defined as ‘the overall state of satisfaction with one’s occupation in an organization in a given instant of time’. The challenge in assessing satisfaction exists because of conflicting opinions on different aspects of the job such as being satisfied with some but not with the rest or vice versa (Spagnoli et al. 2012).

There are two common frameworks for assessing job satisfaction: focusing and breaking down the aspects of the job and rating these parts separately or having an overall measure to oversee every aspect. The overall measurement approach asks the respondent their general perception of their job and creates one global scale (Wanous et al. 1997). The more detailed approach of breaking down the various aspects of work builds the job satisfaction from the smaller pieces. The most known assessments follow this approach such as the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector 1985), Job Descriptive Index (Smith et al. 1969) and Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss et al. 1967).

Employee’s fit in workplace is based on the relationship between the supplementary factors in the workplace and the skill set of the employee (Weiss et al. 1967). This theory has laid the foundation for the ‘Work Adjustment Project’ at University of Minnesota which later produced a self-reporting measure namely, Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. 16 questions out of the 20 MCQ-short version (Martins and Proença 2012) of this questionnaire were chosen to be used in this paper. Questions are rated on a 5-point Likert scale. These points were then averaged or summed to come up with a total score for job satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 5. Cronbach Alpha method was used in order to decide

if the numbers given by the respondents are reliable. The results can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5: Reliability analysis

Scale name	Number of items	Coefficient alpha value
<i>A. Spirituality at Workplace</i>		
Compassion	4	0.649
Mindfulness	4	0.6
Meaningful work	7	0.908
Transcendence	5	0.619
<i>B. Job Satisfaction</i>	16	0.794

Source: Developed by the researchers using data from the respondents

RESULTS

Hypothesis 1

There is no relationship between transcendence and job satisfaction as the analysis resulted in very low correlation. The Pearson’s product moment correlation coefficient between transcendence at workplace and job satisfaction is -0.041. This isn’t a strong value, hence the null hypothesis is retained. This can be because of the sample size, however, the correlation coefficient is very low to have only sample size as a reason for this number. Detailed results can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6: Correlation of transcendence at work and job satisfaction

		Trans- cendence	Job satisfaction
Trans- cendence	Pearson correlation	1	-.041
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.831
	N	30	30
Job Satis- faction	Pearson correlation	-.041	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.831	
	N	30	30

Source: Developed by the researchers using data from the respondents

Hypothesis 2

Compassion received the highest value for correlation and had p value acceptable at a one percent rate. The results for the hypothesis one is rejected as The Pearson’s product moment correlation coefficient between Compassion at workplace and job satisfaction is 0.642 and the value is significant ($p < 0.01$). Compassion has

the highest impact on the job satisfaction compared to other elements of spirituality and plays an important role in the organization. Detailed results can be seen in Table 7.

Table 7: Correlation of compassion at work and job satisfaction

		Compassion	Job satisfaction
Compassion	Pearson correlation	1	.642**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	30	30
Job Satisfaction	Pearson correlation	.642**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	30	30

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
Source: Developed by the researchers using data from the respondents

Hypothesis 3

Meaningful work had the second highest impact on job satisfaction after compassion. The Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient between Meaningful Work and Job Satisfaction is 0.320 and the value is moderately significant ($p < 0.01$). Given the significance of the correlation and moderate coefficient value, it implies that the null hypothesis is rejected. If every other conditions was kept constant, meaningful work would be able to explain thirty percent of the deviation. Detailed results can be seen in Table 8.

Table 8: Correlation of meaningful work and job satisfaction

		Meaningful	Job satisfaction
Meaningful Work	Pearson correlation	1	.320*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.085
	N	30	30
Job Satisfaction	Pearson correlation	.320*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.085	
	N	30	30

*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
Source: Developed by the researchers using data from the respondents

Hypothesis 4

Mindfulness, while being weak, has a negative correlation with job satisfaction. This should not be taken as a reverse correlation as the ques-

tions were framed in reverse for example, "I find myself working without paying attention." The Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient between Mindfulness at workplace and Job Satisfaction is -0.225 and the value is significant ($p < 0.01$). It implies that null hypothesis is rejected. It has the smallest impact on job satisfaction amongst the values that have been tested and found to have a relationship with job satisfaction. Detailed results can be seen in Table 9.

Table 9: Correlation of mindfulness and job satisfaction

		Mindfulness	Job satisfaction
Mindfulness	Pearson correlation	1	-.225
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.232
	N	30	30
Job Satisfaction	Pearson correlation	-.225*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.232	
	N	30	30

Source: Developed by the researchers using data from the respondents

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that there is a positive strong to moderate correlation between job satisfaction and the chosen dimensions for workplace spirituality except for transcendence. The results are in parallel with many other studies which have researched similar dimension of spirituality at work and job satisfaction. Recent studies have shown that transcendence has a lower impact on workplace spirituality when compared to having a meaning for work (Nandanprabhu et al. 2016). In the Indian literature, outcome of Chawla and Guda's (2010) empirical study regarding employees in the sales department, Komala and Ganesh's (2007) research on doctors, and Jawahar's (2011) research on employees of Powergrid Corporation employees linking spirituality to professional and personal growth have all shown the impact of spirituality.

In the private sector, Shrestha (2017) has shown in two different companies the importance of these four dimensions but have also observed impact of transcendence on workplace spirituality. These results can be the difference between private and public positions or simply the dataset is in this paper can be extended to test further results. Bakhtiari et al. (2018), have found that workplace spirituality not only in-

creases job satisfaction but also improves the way nurses deal with the topic of death. To further improve in this area, researchers can create a governmental organization focused scale to assess the metrics in this paper. This scale can confirm the hypotheses proposed in this paper. Additionally, researchers can search for connection between spirituality and other factors such as productivity, retention rate, and burnout.

CONCLUSION

This paper's results have yielded a deeper understanding of workplace spirituality amongst the government employees. There is a clear positive correlation between workplace spirituality and job satisfaction in the public positions, which was already found in private sector.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The positive correlation between workplace spirituality and job satisfaction can be leveraged by organizations by encouraging an environment that enables spirituality in the workplace. This could be achieved by first bringing change in the mission and values of the organisation and then synchronizing the entire set of HR activities (Talent acquisition, Training, Appraisals, etc.) to fit with the desired values. This will eventually lead to an increased performance in the workplace through increased job satisfaction. Further research can be done focusing on the direct impact of spirituality and performance.

LIMITATIONS

Every self-administered questionnaire is exposed to risk of inaccurate answers as respondents may answer how they want the situation to be instead of how it actually is. This can blur the results and lead to incorrect conclusion. For this reason Cronbach Alpha was utilized. Furthermore, having a larger sample size might lead to different results as it is not possible to infer the whole population based on the scale of this paper.

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