

The Spirit of Workplace Spirituality: Harnessing Employee Happiness & Wellbeing

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Abstract

Spirituality has emerged the most prominent buzzword in today's organizations. The organizations are on the notion of realizing the quintessence of spirituality in the workplace and it is quite relevant issue of the corporate culture of the 21 st century enterprises. The objective of the study is to explore and investigate the prominent domains and items that may be considered on the relevance, applicability and rationale of spirituality at work sphere viz. Domain A: Workplace Spiritual climate for Employee Performance & Wellness; Domain B: Building Constructive Framework for Workplace Spirituality; Domain C: Interlinking Managerial Philosophy & Spirituality at Work Arena; Domain D: Revisiting Spiritual Leadership at Work place. The main source of conceptualizing the domains is formulated with related literature and the paper rests on primary and secondary collection methods. The paper would ultimately aim towards finding conclusive remarks in certain identifiable areas within the sphere of workplace spirituality viz.: employee performance wellness, workplace spirituality framework, spirituality coupled with management ideologies and revisiting workplace spirituality. The impact of the paper is quite pertinent in today's management context for competitive survival of business houses across the globe.

Keywords: spirituality, workplace, wellness, employee, organisation

Unveiling Workspace Spirituality

In the present day multi-cultural business enterprises management paradigms have gradually shifted from organization fulfillment to the broader spectrum that significantly makes a prominent impact on the ongoing waves of the organisational culture. It can rightly be focused that management of people is the epicenter of the subtotal of all employee's perceptions and behaviors – the nucleus of organisational culture. Human factors that hinge on vital organisational decisions embedded with the culmination of employee's emotional-academic-spiritual intelligence. Both emotional and academic domains of human intellect have been explored through time. Nowadays the spiritual tunes have become the prominent ringtone both in the personal and professional arena of present generations.

The term "spirituality" has been derived from the latin word "spiritus" meaning breathing, air or wind. This implies spirit is the life energy that inhabits us when we are alive and breathing. The prime focus of the paper will concentrate on the impact of employee spiritual intelligence and its relationship with

workspace spirituality. Nurturing and promoting workplace spirituality creates the foundations of positive outcomes related to better organisational performance, boosting employee morale, enhancing job satisfaction, positive ethical vibes and fostering employee wellness and wellbeing.

Workplace spirituality has become an increasingly key element in the realm of organizational culture and organisational behavior in the past two decades. A holistic, multi-dimensional cultural panorama is the essence of workplace spirituality creating new avenues, multiples promises and great opportunities for the individual and organisational rejuvenation. The transformations of materialistic mindset into spiritual awakening of employees have paved the way to lead a life with an effort to attain true meaning and happiness in their lives. Recent trends highlights that there has been a sincere and tremendous effort in the organisational hemisphere to explore the individual introspective evaluation in the search of real contentment in the true sense of the term.

Dimensions of Workplace Spirituality

It is commonly acclaimed that the term spirituality and religion are interwoven with each other. Virtually religion is distinctively an offshoot of human kind's quest for spirituality. Webster's College Dictionary defines spirituality as "state of being spiritual: essence distinct from matter". In broader sense spirituality is related to the spirit or soul. Spirituality is an intangible element that cannot be explained by our five physical senses. The age old association between spirituality and religion has resulted as isolation topography of spirituality at workplace both for employees and management. Studies reveal that most religions were established as a result of human kind's quest for a spiritual awakening.

The assimilated force of employee spiritual intelligence within an organization is widely related to workplace spirituality- the integral component of an organisation's culture. Simultaneously culture and workplace spirituality are intangible notions and are manifested by the shared perceptions, understandings and values culminating the behavior and actions of the employees within the workforce. Employee behavior projecting positive attitudinal inclination creates a high degree of spiritual intelligence with well balanced emotion is compatible to face an overcome any adverse work environment. Caring more about their jobs and the concern for jobs is the outcome of heightened employee spiritual connectively at the work arena. A optimistic flavor of wellness and job satisfaction is experienced by the employees with elevated levels of attendance, ethical standards, motivational strata and commitment towards the organization. Research focuses heightened employees spiritual intelligence leads to a more spiritual work platform which in turn leads to elevated standards of organizational excellence.

Organisational Paradigms and Workplace Spirituality

The prominence and dominance of decision making paradigm towards work place spirituality is of serious concern in the present day business houses. It been witnessed that majority of corporate leaders wither fail to identify workplace spirituality or decline to incorporate its premises into the decision making process. Leaders lack the true meaning of work place spirituality and its functionality. It is quite imperative that leader's perceptions of workplace spirituality need to be acknowledged by the management for achieving the benefits of heightened employee spiritual intelligence. In broader arena an organization's existence is represented by its cultural identity. The acceptance and use of organisational culture encompasses all aspects of the organization within the nucleolus of living-breathing-organic entity signifying the spiritual realm very much identical to its culture. The very spiritual realm seeks deep understanding with appropriate meaning integrating the vision and mission drives of the organization.

A prospective organisational leadership create avenues for integrating the fruits of workplace spirituality

into culture blending the traits like trust, honesty, caring, ethics, honour and meaning. These integrated spiritual fruits create constructive waves of workplace spirituality. The question of leadership implement strategy which is affirmative quotient for workplace spirituality is quite pertinent in the present business environment. The stepping stone in implementing a cultural, decision making and leadership paradigm is complemented through viable corporate value statement focusing the importance of organizational stakeholders, particularly employees. In other words corporate value statement promulgates and guides the corporate members towards developing organizational platforms in the day-to-day decision making agendas. In today's competitive global business environment it can unanimously agreed a typical spiritual organization possesses traits and characteristics projecting a strong sense of purpose, focus on individual development, trust and respect, humanistic work practices, and toleration of employee expression.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objective of the current paper is to identify and define a set of select domains and items within in tune with application of spirituality at workplace for employee well being.

This specific objective of the study can be understood in terms of the following detailed objectives of this paper

- To define the domains
- To define the items relating to each domain on the basis of literature review.

This is being done towards preparation of a scale as a research instrument in this area.

Research Methodology

The study would be based on secondary literature survey. Broad domains are being identified involving essential considerations of the paper viz. Workplace Spiritual climate for Employee Performance & Wellness; Domain B: Building Constructive Framework for Workplace Spirituality; Domain C: Interlinking Managerial Philosophy & Spirituality at Work Arena; Domain D: Revisiting Spiritual Leadership at Work place. These would be considered as independent variables and the notion of work place spirituality and employee wellness as dependent variable.

Workplace Spiritual Climate: Yardstick of Employee Performance and Wellness

With the advent of the emerging paradigm coined as “the spirituality movement”, revolutionized the organisational terrain wherein organizations have step forward with transformative drives towards spiritual dimensions with meaning, purpose and a sense of community. Over the last decade the exposition of spirituality in the managerial hemisphere is one of the prominent issues of the present day business houses. The connotation of technology based organizations has rightly taken the place by the “spiritually based enterprises” is the growing trend evident in corporations, corporate meeting and the businesses across the globe. The interconnectedness between spirituality and organisational performance can be used as a effective tool to derive positive effects and outcomes of spirituality organizations.

Spirituality at work field with the integration of broad three perspectives results to elevated organisational performance viz. human resource perspective, philosophical perspective and interpersonal perspective. The broad three perspectives namely employee well being, sense of meaning and purpose and sense of community and interrelationship boosts employee performance and increased productivity. With the increasing workholism, uncertainty, stress, downsizing, layoffs, restructuring at work created a feeling of

fear, distanced and distress among employees resulting unhappiness and dissatisfaction with work.

Today's organizations suffer from acute spiritual emptiness and to resort such spiritual impoverishment spiritual rejuvenation programmes in the form of mediation, spiritual practices, wellness programs fitness and sports exercises at work place acts as driving force in coping stress and fostering work efficiency. It has been witnessed that quite a prominent group of employers are encouraging the spiritual agenda at work as a way to enhance employee morale, commitment and productivity. The core of spirituality is embedded in the realization of deeper sense of meaning and purpose for employees. Organizations of the digitalized era have been centered with creating material wealth devoid of deeper meaning and spirit and positivism. Studies reveal that a large number of working force are undergoing psychological isolation and alienation at work with vacuum and confronting lack of meaning in their working lives. It can rightly be acclaimed that notion of longing in people's soul's for deeper meaning, deeper connection, enormous simplicity, a connection to something higher, emphasis on business ethics and work life balance is the roadway towards true essence, purpose and meaning at work.

The harmony of belongingness, interpersonal relationships and social dynamics of spirituality generates a sense on interconnectedness within the organizational members and increases their attachment, loyalty and belonging to the organization. The matter of providing a shield of community and connectedness at workplaces is quite difficult and critical task in the present working climate. Disregarding the materialistic flavor and getting united in a unified vision is truly a challenging issue for 21st century organizations. Feeling a part of the community, shared sense of purpose, shared values are the valuable ingredients of organizational development which paves the way on a deeper meaning, wisdom, compassion and inner satisfaction among its employees fostering spiritual passion "to be of service to other people".

Building Constructive Framework for Workplace Spirituality

In recent times the expectation, hope and aspirations are striking forces inducing increasingly better way of life for the work group is the call for the hour. The proposition of building a framework about human actions that allows for integrating the varied attributes of spirituality at work is a matter of greater importance. Human actions can be outlined broadly in three types of outcomes viz. Extrinsic outcomes: responses from the environment, Intrinsic outcomes: the action's effects on the agent and External outcomes: the action's effects on other people. The varied result implies that people may work for different purpose: extrinsic or economic, intrinsic or psychological and transcendent of ethical. The business houses in turn get motivated by the amalgamated combination of extrinsic, intrinsic and transcendent drives and thus maintaining equilibrium between human qualities and ethicalness at workplace.

The trio component of motives-values-virtues generate development scoreboard in the making of a complete individual. It can be best assured that spirituality acknowledges all of them with their interrelations and complexities. Spirituality is within the human being and its integral component but not of the organizations. Business houses with their organizational hemisphere, structure, modus operandi and culture builds the framework within which the individuals can nurture, develop and grow their human essence in form spirituality. The foundations of love-ethics-rationality can be understood not as a feeling but as a virtue seeking good and goodness and favouring positive ones and disregarding negative results. An action can be judged ethically right when the agent seeks both his or her own good and that of the other person irrespective of mistakes, reactions and adverse situations.

Having a place for Love for the sake of an organization not only creates positive human climate but also entails a unique way of managing and working at work domain. Therefore love can be visualized as a manifestation of the spiritual meaning of work. Ethics is the self development tool for promoting human moral capacities and therefore contributes to virtues' development. Practicing ethics at workplace is

supplemented by the nurturing of spirituality that is being put into practice. However the evaluation of extrinsic motives along with intrinsic outcomes requires a practical vision rather than a consequentialist rationality which is not only beneficial but rather complements it.

The bondage of interpersonal relationships directed towards openness, connectedness, sociability, giving towards others. It creates conditions conducive to “reasoning” work with other and comprehended with the opportunity to acquire and practice virtues. Interpersonal relationships cannot be coined with action-reaction mechanism but it also opens avenues for new options, new possibilities and welcome new reactions. The intricate and delicate corner of human mind in the form of emotions-feelings-affections is the sentimental dimension of human behavior influencing one’s decisions and interactions. True spirituality will foster the feelings of employees at work and gives the direction to look for the best solution to do what seems to be the best at that time by reason and virtue.

Interlinking Management Philosophy and Spirituality at Work Arena

The world of organizations is nowadays characterized by the array of relationships attributing towards loyalty, security, and continuity. Present business era is undergoing through the waves of changes considering people well-being and representation of spirituality in management as the core concern of organisational need. Perspectives of organizational spirituality can be identified through organisational theories drawing lessons with ideological component and industrial betterment. Primarily in the progressive period business philosophy had the image of secular, engineering-based ideas. As a management philosophy is designed with the principle of rationality wherein the goal of attainment of maximal gains both for people and the organizations goes side by side The new technological world was instrumental but now replaced with an aesthetic value harmonizing wealth and welfare in the global hemisphere.

The age old scientific approach of management was not unjustified nor immoral but transformed to the spiritual humane aesthetic science and with the creation of authentic organizations and worker’s social motives has evoked a spiritual dimension of organizing. Management ideologies can be visualized with reference to the congruence of two major influence vis. A pendulum swing between spiritual and secular approaches and a progression from the worker’s view as dependent to independent. Blending these two dimensions the broad four categories of organization can be evolved namely the soulful organization, the ascetic organization, the holistic organization and the professional organization. A soulful organization implies the harmony between organisational vision and employees’ sense of purpose.

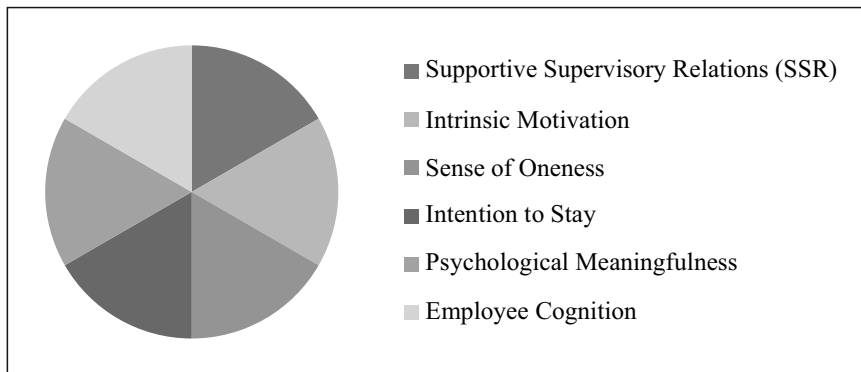
Similarly ascetic organization is characterized by the perspective of management as secular practice coupled with worker viewpoint, rationality and technique. Holistic organisations emphasizes individual in place of organization supplemented with clear, explicit and voluntary investment in development affairs. On the contrary perspective of professional organizations corresponds to the notion that the business of business is business. Linking spiritual component in the managerial approach in not a drive but molding personal motives of the individual with organisational objectives is the key towards developing spiritual organisational ideologies to recourse the self in order to attain happiness, fulfillment success and sustenance it era of digitalized management.

Revisiting Spiritual Leadership at Work

The quest of workplace spirituality in the corporate echelons and how a leader can make meaningful contribution at work in the organisations is the pertinent issues of the present business environment. The buzz around spirituality in the organisational circles takes into consideration the role of a leader in the form

of transformational leadership. A transformation leader possessing the qualities of charisma, change agent, inspirational, motivator, considerate, visionary can bring a change and control in the organisation. Spirituality is expressed through the congruence of integrity, trust, ethical influence, honest, communication and humility. Spiritual leadership goes one step beyond. The flavour of spiritual leadership behaviour can be showcased by ways and means of demonstrating respect, treating others fairly, expressing care and concern, listening responsively, appreciating the contribution of others and engaging in spiritual practices. The positive outcome of spiritual leadership practices at work can be depicted in the given figure projecting meaningful leadership practices at work place.

Outcome of Spiritual Leadership



The impact and the effects of spiritual designed leadership create a strong connection between effort level and moral aspiration of the work force. Present day organisations should build agendas outlining greater need to be considerate towards the employees rather than being hostile. The spiritual outlook of every employee has to be aligned with the organisation. A true spiritual leader of the present day business houses is a spiritually stimulated individual entrusted to harmonize ‘one to oneness’ exhibiting the ability to lead an meaningful, integrated and holistic life.

Findings, Discussion & Implications

From the literature explicated in the paper a clear attempt can be made to identify the items underlying a proposed scale. The scale may be considered to have four broad domains:

Domain A: Managing Workplace Spiritual climate for Employee Performance & Wellness

Domain B: Building Constructive Framework for Workplace Spirituality

Domain C: Interlinking Managerial Philosophy & Spirituality at Work Arena

Domain D: Revisiting Spiritual Leadership at Work place

Each of the above domains can be independently considered to arrive at a handful of items for the scale. The paper thus upholds an attempt to explore the perceptions of employees regarding workplace spirituality. Contemporary organizations are essentially people driven. It is the awareness of self and others at the work platform that constitutes workplace spirituality. An effective initiative for workplace spirituality induces an employee to think, to devote, to work and to achieve and finally evolves him with greater commitment and happiness.

Spirituality is universal and timeless. Spirituality is transcendence of self, manifested into calling and

secondly a belief in one's work has meaning and value beyond self gratification. The essence of spirituality lies on the fact that it has the sole purpose to envisage the sacredness of everything and the deep feeling of interconnectedness of everything. About a decade ago studies on spirituality and workplace spirituality was a rare phenomenon. Amidst the present day turbulent business environment it is quite imperative that the spiritual necessity of every employee has to be aligned with the organisation.

The waves of cut throat competition have oriented the top level management to have unfeeling and insensitive attitude towards their employees. It is the inborn potential imbibed in spirituality that generates a feeling of holistic sensation when people experience total involvement at work. The crops of spirituality at the organisational terrain breeds empathy, supportive and oneness with the co-members, subordinates and the followers. It is very significant for an organisation today to believe on the notion that greater embellishment of spirituality lies in understanding the real purpose of life and to develop and nurture the breed of spiritual siblings at each step and every level.

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