

ROLE OF SPIRITUALITY AT WORKPLACE

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Abstract:

The meaning of work for the modern day employee is undergoing a significant evolution and organisations ought to keep a pace with it. Today's work life has become so pressurized due to many factors that people are losing their core values and moral principles. Targets goals and rewards are being magnified and emotions, thought processes and interpersonal touch is disappearing. Hence the role of spirituality is being emphasized more and more in corporate world. It includes two aspects a vertical connection to the universe and horizontal relationships with other people, family, friends, coworkers and humanity as a whole. Designing good workspaces can bring a lot of positivity, creativity; efficiency etc. spirituality driven activities have not only benefitted employees but also saved companies millions of dollars that are spent on high turnover rates, legal suits etc. Hence this research paper emphasizes on understanding spirituality, perception about spirituality and its role in the performance of an employee in the organization.

INTRODUCTION

Introduction to Spirituality -

Spirituality at workplace is a recently developed new concept. It is not to be merged with ethics, philosophy or with organizational behavior. It is also not synonymous with religion. A person can be different to religion but could be caring towards living beings and similarly the vice-versa. The best e.g. is Lord Buddha who never spoke about God but still spiritual and Mahatma Gandhi who focused on Truth and Ahimsa.

As business the word itself signifies the activity of gaining profit by providing goods and services for required one. Manpower is one of the powerful resource treated as important key area for profitability of the business. Spirituality promotes the expression of talent, brilliance and genius-talent in the sense of our divine gifts. Spirituality in the workplace also leads to increased self fulfillment, contentment and a deep sense of belonging.

The challenges of globalization, customer orientation, competitive services and changing technologies are making business more intricate and leaving employees stressed out. Corporate honchos are trying to find out a solution through spirituality which could lead to a sense of purpose and direction to the employees and it results into satisfied employees who in turn, provide the company with better performance, improved decision making, communication and innovation.

The Oxford dictionary meaning of the word spirituality comprises of 4 things.

- Of or concerning the spirit as opposed to matter
- Concerned with sacred or religious things
- Refined ,sensitive (of the mind etc)
- Concerned with spirit and not external reality

Importance of Spirituality

In a world of ever increasing changes, the idea of spirituality has become a topic that leaders and managers must not only be aware of conceptually but also understand in order to run the organisations smoothly. As a growing competitive advantage for organizations, succeeding in every field is necessity in today's market place. There is a common myth is prevailing that there is a conflict between spirituality and business but in fact there is a lot of convergence between the two. More happiness is derived in giving than receiving, and when one gives to society something, nature replenishes it manifold. Inner fulfilment comes from giving, not taking.

Most organizations find that their ability to identify and develop the spirituality among the employees is bit challenging .Acts of compassion and selflessness ,altruism the experience of inner peace are all characteristics of spirituality. Both the external business environment and the internal business environment are driven by spirituality. A sense of interconnectedness with all living creatures, and an awareness of the purpose and meaning of life and the development of personal, absolute values.

There is a general despair going around our country that our system is failing us .Be it political, governance ,administrative at national level or at state level or organizational level something is lacking because of which the intended output is not coming forth

SPIRITUALITY IN ORGANISATIONS

Hughes Software systems , a consultancy firm ,conducts regular workshops on sudarshan kriya , a form of yoga for its employees. These workshops teach the employees about the importance and procedures of deep breathing , yoga, and role play. The company has trained around 1000 employees until now and has made it mandatory for new recruit to attend this workshop. According to a top management employee of the company ,sudarshan kriya helps an individual to understand others better and harmonize one's body . He also believes that yoga and meditation have helped him and other employees to deal with stressful situations easily.

Wipro Spectramind , a successful BPO firm in dia is conducting “ART OF LIVING” sessions for its employees who are working from various locations in India. The firm believes that such sessions can help in improving the work culture in organization and productivity of employees. The company also helps the employees to relax by encouraging them to attend reiki sessions , a healing therapy ,yoga and physical training in gyms.

WNS Global services a BPO firm, which operates in Mumbai , Nasik, and Pune has started a wellness week program company wide. According to a senior manager of this program is aimed at helping employees achieve work life balance. This program focuses on the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of employees. Some of the activities in this program include yoga, aromatherapy, clay potter

Forms and Practices of spirituality

- 1.Somatic practices, especially deprivation and diminishment. The deprivation purifies the body. Diminishment concerns the repulsement of ego-oriented impulses. Examples are fasting and poverty.
- 2.Psychological practices, for example meditation.
- 3.Social practices. Examples are the practice of obedience and communal ownership reform ego-orientedness into other-orientedness.
- 4.Spiritual. All practices aim at purifying the ego-centeredness, and direct the abilities at the divine reality.

Within spirituality is also found "a common emphases on the value of thoughtfulness, tolerance for breadth and practices and beliefs, and appreciation for the insights of other religious communities, as well as other sources of authority within the social sciences.

PUTTING SPIRITUALITY INTO PRACTICE

- ❖ Learn to forgive
- ❖ Practice gratitude
- ❖ Demonstrate appreciation
- ❖ Give and receive
- ❖ Cultivate compassion
- ❖ Honor the sacredness of all lif

LITERATURE REVIEW

With all of the disasters that have occurred within the past five years, from September 11 to the demise of Satyam and Enron, employees are searching for spiritual resources to get them through these

economical hardships. In this respect Miller (1) aptly says that People are searching for a way to connect their work lives with their spiritual lives, to work together in community, to be unified in a vision and purpose that goes far beyond making money". The problem of the study is to identify employee perceptions of how spirituality impacts the workplace. The type of method used in this study is descriptive research. As Best and Kahn's (2) definition on, descriptive research is interesting. In this context he state that it is concerned with conditions or relationships that exist, opinions that are held, processes that are evident, or trends that are developing. It is primarily concerned with the present, although it often considers past events and influences as they relate to current conditions.

Perception of Spirituality related studies:

This study is primarily concerned with employees' views of how spirituality impacts the workplace. Due to the tremendous growth of interest in workplace spirituality, it is important to obtain accurate definitions and descriptions of spirituality as it relates to the 21st Century. In an effort to gain an in-depth understanding of spirituality, what is needed according to Butts (3) is: sufficient clarity and theoretical understanding of the meaning of spirituality and how it can apply to work especially in terms of personal satisfaction, peak performance, and overall business success that can also enrich communities, cultures, and the Earth itself. Based upon the related literature gathered, there are numerous definitions for the term spirituality. Webster and Palmer's definition of spirituality is given by Garcia-Zamor (4) Webster defines spirituality as "of, relating to, consisting of, or affecting the spirit; of or relating to sacred matters; ecclesiastical rather than lay or temporal; concern with religious values; of, related to or joined in spirit". Whereas Palmer defined spirituality as "the human quest for connectedness". In the words of Turner (5) spirituality means coming from within, beyond the survival instincts of the mind. It means engaging the world from a foundation of meaning values. It pertains to our meaning and dreams, our patterns of thought, our emotions, feelings and behaviours". Mitroff and Denton (6), found commonality among the participants' definitions of spirituality which helped them to come up with key elements of spirituality. Even though the interviews conducted by Mitroff and Denton failed to produce a common definition for spirituality they were able to use several elements from the participants' definitions of spirituality to come up with a list of the key elements of spirituality (7)

1. Not formal, structured or organized.
2. Nondenominational, above and beyond denominations.
3. Broadly inclusive, embracing everyone.
4. Universal and timeless.
5. The ultimate source and provider of meaning and purpose in life.
6. The awe we feel in the presence of the transcendent.
7. The sacredness of everything, the ordinariness of everyday life.

8. The deep feeling of the interconnectedness of everything.
9. Inner peace and calm.
10. An inexhaustible source of faith and will power.
11. The ultimate end in itself.

Like much of the literature has stated, there is no one clear definition or perspective of spirituality and management. Pointed out by Konz & Ryan,(8) the theory explains that the movement towards spirituality given by Tischler (1999) is based on theory on Maslow's theory of hierarchy of needs. Tischler's (1999) theory says, "as the majority of citizens in any society can be freed from the lower levels [food, shelter, security] of concern, they can, as a society, shift their concern to higher order needs [knowledge, self fulfilment] (9). Furthermore, two of the most popular viewpoints of spirituality include the intrinsic origin view, and the existentialist perspective. As Krishnakumar and Neck (10) observed in their study, "The intrinsic-origin view of spirituality is that which argues that spirituality is a concept or a principle that originates from the inside of an individual". On the other hand Guillory's (11) definition falls within this perspective as spirituality is defined as "our inner consciousness" and "that which is spiritual comes from within-beyond our programmed beliefs and values" Like Guillory, Brandt (12) agreed "Spirituality's goal is greater personal awareness of universal values, helping an individual live and work better and more joyfully". Guillory(13) further said that one of the most observed characteristics about this perspective or class of definitions about spirituality is that most of the proponents argue that spirituality is something which is beyond the rules of religion. Graber (14) argued "Spirituality avoids the formal and ceremonial connotations of religion; it is non-denominational, non-hierarchical, and non ecclesiastical. Spirituality implies an inner search for meaning or fulfilment that may be undertaken by anyone regardless of religion" As for the existentialist view, "this view of spirituality is perhaps the most connected to the concepts such as the search for meaning in what we are doing at the workplace" (Kahnweiler & Otte, (15) Some of the existential questions which are pointed out:

- Why am I doing this work?
- What is the meaning of the work I am doing?
- Where does this lead me to?
- Is there a reason for my existence and the organization's?

Dimensions of workplace spirituality

Table 1

Common themes among definitions of workplace spirituality

Author name with year of publication Dimensions of workplace spirituality

Mirvis (1997)	Meaning in work and sense of community
Mitroff and Denton (1999)	Spiritual identity (inner life)
Neal (2000) and Kurth (2003)	Personal relationship to divine (inner life), meaningful work and sense of community
Ashmos and Duchon (2000)	Inner life, meaningful work, and sense of community
Fry (2003)	Notion of calling similar to meaningful work, and membership similar to sense of community
Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003)	Transcendence through work process similar to meaningful work, and sense of community
Milliman et al. (2003)	Meaningful work and sense of community
Marques et al. (2005)	Inner power, meaningful work, sense of community, and a few others
Kinjerski and Skrypnik (2006) Experience	Spiritual connection similar to inner life, meaningful work, sense of community, and mystical
Pawar (2009)	Transcendence similar to inner life, meaningful work, and sense of community
Karakas (2010)	Meaningful work, sense of community, and spiritual self (inner life)

Meaningful work.

A fundamental aspect of spirituality at work involves having a deep sense of meaning and purpose in one's work. This dimension of workplace spirituality represents how employees interact with their day-to-day work at the individual level. The expression of spirituality at work involves the assumptions that each person has his/her own inner motivations and truths and desires to be involved in activities that give greater meaning to his/her life and the lives of others (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000; Hawley, 1993). The quest for purpose in work is not a new idea. However, the spirituality view is that work is not just meant to be interesting or challenging, but that it is about things such as searching for deeper meaning and purpose, living one's dream, expressing one's inner life needs by seeking meaningful work, and contributing to others (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000; Fox, 1994; Neal, 1998). Similarly, Moore (1992) observes that work is a vocation and a calling as a way to create greater meaning and identity in the workplace.

Community.

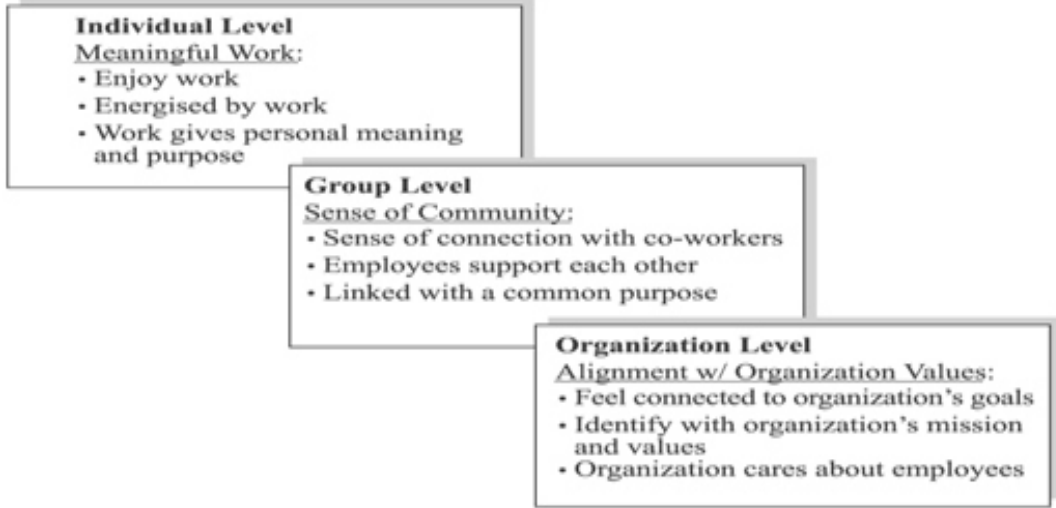
A critical dimension of workplace spirituality involves having a deep connection to, or relationship with, others, which has been articulated as a sense of community (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000). This dimension of workplace spirituality occurs at the group level of human behavior and concerns interactions between employees and their co-workers. Community at work is based on the belief that people see themselves as connected to each other and that there is some type of relationship between one's inner self and the inner self of other people (Maynard, 1992; Miller, 1992). Neal and Bennett (2000) note that this level of spirituality involves the mental, emotional, and spiritual (e.g. "esprit de corps") connections among employees in teams or groups in organizations. The essence of

community is that it involves a deeper sense of connection among people, including support, freedom of expression, and genuine caring. There have been a few firms that appear to have developed strong organizational cultures that emphasize a sense of community among employees. For instance, at Southwest Airlines community includes a feeling among the employees that they are all part of a larger organizational family, that employees take care of each other as well as their customers, and that employees' families are also an important part of the firm (Freiberg and Freiberg, 1996; Milliman et al., 1999).

Alignment with organizational values.

A third aspect of spirituality in the workplace is when individuals experience a strong sense of alignment between their personal values and their organization's mission and purpose. This component of workplace spirituality encompasses the interaction of employees with the larger organizational purpose (Mitroff and Denton, 1999). Alignment with the organization's values is related to the premise that an individual's purpose is larger than one's self and should make a contribution to others or society. Alignment also means that individuals believe that managers and employees in their organization have appropriate values, have a strong conscience, and are concerned about the welfare of its employees and community (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000). Similarly, Hawley (1993) observed that part of living by one's inner truth involves working in an organization with integrity and a purpose that is beneficial to others beyond simply making a profit. Alignment with organizational values involves the concept that employees desire to work in an organization whose goal is to not just be a good corporate citizen, but an organization that seeks to have a high sense of ethics or integrity

And make a larger contribution than the typical company to the welfare of employees, customers, and society. For instance, Malphurs (1996, p. 52) states that a person "should not work for any organization, sacred or secular, if he or she does not share to a great degree the same institutional values" While organizations clearly experience many limitations and remain imperfect institutions, the alignment with organizational values concept suggests that there are some firms that have a higher level of commitment to their workers, customers, and society than others. For example, there is some evidence which suggests that many of the employees at Southwest Airlines feel aligned with the company's cause which includes offering low airfares (allowing people to fly who normally couldn't afford to), frequent and on-time flights, and a personable service characterized by fun and humor (Milliman et al., 1999). Other examples of firms with strong and socially oriented values are described by Collins and Porras (1994) in their book, Built to Last.



DEVELOPING SPIRITUALITY

Not necessarily that every individual should possess the above mentioned qualities by birth .those who need to develop spiritual intelligence can do so by practicing one or more of the following activities. One should know about the strengths and weakness .it develops the personality .this can be understood through deep reflections.

- Give respect and take the respect in a relationship.
- When you are overwhelmed with misfortunes, remind yourself of all your blessings instead.
- If anybody criticizes you saying you cannot do something take it a challenge and prove them wrong
- Keep complementing you as very good , good, superb, etc
- Feel free to forget and forgive and apologise if wrong.
- Do not carry hatred, angered in your heart.
- Be courageous and live the present
- In difficult circumstances think deeply before making decisions
- Always keep acquiring new info ,learning should be from womb to tomb
- Always be helpful to others
- Have belief in your capacities ,this develops self confidence
- Always count blessings and keep a positive approach
- Engage always with supportive and encouraging relationships
- Live true to your conscience and god
- Try to stay healthy and say no to drugs, alcohol with similar problems
- Surround with the things that make you feel good family Photos favourite books, plants ,music
- Remember that excessive negative emotions hatred anger are not healthy

- Identify the causes of stress
- Share your problems feelings with someone you love and trust
- Try to avoid unpleasant situations that trigger negative emotions
- Realise the fact that there are others
- Get involved in the charity work
- Have a role model in your life
- Do meditation which connects the body and mind
- Do exercises daily
- Do yoga and practice regularly which would help in free flow of blood to the entire body.
- Do Pranayama or balancing breathing which facilitates one to concentrate on his or her breathing and relaxes the mind and body.

OBJECTIVES

- To study the concept of spirituality
- To study the general perception about spirituality
- To study spirituality at workplace.
- To analyse the difference between male and female employees handling of stress through spirituality.
- To analyse the improvement through spirituality.

HYPOTHESIS

- H1 : There is no significant difference between male and female employees in using spirituality to handle stress at work.
- H2 : Spirituality in the workplace leads to intuition.
- H 3: Organisations that encourages “spiritual connection at work, experience peace of mind, experience higher profits and success .

METHODOLOGY

Data collection

Both primary and secondary data was collected from different sources for this study purpose. First of all, a questionnaire was drafted and a study was conducted among 50 respondents. Some of the questions were then simplified and the format was finalized. The questions were structured and questionnaires were printed. The secondary data was collected through Books, Magazines, newspapers and periodicals, Various reports on spirituality, Research Journals and Various surveys.

SAMPLING AND ITS SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

To conduct study more authentically sample of the respondents have been selected on random sampling basis .The relevant sample size of the study therefore has been selected to 50 samples only .The age in said sample is 20 and above. More emphasize is given on different factors like age, gender,

marital status etc. The sampling technique will be useful for collecting and analyzing the data. 50 samples were collected out of which 25 were males and 25 were females. A descriptive study was carried out to realize the objectives. The study was based on primary information. The employee at some profession was one of the Preconditions for the selection of the respondents.

TOOLS & TECHNIQUES OF DATA ANALYSIS

The survey was based on random as well as convenience method of sampling. One well structured questionnaire was designed: which comprises of four sections, focusing on profile of respondent, spirituality, perception about spirituality and its role at workplace. Every possible effort was made to take cross-section of population in the sample. Statistical tools like percentage, and tables were used in the study. chi square method and Average method are also used as a statistical tool.

HYPOTHESIS 1:

There is no significant difference between male and female employees in using spirituality to handle stress at work.

The data reveals from the Frequency table that it is almost same number of males and females believe that spirituality do help in reducing stress.

Spirituality Help to overcome Stress

		Sprituality Help overcome Stress		Total
		Yes	No	
Gender	Female	22	3	25
	Male	24	1	25
Total		46	4	50

The Chi-square test of Pearson and likelihood ratio value with significance is presented in Table 2 This Table reveals that :

**Table 3
Spirituality Help to overcome Stress**

Sr.No	Spirituality Help overcome Stress	P.Value	Df	Significance
1.	Pearson Chi-Square	1.041	1	.308
2.	Likelihood Ratio	1.087	1	.297

From Table 3 Regarding spirituality's impact on stress Pearson's value is 1.041 with .308 significance and likelihood ratio is 1.087 with .297 significance. As the Pearson value is 1.041 hence hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis 2:

Spirituality in the workplace leads to intuition

Intutions is the inner conscious voice which speaks about the future on the basis of some facts .They help the person in taking decision during some very critical moments .Some people have strong intuitions and some people not so much .

TABLE : 4
Spirituality in the workplace leads to intuition

Response	Frequenc y	Percent
Yes	50	100.0

Table 4 above says that it is 100 percent (50) people who agrees that spirituality improves intuition which in turn increases creativity that leads to improvement at workplace.

Hypothesis 3:

Organisations that encourages “spiritual connection at work, experience peace of mind, experience higher profits and success .

Organisations not only focus on extraction from employees but also emphasis on spiritual connection at work ,experience peace of mind which in turn leads to higher profits and success.

TABLE 5.
Spiritual connection at work, experience peace of mind, experience higher profits and success

Response	Frequenc y	Percent
1 Yes	48	96
2 No	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 5 shows that 96%(48) respondents agrees on spiritual connection and 4% (2) respondents who disagree on.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The western suburb region is the study area and the samples were collected randomly from here. Profile of the 50 respondents who are working employees is assessed.

According to the survey most of the respondents mean spirituality as religion which is followed by others who says spirituality as inner wholeness.

96% (48) respondents agrees on spiritual connection experience peace of mind, experience higher profits and success and 4% (2) respondents who disagree.

100 percent (50) people who agrees that spirituality improves intuition which in turn increases creativity that leads to improvement at workplace.

Spirituality helps to reduce stress among employees working in the organisation.

CONCLUSION

Spirituality in the workplace may manifest itself in several ways, but at two different levels the personal and the organisational level. Research suggest that the encouragement of spirituality in the workplace can lead to benefits in the areas of creativity, process improvement, customer service, honesty and trust, personal fulfilment and commitment which will in turn lead to increased organisational performance, found that employees who feel spiritually connected at work experience peace of mind, inner strength, serenity, patience, calmness, sanity and positive attitude. Spirituality in the workplace leads to intuition which in turn leads to creativity when employees are allowed to bring the spiritual side of themselves to work. mere capacity is not enough there must be joy of doing something better and beautiful.

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