

Measuring Religiosity and Workplace Spirituality in Pakistan:

a Case Study of Armed Forces and University Teachers

MESURE DE LA RELIGIOSITÉ ET LA SPIRITUALITÉ EN MILIEU DE TRAVAIL AU PAKISTAN:

UNE ÉTUDE DE CAS SUR LES FORCES ARMÉES ET LES ENSEIGNANTS UNIVERSITAIRES

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Abstract: The article reviews workplace spirituality that began as a grass-root movement and has now become a philosophy used to better management in achieving its organizational goals. The concept however is still strange to countries like Pakistan which are swamped with ignorance and business myopia.

The article finds out the extent to which the sectors like Pak. Army and Teaching are experiencing religiosity and workplace spirituality. For this, individuals have been selected from different age groups and positions and case study methodology has been implemented. The study finds out that both sectors experience spirituality and religiosity more or less to a certain extent but at the same time fail to identify any organization where workplace spirituality is being followed in letter and spirit.

Key words: Religion; Workplace Spirituality

Resumé: L'article passe en revue la spiritualité en milieu de travail en tant qu'un mouvement de base et elle est devenue maintenant une philosophie utilisée pour une meilleure gestion dans la réalisation de ses objectifs organisationnels. Le concept est cependant toujours inaccoutumé à des pays comme le Pakistan qui sont submergés par l'ignorance et la myopie des affaires.

L'article découvre l'ampleur dans laquelle les secteurs comme les Armées pakistanaise et l'enseignement connaissent la religiosité et la spiritualité en milieu de travail. Pour cela, des individus ont été choisis parmi des groupes d'âge et de position différents et une méthodologie de l'étude de cas a été mise en œuvre. L'étude conclut que les deux secteurs ont plus ou moins d'expérience de la spiritualité et de la religiosité dans une certaine mesure, mais en même temps, elle ne peut pas identifier aucune organisation où la spiritualité en milieu de travail est suivie littéralement ou spirituellement.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Spirituality can be defined as an ultimate or immaterial reality or an intangible asset; an inner path enabling a person to discover the essence of their being; or the “deepest values and meanings by which people live whereas religion is defined is a comprehensive sociological term used to refer to the numerous aspects of religious activity, dedication, and belief (religious doctrine). Spirituality is defined as the last frontier or the intangible reality (Ewert et al, 1992); an inner path enabling someone to discover the essence of their being, or the deepest values and meanings by which people live (Philip, 2007). Religion on the hand is defined as a set of beliefs explaining the purpose of and giving sense to the universe, through devotional and ritual observances. Religion contains a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs. So we can say that one main difference between the two is that religion is external to the self, while spirituality is defined as a search within oneself. Religion is the set pattern rule and rituals while spirituality is the light that comes with deep understanding of the universe and self.

Here it is important to explain the concept of workplace spirituality. Workplace spirituality is defined as the inborn human quality in spirituality. People bring this as an essential part of themselves to the workplace. Spirituality is a state or experience that can provide individuals with way or meaning, or provide feelings of understanding, support, inner wholeness or connectedness. Connectedness can be to themselves, other people, nature, the universe, a God, or some other supernatural power (Russell, 2010).

Workplace Spirituality as we know enhances the self-esteem of employees. It can also influence job satisfaction since spirit in the workplace encourages each individual to bring their whole self to both work and home; it increases the satisfaction level in both areas (Bower, 2003). It strengthens commitment by being associated with an organization that fosters a tremendous sense of loyalty. The productivity of the company is increased as one feels a greater sense of connection to work and motivated to produce good work. This in turn increases the overall productivity of an organization.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 A Brief History of Workplace Spirituality

The spirit is defined as "that which is traditionally believed to be the vital principle or animating force within living beings." Thus, the spirit speaks about the meaning, or significance of something.

Spirituality involves understanding the significance of employees finding meaning in their work and displays a genuine concern for the "whole" person, not just the employee (Bolman & Deal.2003). Spirituality tries to aid others in finding meaning in their work by addressing fundamental questions such as:

- Who are we as a work team, department, or organization?
- Is our work worthy? What is our greater purpose?
- What are our values and ethical principles?
- What will be our legacy?

The spiritual leader endeavors for a workplace that is truly a community, consisting of people with shared traditions, values, and beliefs (Conger, 1994). It implies that the focus will be less on formal position power, conformity, transformation and less on conformity, controlling. Spirituality does not require that the leader stick to a particular religion or that he or she attempt to persuade subordinates to follow a specific set of religious values. While leaders who highlight spirituality may base their leadership approach in Christianity or another religious tradition, they may also have so-called "non-traditional" religious attitudes or may not stick to any particular religion at all. Spirituality is more concerned with the growth of employees as "whole people"—people who display sympathy to other employees, superiors, subordinates, and customers.

Many employees look to the workplace as a way of finding sense in their lives. In today's world, many look upon their workplace as a community. The U.S. of the mid-twentieth century is characterized by people living near family like parents, children, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins. However, things have changed now as family is not a ready source of support for many individuals. The result is an identity crisis.

Similarly, people are moving away from formal religions and practices as less and less people in the west are going to churches, synagogues. In the 1960s, a general sense of discontent and cynicism about formal religion became common, particularly among younger people.

There was also connectedness of individual with neighborhoods. This has changed as well. Many people reposition several times during their careers and spend relatively short periods of time in any one place. They do not develop roots in the community or contribute to a great degree in community events, and do not form strong relationships with neighbors (Sanders, Hopkins & Geroy, 2004). Anecdotal and survey evidence suggest that people might be living next door and know nothing about neighbors.

Thus people these days are spending more and more time in office with their coworkers than anywhere else. Close friendships, courtships, and marriages are common among coworkers (Scott, 1994). This is why spirituality in the workplace has become a real issue affecting the quality of life in the modern organization.

2.2 Seven Principles of Spirituality in THE WORKPLACE

Seven Principles are related to one another; therefore all are important (Anthony Taylor, 2008). We know that everyone has his or her's own beliefs. We admire each individual's belief and their right to hold their beliefs blessed and private. We defined spirituality as having no religious constituent or choice; it is a way of expressing more humanity. Some of the principles that are observed in spirituality are presented here:

Creativity: - Creativity is the conscious effort to see things differently, to break out of the rut and out-dated beliefs to find new ways of thinking, doing and being (Emoto, 2004). Creativity is God gifted and therefore natural, normal aspect of healthy human beings. Suppression or trying to eliminate creativity leads to violence. When creativity is not properly channeled, its energy force turns to destructive release.

Communication: - This is the medium that allows people to work together. In our society, the learning process is based on how to communicate with teachers and parents (Huang, 1995). We try not to get punished. This sort of behavior results in deception among employees – people try to beat the system, gain extra favors, say the "popular" thing or to keep our views to ourselves rather than "rock the boat "(Huang, 1995).

Respect:- Respect of self and of others; includes: *respect* for the environment; other people's personal privacy, their physical space and belongings; different viewpoints, philosophies, religion, gender, lifestyle, ethnic origin, physical ability, beliefs and personality (Futterman, 2004).Lack of respect and acceptance lead to conflict and hostility.

Vision: - Vision means seeing beyond what is apparent. It is a quality used to describe leaders and entrepreneurs (Buckingham, 2007). Where does vision come from? For some people, it is an inborn trait. Others learn to expand their standpoint, to question the observable, to reach beyond where they are, to follow a dream. They see a vision of what can be, of possibilities beyond the status quo.

Partnership:-Partnership takes into account individual responsibility and trust that people will perform according to their obligations for the good of the team and partners (Ursiny, 2003). Partnership accepts that different people have different viewpoints and beliefs; those differences are used as positive aspects for broadening the team experience. Therefore lack of partnership leads to segregation and unhealthy competition.

Energy:-When people feel creative, can express their opinions, and feel respect from their management and their peers positive energy is released (Shui & Fretwell, 2002).On the other hand, when energy is negative, hostile workplace situations result like, violence, sexual harassment, discrimination, verbal abuse, lack of respect, loss of productivity, etc.

Flexibility: - Flexibility takes into consideration the ability to adapt to change. As our world changes at an ever-rapid pace, we need to find ways to adapt and change ourselves with it (Pinchot & Pellma, 2000).

One way of learning flexibility is seeing trends in the society and prepare for them. Another way is to know our own strengths and weaknesses. It is only when we have known our strengths that we can manipulate them and allow others to help us overcome our weaknesses.

3. EMPIRICAL PROCESS AND RESULTS

A case study method is chosen for this research. A case study has five main components: Research questions, theoretical propositions, units of analysis, the logic linking data to these theoretical propositions, and the criteria for evaluating these propositions. By including these five components, case study is seen as “proper”.

A questionnaire consisting of 23 questions were asked ranging from religiosity and spirituality. We have chosen two sectors: The Pakistan Army and the University Teachers. Both are playing a leading role in the development of the country. From both the sectors we have chosen 5 from the Armed services and 5 individual from the University. The age group and positions vary from both the sectors.

Table 1: Study Demographic

| Gender | | Age Group | | | Education | |
|--------|--------|-----------|---------------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Male | Female | Below 29 | Between 30-40 | Above 40 | Master | Bachelor |
| 09 | 01 | 01 | 03 | 06 | 07 | 03 |

| Experience | | Marital status | | Sector | |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------|--------|------------|
| Above 10 Years | Below 10 Years | Married | Bachelor | Army | University |
| 06 | 04 | 10 | 0 | 05 | 05 |

3.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Following are the main research questions that would aid in the study:

- What values drive people to work?
- What is the level of workplace spirituality and religiosity in the country?
- What are the organizations doing to address workplace spirituality concerns?

3.2 Analysis of questions

Now we will interpret each question that we received from the individuals:

Question 1:- What values drive people to work:

The replies that we have received are as under:

Table 2: Values driving people to work (Army)

| ARMY | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|
| Respondent 01 | Respondent 02 | Respondent 03 | Respondent 04 | Respondent 05 |
| Realizing my full potential | Making money | Being associated with ethical organization | Realizing my full potential | Being associated with ethical organization |
| Being creative | Service to others/community | making money | Service to others/community | Interesting or meaningful work |
| | | Service to others/community | Security | Realizing my full potential |

Table 3: Values driving people to work (University)

| UNIVERSITY | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Respondent 06 | Respondent 07 | Respondent 08 | Respondent 09 | Respondent 10 |
| Realizing my full potential | Interesting or meaningful work | Realizing my full potential | Realizing my full potential | Interesting or meaningful work |
| Interesting or meaningful work | Realizing my full potential | | Being associated with ethical organization | Realizing my full potential |
| Service to others/community | Having good co workers | Service to others/community | Service to others/community | Security |

Table 4: Relationship between value and repetition

| | | | | |
|------------|-----------------------------|--|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Value | Realizing my full potential | Being associated with ethical organization | Interesting or meaningful work | Making money |
| Repetition | 08 | 03 | 04 | 01 |
| Value | Service to others/community | Being creative | Security | Having good co-workers |
| Repetition | 06 | 01 | 02 | 01 |

Here we see that the traits ‘**realizing my full potential**’ and ‘**service to others/ community**’ is repeated more than 5 times. Now we will discuss as to what these means as terms of spirituality.

‘**Realizing my full potential**’ is more related to ‘**energy**’ in the 7 principles of workplace spirituality whereas the ‘**service to others/community**’ is related to ‘**partnership**’. Kindly refer to our literature review point 2.2 for details.

Question 2:- What is the level of workplace spirituality and religiosity in the country?

According to our questionnaire a majority of the respondents attend religions services at least once a month, pray/mediate 1 to 3 times a week believe that spirituality/religiosity is a relevant topic but consider that it should not be always talked about openly in the public. All the respondents believe in God and have felt His presence.

Pakistan is the second largest Muslim nation in the world and the only country established in the name of Islam. Approximately 97 percent of Pakistanis are Muslim. The rebirth of Indian Islam began with Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and the Aligarh movement which insisted on educational and religio-political reforms. They also wanted political autonomy and protection. Thus it adopted the goal of creating a separate state for Muslims. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, visualized the new state to be a moderate Muslim democratic state.

Islamization measures came into being between 1977 and 1988 by Zia-ul-Haq, including hudud punishments, compulsory collection/distribution of zakah, ushr taxes, establishment of shariah courts, partial elimination of interest from the banking system, and revision of school textbooks to reflect an Islamic slant.

Question 3:- What are the organizations doing to address workplace spirituality concerns?

From the table below we can see what programmes are introduced to enhance workplace spirituality/religiosity in the organization.

Table 5: Programmes to enhance spirituality

| Programs to enhance spirituality | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Programme | No.Replies | Programme | No.Replies |
| Twelve-step Programs | 00 | Work/life balance | 04 |
| Wellness programs | 05 | Mediation groups | 01 |
| Counseling or Psychotherapy | 06 | Prayer groups | 06 |
| Employee Assistance Prog. | 06 | Stress management Programs | 01 |
| Flexitime | 01 | Diversity Programs | 00 |

Here we can see from the table that majority of the respondents say that they have counseling/psychotherapy, employee assistance programs and prayer groups.

The words "counselor" "advisor" are related. For example, financial planning and spiritual guidance are both types of counseling. "Psychotherapy" on the other hand is generally a longer term treatment which centers more on gaining insight into persistent physical and emotional problems.

Employee assistance program is also a form of counseling. Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) are employee benefit programs offered by many employers together with a health insurance plan. EAPs are intended to help employees deal with personal problems that might adversely impact their work performance, health, and well-being.

A prayer group is a group of people that meet to pray together. These groups, formed mostly within Christian/Muslims, gather outside of the congregation's regular worship service to pray for perceived needs, sometimes within the congregation, sometimes within their religious group at large.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From this article we have concluded that the concepts of religiosity and spirituality are more or less present in the organization especially the Armed forces and Universities. Studies are now available, for example, majority of Americans think themselves as more spiritual than religious but these studies lack a clear distinction of spirituality and religiosity as most of them assume that being religious and being spiritual is same [Zinnbauer (1997), Roof (2000), Scott (2001), and Marler and Hadaway (2002)].

Spirituality and religiosity levels may be influenced by the historical, cultural and economic factors of their home country, according to this new study. As many as 75 percent of youth living in countries with a history of a "dominant" religion and a developing economy, such as Pakistan, Egypt and Iran, responded that God and religion play a significant role in their daily lives. In contrast, youth in other economically developing countries, where a variety of religions are represented, tend to be less religious and/or spiritual. In many Western European countries, for example, only 10 percent of respondents said that God and religion were important to them.

The United States ranked roughly in the middle of these two groups. Nearly 50 percent of adolescent's ages 13 to 17 who participated in a survey said that religion plays a "very strong" role in their lives," yet researchers found that those beliefs tend to decline with age. As many as 90 percent of American adolescents reported that they believe in God, showing a significant gap between those who would be defined as "religious" and those defined as "spiritual."

4.1 Recommendations

Here are some ways to maintain and even increase spirituality in Pakistan.

(1) Mediating a lot:-People should try to spent some time in quiet (bout 10-15 minutes, especially 5-6 times a day) by focusing on God so that they understand the purpose of life

(2) **Form friends:** - You could try joining a gym or some play. For some people, having positive relationships and interaction with different people can take away that feeling of being alone.

(3) **Educate:** - Its never too late to improve upon the literary skills. The mind is like a sponge. Make sure you continually feed it.

(4) **You are what you eat:-** Being fit and engaging in an appropriate diet helps keep the body toned and provides a clearer and more receptive mind.

(5) **Have fun:** - Being spiritual does not only mean being serious all the time. Ironically, being spiritual allows you the freedom to not take yourself too seriously.

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