

Workplace Spirituality in Private Sector Banks of India: An Exploratory Analysis

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Abstract : This research study has been conducted to understand the process through which an individual is able to understand the meaning of their work and to gain insights dimensions of workplace spirituality in the banking industry. The scarcity in available literature gave a direction to cover the gap in understanding about the topic by gathering responses of two leading private sector bank employees. A Mann Whitney-U Test on the gathered data was applied to judge if there is difference in adopting this practice in both the organizations. The results of the statistical test showed that workplace spirituality is being practiced similarly in both the banks. It has also, been noted that the behavior of employees is highly impacted with the practicing spirituality. The key contribution of this practice is a loyal and satisfied workforce who works with aim of growing while contributing to overall organizational success.

Key Words – Workplace Spirituality, Meaningful Work, Organizational Success, Satisfied Workforce, Banking.

I. INTRODUCTION

Organizations in the era of globalization strive to bring in the most creative management practices that can serve as a factor of competitive advantage for them. It has become critical for the managerial employees to bring out the best from the resources that are available for them. Formulation of welfare activities to keep the employees involved with the work so that there is a feeling of satisfaction has become the main task for every operational unit. The measures that are developed especially for the employees serve as an important contributor in their satisfaction level. A satisfied workforce is the demand of all the organizations. A creative approach that is introduced for the management of employees in the organization is linking the spirits of individuals with the work being performed at the workplace. A belief that of growing along with making contributions in growth of others and society leads to the practice of workplace spirituality.

Practice of workplace spirituality in the management dates back to 1990s. It is a meaningful way of living the professional life for an individual. It is defined as the experiences that individual have from the work that impacts their behavior and performance in the organization. The concern an employee has for other employees working in the company, or the feeling of self motivation to perform a crucial task is the spiritual factors of the individuals. It is necessary at the employees' end to be faithful and committed to the work. An ethical approach in conducting any task would lead to generation of profits for the firm, thus contributing in the success of individuals working within.

There are different dimensions that associate to the practice of workplace spirituality. The dimensions that are mostly used in the business practice are meaningful work, sense of community, alignment of work values and employee engagement. The dimension of meaningful work helps the employees in understanding the impact that their work is making at the workplace. It provides a meaning to the work for individual irrespective of the level at which they are performing their jobs. The factors in sense of community help the employees in being adaptable to the work situations and connect to the work colleagues. It generates a feeling of empathy in people so that people can understand the pains of the other individuals working with them and become concerned and helpful for them. Another dimension leading to workplace spirituality is alignment of work values that means with the practice of spirituality at the workplace, the employees start to align their personal values with that of the organization that helps them in striving for the organizational growth and success instead of focusing only on self. Employees, with the help of this dimension understand that the growth of the organization would reap profits that would ultimately lead to their personal growth and attainment of their personal missions of life. Lastly, the variables under employee engagement also serve as a part of practicing workplace spirituality. It is believed that if the people working for the organization are valued, they will also value the organization. It is a two way relation wherein the management policies should favor the enhancement of employees' skills that would lead to better contribution from employees in attainment of goals developed at the workplace. A conclusive view of practice of spirituality is made that it leads to a positive work environment. There are various benefits that an organization can reap with the help of workplace spirituality. It majorly contributes in the success of the organization by providing employees a quality of work life that leads to effective attainment of organizational goals and tasks.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the research conducted by Paul and Saha (2016) a highlight was made that stress is the most crucial problem among the employees. The modern organizations are making use of creative work practice so that the symptoms of stressed can be dealt. Workplace spirituality is a necessary tool for management so as to deal with the issues that are related to stress among the employees. The dimensions of spirituality are also being employed in the managerial policies to deal with the business problems in a highly competitive environment. The aim with which the researchers conducted this study was to understand the effect that factors of spirituality being adopted at the workplace have on the organizational restructuring. The spiritual dimensions assist the management in dealing with the problems that relate to the employees recruited within thus contributing in an overall growth of the company. The authors have defined workplace spirituality as a subjective orientation that deals with psychological growth and experience of individuals working in the organization.

Thakur and Singh (2016) in the conceptual study about the topic of workplace spirituality illustrates that this practice is still being considered as a private choice of the organization in the developing countries. The aim of the authors was to understand the

context of spirituality in Indian organization and the level to which the practice is being adopted in the organizations around the country. It was noted by the authors that the practice of workplace spirituality keeps the employees engaged with the organizational tasks and the chances of job satisfaction in such organization rises manifold. The rate of absenteeism of employees and employees' turnover rate is reduced by introduction of spiritual practices in management models. Through the research the theoretical gap about the topic is covered. A future implication is suggested through this study that the organizations should opt for the multifarious models that considers the organization and individual variables and can yield effective profits. An organizational policy that combines management practice with workplace spirituality keeping in view the values of organization and its employees gains higher chances of success and can survive any competitions in the market.

In the views of Mukherjee et al. (2016) the most remarkable practice for dealing with organizational issues along with effective management of human resources is to develop policies keeping in view the spiritual dimensions of the work. A paradigm shift in the business economy has given a rise to severe competition wherein the employees in the organization do not only need the material benefits but also strive to gain the inner happiness by understanding what meaning are they providing by working for a company. The corporate citizens have become conscious and are now adopting an ethical route for attainment of pre-defined organizational goals. This choice of ethics and an organizational citizenship behavior among the employees has been induced because of use of spiritual values in the work environment that makes a direct impact in the overall enhancement of productivity of the firm. The authors have also argued that practice of workplace spirituality is individual responsibility and the advancement of organization is possible only if all individuals collectively accept this practice and develop it in the organization.

Beheshtifar and Zare (2013) through their research study have noted that the term workplace spirituality has different meaning for different people. The perspective of various management practitioners and researchers varies while explaining spirituality in relation to a workplace. Through the study the authors want to quote that a spiritual soul always strives to find the meaning from the conduct of work in the corporate. It is an effort to connect to the community which is directly or indirectly being impacted by the contribution of the individual. Spirituality shows a path that can align the personal values with the organizational success so that a complete growth of organization and individual can be made possible. The research study helped in understanding that the practice of workplace spirituality improves the organizational performance. It is also an important factor that contributes in providing quality work life to the employees of the organization. The authors have reported an integration of spirituality and employees performance that enhances the growth of employees by providing them a feeling of connection with the organizational aims and goals.

Bodla and Ali (2012) through their research suggest that the research studies on practice of workplace spirituality are generally conducted in the developed nation. The authors have tried to cover the gap by researching the behavior of banking executives working in Pakistan. It was noted by them that there exists a positive link between spiritual leadership and career enhancement practice of the employees. According to the authors, a spiritual organization can be a major contributor in the wellness of employees and the growth of community as a whole. If the leaders of the organization practice the dimensions related to spirituality, there are high chances that the workforce of the organization will be adaptable to every critical situation. A leader can formulate a supportive feeling in the workforce that helps in the situation of crisis. The core focus of study was on qualitative factors of spirituality and the result showed a high level of relation between spirituality and satisfaction in the workforce.

III. OBJECTIVES

The direction of this research is based on the below given objectives:-

1. To conceptually understand about the dimensions that lead to a practice of spirituality in the workplace.
2. To compare the level to which the employees adopt workplace spirituality through its factors in different private sector banks.

The second objective of the study gives rise to the following hypothesis in the research:-

H₀: There is no significant difference in the level of workplace spirituality of employees of different private sector banks based on various spiritual dimensions.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Population and Sample

The current study has been selected to understand the practice of workplace spirituality in the banking sector. Therefore the universe to the study is all the banks that are running under this industry. Out of the huge number of operative banks in both the public and private sector of banking industry, two leading banks have been chosen for the study based on the employee turnover rate of each of the. The population of study is the employees working in these banks operational in Jaipur. An equal number of responses were gathered in the study for a better comparison and result. The sampling technique of the study is convenience because of the time and mobility as a constraint. There was a random selection of the respondents from the population. The demographic profile as well as the organizational position of the person was not given any preference while collection of data was made.

4.2 Sources of Data Collection

The data that has been used for the conduct of this research study has been taken from a reliable source. The primary source of data for the study is a structured questionnaire that helped in understanding the mindset of banking employees about the dimensions of workplace spirituality. A total of 140 questionnaires equal in number were received and served as a good fit for the research findings to report. The collection of secondary data was made possible by use of referred journals, books that relate to the subject and the thesis that reported critical findings about the same.

4.3 Theoretical framework

The construct of the study has been made with the help of various variables that are both dependent and independent in nature. The independent variable in the study is the choice of organization that has been made. It is a comparison that is being assessed on the knowledge and practice of dimensions of workplace spirituality that is adopted at both the companies. The dependent variable in the study is dimensions of workplace spirituality.

There are various dimensions that collectively formulate the spiritual practice in the organization and makes the work environment conducive.

A pre defined scale that was developed by Ashmos and Duchon (2000) has been taken as a research instrument tool so as to frame the questionnaire and understand both the variables in depth. The dimensions framed out through this scale were meaningful work, sense of community and alignment of work values. All the three dimensions further include various factors that were examined separately.

4.4 Research Instruments

The most important contribution in the conduct of the research was through the questionnaire that was designed on the scale depicted by Ashmos and Duchon (2000). The ranking in the scale started from always that had the highest value and ended at never. The views of the respondents were recorded and analyzed that gave descriptive details about the each of the factor in the dimensions of workplace spirituality. The available literature helped in understanding the conceptual background about the theories that link to the practice and further supported in framing the factors under each dimension. The recording, descriptive analysis and the empirical tests of the study were conducted with the help of SPSS v16 software. The descriptive statistics showed the percentage of response that is preferred by each of the respondent. The empirical tests in the study were also applied with the use of statistical tool. The goodness of fit of the measures was judged on the basis of the reliability analysis that was conducted separately on each of the dimension considered for research. The hypothesis of the study was tested with the help of Mann Whitney-U Test applied on all the variables through SPSS software.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Descriptive Statics about Study Variables

Table 5.1: Descriptive Statics (in %)

Dimension	Statements	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Meaningfulness of Work	S1	49.3	17.1	24.3	7.9	1.4
	S2	60.0	18.6	12.9	4.3	4.3
	S3	45.7	22.1	18.6	8.6	5.0
	S4	54.3	22.9	11.4	7.9	3.6
	S5	46.4	19.3	15.7	12.1	6.4
	S6	52.9	24.3	14.3	4.3	4.3
Sense of Community	S7	50.7	25.0	17.9	5.0	1.4
	S8	58.6	18.6	17.1	2.9	2.9
	S9	49.3	20.0	17.1	7.9	5.7
	S10	55.7	16.4	13.6	9.3	5.0
	S11	50.0	24.3	19.3	5.0	1.4
	S12	42.1	32.1	15.7	5.7	4.3
	S13	55.7	20.7	18.6	2.1	2.9
	S14	49.3	27.9	15.7	5.0	2.1
	S15	47.1	24.3	20.0	6.4	2.1
Aligning Individual and Work Values	S16	67.9	14.3	10.7	5.7	1.4
	S17	38.6	25.7	20.0	5.0	10.7
	S18	55.0	19.3	12.1	7.9	5.7
	S19	44.3	25.0	20.7	2.9	7.1
	S20	55.0	23.6	11.4	4.3	5.7
	S21	52.1	19.3	10.7	10.7	7.1
	S22	51.4	21.4	16.4	4.3	6.4
	S23	40.7	20.0	21.4	7.1	10.7
Engaging Employee	S24	49.3	23.6	15.7	5.7	5.7
	S25	55.7	20.0	15.0	5.7	3.6
	S26	73.6	13.6	7.1	3.6	2.1
	S27	51.4	23.6	12.9	5.7	6.4
	S28	52.1	19.3	15.0	8.6	5.0

The above given table is a descriptive statistic in percentage about the responses on each of the factor under various dimensional head of workplace spirituality. It is clear from the table that maximum responses favor the practice of spirituality at the workplace. It is noted that the respondents mostly engage in the work practices that helps them in finding a purpose in the work. It was the response from a huge number of employees of both the banks that there is a feeling of connect that they get from the team that they are working with. The individuals of a spiritual workplace are also able to align their personal values to that of the organization in most of cases as reported through the data that has been collected in the study.

5.2 Empirical Tests

Reliability Measure

Table 5.2: Reliability Analysis from Cronbach Alpha Value on each dimension

Measure	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha Value
Meaningful Work	6	.901
Sense of Community	9	.905
Alignment of Work Values	8	.923
Engaging Employees	5	.888

The test of reliability helps in understanding about the level to which the data that is gathered can be a good fit for the study. Cronbach Alpha test was applied for measuring reliability of each measure of workplace spirituality separately. It can be noted from the above given table that the responses generated through the questionnaire were highly reliable for generating further results about the study.

Mann Whitney U Test

Table 5.3: Comparisons of workplace spirituality among different organization

Variable	Organization	N	Mean Rank	Sig Value
MW1	ICICI	70	74.94	.163
	HDFC	70	66.06	
MW2	ICICI	70	75.36	.108
	HDFC	70	65.64	
MW3	ICICI	70	78.64	.012
	HDFC	70	62.36	
MW4	ICICI	70	70.37	.967
	HDFC	70	70.63	
MW5	ICICI	70	76.38	.069
	HDFC	70	64.62	
MW6	ICICI	70	74.27	.229
	HDFC	70	66.73	
SOC1	ICICI	70	70.14	.908
	HDFC	70	70.86	
SOC2	ICICI	70	74.76	.162
	HDFC	70	66.24	
SOC3	ICICI	70	78.19	.016
	HDFC	70	62.81	
SOC4	ICICI	70	75.00	.147
	HDFC	70	66.00	
SOC5	ICICI	70	71.80	.681
	HDFC	70	69.20	
SOC6	ICICI	70	70.87	.908
	HDFC	70	70.13	
SOC7	ICICI	70	70.94	.888
	HDFC	70	70.06	
SOC8	ICICI	70	71.21	.823
	HDFC	70	69.79	
SOC9	ICICI	70	66.64	.228

	HDFC	70	74.36	
AWV1	ICICI	70	72.03	.590
	HDFC	70	68.97	
AWV2	ICICI	70	71.21	.829
	HDFC	70	69.79	
AWV3	ICICI	70	72.15	.596
	HDFC	70	68.85	
AWV4	ICICI	70	70.66	.959
	HDFC	70	70.34	
AWV5	ICICI	70	67.77	.379
	HDFC	70	73.23	
AWV6	ICICI	70	68.92	.617
	HDFC	70	72.08	
AWV7	ICICI	70	70.38	.969
	HDFC	70	70.62	
AWV8	ICICI	70	73.00	.445
	HDFC	70	68.00	
EE1	ICICI	70	73.54	.339
	HDFC	70	67.46	
EE2	ICICI	70	73.79	.288
	HDFC	70	67.21	
EE3	ICICI	70	69.04	.581
	HDFC	70	71.96	
EE4	ICICI	70	77.52	.026
	HDFC	70	63.48	
EE5	ICICI	70	78.78	.009
	HDFC	70	62.22	

Mann Whitney-U test was applied on the data in order to compare the level to which the dimensions of workplace spirituality are used in formulation of management policies of the organization. The above given table shows that the mean rank of all the dimensions and the factors within them is similar for both the organization. Furthermore, the p-value (Sig. value) for all the factors apart from two factors of employee engagement and one from meaningful work is also much more than the significant value of 95%. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted for most of the cases that there is no significant difference in the level of workplace spirituality of employees of different private sector banks based on various spiritual dimensions.

V. CONCLUSION

An ever increasing corporate competition and versatility in the nature of individuals is making it difficult for the organizations to retain the best employees. It is crucial for the management practitioners to formulate organizational policies that not only contribute in the success and growth of the organizational goals but also contributes in the well being of the individuals. The employees that gain a meaning out of the tasks that they are performing in the organization tend to remain loyal even in the most stressful situations. The private sector banks in India are known for the nerve-racking work environment that exists within. Thus, practice of workplace spirituality will help the such work culture to bring out strategies that enhance the individual growth so as to make the employee satisfied with the work environment. The practice of workplace spirituality comes as a solution to the problem of sense of disconnection and anxiety that prevails in the companies where the nature of work demands complete attention and focus from the employees. Various dimensions of spirituality link to the organization and individual well being. This practice helps in bridging the gap between the values with which organization is running and the values with which an individual works within. Irrespective of the type of organization, the perception of people regarding the factors of spirituality remain the same. The key aim of the research conducted over two leading private sector banks was to understand the difference in level to which the spiritual dimensions are being adopted in the work practices. It has been noted that the level of workplace spirituality is same in both the organization. It is also noted that these dimensions significantly impact the welfare of the employees. Thus, inducing spirituality among the employees of the organization will have a positive impact over the workforce, the workplace and the community in which the organization is operating.

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