

Impact of Workplace Spirituality on Employee's Work-Life Balance and Emotional Intelligence: An Introspection in Indian IT Companies



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Abstract

With the wake of 21st century balancing one's personal and professional life is not only demanding, but also very essential to lead a happier life. At present, employees are in continuous search for exploring meaning in their personal & professional life due to which they engage themselves in search of job that may provide them a level of self-motivation. These days, the latest focus of employers is to achieve "work-life balance" and "emotional intelligence" at the same time safeguarding the spiritual competences of employees. Authors have undertaken an extensive literature survey on spirituality, employee's work-life balance and emotional intelligence to emphasize that spirituality works as a tool to balance one's personal and professional life and helps in enhancing emotional intelligence at workplace and have cited examples of Indian IT Companies.

Keywords: Spirituality, Work-life balance, Emotional Intelligence

Introduction

An advancing culture and an inconsistent business atmosphere are driving the revitalization of the work environment through an implantation of most profound sense of being. The requirement for a spiritual connection has moved towards vital to a more extensive group of onlookers, somewhat in light of a continuous change in organizational structure which regularly brings about sentiments of instability with respect to one's place in the framework (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). In today's competitive world, employee's performance at workplace is one of the major challenges to most of the organizations. Innumerable literature provides mechanisms that organizations can accommodate to keep their employee motivated. There is no formula to keep employees motivated at workplace as every organization offers a distinctive workplace to their employees. Therefore, organizations must focus on the ways of increasing motivation that meet employee's needs. Managers also need to be sensitive of employee's motivational factors. The current research use in-depth literature research to explore the impact of spirituality on work-life balance and emotional intelligence for the intention to develop a conceptual framework.

Spirituality

The modern world is plagued by economic, social and environmental problems that are the result of human greed and a lack of compassion and love. These problems have triggered a search that is most importantly a spiritual journey. This approach identifies that people work not only with their hands but also with their spirit and hearts. At workplace spirituality provides employees a sense of connectedness and community which increases the level of commitment, belongingness and effectiveness among employees (Garcia- Zamor, 2003). Spirituality is one of the important variable which comes from within and it is beyond survival instinct of the mind. It is pertaining to ones dreams, thoughts, emotions, feelings and behaviors (Turner, 1999). Spirituality at workplace addresses human activities relating to compassion, personal development, meaningfulness and joy at work, trust, commitment, honesty and well-being of employees (Petchsawange & Duchan, 2012).

Extensive literature suggests the remarkable effects of spirituality on people's lives. Spirituality is persuasive in the moral reasoning, ethical

attitudes and behavior management of many managers (King, 2007). Koenig et al. (2000, p. 18) defined spirituality:

“Spirituality is the personal quest for understanding answers to ultimate questions about life, about meaning, and about relationship to the sacred or transcendent, which may (or may not) lead to or arise from the development of religious rituals and the formation of community”.

Furman, Benson, Canda and Grimwood (2005) defined spirituality in terms of an attitude to encompassing a search for purpose fulfilling relations with other people, self, the universe and ultimate reality. Staude (2005) saw spirituality as a transformational process through which different features of life (emotional, physical, intellectual, occupational and rational) are integrated. Spirituality is directly associated with play, love, creativity, forgiveness, trust, faith, wisdom and sense of oneness.

In the context of workplace, spirituality has been defined as inner consciousness (Guillory, 2000). In a study by Mitroff and Denton (1999) it has been found that spirituality at workplace revealed that all participants had high belief in a higher power or God and half of the participants felt that power at work. Executives rarely meditated or prayed in the workplace. Spirituality and spiritual values have been one of the variable that is absent, yet it is one of the most powerful variable which is directly associated with personal, team and organizational effectiveness (Heermann, 1997). Bruce (2000) surveyed members of American Society for Public Administration regarding their views about spirituality at workplace and found that 70% of the population defined themselves as spiritual whereas nearly 60% of the population felt that their career choice was spiritual calling and 56% population believed that it was inappropriate to speak about spirituality at workplace. Karakas (2010) in his study found three different perception on how spirituality benefits employees and support performance at workplace:

1. Spirituality enhances well-being and quality of life of employee.
2. Spirituality provides a sense of purpose and meaning at work.
3. Spirituality provides a sense of community and interconnectedness.

East (2005) concluded that there is a strong significant relationship between spirituality at workplace and level of job satisfaction of employee's. At present organization seeks greater level of productivity, commitment and efficiency from their employees and at the same time they are expected to take care of themselves as a whole person (Bell&Taylor, 2001). It is quoted that when an organization grow an environment of concern, meaningfulness and recognition, the employee will feel more committed. Therefore the integration of HR initiatives aim to engage employee in an area which fosters meaningful workplace and that's when employees will be able to realize the issues related to

work-life balance. Researchers in this area have found that employees who are given an opportunity to work in a meaningful job tends to use a greater sense of ownership and control of their working life (Morris, 2008).

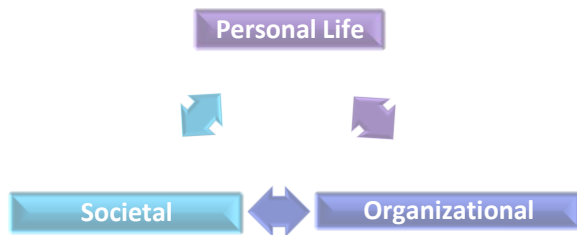
Emotional Intelligence

Daniel Goleman attributed the concept of emotional intelligence to general public and the academia in 1995 through his book *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. Emotional intelligence as defined by Goleman (2006) is the ability to understand, identify, use and manage one's as well as other's emotional states effectively. This involves a process that leads to the use of those feelings to plan, motivate and achieve. Emotional intelligence can be used as a phrase that refers to the ability to manage, recognize and influence one's and as well as other's emotions (Keating & Harper et al., 2013). Consequently, emotional intelligence can be defined as an interconnection between thinking and feelings; Chopra & Kanji (2010) put emotional intelligence in a very simple terms as an individual's self-perceived ability of their emotional abilities.

There are four important clusters of emotional behaviors as outlined by Goleman and Boyatzis (2008); self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management. Nonetheless, Emmerling & Boyatzis (2012) quoted that emotional intelligence is best accepted as a competency. According to the trait-based model (Petridges & Pita et al., 2007) emotional intelligence can be defined as an individual's perception of their own emotional capabilities, and encircle behavioral complexion and self-perceived emotional skills. Employee intelligence helps employees to manage stress, it is important for enhanced teamwork and cooperation as it helps an individuals to learn in relationships. Ability to work together is completely affected by one's emotions and this requires an ability to connect and integrate in relationships at workplace. One may get the job because of skills and experiences but its only emotional intelligence which will determine how well one will succeed in an organization.

Work-Life Balance

Increased competition and technology advancements has resulted in organizations to be more agile, competitive and customer focused. As a result, organizations require employees having higher level of competencies and multitasking skills in order to achieve growth at minimal costs. Employees working encounter challenge of work pressure of performing well. However, commitment towards self and family in order to perform duties along with organizational obligations are important for an individual. The act of balancing well in three area of life namely, personal, organizational and societal is depicted in the diagram below and is termed as work life balance.



Work life balance is ability to manage resources to meet family and work demands so that individuals can show effective participation in both domains of life Voydanoff P (2005)

Outcomes of Work life Balance

Work related outcomes	Non work related Outcomes
1. Job / Work satisfaction	1. Marital satisfaction
2. Career satisfaction	2. Family satisfaction
3. Organizational commitment	3. Life satisfaction
4. Employee turnover	4. Leisure satisfaction
5. Absenteeism	5. Burnout
6. Retention of employees	6. Health outcomes
7. Job performance	7. Family performance

Source: Shobitha Poulse, S., & N, S. (2014). Work Life Balance: A Conceptual Review. International Journal of Advances in Management and Economics, 3(2), 1-17.

Review of Literature

This section highlights research literature related to the impact of workplace spirituality on employees work life balance and emotional intelligence.

Pradhan, R. K., Pradhan, S., & Jena, L. K. (2016). The study of workplace spirituality and job outcomes in Indian information technology industry.

Objective

Examines the effect of workplace spirituality on job outcomes, i.e., affective organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

Methodology

Structural equation modelling is used to analyse the data and test the hypotheses of the study

Findings

There was a positive influence of workplace spirituality on employee's affective organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

Jena, L. K., & Pradhan, R. K. (2014). Workplace Spirituality and Work-life Balance: An Empirical Introspection in Indian Manufacturing Industries.

Objective

To investigate the empirical relationship between work place spirituality and work-life balance amongst employees and executives of manufacturing Public Sector.

Methodology

All the statistical analyses were conducted via IBM SPSS Statistics 20.

Findings

There was moderately significant relationship between spiritual competences with work life balance irrespective of demographic profile.

Agrawal, N., & Khan, M. S. (n.d.). Roles of Emotional Intelligence and Spirituality on Employee's Well-Being.

Objective

to investigate the role of emotional intelligence and spirituality on employee's well-being.

Methodology

To measure EI, Spirituality and well-being. The emotional intelligence Scale, spirituality scale, and well-being scale were administered on employees of an industry.

Findings

The individuals with high level of emotional intelligence formed to be high on spiritual practices and showed better well-being as compared to individuals with low level of emotional intelligence.

Ajala, E. M. (2013). The Impact of Workplace Spirituality and Employees' Wellbeing at the Industrial Sector: The Nigerian Experience. The African Symposium.

Objective

Examined the impact of workplace spirituality on employees' wellbeing at the industrial sectors.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design of the ex-post-facto type was used for this study.

Findings

Study showed that each of the three dimensions of spirituality at workplace (purposeful work, meaningful work, and sense of interconnectedness) has positive significant impact on the wellbeing of employees'.

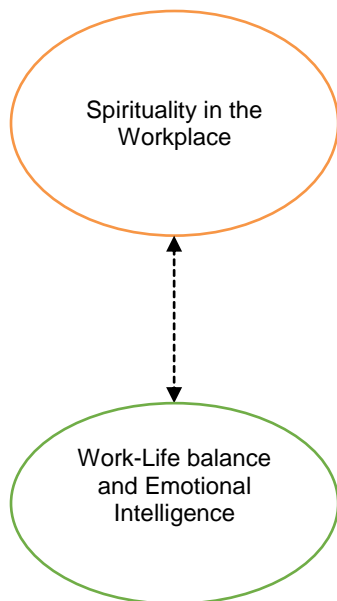
Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the impact of workplace spirituality on employees work-life balance
2. To assess the impact of workplace spirituality on employees level of emotional intelligence.

Conceptual Framework

Based on the previous researches, this paper develops a conceptual framework of how spirituality impact work life balance and emotional intelligence of employees at work place. This framework emphasized on variables like spirituality, work-life balance and emotional intelligence. The diagram framework is given below:

Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Framework of this Study



Benefits of Spirituality at Workplace

Benefits	Author
A Deeper Feeling Of The Meaning And Purpose At Work, Sense Of Community, Increased Loyalty And Well-Being	Karakas, 2010
Increased Productivity And Creativity	Awan, 2011
Increased Sense Of Belongingness To The Organization	Karakas, 2010
Greater Level Of Commitment To The Organization	Awan, 2011
Reduction In Stress	Altaf, 2011
Increased Happiness	Plowman, 2005
Greater Level Of Job Satisfaction	Cunha, 2007
Lower Staff Turnover	Cunha, 2007
Improved Personal Relations At Work, Increase In Ethical Behaviour, Improved Performance, Improved Decision-Making, More Innovation And Increase In Personal Fulfilment	Altaf; Awan, 2011
Greater Level Of Emotional Intelligence	Nancy, 2014
Greater Motivation And More Adaptability	Jurkiewicz, Giacalone, 2004
Reduced Absenteeism	Duschon; Plowman, 2005

Source: Prepared by Author

Findings of the study

HCL

At HCL the Employee First Councils are unique platforms offered to employees to collaborate and work toward common visions in chosen fields of interest. They have formulated Wellness Council for their employees which Focuses on the overall wellness of HCL employees including their physical, emotional, social, occupation and spiritual growth.

Google India

Google has always had a global vision, and wants to change the world from the inside out for this they have taken major initiatives to imbibe spiritual practices at workplace for their employee as Google wants to help their employees to grow as a great human beings on all levels i.e. emotional, mental, physical and beyond the self.

Nike India

As motto says it all "just do it" which directly applies to meditation as well. The company has incorporated meditation practice for their employees at workplace. Employees have access to relaxation room which they can use anytime of the day. Employees can take part in yoga classes as well as in meditation without leaving the office.

IBM

IBM introduced its mindfulness spirituality program in training and have found management teams became healthier, fitter, experience less stress and interacted better with workers. With such training programs employees are better at balancing work-life.

Tata Consultancy Services

TCS offers a wealth of resources to help employees to stay healthy both mentally and physically, with gyms, free yoga classes, and meditation classes offered in the workplace.

Discussion

The present study investigate the impact of spirituality on employee's work-life balance and emotional intelligence at workplace. Work life balance and emotional intelligence are the crucial factor which plays an important role in increasing job satisfaction, management employees relations. Researchers have stated that spirituality at workplace is one of the factor which enhances work-life balance and emotional intelligence among employees. After review of extensive literature it has been analyzed that workplace spirituality is associated with work-life balance and helps to increase the level of emotional intelligence among employees. Rego and Pina e Cunha (2008) in their study found that when an individual's spiritual needs are fulfilled along with other needs the person will derive greater work-life balance. In today's highly competitive work environment like in IT firms where employees sense of job satisfaction is not only limited to fulfilment of factors like good incentives, higher salary, quicker career growth, it is important on the part of the organization to ensure that employees spiritual needs are also looked after (Duchon and Plowman, 2005).

Suggestions

The present study has theoretical contribution to make as it investigated the impact of workplace spirituality on employees work life balance and emotional intelligence which may foster organizational growth and prosperity. After extensive research it has been found that workplace spirituality has positive influence among employees. This study has practical implications as:

1. HRD department will gain greatly by connecting spirituality with work and help them in functions like training, recruitment, performance evaluation and career development.
2. Encouraging employees to be part of prayer/ yoga sessions will strengthen their mental alertness, help in reducing their level of stress and build up community spirit.
3. HRM will play a vital role in creating spiritual workplace by motivating employees to follow their spiritual views and align them with those of organizational values.
4. Poor alignment of organizational goals and individual role can deteriorate the effectiveness therefore, organizations need to set clear policies towards spiritual freedom which will help employees to develop their true capabilities.

Scope for Future Research

In present scenario, workplace spirituality holds a prominent place in the area of organizational behavior. The present study contributes to the existing review of workplace spirituality on employees work life balance and emotional intelligence by adding findings in Indian IT companies which may potentially help to understand these constructs.

This study has not differentiated between organizational spirituality and individual spirituality, this would further help to offer insight into are of spirituality at workplace. Furthermore, researches can be carried out where the relationship between spirituality and leadership styles, demographic variables are taken into consideration.

Conclusion

Taking everything into account, the result of the present study affirms that workplace spirituality has positive influence on employees work life balance and emotional intelligence. In spite of the fact that study is promising, further research is required to establish the positive effects of workplace spirituality on work life balance and emotional intelligence among employees. The field of workplace spirituality helps organization as well as their employees to hold a true reason to be in business.

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