

Workplace Spirituality, the Beacon of Workplace Happiness – A Study on College Teachers of Alipurduar District of West Bengal

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Workplace Spirituality, the Beacon of Workplace Happiness – A Study on College Teachers of Alipurduar District of West Bengal

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Abstract

In human life happiness is indispensable. Unhappy state of mind is the dominant spring of all negative vibes. Negative mind incarcerates us in the world of unhappiness. In modern day life, to get success, we need to be active always and to be active, it is utmost urgent to nourish the mind with the vibes of happiness. Happiness contingents upon numerous factors. If those factors are favorable, mind becomes happy and vice versa. Unfortunately, unfavorable factors incarcerate us in the misery of unhappiness. So the challenge is to be happy while factors are unfavorable. In human life, work life in today's workplace is the origin of negative vibes at work life in terms of anger, annoyance, scare, depression, burnout and so forth. As long as an individual is at workplace, it is impossible to get rid of negative vibes. The need of the hour is to be happy while the surrounding vibes is negative. Spirituality at workplace is as an apparatus which is capable of bringing enormous happiness among employees irrespective of any negative circumstances. Workplace spirituality is a multidimensional variable. In the current study, three dimensions of workplace spirituality viz mindfulness, meaningful work and sense of community have been taken into consideration to analyze the happiness among employees using primary data collected from the college teachers of Alipurduar District, West Bengal. The study finds that there is a positive impact on the happiness by the various dimensions of workplace spirituality among college teachers.

Key words: Workplace Happiness, Workplace Spirituality, Positive Vibes.

Introduction

The canopy of unhappiness has been lay out to the human nation. Unfortunately the so called brick or click busy people of modern day civilization are confined into the universal law of 24 hours limit of a day. These busy people are incarcerated in the world of unhappiness. The unhappy world has been embellished with scariness, annoyance, despair, anxiety, burnout and so forth. The very fluently uttered terminology at modern workplace is anxiety, depression and burnout which lead them to enter into the world of unhappiness. Unhappy mind cannot contribute its full effort to work, thus they become non productive and cost effective to the organization. Henceforth, exit policy is the last antidote. It is not exit, but exist which is indispensable in human life due to the inseparability of work and life. Consequently there is an emergence of a school of thought concerning with how to keep

employees happy. Yoga, meditation along with laughing activity has been introduced in work culture. A good many of educational institutions has already introduced a new subject i.e. positive psychology in the course curriculum. Psychologists are in search of numerous ways to keep human mind happy. Dignitaries from the school of thought of spirituality have conviction that its spirituality which can bring happiness among employees. They further added that daily practice of spirituality bounces back happiness among unhappy people. Recently, researchers in this field of positive psychology imitated the concept of spirituality at workplace to keep employees happy while they are under great work stress. The concept is smiling face with burning heart and transforming burning heart into grin heart with twinkling face. Teacher's duties are confined into the service book but their responsibilities are beyond the service book. To list down their responsibilities, it is easy to list down what is not than what it is. The nation builder job of teachers elaborated dimensions of their responsibility. In turn, teachers are under huge mental pressure. This is a concern for their unhappiness. In this paper, spirituality at work place has been taken into consideration to bounce back happiness among college teachers.

Objectives of the study:

The objectives of the study is portrayed below:

1. To discuss the concept and its applicability of workplace spirituality particularly at the college level.
2. To analyze the impact of workplace spirituality on the happiness among college teachers.

Literature Review:

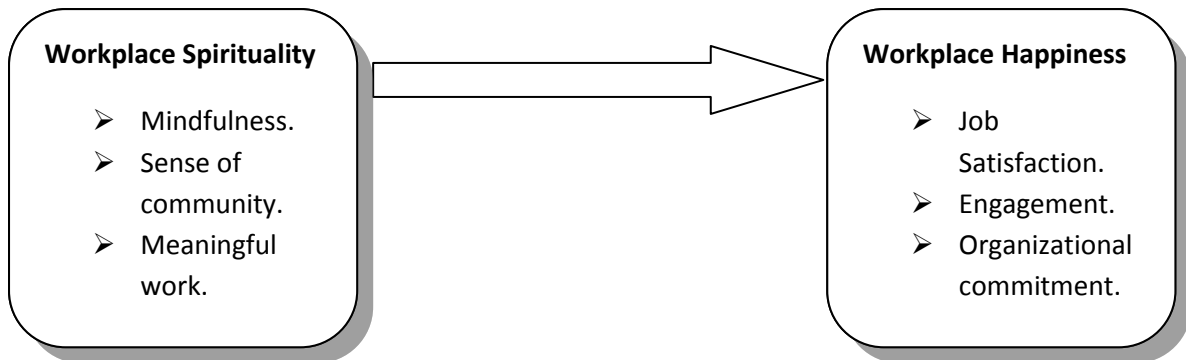
The empirical evidence suggests that work place spirituality is beneficial for both employees and organization (Collins and Porras 1994, Heskett et al., 1997, Grant, 1998: 95, Komala and Ganesh 2007: Pawar 2009, and Javanmard 2012). Spiritual practices at work place can favor employees by feeling complete and authentic at work (Burack, 1999). There is direct relationship between meaningful work, spirituality and job satisfaction (Mitroff, Mitroff, & Denton, 1999; Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). Spirituality at workplace is very important for bringing employee commitment (Kriger & Hanson, 1999). Workplace spirituality positively affects personal well-being and job performance (Milliman et al., 1999). Spirituality at workplace creates a trust environment thus creates employee commitment (Burack, 1999). Workplace spirituality is a widely discussion topic since last few decades (Tischler, 1999; Krishnakumar and Neck, 2002; Lips-Wiersma and Mills, 2002; Lund Dean et al., 2003; Lips-Wiersma, 2003; Fry, 2003; Hicks, 2003; Casey, 2004; Bell and Taylor, 2004; Duchon and Ashmos, 2005; Driver, 2005). A study has been conducted on students reveals that personal spirituality brings subjective wellbeing and hence forth it moderates the relationship between stressors and subjective well-being (Handal, Fabricatore & Fenzel, 2000). Workplace spirituality has come on the nib of both scholars and practitioners (Krishnakumar and Neck, 2002; Hicks, 2003; Kinjerski and Skrypnek, 2004). According to Krishnakumar and Neck (2002), entertaining spirituality at workplace for employee well-being is for the goodness of communities as well as organizations. The chapter of workplace spirituality was unveiled in the late 1980s and is geographically identified in the U.S. (Hicks, 2003). Workplace spirituality is positively related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Milliman, Czaplewski, and Ferguson, 2003). Workplace spirituality is a construct which is very complex as well as multi-faceted (Milliman et al., 2003, p. 428). Together spirituality and meaningfulness creates a sense of control, advancement in purpose,

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affiliation (Corey and Haidt, 2003; Gavin and Mason, 2004; Cartwright and Holmes, 2006; Larsen and McKibban, 2008; Aghili and Kumar, 2008). According to them all these elements are central to happiness. An empirical study by Fairbrother and Warn (2003) on navy trainees concluded that workplace spirituality has direct impact on job satisfaction. Workplace spirituality programs positively impact joy of employees , job satisfaction and employee commitment (Paloutzian, Emmons & Keortge, 2003, Fry, 2005, Reave, 2005). Different researches done on nurses to find out the effect of spirituality revealed that while spirituality is being added to work environment, it makes the nurses more satisfied with their job (Reineck & Furino, 2005). Workplace spirituality has positive influence on employee wellbeing (e.g., Sheep, 2006). Mindfulness as one of the dimensions of workplace spirituality positively affects organizational learning (Levinthal & Rerup, 2006); reduces employee turnover (Dane, 2011; Dane & Brummel, 2013; Reb et al., 2014). Work place where the spirituality has been adopted , employees of such workplace are more satisfied, consistent, more committed, productive with low rate of absenteeism in comparison with workplace where spirituality has not been adopted (Komla & Ganesh, 2007; Rego & Cunah, 2007 and Pawar, 2009; Chawla & Guda, 2010). Rate of employee absenteeism is low where spirituality has been adopted at workplace (Komala and Ganesh 2007; Pawar 2009; Chawla and Guda 2010). Sense of meaningful at work among employees creates greater well-being (McKee et al., 2007; Steger *et al.*, 2012). Individuals in meaningfulness and purposefulness state of mind experience a sense of happiness (Bakker and Schaufeli, 2008; Van den Heuvel *et al.*, 2009). Spirituality is a connection among beings and it can make an extraordinary workplace (Krishnan, 2008, p. 12). Meaningful work creates functioning of employees better which in turn enhances employee engagement and commitment (Steger & Dik, 2009; Steger *et al.*, 2012). The meaning of workplace happiness is employee's work and life satisfaction or the workplace subjective wellbeing (Carleton, 2009; Bhattacharjee & Bhattacharjee, 2010). Happiness at the workplace is crucial for both individuals and organizations (Fisher, 2010; Simmons, 2014). Mindfulness as one of the dimensions of workplace spirituality increases job satisfaction (Hulsheger et al., 2013). According to a study by Gupta et al. (2013) reveals that workplace spirituality positively affects employee job satisfaction. Spirituality is associated with elevated level of subjective wellbeing which may vary depending upon the national culture (Lun and Bond, 2013). A study among college students explores that spiritual practices on daily basis creates significant subjective happiness (Gonzalez et al., 2015). Mindfulness as one of the dimensions of workplace spirituality enhances employee well-being (Zivnuska et al., 2015). Workplace spirituality is beneficial for employees in a way by enhancing cheerfulness, job fulfillment, devotion, and commitment (Khan, Sabri, & Nasir, 2016). Pawar (2016) traced that spirituality has positive relationship with the emotional, social, psychological, and spiritual well-being of individuals. Workplace spirituality is not akin to religion or transforming a person into a specific belief system, it is rooted on individual philosophy and value (Dayal Sandhu, 2017).

Research model:

Independent Variable Dependent Variable



Research Hypothesis:

H1 a: Mindfulness leads to job satisfaction.

H1 b: Mindfulness leads to engagement.

H1 c: Mindfulness leads to organizational commitment.

H2 a: Sense of community leads to job satisfaction.

H2 b: Sense of community leads to engagement.

H2 c: Sense of community leads to organizational commitment.

H3 a: Meaningful work leads to job satisfaction.

H3 b: Meaningful work leads to engagement.

H3 c: Meaningful work leads to organizational commitment.

Research Methodology:

Study Area: The entire study area has been conducted on the government and government affiliated college teachers of Alipurduar District of West Bengal.

Sampling and sample techniques:

190 teachers are working in various colleges in Alipurduar district. Data so collected through circulating structured questionnaire from 150 teachers using convenient sampling technique have been considered to analyze the workplace happiness.

Statistical tools used:

SPSS 20.0, Pearson moment correlation and simple linear regression.

Data Analysis:

About Workplace Spirituality:

Spirituality at workplace is to find meaning and purpose in our lives. Spirituality is a higher power which connect self and something higher than the self. In such circumstances, fear is replaced by faith and negativity is replaced by positivity. At organizational level, the existence of spirituality bring miracle by generating senses belongingness, compassion, mindfulness, meaningful work and alignment between self and organizational value. While such miracle took place, a sense of

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completeness, abundance and joy evokes consequently success at individual as well as organizational level is inevitable.

Relationship between workplace spirituality and workplace happiness:

Meaningfulness has strong and consistent relations to job satisfaction (Fried & Ferris, 1987; Humphrey et al., 2007). Krishnakumar and Neck's (2002) also emphasized on significant relationship between different dimensions of workplace spirituality(including mindfulness) and organizational commitment . Mindfulness is a major dimension of spirituality at workplace.Schaufeli et al., 2006 ; Hulsheger et al., 2013 stated that mindfulness and work engagement could have positive relationship.Rego and Pina e Cunha, 2008, observed that there is positive and significant relationship between five dimensions of workplace spirituality (including mindfulness) and organizational commitment.Rich et al., 2010; Kiken and Shook, 2011; Malinowski & Lim, 2015 also have similar kind of opinion.Bowling et al., 2010 is of the opinion that people who have meaningful work which transform effectively into job satisfaction may have better mental health. All the dimensions of organizational spirituality can create a sense of happiness among the people of an organization (Motahari, Aalee, and Ahmadi Seyed Abedi (2013).There is a positive relationship between spirituality at work and job happiness (Golparvar et,al.,2013).According to them, mindfulness and willing to engage in work are positively correlated. Leroy et al. (2013) found that mindfulness is positively related to work engagement. The findings by Leroy et al. (2013) sensed that mindfulness leads to job engagement.Zivnuska and colleagues (2015) agreed that mindfulness and engagement are related conceptually.Nour Mohammad Yaghoubi , Zahra Motahhari (2016) found positive relationship among happiness and organizational spirituality.Hatice Necla Keles, Mine Afacan Findikli (2016) found a positive relationship among meaningful work and job satisfaction. Spirituality is one of the factors of happiness (Zahra Hasannejad, Amir Hossein Hasannejad, Esmaeil Ghodsi , 2017). The Job Characteristics Model (JCM; Hackman & Oldham, 1976) includes meaningful work and job satisfaction variables.

The theory identifies the conditions necessary for people to become intrinsically motivated and satisfied with their work. According to JCM, workers experience job satisfaction in part because they view it as meaningful (Chelsea Dexter, Blake A. Allan, Rebecca Kinsey & Shelby Parker,2016).Workplace spirituality is a tool to enhance employee wellbeing (Neval Garg, 2017). Mei Zheng et. al.,2018 discovered the relationship between mindfulness and job engagement. Teresa J. Rothausen and Kevin E. Henderson (2018) also have the opinion that there is a positive and significant relationship between meaningful work and job satisfaction.Shengmin Liu, Huanhuan Xin, Li Shen, Jianjia He and Jingfang Liu, 2020 found that there is positive influence of individual and team mindfulness on work engagement.

The outcome of Work place spirituality is workplace happiness. The spiritual practices at workplace creates a sense of belongingness, compassion, mindfulness, meaningful work and alignment between self and organizational value which in turn creates enormous happiness at workplace.

To find out the relationship between workplace spirituality and happiness at workplace, a produce moment correlation and a simple linear regression analysis were carried out in SPSS20.0.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients for study variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Mindfulness	2.39	0.56					
2. Sense of community	2.04	0.66	.320**				
3. Meaningful work	1.93	0.73	.155*	.383**			
4. Job engagement	2.03	0.61	.265**	.251**	.227**		
5. Job involvement	2.13	0.65	.264**	.259**	.564**	.442**	
6. Job satisfaction	2.20	0.63	.377**	.325**	.363**	.312**	.533**

** p< 0.01 (2-tailed); * p<0.05; N= 150.

Source : Analyzed by researcher by SPSS 20

A Pearson product-moment correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between different dimensions of workplace spirituality (mindfulness, sense of community, meaningful work) and different dimensions of workplace happiness (job engagement, job involvement and Job satisfaction). From the correlation matrix, it is apparent that in correlation between mindfulness and job engagement the r value is .265 and the p value is .000 which is less than 0.01. This indicates that mindfulness is positively related with job engagement. In correlation among sense of community and job engagement, $r = .251$ and p value is .000 which is less than 0.01 which also indicates a positive correlation among sense of community and job engagement. Meaningful work is positively correlated with job engagement { $r = .227$, $p = 0.01 (< 0.01)$ }. The correlation among mindfulness and job involvement, sense of community and job involvement, meaningful work and job involvement the correlation values are { $r = .264$, $p = .000 (< 0.01)$ }, { $r = .259$, $p = .000 (< 0.01)$ } and { $r = .564$, $p = .000 (< 0.01)$ } respectively which indicates significant positive correlation. Job satisfaction is positively correlated with mindfulness { $r = .377$, $p = .000 (< 0.01)$ }, sense of community { $r = .352$, $p = .000 (< 0.01)$ } and meaningful work { $r = .363$, $p = .000 (< 0.01)$ }. So from the above Pearson product-moment correlation matrix, it is clear that all the dimensions of workplace spirituality are positively correlated with all the dimensions of workplace happiness.

Further to clarify the impact of workplace spirituality on happiness at workplace, a simple linear regression has been carried out (in variable level). The outcome of the simple linear regression is portrayed below:

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Table 2: Regression coefficients of Workplace Spirituality on Workplace Happiness

Variable	B	β	SE
Constant	1.503**	.22	.156
workplace spirituality	.234**		.073
R2	.34		

Note: N= 150.

** p< .001.

Source : Analyzed by researcher by SPSS 20

Table 2 shows the impact of workplace spirituality on workplace happiness of college teachers of Alipurduar District of West Bengal. The R2 value of .34 revealed that workplace spirituality explained 34% variance in the workplace happiness with $F(1,149) = 10.36, P < .001$. The findings revealed that workplace spirituality positively predicted workplace happiness ($\beta = .22, P < .001$).

From the above mentioned analysis, it is apparent that all the hypothesis mentioned in this paper revealed true which further indicates that workplace spirituality consisting its dimensions (Mindfulness, sense of community and meaningful work) positively and significantly affects the workplace happiness dimensions (job satisfaction, engagement and organizational commitment) of college teachers of Alipurduar District of west Bengal. And mindfulness, sense of community and meaningful work are the effective ways to be spiritually at elevated state to bring workplace happiness.

Conclusion:

Happiness is the innate quality of human being. Workplace happiness is indispensable for working professionals to bring miracle both in their personal as well as work life. Today’s workplace confronted with the sever issue of employee unhappiness. To come across such short coming of modern workplace, the initiative taken in this paper has proved positive impact on college teachers of Alipurduar District of West Bengal. Though the study has been conducted on only one district of West Bengal but it is apparent from the study that workplace spirituality has its ability to bring workplace happiness among employees.

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