

Enhancing Employee Engagement: The Role Of Organizational Citizenship And Workplace Spirituality In Sustainable Workplaces

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Abstract:

In today's competitive business environment, organizations must continuously adapt to ensure long-term success. Research highlights the critical role of human performance in sustaining organizational growth, making employee engagement a strategic priority. As a result, human resource (HR) strategies increasingly emphasize the development of employees' personal and emotional skills to enhance workplace performance. A positive organizational culture fosters alignment with company goals and encourages employees to contribute their best efforts. Among the key drivers of engagement are organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and workplace spirituality. OCB promotes responsibility, teamwork, and mutual support, while workplace spirituality enables individuals to find deeper meaning and purpose in their roles. Together, these elements help cultivate a motivated and high-performing workforce, thereby boosting overall organizational effectiveness. This conceptual review examines the significance of OCB and workplace spirituality, integrating theoretical perspectives with practical implications, and proposes a model that illustrates how these factors contribute to employee engagement and the sustainable growth of organizations.

Keywords: Workplace Spirituality, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Job Satisfaction, Employee Engagement.

Date of Submission: 08-05-2025

Date of Acceptance: 18-05-2025

I. Introductions:

Human resources hold a central role in organizations, coordinating various production factors essential for running a business effectively. As the most complex asset, human behavior at the workplace has been widely studied in behavioral science to understand its nuances through diverse techniques. Both scholars and management practitioners argue that empowering human resources can offer a competitive advantage in an increasingly boundary-less market. With rapid changes in societal and organizational structures, management faces the challenge of optimizing human resources to enhance organizational effectiveness. In today's competitive landscape, fostering wholehearted employee commitment to organizational goals is an essential and compelling area of research in management and organizational behavior.

Literature shows that organizations focusing on integrating spiritual elements—such as addressing employees' emotional needs, motivation, and purpose in work—are seeing improvements in organizational commitment and employee retention. Additionally, when employees share a sense of belonging, mutual attraction, and cohesion within their teams and organization, they are more likely to appreciate their purpose and well-being (Harrington et al., 2004). Building on these insights, this study proposes that workplace spirituality serves as a strategic tool for management to drive organizational growth and effectiveness. Therefore, the first objective of this paper is to explore the strength of the relationship between workplace spirituality and human capital formation as contributors to organizational effectiveness.

Furthermore, research identifies Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) as a construct that significantly impacts organizational efficiency, profitability, and adaptability. OCB has been found to improve coworker relationships, optimize resource allocation, reduce managerial expenses, and facilitate coordination across teams and departments. This ultimately enhances organizational appeal to high-quality recruits, stabilizes performance, and strengthens adaptability to environmental changes (Cohen & Vigoda, 2000; Ertürk et al., 2004). Essentially, an organizational citizen exhibits discretionary behaviors beyond their formal role without seeking rewards, which benefits the organization. Therefore, this paper's second objective is to examine how fostering workplace spirituality might encourage such discretionary behavior among employees, supporting the organization's advancement and growth.

In this review paper, we summarize existing research to delineate the theoretical and practical applications of OCB and workplace spirituality and propose a conceptual framework for achieving higher employee performance and organizational effectiveness.

II. Workplace Spirituality

The term *spirituality* originates from the Latin word *spiritus*, meaning vapor, breath, air, or wind. According to Webster's dictionary, spirituality pertains to matters of the spirit, often linked to sacred values and religious beliefs. Mitroff and Denton (1999) define spirituality as the quest to find one's ultimate life purpose and to live consistently with that purpose. In organizational settings, spirituality is about individuals seeking deeper meaning, forming meaningful connections with coworkers, and aligning personal values with those of the organization (Mitroff & Denton, 1999).

While definitions of workplace spirituality vary, a few capture its essence by incorporating meaning in work and community, expressed through concepts like calling, purpose, belonging, and connectedness (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003; Milliman et al., 2003; Gotsis & Kortezi, 2007). Ashmos and Duchon's (2000) definition is especially relevant, describing workplace spirituality as *"the recognition that employees have an inner life, which nourishes and is nourished through meaningful work in the context of community."* In essence, workplace spirituality centers on the desire to energize one's spirit through work that transcends mere tasks and paychecks.

Today, as people spend more time at work, they often look to their jobs to find purpose and fulfillment (Conlin, 1999). Shifting social priorities and greater security in basic needs have led individuals to pursue self-actualization at work (Maslow). Moreover, many in the workforce are baby boomers who value idealism from the 1960s and 1970s, or millennials who see their careers as personal journeys of self-discovery (Cash, Gray, & Rood, 2000; Hall & Richter, 1990; Hall & Mirvis, 1996). Research by Moore and Casper (2006) found a high correlation between workplace spirituality, as perceived through organizational support, and affective organizational commitment. This underscores that when employees find a sense of meaning, belonging, and community at work, it enhances organizational commitment and retention.

Organizations that embrace spirituality benefit from increased creativity, ethical behavior, and leadership potential (Neck & Milliman, 1994; Conger, 1994; Moore & Casper, 2006). Additionally, spiritual practices support human capital development by promoting diversity and mutual respect, allowing individuals to reach their full potential in an inclusive community. Companies with spirituality-driven cultures have demonstrated faster growth, better returns, and improved efficiencies (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2004). As Mitroff (1999) found, spiritually aligned organizations report that employees feel less fearful, more connected to their values, and are more engaged. This interconnectedness provides employees with a sense of shared purpose, enhancing job satisfaction and organizational loyalty.

III. Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is defined as "individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization" (Organ, 1988). OCB encompasses actions that go beyond job requirements without expecting formal rewards. Williams and Anderson (1991) classify OCBs as (1) those benefiting the organization (OCBO), such as completing extra tasks that improve performance, and (2) those directed at individuals (OCBI), like altruism and helping colleagues with high workloads.

A good organizational citizen displays voluntary behaviors that benefit the organization, such as punctuality, teamwork, and attendance at non-mandatory events that support organizational goals. Research identifies five main dimensions of OCB: altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue, each contributing to a positive workplace culture (LePine, Erez, & Johnson, 2002). Employees with high OCB levels are more engaged, innovative, and likely to remain with the organization, fostering a culture of job satisfaction, productivity, and stability (Mohammad, Habib, & Alias, 2011).

OCB is inherently tied to job satisfaction, commitment, and motivation. Organizations benefit from encouraging OCB as it promotes effective resource use, improves co-worker relations, and enhances organizational appeal for high-quality recruits (Intaraprasong et al., 2012; Podsakoff et al., 2000). Managers can leverage these insights by creating an environment that fosters OCB, ultimately driving organizational success.

IV. Aspects Of Behavior And Employee Performance

Job performance is a key concept in industrial and organizational psychology, referring to the activities expected of an employee and the quality of their execution. Performance plays a crucial role in an organization's success. From a psychological perspective, Campbell (1990) describes job performance as an individual-level variable, focused on behaviors that directly relate to organizational goals. Importantly, job performance encompasses behaviors that contribute to desired outcomes (Murphy, 1989; Campbell et al., 1993), and is defined by the observable actions employees engage in at work.

Campbell (1990) distinguishes between task-specific and non-task-specific behaviors in job performance. Task-specific behavior involves core responsibilities unique to each role, while non-task-specific behavior includes general actions expected across roles. A spiritually-oriented workplace can help individuals

develop Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), encouraging employees to exceed job expectations and contribute positively to the workplace.

Research in performance literature, such as the work by Katz and Kahn (1978), differentiates between in-role and extra-role performance. Extra-role performance, often conceptualized as OCB (Smith, Organ, and Near, 1983), includes actions such as accepting additional responsibilities, adhering to organizational rules, and fostering a positive workplace attitude. OCB enhances organizational effectiveness by promoting resource development, innovation, and adaptability (GholamHosseini et al., 2009). Borman and Motowidlo (1993) also identified two performance components: task performance (job-specific responsibilities that contribute to the technical core) and contextual performance (voluntary actions that support the workplace environment, such as cooperation and volunteering).

In this paper, we reviewed numerous studies and found that workplace spirituality fosters OCB in employees, resulting in improved job performance through engagement, empowerment, and work-life balance. The theoretical model supporting this proposition is displayed in Figure 1.



Figure-1: Model showing the mediating role of OCB

V. Implications And Scope For Future Research

Research shows that organizations embracing workplace spirituality foster employee growth and enhance overall organizational effectiveness. Spirituality positively impacts employees by promoting engagement, job involvement, and a positive work environment, leading to higher job satisfaction and extra-role behaviors. Future research could further explore how workplace spirituality and OCB shape employee perceptions of organizational support and rewards in the context of organizational culture and goodwill.

Additionally, future studies should examine the role of workplace spirituality mediated by OCB in enhancing employees' skills, knowledge, creativity, and career aspirations—key elements of human capital formation. Research could also investigate how organizational culture links human capital to productivity, enriching our understanding of the relationship between workplace spirituality, OCB, and organizational success.

VI. Conclusion:

Research indicates that fostering spirituality in the workplace enhances employees' creativity, process improvement, customer service, honesty, trust, personal fulfillment, and commitment, ultimately leading to improved organizational performance (Krishnakumar et al., 2002). Organizations that promote spirituality have been shown to experience greater performance and profitability by empowering employees to engage in both task-specific and non-task-specific behaviors. This approach cultivates a deeper commitment among employees, driving organizational growth and development. Therefore, it is essential for both employees and managers to integrate spirituality into the workplace, as it enables individuals to see the bigger picture and enhances the overall benefits to the organization.

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