

Spiritual Wellbeing in Organizations

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INTRODUCTION

Whilst recognizing the increased attention to spirituality in the workplace as being a positive development overall, scholars suggest that the association between spiritual beliefs, management practices and organizational outcomes has been conspicuously ignored in the mainstream management research. This occurs despite there being a large number of people worldwide reporting that spirituality is an important part of their daily lives (Sedikides, 2010; Van den Heuvel, 2018; Karakas et al., 2019). Expression of spirituality within organizations is an opportunity for an individual or organization to grow and to contribute to society in a meaningful way about care, compassion, support of others, integrity, creativity, people being true to themselves and others (Wall et al., 2017). It means individuals and organizations attempting to further integrate their values in the work they do (Panda, 2011; Lee et al., 2014; Houghton et al., 2016). Spirituality can be understood in a variety of ways with changeable conceptualizations through history and in different cultural contexts, and has included conceptions that place it synonymously with the practice of religious formalities as well as practices which enable people to experience a higher life purpose, separate from a religious belief. However, within the context of organizations its discussion has come to focus upon reorienting or rebalancing the experience of organizational life in developed countries in the West towards a more sustained and meaningful life in the context of workforce diversity and a greater sense of connectedness to others (Wall et al., 2019). Against this backdrop, in the 2010s there has been a steady rise in interest regarding spiritual wellbeing and an increase in the correlation between the expression of one's spirituality and cases that are regarded as discrimination (Krahnke and Hoffman, 2002; Loo, 2017). Historically, scholars pointed out that a highly committed workplace that embraces spirituality will have benefits to the organization and from a personal level (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000; Fry, 2003). Mitroff et al. (2009) supported these claims by suggesting that employees who view the organization they work for as spiritual, further believe that they become more profitable than their competitors do. Further research has suggested that there is a positive relationship between employee commitment and workplace spirituality and, where evident, spirituality in the workplace has returned a positive impact on job satisfaction and performance (Chawla and Guda, 2010; Marschke et al., 2011; Bodia and Ali, 2012; Foster and Foster, 2019; Garg et al., 2019). Similarly, Chand and Koul (2012) indicated that employees who feel that they can express their spirituality in the workplace felt that this helped them to manage stress, were generally more hopeful and believed they had a more meaningful working experience. In the same way, spirituality in the workplace has been suggested as an instrument of means to improve an employee's wellbeing. Joelle and Coelho (2019) suggested that encouragement by the organization for spiritual wellbeing can be in the best interests for the longevity of the business. However, Shinde and Fleck (2015) suggested that this could be a response to the troubled environment organizations find themselves in. At the same time, organizations have experienced momentous transformations regarding a wide range of areas related to sustainable development (Wall et al., 2017), for example political and technological advances, and the associated organizational changes such as managerial demands for management to create better efficiencies, and downsizing and employee redundancies (Driver, 2005). The context of workplace spirituality has been advanced as an instrumental remedy for this situation and one that human resource management departments will need to explore (Garg et al., 2019). The aim of this chapter is to explain the drive for spiritual wellbeing in organizations, which includes a range of strategic and moral factors. In addition, the chapter discusses a range of

business driven initiatives, where the focus is the strategic benefits to the organization, and is then followed by a discussion about employee spiritual wellbeing. In recognition of the limits, the next section considers wider interventions and cultural dimensions which can shape the effectiveness of expression of spirituality in the workplace. These wider cultural dimensions are the wider behavioural conditions of what and how can be counted as legitimate in an organizational context. The chapter concludes with a review of future directions of research and practice development in relation to creating more space for the expression of spirituality and wellbeing in the workplace.

DEFINING SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGION IN THE WORKPLACE

Despite the amount of key literature on workplace spirituality, less progress has been made towards a clear explanation of a comprehensively acknowledged meaning of the term spirituality and there exists a paucity of broadly accepted workplace spirituality definitions (Afsar and Badir, 2017). Studies on spirituality have resulted in various terms of emphasis, foci, components and levels of analysis owing to the considerable subjectivity of the topic (Fry, 2003; Mukherjee et al., 2016) and the concept remains under-theorized (Karakas, 2010). One of the key challenges of workplace spirituality and religion is that these concepts are separate but similar. Hodge (2017) has highlighted this in the extensive work on faith and spirituality in the workplace whilst acknowledging the breadth of the field. Miller and Ewest (2013) produced a faith and organizational framework for the spiritual and religious needs of an employee in the workplace. They used the term 'faith' to encompass both spirituality and religion, like both Hodge (2017) and Miller and Ewest (2013). There is no doubt that workplace spirituality is receiving attention (Young, 2020) with awareness of how an environment that is conducive to self-expressed and inner purpose can enhance capability and raise the consciousness of the organization (Palframan and Lancaster, 2019). However, we also know that self-expression is 'tolerated' (Digh, 1999), that there is tension between the expression of religious identities (Heliot et al., 2019) and that there is limited evidence of impact on management practice in the workplace, with Sedikides (2010) arguing that religion within the workplace is still not given sufficient attention. The rise of interest in the Islamic faith throughout the media (Badrinarayanan and Madhavaram, 2008) has also accelerated debate surrounding spirituality and work, and in particular surrounding the association between religion and management (Cowling, 2013; McNiff, 2013). Choices of terminology are challenging particularly in a field where there is no universally accepted definition of this complex collection of phenomena (Ali, 2010), and the process of conceptualization has, thus far, produced tentative definitions of the term. However, Kourie (2006) suggests that all individuals express some form of spirituality, whether nihilistic, materialistic, humanistic or religious. Spirituality enables individuals to grow and to contribute to society in a meaningful way with care, compassion, support of others, integrity, creativity; it is about people being true to themselves and others (Wall et al., 2017). Within the workplace, it means individuals and organizations attempting to further integrate their values in the work they do (Panda, 2011; Lee et al., 2014; Houghton et al., 2016). However, the literature is fragmented and dominated by speculative discussion, a US perspective, and a marked lack of empirical data, especially quantitative research (Ali, 2010; Khaled et al., 2012; Palframan and Lancaster, 2019).

SPIRITUALITY AND EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

Research undertaken by scholars suggests as a theory for development within an organizational workplace, spirituality is at an influential stage within the 21st century (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000; Pawar, 2016 Roof, 2015). However, the workplace spirituality concept is not a new idea as it has been grounded in the perspective of organization and management theory previously (Driscoll and Wiebe, 2007). Parboteeah and Cullen (2003) indicated that workplace spirituality, in terms of meaning at work, is related to as far back as Hackman and Oldham's (1980) job characteristics model

and this goes beyond the character of interesting and satisfying work to the spiritual view of work, which involves searching for deeper meaning, purpose and feeling good about one's work. Furthermore, the concept of spirituality has also adopted motivation theory, as in Maslow's (1970) hierarchy of needs. Pawnee and McLean (2017) suggest that fulfilling employees' spiritual needs is comparable to accomplishing the highest level of human needs, as in self-actualization (Maslow, 1970; Izak, 2012). Furthermore, according to self-determination theory, nurture of human needs is important for ongoing psychological growth, integrity and wellbeing (Deci and Ryan, 2000). Spirituality and its association with wellbeing in the workplace is gaining recognition and value amongst researchers and scholars (Wall et al., 2017; Foster and Foster, 2019). The term spirituality is of interest to management, organizations and employees for the reason of good harmony within the workplace. However, predominately two issues challenge it, the first being the struggle to be amongst an effective framework where spirituality is reduced as a means to forward profit-oriented goals, and the second challenge is with spirituality's subjective and multifaceted nature in business management (Udani and Lorenzo-Molo, 2017). Scholars suggest that when discussing spirituality and employee wellbeing, it is beneficial to clarify the relationship between the two topics (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000; Pawar, 2016). Employee wellbeing is best described as a significant topic within organizations and, as Ilies et al. (2015) point out, interest in employee wellbeing has risen greatly in recent times. Subsequently, Wright and Huang (2012) indicate that employee wellbeing has emerged as a very important topic within management research. In light of this practical significance of employee wellbeing, it is not surprising that employee wellbeing has recently received intensified research attention (Zhang et al., 2015). Grant et al. (2007) goes on to suggest that employee wellbeing refers to the quality of employees' operational and experiences within the organization and is also a demonstration and feature of a healthy organization. The debate includes the importance of employee wellbeing. Thus, whilst organizations implement various actions for enhancing employee wellbeing, Canibano (2013) debates that managerial practices often result in trade-offs, improving only one dimension of employee wellbeing (Joelle and Coelho, 2019; Low and Ayoko, 2020). Spirituality in the workplace is often seen as a paradox (Richards et al., 2009). Scarce research investigates both the effects and consequences of employees' spiritual wellbeing. To date, little is known about the psychology, dynamics and consequences of expressing and fulfilling spiritual needs. Theories in the area of spirituality have been viewed as existing in their embryonic stage, with a need for further theory development. Wong (2003) pointed out that a healthy dose of spirituality and meaning within the workplace is good for business as it improves morale and productivity. This view is gaining currency amongst management consultants, human resource professionals and mainstream business schools. The movement to bring spirit and soul to business is no passing fad; it continues to grow, with no signs of abating. Recently it has become even more prevalent recently when viewed through the lens of the international Black Lives Matter movement and the growing emphasis on organizational need to reflect the diverse nature of their employees and stakeholders in all aspects and levels of organizational structure (Moran, 2017; Opie and Roberts, 2017). Clearly, something significant and enduring is stirring the corporate world (Anderson and Burchell, 2019). The business world is now experiencing an economic downturn and government austerity measures which will be exacerbated further due to the economic impact of Covid-19, whilst research and debate on spirituality is expanding (Richards et al., 2009; Houghton et al., 2016). There remains a growing demand for organizations to enact change to further recognize and meet the needs of the individuals they employ (Carney, 2016; Cole et al., 2019). It is generally agreed that workplace spirituality encompasses an element of awareness and interconnectedness with one another or a higher existence; it embraces a sense of fulfilment and value, which provides meaning to an individual's vocation (Karakas, 2010; Bodla and Ali, 2012; Brown, 2012; Lundrigan et al., 2012; Wall et al., 2017; Karakas and Sarigollu, 2019). Within the

framework factors exist such as ethics, trust and fairness of decisions, respect, honesty and the integrity of actions. It is apparent that, in recent times, spirituality in the workplace has reached greater prominence (Badrinarayanan and Madhavaram, 2008). The reasons for this interest in the spiritual world, however, are less clear, although theories that attempt to account for the rise in awareness are becoming widely acknowledged (Van Tonder and Ramdass, 2009; Bhatia and Arora, 2017). In contrast, Bodla and Ali (2012) suggested that the majority of academics and business leaders are often confused and fail to distinguish the difference between spirituality and religion; this is mainly because spirituality and religion are invariably expressed implicitly and are considered to be a private subjective matter. In an investigation carried out by Fry and Slocum (2008), it was apparent that one reason for the rise in awareness was that organizations were focusing on the development of models of spirituality leadership, which emphasize spiritual wellbeing, without sacrificing the organization's performance. However, whilst organizations are attempting to take on board the concept of spirituality, it is apparent that there is still some way to go (Glass, 2007; Karakas, 2010; Goyal et al., 2013; Petrucelli, 2017). Lundrigan et al. (2012) argued that for an organization to succeed, management needs to develop their ability to identify conflicts between employees' perception of how spirituality is acknowledged and supported within the workplace and ensure parity in approach to reduce the potential for unpleasant or awkward interactions between individuals when issues associated with spirituality arise within the workplace, thus helping to avert a breakdown of team unity. As indicated by Anderson and Burchell (2019), due to global competitiveness, economic hardship and government cuts, it is assumed that a clear spirituality workplace policy would secure a competitive advantage for an organization. Indeed, it is argued that engaging the full potential of employees creates a content and successful workforce (Zohar and Marshall, 2004). Javanmard (2012) developed this point further by using Duchon and Plowman (2005) conceptual model (Figure 37.1) to analyse a number of variables which may impact on spirituality. These variables include: organizational leadership, which seeks to identify the organization's vision; altruism, which refers to an individual's unselfish concern for the welfare of others within the workplace; and faith in the organization, which highlights the belief the employee has in their employers. The variables associated with spirituality at work relate to an employee's rich inner life, meaningful employment and an individual's sense of community. The model suggests that these variables feed into organizational performance.

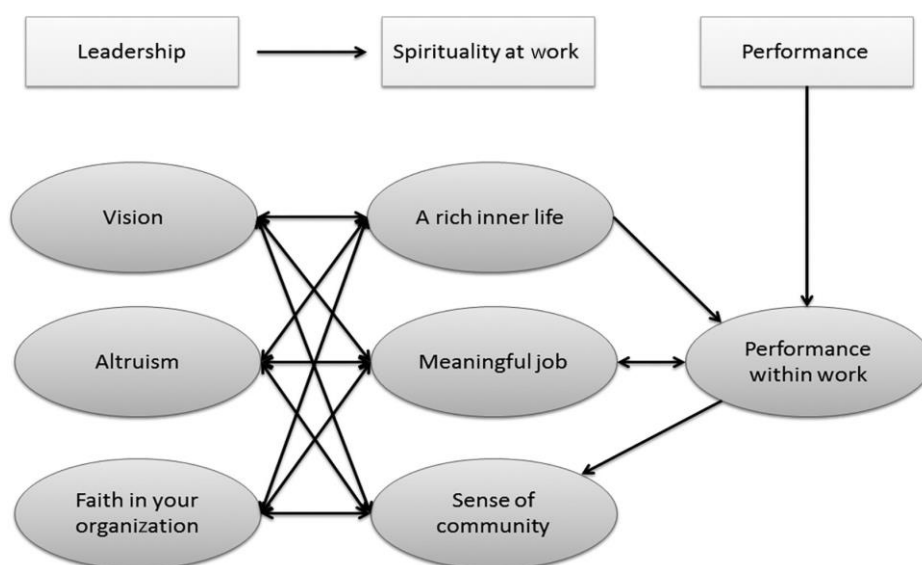


Figure 37.1 Conceptual framework model created by the author, adapted from Duhon and Plowman (2005: 825)

Sparks and Schenk (2001) contended that workplace spirituality can be examined empirically, by arguing that workplace spirituality acts as a mediator in models of organizational behaviour. However, Pawar (2016) argued that it is necessary to develop specific testable propositions that can address the concerns of academics, before such models are implemented, whilst Marshak (2011) added that organizational development generally embraces a number of theories and, as such, religion tends to represent just one of them. The potential benefits of workplace spirituality to employees, versus the consequences of a lack of workplace spirituality, have been tested through corresponding research propositions. Badrinarayanan and Madhavaram (2008) investigated specific propositions objectively, by researching the behaviour of supervisors. They reported that behaviour has a significant effect on employees' psychological wellbeing, which included their spiritual wellbeing. This argument was supported by Dent et al. (2005) who suggested that when management inspires and energizes employees' behaviour and attitudes, it provides the workforce with meaning and purpose. However, Singh and Singh (2011) argued that if a business leader chooses to pursue an unethical direction, they may develop a bunker mentality which tends to ignore employee values, deny mistakes made by the organization and break the rules, for the purpose of organizational or personal achievement. Such an approach can adversely impact staff morale and performance. Whilst Singh and Singh's (2011) views may be valid, it is rational for an organization to adopt humanistic values in policies and practices, thereby recognizing the dignity and worth of employees (Badrinarayanan and Madhavaram, 2008; Thakur and Singh, 2016; Gotsis and Grimani, 2017). Humanistic values in the organization can potentially help the growth and development of employees and their wellbeing, which in turn can sustain greater productivity than organizations with weaker values and beliefs (Jurkiewicz and Giacalone, 2004; Robinson, 2009; Jenkin, 2015). The humanistic approach suggests that all employees need to be treated equally, with this being embedded into the organization's policies and practices. Whilst the humanistic approach perceives that all employees are treated equally, an earlier investigation by Digh (1999) revealed that, depending upon their particular belief system, employees feel their spirituality was observed to differing degrees. A study carried out by Digh (1999) suggested that insensitive and inconsiderate management practices can lead companies into unwanted litigation. Claims of religious discrimination have in fact been increasing. The UK Equal Employment Opportunity Commission reported more than 1,800 religious discrimination cases in 1999 and the number of such cases has increased by 43% within the 2010s. Despite increased legislation to support spiritual beliefs within the workplace (Zohar and Marshall, 2004; Greenwald, 2012; Parris and Peachey, 2013; Low and Ayoko, 2020), there still appears to be a discrepancy in the extent to which differing beliefs are accommodated. Research conducted by Lips-Wiersma and Mills (2002) provided an example, indicating that Christians have time off over Christmas and Easter, whilst other faith groups are required to use their holiday entitlement to observe significant dates in their own religious calendars. The findings further suggested that 20% of the surveyed population from the United States reported having been a victim of religious bias, such as not being able to take time off to observe particular holidays or for prayer time. The situation is not as straightforward as it may seem, as it may not be feasible for an organization to observe all spiritual practices or occasions. Due to the individualized nature of spirituality, organizations can experience difficulty in demonstrating fairness and equality within a diverse workforce. However, Benefiel et al. (2014) proposed a model that attempts to create wholesome and rounded workers who are not only knowledgeable, skilful and possess professional skills, but also have strong spiritual beliefs, are ethical and have social awareness in conducting their duties. Consequently, by ensuring potential shortcomings of the organization are identified and acted upon, business leaders can develop strategies that ensure employees' wellbeing and spiritual practices are maximized. Similarly, in Sembuk's model (Biagini et al., 2012), spirituality is at the centre of an organization, because spirituality is potentially central

to an individual; an organization which adapts itself to support an employee's spirituality can benefit through increased productivity and motivation (Beheshtifar and Zare, 2013). However, although many organizations approach this through embedding current legislation into their policies and procedures in the belief that this addresses an employee's expression of spirituality, the concept is one which is much more complex than these often acknowledge. Whilst policies may seek to support individuals' right to observe religious practices at work or demonstrate their faith through clothing, etc., they often fail to acknowledge the range of factors which are external to the individual employee but intrinsic to the organizational culture and operations of the business, which can also directly influence the extent to which employees feel their work aligns or conflicts with their spirituality (Figure 37.2). In a time of public debate about spiritual tolerance and cultural freedom in a multicultural society, it is important to gain a true understanding of how different religions can manifest themselves within an organization (Bello, 2012). In the main, cultural and religious acceptance within the workplace is becoming part of everyday life for the employer and employee (Jones, 2006). Although this acceptance need not be an admission that discrimination is, or was, tolerated in the first place, it does indicate that spirituality in the workplace is a sensitive area which should be treated with caution. Forstenlechner and Al-Waqfi (2010) initially suggested that Muslim workers believe discrimination exists within the workplace. However, their findings indicated that this is to the contrary, whereby employers actually showed a high level of commitment to respecting the traditions and beliefs of the Muslim faith, with little evidence of discrimination against employees being apparent. The view is taken that the conflicting perceptions and expectations regarding spirituality could be associated with limitations such as inclusion and communication within policies and procedures currently being adopted within business.

BUSINESS DRIVEN INITIATIVES: THE STRATEGIC BENEFITS TO THE ORGANIZATION

The development of spiritual awareness across a wider community has produced a series of changes and aroused academic and practitioner interest in management (Baker et al., 2011). However, because of the



Figure 37.2 Extent to which employees feel their work aligns or conflicts with their spirituality, created by the authors, adapted from Biagini et al. (2012: 32)

dominance and influence of modernization for much of the 20th century, there has been a tendency to show corporations as being preoccupied with a range of performance metrics such as profit, turnover and market dominance. Throughout management discourse, performance metrics are often termed as the minimum expectation of the organization. These dimensions and their effective management are important in the running of any operation, but it is equally recognized that it is important to pay due diligence to what are called the soft factors in business, which includes human resources management (Stokes, 2011). Therefore, for an organization to continually succeed and prosper in today's harsh economic climate it is important that the moral and ethical strategies promote its foundations. Lips-Wiersma and Nilakant (2008: 61) stipulated that, 'Spirituality at work needs to work with and give meaning to the tensions that arise from acting in accordance with a purpose beyond profit in a neo-liberal business climate'. Soltani et al. (2012) also argued that a

successful business requires an outstanding performance in their ethical conduct because the company's ethical conduct strategy should be the foundation for their employees and managers within the business. However, considering the practical approaches to workplace spirituality, a note of caution is offered by Lipps-Wiersma and Mills (2002) advising that thought should be given to the difficulties of getting people to enact spiritual beliefs in the workplace. In addition Hans-Ruediger (2007) identified a lack of safety in expressing spirituality in the workplace, and consequently identified several principles that could be utilized to encourage spiritual expression. This lack of safety can arise from a variety of factors, such as fear of expressing views which are seen as outside the norm, for example a Wiccan amongst a heavily Christian organization, or the perception that the organization's ethos differs significantly from the beliefs of the individual. Soltani et al. (2012) agreed with Hans-Ruediger (2007) and pointed out that one of the issues that currently faces organizations is the inability to allow an individual to express their beliefs in the workplace. Therefore, the important issue in the strategic management process should be implementing new strategies to address this. Failures by employers are often not related to their reluctance in formulating a strategy but instead are due to their failure in strategy implementation barriers, such as lack of employee alignment and a lack of management commitment. This, therefore, indicates that more could be done to facilitate greater engagement with implementation from both the workforce and managers.

Addressing Barriers to Strategic Implementation of Strategies

Identifying and addressing specific barriers towards the implementation of strategies which focus upon spirituality and wellbeing can facilitate greater dialogue about the concepts within the workplace. Hans-Ruediger (2007: 13) stated that:

It is necessary to recognise that because spirituality is at the heart of many people's sense of identity, its expression is perceived to be risky. Spirituality comprises a sense of personal vulnerability which is magnified for those who perceive themselves to be spiritually different to be the majority or norm.

Therefore, providing an open and safe space for discussion can be instrumental in reducing employees' sense of vulnerability whilst maximizing on the opportunities to be gained from allowing them to represent their true selves within the workplace. There does, however, need to be a sense of balance in how this is approached. In reflection of the potential issues, Lips-Wiersma and Nilakant (2008) recommended that it be clear that the dialogue needs to be managed sensibly. Employees should feel that they are represented at strategy level; however, a 'free for all' discussion is likely to stagnate progress within organizational strategy meetings and, instead, a period of consultations with the workforce or discussion with a panel of representatives may prove to be more effective. Similarly, Wennes and Quinn (2008) argued that workers are concerned with the consequences of making spirituality requests or demands in the workplace and the organization should attempt to support the expression of spirituality. This is in agreement with Lipps-Wiersma and Mills (2002) who stated that any action taken by an organization to enhance trust and relationship development should reduce the potential for spirituality to be a source of marginalization in the workplace. Thus, spirituality is such a personal choice for many individuals, employees sometimes tend to keep their beliefs to themselves for fear of adverse consequences. For those individuals holding beliefs that are different from the majority, the process of encouraging workplace spirituality can appear threatening. Consequently, the introduction of spirituality into an organization needs to be handled with great sensitivity and empathy if successful employee and employer buy-in is to occur (Hans-Ruediger, 2007). In line with points raised by Lipps-Wiersma and Mills (2002), research by Wong (2003) stated that simply imposing policies relating to spirituality on employees would be counter-productive, as most organizations encourage religious expressions within the workplace and make facilities available such as Halal meals or prayer rooms, to help meet employees' spiritual needs

where possible. However, Hans-Ruediger (2007) argued that for an organization to be effective, the spirituality requirements of its employees need to be integrated into the corporate culture and reflected in organizational policies and practices on a daily basis. This can be achieved only when senior management embraces it as part of their vision. Garcia-Zamor (2003) indicated that organizations need to establish themselves as an ethical organization with respect to spirituality and culture. This then enables the business to create a new organizational culture in which employees feel happier and perform better. Employees find meaning in belonging to a work community that helps when things get tough. At the same time, a culture of sharing and caring will eventually reach all of the organization's stakeholders, suppliers and customers; therefore, in such a humanistic work environment, employees are perceived to be more creative and have higher morale, two factors closely linked to good organizational performance (Garcia-Zamor, 2003). Howard (2002) concluded that organizations are showing many transformation characteristics when they attempt to use processes that engage people in communication such as instituting real-time strategic change, the use of open space technology and, lastly, encouraging a culture of appreciative enquiry. This is supported by Hans-Ruediger (2007: 25) who stated that these strategies show a move towards 'honouring the core spirit of an enterprise or community'. Howard (2002) stressed, however, that the exploration of spirituality within organizations is still at an early stage and that the benefits or conflicts this might create are, as yet, uncertain. Garcia-Zamor (2003) suggested that continued research is required into how spirituality can underpin transformation at all levels, including the role of leaders in this strategic process. Additionally, scholars echo the same thought and stress that further studies are required to advance and develop spirituality conceptual distinctions (Fry, 2003; Dent et al., 2005).

Spirituality Within the Workplace to Support Wellbeing

The integration of spirituality into effective management and organizations has been regarded as incongruous or, as Goldstein-Gidoni et al. (2009: 600) put it, 'unnatural'. Nonetheless, Ashmos and Duchon (2000: 598) argued that workplace spirituality is a basic right. Workplace spirituality generally includes the recognition that employees have inner lives, a desire to find their work meaningful and a commitment by the company to serve as a context for spiritual growth. In contrast, organizations aim to concentrate more on outcomes, such as returning a profit and sustaining the longevity of the business, instead of being caught in a competitive struggle to facilitate human activity in the organization (Goldstein-Gidoni et al., 2009). Despite the importance of spiritual beliefs, employers and employees traditionally regard the workplace as off limits for any demonstration of faith (Ali, 2010). However, the separation of spirituality and business, for both the private and public sectors, is becoming blurred and, as such, the workplace is being transformed into an environment where expressions of spirituality and practices are now regarded as more commonplace (Abuznaid, 2006). Consequently, employees' job satisfaction sought through spiritual and cultural facets is a worthwhile endeavour that can enhance an organization's longevity, perceived excellence and their retention of staff (Kibui and Namusonge, 2014). It has, however, been identified that the beliefs and values of non-Muslim religions are felt to be marginalized within an organization and ignored worldwide because these religions tend not to be as politically supported as Islam (Williams et al., 2010). There is also evidence that ethnic faith groups express spirituality in the workplace differently, which presumes that certain groups are disadvantaged within an organizational setting. For example, in a court case of Eweida vs British Airways, Eweida was a member of the check-in staff for British Airways, who was refused permission to wear a cross over her uniform, as this was in breach of the airline's uniform policy. However, British Airways did allow Muslim women to wear the hijab, and Sikh men to wear turbans, on the basis that the items were required by the particular religions, and they could not be concealed under the uniform. The role of

an organization can be seen as crucial to the development of its employees' spiritual needs (Ali, 2010). Doing so will support the employees to clarify community feeling; therefore, it can be anticipated that there will be an increase in productivity for the organization (Garg, 2017). If business leaders want to enhance employee performance, improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their staff, then they may have to seek a leader who is spiritual and who can help reduce uncertainty, ambiguity and insecurity within the organization (Conger, 1995). When the leader exhibits the 'human' qualities of creativity, honesty, truthfulness and trust, employees may feel the power of human bondage and connectedness to the organization (Panda, 2011; Wall et al., 2019). The spirituality debate is evolving, as an increasing number of organizations seek a greater understanding of spirituality in the workplace. At the same time, employees are practising spirituality in the workplace more frequently. Employers are equally facing situations where employees discuss religious tenets, wear religious symbols or object to employers' decisions based on their faith (Morgan, 2005). Therefore, as Panda (2011: 204) suggested, 'Does it mean that employers will have to be flexible and conform to their policies so that Sikhs will be allowed to wear a turban and carry a "kirpan" to the office and that Muslims should be allowed to go to a Mosque to chant holy Quran on all Fridays at a given time?' The challenge of integrating spirituality policies and procedures into the organization is now becoming even more complex, due to the wide range of religions being practised. Furthermore, the continued emergence of spirituality movements has led to employers and employees being uncertain of their professional responsibilities, which challenges management decision-making about workplace spirituality. With respect to religious expansion, Sedikides (2010) claimed that Islam is the fastest growing religion worldwide. However, within any population, a number of affiliated subcultural groups exist (Hayward, 2000). The diversity of beliefs provides considerable scope for research to further explore the demographics of employees within the workplace and examine perspectives across the range of groups which exist rather than focusing upon a specific sub-group. In doing so, there is potential to facilitate greater understanding of the breadth of needs and perceptions which exist; information which could be used to further identify strategies to help foster a more inclusive workplace. The topic of integrating spirituality into the workplace is important, not just to organizations but to society in general, with spiritual wellbeing being viewed as a high level of faith and commitment to a belief that provides a sense of meaning and purpose to an individual's existence (Heintzman and Mannell, 2003). In addition, it is possible that employees who are content in their work will transfer such happiness to outside work and vice versa, thus making the individual more content with life (Jurkiewicz and Giacalone, 2004). Spirituality plays an important part within an organization and therefore can influence the attitude the workforce shows towards management (Beheshtifar and Zare, 2013). Research suggests that job satisfaction is linked to the extent to which an employer meets the psychological needs of their employees, which embraces spirituality fulfilment within the workplace (Badrinarayanan and Madhavaram, 2008). Consequently, a key purpose of the research into spirituality is to explore the multifaceted and complex nature of spirituality in the world of work and to evaluate the role and importance of spirituality within business constructs. The outcomes of such an approach could assist businesses to facilitate greater discourse and understanding between employers and employees on spirituality, thereby leading to greater stability, sustainability and competitive advantage (OtakeEbede et al., 2019). Shibani and Veena (2016) reported that the correlation between spirituality and wellbeing is evident and researchers are increasingly including positive outcomes for organizations (Foster and Wall, 2019).

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

In pursuit of the sustainability and general growth of all its stakeholders, organizations have shifted their focus from mere economic progress. Consequently, workplace spirituality and employee

wellbeing have been gaining the attention of both researchers and practitioners. For an organization to cope successfully with the complex spirituality challenges ahead, management and business leaders' attitudes still need to make a fundamental shift. Evidence raises several challenges relating to the perception of spirituality and wellbeing within the workplace and how it is accepted within the organization. The important role spirituality plays in an organization, along with the management benefits of addressing spirituality at work, are key elements that have been raised by numerous researchers (Duchon and Plowman, 2005; Javanmard, 2012; Khaled et al., 2012; Parris and Peachey, 2013; Van den Heuvel, 2018; Low and Ayoko, 2020). As organizations are getting more and more diverse due to different backgrounds, cultures and nationalities, organizational management is faced with the challenge of managing individuals whose values are incongruent with the organizational values. The management who are effective at developing and maintaining working environments and that are characterized by spiritual values such as openness, ethics, accepting diverse viewpoints and differing values, are more likely to engage their employees in extra-role behaviours (Long and Mill 2010; Karakas et al., 2019). The concept of spirituality and wellbeing is one that requires an open mind by business leaders to the range of narratives that express what is intended and understood by concept spirituality at work. To respect the practice of organizational spirituality is to respect the diversity of perspectives on what spirituality means. Nonetheless, the subjective nature of spirituality and a lack of common understanding of what spirituality means to an employee presents challenges in implementing such initiatives.

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