

Workplace Spirituality (WPS) and Job Satisfaction (JS) in the power companies in India: PLS based approach

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Abstract

Purpose- Employee performance can be enhanced by promoting workplace spirituality and having credible solutions to many human resource's challenges in view which is the requirement of present business as being widely discussed by the scholars. This paper aims to explore the relationship between workplace spirituality (WS) and job satisfaction (JS) in the public power companies in India having one of the best salary structure, benefits and job security.

Design/methodology/approach - The study was conducted with a cross-sectional descriptive and analytical approach. The study collected a sample size of 32 employees among them 15 technical and 17 nontechnical from the two public power companies in and around Dehradun (India). The partial least squares method was used to establish the linkage between WS and JS.

Findings -The finding is useful for organizations where basic needs are satisfied and for enhancing performance and productivity, the organization is required to find new motivational methods and tools. The study found that meaningful work and meaningful life is positively associated with job satisfaction and interpersonal relationship is negatively associated with job satisfaction and that there is no linkage between the working environment and job satisfaction in the public power companies and that there may be other factors within working environment to be identified and addressed by the organization.

Originality/value -The research provides insight for managerial practices and for future research in the Indian power companies with the concept of workplace spirituality for human resource management. The finding is unique as the working environment in public power has one of the best salary structure, benefits, job security, good working conditions and basic needs of employees are satisfied and are different from other organizations. The public power companies are required to innovate new mechanisms to deal with stress related problems, employee commitment and new ways to motivate the employees in the coming competitive environment.

Keywords: Workplace spirituality, Job Satisfaction, Smart PLS, Power Sector, Meaningful work.

INTRODUCTION

Workplace spirituality is a reasonably new widely discussed, much disputed area of inquiry and the spirituality assessment in the work environment is a comparatively new study which requires more research and studies as this

has potential to provide credible solution to many human resource's challenges and are gaining interest from practitioners and scholars (James, Miles & Mullins, 2011; Sprung, Sliter & Jex, 2012; Van der Walt & De Klerk, 2014; Benefiel, Fry & Geigle, 2014; Ahmad & Omar, 2014; Garg, Punia & Jain, 2019; Garg, 2020;

Indiradevi, 2020). The performance of the power sector is instrumental for the success of the economy of a country. In India, majority of power is generated by the government sector, where the working conditions in respect of safety of employees, job security, pay and compensation system and welfare are good but organizations struggle to find new ways for motivating its employee for desired productivity level. The challenges for the organizations are to enhance employee performance and organization performance along with job satisfaction. The workplace spirituality can be instrumental for enhancing the performance of employees, building trust, creating transparency and job satisfaction. Spirituality is searching internally, by an individual, about the meaning and purpose of one's life and existence in this world and their relation with others. This can be experienced by anyone, irrespective of religion (Krishnakumar & Neck, 2002). Employees at the workplace require a feeling of relationship amongst themselves, where they try to find meaning, objective and purpose of their work (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). Workplace spirituality enhances both the organizational and employee performance (Neck & Milliman, 1994). According to Quatro (2002), based on the study with the Fortune 500 organizations, found that organizations which are spiritual in their activities are also more profitable. More organizational commitment is from spiritual individuals (Milliman, Czaplewski & Ferguson, 2003), spirituality increases job motivation (Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2004), increases productivity (Duchon & Plowman, 2005) and spiritual individuals have greater job satisfaction (Nur & Organ, 2006). According to Hassan, Bin, Nadeem & Akhter, (2016) WS develops trust amongst the employees. Trust amongst employees can be enhanced by integrating values with the work in an organization. WS forces employees to realize the ultimate significance of their work (Majeed, Nor & Mustamil, 2017). According to Sony & Mekoth (2019), the various dimensions of WS and JS have positive relationships and the findings help in understanding WS, JS and job performance. These dimensions of workplace spirituality, influences the performances and wellbeing of employees and inculcates devotion toward their work. Spiritual workplace enhances the performance of the employee and the organization. Present study examines the

linkages between WS and the JS in the public power companies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Workplace spirituality (WS):

Before designing a WS, there needs to be a clear definition of it. The purpose of this section is to identify the key activities included in the WS, by reviewing different definitions of WS that exist in the literature. WS is about finding purpose and meaning of life by aligning with personal values, which makes a difference and creates a meaningful world. Individuals have the potential to be spiritual, by including wisdom, authority and compassion. Spirituality may not be experienced by all individuals. (Neck & Milliman, 1994). WS in an organization can change the behavior of employees in a positive way. According to Duchon & Plowman, (2005) spirituality at work is an acknowledgement that "employees have an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work and spirituality has three components at work: the inner life, meaningful work, and community". WS implies that spiritually motivated employees bring exceptional personal spirits to the workplace (Fry & Matherly, 2006; Fry, Matherly, Whittington, & Winston, 2007). Spirituality has the power to change the workplace into something incredible, and a feeling of connectedness amongst the human being (Krishnan, 2008). Various researchers (Rego, Cunha & Souto, 2007; Komala & Ganesh, 2007 and Pawar, 2009; Chawla & Guda, 2010) have found that employees are satisfied, committed, consistent, motivated and more productive in the organizations, where spirituality is respected. Present organizations must utilize the spiritual resources of their employees, for their survival in the current dynamic global market (Marschke, Preziosi, & Harrington, 2011). WS creates harmony and unity of the employees by developing a sense of fulfillment for their performance (Suarez, 2015; Sony & Mekoth, 2019). Ke, Zhang, Yan & Fu, (2017) in their study of university teachers observed that "WS helps to improve the university's internal communication, enhances trust between teachers, increases satisfaction, sense of belonging, decreases rate of turnover." WS has credible solution too many human resources challenges (Garg, 2020). Organizations are

using spirituality for solving business related and stress related problems, as many suffer from employee turnovers, loss of business, delayed contracts execution and strained customer relationships (Indira devi, 2020).

Job satisfaction (JS): Locke (1976) described the happiness of a person with his job as an excellent or positive emotional condition. Karatepe et al., (2006) found that a high degree of desire to leave the workplace is due to the low job satisfaction. Various factors of the working environment like working conditions, leadership interpersonal relations, recognition, responsibilities, compensation, professional achievement and growth affect job satisfaction of the employees (Lane, Esser, Holte, & McCusker, 2010). JS is a complex concept, for understanding the contemporary meaning of work and how it influences people, it must be viewed from an intangible perspective and intrinsic factors (such as spirituality) rather than a materialistic or extrinsic perspective which is outdated (Noor & Arif, 2011). JS is a psychological state of an employee. People are content and happy with one's job when their individual's needs and aspirations are fulfilled in their workplace (Molla, 2015).

Linkage between workplace spirituality (WS) and job satisfaction (JS)

Workplace spirituality is gaining supreme importance in organizational studies due to the paradigm shift and is still under the initial stage and requires more clarity (Brown, 2003; Karakas, 2010; Pradhan and Jena, 2015; Molloy and Foust, 2016; Pawar, 2017). According to Mitroff, Denton & Alpaslan, (2009) "spirituality at work is a way to find meaning in work life, virtuous interpersonal relationships, and harmony with organizational values". WS includes a belief that employees identify themselves with their values in the work (Gibbons, 2000). A happy and satisfied employee is more productive at work (Fisher 2003). Milliman, Czaplewski & Ferguson (2003) and Pawar (2009) observed a positive linkage between two variables (WS and JS) and many more confirmed positive associations between them (Kolodinsky, Giacalone, & Jurkiewicz, 2008). According to Daniel (2010), a good organizational environment can be created in the organization by encouraging WS, where employees work as a team and develop trust, creativity, respect and a better understanding of

each other. Top management influences jobs and thus job satisfaction of employees (Raziq, Maula-bakhsh & Raheela, (2014). In the organization, spirituality has an important role as this influence employee attitude and behavior. Employee's job satisfaction can be enhanced, if opportunities are provided to satisfy employee's spiritual needs at work (Ahmad & Omar, 2014). Working conditions which include job involvement, employee's commitment towards achievement of organizational goals, impacts on JS of employees (Shravasti and Bhola, 2015). Madhu (2015) observed about factors that affected the quality of work-life of bank employees, (South India), found that in spite of the good working condition, job satisfaction in private sector banks employees due to job security are less, while for the public sector banks having good working condition and job security, concluded that the employee leadership style and people skill has a major role. Compassion, mindfulness, meaningful work and transcendence are common in most of the recent definitions of spirituality at the workplace (Petchsawang and McLean, 2017). Kumar (2018) relates WS with "meaningful work, meaning life, interpersonal relationship and working environment". JS is the most important ingredient of work and is, to the extent people like their job. Several studies have also revealed that more job satisfaction results in lower turnover (Judge, Weiss, Kammeyer-Mueller & Hulin, 2017). According to Sony and Karingada (2018) "the positive and negative effect at work mediated the relationship between WS and JS with a positive effect exerting a strong influence". Garg, Punia & Jain, (2019) found that WS and JS have a positive relationship between them and mediated the role of organizational citizenship behavior. According to Jin & Lee (2019), workplaces with high spirituality have more organizational commitment and better quality of working life. WS has a significant positive effect on JS and productivity of the organization. WS is being acclaimed as a promoter of JS (Krishnakumar & Neck, 2002).

CURRENT HYPOTHESIS

This research not only discusses the linkage between WS and JS, but also attempts to analyze, using a powerful statistical tool, the importance of WS for JS. We supposed that WS

and JS have a positive link in public power companies in and around Dehradun and accordingly context with the following hypothesis:

H1: Positive link between meaningful work and JS.

H2: Positive link between meaningful life and JS.

H3: Positive link between interpersonal relationships and JS.

H4: Positive link between the working environment and JS.

Conceptual Framework: Conceptual framework is visualized in figure 1. Here, we explain the model in one way, investigating the linkage between WS and JS in the public power companies.

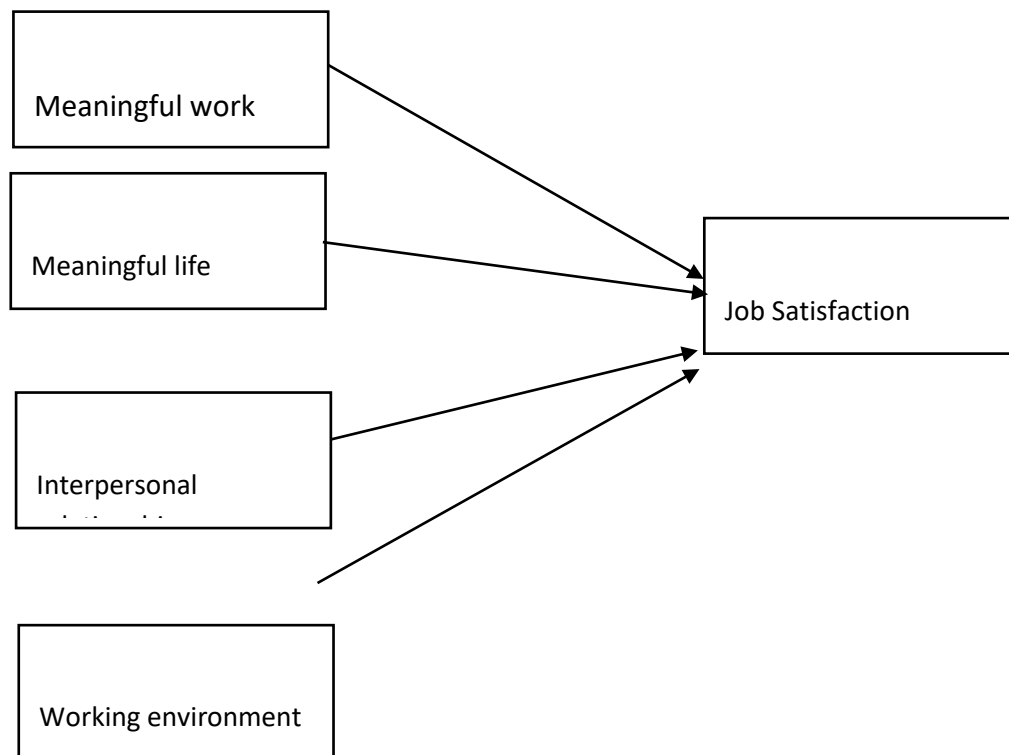


Figure 1: *Conceptual framework of this study*

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In literature (Williams, 2007), there are common research approaches such as qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. The objective of this section is to describe and discuss the research methodology (Dana & Dana, 2005) that has been used for this research. For this study, we used a quantitative approach.

Sample

The sample respondents are from public power companies in and around Dehradun consisting of technical and nontechnical employees by using purposive and convenient sampling techniques through online.

Sampling: According to Teddlie & Yu, (2007) “Non probability sampling or purposeful sampling or qualitative sampling are also referred as purposive sampling technique”. According to Babbie, (2008) “researchers for samples that are likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomena chooses purposive sampling technique”. The respondents of this study were selected by using purposive and convenience sampling techniques.

Data collection: 100 questionnaires were administered through online and offline survey methods among participants of the two power companies in and around Dehradun, only 48 responses were received. The questionnaire with

a hundred percent response was only considered. 32 responses were finally considered with (15 technical, 17 Non-technical) participants retained after the case deletion was applied in our final sample.

Statistical tools: In this study, the partial least squares (PLS) method for structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to establish a clear and concise model of the relationship between WS and JS. For several reasons (Reinartz, Haenlein & Henseler, 2009; Barroso, Carrion & Roldan, 2010; Hair, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2013; Hair Jr, Sarstedt, Matthews & Ringle, 2016) the PLS-SEM approach has been used. First, there is a relatively small amount of data collected. PLS enables smaller sample sets to be worked with compared to other statistical methods. Secondly, this research focuses on predicting a model of WS and JS, and lastly, PLS-SEM becomes more and more useful in explaining complex behavioral research (Fassott, Henseler & Coelho, 2016).

Research Instruments:

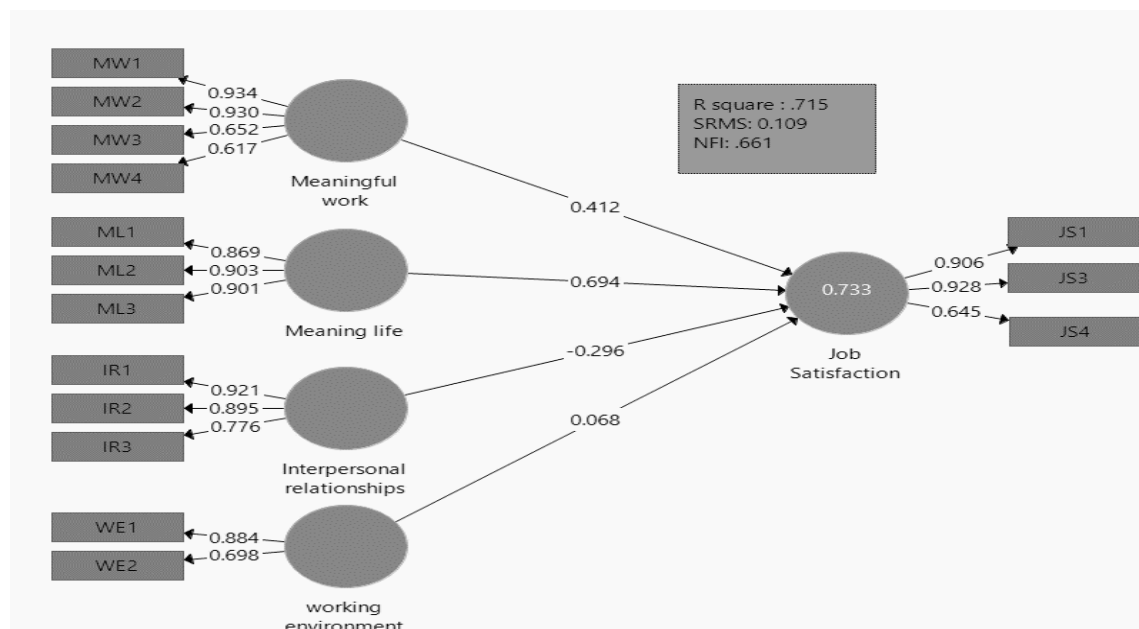
a. **Workplace spirituality (WS):** For evaluating the overall workplace spirituality, 12-item scale, discussed by Kumar (2018) within a 5-point Likert scale with the range (1) as strongly disagree to (5) as strongly agree was considered.

b. **Job Satisfaction (JS):** Psychological instruments to measure job satisfaction are the (5 items, Hackman and Oldham, 1974) within a 5 point Likert scale with the range (1) as strongly disagree to (5) as strongly agree, was considered.

RESULT ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

SMART PLS is the most popular software used for research using an analysis of structural equation modeling (SEM). The WS represent the exogenous latent variables and Job satisfaction represents the endogenous variable in this research.

Exploratory factor analysis (initial test): Workplace spirituality and Job satisfaction: In this test (insert figure 1 here), there are a total of four reflective items on workplace spirituality. It has been shown that the software has been adjusted to a maximum of 300 iterations with a stop criterion of 7. As can be seen, the outcome of the final test revealed that two items (J2 and J5) recorded low loads of 'Job satisfaction' constructs. All these two items will be excluded from the final form to achieve better validity and reliability of the model.



a. PLS-SEM STRUCTURAL MODEL EVALUATION

1. The coefficient of determination (R^2): The value of R^2 for the endogenous latent variable (job satisfaction) is 0.715 by looking at figure 1.

2. Predictive Relevance (Q2): The result of the blindfolding test shows that (Q2) happiness and perceived stress value is 0.477 which is higher than zero, hence the path model has a positive predictive relevance.

3. Model fit test and Structural equation modeling results: SRMR value for this study was 0.109, indicating a good fit. Also, the NFI value is approximately 0.661, which is an acceptable fit for the research model.

4. Path coefficient significance using bootstrapping test: In this study, P-Value coefficients between exogenous variables (Workplace spirituality) and endogenous variable perceived stress are lower than 0.05. Thus, for this relationship path, coefficients of structural equation modeling are statistically significant (insert table 1).

Table 1: Path Coefficient

Hypothesis	Relationship	P Values	Hypothesis status
H1	Meaningful work -> Job satisfaction	0.002	Supported
H2	Meaningful life -> Job satisfaction	0.000	Supported
H3	Interpersonal relationships -> Job satisfaction	0.037	Supported
H4	Working environment -> Job satisfaction	0.535	rejected

DISCUSSION

In this research, the hypothesis investigates the linkage between WS and JS. The interpersonal relationship (H3) is negatively associated with JS. Meaningful work (H1) and meaningful life (H2) is positively associated with JS and there is no link between the working environment (H4) and JS.

Job satisfaction is influenced by the working environment which is affected from various factors like working conditions, organizational structure and communication between employees and management, leadership in the organization, interpersonal relations, recognition and responsibilities, compensation, professional achievement and growth (Spector, 1997; Lane, Esser, Holte & McCusker, 2010).

An organization can attain high performance by creating a culture of trust between employees and their supervisor, to work as a team and by encouraging a sense of mutual respect for each other and for the innovative ideas by working as a team. Employee engagement as a new perspective has emerged by the idea and development of workplace spirituality. (Ke, Zhang, Yan & Fu, 2017; Majeed, Mustamil & Nazri, 2018).

The finding is useful for good organizations where basic needs are already satisfied and they are required to identify new methods and tools to motivate employees to enhance performance and productivity of the organization. The various studies have indicated positive effects of WS on JS. Sony & Mekoth, (2019) found a positive linkage between WS and JS. WS

enhances organization performance and employee's performance (Neck & Milliman, 1994). According to Garg, Punia & Jain, 2019 there is a positive linkage between WS and JS. In this study meaningful work and meaningful life has a positive linkage with the JS and interpersonal relationships had a negative linkage with JS and JS has no linkage with the working environment and can be aligned with previous study Sony & Mekoth (2019) that includes compassion, mindfulness and meaningful work. The findings of this study can also be aligned with the study of Madhu (2015) where job security, leadership style and people skill had significant impact on the JS in the public sector and private sector banks, India. Current organizations are facing employee stress related problems, turnovers, loss of business, delayed contracts execution and strained customer relationships problems and workplace spirituality has credible solutions to many human resource's challenges (Indiradevi, 2020; Garg, 2020).

There are other factors within the working environment to be identified and addressed in the organization where employee's basic needs are satisfied, so that, these are also applicable in the public power companies in and around Dehradun.

CONCLUSION

This study validates that meaningful work and meaningful life has a positive linkage with the JS in the public power companies in and around Dehradun (India) and the other side interpersonal relationships had a negative linkage with JS and there is no linkage with the working environment. The unique contribution of this study is that for the employees of the public power companies, the salary and compensation system, job security, safe working conditions and medical benefits of the basic needs are satisfied. The employees look for satisfaction of higher needs. Esteem needs like a search for self-respect and respect from others, a sense of accomplishment, appreciation from others, recognition and reputation in society and self-actualization needs like a desire to achieve everything, power to command respect or fear. In the public power organizations, the employee aspires for satisfaction of higher needs including a good working environment which includes

appreciation, recognition for work, self-respect and to be respected by management, supervisors and peers. Good interpersonal relation with the supervisors, coworkers, promotions, transfer, uniformity and transparency in implementation of policy of the organization. This conform with Maslow's hierarchy of needs that search for satisfaction of higher needs like esteem and actualization once lower needs of individual is satisfied in the organization (Maslow, 1943). The finding is useful for organizations where basic need is satisfied needs to identify new methods and tools to motivate employee for enhance performance and productivity of the organization which is imperative, in the present competitive environment. The future studies should explore the requirement of spirituality at the workplace in the organization and integrate them in their vision and implement them for managing and implementation of policies, rules and find out ways to satisfy the higher needs of employees for better performance of the organization.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE SCOPE

This study investigated the linkage between workplace spirituality and job satisfaction in only two public power companies in and around Dehradun (India). The sample size was small and only two items were taken in the questionnaire related to the working environment and more responses and more parameters related to the working environment were considered. It may also involve moderator (the type of worker, type of organization) and mediator (organizational citizenship behavior). More study may be required with a big sample size from more organizations.

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