Workplace Spirituality: Possible Organizationally Relevant Outcomes

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Introduction

The connection of oneself with the divine soul is termed as spirituality, and if the individual does his duties keeping a belief in his mind that whatever he/she is doing is the order of that divine soul despite of knowing it's good or bad outcomes is defined as workplace spirituality. The term spirituality, is derived from the English word, "Spirit", which means 'life principles', further the word is derived from a Latin word, "Spiritus", which means 'breathe, air, life or courage'. Workplace spirituality refers to a framework of organizational values in which the work process acts as a catalyst in making the employees experience a sense of transcendence at their workplace thereby consolidating their sense of being- connected to other colleagues in a way that provides them a feeling to completeness and joy (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003). It is conducive in promoting creativity at workplace (Guillory 2000; Cash and Gray, 2000; Harman and Hormann, 1990) and also leads to better communication among employees (Altaf and Awan, 2011). Workplace spirituality focuses on the satisfaction and happiness of the employees, and according to a study by Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (2015) it was found that 42.5% of employees suffered from depression and general anxiety disorder. The Asia Pacific edition of the 'Staying@Work' survey conducted by Towers Watson (2014) showed that 1 in every 3 Indian employees experience stress in workplace. The survey also showed that the major cause of the stress among Indian employees was conflicting job expectations. A vast body of literature has concluded that workplace spirituality helps in reducing work-related stress and increasing work productivity. It provides a sense of completeness and

prosperity amongst employees, making them happy and satisfied leading to increased organizational performance and financial success (Turner, 1999).

The definition of workplace spirituality has been described in a vast range by the different scholars of different schools of thoughts. According to Beyer, 1999, "Workplace Spirituality is the meaningful work and belongingness to work", whereas Mitroff, Denton,1999, described Workplace Spirituality as "interconnectedness to the organization and the workplace". "Workplace Spirituality is inner life, Meaningful Work and Sense of Community", (Ashmos, Duchon, 2000). According to Giacalone, Jurkiewicz, 2003, "Workplace Spirituality is the transcendence through work process and sense of community". In addition, Ashar, Lane Maher, 2004 stated that "Workplace Spirituality is the transcend meaning, purposeful work, sense of community, connectedness and wholeness".

With regarding to the definition of workplace spirituality, researchers had defined it in many definitions further. Jurkiewicz and Giacalone (2004) defined workplace spirituality as 'reinforcing the employees' transcendental experience through works. Claude and Zamor (2003) suggested that workplace spirituality means that individuals discovered deeper life and work values through self-reflection and work relationships in the workplace, including the relationships with others, realizations of morality, and care for the world.

Researches with workplace spirituality had only focused on the psychological and physical dimensions of individuals at work but had not yet talked about the spiritual dimension of the individuals (Walt, 2007), and when the individual detaches themselves from the outcomes and being a spirited soul to complete a task with the good amount of energy. However, both thriving and work engagement both cannot be treated as a skill that can be developed, but rather it can be considered as motivational state (Spreitzer et al., 2010), which suggests that a workplace needs to cultivate an environment to create both thriving at work as well as work engagement, so that employees can give their best to flourish an organization at its better rate of growth.

Moreover, it was also found that organizations have to be spiritual in order to promote spirituality in employees that can promote work engagement in them (Breytenbach,2016) that can lead them to have a believe that whatever they are doing is the order of the divine soul, predestined for them that they have to do, despite of knowing all the good or bad outcomes of that duty. It can be noted that the two concepts came up with workplace spirituality- employee engagement, which is the relationship of an individual with both his/her job as well as their organization and work engagement, which is the relationship of an individual with

his/her job **(Schaufeli, 2017)**. Both workplace spirituality and employee engagement showed a sense of wholeness, which implies all the aspects of oneself (cognitive, physical, emotional and spiritual) when performing a role and it furthermore requires a sense of connectedness in the context of workplace **(Saks, 2011).** Within the vast framework, the study will be empirically emphasised on expressing the inner-self, through meaningful and purposeful work with a sense of connectedness amongst the employees in the context and workplace and organization.

Literature Review

Workplace spirituality or spirituality in workplace is the movement that improvises the employee belief system with the organizational benefits. It is an emerging concept of positive psychology that realizes the employee's inner life at workplace with context to the community nurtured by meaningful work. It is known to enhance work performance by nourishing the spirit of the employees at work (Singh and Chopra, 2016). It is the cultivation of the spirituality in the organization to inculcate work engagement in the employees, that can help the employees to give their best to the organization to achieve the organizational goals and develop the organization at the highest rate of growth. It also develops a sense of wholeness and completeness in oneself, while performing a duty. **Milliman, Czaplewski, and Ferguson (2003)** indicated that "the study of workplace spirituality must involve three levels that is, Individual level; Group level and Organizational level." According to them, the factors influencing the workplace spirituality includes; Meaningful work, which refers to the in-depth feelings of an individual towards the work meaning and purpose and connection between work and the meaning of life. "For instance, work could reinforce the employees' holistic values or increase their emotional and spiritual development" **(Brown, 2003)**. Secondly, shared feelings in work community, refers to the interpersonal and intensive connections and relationships. In other words, the employees had in-depth interactions with others, which enhanced mutual inner feelings and even sympathy with others' inner selves.

Furthermore, workplace spirituality can be defined as the expression of inner-life through the meaningful and purposeful work with a feeling of interconnectedness and oneness amongst the employees of an organization. An individual experiences two concepts in the workplace, first one is employee engaged when they have a relation between both their job and organization and the second one is work engaged when they have a relation between themselves with their job.

A model of workplace spirituality and employee outcomes proposed that the workplace spirituality will have effect on all the aspects of employee outcome such as, Work Engagement, Turnover Intentions, Innovative Behaviour and Job Performance and the controlled variables are: Individual Spirituality, Age and Job Experience.

- Work Engagement- The relationship of an individual with her/his job.

- Turnover Intensions- The plans of an employee to leave the job or a position or the plan of an organization to remove an employee from the job or position.

- Innovative Behaviour- The creative ideas, policies or the plans to be implemented given by an employee that could increase their better performance in the job as well as benefit the organization too.

- Job Performance- With the cognitive and emotional state of mind, the performance of the employee is categorized on the basis, how they are helpful in the benefit of the organization.

"If the organization provide employees the opportunity to express their inner life, it will make them happy and will also reduce their turnover intention", (Peterson, 2004; Shore & Martin, 1989; Stack & Fottler, 2002.) which will further benefit the organization in achieving their goals with higher rates of improving the workplace with the happier and satisfied employees. The model of workplace spirituality and employee outcomes is expressed through the following diagrammatic figure:

Fig. No. 1: Model of Workplace Spirituality and Possible Organizationally relevant outcomes:
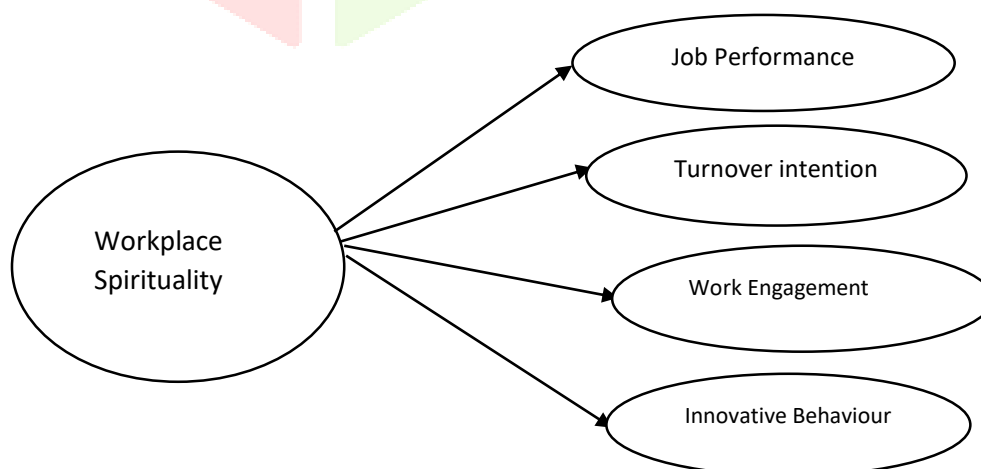
This model shows that the workplace spirituality has the effect on all these dimensions of employee outcomes which will later result into a happier employee which can also benefit the organization by accomplishing the organizational goals with their strengthened happiness and satisfaction from their job as well as from the organization/workplace.

Spirituality can be seen as an individual context, as an emotional and cognitive experience wherein the employee feels and believes in a spiritual connection to their work as well as their workplace. Thus, "it is very important to impose spirituality among the employees in an organization, which is further used as an important source for decision-making, allocation of resources, inform behaviour, etc." (Kolodinskey et al.,2008; Van der Walt and de Klerk, 2014).

Rahimi (2011) include that "it may lead to various advantages which includes, creativity, honesty and confidence, developed feeling of personal evolution, organizational commitment and improved attitude towards self, job and other employees in the organization." In addition, Marques (2005) stated that "it includes many other benefits in the organization, such as, it increases trust amongst employees, increases a sense of interconnectedness and also assists employees to be more motivated towards their job and organization." In another research, Jurckiewicz and Giacalone (2004) stated that "workplace spirituality results in the prosperity of the employees, society, and organizations." It makes a sense of connectedness, job satisfaction and results in increase in performance. On the basis of the study of Jamal (2011), it was found that there is a positive relation between organizational commitment and workplace spirituality and it is also positively related with the job satisfaction.

According to the existing studies and the voluntary turnover intention model, it was found that workplace spirituality promotes individual's emotional satisfaction and companionship amongst employees which leads to meaningful work, a sense of wholeness in community which further reduces loneliness in work which results in spiritual behaviour and job satisfaction without any turnover intention. Workplace spirituality undergoes through stability in mind that leads to job satisfaction, emotional satisfaction by neglecting the turnover intentions.

Innovative behaviour shows how an employee perceives the environment for developing and implementing new ideas for the development of the organization. It is noted that, "Workplace Spirituality reduces mental stress, humiliation and conflict amongst employees" (Brown, 2003; Hancock, 1997; Rego & Cunha, 2008)

and also helps the organization to create new programmes and policies that can result in better development of an organization and organizational climate. Workplace Spirituality promotes an opportunity to express inner life of an individual, and according to a study, Townsend (2000) states that "innovative behaviour along with workplace spirituality helps organization to build a work environment that is healthy for inducing creativity amongst employees in an organization." According to Segal (2001), "there are aspects that can trigger creativity in the workplace, and certain factors to generate new ideas in the organization and amongst those factors, freedom in the workplace is most prior factor to induce more innovate and creative ideas for the development of organization."

Job performance advancement is one of the most significant purposes to which managers are attending, as promotion brings efficiency (Moshabaki, 1997) which causes the growth in the national economy, service qualities and organization production (Spectoriel, 2007) Job performance is a degree of task delegated to an individual (Suliman, 2006). Performance has been defined as activities which are usually a part of an individual's job and should be fulfilled by him. (Alirezaeei et al, 2013). Fry (2005) stated that "workplace spirituality benefits both organization as well as the individual". With reference to his conclusion, we can say that including spirituality at work helps the individuals to express their inner life and that helps them to benefit themselves and the organization and the meaningful and purposeful work satisfaction, this hence improves their job performance and betterment of the organization.

Markoa and Sridevi (2010) found that engaged employees are emotionally attached to their organization and are highly involved in their job to the extent that they are willing to go an extra mile beyond their employment contract. Robinson et al. (2004) surveyed and found that the key force behind the employee engagement was the employees being valued and involved in the organization. Baumruk and Gorman (2006) believed that an engaged employee demonstrates three general behaviours which improves their performance. They are as follows:

- Say- an employee advocates the decision of the organization before colleagues.
- Stay- the employee has an intense desire to continue to remain in the organization despite of receiving better offers from other organizations.
- Strive- the employee spends extra time, expends more efforts and takes initiatives to bring laurels to the organization

Work Engagement increases when there is an aligned value for both employee and for the organization. And if the organization promotes the value for the employee and also respond to that value, it helps in accomplishing the challenging targets and achieving the variety of organizational goals.

Theoretical Framework

Turnover Intentions

Turnover intention is a measurement of an organizational employee's plan to leave an organization or to leave a desired post. It can be voluntary or involuntary:

- Voluntary turnover intentions, are those when the employees themselves plans to leave the organization or their current position. It usually occurs due to the demand of more pay, attention, recognition or even occur at the time of mental stress of employees due to more work pressure.

- Involuntary turnover intention, on the other hand, involuntary turnover intentions are those when the organization plans to remove an employee from the organization or from their position, if they don't like their performance or also due to economic pressure or downfall of the organization.

Fig No. 2: Factors influencing turnover intention
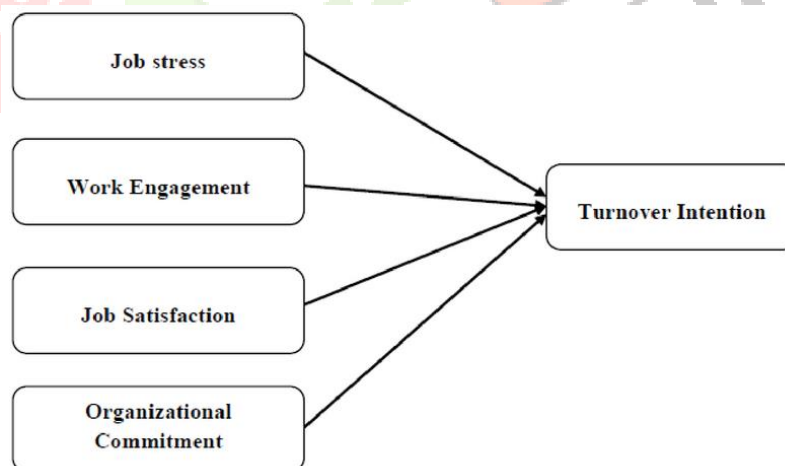
The above diagram shows the factors influencing turnover intention of an employee in an organization. It can be easily concluded that job stress, organizational commitment, work engagement and job satisfaction leads to turnover intentions. These all factors can be caused due to the reason of lack of salary, attention, recognition, rewards or even when the employee is satisfied with their job but can't get pay accordingly. Gatling, Kim and Milliman (2014) studied that there is a positive relation of workplace spirituality on

organizational commitment but a negative relation of workplace spirituality on turnover intentions of the employees.

Munda (2015) investigated a negative relation of workplace spirituality on turnover intentions of the employees. The past study concluded that "once the employees realize that the job is not the final destination, but a mode that leads them to self-actualization, that encourages them to perform an outstanding job, then the turnover intentions of an employee can decrease to a certain level" (Munda, 2015).

Gotsis and Kortezi (2008) stated that work should be viewed not only as a form of utility maximisation, but also as a source of meaning central to individual identities: people do not only aspire for money, but they also seek to build effective relations through which they can shape a legitimate account of themselves to their co-workers. And as a result, this can be seen as a healthy environment of the organization and the benefit for the employees as well as the organization as it leads them to self-actualisation and allows them to perform an outstanding job, which can further reduce the employees' turnover intentions to a certain extent.

P1: Workplace Spirituality and turnover intention will be negatively related to each other.

<u>Innovative Behaviour</u>

The process of innovation is composed of two basic phases, that is: Initiation and Implementation (Zaltman et al., 1973; Axtell, et al., 2000). The division between these two phases is believed to be the point at which the idea is first adopted, that is, the point at which the decision to implement the new innovation is made. It is the new ideas promoting the development of the organization. It also helps the organization to recognize a problem, solve the problem and also create a support for the solution of the problem. It helps in making the best policies for the growth and development of the organization and hence, developing the better performance of the employee with the recognition. According to a study, it was found that spiritual climate has a positive relation between innovative behaviour at individual level as well as team-level (Pandey et al. 2017). Employees' innovative contributions greatly influence an organization's success. Beyond knowledge and skills, innovation requires an inner force that pushes employees to persist with the challenges that are intrinsic during innovative work. Workplace spirituality is the search for meaning or purpose, social connectedness, inner life and transcendence or a higher level of calling for work (Pandey et al., 2017).

Individual innovative behaviour can be defined as "the intentional creation, introduction, and application of new ideas within a work role, group, or organization, in order to benefit role performance, the group, or the organization" (Janssen, 2004, p. 202). Janssen (2004) stated that individual innovation behaviour occurs in three stages: idea generation, idea promotion to potential allies, and idea realization. Gryskiewicz (1987) found that the generation of ideas is evident when individuals are good listeners, good team players and are willing to help others.

Townsend (2000) stated that it is important to build a work environment that could be produce creativity. In order to be innovative in the workplace, employees need to have freedom, autonomy and the opportunity to express themselves. Segal (2001) claimed the aspects that can produce creativity in workplaces. According to Segal there are certain factors within organizations that can help in generation of the ideas in the workplace. Amongst those elements, freedom in the workplace is an important element that can be helpful to innovative behaviour. It can be found that including spirituality in organization and the opportunity when employees express their inner life they are more prone to show innovative behaviours at workplace and introducing spirituality at workplace will help the organization and the employees to find a meaningful and purposeful work. Both innovative behaviour and spirituality can help the organization to develop with higher level of challenges.

P2: Workplace Spirituality and Innovative Behaviour will be positively related to each other.

Work Engagement

Work Engagement is "the harnessing of organizational members' selves to their work roles" Kahn (1990). Work Engagement is the relation of an individual with his/her job. It is further expressed as the physical, cognitive and emotional work role during the role performances. According to the studies, people with high level of work engagement are energetic and are more dedicated towards their work. Further the work engagement is divided into three aspects, which are diagrammatized below:

Fig No. 2: Aspects of Work Engagement.
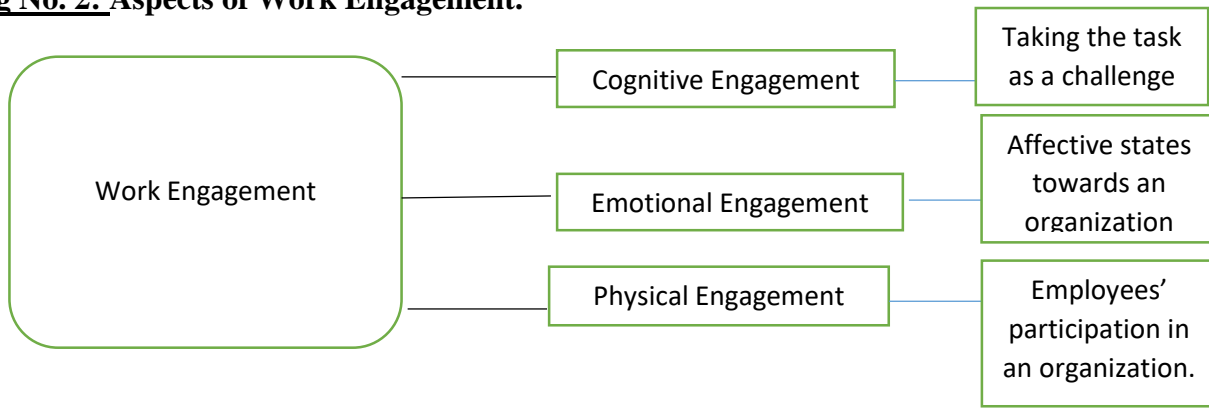
According to Rothbard, there are two components of work engagement, which are diagrammatized below:

Fig No. 3: Components of Work Engagement by Rothbard, 2001.
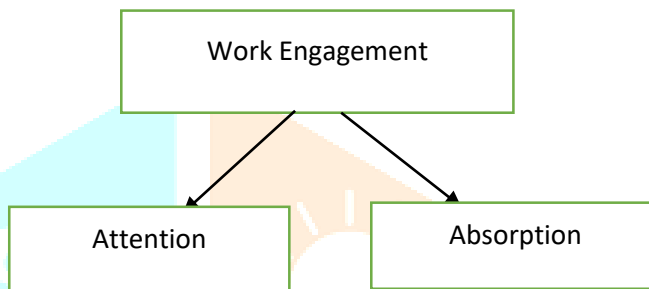
Attention is determined as the individual's cognitive ability and the amount of time he/she is focused on their work, while on the other hand absorption is determined by the intensity with which an individual remains focused and the degree to which they are involved into that work (Rothbard, 2001). Markoa and Sridevi (2010) found that engaged employees are emotionally attached to their organization and are highly involved in their job to the extent that they are willing to do something beneficial for the organization beyond their extent. The more employees are engaged with the work and the organization, the more organization will develop and workplace spirituality give the employee a higher level of calling at work, which can benefit the organization and the organizational relations of the employee. It can be seen that including spirituality at workplace, the work engagement can nourish the positive attitudes, intentions and behaviours in the employees which can help the employees and the organization to develop and accomplish the organizational goals by facing the challenges and involving into the job.

P3: Workplace Spirituality and Work Engagement will be positively related to each other.
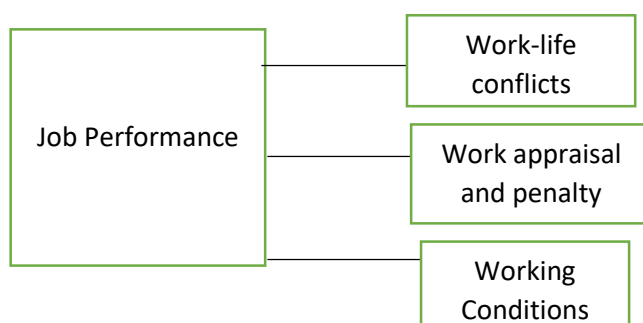
Job Performance

Job performance is a means to reach a goal or set of goals within a job, role, or organization (Campbell, 1990). Spiritual organizations are more productive than organizations with no spiritual orientation (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). An employee, who considers their organizations as spiritual, also believes their organizations are more profitable and more productive (Mitroff & Denton, 1999). Workplace spirituality improves organizational performance (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Fry, 2005; Garcia-Zamor, 2003; Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2010). According to Milliman, Workplace Spirituality has a positive relation with job performance. According to Dinc, Muhammet. (2017), Job performance is affected by organizational commitment and overall job satisfaction.

We can see that including spirituality at workplace, can make an employee satisfied with his job at cognitive, emotional and physical aspects by giving them an opportunity to express their inner life, which can lead to the commitment of the employee towards the organization as the higher level of calling of work and an intention to get highly involved to the work of the organization and that leads to the better job performance of the employee at the workplace.

Job Performance is further related to the innovative behaviour of the employees in the organization, which further leads to the more productivity in the organization and more profit of the organization. Job performance is furthermore related to the overall development of the employees and the organization with the feeling of self-actualisation and interconnectedness amongst the employees. It validates the relations between the employees so that there can be a sense of completeness amongst employees. The factors affecting the job performance can be postulated by the following diagram:

Fig. No. 4: **Factors Affecting Job Performance.**

With concern to workplace spirituality, these factors (Work-life conflicts, work appraisal and penalty and working conditions) can be improved to a certain extent which can lead to the better job performance of the employee, as they don't take work as their final destination but they will work for the outstanding performance at the organization and for the benefit of the organization. Research suggested that including spirituality in the workplace can lead to benefits in the areas of creativity, interpersonal relation amongst employees and organizational commitment, which will lead to increased job performance (Krishnakumaret al., 2002).

According to adult learning theory, (Knowles, 1968), it was assumed that learners include self-concept and an internal motivation while learning, meanwhile introducing the concept of spirituality in the workplace could also help the employees to learn a self-concept and an internal motivation that can help them to organizationally perform better which can further lead to a healthy working conditions of an organization.

It could be also seen that workplace penalty and reward acts as a motivation that helps the employee to perform better, whereas, the interpersonal relationship amongst the employees could help the organization to reduce work-life conflicts and as a result the working conditions could increase and be at a better place instead.

P4: Workplace Spirituality and Job Performance will be positively related to each other.

Discussion

The study makes an important contribution of workplace spirituality in an organization. This study empirically focuses upon the relationship between workplace spirituality and other possible organizationally relevant outcomes, such as, job performance, turnover intention, work engagement and innovative behaviour. Issues of ethical and spiritual well-being are reflected on the four principal dimensions of workplace spirituality – that is, transcendence, connectedness, completeness and joy – ought to be taken into consideration equally (Gotsis and Kortezi, 2008). It can be seen that these outcomes of the organization are inter-linked with each other and by including spirituality in an organization, an employee can focus more on their duties, and will be satisfied and committed to their job and duties and also be loyal to their duties as well. It can be seen that when employees are more into the work engagement and don't suspect the job to be their final destination and eudemonic happiness but their hedonic happiness, they are more likely to perform

well in the organization innovatively as well as their performance would benefit the organization at higher level (Gotsis and Kortezi, 2008).

Workplace spirituality also helps employees in being more committed to their job, which helps them in being more engaged to their work and as a result it helps the organization in achieving better organizational goals with the innovative behaviour of the employees that helps the organization in making the new policies and developing the organization. And the innovative behaviour that helps the organization to develop also helps the employees in developing, and also fulfils their demand of more salary, recognition and other demands from the organization. Hence, their satisfaction from their job and organization helps them to reduce turnover intention as they are satisfied in the organization they are working in and also the employees are satisfied with their better performance. Generally, it was seen that workplace spirituality has important relationship with all possible work outcomes (Milliman et al., 2003; Rego and Cunha, 2008; Rego et al., 2007). According to the prior studies, it was found that workplace spirituality has a significant negative effect on turnover intentions (Promsri, 2003), whereas, a positive effect on workplace spirituality on work engagement (Singh and Chopra, 2016). And, it was found that this study assumed a significant positive effect of workplace spirituality on job performance, innovative behaviour and work engagement but assumed a significant negative effect of workplace spirituality on turnover intentions of the employees of the organization. It was also found that, including spirituality in the workplace helps the employees in expressing their inner life, developing the sense of oneness amongst the employees by conducting a concept of meaningful work in the organization. This helps the organization to develop in a better way with a healthy, satisfied and happier workplace environment with satisfied and happier organization and employees.

Conclusion

The concept of Workplace Spirituality has been analysed and discussed in this present research paper. It has been noted that, there is a lack of research in the area of empirical study focusing on the impact of workplace spirituality and the possible work-related outcomes (Rego & Cunha, 2008). The idea behind this research was to expand the knowledge and application of spirituality in a workplace and also to present the applicability of spirituality in the management practices that can help in creating a better workplace environment. The results shown in the study proved that workplace spirituality enhances the work-related

outcomes of the employees and helps in developing the organization in a better manner with the healthier and happier workplace environment and happier and satisfied employees. Workplace Spirituality also increases one's commitment towards their job, which makes them more engaged into their work and as a result that makes them innovative so that their innovative ideas could help the organization by implementing new policies and these could help them in reducing the turnover intentions and increases their job performance by their better pay, recognition and many other work-related demands fulfilled by the organization. It helps in the better development of human resource development of the organization and helps in the better management of the organization.

The study could only empirically postulate the work related outcomes by the help of workplace spirituality, but it is not scientifically proven through any research methodology. And by proving this fact by any research methodology such as questionnaire, or observation, we can surely say that these assumptions are actually true on the basis of facts, knowledge and experience. And hence, in the concluding line, we can say that these postulates can be further tested through any research methodologies and is developed for further future researches.

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