

REFINING ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR THROUGH WORK ENGAGEMENT AND SPIRITUALITY

IBOBO, Bridget
Department of Business Administration,
Delta State University, Abraka

BENJAMIN, Nwajei
Department of Business Administration/Marketing
Delta State University, Asaba Campus

and

HENRY, Olannye
Department of Marketing,
Imo State University, Owerri.

ABSTRACT

Previous research's focus on predictors of organizational citizenship activity was on mental, organizational, and task features along with leadership behaviours. Despite earlier work focusing more on individual characteristics, little is known about the potential effect of spirituality on the organizational citizenship behaviour. And to use the job interaction model and the results of previous empirical studies were structured to investigate the impact of spirituality in the workplace on the conduct of organizational citizenship through work engagement as a mediator. On-the-job spirituality should have positive effects on the behavior of organizational citizenship, and commitment to work can have a positive impact on organizational citizenship behaviours. Under the scheme, they will be more involved in job positions and more likely to engage in citizenship behavior as workers encounter spirituality in the workplace. The goal of this paper is to present structure and theories which could be tested and the framework means that organizations can build spiritually balanced environments, appreciation of the possible predictive power of workplace spirituality in the conduct of corporate citizenship and involvement in the jobs.

Keywords: Organizational Effectiveness, Workplace Spirituality, Work Engagement, Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

INTRODUCTION

Today's organizations will thrive if they can respond completely to the biological, financial, emotional, and spiritual needs of their employees. With regard to the value and role of manpower and its success in an organization as well as the significance of spirituality in human life, the spirituality of the workplace is given special attention recently (Narjes & Narges, 2018). They also stressed that studies carried out up to now show examples of the fact that spirituality exhortation has many advantages for an organization by which it can enhance its effectiveness and functionality. In these individuals one can easily see an improvement in innovation and effectiveness, and a greater participation in activities of organizational citizenship. Thus, by creating spirituality in the workplace, the managers and leaders of the organization make their staff feel as assets of their department and support themselves and be more compatible with organizational purposes and missions (Zadeh Beik et al., 2010).

Researchers have concentrated on organizational citizenship activity (OCB) due to increased evidence of the effect of OCB on organizational and individual success (Dunlop and Lee, 2004; Podsakoff et al., 2009). OCB has the potential to increase organizational efficiency by improving performance and productivity of employee tasks (Organ, 1997; Podsakoff et al., 2000). According to Organ et al. (2006), when seasoned workers volunteer to help new workers learn the ropes, this helps employees to become efficient employees quicker, thereby improving the work team's performance. OCB can also help to improve the quality of organizational performance, in addition to improving work efficiency. For example, diligent workers prefer to maintain a consistently high level of efficiency, thereby reducing variation in performance of a work team.

In addition, organizational effectiveness can be improved when OCB occurs by the development of social capital (e.g., through enhancing network relations when workers show helping behaviour, social capital is improved, Enhancing knowledge flow and organizational learning, and efficiently carrying out organizational tasks (Organ et al., 2006). Many organisation-level OCB findings include reduced costs and customer satisfaction (Podsakoff et al., 2009). OCB is linked to performance at the person level, in addition to organizational outcomes, Including management assessment of employee performance, reward

allocation decisions and various retirement-related factors such as absenteeism, staff turnover intention and actual turnover (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Recognizing OCB's association with individual and organizational outcomes, Researchers looked at OCB antecedents. Podsakoff et al. (2000) noted that most OCB research focused on four major background categories that included individual characteristics, organizational characteristics, job characteristics, and leadership behaviors. Of them, Somech and Drach-Zahavy (2004) emphasized that the individual characteristics had received greater attention. The characteristics of an individual are expected to affect the extent to which the individual will go beyond and beyond what the job description has stipulated. A meta-analysis conducted by Organ and Ryan (1995) Revealed that some of the individual factors observed to influence OCB include job attitudes (job satisfaction, organizational engagement, perceived fairness, leadership support), role perceptions (role conflict and role ambiguity) and personality traits (conscientiousness, agreement, positive affectivity, and negative affectivity). Similarly, a meta-analysis by LePine et al. (2002) on OCB studies later found that, in addition to antecedents such as happiness, engagement, fairness, and respect for members, conscientiousness as an individual trait was frequently examined by researchers in OCB predictor studies. Despite previous studies' greater focus on the individual characteristics, Of the potential effect of spirituality on OCB, little is known. Sulea et al. (2012), for example, have examined the role of labor participation as a mediator between workplace resource and extra-role behaviors such as OCB.

They concentrated however on perceived organizational support as a tool in the workplace. Workplace spirituality that includes the experience of employees seeking inherent meaning in work and sense of connection with organizational members (Gupta et al., 2013) has begun to be seen as a new perspective for understanding employee behavior like OCB and thus improving organizational performance. Among the limited studies that had examined the connection between spirituality and OCB are those by (Nasurdin et al., 2013; Kazemipour et al., 2012) that found significant correlations between spirituality and OCB.

Considering the limited studies on the spirituality-OCB link, this paper is a review of literature, and the aims is to propose a framework on the effects of spirituality in the workplace, as an individual resource, on OCB and the mediating role of labor engagement using Bakker and Demerouti's (2008) work engagement model and previous empirical literature. It addresses the need to

incorporate spirituality in the workplace and work engagement with organizational behavior, namely OCB, in a context that researchers could use to better understand OCB. The framework developed in this paper is hoped to add to the scarcity of literature on how spirituality in the workplace is linked to OCB through work engagement. It would help organizations understand the role of spirituality and work engagement in improving OCB employees which would ultimately help improve the performance of organizations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Organ (1988) defined OCB as “an individual's behaviour in the workplace that is discretionary and not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization”. Based on this definition, there are three critical aspects of OCB. First, OCB is thought of as a discretionary behavior, which is not part of the employee's job description and the employee engages in it out of personal choice. Second, OCB goes above and beyond that which has been stipulated in the job description. Third, OCB contributes to overall organizational effectiveness.

Later, Organ (1997) redefined OCB as any behavior that contributes to the social as well as psychological context supporting task performance. OCB has also been defined as any non-task related behavior that contributes to the achievement of organizational goals by improving its social and psychological environments (Rotundo and Sackett, 2002). According to Organ (1988), OCB is comprised of five dimensions namely, (1) altruism (e.g., assisting coworkers who have heavy workloads), (2) conscientiousness (e.g., work attendance beyond the norm), (3) sportsmanship (e.g., not complaining about trivial matters), (4) courtesy (e.g., consulting with coworkers before taking action) and (5) civic virtue (e.g., involvement in the political process within the organization).

A meta-analysis of the literature by LePine et al. (2002) revealed that this five-dimension framework by Organ (1988) has been widely used by researchers in numerous empirical studies. Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1994) defined OCB as an individual's extra-role behavior at work that is not explicitly acknowledged by a formal reward system of the organization. OCB is context-bound since this behavior is more likely to be generated in a culture which places collective interest ahead of the individual (Gautam et al., 2005; Moorman and Blakely, 1995; Paine and Organ, 2000). This OCB characteristic has been studied and endorsed by Cohen and Avrahami (2006) who found that collectivist employees

tend to engage in OCB more often than individualistic employees.

Workplace Spirituality

Workplace spirituality refers to “the recognition that employees have an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in a community” (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000). An employee seeks meaningful work, not only a paycheck and attempts to be a whole person, connected to their true self, to others at work and to the transcendent (Hudson, 2014). Spirituality experienced by an employee involves a common connectedness and togetherness with other colleagues at work (Gupta et al., 2013), or the sharing and experiencing of common attraction, attachment and togetherness with others at the workplace (Harrington, 2004). Three dimensions of workplace spirituality, “meaningful work” (individual level), “sense of community” (group level) and “alignment with organizational values” (organization level), were identified and measured by Milliman et al. (2003).

An extended definition of the construct was provided by Marques (2005) who defined workplace spirituality as “an experience of interconnectedness and trust among those involved in a work process, engendered by individual goodwill, leading to the collective creation of a motivational organizational culture, epitomized by reciprocity and solidarity; and resulting in enhanced overall performance, which is ultimately translated in lasting organizational excellence” (p. 283). There seems to be various definitions of workplace spirituality and lack of agreement on an appropriate definition.

However, Duchon and Plowman (2005) concluded that a majority of the definitions of workplace spirituality involve the elements of sense of meaning, purpose and connectedness. Unlike the previous view which regards spirituality and management as incompatible, the present view has changed whereby both these factors are seen as linked and additionally, researchers and practitioners now realize that supporting workplace spirituality can to a certain extent help improve employee performance (James et al., 2011). Several scholars suggest that besides improving performance, spirituality can result in higher productivity, increased problem solving capabilities, better decision-making, higher intuitive capabilities, greater creativity and more efficient utilization of resources (Weitz et al., 2012). If managed appropriately, workplace spirituality could serve as a mechanism for controlling employee behaviour at work (James et al., 2011).

Work Engagement

In the literature, work engagement has been defined by a number of academicians and researchers. One of the first definitions that was published in the literature was by Kahn (1990) who studied the psychological conditions of engagement. According to Kahn (1990), engagement refers to “the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role performances” (p. 694). It is the “simultaneous employment and expression of a person's 'preferred self' in task behaviors that promote connections to work and to others, personal presence (physical, cognitive and emotional) and active, full role performance” (p. 700).

Rothbard (2001) noted that there were two important motivational components of role engagement—attention and absorption in a role. Engaged employees possess high levels of energy and are enthusiastic and often fully immersed in their work such that time appears to fly (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008). When employees are engaged in role performance, they invest their hands, head and heart (Rich et al., 2010) and are psychologically present when performing an organizational role (Kahn, 1990; 1992). When employees are psychologically present, they are focused, attentive, connected and integrated in role performance (Kahn, 1992). In addition, there is a variation in the extent to which employees retain their selves within the role that they perform (Kahn, 1990).

Schaufeli et al. (2002) defined engagement “as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption” (p. 74). Vigor is associated with high energy levels and mental resilience while at work; dedication refers to a state of being strongly involved in work and accompanied by feelings of enthusiasm and significance as well as a sense of challenge; and absorption refers to a state of being in full concentration and engrossed in work or unable to detach oneself from work. They further added that engagement is “a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behavior”.

Work Engagement Model

According to the work engagement model by Bakker and Demerouti (2008), job resources in the form of, for example, social support from coworkers and supervisors, feedback for performance improvement, skill variety and autonomy initiate a motivational process leading to greater work engagement and

consequently to improved performance. Job resources refer to physical, social, psychological or organizational elements of a job which decreases job demands; stimulate the achievement of work goals and/or personal growth, learning and development (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004).

Personal resources refer to individuals' sense of ability to successfully control and produce an impact on their environment and such resources are positive self-evaluations that are associated with resiliency (Hobfoll et al., 2003). It has been shown that positive self-evaluations predict desirable outcomes such as motivation, goal setting, performance and job and life satisfaction (Judge et al., 2004). In addition, the model proposes that job resources become more significant and increase their motivational potential in situations where there are high job demands such as workload and emotional and mental demands. Job and personal resources have been shown to be mutually related and personal resources can act as independent predictors of work engagement (Xanthopoulou et al., 2009a; 2009b). Based on the model of work engagement, it is postulated that a personal resource such as spirituality can predict work engagement and consequently lead to OCB.

Workplace Spirituality and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Workplace spirituality is one of the variables that has so far been ignored in organizational behaviour research and it has a great possibility of influencing OCB. Tepper (2003) in his conceptual framework pointed out that employees who have high spiritual values and experience a greater meaning at work are likely to perform frequent acts of OCB. Additionally, Tan and Geh (2009) proposed a theoretical model in which work spirituality has been linked to OCB and they have verified it empirically. Kazemipour et al. (2012) who conducted a study on 305 Iranian nurses employed in four public hospitals, concluded that workplace spirituality dimensions (i.e., a sense of community, meaningful work and alignment with organisational values) have significant associations with OCB and workplace spirituality accounted for 16% of the variation in OCB of nurses.

Nasurdin et al. (2013) investigated the effects of workplace spirituality dimensions on OCB of academic staff attached to 15 private institutions of higher learning in Malaysia. They found that meaningful work, as a dimension of spirituality, was positively related to all of the OCB dimensions (conscientiousness, sportsmanship, helping behaviour and civic virtue).

Similarly, a significant relationship between workplace spirituality and OCB was found in studies among teachers in Iran (Ahmadi et al., 2014; Moosapour et al., 2013). Hence, empirical studies suggest that employees with a deep sense of meaning and feel connected to others at work and experience a strong sense of alignment with organizational values are bound to display OCB. We therefore postulate that workplace spirituality would positively affect OCB.

Workplace Spirituality and Job Engagement

Currently, both workplace spirituality and job engagement are emerging as important topics in the field of organizational behaviour with a focus on employee performance and well-being as outcomes. Earlier, Mirvis (1997) noted that to engage an employee at work one should bear in mind the employee's spiritual life and collective potential. According to Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2010), the possibility of having more determination and greater attempt to exert more effort at work is more common among employees who consider their work as a means to develop spirituality than those who work only for the sake of money. Similarly, Krishnakumar and Neck (2002) suggested that organizations with spiritually-rich values are more effective in engaging the souls of their employees than organizations with less spiritual values (Jurkiewicz and Giacalone, 2004).

Krishnakumar and Neck (2002) noted that fostering spirituality will generate the feeling of wholeness among employees when they come to work. According to Kahn (1992), both workplace spirituality and engagement involve one's complete self in performing one's work role. As yet, empirical research linking workplace spirituality to work engagement is still lacking and only a few studies have considered the effect of spirituality on work engagement at the workplace. For instance, Kolodinsky et al. (2008) found that organizational spirituality was positively linked to work engagement. Likewise, the results of a study by Saks (2011) showed that meaningfulness of work, which is a dimension of workplace spirituality, is a significant psychological condition that influences an employee's degree of engagement at work.

When work is seen as fulfilling and satisfying, striving for task accomplishment takes on new meaning resulting in greater investment of energy and time or engagement at work (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010; Paloutzian and Lowe, 2012). Similarly, other researchers have also shown the association between meaningfulness of work and work engagement (Hirschi, 2012; Rothmann and

Buy, 2011). In conclusion, even though spirituality in the workplace and work engagement have previously been more often studied separately, there are some evidence that workplace spirituality might be an important new driver of work engagement.

Work Engagement and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

According to Kahn (1992), an individual becomes actively engaged at work when he or she is able to involve and express himself or herself physically, cognitively and emotionally. He noted that it is this involvement and expression of oneself in task behaviors that promote role performance. Rana et al. (2014) proposed a theoretical model of antecedents and outcomes of employee engagement in which OCB is one of the organizational outcomes of engagement. Similarly, Soane et al. (2012) suggested that OCB is a possible outcome of job engagement because the engaged state not only encompasses positive affect but also motivates beneficial behaviors. Hence, it is reasonable to expect that work engagement could lead to role behavior such as OCB. Past studies have shown the relationship between work engagement and OCB.

According to a study in Norway by Kuvaas and Dysvik (2009), employees who engage in collaborative work are more involved in OCB. Rurkkhum and Bartlett (2012), in their study conducted in Thai organizations, revealed that there was a positive relationship between employee engagement and every component of OCB including courtesy, conscientiousness, altruism, sportsmanship and civic virtues. Other studies have also reported the link between work engagement and OCB (Hakanen et al., 2006; 2008). Engaged employees tend to perform OCB because they efficiently achieve their goals at work and they feel that they are able to perform OCB as an extrarole behavior (Christian et al., 2011). Most of these studies were carried out in Malaysia, Iranian, and others in the developed world. Hence, the need to carry out this study in Nigeria in order to propose a framework for organizational behavior. It can be concluded that the literature seems to support the influence of work engagement on OCB.

Framework of Spirituality, Work Engagement and OCB

Using the model of work engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008) and previous literature, a structure was developed to describe the relationships between workplace spirituality, job commitment and OCB (Fig .1). The model of job interaction offers a valuable theoretical context for understanding how an affective-motivational situation influence OCB. Studies have shown that when

employees are provided with resources, they experience work commitment, which in turn leads to positive results such as engagement (Hakanen et al., 2006; Hu and Schaufeli, 2011). and proactive behavior (Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008).

Spirituality is a form of personal tool (Bickerton et al., 2014; Karakas, 2010) in which workers are seen as a way to cope with their work as they feel connected to their work and consider their work as important to them. Individual tools, such as workplace spirituality, may produce positive behavior in the context of an OCB based on the job engagement model. When workers feel transcendence through the job process and a sense of belonging in the company associated with others, they feel positive feelings that add happiness and completeness to the job. These emotions generate an array of thinking and acting based on the Broaden and Build Theory (Fredrickson, 2003), such as engaging in OCB that involves for example helping their colleagues or the work team with heavy workload.

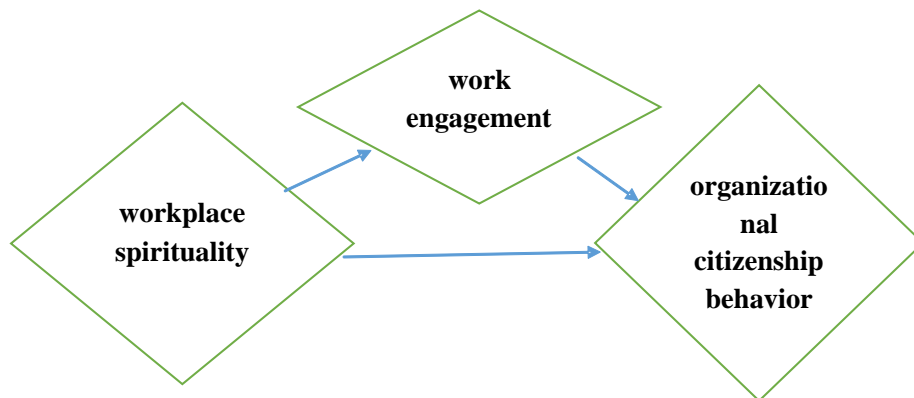


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the mediating effect of work engagement on the relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behavior.

Employees who find their work meaningful or have a sense of purpose in their work are also able to integrate their personal lives with their work and hence experience wholeness. Such employees are likely to be more engaged in their work whereby according to Bakker (2011), they are physically, cognitively and emotionally immersed in their work and this in turn will result in improved performance including the engagement in citizenship behavior at work. Work spirituality is the independent variable, work engagement is the mediating variable and organizational citizenship behavior is the depending variable. The model also shows that Work spirituality has a direct relationship with organizational citizenship behaviour and that work engagement mediate in the

relationship between Work spirituality and organizational citizenship behavior. Based on the developed conceptual framework that emanates from the review of literature, we propose as follows:

- Proposition 1: There is significant positive relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational citizen behaviour.
- Proposition 2: There is significant positive relationship between workplace spirituality and work engagement.
- Proposition 3: There is significant positive relationship between work engagement and organizational citizen behaviour.
- Proposition 4: Work engagement mediates the relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational citizen behaviour.

CONCLUSION

Using Bakker and Demerouti's work engagement model (2008) and results from previous studies, a research framework was developed on the relationship between workplace spirituality and the actions of organizational citizenship with work engagement as the mediator. In addition to using the working engagement model, the framework integrates literature on the various topics of workplace spirituality, Engagement of employees, and OCB. Recognizing the ability of organizational spirituality to promote job participation, which in turn increases OCB, will help companies understand the value of spirituality as a human tool that could boost OCB by participating in the job.

If organisations, through the experience of meaningful work, interaction with others at work and a strong alignment of their values with organizational values, allow employees to be whole people at work, there is a great possibility that both employees and organizations can benefit. The significance of this paper is that it provides a framework and hypotheses that could be tested using modeling procedure for structural equation. At the same time this paper proposed that Bakker and Demerouti's work engagement model (2008) could be used to describe the interrelationships between spirituality in the workplace, work engagement and OCB. However, by collecting strong data illustrating how spirituality can affect key attitudes and outcomes in workplaces, research will generate insightful conclusions that will feed management practice. I hope that this study represents a useful step in that direction.

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