

Toward Greater Spirituality in Personal and Professional Life: The Movement Gains Momentum During These Challenging Times

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Abstract

This paper attempts to find out whether spirituality plays an increasing, decreasing, or neutral role in challenging times. To do so, it presents the findings of a survey conducted amongst 52 executives in Los Angeles (N=200, response rate 26%), who performed in various positions and workplaces. The survey findings led the researchers to conclude that spirituality is a highly important approach in challenging times, and to subsequently suggest that leaders who aim for lasting excellence of their endeavors should nurture work environments that support trust, morale, and harmony.



Introduction

This paper is the result of a study that was implemented to determine the general perceptions on spirituality and spirituality at work; specifically, to identify the possible effects of working in a spiritual environment. The authors of this paper conducted a survey on 200 business executives in the Los Angeles area, and received 52 responses or 26%. The workforce members interviewed were all living and working in Los Angeles, between 30 and 60 years of age, with more than 5 years of full-time working experience, and performing in various positions and workplaces. The common factor among these workforce members is that they were all supporters of a non-profit movement on workplace transformation.

The paper first presents a literature review on spirituality, including a historical overview and a reflection of this phenomenon as interpreted at the personal, integrative, and professional level,



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and subsequently engages in a discussion of the study. The survey findings are presented, followed by tables that include frequency, relative frequency, and top-ten ranking of the answers provided. After an analysis of the study findings, a conclusion is presented.

Purpose of the Paper

The authors of this paper wanted to find out what the role of spirituality is in challenging times: Do people gravitate to or deviate from their spiritual values, or is there no change in that regard? Once some of the corresponding answer categories were combined, a clear trend became visible: spirituality is the most important approach in challenging times, and leaders who aim for lasting excellence of their endeavors should nurture work environments that support trust, morale, and harmony.

Workplace Spirituality: A Historical Overview

Interest in workplace spirituality has been growing by leaps and bounds over the last two decades (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Benefiel, 2003, 2007; Cavanagh & Bandsuch, 2002; Driver, 2007;

Duchon & Ashmos, 2005; Gotsis & Kortezi, 2008; Marques, Dhiman, & King, 2007, 2009; McCormick, 1994; Mitroff & Denton, 1999; Neal, 1997; Poole, 2009). A *Business Week* cover story quoted Laura Nash, a business ethicist at Harvard Divinity School and author of *Believers in Business*, as follows: "Spirituality in the workplace is exploding.... One recent poll found that American managers want a deeper sense of meaning and fulfillment on the job--even more than they want money and time off." (Conlin, 1999, p. 2)

An issue of the *U.S. News & World Report* (May 3, 1999) reported: "In the past decade, more than 300 titles on workplace spirituality – from Jesus CEO to The Tao of Leadership – have flooded the bookstores.... Indeed, 30 MBA programs now offer courses on this issue. It is also the focus of the current issue of Harvard School Bulletin." Signs of this sudden concern for corporate soul have been showing up everywhere: from boardrooms to company lunchrooms; from business conferences to management newsletters; from management consulting firms to business schools. Echoing Andre Malraux – who said that the 21st century's task will be to rediscover its Gods – some management thinkers are prophesying that the effective leaders of the 21st century will be spiritual leaders (Bolman & Deal, 2001; Carroll, 2007; Pruzan & Mikkelsen, 2007).

Organizations are increasingly realizing the futility of achieving financial success at the cost of humanistic values. Employees are expecting to get something more than just employment from the workplace (Bragues, 2006). At the beginning of the millennium, organizations have been reflecting upon discovering ways to help employees balance work and family, and to create conditions wherein each person can realize his/her

potential while fulfilling the requirements of the job. Autry (1994) has referred to such enlightened organizations as incubators of the spirit.

Work has ceased to be just the "nine-to-five thing," but is increasingly seen as an important element in fulfilling one's destiny. As Autry (1994) has observed, "Work can provide the opportunity for spiritual and personal, as well as financial, growth. If it doesn't, we are wasting far too much of our lives on it" (p. 117). Autry insists on achieving, what he calls, an exquisite balance between professional and personal life. Bolman and Dean (2001) underscore that leading others is increasingly seen as an extension of managing ourselves.

The implications of these changes are clear. On one hand, it is about how to work collectively, reflectively, and spiritually smarter. On the other hand, it refers to doing work that is mind-enriching, heart-fulfilling, soul-satisfying, and financially rewarding.

Social scientists and management scholars (Conlin, 1999; Gotsis & Kortezi, 2008; McCormick, 1994; Neal, 1997) cite the following reasons for this resurgence of interest in spirituality in the workplace:

- Baby-boomers' mid-life soul-searching
- Arrival of the new millennium
- Anxiety caused by corporate downsizing and restructuring
- Search for meaning through work
- Quest for stability in an unstable world
- Movement towards more holistic living
- Greater influx of women in the workplace
- Developed countries' progression from belly needs to brain needs

Spirituality

Meaning and Definition

The term spirituality means different things to different people. Webster's Dictionary defines spirituality as: of, relating to, consisting of or affecting the spirit; of relating to sacred matters; concerned with religious values; of, related to, or joint in spirit. The term "spirituality" comes from the Latin word "spiritus" that means vapor, breath, air or wind.

Although the interest in workplace spirituality has been growing over the past two decades, still "the field is full of obscurity and imprecision for the researcher, the practitioner, the organizational analyst and whoever attempts to systematically approach this relatively new inquiry field" (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2008, p. 575). Although no commonly agreed upon definition of spirituality yet exists (Ashforth & Pratt, 2003), a review of most frequently cited definitions of workplace spirituality reveal the following key components: meaning and purpose in life, sense of interconnectedness and belonging, and personal joy and fulfillment (Adams & Csernick, 2002; Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; De Klerk, 2005; Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003; Marques, Dhiman, & King, 2005, 2007, 2009; Neal, 1999). Later in this paper, the topic of workplace spirituality will be discussed in more detail.

Spirituality vs. Religion

There is a natural tendency to confuse spirituality with religion. Spirituality, however, is distinct from institutionalized religion. While religion often looks outward depending on rites and rituals; spirituality looks inward – the kingdom within. Spirituality recognizes that there is something

sacred at the core of all existence. Whatever its source, this sacred element dwells within each and every living being. Spirituality is non-dogmatic, non-exclusive, gender-neutral, and non-patriarchal. In his book, *Ethics for the New Millennium*, the Dalai Lama (1999) makes a clear distinction between spirituality and religion and situates spirituality within the larger societal context, as follows:

Religion I take to be concerned with faith in the claims of one faith tradition or another, an aspect of which is the acceptance of some form of heaven or nirvana. Connected with this are religious teachings or dogma, ritual prayer, and so on. Spirituality I take to be concerned with those qualities of the human spirit—such as love and compassion, patience tolerance, forgiveness, contentment, a sense of responsibility, a sense of harmony—which bring happiness to both self and others. (p. 22)

Although it is widely acknowledged that workplaces that nourish their employees' spirits gain increased commitment and that attention paid to holistic human flourishing in the workplace creates increased engagement and potential for greater performance (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003; Garcia-Zamor, 2003), "the jury remains out about the bottom-line relevance of organizational spirituality" (Poole, 2009, p. 577). Poole cites several studies such as by Gallup, NOP, the Work Foundation, and Roffey Park that show that the general level of engagement in most workplaces borders at a staggeringly low 20%. According to him, "any company able to lift these levels by even a percentage point will release additional resource and capacity from their human assets." (p. 587)

Some critics believe that spirituality in the workplace is a passing fad just like its predecessors such as TQM and Reengineering. Yet, after providing a critical review of the literature on workplace spirituality, Gotsis and Kortezi (2008) observe,

“there are good reasons to believe that workplace spirituality is more than an impermanent trend; on the contrary, the concept carries a much more substantial meaning and its potential contribution to a more rounded understanding of human work, of the workplace and of the organizational reality worthy of examination”. (p. 575)

Spirituality and Leadership

Underscoring the vital link between spirituality and leadership, Hawley (1993, p. 5) has noted that ‘all leadership is spiritual because the leader seeks to liberate the best in the people and best is always liked to one’s higher self. Fry (2003, 2008), in discussing the initial theory of spiritual leadership, opines that workplace spirituality and spiritual leadership can be viewed as constructs that are in the initial concept/elaboration stage of development. He views spiritual leadership as a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for organizations to be successful in today’s highly unpredictable Internet driven environment. Fry agrees that people need something to believe in, someone to believe in, and someone to believe in them. Fry stresses that spiritual leaders determine their place on a need basis: in front when they need to be followed, behind when they need to encourage, and beside when they need to be a friend.

Fry (2003) presents a model of spiritual leadership that fosters intrinsic motivation through vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love. At the heart of this model is the practice of altruistic love, which is

described as unconditional, selfless, caring concern for both self and others. Altruistic love is nurtured through spiritual values such as trust/loyalty, forgiveness/acceptance/gratitude, integrity, honesty, courage, humility, kindness, empathy /compassion, patience/meekness/endurance, excellence, self-discipline, and truthfulness.

It must be noted that garnering a sense of kindness and compassion benefits both the practitioner as well as the recipient. Recently, positive psychology has confirmed the emotional and health benefits of altruistic love. Empirical research by Lyubomirsky and her colleagues has shown that we can maximize our well-being as much as 40% by intentionally engaging in activities such as expressing gratitude, doing random acts of kindness, and creating a sense of optimism (Boehm & Lyubomirsky, 2009; Kurtz & Lyubomirsky, 2008; Lyubomirsky, 2008; Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005; Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2006; Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2007).

Importance and Role of Spirituality in Personal Life

Spirituality in personal life is anchored in the now widely stated belief that we are not human beings on a spiritual journey, but spiritual beings on a human journey. It begins with the premise that, in the grand cosmic scheme of things, everything and everyone has a purpose. And to realize this purpose is to live a life of purpose. Warren (2002) calls living such life a “purpose-driven life.” According to Frankl (1959/1999) “There is nothing in the world [...] that would so effectively help one to survive even the worst conditions, as the knowledge that there is a meaning in one’s life” (p. 95). Frankl is fond of quoting Nietzsche: He

who has a “why” to live can bear with almost any “how.”

Shah (2004) establishes a link between spirituality and psychology in his claim that there is no spirituality without proper psychology orientation. Personal spirituality, therefore, builds on healthy psychology that begins with the primacy of consciousness—the font of all possibilities. Many modern writers (Chopra, 1994; Dyer, 1972; Goodman, 1985; Wei, 2000; Zukav, 1999) recognize the creative power that lies at center of human consciousness. Chopra (1994), for instance, asserts, “The source of all creation is pure consciousness: pure potentiality seeking expression from the unmanifest to the manifest. And when we realize that our true Self is one of pure potentiality, we align align with the power that manifests everything in the universe”. (p. 7)

Another important aspect of personal spirituality is realizing one’s essential kinship with all existence, a realization born of understanding that everything is connected with everything else and that to be is to interbe (Thich, 2009). In the words of Eliot (1969):

In the Heaven of Indra, there is said to be a network of pearls, so arranged that if you look at one you see all the others reflected in it. In the same way each object in the world is not merely itself but involves every other object and in fact IS everything else. In every particle of dust, there are present Buddhas without number. (pp.109-110)

This understanding helps one to make responsible choices in all aspects of life and garners a greater reverence for all life.

Finally, spirituality in personal life recognizes that our authentic power lies in living fully in the present moment, becoming aware of the silent sense of our presence, our being. Tolle (1999) refers to it as witnessing presence, and Langford (2008) as Awareness Watching Awareness. The moment one starts “watching the thinker,” states Tolle (1999), “a higher level of consciousness becomes activated” (p. 14). Tolle (1999) continues,

“You then begin to realize that there is a vast realm of intelligence beyond thought, that thought is only a tiny aspect of that intelligence. You also realize that all the things that truly matter - beauty, love, creativity, joy, inner peace - arise from beyond the mind. You begin to awaken, freeing yourself from your mind.” And to live with felt awareness in the present moment is to be awakened to the reality of our essential being”. (p. 14)

Importance and Role of Spirituality in Professional Life

The awareness that work time should be quality time, not only from an organization’s perspective but also for all individuals involved, has soared in the past decade. The number of books, scholarly papers, and short articles on the desire toward improved quality of life in the workplace speaks for itself. And whether the phenomenon here referred to is called “spirituality in the workplace”, “job satisfaction”, “business renaissance,” or something else; the basic implication is the same: workers at all levels want to feel that they represent more than a mere tool toward organizational profit. Mullins (2005) words it as follows: “Staff satisfaction is an important factor in good teamwork, retention and practice development” (p. 36). Long (2005) asserts along the same lines, “Happiness with work is critical to an individ-

ual's overall well-being" (p. 303). Ruch (2005) even suggests a three-step plan for management toward greater workers engagement, entailing, 1) the development of "a deep understanding of your workforce-demographics, skill sets, personality traits, and perspectives on the culture" (p. 11), 2) the creation and maintenance of a balanced workforce; and 3) the creation of "an accepting culture" (p. 11).

Increasingly, critics, consultants, and employees seem to agree that organizational excellence is best sustained when combined with workers' gratification. In their performance review of VSP, the nation's largest provider of eye care benefits, Leuchars, Harrington, and Erickson (2003) conclude that "maximum contribution occurs when there is a high level of satisfaction on the part of the employee" (p. 34). These authors further assert, that in VSP's case, "This collective satisfaction has translated into observable, quantifiable business impacts" (p. 34). Bowden (2000) concurs with this correlation between employee satisfaction and organizational performance. It is his finding that "many organizations are recognizing that the traditional measure of employee satisfaction gives but a one-dimensional view of employee perception of value and certainly sheds no light on the alignment of employee-held values with required organizational outcomes" (p. 10). Emphasizing the importance of a positive relationship between workers' input and company excellence Bowden (2000) continues, "Organizations need to find other dimensions that get to the motivational and cultural drivers - the characteristic values - that will get their employees to put their weight behind the enterprise" (p. 10). Perttula (2004) also agrees with the above by alleging that passion for work is considered fundamental; otherwise, employees will not

be able to uphold the energy essential to organizational excellence and managers will have a hard time stimulating organizational members.

Workplace Spirituality and the 21st Century

Recently, the topic of spirituality in the workplace has taken a high magnitude and visibility due to the lack of security, loyalty, continuity, and the constant downsizing of organizations in a frantic search for profit. Marschke (2008) explains that the rise of workplace spirituality since the late 1990's could partly be attributed to the high cost that society has to pay for unethical corporate leaders and selfishly formulated human resource standards, based on maintenance of the affluence of these leaders and their boards of directors.

In this new millennium, the trend has been intensified toward increased human values and less focus on material gains and fleeting positions. While not everyone may see the current economic downturn as evidence that the spiritual movement is on the right track, there seems to be general agreement on the fact that challenging times bring us closer to human values than to aggressive financial moves. Nooyi (2009) feels that there is, indeed, more focus on value-based issues these days. She states, "the decline in economic activity has more direct consequences too. Suddenly people will be more searching in their quest for good value. This is something we are seeing the world over" (p. 67).

As stated earlier, we are not referring to a religious stream when discussing "spiritual movement," but rather to a revisiting of human workers to senses of interconnection and mutuality. The spiritual movement in and of itself has been in full swing since the beginning of the nineties,

and various definitions have been presented since. Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003), for instance, define workplace spirituality as “a framework of organizational values evidenced in the culture that promotes employees’ experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected to others in a way that provides feelings of completeness and joy” (p. 13). Ashmos and Duchon (2005) have explained spirituality at work as “the recognition that employees have an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of community” (p. 807). In 2007, Marques, Dhiman, and King presented the following definition:

" Spirituality in the workplace is an experience of interconnectedness among those involved in a work process, initiated by authenticity, reciprocity, and personal good will; engendered by a deep sense of meaning that is inherent in the organization’s work; and resulting in greater motivation and organizational excellence." (p. 12)

It is important to take note of the link between personal goodwill, human connection, and organizational excellence expressed in this last definition. From this definition, which was a conclusion of a longitudinal study, it can be deduced that an organization cannot function efficiently in an environment of insecurity and without trust.

When comparing all three definitions above, we can conclude that all implicate a revived human awareness toward internal and external connections, and the fact that well-being for the entire group can get established through that. With the challenges of contemporary times, this language has grown stronger and has diverged into multi-

ple directions and dimensions. The following review of values and characteristics highlighted in recent publications will demonstrate the vibrancy of the spiritual mindset.

In a review of today’s financial challenges, Force capitalizes on a key theme of current U.S. President Obama by focusing on hope. She states, “Hope is such a critical aspect of the human experience. Whatever boat we’re in, we know we can hope for something more. Something better. Something different” (Force, 2009, p. 4). In another article, Force (2008) stresses that the phrase, “doing more with less” has transcended the status of being a popular buzzword to now enter the realm of everyday life. It is here where she also points out that we should *nurture our relationships* and *focus on unity* instead of division. Focus is also high on Isaac’s (2008) agenda: he calls for *focus on the purpose, enhanced connection* with stakeholders, and *adding value* to a higher degree than competitors do.

In a speech delivered to the University of Miami in 2009, Aldrich Sevilla-Sacasa, former President and CEO, U.S. Trust Co., emphasized the *interconnectedness* of today’s world, and the need for *greater transparency* in business transactions. He also commented that success in the future will be reserved for those who apply effective and quick *communication*, and demonstrate *sensitivity* to a wide variety of cultures. This perspective is seconded by Dyer (2008/2009), who asserts, “Although a company shouldn’t have to go to these extremes to value the importance of communication, the unfortunate truth for many is that internal communicators are now having to prove their worth more than ever” (p. 1).

Orrell (2009) accentuates a focus on *work-life balance*, *mentoring* and *accessibility* of management for corporations that want to outsmart this economic downturn, while Blausten (2009) highlights *reliability*, *integrity* and *authenticity* as the ultimate requirements for our business leaders today.

Schanz (2009) adds yet another dimension to the picture of important values by earmarking trust as a damaged but crucial attribute toward survival of these times.

As we are heading toward a more humane oriented organizational climate, some familiar theories, such as Maslow's earlier mentioned hierarchy of needs, start reclaiming their essence. Aigiang (2009) recommends, "Since in some cases, employees spend more than eight hours in the workplace every day, companies should spend a lot of time on serving [Maslow's] hierarchy" (p. 27). Aigiang (2009) emphasizes that issues such as belonging, self-esteem and self-actualization needs, which are now crucial in establishing a gratifying work climate, have very much to do with company cultures. Aigang, therefore, recommends managers to work closely together with their Human Resources staff to help create "a company culture of cooperation and respect as a shared mindset of the company and establishing a transparent system of recognition, reward and motivation" (p. 27). As Bidwell, Francis, Johnson, Otuteye, and Powell (2009) state, "This is a time when leaders must show their worth. Now is that time" (p. 36).

Is Spirit at Work Really Possible?

One of the prominent questions that keeps arising when discussing the topic of spirituality in the workplace is how to establish this phenomenon when the average organizational environment, by definition, leans more toward toxic than toward

healthy. In an article where Heard (2005) explains the increasing call for responsible workplace flexibility and work-life balance among CPA's, for instance, this author emphasizes, "In 1999 workplace stress cost American business \$3 billion, and that figure continues to rise" (p. 94). Mor Barak and Levin (2002) claim that "research over the past two decades indicates that exclusion from organizational information networks and from important decision-making processes is one of the most significant problems facing today's diverse workforce" (p. 133). It is Mor Barak and Levin's opinion that, "Many workers lack a sense of inclusion, which is a key component in wanting to remain at a place of employment" (p. 133).

On top of the stressful atmosphere that seems to be more rule than exception in corporate America, it also seems that establishing a spiritual workplace is perceived as practically impossible when one is not a member of top management. In various Los Angeles based business organizational workshops and higher education courses on the topic of spirit at work, co-facilitated by the author of this paper, the recurring query was, "how can one establish or promote spirituality at work if one is not a member of top management?" This question is definitely one that requires a deeper look into the phenomenon of spirituality in the workplace and the prerequisites at stake. Since spirituality in the workplace, as a phenomenon, is still a disputed topic among various theorists –some consider it impossible without the involvement of religion, while others strongly reject the incorporation of the "R" word when talking spirituality – a clear reference to what is meant in this particular paper seems to be necessary.

Table 1: Responses from 52 Participants on their Personal and Professional Spiritual Experiences

No.	Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Totall
1	Spirituality is very important to me in my personal life	37	13	2	0	0	52
2	Spirituality is very important tome in my professional life	30	18	3	1	0	52
3	Spirituality and religion mean the same thing to me	2	8	8	23	11	52
4	Gender plays an important role in one's spiritual quest	1	4	19	14	14	52
5	My spiritual journey gained momentum due to a significant event in my life	16	23	9	3	1	52
6	I feel comfortable expressing my spirituality in my personal life	23	22	6	1	0	52
7	I feel comfortable expressing my spirituality in my professional life	18	16	12	6	0	52
8	Spirituality has provided stability in my life during difficult times	35	12	5	0	0	52
9	Spirituality has made me more resilient in my personal life	30	15	7	0	0	52
10	Spirituality has made me more productive in my professional life	27	18	6	1	0	52
11	In a spiritual workplace greater harmony exists among employees	28	15	8	0	1	52
12	A spiritual workplace characterizes a high sense of morale among employees	28	17	6	1	0	52
13	A spiritual workplace harbors a greater sense of trust between employees	27	18	7	0	0	52
14	Spirituality is universal	28	13	8	2	1	52

Table 2: Frequency Data on Top-Ten Choices

Questions	Strongly Agree			Agree			Neutral			Disagree			Strongly Disagree		
	F	RF	TT	F	RF	TT	F	RF	TT	F	RF	TT	F	RF	TT
1. Spirituality is very important to me in my personal life	37	71	1	13	25	7	2	0	9	0	0	7	0	0	4
2. Spirituality is very important to me in my professional life	30	58	3	18	35	3	3	6	8	1	2	6	0	0	4
3. Spirituality and religion mean the same thing to me	2	0		8	15	9	8	15	4	23	44	1	11	21	2
4. Gender plays an important role in one's spiritual quest	1	0		4	8	10	19	37	1	14	27	2	14	27	1
5. My spiritual journey gained momentum due to a significant event in my life	16	31	8	23	44	1	9	17	3	3	6	4	1	2	3
6. I feel comfortable expressing my spirituality in my personal life	23	44	6	22	42	2	6	12	6	1	2	6	0	0	4
7. I feel comfortable expressing my spirituality in my professional life	18	35	7	16	31	5	12	23	2	1	12	3	0	0	4
8. Spirituality has provided stability in my life during difficult times	35	67	2	12	23	8	5	10	7	0	0	7	0	0	4
9. Spirituality has made me more resilient in my personal life	30	58	3	15	29	6	7	13	5	0	0	7	0	0	4
10. Spirituality has made me more productive in my professional life	27	52	5	18	35	3	6	12	6	1	2	6	0	0	4

The Study

In order to find out what the general perceptions are on spirituality and spirituality at work, and specifically, what the possible effects of working in a spiritual environment were, the authors of this paper conducted a survey among 200 business executives in the Los Angeles area. These business executives were all in the age category between 30 and 60 years, and had at least 5 years of full-time work experience. They were working in multiple industries, such as fashion, entertainment, business consulting, education, engineering, banking, and architecture. This broad variety of representatives from various business directions could be targeted, due to the fact that they are all members of a support group focusing on

conscious change in the workplace, and attend quarterly sessions within this setting.

The questionnaire was provided via email to the database of business executives, who regularly participate in our projects. The participants were given one month to respond, and 52 (26%) completed the survey. Table 1 below represents a summary of the responses as they were received.

Based on the information provided by the participants, the researchers engaged in analysis of the data, a process, which is explained next.

Data Analysis

Discussing Table 2

In the first step of the data analysis, represented

Table 3: Combined Frequency with Top-Ten Choices

Questions	Strongly Agree/Agree		Strongly Disagree/Disagree		Neutral	
	RF	TT	RF	TT	RF	TT
1	96	1	0		0	9
2	93	2	0		6	8
3	19	9	65	1	15	4
4	10	10	54	2	37	1
5	75	7	8	4	17	3
6	87	4	0		12	6
7	65	8	12	3	23	2
8	90	3	0		10	7
9	87	4	0		13	5
10	87	4	0		12	6
11	83	5	0		15	4
12	87	4	0		12	6
13	87	4	0		13	5
14	79	6	6	5	12	6

in Table 2 below, we re-listed the frequency of answers given for each question (represented under “F” in the table), and then converted these frequencies to percentages based on the total number of participants. These percentages were listed in the columns “RF”, which stands for relative frequency. Finally, we ranked the answers on basis of their relative frequency in a top-ten list, represented under the columns “TT”. As an example, Question 1 received a response or frequency rate (“F”) of “Strongly Agree” from 37 participants. Based on a total of 52 participants, this reflects 71% of the total of respondents that answered this question (see “RF”). In the RF list, 71 turns out to be the highest percentage, which resulted in Question 1 being ranked as no. 1 in the Top-Ten (TT) column.

Discussing Table 3

In Table 3, we reduced the five options for

answers on the Likert scale to three by combining the “strongly agree” and “agree” answers with one another. We did so to strengthen consistency in the data, and in order to be able to enhance clarity in the findings. The same was done with the “disagree” and “strongly disagree” responses. The only category left separate was the “neutral” category. Based on the new data, we, again, listed the findings according to their relative frequency (RF) and Top-Ten (TT) ranking.

As may be evident from Table 3, we tried to determine the question(s) with the highest “relative frequency” that were chosen by the participants in the study. In “strongly agree” category questions 1 and 8 were the most popular (less popular) questions that were picked up by the participants. However, in the “agree” category, those questions 1 and 8 lost their popularity to questions 5 and 6. Since there was an inconsistency between “strongly agree” and “agree” categories, we combined these 2 and renamed them, “strongly agree/agree”. Similarly, we combined “strongly disagree” with “disagree” and renamed it “strongly disagree/disagree”.

In the “strongly agree/ agree” category, questions 1 and 2 were the most agreeable questions and questions 4 and 3 were the least recognized questions. This result indicates that participants were not “very agreeable” with their importance relatedness. Other more recognizable questions in this category were 8, 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 11 and 14.

In the “strongly disagree/disagree” category, the most recognizable questions were numbers 3 and 4. The result in this category is quite consistent with the “strongly agree/agree” category. Indicating that participants vividly stating that these two questions are not important in explain-

Table 4: Pearson's Correlations

Questions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	1	S	NS	NS	S	S	NS	S	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
2	S	1	NS	NS	NS	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	NS
3	NS	NS	1	S	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
4	NS	NS	S	1	S	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	S	S	S	NS
5	S	NS	NS	S	1	S	NS	S	S	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
6	S	S	NS	NS	S	1	S	S	NS	S	S	S	S	NS
7	NS	S	NS	NS	NS	S	1	NS	NS	S	S	S	S	S
8	S	S	NS	NS	S	S	NS	1	S	S	NS	S	S	NS
9	NS	S	NS	NS	S	NS	NS	S	1	S	NS	NS	S	NS
10	NS	S	NS	NS	NS	S	S	S	S	1	S	S	S	NS
11	NS	S	NS	S	NS	S	S	NS	NS	S	1	S	S	NS
12	NS	S	NS	S	NS	S	S	S	S	S	S	1	S	S
13	NS	S	NS	S	NS	S	S	S	NS	S	S	S	1	S
14	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	S	NS	NS	NS	NS	S	S	1

ing that spirituality issues. In this category, questions, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 have all zero relative frequency indicating that participants are not “very disagreeing” with these questions at all. In other words, they agree that these questions are important. This observation is quite consistent with the combined “strongly agree/agree” category.

In the “neutral” category, participants vividly show their neutral reaction to questions 4, 7 and 5.

Discussing Table 4

Based on the findings above, we went on to develop Table 4, which is the “correlation” table. Table 4 is actually a matrix that shows which two questions are related to one another. “S” represents a significant correlation at 1% level of confidence (2-tailed), while NS represents a Non-Significant correlation.

Discussing Table 5

Table 5 represents the factor analysis. Here, we strived to reduce the 14-question questionnaire down to its underlying dimensions by looking at which variables seem to make a cluster together in a meaningful way. This data reduction is achieved by looking for variables that correlate highly with a group of other variables, but do not correlate with variables outside of that group. In this study, there were four clusters that fit that data. The 1st factor related to an integrated view: spirituality in the workplace; the 2nd factor presented an internal view, relating to the effect of spirituality on individuals’ social and personal life; the 3rd factor presented an internal view as well, relating to how individuals mentally and professionally conceived spirituality; and the 4th factor related perspectives on the distinction

Table 5: Factor Analysis

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
A spiritual workplace characterizes a high sense of morale among employees	0.861			
In a spiritual workplace greater harmony exists among employees	0.853			
A spiritual workplace harbors a greater sense of trust between employees	0.838			
I feel comfortable expressing my spirituality in my professional life	0.684			
Spirituality is universal	0.522			
Spirituality has provided stability in my life during difficult times		0.878		
Spirituality has made me more resilient in my personal life		0.869		
Spirituality is very important to me in my personal life			0.857	
Spirituality is very important to me in my professional life			0.612	
I feel comfortable expressing my spirituality in my personal life			0.572	
Spirituality and religion mean the same thing to me				0.846
Gender plays an important role in one's spiritual quest				0.691

Note. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

between religion and spirituality and gender characteristics toward spirituality.

The result of the factor analysis (Table 5) is consistent with Table 4, "Correlation Table," at which all cluster one questions 12, 11, 13, 7 and 14 are significantly correlated with one another at the 1% significance level. The same goes for the 2nd cluster, which consists of questions 8 and 9; the 3rd cluster 1, 2 and 6; and the 4th cluster, 3 and 4. Interestingly, there is no correlation between questions in each cluster with other clusters. For example, correlations between 11, 12, 13, 7 and 14 (cluster 1) and questions 3 (cluster 2) are insignificant and so on. This observation may lead us to believe that, indeed, there are 4 distinct clusters in this study.

Empirical Results

In an effort to support our findings, we employed the chi-square testing technique, allowing us the goodness-of-fit test. In this study, we employed two sets of hypotheses testing. The general form of the set of hypothesis testing is as follows:

- Ho: All five categories (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree) are equally possible. That is, there is no difference between the set of observed frequency and the set of expected frequency and any differences between observed and expected frequency are because of chance.
- Hi: There is a difference between observed and expected set of frequency.

By rejecting the null hypothesis, we concluded that there was a significant difference between

participant responses regarding the five categories. In this regard, we employed the chi-square testing technique, allowing us the goodness-of-fit test. To do this test, we conducted two separate trials. In the first attempt, we would expect that the observed frequencies for all 5 categories are equal and any discrepancy in the observed and expected frequencies are attributed to chance (sampling). In the second trial, we utilized "unequal" expected frequency (as opposed to the first trial with equal expected frequencies). The "unequal" expected frequency was measured as:

$$.EXP. \text{ Freq. } (f_e) = \frac{(\text{Rows total})(\text{Column total})}{\text{Grand total}}$$

In this trial, to comply with 20% policy of the chi-square fitness-of-the fit test, we combined "disagree" and "strongly disagree" categories to obtain five and plus expected frequency in each cell.

In this hypothesis testing, the obtained chi-square testing = $\sum (f_o - f_e)^2 / f_e$ was greater than the critical chi-square at .05 significance level for a given degree of freedom (df).

Once the null hypothesis was rejected, then the second version of the chi-square involved testing whether or not there was a significant correlation between participant's responses regarding 14 selected outcomes. The form of this testing is:

- Ho: P = The correlation in the population is zero
- Hi: P \neq 0: The correlation in the population is different from zero

By rejecting the null hypothesis, we concluded that there was a significant among between questions.

In both sets of hypotheses testing, the null hypothesis was rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis. In the first set of hypothesis testing, the rejection of the null hypothesis, indicated that participants' perceptions regarding all 14 questions were significantly different.

The second version of hypothesis testing attempted to explore whether or not these 14 questions were correlated (pair wise). The result of this test was depicted in Table 4.

Study Findings

When relating the tables to the core concepts of this research, we find that, among the 52 participants to this study, spirituality was considered of high importance in their personal and professional life. The responses to these questions scored 1 and 2 in the top-ten categorization. We can further conclude that 90% of the participants felt that spirituality had helped them through difficult times, which, of course is in line with their assertion that spirituality is important in their personal and professional life. This is also in line with the high scores for ease in expressing their spirituality, even though this ease was clearly higher in personal than in professional environments; experiences of resiliency and higher productivity in work life, due to one's spirituality. All of the above reflections can be considered as part of an internal perspective of the participants.

In a more integrated perspective, the participants seem to be in fairly common agreement (listed as no. 4 in the Top-Ten ranking) that a spiritual workplace enhances workers' morale and mutual trust. A greater sense of harmony was also considered a fairly common trait of spiritual workplaces. This finding was listed as no. 5 on the TT list,

with 83% of the participants agreeing or strongly agreeing.

Two other significant findings in this study were, that the participants felt rather strongly that spirituality and religion are not the same thing - this point made no. 1 on the TT list of strongly disagree/disagree, and that gender does not seem to play an important role in one's quest toward spirituality: this question earned second popular ranking (no. 2) on the TT list for strongly disagree/disagree, and no. 1 ranking in the neutral list, while it ended in the last place on the TT list for agree/strongly agree. Taking all three categories into consideration, it can thus be concluded that the participants generally did not feel that gender played any role in spiritual considerations.

Reviewing the four clusters identified in Table 5, factor analysis, we can deduce the following:

- Cluster 1 related to feelings about a spiritual workplace, and as stated above, the participants to this study generally felt that workplace spirituality is important and adds to greater senses of trust, harmony and morale.
- Cluster 2 reflects strong internal reflections on the influence of spirituality in the participants' lives. As also stated in the section above, this cluster represents participants' opinions that spirituality brings resilience and provides a stable mindset in challenging times.
- Cluster 3 reflects a more general perspective on spirituality in the participants' lives, underscoring the importance they seem to massively adhere to this phenomenon.
- Cluster 4 provides a interesting view on two issues that the participants had

divergent opinions about: there was a fairly high commonality in perceptions that spirituality is universal, but there was generally a strong aversion about gender being a determining factor in one's spiritual quest.

Conclusion

An important point of caution needs to be posted prior to presenting our conclusions. The sample used for this paper was relatively small, even though it entailed a representation of a wide variety of business settings and industries. This negatively affects generalizability of the conclusions, but create a great opportunity for future researchers to test the findings and suggestions presented below in various settings for verification purposes. Furthermore, it needs to be stated that the conclusions below are not merely based on the study findings, but also on the findings of prior studies reviewed in this paper.

The researchers involved in this study feel that the findings presented and analyzed above, entails a positive encouragement to today's corporate leaders to include a spiritual approach in their organizations. This sense is supported by various statements in the literature review section of this paper, such as Bragues (2006), who had also found that contemporary workforce members are expecting to get something more than just employment from the workplace. Based on the study findings and reviewed literature, it seems that today's workforce members increasingly understand the influence of spirituality in their daily life, whether in private settings or at work, even though they may feel somewhat more inhibited to express their spirituality at work. Workers seem to be convinced that workplaces where the

spiritual mindset is nurtured will turn out to be more resilient and productive throughout challenging times. Workplace spirituality has, by now, transcended the stage where it could be considered merely hype. It has established itself as a movement that is unstoppable, and only growing in magnitude as challenges and volatility augment. The spiritual mindset has demanded attention in academia, the corporate world, and in daily interactions. Based on our literature review and the findings of this study we dare to state that nurturing a spiritual mindset can be an important way forward toward a global work environment that involves respect, acceptance, trust, harmony; hence, greater collaboration, creativity, and performance excellence.

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