Moderating Affect of Workplace Spirituality on the Relationship of Job Overload and Job Satisfaction

Amal Altaf · Mohammad Atif Awan

Abstract With the increase in market competition and dynamic work environment, work overload seems to have become a common issue suffered by almost every employee. Overload usually results in not only poor health conditions but also mental circumstances. These problems then become a threat to the organizations in the form of poor performance and lack of ability to reach standards. Workplace spirituality is one way to deal with stressful overload conditions. This research deals with the study of moderating affects of workplace spirituality on job overload and employee's satisfaction relationship. Having large piles of work in given targeted time results in employees becoming stressed out from their work as well as their organization. The motive of their job becomes to achieve targets and diminish the creativity within the employees. Workplace spirituality basic dimensions mentioned in this research help one achieve these targets and help employees cope with the symptoms caused by work overload. The research includes three variables, workplace spirituality, job overload, and job satisfaction. The samples of 76 respondents were asked to fill the questionnaire on all the three variables. The final results show interestingly different results then, as conceptualized according to theory. Workplace spirituality also showed to have quite an impact on job satisfaction.

Keywords Job overload · Job satisfaction · Workplace spirituality

Introduction

Work overload or job overload, as we know it, is a major problem suffered in almost every organizational sector. Job overload can be characterized as conditions having long difficult working hours, pressure to work overtime, lesser holidays or breaks, unreasonable work overload, and improbable expectations of what can be achieved in some given limited time and with available resources. Work overload is both physical and psychological issue. It may be due to internal or external forces. Internal forces are self made and occur when an individual tends to take work overload because he is unable to say "No." As external forces work overload is given forcedly by supervisors, saying "No" to this may, however, result in bad appraisals, job insecurity, and bad relationships with the supervisors. A person suffers from work overload when shown the following: fatigue, headache, nausea, insomnia, and the most important, stress. According to Kahn (1980), work overload can be quantitative, i.e., quantity of work to be accomplished at a given time or qualitative i.e., the ease or difficulty of accomplishing the given target. As the need for the market and competition to survive increases, so does the job overload on employees. With long working hours and heavy work loads employees suffer from stress and anxiety causing poor work performance, poor family interaction, and several physical issues. Work itself is never a problem or concern, rather job overload on an employee or job demands that exceeds normal human limits are always of concern for both the employee and its employer. The main reason behind the issue of concern is usually the results caused by such factors. For example, the threat that the organization faces for having its employee suffer from mental or physical problems. Along with other issues like meeting health and safety measures,

A. Altaf (✉) · M. A. Awan
Mohammad Ali Jinnah University, Islamabad, Pakistan
e-mail: amalaltaf@gmail.com

psychological stability of employees also needs to be focused on. Considering the following problems, one realizes that job overload tribulations are a risk to an employee, the organization, employee's family, and his friends. Therefore, job overload has now become a major social issue. Workers see their work load and timings to increase and their leisure time to decrease day by day. General health declines eventually. One of the most widely studied indicators of work overload is stress. Several programs, trainings, and sessions have been introduced worldwide to reduce stress of the job overload. Other factors include, specifying jobs and reorganizing them. It also includes roles to be clearly defined. But a little is known to what other factors have an influence on work overload such as spirituality and to be specific, workplace spirituality.

Spirituality has been a major area of focus over the years. Many researchers have given different views on spirituality. From an eastern perspective, people who are not aware of the depth of spirituality and the extent to which it has been researched, the first thought that comes to the mind is the religious factor. Many of us believe that our strong interconnection with the hereafter and our God would be spirituality. The stronger our connection with our religion and our God, the stronger the spirituality within us. However, according to many studies, spirituality can be any sense of connectedness, understanding, and satisfaction with respect to not only our religion but also toward the people and oneself. Spirituality could, therefore, be defined as an extent of satisfaction, meaning, or direction that can be achieved by performing a particular task, either religious or societal that results in a betterment of self and others. Other researchers, like Hungelmann (1985) has provided better and most appropriate categories and properties of spirituality. These include transpersonal (relationship with God), interpersonal (relationship with friends and family etc.), and intrapersonal (relationship with one's innerself). Others described spiritual well being as expression of satisfaction with ones life and perceive life to be meaningful (Moberg 1986). Another source describes spirituality as having two dimensions: one being vertical and the other being horizontal. In vertical dimension, an individual experiences profound connection between himself and his God. For example, meditation trainings, silence before meetings, prayers, and supporting employees to take time for spiritual performance as done by some companies like Microsoft, Intel, and Boeing who support Torah, Bible, and Quranic classes organized by their employees. The horizontal factor, on the other hand, deals with doing things for the betterment of the society. This includes helping others and having a desire to serve people. Examples of horizontal dimension include service

orientation, compassion, and things that are mission oriented for the betterment of the world. (From the 2008 International Spirit at Work Award Application, p. 2.)

Workplace spirituality is slightly different from the spirituality itself. It is limited to the workplace of an organization. As it has been extensively studied, every researcher has defined almost similar dimensions in a different way representing workplace spirituality. Workplace spirituality is the spiritual well being of an individual in working conditions. This can include different factors which influence the satisfaction of an individual toward his or her life or job. If these factors are limited, then they may result in dissatisfaction of the individual due to the workplace and the organization at large and, in some cases, dissatisfaction due to life itself. Workplace spirituality means that employees are satisfied with all categories of spiritual well-being as set by Hungelmann (1985). This means that they find fulfillment of both the vertical and horizontal dimensions of the spirituality. The most interesting thing is that providing a spiritual environment and following the work place spirituality activities can result into not only a satisfied employee but also results in high productivity, morale, and increasing competition. Many companies worldwide are now offering a wide range of sessions, classes, and seminars on awareness and achievement of spirituality. Spirituality is seen in any organization when they are practicing wellness procedures or measures, fairness, ethics, employee support, encouragement of spiritual change, diversity in cultures, core values, and employee development programs.

Both work overload and workplace spirituality have different influences on job satisfaction. Work overload causes stress, anxiety, and depression resulting into dissatisfaction which in turn results into poor health, poor job performance, and declining profits. This in turn results in decreasing job satisfaction. From common practice and research, it has been seen that work overload has a negative affect on job satisfaction, whereas work place spirituality seems to have a positive affect on the job satisfaction. Studies conducted by McLaughlin (1998) emphasized on workplace spirituality as it increases the profitability of organizations by better performance. A satisfied employee is said to be a better performer. Therefore, spirituality at workplace puts emphasis on the needs of the employees and in result achieves better productivity as valued employees tend to show better performance on being satisfied. The more the spiritual work environment, the more the positive working conditions and positive satisfaction. This finally results in increased job performance, job involvement, higher profits, organizational commitment, and success at large.

Introduction to the Problem

With the increase in work overload, working hours and pressure from the supervisors to achieve competitiveness, make profits, and achieve goals, work overload has become an important area of focus. Several studies have been conducted to reduce the affects of stress and depression caused by the work overload. Different sessions of stress management and role identification have been introduced, but little is known of the influence of introducing workplace spirituality in the organizations to overcome work overload effects and testing its influence on job satisfaction of employees. The following research has been conducted to study the moderating affects of workplace spirituality on work overload and job satisfaction. Workplace spirituality dimensions under study would include fairness, honesty, morale values, needs, employee development, respect, support, and encouragement.

Problem Statement

Workplace spirituality may or may not have a moderating affect on work overload and job satisfaction relationship

Objectives

The objectives of this research were to determine the impact of work overload on a particular employee, and if provided with workplace spirituality, whether it will then moderate the affects of work overload on job satisfaction. The main emphasis was to study the spiritual dimensions and its values and how they are implemented in an organization. The research has been conducted using variables—work overload, workplace spirituality, and job satisfaction. Work overload was studied to determine the negative affects and the spiritual dimensions, such as fair treatment, integrated teamwork, honesty and ethics, integrating employee values and morale, and support—these determine the positive influence with job satisfaction.

Significance

Different and separate studies have been conducted with regard to job overload and workplace spirituality and to a wide extent on job satisfaction. Although work place spirituality and job satisfaction have been studied by different researchers, no formal research has yet been found on a managerial work overload and whether spirituality will help to cope with its symptoms. Stress is one factor of work overload that has been widely studied and is thought to be dealt with stress management programs. This study, on the other hand, focused on not only stress, but also on all the other factors that a work overload may include and what it might result into. Depending on the fact that spirituality is found to be a high source of satisfaction and personal well being, this study has concluded the results at the end.

Literature Review

Spiritual well being in the literature is described as something that leads to a personal inner satisfaction with one's life, which in turn results in an awareness that one's life has a meaning and a purpose (Moberg 1986; Ellison 1983; Paloutzian and Ellison 1982; Stoll 1989) fulfilling the three dimensions of spiritual relationships (Stoll 1979; Banks 1980; Hungelmann 1985): transpersonal (i.e., with God), interpersonal (i.e. with family, friends, and others), and intrapersonal (i.e., with inner self).

Spiritual well-being deals with the activities performed by human beings to achieve the level of satisfaction they desire and to find a direction and purpose for their life (Trott 1996).

According to the very extensive research done by James B. Maginnis II 2001 (spiritual well-being of workers), spiritual well-being is how successful a person is in achieving his desires and meaning of life and, therefore, maintaining an interconnected existence. At workplace, spirituality would be achieving a level of satisfaction through factors that may provide fulfillment of needs and desires of the employees. This also involves providing support and comfortable working environment to employees to achieve their targets successfully and feel happy toward their life and their achievements.

Another source of information regarding work place spirituality defines workplace spirituality using seven principles: creativity, communication, respect, vision, partnership, energy, and flexibility. According to this source, the greater emphasis of workplace spirituality is not related to religion, rather expressing greater humanity, similar to this research being conducted (http://www.itstime.com/rainbow.htm).

An extensive study done on workplace spirituality has given 19 themes of workplace spirituality (Marques et al. 2003), including, Ethics, Trust, Belief in God or Higher Power, Respect, Understanding, Openness, Honesty, Being self motivated, Encouraging creativity, Giving to others, Trust, Kindness, Team orientation, Few organizational barriers, Sense of peace and harmony, Esthetically pleasing

workplace, Interconnectedness, Encourage diversity, and Acceptance.

Several other studies have been done by different researchers on spirituality, each identifying different dimensions of spirituality and workplace spirituality. Six component model of workplace spirituality (Kent Rhodes, EdD) suggests six effects of workplace spirituality: sustainability, values contribution, prizes creativity, cultivates inclusion, develops principles, and promotes vocation. Several factors are said to have caused the emergence of spirituality like the fear of unknown or something known, e.g., losing your job or feeling loneliness and not being able to achieve satisfaction with life or work done and so on (Rutte 1996).

Work overload seems to have been not extensively studied as compared with workplace spirituality and job satisfaction. Limited research material was available during the commencement of this research specifically on the topic on work overload. Studies have been conducted on stress and burnouts which are some effects of work overload. Nursing and medical areas have researched extensively on work overload and its impact on employees. Nurse's Christian Fellowship has done a wide study and showed major interest on both spirituality and work-related stress and identified "relief from death, knowledge of God's presence, expression of care and support from others, and receiving sacraments as areas of spirituality." Since 1930, Nurse's Christian Fellowship has dedicated time, energy, and resources for conducting research and seminars on spiritual care giving (Fish and Shelly 1978).

Quantitative work overload was found to be the source of stress which has been induced by time pressure and work difficulty (Mazloum et al. 2008). The cause of low level of job satisfaction was burnout, which shows a negative relationship (Nurit et al. 2008)—overload is caused by burnout at job (Nurit et al. 2008).

The above study shows a relationship of overload with job satisfaction, i.e., low level of job satisfaction was caused by burnout, and burnout was caused by overload, and so we can conclude that low level of job satisfaction is caused by overload (a negative relationship) which is the relationship that has been studied by the current research.

People see work as a source of salary. In current situation, people consider having good working conditions or work itself as being a member of good and ethical organization, having interesting work, earning, having supportive peers, and helping community (Mitroff and Denton 1999).

Meaning, purpose, and satisfaction are the three important components on which the spirituality is based on. These factors are further the motivator of performance and positive attitudes toward organization. Spirituality has found to be positively related to job satisfaction (Davis et al. 2003) and positive work attitudes (Neck and Milliman 1994).

Theoretical Frame Work
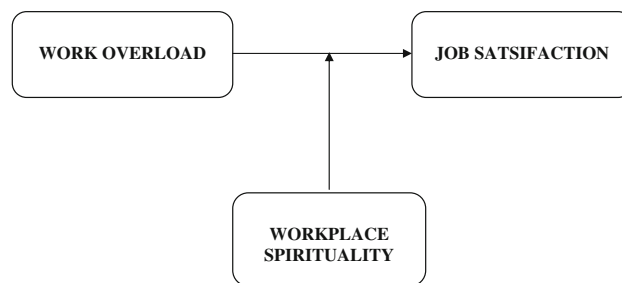
Hypothesis

H1 Workplace spirituality moderates the affects of work overload on job satisfaction.

H2 Job overload has a negative impact on job satisfaction.

H3 Workplace spirituality has a positive impact on job satisfaction.

Research Methodology

The population is limited to employees working in different organizations in Islamabad. The samples of employees selected were 76. Between 20 and 30 employees were selected from different organizations. A total of about 76 questionnaire samples were collected. Each sample tells about different working conditions and work overload situations in different organizations and their impact on employees and also tells about employee's attitudes toward organizations. Questionnaire was based on three parts, mainly on work overload, job satisfaction, and workplace spirituality.

Data collection involved the use of the structured questionnaire. Work overload questions were reduced form of Caplan et al. (1975), reliability coefficient α values ranged from 0.72 to 0.81. Some of the questions affecting the reliability were removed. Reliability using Cronbach's α of this questionnaire was 0.897. Reduced form of Workplace spirituality well being scale [used and developed by Miginnis (2001), based on open organizational profile, measuring nine dimensions of open organizational model] was used. Questions on job satisfaction were based on Tsui et al. (1992).

Pilot testing was also done insuring the validity of questionnaire made using SPSS.

Findings

The first variable, job overload questionnaire was checked for reliability after conducting the pilot testing, using reliability analysis. This can be seen on Table 1.

The results show that the reliability of questionnaire prepared after reducing the questions that were affecting the reliability is 0.897.

Similarly, Table 2 shows the reliability of workplace questionnaire. According to the readings generated, the reliability of the questionnaire prepared was found to be 0.876.

Table 3 shows reliability of job satisfaction questionnaire utilized to collect the data with respect to how satisfied the employees are with their job situation. The reliability was found to be 0.701.

After conducting the pilot testing, proper format of questionnaire was prepared and distributed among 100 employees; responses from only 76 individuals were received. Reliability of questionnaire was again checked using reliability analysis. The results were found to be consistent.

Table 4 showed the reliability of job overload questionnaire to be 0.864 computed from the whole sample.

Table 5 showed the reliability of workplace spirituality was found to be 0.904 computed from the whole sample.

Table 6 showed the reliability for job satisfaction for 76 questionnaire responses were found to be 0.787 computed from the whole sample.

Table 1 Job overload reliability

Reliability statistics	
Job overload	
Cronbach's α	No. of Items
0.897	6

Table 2 Workplace spirituality reliability

Reliability statistics	
Workplace spirituality	
Cronbach's α	No. of Items
0.876	10

Table 3 Job satisfaction reliability

Reliability statistics	
Job satisfaction	
Cronbach's α	No. of Items
0.701	6

Table 4 Improved job overload reliability

Reliability statistics	
Job overload	
Cronbach's α	No. of Items
0.864	6

Table 5 Improved workplace spirituality reliability

Correlations				JO	JS
Control Variables				JO	JS
MOD	JO	Correlation		1.000	−.455
		Significance (2-tailed)			.000
		df		0	73
	JS	Correlation		−.455	1.000
		Significance (2-tailed)		.000	
		df		73	0

Table 6 Improved job satisfaction reliability

Reliability statistics	
Job satisfaction	
Cronbach's α	No. of items
0.787	6

Table 7 Correlations

	Correlations		
	WPS	JO	JS
WPS			
Pearson correlation	1	0.299**	0.610**
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.009	0.000
N	76	76	76
JO			
Pearson correlation	0.299**	1	0.213
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.009		0.065
N	76	76	76
JS			
Pearson correlation	0.610**	0.213	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.065	
N	76	76	76

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The relationship between the variables was tested using correlation and regression. Research conducted by Baron and Kenny (1986) was employed to determine the moderating effect of work place spirituality.

Table 7 shows the relationship between the variables using correlation. All the three variables workplace

Table 8 Significance of the study

Model summary

Model	Change statistics				
	R^2 change	F change	df1	df2	Sig. F change
1	0.373	21.709	2	73	0.000
2	0.101	13.773	1	72	0.000

spirituality, job overload, and job satisfaction were checked for their relationship. Job overload and job satisfaction was perceived to have a negative relationship with each other. According to the results, the relationships between job overload and job satisfaction were not found to be consistent with the literature. The relationship between workplace spirituality and job satisfaction was found to be positively significant ($r = 0.610**$).

Hypothesis testing

H1 Workplace spirituality moderates the affects of work overload on job satisfaction.

It can be clearly seen from Table 7 that workplace spirituality moderates the affects of job overload and job satisfaction. Table 8 shows that 10% of the change has been due to the moderating factor, i.e., workplace spirituality. Therefore, H1 is accepted.

H2 Job Overload has a negative impact on job satisfaction.

Results of Table 7 show ($r = 0.213$) no significant relationship between both job overload and job satisfaction. With these results, H2 is rejected. This may have been caused by any other factor not under study.

H3 Workplace spirituality has a positive impact on job satisfaction.

Table 7 shows ($r = 0.610$) significant positive relationships between workplace spirituality and job satisfaction. Therefore, H3 is accepted.

Table 8 shows R^2 change to be 37% the overall change and 10% affect was caused by the moderating factor.

Conclusion

In today's dynamic work of environment and competitive circumstances, everyone experiences atrocious sense of having to do a lot of work in very little time. Often, we ignore the real fact and keep on working based on different factors we might experience. The risks that individuals

suffer from such overload include exhaustion, insomnia, fatigue, and most important stress. These factors not only lead to poor performances but also lead to poor interactions with colleagues and supervisors, as well as family and friends. The serious problem with work overload is that it not only causes mental problems but also results in physical problems such as back pain, tiredness, lack of sleep, and no proper rest. Working with any organization, requires, working intelligently and focusing on things that are important for the job success, while suffering from job overload, results in the absence of mind and destruction of creativity. Skills such as creativity, communication, and innovation are results of peaceful mind and satisfaction with what one does. Providing employees with such harsh working conditions may result in poor performance and lack of satisfaction rather than positive performance and achievements as expected and desired by the companies. The challenges of globalization, customer orientation, competitive services, and changing technologies are making business more intricate and leaving employees feel besieged. For such issues, a solution is required that may not only help cope with the problems that the employees suffer because of having work overload but also something that can help them improve their productivity and cope with symptoms of overload either physical or mental. Workplace spirituality can be one factor that may be utilized to overcome these affects. According to the research done, providing employees with vertical and horizontal dimensions of spirituality helps one achieve a sense of direction and purpose in life. It also helps one achieve desires and satisfaction at large. The result would be—employees being more creative. Milliman et al. (2003) also suggested that making sure that employees have a clear direction would make them more creative. Providing employees with workplace spirituality also helps in better interaction and communication. Improvement in communication among employees may build honesty and trust among them. This helps the employees cope with their work overload problems and better perform their duties both at work and at home. Encouraging employees to participate and perform, providing them with peer and supervisory support, and making sure that their career development programs are introduced, all these factors help in motivating employees to perform better. Providing them with workplace spirituality will help them unwind and then decide which task to be performed and when. This helps the employee develop priorities and time management, which will eventually result in doing the work in time and being satisfied with no stress involved. Having morale values set based on organizational spiritual philosophy and vision increases the ethical behavior, which helps both the organization and the employees trust each other. Having said that, all these spiritual dimensions

provide the final desire of every organization i.e., satisfied employees, who, in result, provide the company with better performance, improved decision-making, communication and innovation. One of the important aspects of workplace spirituality is providing employees with personal fulfillment. These can be achieved by providing employees with programs like career development and trainings that may help them perform better according to different situations. It also provides employees with tolerance toward work environment and conditions, less stress rate, high involvement, and commitment toward organization. This is also one of the ways of retaining the best performing employees. Providing any employee with workplace spirituality help them develop a sense of affection with the organization and would retain them for longer providing them with competitive advantage and lowering costs of finding and rehiring efficient staff.

Recommendations

Dimensions of workplace spirituality provided by this research show that workplace spirituality helps induce job satisfaction in employees and better performance. To make sure these are achievable simple dimensions studied by the research including, honesty, fair treatment to all, encouraging employees, providing them with morale and support, ensuring that the needs of the employees are met and their values are acknowledged. These dimensions are simple and easy to implement, making them cost effective. Therefore, with minimum cost and practice, organizations can help their employees cope with their work overload, manage their time, reduce their stress, and perform effectively. In the long term, providing employees with such working environment helps them achieve satisfaction, and not feeling their work would go unrewarded. Helping employees cope with their problems using spirituality trainings, such as meditation, silence before meetings, helping them practice their religion, like Microsoft as organization uses to do, and service orientation, all such things help in achieving the satisfaction. The best results are realized through commitment to the organization, involvements, innovation, and high returns.

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