

Spirituality at workplace: An Empirical Study

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Abstract

Spirituality at workplace has been defined by many authors. Different views are given by different people on spirituality. This paper focuses on analysing the definition of spirituality at workplace. Its orientation and benefits to the organization. In this paper review of the literature has been done on spirituality at workplace to study how it impacts an organization and it also makes an attempt in suggesting measures to the management in introducing the concept of spirituality at the place of work.

Key Words: Spirituality, Workplace, Performance, Employees

Introduction

The concept of spirituality at workplace is growing as today in the fast world of technology and stress we and our actions need to be regulated. A camera can be put at the workplace to see the actions of the employees at work but it is of no use if the individual's beliefs and thoughts are in contradiction with his actions. Spirituality is something which reforms a person from inside. As in some conference swami Vivekanandaji said I need reformers who can reform themselves because spirituality calls for reforming our own selves rather correcting the actions of others.

Definition

(Krishankumar and Neck) There is a continuous debate on the definition of spirituality. It can be studied under three views (a) intrinsic origin view (b) religious view and the existentialist view. The intrinsic-origin view of spirituality says that spirituality is intrinsic to an individual i.e. it originates from inner self of an individual. This view says a spiritual being is always connected to himself instead of the universe. According to religious view spirituality is specific to the norms of a

particular religion e.g. Islam has its 'Islamic work ethics' Hindus believe in doing their work with utmost devotion. Some favour teamwork and togetherness. So, accordingly the spirituality at workplace is viewed from specific religion. The third view is of existentialist view in which a person finds the meaning for his existence in the job. This is very important when the job is boring and of repetitive nature. The lack of which will result in alienation and separation from the job.

Thus, spirituality at workplace cannot be viewed from one perspective. All the different views should be considered while studying spirituality at workplace. And employees should be left free for opting their own view of spirituality at workplace.

Why there should be spirituality at workplace?

Better problem solving: Spirituality leads to awareness which in turn leads to intuition and intuition leads to creativity. Creativity helps an individual to solve problems in a better way. Awareness about self also helps employee in keeping a good decorum in the place of work. It helps in

the growth of an employee both mentally and emotionally. Thereby helps in overall employee performance.

Development of Honesty and Trust: A spiritual being is capable of showing more honesty and trust. At the time of economic crisis for an organization trust between the management and employees prove to be very fruitful. Mistrust in an organization among the members will prove to be a hurdle for the growth of the business. Trust and honesty promotes better communication and leads to improved decision making and helps in better focus on customer issues.

Achievement: Spirituality at workplace gives a sense of belongingness and self-fulfilment to an employee. Many religions associate work with worship and a spiritual being will actualise a sense of accomplishment when he performs his obligations at workplace.

Organizational commitment: Practising spirituality at workplace leads to organizational commitment. Organizational commitment is a fruit that is associated with trust. In a trustful environment in an organization, commitment nurtures. Commitment is not linked towards organization it is also related in providing quality services and products to the customers. A committed employee will recognize himself and his goals to the goals of the organization. And will always stay committed towards uplifting his employer organization.

Overall improved performance: Thus, with the above stated benefits an organization will improve its and its employees' overall performance, thereby leading to the growth of the business and a healthy environment which will found a base for the development of the business.

How spirituality at workplace can be implemented?

Spirituality at workplace can be viewed from two perspectives. First is from organizational level and the second is from individual level. The organizational level suggests introducing and implementing spirituality in the organization as a whole. It views that at individual level there are individual difference among the employees in context to their religions. So, it should be built at organizational level as a whole.

The second is individual level which suggests introduction of spirituality in the organization from individual's point of view. This perspective sees employees as individuals who are part and form an organization. So, there level should be reached because they are the one who makes an organization. Employees form an organization and its their efforts which works for the performance of the business. They come in an organization not as objects but human beings with brains and different thoughts.

Dogma towards spirituality and religion at Individual level

(Mitroff and Denton) Individuals can have four views on religion and spirituality. It can be either positive or negative or both. It can be studied in these four ways:

1. Positive about both religion and spirituality: In this the individuals consider them synonyms and consider them both as a source of values and beliefs.
2. Positive about religion and negative on spirituality: Religion supersedes spirituality and considered to be the source of values and beliefs. Life is more surrounded by religion and more importance is given to rituals and religious ceremonies.

3. Negative about religion and positive about spirituality: In this view spirituality dominates the religion and is the source of basic values and beliefs. The person is more open-minded.
4. Negative about both religion and spirituality: In this the Individuals don't view any role of religion or spirituality in building values or beliefs. They consider workplace is independent of religion and spirituality.

Spirituality at workplace at organizational level

At organizational level there can be five dimensions stated below:

1. Religious based organizations: Such organizations can either be positive towards religion and negative towards spirituality or can be positive towards both.
2. Evolutionary organizations: These are basically the beginners which begin with a link with a particular religion and afterwards acquire a temporal position.
3. Recovering organizations: These organizations are those typically in which majority of executives are recovering from alcohol addiction and gambling etc.
4. Socially responsible organizations: Such organizations core is more on providing value services to the society. These organizations concentrate more on their external obligation than their employees.
5. Values based organizations: Such organizations follow particular values for their management and those values are not derived from any religion and spirituality.

Recommendations for introducing spirituality at workplace

(Thakur and Singh)

1. Firstly, the employers should guide the employees on the concept and its importance and some programmes for its implementation at the workplace should be introduced.
2. Like other objectives and goals of the organization, it should be discussed regularly with the employees so that an environment of positivity towards spirituality can be generated. Some introductory sessions of meditation or lectures can be introduced.
3. Some scope should be given in the organization for informal communication. So that a community can be established for the employees.
4. Some kind of entertainment or recreational activities can be held in the organization. So that a festive and a rejuvenating kind of atmosphere can be created for the employees at workplace.
5. Importance should be given to the needs of employees.
6. While selecting the employees proper test should be conducted on their values and beliefs so that those can go parallel with the values and mission of the organization.
7. Timely job analysis should be done. So, the employees can be well aware of what is expected of them and also, they can have clarity on their jobs.
8. The employees should be well informed about their appraisals and the contribution they are making to the organization. It keeps them motivated.
9. The company should be very principled on following its norms on spirituality and its value system. So

that the same can be expected from the employees working in it.

Conclusion

The above discussion clearly shows that spirituality at workplace has its own importance. The concept needs to be made clearer of so that it can be well implemented in the organization. Its

implementation should match with the mission and vision of the organization so that all the conflicts can be avoided. The employers need to consider it as an important requisite for today's time when the business has become more complex and the employees are facing more stress to handle the complexities and pressure of work.

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