



Workplace Spirituality: A New Paradigm for Teachers

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ABSTRACT

Workplace spirituality is the recognition that employees have an inner life which nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work taking place in the context of a community. It is about employees who view themselves as spiritual beings whose souls need nourishment at work, who experience a sense of purpose and meaning in their work, and a sense of connectedness to one another and to their workplace community. Teachers as spiritual creatures experience connectedness and an intellect of personal completeness and meaning in their lives, including their professional lives. Workplace spirituality provides a sense for individuals to unite their work and spirituality, imparting direction, association, and completeness at work. This article outlines the meaning of spirituality in workplace for teachers.

KEYWORDS

Workplace Spirituality, Paradigm, Spiritual creatures

INTRODUCTION

Educational structure is considered as the strength of every nation in which teachers conquer vital place. Its achievement is greatly dependent on potential ability and eminence of the teachers who are crucial for the societal progress. Further, the vivacity of all the educational organizations tends in to what extent the teachers are contented with the jobs they are into and devoted to contribute to the advancement of their organizations. It is likely that greatly contented teachers will be more dedicated to their educational organizations ensuing into greater withholding and deterioration in their turnover amounts. As regards advanced educational institution as an organization, higher educational institution teachers are significant because they are vitally accountable for educating and cultivating the thinkers of nations. According to Rutte (2003) "Now-a-days organizations are in a desperate need of extremely fulfilled, satisfied, creative, committed and productive employees to achieve and withstand their competitive advantage. But employees are feeling stressed, demoralized and insecure due to economic downturn and downsizing in their organizations". According to Hamilton and Jackson (1998) "All these uncertainties sensitize them to search for spiritual presence". It seems that unsatisfied spiritual needs encourage employees of today's organizations to look for the real meaning in their lives. According to Labbs (1995), "the spiritual perspective is causing shift in the workplace values promoting cooperation rather than fear at the workplace".

According to (Hart and Brady, 2005), "Spirituality is undeniably a human need for many people and workplace spirituality is a "reality" that must not be disregarded by society and organizations". Organizational science can no extensively escape studying, accepting, and seeing organizations as spiritual units. Most teacher staffs gaze for the contentment of their spiritual desires and needs so to be distinctive, to unite with something loftier than themselves, to become beneficial, to be comprehensible by other persons, and to comprehend in what way they adequate into a larger context. They desire to understand sense of motive and connotation at work as well as a sense of association with work fellows and their work circle.

Teachers, as spiritual beings, long to experience connectedness and a sense of personal wholeness and meaning in their lives. Teachers who include and unite the spiritual dimension in their work are more tend towards self-reflection they are alert to the association with their inner self, with others and with a power superior than the self. Their choices tend to be inclined by virtues such as empathy, modesty and love where love is observed through Peck's (1997) definition as "the will to ex-

tend oneself for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth." They are more suitable actually to listen to others and to form spaces. When spirituality is limited to the private realm people survives and teachers are unable to unite spirit in their lives and classrooms, teaching degenerates into a technical and de-spirited action. Teaching, in the sense of experiencing and discovering meaning in life, cannot be detached from spirituality.

When workplaces are able to create environments that are conducive to teacher employees experiencing harmony in behavior and belief, their values and their work, and a sense of purpose in their vocation, a certain pattern of spiritual orientation will emerge. If institutions are poorly governed and concentrated on material existence, it is not relaxed to allow "spiritual richness" delight and relevant work to teacher staffs. There is a need to promote workplace spirituality to progress teacher employees' commitment, organizational enactment and job satisfaction.

NEED OF THE STUDY

According to Cash and Gray (2000), "the catalyst for the extensive interest in workplace spirituality is an unstable work environment characterized by downsizing and new technologies. Faced with problems of fear, social alienation and constant turbulent changes, teacher employees are embarking on an individual search for deeper meaning in life". According to Krishna Kumar & Neck, (2002) "Workplace spirituality represents an attempt to experience spirituality not only in their personal lives but also at work where they spend a large amount of time". Spirituality has been described as "the subjective feelings, thoughts, and behaviors that arise from a search for the sacred" where the word "search" denotes to "attempts to identify or transform" and the word "sacred" is expressed mostly as referring to "a divine being, divine object, Ultimate Reality, or Ultimate Truth as perceived by the individual". According to Mitroff and Denton (1999) expresses spirituality as "The basic feeling of being connected with one's complete self, others and the entire universe". According to Harrington, (2004), "the core of spirituality is about people sharing and experiencing some common attachment, attraction and togetherness within their work unit and the organization as a whole. According to Myers, (1990), "It is a continuing search for meaning and purpose in life; an appreciation for the depth of life, the expanse of the universe, and natural forces which operate it; and, it is a personal belief system". According to Moore & Casper, (2006), "spirituality is generally viewed as some "internal substance", a value, belief, attitude or emotion that affects people's behavior".

Workplace Spirituality is regarding persons who recognize their selves as spirited creatures, and their spirits wishes and required to be strengthened with the work. Hence, it is about undergoing actual motive and significance at work rather than remunerations and performance appraisals. According to Ashmos and Duchon, (2000), “Workplace spirituality can be defined as the recognition that employees have an inner life which nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work taking place in the context of a community”. According to Milliman et al., (2003) “ It is about employees who view themselves as spiritual beings whose souls need nourishment at work, who experience a sense of purpose and meaning in their work, and a sense of connectedness to one another and to their workplace community” .

Teachers as spiritual creatures experience connectedness and an intellect of personal completeness and meaning in their lives, including their professional lives. Workplace spirituality provides a sense for individuals to unite their work and spirituality, imparting direction, association, and completeness at work. When organizations and workplaces are able to generate surroundings that are conducive to employees undergoing harmony in conduct and belief, their values and their work, and a sense of motive in their vocation, a certain shape of spiritual orientation will develop. Workplace Spirituality in its basic component is awareness, interconnectedness with each other and a greater existence, an intellect of fulfillment, and value and implication to one’s vocation. The basic fundamentals that create the framework conducive to this in work ethics, trust, and fairness of judgments, respect, honesty and integrity of activities. The most important agents deals with workplace spirituality are: Benevolence, Generativity, Humanism, Integrity, Justice, Mutuality, Receptivity, Respect, Responsibility, and Trust. In this research we use ten called agents to measure workplace spirituality. Definition of each of them is shown in table 1

TABLE 1. DEFINITION OF THE TEN AGENTS OF WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY

1. **Benevolence** Kindness toward others and an orientation to benevolence promote the happiness and prosperity of employees and other stakeholders within the work context.
2. **Generativity** Long-term focus, showing a concern for the consequences of one’s actions into the future: respectful of future generations.

3. **Humanism** Practices and policies that assert the essential dignity and worth of each employee; provides an opportunity for personal growth in conjunction with organizational goals
4. **Integrity** Uncompromising adherence to a code of conduct; sincerity, honesty, candor; exercising unforced power
5. **Justice** Even-handed treatment and judgment: of employees; impartial, fair, honest; unbiased assignment of rewards and punishments.
6. **Mutuality** All employees are interconnected and mutually dependent, each contributes to the final output by working in conjunction with others.
7. **Receptivity** Open-minded, flexible thinking, orientation toward calculated risk-taking, rewards creativity.
8. **Respect** Regard and treat: employees with esteem and value; showing consideration and concern for others.
9. **Responsibility** Independently follows through on goal attainment irrespective of difficulty or obstacles; concerned with doing what’s right rather than the right thing.
10. **Trust** Being able to confidently depend on the character and truth of the organization and its representatives.

Conclusion

Workplace Spirituality is a new buzzword not only in theology, business science but also in education. There is an emerging and accelerating call for spirituality in workplace. Teaching is a vocation for those who are able to familiarize their selves to the modifications of the times and who are able to revert these modifications to the community, who persistently replenish their selves, who are accountable, inventive, and dynamic, humane, and who have optimistic perception towards the occupation. Workplace spirituality represents an attempt to experience spirituality not only in their personal lives but also at work where they spend a large amount of time” .

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