

The Spirituality–Citizenship–Performance Nexus: A Conceptual Framework for Understanding Employee Behavior

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ABSTRACT

Workplace spirituality is gaining prominence in organizational behavior as employees increasingly value meaning, purpose, connection, and shared values at work. This conceptual paper examines the relationship between workplace spirituality, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and job performance. Workplace spirituality is represented through meaningful work, a sense of community, alignment with organizational values, and inner life. OCB includes voluntary behaviors such as helping colleagues, courtesy, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, and civic participation. The proposed framework suggests that a spiritually supportive workplace encourages employees to engage in positive discretionary behaviors, thereby strengthening their effectiveness and performance. OCB is therefore proposed as a behavioral mechanism linking workplace spirituality with improved job performance.

Keyword: Workplace Spirituality, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Job Performance, Meaningful Work, Employee Behavior, Conceptual Framework, Organizational Behavior.

1.1 INTRODUCTION:

Organizations increasingly recognize that employee performance is influenced by more than financial incentives, formal responsibilities, and traditional performance-management practices. Employees also have psychological, social, emotional, and value-oriented needs that shape their workplace experiences. This broader perspective has increased scholarly interest in workplace spirituality as an important area of research in organizational behavior (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Milliman et al., 2003).

Workplace spirituality refers to employees' experiences of meaning, purpose, connectedness, and alignment between personal and organizational values. Important dimensions include meaningful work, sense of community,

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alignment with organizational values, contribution to society, enjoyment at work, and opportunities for inner life (Milliman et al., 2003; Petchsawang & Duchon, 2009).

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) refers to voluntary employee actions that go beyond formal duties and contribute to organizational effectiveness. Organ (1988) identified behaviors such as altruism, courtesy, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, and civic virtue as important dimensions of OCB. Such behaviors can facilitate cooperation, interpersonal relationships, and effective organizational functioning.

Job performance refers to employee behaviors that contribute to organizational objectives. Campbell et al. (1990) emphasized that performance should be understood primarily in terms of behaviors relevant to organizational goals, rather than merely the outcomes produced by those behaviors. Previous research suggests that workplace spirituality is associated with positive employee attitudes, OCB, and performance (Duchon & Plowman, 2005; Habeeb, 2019). However, these relationships have frequently been examined within specific sectors or through separate associations.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Workplace spirituality research highlights employees' needs for meaning, purpose, a sense of belonging, and value alignment. Ashmos and Duchon (2000) conceptualized workplace spirituality as inner life, meaningful work, and a sense of community, establishing it as an organizational concept distinct from religious practice. Milliman et al. (2003) further identified meaningful work, community, and alignment with organizational values as key dimensions and linked them with positive employee attitudes. Extending this perspective, Duchon and Plowman (2005) examined spirituality at the work-unit level and found its association with work-unit performance. Collectively, these studies suggest that meaningful and value-oriented workplaces can positively influence employee attitudes, relationships, and organizational effectiveness.

2.1 Workplace Spirituality, OCB, and Job Performance

Research examining all three constructs provides direct support for the conceptual foundation of the present framework. Habeeb (2019), studying the banking, financial, and insurance services sector in India, investigated the relationships among workplace spirituality, OCB, and job performance in a non-Western context. Job performance represents employee behavior that contributes to

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organizational objectives. Campbell et al. (1990) emphasized the behavioral nature of job performance and developed a multidimensional approach to understanding performance across different jobs.

OCB mediates the relationship between workplace spirituality and employee performance. Munir, Samdani, and Adnan (2021) examined the mediating role of OCB between workplace spirituality and job performance, while also considering organizational commitment as a contingent factor. This study provides further empirical support for conceptualizing OCB as a behavioral pathway between spirituality and performance.

3. METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a conceptual research design to develop an integrated framework that explains the relationships among Workplace Spirituality (WPS), Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), and Employee Performance. The study is based on secondary sources, including peer-reviewed research articles, review papers, and conceptual studies. Relevant literature was identified using academic databases with keywords such as workplace spirituality, spirituality at work, organizational citizenship behavior, employee performance, meaningful work, and organizational values. The study

focuses on literature examining the direct and indirect relationships among the three constructs.

The analysis was conducted in three stages. First, major concepts and dimensions of WPS, OCB, and employee performance were identified. Second, findings from previous studies were compared to identify recurring relationships and explanatory mechanisms. Third, the findings were synthesized into a conceptual framework in which WPS is the antecedent variable, OCB functions as a mediating behavioral mechanism, and employee performance is the outcome variable. The study is therefore theory-building and provides a basis for future empirical testing.

4. Results and Discussion

The synthesis of existing literature indicates a positive conceptual relationship among Workplace Spirituality (WPS), Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), and Employee Performance. First, WPS promotes meaningful work, a sense of community, and alignment between individual and organizational values, which can encourage employees to contribute beyond their formal duties. Duchon and Plowman (2005) linked workplace spirituality with meaningful work, community, and improved work-unit performance.

Second, the reviewed literature suggests that WPS is positively associated with OCB. Employees

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experiencing greater meaning and connectedness may demonstrate helping behavior, conscientiousness, cooperation, and active organizational participation.

Third, OCB may serve as a mediating behavioral mechanism linking WPS to employee performance. Jana et al. (2026) reported that OCB

strengthened the relationship between workplace spirituality and employee performance, while Garg & Sexena (2020) identified partial mediation of OCB between WPS and organizational performance.

Thus, the proposed relationship is:

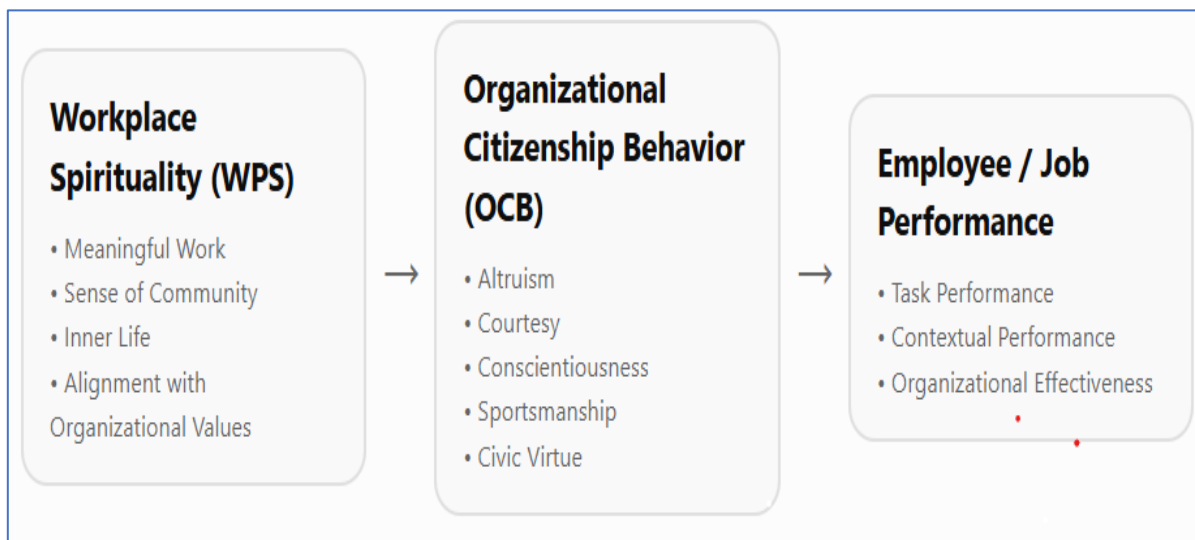


Figure: 1

source: author's own

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual relationships among Workplace Spirituality (WPS), Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), and Employee Performance. WPS involves meaningful work, a sense of community, inner life, and alignment with organizational values. These factors encourage employees to display OCB, including altruism, courtesy, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, and civic virtue. Such voluntary behaviors strengthen cooperation and support

among employees, ultimately improving task and contextual performance. Thus, OCB acts as an important behavioral mechanism linking workplace spirituality with improved employee and organizational performance.

5. CONCLUSION

The present conceptual study develops an integrated framework connecting Workplace Spirituality (WPS), Organizational Citizenship

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Behavior (OCB), and Employee Performance. The literature suggests that workplace spirituality can create meaningful work experiences, strengthen employees' sense of belonging, and improve alignment between individual and organizational values. These conditions may encourage employees to engage in voluntary behaviors such as helping colleagues, cooperating, being conscientious, and constructively participating. Such citizenship behaviors can, in turn, contribute to effective employee functioning and improved performance.

The proposed Spirituality–Citizenship–Performance Nexus, therefore, positions OCB as an important behavioral mechanism through which workplace spirituality may influence employee performance. The framework contributes to the literature by integrating these three constructs into a single conceptual model. It also provides a foundation for future empirical research using mediation analysis, structural equation modeling, and cross-sectoral comparisons.

6. Research Gap

Although previous studies have examined workplace spirituality, OCB, and employee performance individually or through selected relationships, relatively limited conceptual attention has been given to their integrated relationship within a single framework. Existing

research also varies across industries, countries, employee groups, and measurement approaches, making it difficult to determine whether the proposed relationships hold across organizational contexts.

Further, the mediating role of OCB requires additional empirical examination with larger, more diverse samples. Future research could investigate whether factors such as organizational culture, leadership style, employee engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment influence the spirituality–citizenship–performance relationship. Longitudinal studies could also help clarify the direction and stability of these relationships over time.

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