

Extended Abstract

Do Religion and Spirituality in the Workplace Matter?

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The study addresses the increased demand to better conceptualize, define, and contrast the concepts of religion and spirituality in the workplace. It examines the potential impact of religion and spirituality in four discrete yet closely related areas: leadership, corporate culture, ethics and employee well-being, addresses some of the key questions and issues related to the topic, points out some possible areas of concern, and discusses future directions of research in this area.

Objective(s)

The study summarizes recent findings in the literature with regard to the impact of:

- religious diversity in the workplace on employee engagement
- leaders' values on organizational culture
- religion and spirituality on Business Ethics
- religion and spirituality on workplace stress

Methodology

Using secondary materials through library research, the study explores the concepts of religion and spirituality in the workplace. The use of secondary sources provided an overview of current research into the topics and highlighted the gaps in the literature, thus establishing possible future research topics. The research, co-authored with my colleagues Dr Hanan Naser and Dr Fatema Alaali, was included in the book "Religion and Its Impact on Organizational Behavior", published by IGI Global (2022).

Results/Findings

In the forging and maintenance of an organizational culture, religion and spirituality play a role by instilling employees with the sense that their work is meaningful. The powerful impact of a spiritual leadership approach on the spiritual satisfaction of organizational members was shown to result in better productivity. The alignment of Business Ethics, values, and culture of care allows employees to remain motivated and enables them to continue to pursue the employer's path. In today's increasingly globalized workplace, care must be taken not to be seen to favor a particular faith, which would lead to conflicts. Shared core values and beliefs of the employees should be respected.

Implications

Long regarded as a taboo topic, religion and spirituality can be seen to be a driving force in setting out a roadmap towards the achievement of organizational goals and the empowerment of employees. Spirituality plays a vital role in creating a positive, creative, and productive environment in the workplace, and therefore organizations should gradually introduce it in steps or stages to allow for sustainable organizational development. The study highlighted a need for future research into the impact of religion and spirituality on leadership, ethics, corporate culture and employee well-being. This would include topics such as:

- the impact of external factors such as globalization, rapid changes in technology, and social unrest on the application of a spiritual leadership approach in organizations
- the effects of religious diversity in the workplace on the psychological well-being of expatriate workers working in a country with a dominant religion different to their own, such as non-Muslims working in Middle Eastern countries
- the efficiency of codes of ethics in supporting spiritual aspects of an organizational culture
- the role played by religion and spirituality in coping with adversity and stressors in the workplace

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