

## Spirituality in the Workplace: What Does It Mean? A Literature Review

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### ABSTRACT

The concept of spirituality has become even more critical in the 21st century so that organisations have had a transition from modern paradigm to spiritual paradigm. In organisations, the concepts of spirituality, spiritual workplace, and spirituality in the workplace have become a matter of debate among various disciplines. Although attaching importance to the spirituality or spiritual values in organizations have become remarkable in the 1990s, the discussion on the concept and difficulty in defining the concept persists. Besides, it's positively associated with the concepts of personal spirituality, intrinsic, satisfaction, distress, development, wellbeing. It occurs as the concept of organizational spirituality; spirituality based organizations emerged as the spirituality had been noticed by the organisation and included into the organizational processes so that the positive results have been obtained such as job satisfaction of these organizations, organizational well-being, employee empowerment, and so on. Though, it is explained that the competitive power of organizations is closely related to the inclusion of spirituality organizational culture and climate. This study deals with the concepts and approaches of the spirituality and the spirituality in organizations (workplace spirituality/spiritual workplace) and the benefits of spirituality to organizations.

**Keywords:** spirituality, spirituality in the workplace, spiritual organizations, spiritual workplace

### INTRODUCTION

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, organizations should provide “meaning-focused” acquisitions to their employees in contradistinction to opportunities such as economic gain, training etc. With this respect, it is obvious that organizations should focus not only on material values but also on non-material values (trust, loyalty, success, diversity, pleasure, happiness, care) (Vasconcelos, 2015). Emphasizing the concept of spirituality in organizations shows the shift from modern paradigm to spiritual paradigm. While the spiritual paradigm emphasises spiritual principles and practices, the modern paradigm has an understanding of logical and mechanistic values, scientifically evaluating and categorising employees. In this respect, it also adopts team development and employee development principles with an understanding based on thinking and learning. In this sense, it can be called as the postmodern paradigm (Birberman & Whitty, 1997). The new paradigm is also called "a new movement" (Weitz et al., 2012) and "the spirituality movement" (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000).

The spirituality movement emerged as a result of the unhappiness of employees feeling that they lost personal values in organisations at the end of the 1980s (Garcia-Zamor, 2003). “The new paradigm takes ideas from quantum physics, cybernetics, chaos theory, cognitive science, and Eastern and Western spiritual traditions to form a worldview in which everything is interconnected, in which reality is not absolute but a by-product of human consciousness” (Rose, 1990). In other words, the concept of “third wave” used by Alvin Toffler to express the

impact of technological developments shows that the concept of "fourth wave" (Wagner-Marsh & Conley, 1999: 292) has been attained with changes based on spirituality. Together with the expression of spiritualism by Stephen Covey in 1989 and of holistic learning by Peter Senge in 1990, it is seen that the concept of "spirituality in the workplace" constitutes the subject of some books and articles. Along with pointing to the future postmodern workplace, spirituality in the workplace refers to spirit-based organizations that emphasise organisational culture, human activity and personal values (Birberman & Whitty, 1997). In other words, it covers creating the humanistic work environment (Garcia-Zamor, 2003).

The spiritual workplace helps employees to find meaning and purpose of their lives, in other words, the personal values. For this reason, today, attaching importance to spiritual values is regarded as a new sense of competition and is considered to be unique and intangible sources of organisations (Aravamudhan & Krishnaveni, 2014).

While spirituality used to be interpreted as solely a personal interest and development field, nowadays, it is seen that there should be a connection between the individual's spiritual life and his/her job and there is a need for guiding practices so that the employees can find their meaning and purpose. The most substantial reason of the importance attached to spirituality in the workplace is the fact that it is no longer sufficient for the employees to contribute to their workplaces only with their minds and bodies and it is essential that they contribute with their souls. In other words, the main objective is to ensure the contribution of employees to the workplace with their whole potential. In addition, the aim is to value the entirety of the employees' characteristics, to enable them to re-connect with themselves and thus contribute to the organisation and to the society. Attaching importance to spirituality in the workplace enables employees to motivate their life force and energies towards work-related matters, and when met with obstacles, enables them to act with a fighting spirit to overcome the problems.

### **THE MEANING OF SPIRITUALITY AND APPROACHES ON SPIRITUALITY**

Due to the pluralistic nature, spirituality is a complicated concept to define (Aravamudhan & Krishnaveni, 2014), as there is no common thought on what exactly it covers (LaPierre, 1994). The concept originated for the first time with the use of the word "spiritual" by Ohmann in 1955 (Bowman, 2004: 11). The word spirituality flows from the Latin term "spiritus" which means "breath" referring to the breath of life (Hill et al., 2000: 57).

Spirit is "the basic feeling of being connected with one's complete self, others and the entire universe", everyone and everything is interconnected and has a purpose (Mitroff & Denton, 1999: 83). Spirituality can be "most characteristically described as the inner experience or the individual when he senses a beyond especially as evidenced by the effect of this experience on his behaviour when he actively attempts to harmonize his life with beyond" (McCormick, 1994: 5-8). Synder & Lopez (2007: 262) define spirituality as "the thoughts, feelings, behaviours that fuel and arise from the search for the sacred". Pargament (1999) states with a supporting idea that the individual is in search of self-exploration. Spirituality refers to the internal substance which includes values, beliefs, attitudes and emotion (Mitroff & Denton, 1999), the inner experience of the individual (Dehler & Welsh, 1994), and the deep values that the individual has (Gibbons, 1999). In other words, it is the personal quest for understanding answers to ultimate questions about life, about meaning, and about the relationship to the sacred or transcendent (Canda & Furman, 2010: 70; Moodley, 2008: 2).

Spirituality is used as equivalent to religion, beliefs, ethical values and traditions. Spirituality is not official, structured or organized. It defines the totality of experiences of every person to find the truth and its principles. Spirituality is not directly linked to religion or any belief

system. According to an interview conducted with 85 executives and human resource managers, the characteristics of spirituality can be expressed as follows (Cacioppe, 2000: 51-52):

- Spirituality is a feeling of interconnectedness with oneness, higher power or a being.
- There is a fundamental harmony or "goodness" in the universe that underlies its design.
- Spirituality is inextricably connected with caring, hope, love, optimism.
- Spirituality is in itself meaningful and purposeful and therefore, is an end in itself.
- Spirituality is the awe and mystery we feel in the presence of the transcendent which is at the core of the universe and life itself.

"Spirituality is not just a theory; it is a practice. Such practice is not just confined to our daily rituals or the pursuit of enlightenment. It is in our every waking moment, in the ordinary actions of life as well as the extraordinary." (Wright, 2005: 7). The concept of spirituality involves observable practices, but it focuses on an experiential level related to immaterial aspects. It may involve salutary qualities such as love, well-being and peace. Spirituality relates to good health status, subjective well-being, meaningful life, self-efficacy (Canda and Furman, 2010: 70). Owing to its extensive scope, different approaches are put forward in order to elucidate the concept of spirituality. These perspectives can be set forth basically as "intrinsic-origin view, religious views, existentialist views" (Krishnakumar & Neck, 2002: 154-156):

- **The intrinsic-origin view:** This perspective implies that spirituality is a concept or a principle originating from the person's inner world. In other words, it is pointed out that it is a state related to the person's inner consciousness or his/her beliefs and values. It is explained that the person can reflect this power stemming from his/her inner world and the felt emotions on his/her job and his/her relations with others. In a sense, it is argued that the person complete himself/herself with the others and the universe.
- **Religious views:** This perspective associates spirituality with the existence of supernatural powers; it is pointed out that it pertains to the fact that persons' moral values create links with the said power(s) and on account of these beliefs, an individual considers various rules as important and applies them. For example, important principles exist for those who adhere to Hinduism, one of which is the acknowledgement of working as the most important worship. Meanwhile, according to Buddhist belief, hard work and sincere devotion is a way to enrich the person's life. On the other hand, Taoism and Confucianism express the importance of team work and unity for the realization of spirituality in the workplace.
- **Existentialist views:** This perspective implies that spiritualism is closely linked with a person's quest for the meaning of life and that rendering a person's life prosperous and meaningful is possible with spiritual development. It is explained that for that matter, people who look for the meaning of life solely in their professional lives or jobs become alienated from themselves and after a while, their efficiency might decrease because of negative feelings such as stress, exhaustion etc. It is indicated that the important point resides in the person's exploration of the meaning and purpose of himself / herself and life.

There is a frequently mixed-up concept regarding the definition or explanation of the notion of spirituality. Spirituality is set forth as a concept that is closely linked or equivalent to religion. The main reason is that even though there are differences between the two fields, they overlap most of the time and one can be the subfield of the other. The Religion word comes from the Latin root *da religion* which defines "a bond between humanity and some greater-than-human power" (Hill et al., 2000:56). Besides, it is expressed by LaPierre (1994) as "Religion is often

experienced as a collection of rituals, rules, patterns of life, and other behaviour to which one must adhere to be accepted in particular religious groups". It is stated that the concepts of spirituality and religion do not have the same scope. The main difference is that the spirituality has a narrow scope compared to religion, and defines a sacred emotion belongs to the individual without any institutional limitations and practices associated with traditional religion (Zinnbauer et.al., 1999). In other words, spirituality is not formal and organized (Aravamudhan& Krishnaveni, 2014). It is also explained that spirituality is related to personal beliefs whereas religion is related to behaviour (Gupta et al., 2014; Fry, 2003; Rego&Cunha, 2008).

Zinnbauer et al. (1999: 897) state that traditional and modern psychological approaches to religion and spirituality, deal in different ways. In this context, the "broad-band" construct between the two concepts in the traditional psychological approach, also indicates that the two concepts are not very different to each other. Nevertheless, it states that in modern psychological approach, there are a "narrow-band" constructs between the two concepts, so that explains the two concepts are polarized from each other. Definitions of the traditional and modern psychological approaches related to concepts of religion and spirituality are given in below figure.

**Table 1: Traditional and Modern Psychological Approaches to Religiousness and Spirituality**

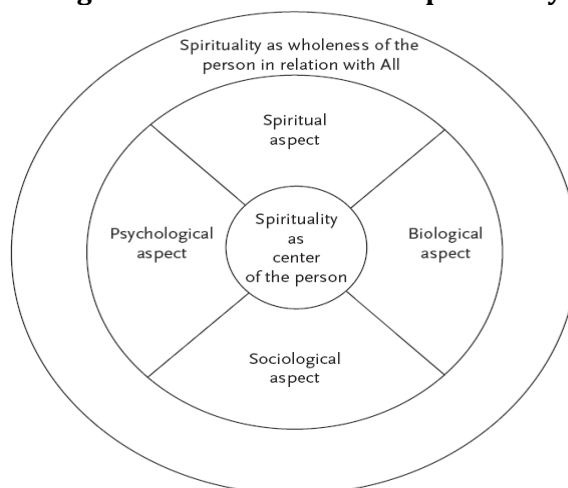
<i>Traditional</i>	<i>Modern</i>
Religion as a broad-band construct	Religion as a narrowly defined construct
Spirituality not widely differentiated from religion: religion and spirituality not polarized Emphasis on personal religiousness	Spirituality explicitly differentiated from religion: religion and spirituality polarized External, institutional religion contrasted with personal, relational spirituality
Religion includes substantive and functional elements	Substantive religion contrasted with functional spirituality
Religion regarded as positive and negative	Religion viewed as negative, spirituality viewed as positive

**Source: Zinnbauer et al.,1999:899**

Along with the approaches that focus on the differences of spirituality and religion concepts, it is noted that spirituality is not formal, structured or organized when compared to conventional religion, yet closely relevant to the religion. In this case, spirituality and religion do not all refer to each other as two different concepts, but as two relevant concepts (Hill et al., 2000; Brown, 2003).

Spiritual values are situated right in the middle of a person's life and the necessary energy for other life-orienting fields is provided by that point, uses three key metaphors that are "*the wholeness of the person, spirituality as the center of the person, and spirituality as the spiritual aspect of the person*" (Canda & Furman, 2010: 87).

**Figure 1: Holistic Model of Spirituality**



**Source: Canda & Furman, 2010: 87**

The holistic model of spirituality shows that spirituality figures in the central core of life and for its completion and for it to have an impact on other fields of life, it should be in coherence with psychological, sociological and biological functions. In the model, spirituality is seen in the center, and the main reason for that is to show that spirituality is an essential element of human life and it expands towards the bio-psycho-social aspect from that point. The meaning and purposes identified by the spiritual characteristics of the person guide the body and the biological functions. Moreover, the feelings, intuitions and thoughts stemming from the spiritual characteristics of the person harbour a guiding quality for his/her relationships in life and all efforts in the universe because of a human being, intrinsically, constantly interrogates the meaning of life, of the world and the self. Questions such as *"Who am I? What is my purpose? What is the reality?"* are asked by individuals throughout their life, and the answers to those questions are given concerning religion, culture, psychology etc.

These questions addressed by the individual regarding life and himself/herself requires a ranking of the person's priorities, experiences, interests, values, realities. In fact, all connections of a person serve as an intermediary for the actualization of his/her spiritual functions. A person acts upon certain spiritual motives (for a profound experience, for the meaning of self/world, for the integrity of self/relations with world etc.) and acquires various spiritual experiences (transcendence, sacredness, the mystical, moment of clarity, transpersonal levels of consciousness, the supernatural etc.). For a person to reach spiritual growth, in other words, to reach *"experiences related to transcendence with numinous feelings, beliefs, self-concept, worldview, values, attitudes, patterns of coping and adaptation etc."* functions of spirituality are of capital importance. It is possible to set forth these functions as follows (Canda& Furman, 2010: 83-84):

- **Spiritual perceiving:** Spiritual perceiving provides a motive to interconnect and enhance an individual's all abilities and capacity. The person's sense of curiosity provides clarity for the observation and the sharpening of awareness regarding good or bad events or situations that come into existence all the time.
- **Spiritual interpreting:** Spiritual interpreting enables a person to give meaning to events or presentations that occur in the external world with his/her inner experiences and to make meaning by unifying them with cognitive symbols.
- **Spiritual relating:** Spiritual relating enables a person to make sense of the relations that he/she has with himself/herself, with the others and with the whole universe and to create connections.

The functions of spirituality, especially during certain times in life that require maturation (such as birth, puberty and death etc.), provides a developmental process by enabling the broadening of the point of view and of its limits in the efforts of the person to adapt to changes around him/her and to give them meaning. Adopting an approach bearing spiritual values towards events and situations in life enables the person to find new meanings regarding him/her and relationships, to remake sense of situations and events and thus realize spiritual growth. Spirituality is situated at the core of a person's existence and its adaptation to life is a long and challenging journey. The spiritual development of a person is expressed by the phrase "*good people in a good environment do good work*" (Korac-Kakabadse et al., 2002:165).

### **SPIRITUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE**

The expressions "spirit at work and spirituality in the workplace" (Thompson, 2000; Pandey and Gupta, 2008), "workplace spirituality" Sheep (2006), "organisational spirituality" (Kolodinsky et al., 2008) are used as synonyms. The first explanation for the "spirituality in the workplace" concept was raised by Ian Mitroff at the All Academy Symposium in 1998, to describe spirituality as a desire to find the ultimate goal of life and the desire to live accordingly (Cavanagah, 1999: 189).

The personal spirituality refers to the personal values that the individual has whereas the organizational spirituality refers to the perception of the spiritual values within organizational settings (Kolodinsky et al., 2008). In a research conducted by Kinjerski and Skrypnek (2004: 38), the participants have used the following words to explain the term "spirituality at work": "*meaning and purpose, heart and soul, vitality, sentiments of mankind, harmony, working together, fun, trust, integrity, cooperation, respect, honesty, compassion, gifts from the soul, truth, intention, intuition, energy*". Additionally, Burack (1999: 280) states that instead of "spirituality in the workplace", terms such as "soulfulness", "rediscovering the soul", "managing with love" may be used. Definition of spirituality in the workplace is "the recognition that employees have an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of community" (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000: 137).

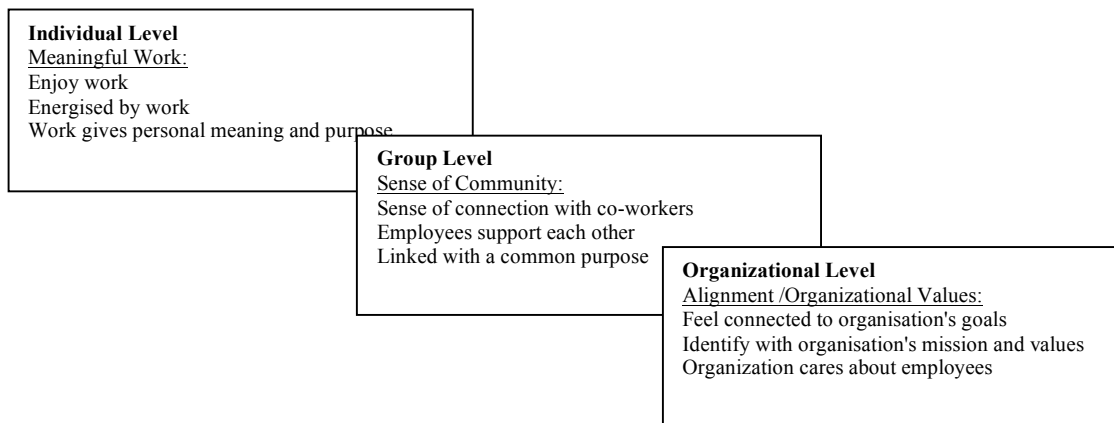
The notion of "spirituality in the workplace" is interpreted in two ways. According to the first one, the actualization and manifestation of spirituality by the employees in the workplace present various benefits to the organisation. Moreover, accordingly, organisations add some structure and implementations to the organisational culture which are fun-providing and support the spiritual growth of employees. Secondly, workplace spirituality enables employees to have spiritual experiences in professional life. Employees appraise what their jobs mean to them, whether the missions and objectives of the organisation are the same as theirs (Pawar, 2008: 544-545).

Spirituality in the workplace is addressed within the organizational dimension of spirituality, and it is stated that spirituality provides acknowledgement of organizational values and a positive contribution to the objectives of the organization. It is explained that the following is the main reason of this: when a person works with others within the organization, he/she feels the sense of togetherness, and by feeling his/her self-value, experiences personal development (Pawar, 2009: 762). With this scope, due to the inclusion of physical, affective, cognitive, interpersonal, spiritual and mystical dimensions (Koshi & Ganesh 2006: 120), the spirituality in the workplace consists of multiple factors. These factors can be expressed as engaging work, spiritual connection, sense of community and mystical experience (Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2006):

- **Engaging work:** Engaging work expresses the feelings about the individual's well-being situation, and it is related to having a meaningful work, having high-level goals, and having awareness of the values.
- **Spiritual connection:** Spiritual connection defines the individual's feeling of being connected to something other than itself.
- **Sense of community:** Sense of community defines having the common goals and feeling of togetherness.
- **Mystical experience:** Mystical or unitive experience defines transcendence, which is fulfilled with positive energy, perfection and experience.

Spirituality in the workplace implies experiences on personal and organizational levels. On the personal level, it implies that the employees show all their qualities in their professional lives to render the job meaningful. In other words, it implies that employees, by incorporating all of their inner world characteristics to work processes, contribute with their intellect, creativity and emotions. In a sense, it expresses the integration of the person's spiritual qualities and the job itself. In this case, a reciprocal development process is structured in a manner that the individual's spiritual world would contribute to his/her work and vice versa. As for the term organizational spirit, it is used in the sense of "corporate soul" which implies that the work circle/environment has the necessary qualities to attract and keep the best employees. "Spirituality in the workplace", in a sense, implies that the person reflects his/her humanistic principles, practices and behaviour on work-related functions (Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2004: 28-29). In this sense, organizational culture implies that the organisation has a mission to contribute to its employees and business and leadership practices based on the values of the organization and social responsibility as well as a trait that encourages the spiritual growth and well-being of its employees (Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2006: 282).

The concept of spirituality in the workplace is analysed as a three-dimensional component - namely individual level, group level and organisation level- by Milliman et al. (2003: 429-430). As is seen in the figure 2 below, spirituality mainly focuses on the meaning of the work, community and the alignment of organizational values. On the individual level, it is stated that the person should have deep awareness regarding the meaning and purpose of his/her work. This dimension emphasises how employees should establish an interaction at work on the individual level. It allows for the motivation of the person for the realisation of activities that give meaning to the person's life and his/her interactions with other people. On the other hand, the group dimension implies that, through spirituality, the person creates deep relations with the others and maintains his/her connections. This dimension of spirituality in the workplace is concerned with the interactions of employees with their co-workers and group-level behaviours. This level enables the creation of mental, emotional and spiritual bonds between the employees of the organisation and the realisation of teamwork. The third dimension implies the establishment of a strong bond with organizational values and the harmonisation between the organization's missions and objectives and the values of the individuals. Furthermore, it indicates that the interactions between employees should extend towards organisational objectives, and even be concerned with the objective of ensuring the well-being of the society.

**Figure 2: Spirituality in the workplace: individual, group and organisation level**

**Source: Milliman et al., 2003: 428**

Workplace spirituality is effective in ensuring the enhancement of employees' self-realisation, meaning and purpose finding, devotion etc. Concerning this, nowadays there are two main approaches to spirituality in organisations. They are called “organisation focused approach” and “individual-focused approach”. Each approach describes real and active organizations. In both approaches, the aim is to provide positive results to employees as well as to the organization via the transfer of spiritual values to the organization (Pawar, 2009: 554).



**Table 2: A comparison of two approaches to workplace spirituality**

Key feature	Organization-focused approach (I)	Individual-focused approach (II)
<b>Similarities between two approaches</b>		
<i>Focus on spirituality at work</i>	Focuses on spirituality at work	Focuses on work (and to some extent on other spheres of life)
<i>Focus on values</i>	Focuses on spiritual/ human higher values	Focuses on healthy/human higher values
<i>Focus on benefits for employees</i>	Focuses on various individual-level benefits of workplace spirituality for employees such as satisfaction, joy at work, sense of community, meaningful work, emotional fulfilment, and self-expression.	Focuses on various individual-level benefits of workplace spirituality for employees such as richness of work-life experiences, improved intra-personal processes such as introspection ability, self-control over anger, ability to deal with frustrations, and ethical sensitivity.
<i>Focus on benefits for organisation</i>	Focuses on organisational benefits such as attainment of its purpose (economical, fun-filled flying experience for customers etc.) accomplishment of its business plan, attainment of high productivity.	Focuses on organisational benefits such as improved intradepartmental communication and understanding and aims at weakening individual employees' self-centeredness that may be detrimental to the organisation.
<i>Attention to contextual factors necessitating and supporting workplace spirituality facilitation process</i>	Pays attention to the contextual factors outside the organization such as the strategic niche in the industry and the contextual factors internal to the organization such as the focus on low-cost operations.	Pays attention to the organisation factors outside the organisation such as increasing competition and inside the organisation such as the impairment in some aspects of organisational culture.
<b>Differences between the two approaches</b>		
<i>Perspective or model adopted for workplace spirituality facilitation</i>	Draws upon values-based management model and strategic HRM framework to propose the spirituality	Draws upon indigenous Indian spiritual ethos. The approach adopted to facilitate spirituality in the organization is culturally congruent and compatible with the psychic topography of the employee.
<i>Origin or spiritual values in the workplace</i>	An organisation's adoption of spiritual values is the point of origin of workplace spirituality facilitation.	The emergence of higher values in individual employees is the point of origin of workplace spirituality facilitation.
<i>The focus on efforts for workplace spirituality facilitation</i>	The primary focus of efforts on introducing changes in organisational features and processes (value adaptation HRM practices etc. ) to facilitate workplace spirituality.	The primary focus is on facilitating spiritual development of individual employees to facilitate workplace spirituality.
<i>The sources of workplace spirituality experiences</i>	Workplace spirituality experiences such as the sense of meaning and community come from the work system and organisational mechanisms reflecting organisational spiritual values.	Workplace spirituality experiences such as a greater sense of meaning and unity come from the spiritual development of and higher values emergence in individual employees.

**Source: Composed by making use of Pawar, 2008: 555-556**

As is seen on the table 2, regarding the first approach (organization-focused approach), the deep focus is on the employer's soul and workplace conditions. For example, the subject of interest is the employees' families and relationships, emotional expressions. Similarly, the second approach (individual-focused approach) focuses on healthy social and organizational values, the person's sharpening of his/her spiritual dimension and reflecting this on his/her work. While the first approach is about the adaptation of the organization to high-level spiritual values, within the second approach the notion of the values-based organization is adopted; advanced and healthy human values are stated as being the most important features of this organization. However, the first approach, through the organizations' adaptation to spiritual values and implementation of practices, aims at providing benefits to employees individually. The second approach aims at overcoming obstacles, overcoming mental

exhaustion and ameliorating ethical sensibility to enable the development of employees' capabilities so that they can reap individual benefits. On the other hand, there are also differences between the two approaches.

The first approach, from the perspective of strategic human resources, proposes a values-based organization understanding. Moreover, it aims at incorporating a sense of community, emotional expression, work ethics and empowerment to organisational functions as spiritual organization values. On the contrary, the second approach is based on native Indians' spirituality-related values and views. Another difference between the two approaches concerns the adaptation of spiritual values to the organization. Regarding the adaptation of spiritual values, the first approach considers the sense of community and emotional expression etc. as the point of departure whereas the second approach favours the adaptation of these values individually to the employees.

The first approach adapts work and personal plans and human resources management practices so that the organisational process and systems are in harmony with organizational spiritual values. However, the second approach favours the transformation of spiritual values to ensure workplace spirituality. The first approach is based on processes such as reward systems and teamwork, i.e. "outside-in" process; whereas the second approach focuses on the individual realisation of spiritual development of the employees, in other words, an "inside-out" process is implemented. On the other hand, in the first approach, the spirituality process operates from macro to micro level (top-down process), the aim being the adaptation of organizational spiritual values to the behaviour of employees. In the second approach, however, spirituality process aims at proceeding from personal-level changes towards organization-level ones, that is to say, a bottom-up process is followed.

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF SPIRITUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE**

Spirituality is an experience that is considerably different and strange than the experiences of people in their daily lives. People constantly manifest a defensive approach to protecting themselves from elements such as nature, diseases, strangers, rivalry etc. This causes the perception of a person's mind and body as being separate elements, bringing about the alienation of the person from himself/herself, and consequently, it becomes difficult to find the meaning of life in a mechanical universe (Cacioppe, 2000: 52). At this point, Waddock (1999) states that employees' bringing to the organization as heart, mind, body and soul is very important for both individual and organizational success.

Warr (2002) explains that self-perceptions are closely related to the individual's well-being, and that employee's perception on organization's well-being is also determined by the perception of the employee's the value as the "employee". McLaughlin (1998) notes the fact that higher salaries are not enough organizations in the 21st century to attract the most talented employees to the company, whereas it is more important to provide personal development and community services to employees. Therefore, it is expressed as a fundamental that organizations need to focus on creating feelings of meaning and purpose, in other words, should concentrate on spirituality.

In this sense, organizations which attach importance to spiritual values and have humanistic organizational values care whether their employees are confident, hopeful, healthy and happy and they encourage personal development. It is believed that organizational performance could be increased if the employees of these organizations are encouraged to contribute physically, mentally and spiritually to working life. In consequence of research conducted

during 2004-2005 with managers of the business world, the following facts have been obtained regarding the importance of spirituality in the workplace (Marques et al., 2007: 12):

- Vision as a concentration on the greater good, passion and purpose.
- Enhancement of personal fulfilment and creativity through spirituality and enlightenment.
- Work as a life-fulfilling activity- not as a means to merely fund an otherwise personally fulfilling life
- Work as a contribution toward an integrated life
- Seeing the potential for businesses to achieve enhanced goals by helping their people at all levels achieve personal fulfilment through their work.

No matter the approach adopted by the workplace for the adaptation of spiritual values to organization processes, spirituality presents multiple benefits to employees as well as organizations. The benefits in question are aimed at by workplace spirituality practices, yet the implementations relating to the process may vary from one organization to another. The benefits provided by spirituality in the workplace may be expressed as follows (Krishnakumar & Neck, 2002: 156-159):

- **Intuition and creativity:** As spirituality enables the person to get distanced from the borders of consciousness and become open to intuition, the person becomes more creative. As spirituality increases awareness, it nourishes intuitions, and intuitivism brings forth creativity. Spiritual wealth makes employees feel happy and satisfied with work, and this encourages them to be more creative. This situation also contributes positively to the increase of organizational performance and achievement of financial successes.
- **Honesty and trust:** Honesty is the focal point in many spiritual-based organizations. The organization founds its business objectives and processes on honesty towards both employees and suppliers. Besides, in workplaces where truthfulness and honesty are valued, the sense of trust is also prized and especially during times of crisis or periods of expansion of organizations, the principle of trust becomes considerably essential. Distrust causes communication problems, the deterioration of cooperation between employees and affects work results negatively. The existence of relations based on trust accelerates decision-making processes and brings along better communication, better focus on clients and further innovation.
- **Personal fulfilment:** Spirituality satisfies “the need to belong and to succeed” which figures among Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, that is to say, it triggers action-taking. Accelerating spirituality results in a feeling of completion by the employees which lifts their spirits and makes them want to work.
- **Commitment:** As spirituality creates a trustful environment, it reveals a sense of commitment in the workplace. The employees get attached to the organization in an emotional sense and desire to contribute to the successes of the organization by working more for it.
- **Organizational performance:** If organizations encourage spirituality, the increase of organizational performance comes along. High profitability and success are encouraged thanks to spirituality. As the organization’s support to spirituality creates a feeling of personal development and in a sense, a feeling of completion, on the part of employees, it has positive reflections on organizational performance.

The benefits of spirituality to organizations are evaluated from three different perspectives by Karakas (2010). In this sense, it is stated that, when it is assessed on human resources perspective, spirituality affects employees' well-being and quality of life whereas when it is assessed on philosophical perspective, spirituality provides the feeling of meaning at work to

employees. Besides, spirituality provides employees with the feelings of interconnectedness and community when it is approached from the interpersonal perspective.

It is seen that there is a relationship between the culture of the organization and the dimensions of spirituality (meaningful work, sense of community, conform to organizational values), when the workplace spirituality is evaluated (Alas & Mousa, 2016: 7). Though it is stated that organizations to help employees and to aim employees to reach their full potential and to target employee empowerment are the most essential conditions while adapting spirituality to organizational culture and processes. Also, the organization culture needs to be built in the frame of "a meaningful purpose, trust & openness, expression of feelings, toleration" (Pethe, 2011).

Corporate culture and spirituality draw close in many aspects. A workplace comprises various significances on national, corporate and personal levels and the definition made on each level affects somehow the cognitive, behavioural and emotional nature of people. Organizations always define a mission statement that is equivalent to the values of the management and approved by the management. Individuals have missions too just as organizations do. This mission can be expressed as personal belief systems that are shaped by religious beliefs, family structure etc. (Bloch & Richmond 1997). In this scope, organizational culture implies that the organization has a mission aiming to contribute to its employees and to the society with business and leadership practices based on the values of the organization and social responsibility as well as a trait that encourages the spiritual growth and well-being of its employees (Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2006: 282). Regarding the point, Garg (2017) states that employee well-being cannot be achieved in a scenario where no spirituality takes place within the organizational culture at a workplace.

Spirituality in the workplace reflects a different state that enables the sense of wellbeing on a personal level, and it unveils a belief of contribution to work, a sense of cooperation regarding others and common purposes, the realization of being connected to the surrounding world and others more than the self and a feeling of completion (Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2006: 280). This is why organizational well-being is linked to the spiritual well-being of employees. Gamez and Fisher (2003: 1975-1991) define spiritual wellbeing as "a state of being, reflecting positive feelings, behaviours and cognitions of relationships with oneself, others, the transcendent and nature, that in turn provide the individual with a sense of identity, wholeness, satisfaction, joy, contentment, beauty, love, respect, positive attitudes, inner peace and harmony, and purpose and direction in life". In other words, "Spiritual well-being is a quality of developing and being oriented toward ultimate or sacred concerns that alleviate personal and collective suffering, provides a sense of meaning and purpose to life and death, and fosters human development and fulfilling relationships" (Canda & Furman, 2010: 93).

Spiritual well-being correlates positively with several indicators of well-being such as self-esteem, finding meaning and purpose in life, good physical health and emotional adjustment. Spiritual well-being is positively associated with the perceived level of social competence, positive feelings about life, optimism. Moreover, spiritual wellbeing is significantly related to perceptions of organizational openness, general self-efficacy and organizational commitment (Bowman, 2004: 22-23). In a workplace where spirituality takes place, it helps individual to feel better, to provide personal motivation on life, on living, etc., which in return increases employee well-being relatively (Gibbons, 1999).

Nowadays, organizations appraise the health of their employees as an intellectual capital and because of this fact, focus on organizational health. Organizational health implies the creation

of a synthesis between the enabling of the well-being of employees and organizational activity. Organizational health explains not only the focus on the wellbeing of employees in the business environment of the organization but also the development of skills to get over difficulties in the long run. The World Health Organization defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. As such, health is no longer viewed as a passive state of being but rather as a dynamic process of achieving higher levels of wellness within the physical, mental, social and spiritual dimensions (Bowman, 2004:21). At this point, for organizational health, the organization's physical health (structure, culture and climate of the organization, its communication system etc.), mental health (objectives and policies of the organization etc.) and spiritual health (mission and values of the organization etc.) should be in a state of complete wellbeing. Spiritual well-being is the most important because it keeps the organization alive and because it supplies constant energy. To assure spiritual wellbeing, primarily physical and mental health should be attained. This is why it is possible for organizations to assure or maintain the spiritual wellbeing of the employees by making arrangements regarding the system that they possess.

### **CONCLUSION**

For an employee working in a workplace that focuses on spiritual values such as sense of purpose, acceptance, trust, respect, understanding, appreciation, helpfulness, encouragement etc., the aim is that he/she develops his/her spiritual awareness, possesses a spiritual way of thinking, feels deeply the values belonging to him/her and to the organisation, and reflects all these as creativity, performance and success on his/her endeavours within the organisation (Marques et al., 2007; Waddock, 1999); Pethe, 2011). When employees feel the existence of mutual understanding, honesty, respect and trust within the organisation their commitment/devotion increases towards themselves as well as the organization.

The existence of spirituality in the workplace enables the employees to manifest a thriving mental, physical and spiritual development and this situation ensures positive results for the employee himself/herself and for the organization (Krishnakumar & Neck, 2002; Warr, 2002; Alas&Mousa, 2016; Karakas, 2010; Canda&Furman, 2010). Meanwhile, spirituality in the workplace enables the discernment of each unit, person and group within the organization and provides an incentive to discover novelties.

In organizations, for the conveying of spiritual values to employees, importance is attached to the adoption of personal purposes, missions and values. In other words, the organisational milieu guides the spiritual development of the person. The adoption of spiritual values by the organisation and its transfer to employees develops ethical behaviour, enables empowerment and creates possibilities for better leadership (Lips-Wiersman, 2002: 386). In order to be a spiritual workplace, it is not enough to mention it only in mission statements; the organisation should establish a system in which the employees would use their whole potential, ensure spiritual growth and perform at an optimum level (King&Nicol, 1999: 238-240). In other words, the organization, by defining its values, priorities and principles concerning spiritual wellbeing, announces it to its employees, suppliers and external environment.

In the 21st century, during which the modality of competition has undergone a change, organizations adapt necessary practices for the spiritual development of the employees and they enable the creation of abstract values that are non-imitable. The adoption of spiritual paradigm, its integration with the values of the organization and its reflection on work processes require a long and gradual course (Vasconcelos, 2015; Birberman&Whitty, 1997; Garcia-Zamor, 2003); Rose, 1990; Aravamudhan & Krishnaveni, 2014). As a consequence of reflection of spirituality to the organisation's culture and climate, the existence of spiritual

values is felt in the organisation's relations with internal and external partners (Alas&Mousa, 2016). It is at this point that the development of spirituality in a workplace brings about important contributions not only for the individual and the organization, but also for the society as well as a gradual contribution to the improvement of life quality.

It is stated that organisations can obtain spiritual well-being as a result of adopting the spiritual values and implementing practices, of which acquisitions are explained firstly at the individual level, then at the organisational level, and eventually at the societal level (Bowman, 2004; Gibbons, 1999). At this juncture, Srivastava's (2017) statement at HRZone March 2017 matters as a response to organisations' question on where to start spirituality. "The first thing that needs to happen is to make it safe and permissible to talk about it (spirituality), as normal and as naturally as the many other conversations we have at work, such as profitability, innovations and personnel issues. However, spirituality is becoming more openly recognised as an integral part of work".

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