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**EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY AND INNOVATIVE WORK BEHAVIOUR****Deepakshi Gupta<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Neha Bhatt<sup>2</sup>**<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Faculty of Management & Commerce Jagannath University, Delhi NCR, Bahadurgarh<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor, Faculty of Management & Commerce, Jagannath University, Delhi NCR, Bahadurgarh**ABSTRACT**

*In today's volatile business environment, organisations are increasingly relying on intangible resources to sustain competitive advantage tremendously. Workplace Spirituality (WPS) has now emerged as a significant organisational construct which is capable of fostering an employee's creativity and innovation. Despite increasing interest, the empirical research linking WPS to innovative work behaviour (IWB) using Indian conceptualisations remains very limited. This study has an objective to investigate the relationship between WPS and IWB among Indian working professionals, heavily employing on Pandey et al.'s (2009) four-dimensional WPS framework: Swadharma, Sense of Community, Lokasangraha, and Authenticity. I did a study to understand how workplace spirituality affects a person's overall well-being at work. To do this, my first step was to ask 395 people who work to fill out a questionnaire. I then used a specific set of questions in order to measure how spiritual the workplace is, and another set to see how well people feel about their work nowadays. Further, I used a statistical method to understand how the different parts of workplace spirituality affect how people feel about their work, while also considering other things like age, gender, education, income and job level. This helped me comprehend the relationship between workplace spirituality and well-being at work. All four WPS dimensions were significant positive predictors of IWB: Swadharma ( $\beta = .33, p < .05$ ), Authenticity ( $\beta = .36, p < .001$ ), Lokasangraha ( $\beta = .49, p < .05$ ), and Sense of Community ( $\beta = .35, p < .01$ ). Model 2 explained 44.4% of variance in IWB ( $F = 9.41, p < .001$ ), a substantial improvement over the control-only model ( $R^2 = .035$ ). Demographic variables were non-significant predictors in both models. These findings suggest that cultivating a spiritually aligned workplace meaningfully enhances employees' propensity for innovation. Theoretical and practical implications for organisations in the Indian context are discussed further in this research paper.*

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The skilled labour force is not as readily available as it once was, and those who are employed are fighting to stay in their positions in this unanticipated business climate.

The organization faced with uncertainty, companies are shifting more towards intangible resources (Henson, 2003) and building competitive advantage by exploring forms of creativity (Basadur, 1992; Woodman et al., 1993), innovation (Cho and Pucik, 2005), tacit knowledge (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995), and spirituality.

Mitroff and Denton (1999) suggested spirituality, as in today's rapidly changing business environment, companies are recognising the importance of leveraging intangible resources to stay competitive, as people are looking for what this means for their work as part of a spiritual journey.

Workplace spirituality (WPS) is identified as an essential antecedent for arousing the importance of creativity and innovation among employees by encouraging innovative work behaviour (IWB), which refers to the intentional introduction of novel and valuable ideas and behaviours that support creation (Hunsaker and Ding, 2022). In an organisation, IWB is fostered through job autonomy (Ramamoorthy et al., 2005; Bantha and Nayak, 2021), psychological contract, psychological climate (Montani et al., 2014), and knowledge sharing (Radaelli et al., 2014). Values like spirituality have a strong link with culture (Ortiz, 2020), and cultural dimensions add a linkage to national innovation (Yeganeh, 2023). We therefore used Indian-based WPS instruments that have already been tested and validated (Pandey et al., 2009).

The extent to which employees perform innovatively in response to workplace spirituality will be studied in this work. By studying how the organizational environment will encourage innovation through better internalization of the workplace Spirituality. The present study meets the gap by studying the inter-relationship between employees' Workplace spirituality (WPS) and Innovative work behaviour (IWB).

**1.1 Research Objectives**

- To explore the relationship between WPS and IWB among Indian working professionals.
- To assess the individual impact of Swadharma, Lokasangraha, Authenticity, and Sense of Community on IWB.

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## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Workplace Spirituality

WPS is said to be a framework of organizational values testified in the culture that promotes employees' experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected to others in a way that provides completeness and joy (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003).

The present study relies on Pandey et al. 's (2009) four-dimensional conceptualization of spiritual climate-

- 1) Swadharma
- 2) Sense of community
- 3) Lokasagraha
- 4) Authenticity

### Innovative Work Behavior

Innovative work behavior (IWB) is the degree of individual employee's behaviour that initiates new useful ideas in organizational processes, procedures, activities and services. It can be inferred from Amabile's (1988) belief that innovative work behavior is a journey in which people start from generating new ideas until the end of realizing new ideas and finally using those new ideas to solve critical problems.

Organizational innovation requires an adequate understanding of what motivates people to develop and execute new ideas (Scott and Bruce, 1994).

### Workplace Spirituality (WPS) And Innovative Work Behaviour (IWB)

The proposed relationship between WPS and IWB is based on the broaden-and-build theory and the resource-based theory of intangible resources. According to this notion, an organization's workforce's intangible social and psychological resources are what give it its innovation and competitive edge. The perspective sees employees as sources of competitive advantage because of their value, distinctiveness, exclusivity, and non-substitutability. The idea holds that an organization's intangible resources—its employees—have a significant impact on its competitiveness, innovation, and creativity (Hunsaker and Ding, 2022). These intangible workers' assets are their social and psychological capital, which includes their skills, knowledge, tenacity, optimism, etc.

"Swadharma" refers to a work assignment that fits an employee's aptitude, competences, passions, and abilities within the previously mentioned WPS characteristics (Pandey et al., 2009; Garg et al., 2022). According to Hoffoll (2002), this enlarged perspective provides social and psychological resources, which are employees' intangible assets. It may also promote IWB among employees (Sengphet et al., 2019). To put it briefly, WPS stimulates socio- psychological resources that support workers' inventiveness and creativity. Positive emotions evoked by WPS help employees develop their socio-psychological resources (Hunsaker, 2020; Saxena et al., 2020). According to Afsar and Badir (2017) and Houghton et al. (2016), workers that engage in meaningful and reflective work are now more conscious, dedicated, and intuitive in their endeavors, which results in IWB. Considering this, the following theory is put forth.

#### **H1: Swadharma is positively associated with IWB.**

According to McMillan and Chavis (1986), "a sense of community" is the second dimension of WPS that is discussed. It is defined as "a shared belief that members' needs will be sought after through their commitment to being together" and "a feeling that employees have of belongingness, a feeling that members matter to each other as well as to the group". According to Ashmos and Duchon (2000), the emphasis is on close relationships built on trust and affection. Employees gain from and advance corporate goals when they recognize their interdependence and connectivity (Milliman et al., 2003; Garg et al., 2020; Yadav et al., 2022).

Positive emotions, like pleasure and maybe curiosity and anticipation, broaden consciousness and promote creative, exploratory ideas and behaviors, as the broaden- and-build hypothesis suggests (Fredrickson, 2004). Drawing on the broaden-and-build idea, a feeling of community may influence employees toward IWB in addition to providing one with social resources in the form of enduring, reliable, and passionate connections and relationships. In light of this, the following theory is put forth.

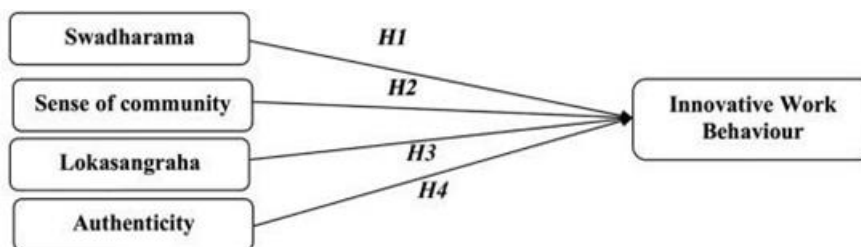
#### **H2. A sense of community is positively associated with IWB.**

"Authenticity," which is defined as being truthful to oneself, coworkers, superiors, the workplace, the organization, and society, is the third component of WPS.

**H3. Authenticity is positively associated with IWB.**

"Lokasangraha" (other's orientation), the fourth component of WPS, describes "coming together for the betterment and welfare of society." It promotes teamwork for the good of people, communities, businesses, and society (Garg, 2017). Employees may display IWB at work to improve organizational procedures and objectives. Positive emotions and positive meaning are correlated in that doing meaningful work elevates one's mood and extends one's perspective.

**H4. Lokasangraha is positively associated with IWB.**



Source - Garg, 2023

Workplace spirituality, as defined by Sandhu (2016), is about finding meaning and purpose in work, and creating a sense of harmony and interconnectedness. This concept, as further explored by Vinod (2014), is not about religion, but rather about the inner life of individuals and their desire for meaningful work and community. Butts (1999) adds that integrating spirituality into the workplace can enhance personal well-being, creativity, and organizational success. However, Rowland (2016) cautions that while workplace spirituality can lead to more productive employees, it can also be used to manipulate employees into working longer and harder.

**3. METHODOLOGY**

**Research Design**

The research design used for this project is "Empirical Research" design. Empirical research is an investigation grounded in the direct experience of the researcher with phenomena through observation and measurement. The collected data may be subject to comparison against a theory or hypothesis, the conclusions remain grounded in real-world experiences.

**Size of the Sampling**

Random Sampling

Sample Unit: Working professionals

Sample Size: 395

**Data collection**

The study was conducted on working professionals with a sample of 395 individuals. Google Form, divided into three sections, was randomly shared via social media and educational communities like groups on Telegram and Facebook to collect data. As per our practice, the form consists of ethical and privacy statements. For instance, the participants were assured that the data would not be shared with any third party and would be strictly used for academic purposes. Also, informed consent from the participants was taken. The consent was taken in the form of choice. The choice of whether the participants wanted to proceed further with the survey or not (after reading the ethical and privacy statements) was provided. The form was designed so that if the participants agreed with the statements, they could proceed with the survey. If not, the survey automatically ended at that point. The first section consists of the demographic details of the respondents. There were 170 females (43.03%) and 225 males (56.9%) participants.

**4. RESULTS**

**4.1 Reliability and Validity**

All constructs demonstrated acceptable reliability and convergent validity (see Table 1). Cronbach's alpha ranged from 0.747 to 0.901, and AVE values ranged from 0.58 to 0.702, all meeting recommended thresholds.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics, Reliability, and Convergent Validity**

Variable	Mean	SD	Cronbach's $\alpha$	AVE
Swadharama	26.23	6.37	0.844	0.683

Authenticity	9.59	2.87	0.844	0.700
Lokasangraha	20.50	3.72	0.747	0.702
Sense of Community	10.80	1.43	0.765	0.610
WPS (Overall)	67.12	11.17	0.901	0.640
IWB	33.86	7.35	0.850	0.580

Note. WPS = Workplace Spirituality; IWB = Innovative Work Behaviour; AVE = Average Variance Extracted.

4.2 Correlations

Table 2 presents bivariate correlations. IWB showed strong positive correlations with overall WPS ( $r = .790$ ,  $p < .05$ ), Swadharma ( $r = .755$ ), Authenticity ( $r = .590$ ), Lokasangraha ( $r = .389$ ), and Sense of Community ( $r = .425$ ), providing initial support for all four hypotheses.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Matrix

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Swadharma	--					
2. Authenticity	0.728*	--				
3. Lokasangraha	0.389*	0.494*	--			
4. Sense of Community	0.015	0.043	0.012	--		
5. WPS	0.617*	0.539*	0.635*	0.251*	--	
6. IWB	0.755*	0.590*	0.389*	0.425*	0.790*	--

Note. \* $p < .05$  (two-tailed). WPS = Workplace Spirituality; IWB = Innovative Work Behaviour.

4.3 Hierarchical Regression

Table 3 presents hierarchical regression results. Model 1 (demographics only) was non-significant ( $R^2 = .035$ ,  $F = 1.91$ ,  $p > .05$ ). Adding the four WPS dimensions in Model 2 substantially improved fit ( $R^2 = .444$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .409$ ,  $F = 9.41$ ,  $p < .001$ ). All four WPS dimensions were significant: Swadharma ( $\beta = .33$ ,  $p = .036$ ), Authenticity ( $\beta = .36$ ,  $p < .001$ ), Lokasangraha ( $\beta = .49$ ,  $p = .023$ ), and Sense of Community ( $\beta = .35$ ,  $p = .006$ ). H1–H4 were all supported.

Table 3: Hierarchical Regression Analysis: Predictors of Innovative Work Behaviour

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	R <sup>2</sup>	F
<b>Model 1 - Control variables only</b>						
Constant	3.08	3.16	10.79	.000	.035	1.91
Age	.11	.45	.25	.806		
Gender	.79	.75	1.05	.293		
Marital Status	1.90	.82	1.31	.123		
Education Level	1.85	.72	1.55	.354		
Income	.76	.52	1.46	.145		
Management Level	.08	.48	.17	.868		
<b>Model 2 - WPS dimensions added</b>						
Constant	23.73	4.23	5.62	.000	.444	9.41
Age	.17	.41	.41	.680		
Gender	.70	.69	1.02	.308		
Marital Status	1.50	.76	1.98	.528		
Education Level	-1.33	.67	-1.99	.448		
Income	.63	.48	1.32	.189		

Management Level	.11	.44	.25	.805		
Swadharma	.33	.08	2.67	.036*		
Authenticity	.36	.18	3.67	.000*		
Lokasangraha	.49	.11	2.78	.023*		
Sense of Community	.35	.24	4.49	.006*		

Note. \* $p < .05$ . Dependent variable = IWB. Controls: age, gender, marital status, education, income, management level.

**5. DISCUSSION**

The goal of this research was to investigate how WPS affects employees' IWB. WPS is a holistic concept that includes Lokasangraha, authenticity, community, and Swadharma. The study's first four hypotheses looked at how four WPS dimensions affected IWB. These IWB parameters have a substantial favorable impact.

Results are in line with research on Chinese SMEs conducted by Hunsekar and Ding (2022). According to Pandey et al. (2009), the first component, Swadharma, is the optimal method of working that maximizes happiness, contentment, and productivity. The study demonstrates the beneficial psychological impacts of implementing Swadharma. Work that is meaningful and meditative naturally leads to awareness and mindfulness (Montani et al., 2019).

The second construct, the sense of community, reflects the interdependence and connectivity amongst workers. Research has already shown enough to support the premise that companies should strive for greater communication fluidity, team and group hybridization, idea cross-fertilization, constructive deviances and conflict, to foster innovation (Foss et al., 2013). It implies that creativity and novelty come from collectivism rather than individualism. Novel ideas and designs are more likely to emerge when people with different cultural origins, personality traits, value systems, and ambitions come together. It is among the factors contributing to the increased global acceptance of a diverse workforce.

According to Pandey et al. (2009), the third component, Lokasangraha, emphasizes the significance of "working for the world's maintenance." Its goals are self-sufficiency as well as the welfare of other people, animals, and the environment (Pratt and Ashforth, 2003). The attitude of these people is essential for inspiring people to take meaningful action and fostering workplace innovation (Pink, 2010). If there is a greater purpose involved, employees will be inspired from inside. The final concept, authenticity, highlights the importance of honesty, devotion, integrity, and truthfulness. Conversely, employees who are committed to their work or who share Swadharma's values will behave more prosocially, which will foster a sense of community among all members of the organization. Employees' belongingness to the company is also a result of authenticity being accepted at work. Thus, it is evident that Swadharma, sense of community, Loksangraha, and authenticity are interconnected and reliant on one another, making them an indestructible whole.

**6. IMPLICATIONS**

**6.1 Theoretical Implications**

**1. Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) in Organizations:** This paper enhances SCT by suggesting that formal work environments be used to implement it. The study emphasizes the significance of environmental and individual factors in influencing employee behavior in work environments.

**2. Culturally Specific Workplace Spirituality (WPS):** The study presents a fresh viewpoint that in line with India's collectivistic culture using Pandey et al. (2009)'s idea of WPS. This culturally specific approach opens the door to a more global understanding of spirituality in the workplace.

**3. Bridging in the Research Gap:** The study discusses the scarcity of empirical studies on WPS, especially in contexts from the East. It adds to the expanding literature of research on workplace spirituality and its useful applications.

**6.2 Practical Implications**

**Creating a Spiritual Work Environment:** By incorporating spiritual practices and values into their vision, mission, and policies, organizations can create a comprehensive and all-encompassing spiritual environment. For example: using team-building exercises to emphasize collectivism and integrating social responsibility programs with business goals.

## 7. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

- Self-reported questionnaire surveys, which have the potential to be biased, were used in this study. Individuals may overestimate their innovative behavior, especially if they sense spiritual fulfillment in their profession.
- Only a single point in time is captured in the study. Further research using longitudinal designs that monitor workers over time may yield more convincing proof of a causal connection between WPS and IWB.
- The study concentrated on workers in Indian companies and the Indian conception of WPS. Other cultures might not be able to apply the findings. Additional cross-cultural research may improve the results' generalizability.

## 8. CONCLUSION

This study provides the empirical evidence stating that workplace spirituality is operationalised through Swadharma, Sense of Community, Lokasangrah and Authenticity remain a significant predictor of innovative work behaviour among Indian professionals, explaining 44.4% of IWB variance. Demographic variables were not very significant predictors, reinforcing that the spiritual climate of the workplace is a more powerful tool to judge for innovation than individual background. As organisations navigate in an increasingly complex world, fostering inner alignment, community, prosocial purpose, and authentic conduct may prove among the most powerful strategies for unleashing employee innovation.

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