Payal Kumar, Kasturirangan Sudarshan

13 Workplace Spirituality and Creative Industries

Introduction

Spirituality, once considered to be personal, individual-centric and intimate, has evolved into a phenomenon which today is broadly discussed in boardrooms, town-hall meetings and conferences. Increasing discussion and research work centres around the spiritual workplace – a workplace that supports and develops the spirit and well-being of its employees, and where the firm's stakeholders are seen to be as important as the shareholders (Walsh et al., 2003). So much so, that this increased interest in workplace spirituality (WS) has even been described to be a spiritual movement (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000).

Spiritually-inclined organizations are said to exhibit both extrinsic and intrinsic value. Research suggests that such firms have greater efficiencies, generate a better rate of returns (Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2004; Fry, 2003) and can solve human resource challenges (Garg, 2017). Various empirical studies also suggest that workplace spirituality provides intrinsic job satisfaction (Moore & Casper, 2006), enhances employee engagement and grit (Singh & Chopra, 2016), promotes employee wellbeing and shapes a positive attitude amongst employees (Kolodinsky et al., 2008), while helping the employee to develop their inner life at the workplace (Sheep, 2004). WS not only provides employees with meaning at work at the personal level, but often goes beyond the individual due to a sense of interconnectedness with others in the organisation and a desire to create a more meaningful world (Karakas, 2010; Milliman et al., 1999).

Apart from wellbeing of the employee, WS is also said to boost creativity (Freshman, 1999; Shinde & Fleck, 2015), which is the cornerstone for innovation and which paves the way for holistic, organisational growth (Wong, 2003). Creativity is the bedrock for employees in the creative industries, also known as the cultural industries. Creative industries include film and video, music, advertising, fashion designing as well as the performing arts, television and radio, and software (DCMS, 1998). An individual's creative skills and imagination combined with the economic value of their innovation, is the foundation of creative industries (DCMS, 2001). From an economic perspective, global creative industries are estimated at around US \$2250 billion and account for more than 30 million jobs worldwide, with major employers in this domain from the visual arts, books and music (UNESCO & EY, 2015).

In the next sections, we survey the literature with reference to 1. Workplace Spirituality 2. Creativity in the Workplace and 3. Creative Industries, and then end the chapter with a discussion section. The literature review is interspersed with quotations from interviews of thought leaders in this field.

Workplace Spirituality

Many scholars have defined spirituality, but there does not seem to be any identifiable common definition. While there are hundreds of articles, papers and books on this topic, Brown says the more she reads, the more she realizes that the concept is opaque (2003). For some spirituality represents a perennial search for the purpose and meaning of life (Krishnakumar & Neck, 2002). Others say it is a disposition of the mind or one's outlook (Covey, 2004), and still others that it represents inner consciousness (Sisk & Torrance, 2001) or even morality (Kohlberg & Ryncarz, 1990). Olufemi-Ayoola & Ogunyemi (2018) have tabulated various definitions of WS, including inner-life, wellbeing, feeling connected and compassionate towards co-workers, etc.

There are very few studies on the antecedents of WS. In one such study, Badrinarayanan & Madhavaram (2008) have listed supervisory behaviour, organisational values, ethical climate, and wellness lifestyle as antecedents. In other studies, supervisory and senior management behaviour are said to impact the psychological health and spiritual wellbeing of the employee (Dent et al., 2005; Gilbreath & Benson, 2004). At the firm level, WS is said to be best fostered in those firms with ethical climates (Parboteeah & Cullen, 2003) and best implemented through a person-organisation fit (Afsar & Badir, 2017).

In terms of outcome variables, several studies have identified a positive influence of WS on both organisations and the people working in them. WS is said to promote employee motivation, enhance positive behaviour and increased productivity (Olufemi-Ayoola & Ogunyemi, 2018). Furthermore, WS is said to lead to greater job satisfaction and also organisational commitment (Pawar, 2009). Kinjerski & Skrypnik use the term 'spirit at work' to describe WS (Kinjerski & Skrypnik, 2004). In a 2008 study of long-term care givers, they found that a spirit at work program at the workplace is a cost-effective way to improve employee job satisfaction, boost employee organizational commitment, and reduce attrition, ultimately leading to better patient care. Earlier, Moxley (2000) pointed out that harnessing the inner spirit at the workplace enables an employee approach work with a heightened sense of purpose and satisfaction. According to Fry (2003), when employees deem the organisations that they work with as spiritual, they, in turn, become more ethical and committed, and less fearful.

However, not all scholars believe that WS leads to positive outcomes. Some say that WS is a mere management fad or just a tool to control employees (Fernando, 2005). Others, such as Gibbons (2000) say that WS is another failed management concept such Total Quality Management. Still others suggest that employees in spiritual organisations feel unappreciated, unconnected, and lost (Meyer et al., 1993). Furthermore, the jury remains out on an increase in productivity and the company bottom line, with Poole (2009) questioning the business case for WS (see Table 13.1).

Table 13.1: Antecedents and outcomes of WS.

Title	Theme	Findings
(Parboteeah & Cullen, 2003)	Antecedents of WS	WS is best fostered in those firms with ethical climates
(Gilbreath & Benson, 2004; Dent et al., 2005)		Supervisory and senior management behavior impact the psychological health and spiritual wellbeing of the employee
(Badrinarayanan & Madhavaram, 2008)		Supervisory behavior, organizational values, ethical climate, and wellness lifestyle are antecedents of workplace spirituality (WS)
(Afsar & Badir, 2017)		WS is best implemented through a person-organization fit.
(Milliman et al., 1999; Karakas, 2010)	Positive outcomes of WS	Provides employees with meaning at work, goes beyond the individual due to a sense of interconnectedness with others in the organization and a desire to create a more meaningful world
(Fry, 2003)		When employees deem the organizations that work with as spiritual, they, in turn, become more ethical and committed, and less fearful.
(Sheep, 2004)		Helps the employee to develop their inner life at the workplace
(Moore & Casper, 2006)		Workplace spirituality provides intrinsic job satisfaction.
(Kolodinsky et al., 2008)		Promotes employee wellbeing and shapes a positive attitude amongst employees
(Pawar, 2009)		Leads to greater job satisfaction and organizational commitment
(Singh & Chopra, 2016)		WS enhances employee engagement and grit.
(Olufemi-Ayoola & Ogunyemi, 2018)		Promotes employee motivation, enhances positive behavior and increased productivity
(Meyer et al., 1993)		Employees in spiritual organizations feel unappreciated, unconnected, and lost.
(Gibbons, 2000)	Studies questioning positive outcomes of WS	WS is another failed management concept such Total Quality Management.
(Fernando, 2005)		WS is a mere management fad or just a tool to control employees
(Poole, 2009)		The business case for WS is questionable.

Source: Author's own.

Workplace and Creativity

Organisations have, for a very long period, emphasised and focused on creativity as a fundamental value proposition that provides a distinct advantage over competitors. Creativity is said to be linked to effectiveness, productivity and innovation amongst employees (Runco, 2004), thanks to ideas being generated and also due to existing ideas being reshaped (Nonaka, 1991). A creative mind can lead to immense transformation – culturally and societally (Harman & Hormann, 1990). A study commissioned by Adobe (State of Create, 2016) suggests that 70% of people believe being creative is valuable to society and 65% believe this adds value to the economy.

Artists, musicians, designers and architects have described being creative as akin to being spiritual (Howkins, 2007). However, it is noteworthy that workplace creativity as a phenomenon in the creative industries is not all a rosy picture, given that creative persons can be subject to high mood disorders (Mayo, 2009). In a study undertaken by Ulster University in 2018 (Ulster University, 2018), more than 500 people employed in the creative industries in Ireland were surveyed for their mental health and wellbeing. Some of the key findings that emerged include that the pressure to reach high standards and irregular work lead to severe stress and depression, and that there was a high suicidal tendency amongst the participants. Another study in Australia, Mentally Healthy (2018), suggests that the workforce in media, marketing and creative industries is more vulnerable to mental illnesses, with many employees showing high symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Both intrinsic and extrinsic factors are said to boost employee creativity. Amabile (1996) suggests that for employees, intrinsic motivation is a crucial facilitator for creativity and so too is a stimulating work environment. Also, a quality relationship with supervisors promotes the generation of more creative ideas from employees (Zhao et al., 2014). Personal characteristics conducive to creativity include openness and broad-mindedness (Dollinger et al., 2004). Marques & Dhiman (2014) say that demography is also an important variable of study, as the younger generation in the workforce seem to be more open to explore things that the older generations were not: “In recent years, we have seen a growing number of intellectual and practice based gatherings on spirituality, motivation, alternative learning, and right-brain thinking, and an increasing legion of scholars looking for ways that have not yet widely been introduced.” (2014, p. x). See Table 13.2 for a datewise overview of some of the workplace and creativity literature.

Table 13.2: Studies on workplace and creativity.

(Wong, 2003)	In the context of work, creativity is one of the attributes of workplace spirituality.
(Dollinger et al., 2004)	Personal characteristics conducive to creativity include openness and broad-mindedness
(Runco, 2004)	Organizations focus on creativity as this is linked to effectiveness, productivity and innovation amongst employees.
(Howkins, 2007)	When creativity translates into a tradeable product or service, it gives rise to the creative economy.
(Rego & Pina e Cunha, 2008)	WS is said to have a positive spillover effect on employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment, that can further enhance creativity, and lead to individual and professional growth.
(Mayo, 2009)	Creative people are subject to high mood disorders.
(Marques & Dhiman, 2014)	Demography is an important variable, as the younger generation in the workforce seem to be more open to explore things that the older generations were not.
(Zhao et al., 2014)	A quality relationship with supervisors facilitates the generation of more creative ideas from employees
(Olatere, 2018)	WS leads to creativity and innovation amongst employees
(Bhawuk, 2019)	Creativity can be said to be a gift of spirituality

Source: Author's own

Workplace Spirituality and Creative Industries

The significance of a creative economy from a global standpoint can be reckoned from the fact that 2021 has been declared as the International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development by the United Nations (UN). The UN acknowledges that “creative industries can help to foster positive externalities while preserving and promoting cultural heritages and diversity, as well as enhance developing countries’ participation in and benefit from new and dynamic growth opportunities in world trade” (UN, 2019, p. 2).

Various global organisations have defined creative industries, as per Table 13.3: Table 13.4 lists some examples of creative industries:

From the definitions and classifications, one can infer that when creativity translates into a tradeable product or service, it gives rise to the creative economy (Howkins, 2007). Furthermore, the industries are a concoction of creative and cultural industries, with an intrinsic manifestation of human qualities (Peris-Ortiz et al., 2019). Says Father Oswald A J Mascarenhas, S J., JRD Tata Chair in Business Ethics, XLRI,

Table 13.3: Defining creative industries.

Defined by	Definition
(Creative Industries Mapping Documents, 2001, Department of Digital, Culture, Media & Sports, United Kingdom)	“ . . . those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property.”
(United Nations Council for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Creative Economy Report, 2008, p. 13)	<p>The creative industries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – are the cycles of creation, production and distribution of goods and services that use creativity and intellectual capital as primary inputs; – constitute a set of knowledge-based activities, focused on but not limited to arts, potentially generating revenues from trade and intellectual property rights; – comprise tangible products and intangible intellectual or artistic services with creative content, economic value and market objectives; – constitute a new dynamic sector in world trade.
(United Nations General Assembly Seventy-Fourth Session, 2019, p. 2)	the creative economy is called the ‘Orange Economy’ and defined as “knowledge-based economic activities and the interplay between human creativity and ideas, knowledge and technology, as well as cultural values or artistic, cultural heritage and other individual or collective creative expressions.”

Source: Author’s own

India, “Real work is the impression of one’s personality on matter – specifically exemplified in pottery, sculpture, painting, embroidery, gardening and parenting. Work defined thus frees creativity, imagination, character, commitment and humanity.”

According to Wong (2003), in the context of work, creativity is one of the attributes of workplace spirituality. For some employees engaged in the creative industries such as arts and music, spirituality plays a decisive role. Artists, musicians, designers and architects have described being creative as akin to being spiritual (Howkins, 2007). They believe they undergo a transcendental experience during the creative process which takes them to a different plane when they get immersed in their creative work (Mayo, 2009). Frida Kahlo, “found the language that would eventually impel her to tell her story, unflinchingly, charting her personal and spiritual quest and suffering” (Rummel, 2000, p. 18).

While creativity can lead to a spiritual experience, there are studies that suggest reversal causality, in other words, WS leads to creativity and innovation amongst employees (Olalere, 2018), and problem-solving capabilities (Tischler et al., 2002). This connection between a spiritual experience and ensuing creativity, however, is not exclusive to those working in the creative industries. Take the case of Srinivasa

Table 13.4: Classification of creative industries.

Classification by	Creative Industries
(Creative Industries Mapping Documents, 2001, Department of Digital, Culture, Media & Sports, United Kingdom)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Crafts – Designer Fashion – Film and Video – Advertising – Architecture – Arts and Antiques – Markets – Television and Radio – Software and Computer Services
(UNESCO, Measuring the Economic Contribution of Cultural Industries, 2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Audio-visual and Interactive Media – Architecture – Tourism – Books and Press – Cultural and Natural Heritage – Performance and Celebration – Visual Arts and Crafts – Design and Creative Services
(United Nations Council for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Creative Economy Report, 2010, p. 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Heritage – Arts – Media – Functional creation (advertising, architecture, design goods, recreational services etc.)

Source: Author's own

Ramanujan, the mathematical genius who rose from a humble background to be the first Indian to be elected as a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. He ascribed his work to divine inspiration, in which he said that complex mathematical solutions would come to him after he had vision of the mother Goddess (India Today, 2017: <https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/gk-current-affairs/story/srinivasa-ramanujan-life-story-973662-2017-04-26>, downloaded on 13/11/2020). In this context, creativity can be said to be a gift of spirituality (Bhawuk, 2019).

Organisations would do well to provide space for spirituality and creativity, which can lead to spiritual wellbeing. While wellness is defined as “the integration of social, mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical health at any level of health or illness” (Greenberg, 1985, p. 404), spiritual wellness is seen to be “a balanced openness to or pursuit of spiritual development” (Chandler et al., 1992, p. 170).

How can organisations foster spirituality and wellbeing? Space can be created for leisure and also for prayer and reflection. In an interview by the authors of this chapter, Dr Mrinalini Kochupillai, faculty at Munich Intellectual Property Law Center; formerly Senior Research Fellow, Chair of Business Ethics and Global Governance, Germany, she said:

Expanding the adoption of spiritual practice within workplaces does not take away from the very personal or community based nature of religious preferences. While several public places (such as international airports) have started providing for 'prayer rooms' catering to needs of various religious communities, workplaces can either adopt similar models to support individual spiritual or religious practices, or support collective secular spiritual practices at specific times in the workplace, such as starting every meeting with a 2 minute mindfulness silence. As is evidenced by a growing body of scientific research, such practices enhance employee well-being, (team) connectedness, and support overall work productivity, which, in turn, can enhance workplace creativity and innovation. (Kochupillai, 2020)

Discussion

The creative economy is growing significantly year on year, hand-in-hand with technological advancements, with greater coverage being afforded to this in the print and electronic media. In an interview of Chris Frost, Professor Emeritus of Journalism, Liverpool John Moores University, UK, (2020) he said: "Journalism plays a pivotal role in the creative industries. By writing about and criticizing creative arts and production, journalists stimulate interest in and consumption of a wide range of creative outputs that are a major part of the commercial life of any civilized country. Creativity adds magic to our lives and the journalism of creativity helps spread that stardust far and wide."

The increasing importance of WS, creative industries and innovation can be seen from a unique conference on Ethics in Innovation in 2017, which saw an interplay of ethics, science and Industry 4.0, on the same platform. Organized by the World Forum for Ethics in Business and the Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition in Munich, the conference dwelt on the multiple stakeholder lens to seek answers to ethical questions in innovation.

Furthermore, the Center for Management in the Creative Industries (CMCI) has been formed as a collaboration between Sotheby's Institute of Art and Claremont Graduate University's Drucker School of Management, School of Arts and Humanities, and Getty Leadership Institute. It is aimed at students who aspire to work in the creative industries, such as in film production. Said Larry Crosby, former Dean of the Drucker School of Management, "The creation of the CMCI marks the next phase of the Drucker School's focus on management challenges and opportunities that are specific to the creative industries and the creative economy more generally," (Claremont Graduate University, 2015: <https://www.cgu.edu/news/2015/03/claremont-graduate-university-announces-creation-of-new-center-for-management-in-the-creative-industries-3/> downloaded on 05/11-2020).

To summarise, various studies have focused on the positive impact WS has on organisations and its stakeholders. In fact there are some organisations that prefer to be labelled as 'spiritual organisations' owing to the benefit this brings to all the

stakeholders concerned, including enhanced creativity and innovation amongst employees and clients. The Times of India Group, India, is one such example. The group comprises of businesses spanning print media, internet, music and multimedia. At one time the group had an employee training programme called “Self Mastery,” with the aim to controlling ego and unleashing individual potential. More recently, the Times of India has formed the “Times Foundation” with the twin aim of encouraging sustainability and transformation, which includes spiritual awareness as an important pillar. Also, the media outlet publishes a popular weekly column known as The Speaking Tree.

On the other hand, there are scholars who argue that WS has no real purpose or value. Finally, there are scholars who believe that what in fact ails many modern organizations today is a form of spiritual emptiness and impoverishment (Mitroff & Denton, 1999). This emptiness is exacerbated by toxic leaders full of self-seeking greed, lacking in spiritual maturity (Delbecq, 2009), and also by lean methodologies, which sacrifice creativity and meaning for the employee at the altar of hyper-efficiency (Mehri, 2006).

In an interview by the authors of this chapter with Father Oswald A J Mascarenhas, S J., JRD Tata Chair in Business Ethics, XLRI, India, he said, “To avoid spiritual emptiness, organizations need to cultivate WS. WS should bring joy, mindfulness and meaning to life and family. It is a humanization of the work and environment, which cultivates bonding, togetherness, harmony and human solidarity, national dedication and citizenship.”

While there is a lot of work on workplace spirituality and also on creativity, there is very little work that synthesizes the two. Also, while existing literature suggests that spirituality and creativity are interlinked, this does not mean that all creative industries embrace WS. More work needs to be done on the antecedents and outcomes of WS in creative as well as other industries, preferably in the form of longitudinal studies.

Future research on WS and creative industries can also delve into gender in conflict and post-conflict economies. Charlotte Karam, associate professor at the Olayan School of Business, American University of Beirut, a section editor of *Feminisms and Business Ethics*, and an editorial board member of the *Journal of Business Ethics*, is known for her work as a leadership development consultant in the MENA region, particularly in Lebanon, Iraq and Libya. In a recent interview of her by the authors she said, “After suffering from civil war, man-made disasters, and an entrenched corrupt political class responsible for government failings, the workplace often serves as a bastion or conduit of hope and compassion. This is the case for all industries, but particularly the case of creative industries, where the increasingly disenfranchised and frustrated youth turn to information technology and art to channel their energies to the world outside their local conflicted spaces. Future research would do well to unpack the relationship between workplace spirituality and creative industries against the backdrop of failing states, and the interaction

between the embedded oppressive structures and the intersectional identities of the populations trying to survive and have a liveable future within.”

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