

The Impact of Workplace Spirituality on Employee Performance: Evidence from Abu Dhabi University

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to argue that workplace spirituality may have an impact on enhancing the performance of employees. Hence, it focuses on the ways through which workplace spirituality can boost performance.

The paper proposes a theoretical model regarding the links between five elements of workplace spirituality (team's sense of community, alignment between organizational and individual values, sense of contribution to the community, sense of enjoyment at work and opportunities for the inner life) and employee performance. The theoretic model is then tested empirically using a spiritual modelling partial least squares analysis of a survey data set of 145 observations, collected from members of the Abu Dhabi University community.

The presence of workplace spirituality in an organisational environment is considerably connected to employee performance. An interesting observation made from this study is that there is a significant variance in employee performance as a function of an employee position.

Keywords: organisational climate, performance management, workplace spirituality

1. Introduction

Managing employees in institutions of higher education can be a challenge (Decramer et al., 2012). Scholars like Harley et al. (2004) note that employees in such environments are usually have freedom to determine the priority tasks. Also, in modern times, employees spend most of their lives in the workplace (Mirvis, 1997). Hence, they seek out purpose, meaning, and self-realization from their workplaces (Mitroff & Denton, 1999a). This is because to a degree, they link their social identity to the experiences they have at work and interactions with others (Cartwright & Cooper, 1997). It is this change that is driving the focus on workplace spirituality (Pardasani et al., 2014).

The spiritual connection in the workplace is a concept recognised by Neck and Milliman (1994) who note that in contemporary times, people are not just getting more spiritually oriented in their normal everyday lives, but also in their workplace. Sheep (2006) also connects workplace spirituality to individual wellbeing in both society and the workplace. He adds that workplace spirituality can assist organisations when dealing with matters linked to the welfare of their employees. French and Bell (2001) also argue that spirituality has a crucial effect on efforts linked to organisational development.

This paper explores if and how employee performance can be promoted through workplace spirituality. It suggests that workplace spirituality can facilitate employee performance, and boost organisational performance.

An important element for modern corporations is the importance of building self-motivation characteristics. Diamantidis and Chatzoglou (2019) agrees and adds that self-motivation boosts competitive advantage which allows for sustainability in an agile environment. Hence some organisations have started to focus on the importance of creating an environment where their human resources use employee performance as a foundation for tactical improvement and professional development approach (Wright & Snell, 2009). Unquestionably, the better the work-life balance of employees the better their performance (Soomro et al., 2018).

Even though there a proliferation in studies around the management of employee performance, there is still little known about the particular variables that impact the performance of employees, particularly in higher education

settings (Decramer et al., 2012).

For employees, religious beliefs can have a significant meaning. For example, Osman-Gani et al. (2013) note that religious beliefs can change the behaviour of employees and the way they perform, delivering a structure through which decisions can be made, especially in societies that are multi-religious and multi-cultural. It is on this basis that the dearth of empirical evidence in this area, especially in the UAE is concerning (Thanh Do, 2018).

This paper begins with presenting a theoretical model of the links between workplace spirituality and employee performance. It explores five elements of workplace spirituality: the sense of community within teams; how individual and organisational values align; sense of contribution to the community; inner life opportunities; and sense of work enjoyment. All these elements affect employee performance. This is then followed by testing several hypotheses regarding the effect of workplace spirituality on employee performance. This is achieved through the analysis of a survey data set containing 145 observations, obtained from workers at the Abu Dhabi University. The analysis of the data is accomplished through structural equation modelling, which is done using partial least squares package. This examines connections between the variables of the study. The last part involves the presentation of the results, together with their practical and theoretical implications.

2. Theoretical Background

In this section, the character of workplace spirituality practices and employee performance is discussed. The research model is then presented before hypotheses regarding how employee performance is impacted by workplace spirituality is proposed.

2.1 Employee Performance

The idea of employee performance denotes the accomplishments of an individual in a work situation. Performance is linked to involvement in meaningful activity, working with understanding colleagues and employers, and a feeling of being engaged (Karakas, 2010). For Bishop (1987), employee performance denotes the results of the work done by a particular worker. Soomro et al., (2018) add that employee performance is the result of what an employee develops, with the anticipation of compensation. It is the success or general result of the outcome of the efforts of an individual during a defined time of responsibility in comparison to the work's criteria or targets which are defined in advance (Rivai, 2004).

Work performance can be divided into three dimensions (Figure 1). The first dimension is task performance. This kind of performance comprises of work explicit behaviours which could incorporate important job responsibilities which the employee and employer agree to in the job description (Pradhan & Jena, 2017). For task performance, mental ability is required, and the responsibility is mainly facilitated via task awareness, task talent, and task practice (Conway, 1999). The second kind is known as adaptive performance. This consists of eight dimensions as listed below:

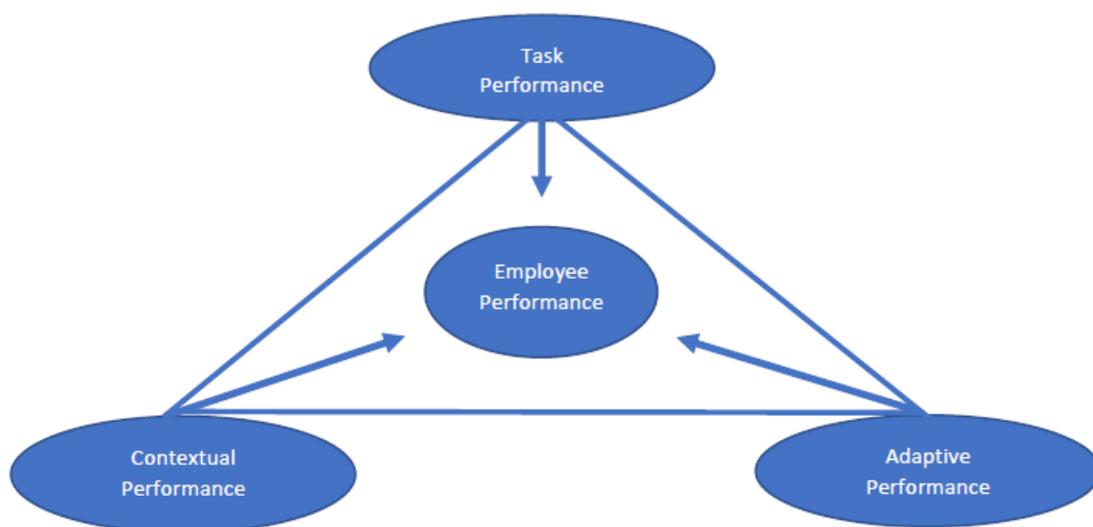


Figure 1. The Triarchy Model of Employee Performance

Source: (Pradhan & Jena, 2017)

- Creatively finding solutions to problems.
- Learning novel tasks.
- Procedures and technologies.
- Demonstration of interactive flexibility.
- Showing cultural adaptability.
- Ability to show physical-oriented adaptability.
- Effectively dealing with stress at work.
- Ability to deal with crisis situations and emergencies.

Contextual performance can be viewed from two dimensions (Jawahar & Carr, 2007). The first dimension is linked to job commitment (Van Scotter & Motowildo, 1996; Motowildo & Van Scotter, 1994), or normative conducts linked to the institutional and work setting (Organ, 1998; Bateman & Organ, 1983; Williams & Anderson, 1991). Elements included in this category are ethics and ethos, taking the lead, working hard, and acting in a manner that puts the organisation in good standing (Jawahar & Carr, 2007).

The level of success that can be achieved by an institution with regards to its strategic objectives is entirely dependent on the way those who work for it perform (Sugianingrat et al., 2019). Empirical proof with regards to the tri-lateral link between Human Resources Management, the well-being of employees, and their performance reflects the fact that HRM plays a positive role on the various dimensions of employee performance. This results from the development of positive employee satisfaction effects (Van De Voorde et al., 2012).

It is the view of Locander et al. (2002) and Bass et al. (2003) that the main element determining employee performance and organisational adjustment capability is leadership. Through leadership, the affiliation between the leaders and subordinates, is portrayed (Locander et al., 2002). Studies (Soomro et al., 2018) have concluded that workers who are involved in the making of decisions and feel that they belong to the whole team tend to be more productive when they are compared to those who do not have a feeling of belonging and engagement. Those workers who take part in the process of decision-making feel that they are valued and tend to like the organisations they work for. Consequently, employee performance is boosted (Lam et al., 2002).

2.2 Workplace Spirituality

Spiritual individuals connect religion and the workplace. This is a view acknowledged by Neck and Millan (1994) who note that the perspective is embedded in the historical connection of spirituality and religion. However, in contemporary times, workplace spirituality is not connected to any specific religion. Rather, it is founded on the individual attitude and ethics (Mitroff & Denton, 1999b).

There is no broadly accepted meaning of the concept of spirituality (Markow & Klenke, 2005). Thanh Do (2018) agrees and says that the term spirituality is complex and miscellaneous. Ashforth and Pratt (2003) identify the primary components of workplace spirituality: purpose and meaning in life; a feeling of belonging and being interconnected, and individual fulfilments and satisfaction (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Sheep, 2006; DeKlerk, 2006). Valasek (2009) summarised the concept of workplace spirituality:

- The search for purpose and meaning.
- Existing in harmony with others.
- A feeling of being personally adequate, healthy, and holistic.
- Attaining individual growth.
- Integrity, ethics, or values-based.
- Sense of fairness and justice.
- Believing in the divine.

Rego and Cunha (2008) place workplace spirituality into five dimensions. The first is the sense of community among a team. An important element of workplace spirituality includes a feeling of being deeply connected, to association with others. This is expressed by Ashmos and Duchon (2000) as a sense of community. This workplace spirituality takes places at the group level of human resources and is concerned with communications that employees have between each other (Milliman et al., 2003). The idea of community at work is founded on the appreciation that individuals perceive themselves to have connections with others and that there exists a level of compassion between an individual's inner feelings and those of others (Miller, 1992; Maynard, 1992).

Secondly, Rego and Cunha (2008) identify the alignment between organisational and individual values. Such a spirituality dimension within the workplace is present when the employee's personal principles are in alignment with the standards of the organisation (Pardasani et al., 2014). Employees will feel that there is an association between themselves and the organisation when they believe that the employees and managers in their

organisation have appropriate values, possess a robust conscience, and have a concern about the welfare of employees and the communities where they come from (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000).

Thirdly, Rego and Cunha (2008) introduce the dimension of sense of contribution to the community. In workplace spirituality, this element is similar to the ideas of mutual responsibility, sharing, and commitment that link one individual to the other (Duchon & Plowman, 2005). The dimension is characterised by having a common purpose and having a sense of being connected to others (Kinjerski & Skrypneck, 2006a). A number of scholars have been noted to embrace the idea of the link between job performance and the sense of collegiality (Thanh Do, 2018). For instance, Milliman et al. (1999) argue that greater commitment and job performance are results of robust, purposeful targets and sense of community. In more recent times, Vanover (2014) was involved in a study exploring how work performance is impacted on by a sense of community and conclude that employees with higher community engagement rank also show higher levels of performance.

The fourth element is the sense of enjoyment at work. This concept involves items linked to a sense of pleasure and happiness in the workplace. This dimension forms a sub-division of a bigger demission of *meaningful work* which is identified by Ashmos and Duchon (2000) and Millan et al. (2003). It denotes several kinds of workplace achievements (Rego & Cunha, 2008).

Element number five is called opportunities for the inner life. Belwalkar et al. (2018) say this element involves the idea that the place of work is turning into an area where employees find a sense of meaning and exhibit their personality. This is a view also supported by Duchon and Plowman (2005) who say that the place of work can be a crucial setting for employees, provided they are able to find fitting circumstances that will allow them to show their inner emotions and feelings. This constitutes a self-recognition of power and spiritual identity, which is bigger than the physical approach (Liu & Robertson, 2011); inner life in transcendence over self-image (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2010).

The last 20 years have seen a growing focus in workplace spirituality (Poole, 2009; Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Gotsis & Kortezi, 2008; Mitroff & Denton, 1999b). Scholars who have focused on this area like Westerman and Whitaker (2014) and Benefiel et al. (2014) have indicated that past studies have come to the conclusion that workplace spirituality is linked with a number of outcomes such as boosting the commitment of employees, productivity, job satisfaction among employees, employee organisational-based confidence, the well-being of workers, lower turnaround of employees, and lower employee frustration (Pawar, 2017).

Workplace spirituality has the potential to deal with undesirable issues that can have an effect on the mental wellbeing of employees (Mitroff, 2003). It has been suggested that spirituality in the workplace has turned into a requirement for any institutions that want to create a good balance between work and life (Cavanaugh, 1999; Mitroff & Denton, 1999a). This is a point of view characteristic of the place of work which could boost productivity and performance if the leadership has the capacity to address it appropriately (Milliman et al., 2003).

Karakas (2009) reviewed around 140 pieces dealing with how organisational performance benefits from spirituality. The review distinguishes three standpoints regarding how spirituality can be a benefit to workers and boost the performance of an organisation using extant literature as a foundation. The review came up with the conclusions listed below:

- Spirituality leads to improvements in the quality of life and wellbeing of employees.
- Spirituality gives employees a sense of meaning and reasons why their work is important.
- Spirituality makes employees feel as if they are interconnected and belong to a community.

2.3 Model of the Research: Workplace Spirituality as a Way of Employee Performance Improvement

For modern organisations, productivity is an essential issue (Pradhan & Jena, 2017). Analysing literature on human resources (HR) development and organisational behaviour (OB) shows that the employment of job performance as a way of productivity is an area that is widely studied (Shiemann, 2009). Several researchers who focusing on HRM and OB have, in the past few years, tried to explain how well or bad an impact employee relation or the work environment have on the behaviour and performance of employees (Devonish, 2013).

Workplace spirituality has attained central meaning but studies around the area of workplace spirituality remain controversial as an emerging topic (Van de Klerk, 2014). Nonetheless, it can be noted that there is a substantial interface between workplace spirituality, desirable outputs, and job satisfaction (Van der Walt & de Klerk, 2014). Hence, Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2010) advance the view that the idea of workplace spirituality is increasingly being identified as an important part of the workplace and a means of increasing productivity.

There seems to be an agreement that the consciousness of workplace spirituality is vital because it can assist in

explaining the elements that trigger employee performance in organisations. This view is acknowledged by Neck and Milliman (1994) who argue that spiritual ethics impact individual job performance through boosting their well-being. Those institutions that embolden spiritual workplaces tend to have employees who are more righteous, committed, work with efficiency, and are more innovative (Eisler & Montouri, 2003; Mat & Naser, 2012).

An analysis of some research literature and theorists will reveal suggestions that workers within institutions that nurture spirituality tend to be rewarded with improved productivity (Garcia-Zamor, 2003), better job satisfaction, (Miles et al., 2005), and enhanced performance (Marques, 2005). It is taken into consideration that positivity in the workplace has the capacity to play the role of a harbinger to the boosting of employee performance (Ayanci, 2011), a situation that would improve the success of an institution (Milliman et al., 2003). This is the reason why several leading organisations like have started to introduce spirituality into the workplace (Casey, 2002).

Hassan et al. (2016) note that workplace spirituality does not only deliver religious doctrine; it can also be relevant to the success of employees, organisations, and societies. It links the spirit of the employee to the tasks and activities they are employed to perform, leading to more commitment to the institution they work for and job satisfaction (Mirvis, 1997; Milliman et al., 2003). For Jurkiewicz and Giacalone (2004) this is a setting that boosts productivity for both the cooperation and individuals.

On the basis of the views expressed by the scholars above, this paper suggests that the extent to which employees experience workplace spirituality will determine their performance. This view can be expressed using five hypotheses.

H1- There would be a positive relationship between team’s sense of community and employee performance.

H2- There would be a positive relationship between alignment between organizational & individual values and employee performance.

H3- There would be a positive relationship between sense of contribution to the community and employee performance.

H4- There would be a positive relationship between sense of enjoyment at work and employee performance.

H5- There would be a positive relationship between opportunities for the inner life and employee performance.

Figure 2 represents the research model. The argument advanced by this paper is that the five elements of workplace spirituality introduced in this paper improve the likelihood of employee performance. This paper’s findings focus on the link between employee performance and workplace spirituality.

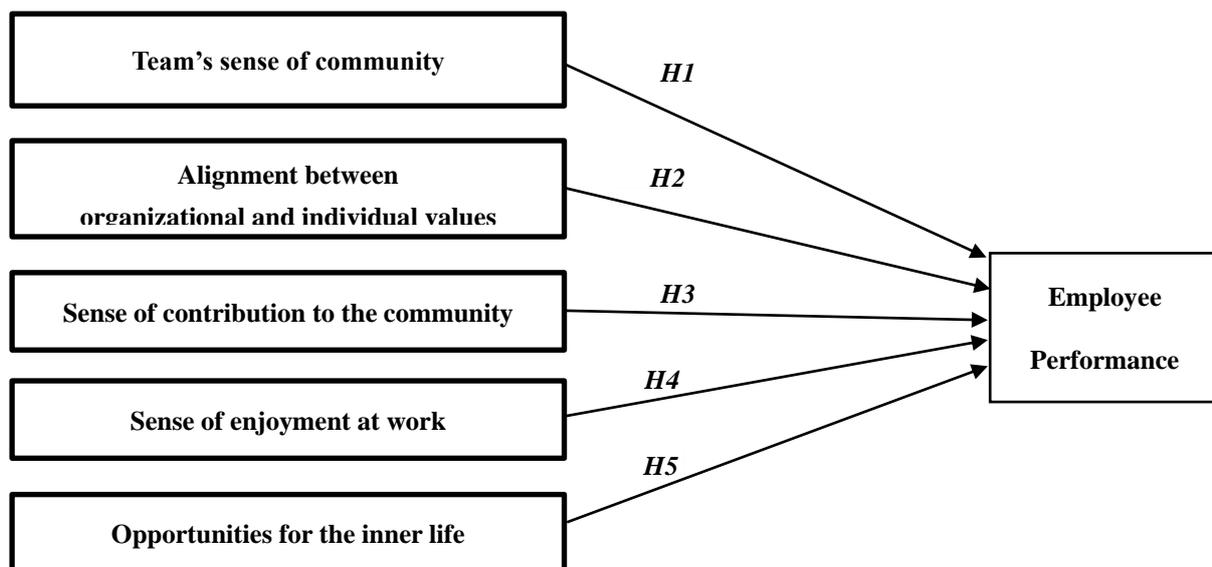


Figure 2. The research model

3. Methods

3.1 Sample and Data Collection

The data for this study were gathered from the employees in Abu Dhabi University (ADU) using a web-based questionnaire. Abu Dhabi University (ADU) is considered one of the largest educational institutions in the UAE. ADU has four campuses: Abu Dhabi, Al Ain, AlDhafra, and Dubai. It conducts various programs: Bachelor Degrees, Master Degrees, and PhDs in compliance with the American model of higher education. Around 7650 students from 70 countries are enrolled in ADU's different programs and faculties (college of business, college of arts and sciences, college of law, academic programs for military colleges, college of engineering and college of health sciences). The university has 198 faculty members and 259 other staff. ADU has got local and global accreditations.

In ADU, responses were acquired from 145 respondents, representing faculty and staff. The respondents were grouped as described below.

- 63 (43.4%) came from faculty.
- 82 (56.6%) are general members of staff.

From the gender perspective, 66 (45%) are female, and 79 (54.5%) are males.

With regards to age:

- 23 (15.9%) were less than 30 years.
- 56 (38.6%) were from 30 to less than 40.
- 36 (24.8%) were from 40 to less than 50.
- 19 (13.1%) were from 50 to less than 60.
- 10 (6.9%) were from 60 to less than 70.
- 1 (0.7%) were 70 and more.

With regards to experience:

- 50 (34.5%) were less than ten years.
- 64 (44.1%) were from 10 to less than 20 years.
- 19 (13.1%) were from 20 to less than 30 years.
- 12 (8.3%) were 30 and more.

It can be noted that 145 participants constitute an appropriate sample for two types of statistical analysis employed in this study: regression analysis and factor analysis. For the newly designed three-item employee performance scale, the study employs a factor analysis. "Hinkin (1995, p. 973) notes that for a scale to be factor analysed, recommendations for item-to-response ratios range from 1:4 (Rummel, 1970) to at least 1:10 (Schwab, 1980) [...]" (Pawar, 2016, p. 983). For factor analysis, even when one follows guidelines that are conservative, a sample size of 30 (10×3) will be needed to conduct factor analysis on a set of three items in the employee performance scale. With regards to regression analysis, "Hair et al. (2014, p. 171) suggest a requirement of 15-20 data points (respondents or observations) per independent variable in the regression equation" (Pawar, 2016, p. 983).

This study has five independent variables. These are the team's sense of community, alignment between organizational and individual values, sense of contribution to the community, sense of enjoyment at work and opportunities for the inner life. It is for this reason that the size of the sample is 145, which is a lot above the sample size that the guidelines recommend.

3.2 Measures

3.2.1 Workplace Spirituality

To measure workplace spirituality, respondents were asked to answer items on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 representing totally disagree and 5 denoting totally agree). The items were based on the Rego and Cunha (2008) survey. The team's sense of community-scale includes items linked to mutual care between members, team spirit, sense of common purpose, and sense of community. On the other hand, the alignment between organizational and individual values incorporates items that embody the congruence between the individual's inner life and the values of the organisation. In the same scale, there is an item dealing with the leaders' involvement with the wider community. The descriptor implies that individuals feel that they are more

comfortable/aligned when they work in institutions where leaders care about the community. Aggregates items for a sense of contribution to the community, implying that an individual's work is in agreement with their personal life values, and makes a desirable contribution to the community. Items for the sense of enjoyment at work are linked to the feeling of pleasure and joy at work. The opportunities for the inner life scales incorporate descriptors dealing how the institution respects the spiritual values and spirituality of the individuals.

3.2.2 Employee Performance

The measuring of employee performance was done using a three-item composite. Items were drawn from "Employee Performance at Workplace: Conceptual Model and Empirical Validation" survey (Pradhan & Jena, 2017). The scale for task performance examined the effectiveness with which job occupants execute their assigned tasks. The scale for adaptive performance refers to adjusting to and understanding change in the workplace. The items for contextual performance include aspects of the performance of an individual which sustains and boosts the psychological climate and social network climate which facilitates tasks of a technical nature. All the items about employee performance are evaluated with five points Likert scale as in the workplace spirituality scale.

3.2.3 Control Variables

With regards to the control variables, variables include position, gender, age, and experience. This is done to remove the impact they may have had on employee performance.

For the data, self-reported measures are the mainstay. Hence, one should note that the findings may be biased by common method variance. In situations where respondents are requested to complete items which cover dependent and independent variables, the common method bias becomes a real concern. For this research, Harman's one-factor test (Podsakoff et al., 2003) was employed for the purpose of assessing the hazard of this kind of bias. The author of this paper did a principal component analysis which involved all of the construct's items. The aim of the study was to explore a way out for determining the number of factors needed to take variance into account in all the items. The biggest factor is responsible for 3.4%, implying that the common method bias did not affect the results of this study.

4. Results

Version 2.0 M3 of Smart PLS was used for analysing this study. The initial step involved evaluating the validity and reliability of the measurement model. The testing of the hypothesis was then achieved using the structural model.

4.1 Correlation Analysis

The initial phase involved an examination of the correlation between performance and workplace spirituality. To achieve this, a correlation analysis was employed. Table 1 indicates the standard and mean deviations and delivers the correlation matrix. From the results, it can be seen that every one of the workplace spirituality variables had a significant relationship with each other and with employee performance. This lends credence to the expectation of the study that there is likely to be interconnectedness between workplace spirituality and employee performance.

Table 1. correlation matrix

| Variable | Mean | SD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. Team's sense of community | 3.92 | 1.21 | | | | | |
| 2. Alignment between organizational and individual values | 4.62 | 1.19 | 0.443** | | | | |
| 3. Sense of contribution to the community | 4.08 | 1.49 | 0.468** | 0.356** | | | |
| 4. Sense of enjoyment at work | 4.09 | 1.33 | 0.387** | 0.453** | 0.407** | | |
| 5. Opportunities for the inner life | 4.14 | 1.27 | 0.516** | 0.549** | 0.413** | 0.491** | |
| 6. Employee performance | 4.73 | 1.32 | 0.587** | 0.491** | 0.218** | 0.375** | 0.399** |

Note. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

4.2 Measurement Model

Testing the measurement model involved assessing the discriminant validity and internal consistency.

4.2.1 Internal Consistency

Internal consistency is represented by convergent validity and contrast reliability (CR). Based on the CR test, it can be noted that all the constructs have a result which is higher than the threshold of 0.7, which was used by Bagozzi and Yi (1991) (Appendix). The testing of the convergent validity was an accomplished analysis of the average variance extracted (AVE) and factor loading. Results show higher loadings for each item and that they were statistically significant (Appendix), implying that they are all linked to their precise constructs, which validates the proposed connection between the constructs and indicators. For all the constructs, the AVE measure is above the threshold of 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

4.2.2 Discriminant Validity

The discriminant validity indicates the degree to which any of the individual constructs varies when compared to the others. The AVE must be higher than the variance shared between that construct and the model's other constructs (referring to the squared correlation between the two constructs) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As is illustrated in Table 2, this condition is met by this study's constructs. Analysing the model shows that the diagonal elements (AVEs) are higher when compared to the off-diagonal elements of the matching columns and rows. It can be noted that the assessments of the models produce evidence that can be relied on with regards to reliability and validity for the concept's operationalization.

Table 2. Discriminant validity of the research model

| Variable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. Team's sense of community | 0.61 | | | | | |
| 2. Alignment between organizational and individual values | 0.28 | 0.59 | | | | |
| 3. Sense of contribution to the community | 0.12 | 0.09 | 0.79 | | | |
| 4. Sense of enjoyment at work | 0.22 | 0.31 | 0.18 | 0.71 | | |
| 5. Opportunities for the inner life | 0.25 | 0.39 | 0.22 | 0.25 | 0.58 | |
| 6. Employee Performance | 0.38 | 0.27 | 0.06 | 0.16 | 0.13 | 0.67 |

Note. AVE associated with the construct is presented diagonally; the squared correlations between the constructs are presented in the lower left triangle

4.3 Research Model Testing

As is illustrated in Table 3, the research model has been able to clarify the 49.1% of the difference in employee performance. The path model was predicted to replicate the suggested relationship between employee performance and workplace spirituality for hypothesis testing. From the results, it can be noted that the majority of the hypothesis is supported by the path estimates. The paths from the alignment between organizational and individual values (H2), sense of contribution to the community (H3), sense of enjoyment at work (H4), and opportunities for the inner life (H5) to employee performance were as hypothesised. Alignment between organizational and individual values ($B = 0.487$, $p < 0.005$), sense of contribution to the community ($B = 0.237$, $p < 0.01$), sense of enjoyment at work ($B = 0.186$, $p < 0.005$), and opportunities for the inner life ($B = 0.197$, $p < 0.005$) each had a significant positive impact on employee performance. The research model also predicted a direct path from the team's sense of community (H1) to employee performance. However, this hypothesis was not supported. It is also noted that the direct path from the team's sense of community (H1) to employee performance was predicted by the research model. However, the hypothesis was not validated.

Table 3. Testing the research model

| Path | Path coefficient | t-value |
|---|------------------|---------|
| <u>Control variables:</u> | | |
| Gender → Employee performance | .038 n.s. | 0.192 |
| Age → Employee performance | 0.059* | 1.874 |
| Experience → Employee performance | 0.309*** | 1.505 |
| <u>Dependent variables:</u> | | |
| Team's sense of community → Employee performance | 0.042 n.s. | 1.494 |
| Alignment between organizational and individual values → Employee performance | 0.487*** | 3.551 |
| Sense of contribution to the community → Employee performance | 0.237** | 1.918 |
| Sense of enjoyment at work → Employee performance | 0.186*** | 3.391 |
| Opportunities for the inner life → Employee performance | 0.197*** | 3.798 |
| R ² | | .491 |

Note. ***Significance < 0.005, **Significance < 0.01, *Significance < 0.05

4.4 Testing Models for Employee Groups

The author also wanted to analyse the link between workplace spirituality and employee performance. Hence, supplementary models were tested for distinct categories of workers: faculty (N = 65) and staff (N = 80).

As Table 4 indicates, the models for various groups of employees account for between 35 and 57% of employee performance. Precisely, workplace spirituality clarified the huge volume of the variance of employee performance for faculty and the small quantity for staff. Path estimates from workplace spirituality to employee performance show a significant positive relationship between alignment between individual and organisational values (B = 0.599, p < 0.005), sense of contribution to the community (B = 0.576, p < 0.005), sense of enjoyment at work (B = 0.529, p < 0.005), opportunities for the inner life (B = 0.566, p < 0.005), and employee performance in faculty group. For staff group, path estimates from workplace spirituality to employee performance show a significant positive relationship between alignment between organizational and individual values (B = 0.471, p < 0.01), sense of contribution to the community (B = 0.437, p < 0.01), sense of enjoyment at work (B = 0.493, p < 0.005), opportunities for the inner life (B = 0.551, p < 0.005), and employee performance.

Table 4. Testing the research model for employee groups

| Path | Faculty | Staff |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| <u>Control variables:</u> | | |
| Gender → Employee performance | - 0.045 n.s. | - 0.029 n.s. |
| Age → Employee performance | 0.174* | 0.161* |
| Experience → Employee performance | 0.547*** | 0.518*** |
| <u>Dependent variables:</u> | | |
| Team's sense of community → Employee performance | 0.071 n.s. | 0.062 n.s. |
| Alignment between organizational and individual values → Employee performance | 0.599*** | 0.471** |
| Sense of contribution to the community → Employee performance | 0.576*** | 0.437** |
| Sense of enjoyment at work → Employee performance | 0.529*** | 0.493*** |
| Opportunities for the inner life → Employee performance | 0.566*** | 0.551*** |
| R ² | .570 | .351 |

Note. ***Significance < 0.005, **Significance < 0.01, *Significance < 0.05

5. Discussion

Of the five factors of workplace spirituality that this study is concerned with, the team's sense of community is the only factor that does not affect employee performance. A possible reason for this result could be the context of the study. There is a possibility that the character of the work done at ADU does not require a team's sense of community. Hence, that kind of activity is not stimulated by either reward or support at ADU. As a result, it does not affect the performance of employees.

Nonetheless, the other four factors of workplace spirituality (alignment between organizational and individual values, sense of contribution to the community, sense of enjoyment at work, and opportunities for the inner life) are linked to employee performance. Particularly, the study's results show that these four factors promote employee performance for all employee groups. Again, there is a possibility that the kind of work done at ADU calls for the availability of these four factors of workplace spirituality to motivate employees to achieve the targeted performance.

The results also demonstrate that the significant workplace spirituality on employee performance varies as a function of an employee position. Precisely, workplace spirituality accounts for 57% of the difference in employee performance for faculty, a big proportion of the study. With regards to this category, alignment between organizational and individual values was a key issue, followed by a sense of contribution to the community, followed by opportunities for the inner life, and finally a sense of enjoyment at work. Based on the size of the difference in employee performance which workplace spirituality accounts for, it seems that workplace spirituality is particularly imperative in making sure that there is high performance for faculty. This is understandable because their work is mostly about scientific research and teaching activities that are largely related to the compatibility between personal and organizational values and are related to others' challenges.

For staff, workplace spirituality accounts for 35.1% of the variance of employee performance. For this group, opportunities for the inner life was the key issue, followed by a sense of enjoyment at work, followed by the alignment between organizational and individual values, and finally a sense of contribution to the community. It is the view of this author that the reason for the low variance of staff compared with that of faculty is because of the nature of the work of staff which related to administrative and material matters more than the nature of the work of faculty.

6. Conclusion

Even though the influence of workplace spirituality has characteristically been researched in connection with its advantages to "soft" human issues "well-being of individuals, organizations, and societies" (for example: Sheep, 2006, p. 357), there is a limited amount of previous studies focusing on the impact of workplace spirituality on "hard" human issues from the viewpoint of different workers. This research provides workplace spirituality on a kind of result of workplace spirituality, which is ignored by previous research.

From this study it can be concluded that the presence of workplace spirituality is connected to high employee performance. Accordingly, this study presents a new value of workplace spirituality for institutions, consolidation the argument that embracing spiritual practices in the work environment can boost elements like employee determination and reduce work stress and exhaustion (Karakas, 2010). Thus, workplace spirituality can be useful for consultants, managers, and developers of organisations in their pursuit to boost employee performance.

6.1 Implications for Academics and Practitioners

From this study's results, it has been illustrated that workplace spirituality has a robust influence on employee performance. Such a result should encourage those in charge to apply the activities which reinforce workplace spirituality in their organisations to improve adaptive performance, task performance, and contextual performance of employees. The results also demonstrate that both academic employees and the general staff in the university profit from diverse types of workplace spirituality activities. Therefore, this paper delivers guiding principles for targeted application of workplace spirituality in different intra-organisational working settings.

The paper backs moving workplace spirituality studies to a phase where the impact of its practices can be explored not as a "one size fits all" concept but rather as a contextual and contingent matter, which considers the characteristics and requirements of numerous kinds of duties performed in an institution.

6.2 Limitations and Future Research

The design of this study was cross-sectional, making it possible to deal with the develop hypothesis on the direction of the influence between workplace spirituality and employee performance. On the basis of the results

of this study, it could be said that the employees who are proficient in performing their jobs are more influenced by the environment in which spirituality exists. Determining the direction of influence could be something that is better done through a longitudinal study.

Based on the knowledge of the author, no prior studies have dealt with the impact of employee performance on workplace spirituality. An examination of the connection workplace spirituality, employee performance, and organizational effectiveness could be an exciting subject for upcoming research.

Finally, this research ranks among the inaugural studies to examine the connection between workplace spirituality and employee performance. Hence, the study only delivers an initial perception of the subject, and there is still a need for more studies that will deliver in-depth comprehension. Possible productive paths for future study consist of considering the factors of workplace spirituality as contingency variables. Including issues that are closely linked to the research model like the quality of life and employees' general well-being, could also be considered as valuable aspects of research.

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Appendix

Appendix. Measurement items

| Concept /Item | Mean | SD | Factor loading | AVE | CR | Alpha |
|--|------|-------|----------------|-------|--------|-------|
| Employee Performance: | | | | | | |
| Task Performance: | | | 0.801*** | | 7.879 | |
| 1- I maintain high standards in work. | 4.47 | 0.747 | | 0.741 | | 0.760 |
| 2- I am capable of handling my assignments without much supervision. | 4.34 | 0.759 | 0.721*** | | | |
| 3- I am very passionate about my work. | 4.31 | 0.912 | 0.757*** | | | |
| 4- I know I can handle multiple assignments to achieve organizational goals. | 4.41 | 0.714 | 0.771*** | | | |
| 5- I complete my assignments on time. | 4.37 | 0.774 | 0.755*** | | | |
| 6- My colleagues believe I am a high performer in my organization. | 4.31 | 0.789 | 0.642*** | | | |
| Adaptive Performance: | | | | | | |
| 7- I perform well to mobilize collective intelligence for effective team work. | 4.13 | 0.718 | 0.68*** | 0.692 | 8.575 | 0.733 |
| 8- I can manage change in my job very well whenever the situation demands. | 4.19 | 0.722 | 0.511*** | | | |
| 9- I can handle effectively my team work in the face of change. | 4.16 | 0.745 | 0.536*** | | | |
| 10- I always believe that mutual understanding can lead to a viable solution in organization. | 4.46 | 0.688 | 0.804*** | | | |
| 11- I am very comfortable with job flexibility. | 4.01 | 0.853 | 0.83*** | | | |
| 12- I cope well with organizational change from time to time. | 4.09 | 0.784 | 0.79*** | | | |
| Contextual Performance: | | | | | | |
| 13- I extend help to my co-workers when asked or needed. | 4.56 | 0.634 | 0.766*** | 0.756 | 10.371 | 0.798 |
| 14- I love to handle extra responsibilities. | 3.98 | 0.904 | 0.636*** | | | |
| 15- I extend my sympathy and empathy to my co-workers when they are in trouble. | 4.52 | 0.625 | 0.693*** | | | |
| 16- I actively participate in group discussion and work meetings. | 4.17 | 0.672 | 0.616*** | | | |
| 17- I praise my co- workers for their good work. | 4.43 | 0.665 | 0.835*** | | | |
| 18- I derive lot of satisfaction nurturing others in organization. | 4.14 | 0.799 | 0.738*** | | | |
| 19- I share knowledge and ideas with my team members. | 4.44 | 0.634 | 0.806*** | | | |
| 20- I maintain good coordination with fellow workers. | 4.37 | 0.717 | 0.891*** | | | |
| 21- I guide new colleagues beyond my job purview. | 4.29 | 0.765 | 0.772*** | | | |
| 22- I communicate effectively with my colleagues for problem solving and decision making. | 4.38 | 0.657 | 0.805*** | | | |
| Workplace Spirituality: | | | | | | |
| Team's sense of community: | | | 0.853*** | | | |
| 1- People in my team/ group feel that they are part of a family | 3.84 | 0.944 | | 0.884 | 14.506 | 0.892 |
| 2- My team/ group Promotes the creation of a spirit of community | 3.85 | 0.900 | 0.922*** | | | |
| 3- I feel that the members of my team/ group support each other | 3.94 | 0.959 | 0.902*** | | | |
| 4- I feel that the members of my team/ group care about each other | 3.86 | 0.943 | 0.878*** | | | |
| 5- I feel that the members of my team/ group are linked by a common purpose | 3.83 | 0.961 | 0.863*** | | | |
| Alignment between organizational and individual values: | | | | | | |
| 6- I feel positive about the values prevailing in Abu Dhabi University | 3.84 | 1.042 | 0.865*** | 0.893 | 15.378 | 0.877 |
| 7- People feel good about their future with Abu Dhabi University | 3.33 | 1.246 | 0.882*** | | | |
| 8- Abu Dhabi University respects my "inner life" | 3.7 | 1.078 | 0.886*** | | | |
| 9- Abu Dhabi University helps me to live in peace/harmony with myself | 3.64 | 1.138 | 0.926*** | | | |
| 10- The leaders of Abu Dhabi University try to be helpful to the larger social good of the community | 3.69 | 1.232 | 0.907*** | | | |
| Sense of contribution to the community: | | | | | | |
| 11- My work is connected with what I think is important in life | 4.15 | 0.844 | 0.854*** | 0.854 | 11.913 | 0.850 |
| 12- I see a connection between my work and the larger social good of my community | 4.06 | 0.871 | 0.958*** | | | |
| 13- When working, I feel helpful for the whole society | 4.14 | 0.807 | 0.806*** | | | |
| Sense of enjoyment at work: | | | | | | |
| 14- I experience joy in my work | 3.94 | 0.933 | 0.835*** | 0.843 | 13.725 | 0.840 |
| 15- Most days, I feel joy when coming to work | 3.83 | 0.992 | 0.909*** | | | |
| Opportunities for the inner life: | | | | | | |
| 16- My spiritual values are valued in my workplace | 3.77 | 0.987 | 0.883*** | 0.833 | 11.855 | 0.870 |
| 17- In my workplace, there is a room for my spirituality (R) | 3.61 | 1.038 | 0.836*** | | | |

Notes. ***Significance <0.005; reverse items are marked with (R)

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