The Interaction of Spiritual Leadership and Individual Spirituality impacting Spirit at Work toward Enhancing Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction: A Conceptual Proposition

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Abstract
There is an increasing interest in the research of workplace spirituality, seen through the increasing number of research in this area. However, there is still a gap on the analysis of spirit at work from a resource based view (RBV) framework. This research is on The Impact of Spirit at Work toward Enhancing Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction: A Conceptual Proposition. Through the literature review analysis, it is shown that organizational intangible resources (in the form of integrated spiritual leadership (SL) variables: Vision, hope/faith, meaning/calling and membership) interacting with Individual Spirituality are influencing SW as a capability. It is proposed that SL is interacting with Individual Spirituality and organized into employees experiencing SW. Further, literature review supports that SW influences JS and OC as competitive advantages. Both JS and OC are valuable and become the proxy for organizational performance. SL and SW potentially conform to valuable, rare, inimitable resource/capabilities of VRIO framework which leads to competitive advantages.

Keywords: Resource Based View, Spirit at Work, Individual Spirituality, Spiritual Leadership, Workplace Spirituality, Competitive Advantage, Service Industry, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment.

1. Introduction
The Resource Based View (RBV) has opened up new perspectives of bundling tangible and intangible individual and organizational capabilities as unique resources. RBV approach assumes that each organization is a collection of unique resources and capabilities that provides the basis for its strategy and the terms resources and capabilities are used interchangeably and refer to the tangible and intangible assets firms use to develop and implement their strategies (Barney & Wright, 1998). Value and rareness of resources and capabilities in the RBV framework contributes to a firm’s competitive advantage, which contributes to its performance (Newbert, 2008).

Research has shown that the emphasis toward value, meaning and spirit at work increased organizational performance (Garcia-Zamor, 2003). Vanderbilt University Business School study conducted a research on the Fortune listing of The 100 Best companies to work for, and found a similar findings (Neal, 2013). Other research has also supported that more spiritual companies are doing better than their counterparts with lower spirituality (Fry et al., 2011). Unfortunately these research in the workplace spirituality area are mostly still on the theoretical propositions and practical businesses research format.
2. Literature Review

Most approaches in the workplace spirituality area inconsistent in measurement issues. Spirit at Work (SW) is one the research in the workplace spirituality area, focusing on the personal experience of engaging work, mystical experience, sense of community and spiritual connection in the workplace (Kinjerski, 2013) without confusing it with perceptions and characteristics of individual spirituality. SW is also an interesting concept because it includes religious spirituality without the direct reference to any specific religious ideology (Stevison, 2008).

Resource and capabilities are the focused of RBV framework of Strategic Management where it becomes a competitive advantages if the resources conform to the VRIO (Valuable, Rare, Inimitable and Organized) concept. SW research is in line with the need to focus on unique spiritual resource and capabilities which have the characteristics of value based, holistic, socially complex and causally ambiguous, therefore would fulfill the valuable, rare and difficult to imitate requirement of VRIO (Stead & Stead, 2014). Spiritual capabilities, gained through developing spiritual capital and spiritual intelligence (Stead & Stead, 2014) are aligned with the strategic approach of bundling organizational and individual spiritual intangible resource and capabilities to create valuable and difficult to imitate heterogeneous resource and capabilities (Stead & Stead, 2014). Once it is organized as a strategy by the corporation it becomes a sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 2007), a unique strategy even capable of turning a crisis into challenge and opportunity (Mitroff & Denton, 1999).

Stead and Stead (2014) had proposed that Spirit at Work conceptually conform to VRIO concept in the Strategic Management concept, but empirical research is furthermore needed to determine the resources of SW as a capability, and how it is impacting competitive advantage in the RBV framework.

Despite the previous research on the influence of Spirit at Work toward Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment (Kinjerski, 2007; Stevison, 2008; Tevichapong, 2010) there is a lack of research on determining the resource factors influencing Spirit at Work in the Resource Based View framework. Mitroff and Denton (1999) found that organization’s leaders believe strongly that organizations need to learn how to connect work into a meaningful purpose which will encourage the immense spiritual energy that is at the core of everyone, a characteristic that can be represented by spirit at work. Many authors and scholars also support the organizational resources in the form of organizational leadership as the resources of spirit at work (Dent et al., 2005; Fry & Altman, 2013; Middlebrooks & Nogiu, 2010; Wagner-Mash & Conley, 1999).

The organizational resources, in this research are represented by Spiritual Leadership or SL variables (Fry, 2003). SL is a leader-less approach where the whole organization and everyone regardless of their position can help support the spiritual value of the organization (Fry, 2003). SL shows the organizational support and this intangible organizational resources should influence SW as a capability and further influence the competitive advantages as the dependent variable. Ray et al (2004) argues that utilizing performance as the dependent variable is problematic since resources are not directly impacting organizational performance. Ray, Barney, Muhanna (2004) pointed out the RBV model toward competitive advantage to overcome the problem. In this model, strategic managers arrange the firm’s resources, specifically the intangible assets and capabilities due to its value, rarity and difficulty to imitate and strategically deploy them in ways that build competitive advantages in the business process.

Individual Spirituality is a terminology independent of any religious preferences and more into the application of every day real life situation (Rojas, 2002). It is seen as a skill and effort to align a worldview into everyday activities with the expectation of a desired long-oterm transformation. The ideology application has resulted into a strong indicator of spirituality as stated by Rojas (2005). This concept is an integrated approach where the congruence between ideology and life style is seen through all relational perspectives, such as interpersonal, intrapersonal and supra-personal.

The output of service industries is in the form of service excellence. This is especially true in the context of volatile and high competitive service industry. Makhlia (2003) stated that RBV is more appropriate in analyzing
the source of superior performance in industry facing volatile market. The disruptive era created a lot of
turbulence in this new era, which is why the RBV approach is chosen to increase the employees’ level of
satisfaction. The higher level of job satisfaction will in turn create valuable service toward others (Heskett et al.,
1997; Malhotra and Mukherjee, 2004). The strategic management role is to formulate and implement a valu-
creating strategy to support and encourage spirit at work, since it will be reflected in work and in turn affect the
employees’ service to the customers (Pandey et al., 2009).

Organizational commitment is a popular concept to analyze the level of employee’s commitment normatively
and affectively (the highest level of commitment) and also looking the continuance of the commitment (Meyer
& Allen, 1997). In summary, the complete research model (figure 1) are established to answer the main research
question of the possible interactions of valuable resources which influence Spirit at Work as a capability, and
how it works in an RBV framework to influence competitive advantages in the form of Jobs Satisfaction and
Organizational Commitment. The research model is set up to analyze the impact of the interaction between
organizational resource in the form of spiritual leadership variables and Individual Spirituality as the individual
intangible resource toward spirit at work and how it would impact the competitive advantage in the form of OC
and JS.

![Figure 1: Conceptual Proposition: Interaction of SL and IS toward SE toward JS and OC](image-url)
3. Proposition Development

Fry (2003) defines SL as comprising the values, attitudes, and behaviors of organizations necessary to extrinsically and intrinsically motivate one-self and others so that they have a sense of vision, hope, altruistic love, a sense of membership, and spiritual calling to facilitate Spirit at work. All the variables in the integrated model of Spiritual Leadership will be used as the organizational resources to test toward the influence to Spirit at Work.

Duchon and Plowman (2005) stated that the SW will be influenced by the leaders’ ability to encourage the worker’s inner life. Hence, how a person is going to experience their SW depends also on the support of the organization through providing Spiritual Leadership. In another statement it is posited that SL is depicted by how organization members interact with each other, and various formal and informal leaders emerge influencing the worker’s spirituality (Van Velsor et al., 2010). Thus, the first proposition is:

P1: The higher the level of SL variables (SL) the higher the level of SW. The minor hypotheses are derived from the five variables taken from the SL integrated model as follows:

1.a The higher the level of vision (V) the higher the level of SW
1.b The higher the level of Hope/Faith (HF) the higher the level of spirit at work
1.c The higher the level of Altruistic Love (AL) the higher the level of SW
1.d The higher the level Meaning/Calling (MC) the higher the level of SW
1.e The higher the level of Membership (M) the higher the level of SW

The interaction of Individual Spirituality toward SL to produce SW

A person can be born with spirituality as their potential. But potential is not yet a skill. It needs to be honed into becoming a skill. Lots of people can develop their own spirituality. At the same time, it will be helpful to have a set of individual assessment of spirituality tool to show the level of individual spirituality. In this research the individual spirituality is seen as a faith neutral, faith-friendly way to approach and improve the individual spirituality as proposed by Rojas (2002). This personal level quality should have the moderating influence on the relationship between organization supports in this case through the variables of Spiritual Leadership toward the implementation of spirit at work. Garcia and Zamor (2003) proposed that the way an employee implemented the spirit at work is based on their personal interpretations of the organizational spiritual support, hence it refers to interpretations based on the personal trait which is shown through individual spirituality. Marque, Dibman and King (2005) and Marques (2005) mentioned that the influential level of the individual which is the characteristic of individual spirituality will influence the organization impact toward spirit at work. Hence individual spirituality is moderating the relationship between spiritual leadership variables and spirit at work. Thus, the second proposition is:

P2: Individual Spirituality moderates the relationship between Spiritual Leadership toward Spirit at Work

Minor Propositions:
2.a individual spirituality moderates the relationship between vision toward spirit at work positively
2.b individual spirituality moderates the relationship between hope/faith toward spirit at work positively
2.c individual spirituality moderates the relationship between altruistic love toward spirit at work positively
2.d individual spirituality moderates the relationship between meaning/calling toward spirit at work positively
2.e individual spirituality moderates the relationship between membership toward spirit at work positively

3.1 The Relationship Between SW and OC

Nwibere and Emucheta (2012) have conducted a research that shows a significant relation between workplace spirituality toward OC. Vandenberghe (2011) has also proven that workplace spirituality influences OC. Kinjerski in his work on SW (2008, 2013) also has supported the relationship between SW and OC. Stevison (2008) in his dissertation used SW and empirically proven the impact on OC. Hence, the 3rd proposition is:

P3: The higher the SW the higher The OC value.
3.2 The Relationship Between SW and JS

Many corporations are encouraging the development of workplace spirituality because they believe that a humanistic work environment creates a mutually beneficial relationship between employees and the organization. The goal is to make everyone in the organization happy; if they are happy, they will be more satisfied, productive, creative and more fulfilled. These lead to job satisfaction and eventually personal fulfilment and high morale will lead to outstanding performance and hence will have a direct impact on the organization’s financial success (Garcia-Zamor, 2003). Heskett et al. (1997) has also proven that satisfied and fulfilled employees will have JS; hence, the SW which gives the feeling of happiness (Mitroff, Denton, 1999; Garcia-Zamor, 2003; Kinjerski, 2013) create JS. The 4th proposition is:

P 4: The higher the level of SW will influence the higher JS

4. Research Methodology

This paper is focusing on a literature review analysis to delve deeper on the concept of workplace spirituality and how it is impacting the competitive advantage in the form of Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction. The research is a conceptual approach to explore deductively through the theories and research and come up with a workable propositions.

5. Results And Discussion

In order to enhance the organizational performance, the existence of OC and JS is an important foundation. SW is proposed to be influential toward OC and JS. This also supports previous research by Stevison (2008) and the original work of SW (Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2006). This means that high spirited individual employees show OC to pursue and accomplish organizational targets. Previous theories support that the key concepts of workplace spirituality should be encouraged by all the leaders in the organization, regardless of their positions. The interaction between organizational resources in this research seen as Spiritual Leadership variables with Individual Spirituality are resulting Spirit at Work as the capability. The Spirit at Work in turn is impacting Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction. These are powerful organizational performance indicators, capable of changing status quo and make a difference (Garcia-Zamor, 2003).

Conclusions

The research had shed some light that Strategic Management show an applicable concept through the Spirit at Work (SW) context. SW is a capability and influences Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction, where OC and JS are important traits for providing Service Excellence in the Service Industry according to Malhotra & Mukherjee (2004). Management implications therefore would be providing a roadmap of strategic HRD for the corporation to perform long range corporate strategic actions in developing spirit at work. Nevertheless further research should be conducted to test the propositions.

References


