

Workplace Spirituality and Person-Organisation Fit Theory:

Development of a Theoretical Model

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Abstract

This paper advances the theoretical and practical value of workplace spirituality by drawing on person-organisation fit theory and transpersonal psychology to investigate three questions: 1) What antecedents lead individuals and organisations to seek and foster workplace spirituality?, 2) What are the perceived spiritual needs of individuals, and how are those needs fulfilled in the workplace?, and 3) What are the consequences of meeting spiritual needs as individuals perceive them? Using constructivist grounded theory, analysis of interview data from thirty-four participants located in organisations across the Netherlands, Ireland, the United Kingdom, and Portugal led to development of a workplace spirituality, person-organisation (PO) fit model in which we propose reconciling self as a core factor of workplace spirituality. We note how through the process of reconciling self, workplace spirituality is related to meaning making and how an individual perceives their work environment as conducive to self-expression and inner purpose. Practical and theoretical implications are discussed, as are limitations of the study and ideas for future research.

Keywords: workplace spirituality, transpersonal psychology, person-organisation fit theory, reconciling self, grounded theory, human resources management

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Introduction

Workplace spirituality has gained increased interest in recent years (Hill, Jurkiewicz, Giacalone & Fry, 2013). These interests demonstrate that workplace spirituality is more than a trend (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2008); it depicts a new paradigm in organisational theory and practice (Karakas, 2010) and a movement called the organisational fourth-wave: the spirituality-based firm (Wagner-Marsh & Conley, 1999), a movement in which a number of highly diverse firms are attempting to instil a spiritual corporate culture. Amongst the benefits of workplace spirituality include greater employee attachment, loyalty, and sense of belonging (Duchon & Plowman, 2005). However, much of the evidence that supports analyses of workplace spirituality is anecdotal, and there is need to develop a theoretical base and integrate it with traditional frameworks (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). In particular, few studies have investigated the antecedent factors and interactive effects of personal and workplace spirituality and subsequent outcomes (Hill *et al*, 2013; Singhal, 2007). Using a constructivist grounded theory methodology, we aim to investigate the antecedent factors and interactive effects of personal and workplace spirituality and subsequent outcomes, integrating frameworks from person-organisation fit theory and transpersonal psychology.

Person-organisation (PO) fit theory

Person-organisation (PO) fit theory refers to compatibility between people and organisations (Kristof, 1996); the greater the compatibility between an individual and organisation (i.e., needs and values), the more likely outcomes such as an individual's perceived need for meaning and purpose can occur. The complementary needs-supply perspective of PO fit theory, where fit occurs 'when an organization satisfies individuals' needs, desires, or preferences' (Kristof, 1996, p.3), offers a first step to integrating workplace spirituality into a

more traditional framework of investigation (Ashforth & Pratt, 2003; Sheep, 2004, 2006; Singhal & Chatterjee, 2006; Singhal, 2007; Vallabh & Singhal, 2014). Singhal and Chatterjee (2006), for example, offer a framework built on the needs-supply perspective of PO fit to examine the antecedent factors and interactive effects of personal and workplace spirituality and subsequent outcomes. Singhal (2007) investigated the framework with both explicitly spiritual and non-spiritual organisations and found support for integrity and wholeness, meaningful work, and being larger than oneself as the central constituents of workplace spirituality. A positive correlation was found between workplace spirituality and outcomes such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

These initial attempts have gone some way towards developing a theoretical base of workplace spirituality with traditional frameworks, however, we believe that transpersonal psychology can help to further broaden the theoretical base of workplace spirituality by acting as a bridge between workplace spirituality and PO fit theory.

Transpersonal Psychology

Transpersonal psychology refers to a 'transformative psychology of the whole person in intimate relationship with a diverse, interconnected and evolving world.' Moreover, transpersonal psychology also focuses on 'self-expansive states as well as to spiritual, mystical, and other exceptional human experiences that gain meaning in such a context (Hartelius, Rothe & Roy, 2013, p.14). Transpersonal psychology as a psychology of spiritual experience could serve as a bridge between workplace spirituality and PO fit theory in two ways. First, a central feature in workplace spirituality is the self, (Sheep & Foreman, 2012) and transpersonal psychology offers a more holistic and integrative explanation of self (Lancaster, 2004), human potential and abilities (Cunningham, 2007). Second, understanding the whole person in an intimate relationship with a diverse and interconnected world could

further help to understand the antecedent factors, interactive effects and outcomes of workplace spirituality and PO fit.

Present study

The aim of this study is to investigate the antecedent factors and interactive effects of personal and workplace spirituality and subsequent outcomes, integrating frameworks from person-organisation fit theory and transpersonal psychology. Specifically, we examine the antecedent factors and interactive conditions for achieving congruence between the micro aspect—an individual yearning for compatibility and seeking fit—and the macro, spiritual workplace aspect and the subsequent outcomes. We believe that when an individual perceives a congruence between having their needs or preferences met within the context of the workplace, the more positive outcomes will result.

We acknowledge at the outset the tensions between spiritual strivings and institutional work settings and how organisations can be arrayed on a continuum of approaches to workplace spirituality (Ashforth & Pratt, 2003). Along this continuum we adopt a middle ground partnering approach where workplace spirituality is a blend of active bottom-up and top-down processes. Ashforth & Pratt (2003) view a partnering approach to workplace spirituality as a co-constructed process where organisational employees explore their spirituality within a facilitative context. Accordingly, we view workplace spirituality as the ‘recognition that employees have an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of a community’ (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000, p.137). Within this inner life, the person co-constructs their world, in intimate relationship with a diverse, interconnected and evolving world. The individual is a knowing, self-conscious and empowered individual, actively reaching out and creating meaning.

Accordingly, we adopt a constructivist grounded theory methodology, where our worldview follows a relativist stance that assumes ‘reality is constructed, and truth depends

solely on the meaning sets and degree of sophistication available to the individuals and audiences engaged in forming those assertions', (Guba & Lincoln, 2001.p.1), knowledge or facts about the world are thus co-created and accordingly, the researcher and researched co-construct the data (Charmaz, 2008).

Based on the forgoing discussion, we address three central questions. In the micro and macro contexts, we consider perceptions of antecedents, and examine what predisposes individuals and organisations to seek and foster workplace spirituality? At the micro level, we examine the perceived spiritual needs of individuals, and ask how such needs are fulfilled through the macro aspect of the workplace? At the micro and macro levels, we examine the outcomes of meeting spiritual needs as individuals perceive them.

Methodology

Research design

A constructivist grounded theory methodology (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) was adopted for its applicability to answer the research questions and because of its potential to understand dynamic psychosocial processes and explicate the rich, subjective nature of PO fit and workplace spirituality.

Participants

Table 1 shows demographics of participants and organisations used during the study. Using theoretical sampling, we initially examined an explicitly spiritual organisation that could provide a data source to answer the research questions. Explicitly spiritual means that the topic of workplace spirituality is discussed openly, not assumed or implied. As Coyne (1997) points out, the initial stages in theoretical sampling include taking a sample from where the phenomenon is found to exist. Subsequent theoretical sampling was guided by the emerging categories and theory. For variation and theoretical saturation, we also examined three non-spiritual organisations. By building in variation, we acknowledge the multidimensional nature

of workplace spirituality. Overall, thirty-four participants volunteered for the study, ranging in age from 24 to 64.

Spiritual orientation	Organisation	Industry	Country	Participants	Gender profile	
Explicitly spiritual	An Cosán	Charity	Ireland	15	14 females	1 Male
Non-Spiritual	Vitae	Recruitment services	The Netherlands	5	4 Females	1 Male
Non-Spiritual	Beaverbrooks	Retail	United Kingdom	9	7 Females	2 Males
Non-Spiritual	Liberty Seguros	Financial services	Portugal	5	3 Females	2 Males

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of participants and organisations.

An Cosán was the only explicitly spiritual organisation to volunteer and was accordingly analysed first. An Cosán, meaning *the path* or *the way*, is an Irish organisation based in Dublin that provides a sustainable centre of learning, leadership, and enterprise. The rationale for choosing An Cosán was that a spiritual dimension was part of its founding vision and is central to its ethos for over 20 years. Participation from An Cosán employees was voluntary, and 15 participants from a total workforce of 43 volunteered. The criterion for selection was that staff members had to have been employed by An Cosán for six months or more. After completion of the first interview and data analysis, we used constant comparison to test, elaborate on, and refine categories as they emerged. The focus of the sampling was arrived at according to developing categories from emerging theory, rather than variables such as age, gender, or class (Coyne, 1997).

Following data saturation at An Cosán, for theoretical variation, we sampled three non-spiritual organisations—Vitae (the Netherlands), Beaverbrooks (United Kingdom), and Liberty Seguros (Portugal). We selected these companies using the 2008’s best European workplaces list, as determined by the Great Place to Work (GPTW) Institute Europe, Denmark. We selected these organisations because the Institute identified them as having

high degrees of trust, an aspect of the partnering approach we described earlier (Ashforth & Pratt, 2003). Participation was voluntary, and in total 19 participants volunteered. The criterion was that participants had been employed with the organisation for six months or more.

Procedure

An interview guide was used that initially followed indirect questions about workplace spirituality and subsequently with direct questions about workplace spirituality. The indirect questions initially focused on antecedents of workplace spirituality (e.g., What attracted you to the organisation?). Next using Sheep's (2004) Workplace Spirituality needs-supply PO Fit Scale, we explored the perceived spiritual needs of individuals (e.g., To what extent is it important for the workplace to acknowledge your individual needs and integrate your personal needs with work life?), and how those needs were fulfilled by the workplace (e.g., In what ways does the workplace allow for expression of inner beliefs and values in life). Finally, indirect questions then focused on the outcomes of having needs met (e.g., What, if any, are the personal or organisational outcomes of the workplace being able to meet your needs?). Next, direct questions regarding workplace spirituality followed, explored under the theme 'explicit questions about workplace spirituality' (e.g., What, if any, is the relationship between spirituality and the workplace?). The interview guide developed based on emerging categories using theoretical sampling (Coyne, 1997).

Stages of data analysis

We analysed the transcripts and coded using QSR NVivo 9. Three types of coding were used—open, axial, and selective (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Open coding involved both microanalysis and general macroanalysis. We used microanalysis for the five transcripts, which involved breaking the data into details to understand meanings. Initial concepts were identified, and this continued until new data failed to identify new concepts. Where possible,

we used in-vivo codes using participants' own language to reflect data themes. Conceptual memos were developed and later revised that documented emerging categories, concepts, and properties. We used macroanalysis following the first five interviews, which involved coding less for detail and more for essence.

Axial coding involved relating concepts and categories through constant comparison. During axial coding, the paradigm model (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) was used to relate categories and sub-categories to structure and process. This included antecedents, a set of action strategies, and the context, and intervening conditions that influenced action strategies and their consequences. Selective coding involved using integrative diagrams and memos and linking categories around a core category (see appendix A for a full description of categories, sub-categories, and their properties) and refining the resulting theoretical construction into a unified model (figure 1) until theoretical saturation. The sequence of the model is based on Stake's (1967) full countenance model, discussed later.

Validity and reliability issues

For validity and reliability, we used a number of qualitative strategies (Creswell, 2013). For validity, first we used the member check procedure where we discussed the emerging model with participants. This was a valuable way of obtaining participants views of the credibility of the findings and interpretations. Second, through triangulation and the analytic process of the constant comparison method, emerging categories were validated using evidence from across several transcripts. Third, we used the peer review process where one of the researchers provided an external check of the research process acting as a devil's advocate on the emerging model. For reliability, we used intercoder reliability, a process where multiple coders analyse transcript data for agreement on coding names. For example, after coding the first five interviews, both researchers compared coding, so analysis and subsequent theory building was not confined to one viewpoint.

Results

Workplace spirituality PO fit model

Analysis of the three central questions discussed earlier resulted in the development of the workplace spirituality PO fit model (figure 1). The model has a left to right sequence and treats the person-plus-organisation as the unit of analysis. The model indicates organisational aspects at the top of the model and person/self aspects at the bottom. The sequence of the model is based on Stake's (1967) full countenance model for program evaluation, and we adopt three sequential stages—antecedents, transactions, and outcomes. The sequence fits the logic of the research questions and paradigm model noted earlier and is appropriate for PO fit theory by stressing congruence across the model, with each stage contingent on the one before.

Antecedents explain factors that lead individuals and organisations to seek and foster workplace spirituality. Transactions indicate the interactive context, conditions, and processes between the person and organisation that influence the perceived spiritual needs of individuals, and how those needs are fulfilled. The outcomes represent the final stage of the model and the benefits of workplace spirituality, as individuals perceive them. At each of the three stages, the requirements regarding both the person/self and organisation are summarised.

Using a holistic and integrative perspective from transpersonal psychology, the central process in the model that determines PO fit is a question of reconciling self. Reconciling self involves an ongoing cognitive process of meaning making and when appropriate adapting one's needs to fit the immediate environment. The process of adapting one's needs is captured through the action strategies—conscious reconciling experiences and self-adjustment.

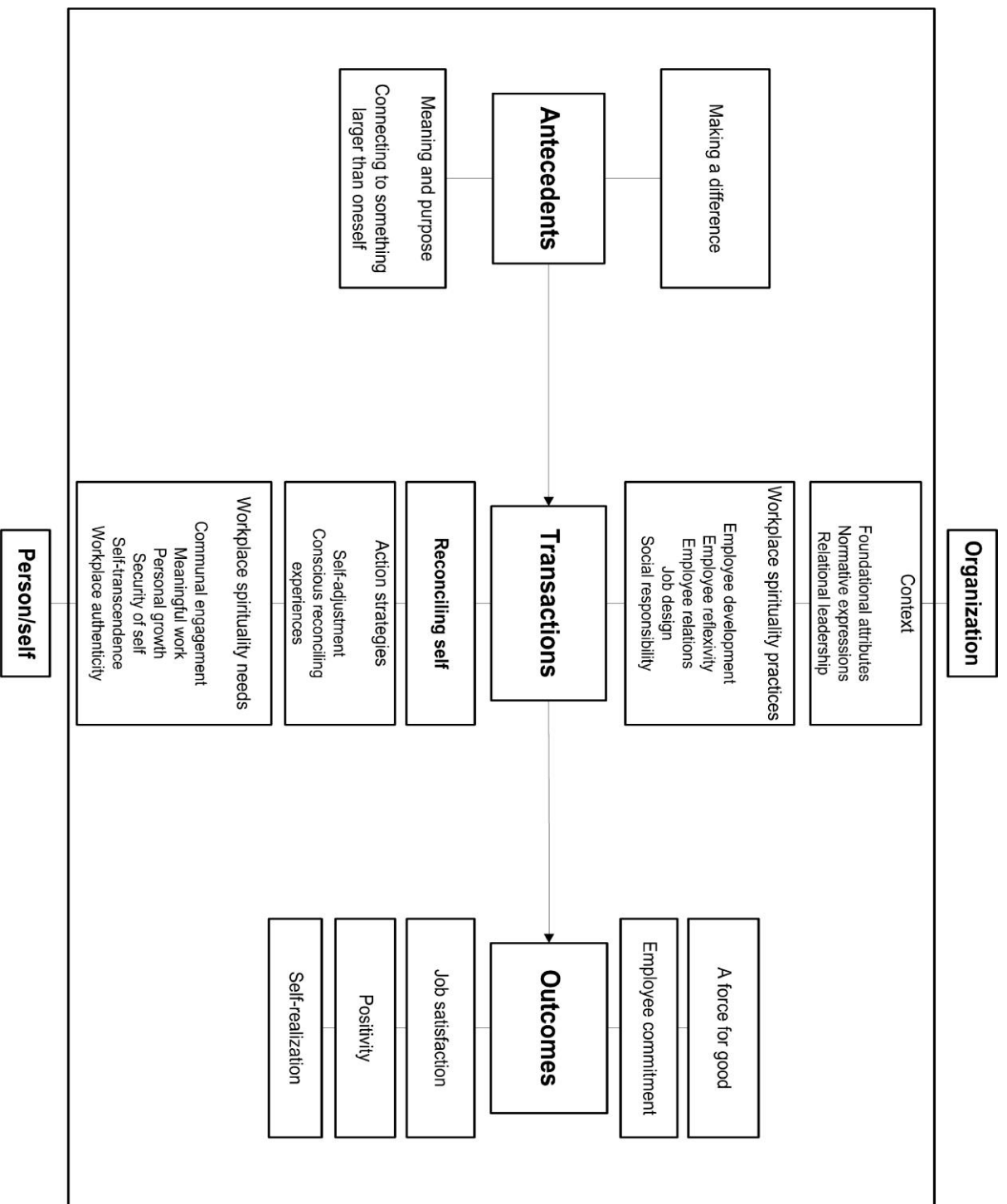


Figure 1: Workplace spirituality PO fit model.

Conscious reconciling experiences concerns the extent to which an individual perceives a work environment conducive to self-expression and purpose; it is a state of alignment with one's authentic self. Self-adjustment, however, occurs when self-expression is compromised, and concerns the ease with which an individual and/or organisation adjust to enable self-expression. For participants, self-adjustment meant steadily re-establishing meaningful contact with a deeper sense of self. Both action strategies—conscious reconciling experiences and self-adjustment—are not mutually exclusive but should be placed on a continuum between fit and misfit during the process of reconciling self. The next section examines the model in more detail.

Antecedents stage

The antecedents stage of the model specifies factors that lead individuals and organisations to seek workplace spirituality.

Person/self

At the individual level, participants cited connecting to something larger than oneself through a sense of belonging, and meaning and purpose through an inner search, being affected by the culture, inner development and intuitive knowing as individual perceptions of what predisposes individuals to seek workplace spirituality.

Organisation

At the organisational level, making a difference through a contribution to society and raising the consciousness of the organisation through an environment in which employees thrive and can act according to their own views was a clear reason an organisation wants to foster workplace spirituality.

Transactions stage

The model then moves to the transactions stage and the interaction between the person and organisation. The context is discussed first, followed by conditions and processes that

influence the perceived spiritual needs of individuals, noted as workplace spirituality needs, and how those needs are fulfilled, noted as workplace spirituality practices. The conditions and processes are followed by the action strategies—conscious reconciling experiences and self-adjustment—which are central to reconciling self.

Context

The contextual factors that influenced workplace spirituality were foundational attributes, normative expressions, and relational leadership.

Foundational attributes

Foundational attributes are basic assumptions of the organisation, essential to the broader context of workplace spirituality because they convey a culture that is purpose-driven and meaning-based; the more clarity regarding the organisation and its purpose, the more people can align with it. Foundational attributes were noted through the vision and mission and in particular a common purpose, and a set of core values. P14 (An Cosán) described a core value of human uniqueness at An Cosán when she captured how the whole person is acknowledged at the company:

We've always talked about an awareness of working with the whole person and the spiritual dimension, so we'd have a big focus in our work on supporting the development of the spiritual part of all the people who come and use our services.

Normative expressions

Normative expressions represent the second contextual factor, evident in the way culture was fostered by openness and respect in a safe, supportive culture where employees could express themselves without fear of ridicule. Openness creates a safe space and enables a culture where people can show up. Through openness and a supportive culture, the organisational hierarchy and boundaries were broken down, and a self-actualised culture fostered a sense of community and belonging in employees.

Relational leadership

The third contextual factor, relational leadership, highlights how leaders contribute to workplace spirituality. Relational leaders listen and build both trust and a safe place in which employees are valued based on who they are and what they might become, rather than what they can do for the organisation. Relational leadership was evident through leadership as holding and role modelling.

Workplace spirituality needs

Workplace spirituality needs represent the first set of two intervening conditions and processes. Needs correspond with self-adjustment and consciousness reconciling experiences and are perceived by individuals that contribute to a perceived sense of fit within the organisation. The needs align with organisational practices, noted below as workplace spirituality practices. Six needs emerged from analysis of interview data—communal engagement, meaningful work, personal growth, security of self, self-transcendence, and workplace authenticity. Communal engagement is discussed below, followed by a brief overview of the other five needs.

Communal engagement

Communal engagement formed a fundamental part of relationships with both the individual and work community. By connecting through common purpose, a sense of meaning and togetherness prevailed, fostering an open and trusting environment. A need for communal engagement was highlighted through a sense of connection to others and self-expression in the communal space of the organisation. P13 (An Cosán) reported how through self-expression of individuals, a deeper connection with others to express one's feelings, needs, and wants was evident:

You know that's really how we meet our needs ourselves individually by connecting with each other on a deeper level and communicating whatever issues we might have and if there's anything major, it would be heard, you do feel that if you've an issue in here you don't have to sit on it.

Meaningful work

Meaningful work enables individuals to live their values and fulfil intrinsic needs in the work they do. Meaningful work became evident through a search for deeper meaning, making a contribution to others, where work is felt more than a job, and through a direct influence or effect on people's lives.

Personal growth

Personal growth was seen as an important part of organisational life by the majority of participants and was highlighted through growth as an innate potential and self as unfolding.

Security of self

Security of self demonstrates how trust-based relationships, rather than fear-based ones, are a pivotal need in a spiritual workplace. Security of self was evident through either being at ease with oneself or feeling safe in an environment that is secure and free from excess anxiety and fear.

Self-transcendence

Self-transcendence highlights a need to transcend ego and was captured through being part of something bigger and experiencing shared unity.

Workplace authenticity

Workplace authenticity emphasises the human need to be acknowledged as an individual, valued for who employees are rather than what they can do for the organisation. It also emphasises employees as wanting to bring their whole selves to work and having inherent

values greater than work roles. The need for workplace authenticity was captured by feeling authentic, integration, and an interest in personal life.

Workplace spirituality practices

Workplace spirituality practices, the second set of intervening conditions and processes, align with needs as participants perceived them and further influence the action strategies of self-adjustment and conscious reconciling experiences. Five practices were identified—employee development, employee reflexivity, employee relations, job design, and social responsibility. Employee development is discussed below, followed by a brief description of the other four practices.

Employee development

Employee development was viewed by all four organisations as a necessity in the workplace, evident through regular, individual coaching and a culture that permits encouragement of learning and human potential. Employee development was pivotal to fostering the need for individual personal growth. P20 (Vitae) described how the company uses individual coaching for personal growth:

At Vitae you also have a development manager, I've got two managers, like a development manager and a managing consultant, and a development manager is just for your personal development and for your growth, and she is always there when you need her. So if you are meeting a client she will meet you and coach you.

Employee reflexivity

Employee reflexivity was a fundamental part of daily life, highlighting the human capacity to be aware of being aware. Reflexivity allows the truth to emerge from within and foster a sense of community. Employee reflexivity was fostered by providing a dedicated space for staff, reflective appreciation, and the open circle ritual, and together fostered the needs of communal engagement, meaningful work, and security of self.

Employee relations

Employee relations was fundamental to all four organisations; they understand that central to the human condition is human nature as beings-in-relationship, where each individual exists within a series of relationships: relationship with one's self, others, society, and culture. Employee relations are fostered through a culture of respect and/or trust, and consequent to attending to the diverse nature of employee relations, the need for communal engagement flourishes.

Job design

Job design fostered the elements of challenging work and self-leadership, where there is a shift from a command and control culture to an emphasis on empowerment, work-life balance, and work teams. These elements were a core factor in fostering the needs of communal engagement, meaningful work, personal growth, and workplace authenticity.

Social responsibility

Social responsibility reflects the highest order of internal connectedness and social awareness. The way employees lose self-interest through social responsibility and focus on others' needs promotes meaningful work and self-transcendence. Participants emphasised the practice of social responsibility through commitment to a common good, and enriching lives.

Action strategies

Two parallel action strategies—conscious reconciling experiences and self-adjustment—were devised to handle and respond to reconciling self, and were influenced through the contexts, conditions, and processes discussed above.

Conscious reconciling experiences

Conscious reconciling experiences depicts a state of aligning with one's authentic self, in which the work environment is conducive to self-expression and purpose. It is where an individual experiences the rightness of things. It is intellectual or feelings-based and offers

intimation of inner wholeness. Conscious reconciling experiences revealed various degrees of intensity, influence, and duration for individuals, and was evident through the properties of a deeper knowing, celebrating success, feedback, and personal reflection. P6 (An Cosán) described a conscious reconciling experience through a deeper knowing of having needs aligned:

So now that I'm working here, and my needs are aligned with my work so closely it's hugely important and Steve Jobs is right...it's a matter of the heart when you find the great work that you know you should be doing *you won't be in any doubt about it* [emphasis added] and that's exactly what happened in my case. So, it's especially important to have them aligned.

Self-adjustment

Self-adjustment was both an automatic and thoughtful action/interaction response to handle situations when self-expression was compromised. Self-adjustment was evident through active adjustment, a term that denotes when an individual makes a psychological adjustment to the environment, or when an organisation initiates changes to work roles to suit the needs of the individual. P16 (Vitae) emphasised active adjustment through a psychological adjustment to an environment in which openness was encouraged:

They [Vitae] worked hard to make me feel comfortable and it was quite a [induction] programme and everyone was nice and concerned, how are you doing, are you fine and yeah, it's difficult, it's so much based on feelings...it was quite confrontational, yeah is that the right word? They give feedback without asking if you're okay with this so it's, yeah sometimes it gets to you, it's very, I can't explain. I think I needed two months to get used to the open atmosphere.

Outcomes stage

The outcomes stage represents the final stage of the model and outlines the benefits of workplace spirituality as individuals perceive them. Person/self outcomes include job satisfaction, positivity, and self-realisation. Organisational outcomes include being a force for good and employee commitment.

Person/self

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction denotes whether an individual is satisfied with his/her job. Job design and the presence of relational leadership across the organisations primarily influenced Job satisfaction. Examples of job satisfaction were offered when participants reported satisfaction in their role, which included being passionate about one's work and experiencing fulfilment. P22 (Beaverbrooks) acknowledged being passionate about one's work when she was asked about the outcome of working in an organisation where her needs were aligned:

I don't know of another company that is as passionate about what we do, not just what we do, but about everybody that makes it happen. And again, that's quite a reflection of me because I'm quite an example of something that I do, I actually do something like a product bulletin that goes out to the stores every month, and that gives me the opportunity to get really passionate about the product.

Positivity

Positivity was perceived through having a great place to work and having fun, both of which were central outcomes of fostering workplace spirituality.

Self-realisation

Self-realisation was fostered primarily through working in a self-actualised culture, as demonstrated earlier through the normative expression of openness and a supportive culture. As an outcome, self-realisation was evident when participants spoke in terms of needs realisation and personal growth and change.

Organisation

A force for good

A force for good was evident in making a difference in the community and wider society by enacting social change. Being a force for good was fostered through social responsibility.

Employee commitment

Employee commitment was evident in how participants' psychological attachment to the organisation was fostered through a normative commitment that included feelings of obligation. These feelings may derive from many sources, including how the organisation invested in development of the individual and the extent to which the individual perceives support.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to investigate the antecedent factors and interactive effects of personal and workplace spirituality and subsequent outcomes. The results of the study are shown in the workplace spirituality PO fit model, with data supportive of Singhal (2007) and the central constituents of workplace spirituality. The notion that reconciling self and conscious reconciling experiences are related to meaning making and how an individual perceives their work environment as conducive to self-expression and inner purpose lends support to other studies (e.g. Tombaugh, Mayfield, & Durand, 2011). Significantly, our work highlights how through self-expression and inner purpose individuals can satisfy their potential capability and provide a number of beneficial outcomes for the organisation (King & Nicol, 1999). The notion of self-expression through conscious reconciling experiences depicts a state of consciousness in alignment with one's authentic self. Such experiences are intellectual or feelings-based and offer intimation of inner wholeness. They are temporary experiences in a developmental stage (Edwards, 2009). They demonstrate how the self guides an individual toward optimal development to express the individual's full potential

(Treadgold, 1999). Conscious reconciling experiences were realised and acknowledged steadily through varying degrees of intensity, influence, and duration. For some, the experiences were infrequent, but for others, they were fluid.

The process of reconciling self through self-adjustment points to the innate need for self-expression and unity, or self-adaption (Edwards, 2009). Although the literature contains several adjustment models regarding organisational fit (e.g. Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003), dynamic conceptions of fit and workplace spirituality are rarely investigated. In the current study, participants experienced considerable ease self-adjusting when supported in organisational environments that fostered openness and supportive cultures. Openness was built on respect and building a safe, supportive place wherein the need for security of self was evident. A community based on openness and trust helps individuals understand their true selves and align to their life roles (Palmer, 2004), and enables self-expression in the workplace. Through openness, individuals can let go, are more open to change (Lancaster & Palframan, 2009), can overcome separateness, and can bring their whole selves to work and serve the deepest purpose of themselves and the organisation.

Relational leadership served a crucial part of PO fit facilitating workplace spirituality and highlighted the ability to relate to the individual at a deeper level. We contend that for workplace spirituality to flourish, it is critical that leadership hold the space and role model wholeness by acting from wholeness itself (Laloux, 2014).

Implications for theory

The workplace spirituality PO fit model contributes towards a theoretical understanding of the interactive effects of workplace spirituality and outcomes. The model also expands understanding of PO fit in a broader psychological context (i.e., through reconciling self) and promotes an integrative explanation of what is meant by the term fit (Edwards, 2008).

Implications for practice

Compatibility between individuals and organisations is not an accident, but the result of placing values such as respect, integrity, and trust upfront and negotiating shared meanings that address the deeper needs of the workforce. Organisations should emphasise a meaning- and purpose-driven culture that centres on a core set of values, openness, and support.

Limitations and future research

We acknowledge that the sample was heavily female, though the thirty-four participants were self-selected volunteers, and self-serving bias might have operated through motivational factors. Likewise, we acknowledge the ambiguities of reconciling self taken from a European sample of participants, especially when viewed from the diverse ideological, spiritual, and religious assumptions the participants brought to the study. Moreover, several lines of evidence suggest that people's response to fit and misfit will vary across cultures (Lee & Ramaswamy, 2013). Further research should be undertaken to investigate cross-cultural research when examining workplace spirituality and PO-Fit.

Human resources management (HRM) influenced this study and future research should further investigate the relationship between HRM and workplace spirituality (Weicht, Altman, Muller-Camen, & Chen, 2016). Research questions that could be asked include: Which HRM practices influence self-adjustment and conscious reconciling experiences most?, and in what ways does the role of line managers and their beliefs influence workplace spirituality?

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate the antecedent factors and interactive effects of personal and workplace spirituality and subsequent outcomes. The results of this investigation are shown in the workplace spirituality PO fit model. The central process in the model that determines PO fit is a question of reconciling self. This involves an ongoing cognitive

process of meaning making, and how an individual perceives their work environment as conducive to self-expression and inner purpose; and when appropriate adapting one's needs to fit the immediate environment. Since people spend most of their lives at work, workplace spirituality has the potential to enrich individual experiences at work and become a force for good for organisations.

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Appendix A

Categories, Sub-categories and Properties

Category	Sub-category	Properties
Reconciling self	Conscious reconciling experiences	A deeper knowing, celebrating success, feedback and personal reflection
	Self-adjustment	Active adjustment
Antecedents	Meaning and purpose	A search for deeper meaning, affected by the culture, inner development. intuitive knowing
	Connecting to something larger than oneself	A sense of belonging
	Making a difference	Contribution to society, raising consciousness
Foundational attributes	Vision and mission	A common purpose
	Values	Caring, human uniqueness, integrity, respect, social justice and change, trust
Normative expressions	Openness	Freedom of expression, lack of status differentials, managing the shadow side
	Supportive culture	A sense of belonging, being part of a family
Relational leadership	Leadership as holding	Being fully present, emphatic understanding
	Role modelling	Openness, supporting behaviour
Workplace spirituality needs	Communal engagement	A sense of connection, self-expression
	Meaningful work	A search for deeper meaning. making a contribution to others, more than a job, the effect on people's lives
	Personal Growth	Growth as innate potential, self as unfolding
	Security of self	Being at ease within oneself, feeling safe
	Self-transcendence	Being part of something bigger, experiencing shared unity
	Workplace authenticity	Feeling authentic, integration, interest in the personal life

Workplace spirituality practices	Employee development	Encouraging human potential, individual coaching
	Employee reflexivity	Open circle ritual, providing space, reflective appreciation
	Employee relations	Respect, trust
	Job design	Challenging work, self-leadership, work-life balance, work teams
	Social responsibility	Commitment to a common good, enriching lives
Outcomes	Job satisfaction	Fulfilment, passionate about one's work
	Positivity	A great place to work, having fun
	Self-realisation	Needs realisation, personal growth and change
	A force for good	Enacting social change
	Employee commitment	Normative commitment

Spiritual orientation	Organisation	Industry	Country	Participants	Gender profile	
Explicitly spiritual	An Cosán	Charity	Ireland	15	14 females	1 Male
Non-Spiritual	Vitae	Recruitment services	The Netherlands	5	4 Females	1 Male
Non-Spiritual	Beaverbrooks	Retail	United Kingdom	9	7 Females	2 Males
Non-Spiritual	Liberty Seguros	Financial services	Portugal	5	3 Females	2 Males

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of participants and organisations.