

Exploring Workplace Spirituality as A Predictor of Contextual Work Performance among Delhi's Higher Education Teachers

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Abstract

Workplace spirituality is based on an inner feeling that drives meaning, purpose, and connection in the workplace beyond material rewards that promotes an intrinsic motivation in an employee. Although previous literature has mostly focused on how spirituality in the workplace contributes to general job attitudes or task outcomes, its contribution to contextual work performance has been less empirically investigated in literature, especially in the field of higher education. Considering this gap, the present study is an attempt to find the causal effect between workplace spirituality and contextual work performance among teachers who are employed in the government-funded and regulated institutions of higher education in Delhi. Workplace spirituality and contextual work performance were evaluated with the help of standardized measurement scales adapted for the suitability of Indian higher education teachers. SPSS version 23 was used for data analysis and interpretation. The findings of the study confirm that workplace spirituality is a significant predictor of contextual work performance among higher education teachers in Delhi. The present study has significant implications for the policy-makers, academic administrators, and institutional leaders, indicating that the promotion of workplace spirituality can be an effective instrument to improve the contextual work performance.

INTRODUCTION

The higher education sector plays a fundamental role in shaping the knowledge, skills, and values of future generations. In recent years, the teaching profession has grown more challenging in higher education because of the growing academic demands, administration workloads, and evolving needs of the students. Consequently, this has raised a need to seek the factors that motivate teachers to move beyond their official job requirements to actively participate in the well-being of institutions, specifically in the higher education sector. Out of the many possible factors, one factor is contextual work performance. It is a voluntary

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behavior, such as supporting other people at the workplace outside the job description and being involved in organizational activities, that leads to the creation of a positive work environment (Borman and Motowidlo, 1997). These work behaviors are not necessarily rewarded formally; yet, they are the key to the success of organizational efficacy in the long term.

In the academic context, contextual work performance can improve the learning environment and strengthen the institutional culture. While formal job responsibilities are important, they do not fully explain why many teachers willingly engage in supportive and voluntary behaviors within their institutions. Teaching often involves a deeper sense of purpose, meaning, personal values, and connection with others. These aspects of teaching work are closely related to the notion of workplace spirituality, which is a religion-neutral concept (Kumar & Singh, 2024, 2025). Workplace spirituality focuses on deriving meaning in work, a sense of belonging to fellow workers and students, and alignment between personal values and institutional objectives (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Milliman et al., 2003).

Even though the role of workplace spirituality in relation to job attitudes and task-related outcomes has already been studied, its impact on contextual work performance, especially in the higher education field, is comparatively under-researched. This is particularly applicable to the Indian context, where teachers tend to undertake various roles in addition to official job descriptions. Thus, the proposed research aims at investigating the effects of workplace spirituality on contextual work performance among higher education teachers working in the government institutions in Delhi with an aim of offering suggestions that could assist institutions to provide meaningful and supportive work environments.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Workplace Spirituality

Workplace spirituality has emerged as an important concept in understanding how individuals experience their work beyond formal roles and material rewards. Unlike religious practices, workplace spirituality does not involve rituals and worship (Kumar and Singh, 2024 and 2025). Rather, it emphasises the extent to which employees derive meaning in their jobs, feel belongingness with others, and have a sense of alignment in their personal values with organisational goals (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Milliman et al., 2003).

Ashmos and Duchon (2000) have made one of the first and most significant contributions to this field when they defined workplace spirituality as the acknowledgement of inner life that is sustained by meaningful work in a community. Their contribution highlighted that employees want to work in good environments where they can express themselves and have the feeling of belonging. Extending the conceptualisation of Ashmos and Duchon (2000), Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003) perceived workplace spirituality as a system of organisational values, which promotes the realisation of meaning, connectivity, and transcendence in the workplace among the employees.

Milliman et al. (2003) have proposed three major dimensions of workplace spirituality, i.e., 'meaningful work', 'sense of community', and 'alignment with organisational values'. According to authors, 'meaningful work' is used to refer to the levels with which people view their work as purposeful and a personal fulfilment. A 'sense of community' gives an expression of feelings of connection, support and cooperation between colleagues. Organisational values indicate the level of the alignment between the values of the employees and the values and mission of their organisations. This multidimensional perspective of workplace spirituality has been widely used in the empirical research because of its clarity and applicability in various sectors. Some of the beneficial effects of workplace spirituality that have been associated with the previous studies include job satisfaction, organisational commitment, work engagement, and reduced stress levels (Milliman et al., 2003; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003; Kumar and Singh, 2024, 2025). This shows that spirituality at the workplace can significantly contribute to positive work attitudes and behaviours, and therefore, it is a significant construct to be investigated relative to contextual work performance.

Contextual Work Performance

Contextual work performance comprises voluntary behaviours that facilitate the organisational, social, and psychological context within which the actions are carried out. This conceptualisation is given by Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994), who have made a distinction between contextual performance and task performance and highlighted that performance is more than the job responsibilities as stated in the job description. Borman and Motowidlo (1993, as cited in Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994, p. 476) state that the discretionary behaviours, which are part of contextual work performance, are cooperation,

helping others, persistence, initiative and voluntary effort leading to the overall organisational performance.

For higher education faculty members, the contextual work performance can be captured in the context of discretionary behaviour like mentoring students, being involved in activities of the institution, volunteering to take part in departmental activities and creating a positive work climate. Such behaviours are consistent with the general conceptualisation of contextual performance and organisational citizenship behaviour that focuses on the voluntary behaviours that reinforce the social and psychological climate of the organisation (Organ, 1988; Borman & Motowidlo, 1997).

In the field of academics, several studies have supported the relevance of contextual work performance among teachers. For example, Widodo (2024) has conducted a study on 275 elementary school teachers in Jakarta, Indonesia, and has discovered that the school organisational culture has a significant effect on the contextual performance of teachers. The author further states that organisational and value-orientated factors are important in determining the nature of discretionary teaching practices. Although this research was carried out on the school level, it confirms the relevance of the contextual performance in the context of educational institutions.

In the context of higher education, Deeba et al. (2021) have conducted a study with respect to demographic variables in university teachers in Pakistan, and the results show that contextual performance is a measurable aspect of faculty behaviour in higher educational institutions. This opinion is also supported by the recent evidence in the educational institution setting of higher education. Vu Thi Yen (2024) has conducted a study on 397 lecturers in universities located in Vietnamese institutions and analysed how work overload would affect lecturers' contextual work performance. The results indicated that job demands and leadership support determine contextual performance, and organisational and contextual variables are crucial in the explanation of discretionary academic behaviours.

RESEARCH GAP

The previous studies on workplace spirituality have primarily concerned the influence on the attitudes, including satisfaction and commitment, whereas the current research on contextual work performance has explored the behaviours that facilitate the work environment and the functioning of the institution. To the best of the knowledge of researchers, only a limited number of

studies have examined the causal relationship between workplace spirituality and contextual work performance, particularly in higher education teachers. Moreover, a majority of the existing literature has not been carried out within the Indian context, and hence the results from these studies are less relevant to the higher education sector in India. Hence, there is a lack of empirical evidence regarding the role of workplace spirituality in promoting supportive and voluntary work behaviours in the higher education sector in India. The present study attempts to fill this gap by investigating the effect of workplace spirituality on contextual working performance in higher education teachers in Delhi.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To test the relationship between workplace spirituality and contextual work performance among higher education teachers in Delhi, India.
2. To test workplace spirituality as a predictor of contextual work performance among higher education teachers in Delhi, India.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

H₀1: Workplace spirituality has no significant relationship with contextual work performance among higher education teachers in Delhi, India.

H₀2: Workplace spirituality is not a significant predictor of contextual work performance among higher education teachers in Delhi, India.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The current research is based on a quantitative research design to test the cause-effect relationship between workplace spirituality and contextual work performance among higher education teachers in Delhi, India. To find the direction of the relationship and the effect between the constructs, respectively, Pearson correlation and linear regression were used to analyse the data collected.

Sampling

The sample of the current study included teachers who are working in the government higher education institutions in Delhi. The study has included only permanent teachers to provide uniformity in employment status, benefits, rights, and duties. The primary data were collected via an online survey, which was conducted between 7 August 2025 and 30 November 2025, where 155 teachers were voluntarily engaged in the research. For

selecting the sample, the judgemental sampling technique was used because the respondents were chosen according to predetermined criteria that were consistent with the purpose of the study, in particular, the permanent working status of respondents. SPSS (version 23) was used to analyse the data collected.

Measurement of Variables

In the present study, the predictor construct, i.e., workplace spirituality, and the outcome construct, i.e., contextual work performance, were measured using standardised scales developed by Milliman et al. (2003) and Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994), respectively. The workplace spirituality scale and contextual work performance scale have 21 and 16 items, respectively, and are measured on a five-point Likert scale with strongly disagree (corresponding score = 1) and strongly agree (corresponding score = 5), respectively. The higher the score on the respective scales, the higher the levels of constructs. For contextual work performance, the scale was originally designed to be filled in by the employers; however, for the purpose of the present study, it was adapted into a self-report version to make it convenient for the higher education teachers in Delhi.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Demographics of the Study

Table 1: Demographic Variables Frequency Distribution

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	72	46.5 %
	Female	83	53.5 %
Work Experience	Less than 1 year	12	7.7 %
	1 to 10 years	28	18.1 %
	11 to 20 years	37	23.9 %
	21 to 30 years	41	26.5 %
	31 to 40 years	29	18.7 %
	More than 40 years	8	5.2 %
Academic Rank	Assistant Professor	54	34.8 %
	Associate Professor	48	31 %
	Professor	53	34.2 %
Age Group	22 to 30 years	6	3.9 %
	31 to 40 years	29	18.7 %
	41 to 50 years	32	20.6 %
	51 to 60 years	49	31.6 %
	61 to 65 years	39	25.2 %

Note: Total Respondents – 155; Source: Primary Data

Table 1 presents the demographic information of the respondents who participated in the study. The gender distribution shows that there are more female teachers than males, which indicate that both genders are well represented in the sample. In work experience, the majority of respondents are experiencing significant teaching experience. A large number of the respondents have 11 to 30 years of teaching experience, which

makes up about half of the sample. In comparison, fewer teachers are in the early stage of their careers, and only a very small number have more than 40 years of experience. This shows that most of the respondents in the study are mid-career and senior faculty members.

The distribution across academic ranks is fairly balanced, with assistant professors, associate professors, and professors represented in approximately similar proportions. This means the study includes views from teachers at different academic levels. In terms of age distribution, most of the respondents are above 40 years of age. The largest group falls in the 51–60 years category, followed by those in the 61–65 years group. Only a small number of respondents belong to the youngest age group, which shows that the sample mainly consists of experienced teachers.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of Workplace Spirituality and Contextual Work Performance

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
WPS	155	2.05	4	3.0034	0.3629	0.002	0.047
CWP	155	2.13	4.13	3.0206	0.41077	0.081	-0.13

Abbreviations: WPS – Workplace Spirituality (average score based on 21 items)

CWP – Contextual Work Performance (average score based on 16 items); Source: SPSS

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of workplace spirituality and contextual work performance, which is based on their average scores. The average scores of the two variables are near the middle of the five point likert scale, with workplace spirituality (M = 3.00) and contextual work performance (M = 3.02). The minimum and maximum values indicate that there was enough variation in the responses implying that the participants varied in their perceptions and behaviours. The values of standard deviation show that there is moderate dispersion, which means that the responses are fairly similar throughout the sample. The skewness and kurtosis of the two variables are close to zero, which means that the data are normally distributed.

Reliability Analysis

Table 3: Reliability Test

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Workplace Spirituality	0.71	21
Contextual Work Performance	0.77	16

Source: SPSS

Table 3 presents the reliability results for the study constructs. The Cronbach's alpha value for workplace spirituality is **0.71**,

which indicates an acceptable level of internal consistency for the 21-item scale. This suggests that the items used to measure workplace spirituality are reasonably consistent in measuring the same concept. Similarly, contextual work performance shows a Cronbach's alpha value of **0.77** for the 16-item scale, indicating good internal consistency. Overall, these reliability results suggest that both constructs are reliable and suitable for further statistical analysis in the study.

Normality Assessment

Table 4: Normality test

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Workplace Spirituality	0.063	155	0.200*	0.993	155	0.698
Contextual Work Performance	0.046	155	0.200*	0.993	155	0.645

* This is a lower bound of the true significance;

^a Lilliefors Significance Correction;

Source: SPSS

Table 4 presents the results of the normality tests for workplace spirituality and contextual work performance. For both variables, the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test results are not statistically significant ($p > .05$), indicating no serious deviation from normality. Similarly, the Shapiro–Wilk test results are also non-significant for workplace spirituality ($p = .698$) and contextual work performance ($p = .645$). Overall, these findings suggest that the distributions of both variables are approximately normal. Therefore, the assumption of normality is satisfied, supporting the use of parametric statistical techniques in the subsequent analyses.

Correlation Analysis

Table 5: Pearson Correlation Analysis

		Workplace Spirituality	Contextual Work Performance
Workplace Spirituality	Pearson Correlation	1	
Contextual Work Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.622**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.00	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); Source: SPSS

Table 5 presents the results of the Pearson correlation analysis between workplace spirituality and contextual work performance. The findings show a positive and statistically significant relationship between the two variables ($r = 0.622$, $p < .01$). This implies that higher levels of workplace spirituality are correlated with higher levels of contextual work performance. The strength of the correlation suggests a moderate to strong association, implying that teachers who perceive greater

spirituality at their workplace are more likely to engage in supportive and extra-role behaviours.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

H₀₁: Workplace spirituality has no significant relationship with contextual work performance among higher education teachers in Delhi, India.

Since the correlation between workplace spirituality and contextual work performance is statistically significant ($r = 0.622$, $p < 0.01$), the researchers have rejected the null hypothesis $H_0 1$. This validates the existence of a strong correlation between workplace spirituality and contextual work performance among higher education teachers in Delhi, India.

Regression Analysis

Table 6: Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.622 ^a	0.387	0.383	0.32271

^a Predictors: (Constant), Workplace Spirituality

Source: SPSS

Table 6 summarizes the overall fit of the regression model. The value of R (0.622) indicates a moderate to strong relationship between workplace spirituality and contextual work performance. The R^2 value (0.387) shows that workplace spirituality explains about 38.7% of the variance in contextual work performance. The adjusted R^2 (0.383), which accounts for sample size, is very close to the R^2 value, suggesting that the model is stable and not inflated.

Table 7: ANOVA Matrix

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	10.051	1	10.051	96.515	0.00
Residual	15.934	153	0.104		
Total	25.985	154			

Dependent Variable: Contextual Work Performance; Predictor (constant): Workplace Spirituality

Source: SPSS

Table 7 shows the results of the ANOVA test for the regression model. The model is found to be statistically significant ($F = 96.515$, $p < .001$), which indicates that workplace spirituality explains a substantial portion of the variation in contextual work performance. This result suggests that the regression model fits the data well and that workplace spirituality plays a meaningful role in predicting contextual work performance among higher education teachers in Delhi.

Table 8: Coefficient Matrix

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T statistics	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.906	0.217		4.181	0.00
Workplace Spirituality	0.704	0.072	0.622	9.824	0.00

Dependent Variable: Contextual Work Performance; Predictor (constant): Workplace Spirituality
Source: SPSS

Table 8 shows the coefficient matrix results according to which the estimated regression equation can be calculated as follows:

$$\text{Contextual Work Performance} = 0.906 + 0.704 (\text{Workplace Spirituality})$$

This equation means that a one-unit increase in workplace spirituality will increase contextual work performance by 0.704 units. Moreover, the constant term is statistically significant ($B = 0.906$, $t = 4.181$, $p < .001$), which shows a baseline level of contextual work performance if workplace spirituality is absent. More importantly, workplace spirituality shows a positive and significant relationship with contextual work performance ($B = 0.704$, $\beta = 0.622$, $t = 9.824$, $p < .001$). This finding shows that workplace spirituality is a meaningful and substantial predictor of contextual work performance within the regression model.

H₀₂: Workplace spirituality is not a significant predictor of contextual work performance among higher education teachers in Delhi, India.

Since workplace spirituality has a significant impact on contextual work performance ($\beta = 0.622$, $p < 0.001$), the researchers have rejected the null hypothesis $H_0 2$. This proves that workplace spirituality is a significant predictor of contextual work performance among higher education teachers in Delhi, India

CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

The correlation and the regression analysis both confirm that the increased levels of spirituality at the workplace will substantially increase contextual work performance. The findings of the study indicate that teachers who find meaning in their work, are connected to their colleagues and students, and feel that they align with institutional values are more likely to engage in supportive and voluntary behaviours that contribute to the overall functioning of their institutions.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The current study has some limitations that need to be mentioned. First, the study was conducted on a small sample of teachers who

are employed in the higher education institutions in Delhi. Due to this limited sample and geographical focus, the findings may not be easily generalised to teachers in other regions or to different types of educational institutions. Second, the data for the study were collected through a self-reported survey. The answers will depend on the subjective perceptions of the participants and can be influenced by personal bias or the desire to give socially desirable responses. The other limitation is related to the research design. The present study used a cross-sectional design, which gathered the answers at one point in time. Consequently, it is difficult to determine the definite causal relations between variables. Lastly, the scope of the study was limited to workplace spirituality as a predictor of contextual work performance. The analysis did not include variables like leadership style, workplace culture, or organisational culture, which might have influenced contextual work performance and therefore are out of the scope of the present study.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the research, several recommendations can be made. Higher education institutions should attempt to create a work environment that encourages meaningful work, strengthens connectedness among colleagues and students, and promotes shared values among teachers. When teachers feel that their work has meaning and that they are part of a supportive academic community, it can contribute positively to their overall work behaviour.

Academic administrators also have an important role in this regard. They can encourage practices that promote cooperation, mutual respect, and a sense of purpose in academic work among higher education teachers. In addition, faculty development programmes may incorporate elements that help in building reflection, ethical values, and stronger interpersonal relationships within the workplace. At a broader level, policymakers and institutional leaders should recognise contextual work performance as an important aspect of teachers' effectiveness and consider integrating it into institutional development strategies. Further studies are suggested with a larger sample size and by including teachers from private educational institutions. These studies can provide more information on how workplace spirituality is related to contextual work performance. Further studies should also take into account other variables that can affect contextual work performance in higher education teachers.

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