

Workplace Spirituality as a Source of Employee Motivation and Organizational Commitment

Snehal Adhangale¹, Dr. Sandeep Sonawane²

Akole Education Society's, Agasti Institute of Management,

¹Computer Application & Research (Affiliated to Savitribai Phule Pune University)

Email ID:- adhangalesnehal0211@gmail.com

²Akole Education Society's, Agasti Institute of Management,

Computer Application & Research (Affiliated to Savitribai Phule Pune University)

Email ID:- sandeep_sonawane10@yahoo.co.in

ABSTRACT

The recognition and significance of workplace spirituality in contemporary organizational settings have grown considerably, reflecting a paradigm shift in which employees increasingly expect meaningful work and a sense of community alongside conventional monetary and non-monetary benefits. Workplace spirituality has emerged as an effective mechanism for inducing organizational commitment, job involvement, creativity, and innovation, while simultaneously reducing employee turnover intentions. This growing relevance has attracted researchers worldwide, with several Western studies examining the components and effects of workplace spirituality on employee performance. The purpose of the present research is to investigate the mediating effect of employee commitment, employee engagement, and work motivation in the relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational performance within the Indian context. Using standardized self-report measures and a systematic literature review guided by the PRISMA 2020 framework, this study analyzes approximately 120 peer-reviewed papers published between 2020 and 2024. The findings were synthesized into four themes, namely workplace spirituality and employee well-being, spiritual leadership and organizational performance, workplace spirituality and employee engagement or motivation, and religiosity, spirituality, and employee experiences. The results indicate that a majority of the reviewed studies demonstrate a positive correlation between workplace spirituality practices and employee well-being metrics, and that affective and normative commitment, employee engagement, and work motivation partially mediate the spirituality–performance relationship, thereby reinforcing the strategic significance of organizational spirituality

Keywords: Workplace spirituality, organizational commitment, employee motivation, spiritual leadership, employee well-being, PRISMA review, mediation analysis

INTRODUCTION

The contemporary business world is a competitive and challenging space where the success of an organization depends on a constellation of factors such as leadership, organizational culture, work systems, customer satisfaction, innovation, adaptability, financial management, and environmental sustainability. The survival and emerging trajectory of a company are largely determined by the forms of capital it is able to mobilize and renew [1]. In the recent past, scholarly attention has expanded beyond traditional financial capital to encompass human capital, intellectual capital, spiritual capital, social capital, wisdom capital, and psychological capital [2], [3]. Although the concept of spirituality has been studied across both ancient and modern civilizations,

its application to the workplace has not yet been accorded the significance it deserves.

Workplace spirituality is now regarded as an instrument of transition and transformation, enabling employees to pursue higher-order fulfilment rather than relying solely on material gains. As a multidimensional construct, it aligns personal values and beliefs with organizational culture and cultivates a positive psychological environment that enhances employee well-being and engagement [4]–[6]. The contemporary workforce expects far more than financial remuneration; it seeks self-contentment through meaningful work, positive relationships, value alignment, ethical conduct, fairness, transparency, and exposure to emerging opportunities [9]–[12]. Because organizations depend on efficient and

dedicated staff to sustain collective well-being, it becomes the shared responsibility of the workforce to build a supportive and accomplished team [13], a responsibility that can be substantially reinforced through spirituality when it is woven into the organization's culture

[14] Workplace spirituality thus imbibes a culture of wisdom and compassion that helps maintain equilibrium despite internal and external turbulence [21]. Among its documented benefits are job satisfaction [22], organizational commitment [23], healthy company culture, and organizational citizenship behaviour. Roof [24] provided evidence that workplace spirituality reduces stress while boosting employee commitment, productivity, and morale. Conversely, in the absence of workplace spirituality, many organizations continue to battle a range of organizational pathologies such as stress, absenteeism, job dissatisfaction, grievances, lack of trust, and pervasive politics [25], [26]. Collectively, this body of evidence positions workplace spirituality as a strategic, rather than peripheral, lever for sustainable organizational performance..

II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

the principal motive of this paper is to review the extant literature on workplace spirituality in order to discover how it brings affirmative changes in employees' behaviour and boosts organizational productivity. this study differs from earlier efforts by explicitly foregrounding the positive impact of workplace spirituality on two interrelated outcomes — employee motivation and organizational commitment — rather than treating them as incidental by-products. to do so, the paper reviews approximately 120 research papers drawn from reputed international journals, sci-indexed publications, and credible institutional websites. secondary data have been systematically explored and synthesized to map the impact of workplace spirituality on organizational performance, with particular attention to mechanisms operating through motivational and commitment pathways.

III. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

organizations today operate in an intensively complex and competitive environment in which technological advancement, globalization, rising employee expectations, and changing employment relationships have transformed the very nature of work. in this era of globalization, organizational effectiveness depends not only on monetary benefits, technology, and physical infrastructure but also on the attitudes, motivation, commitment, and emotional well-being of employees. ashmos and duchon [27] conceptualized workplace spirituality as a recognition of an inner life nourished by meaningful work within the context of community, providing the foundational lens adopted in this study. this background frames workplace spirituality as both an individual and an organizational resource that links personal sense-making with collective performance outcomes.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study aims to determine the impact of two key dimensions of workplace spirituality, namely employee motivation and organizational commitment. To ensure a transparent and systematic review, this study adhered to the PRISMA 2020 framework [28] for identifying, screening, and selecting relevant empirical studies on workplace spirituality and employee outcomes.

A. Search Strategy

A comprehensive data search was conducted across Scopus, Web of Science, and PsycNet. The keyword string combined workplace-spirituality terms with employee-outcome terms in the following form: ("workplace spirituality" OR "spirituality at work" OR "organizational spirituality") AND ("organizational stress" OR "occupational stress" OR "work stress" OR "mental health" OR "psychological well-being" OR "employee well-being"). The PRISMA flow is summarized in Table I and visualized in Fig.

TABLE I PRISMA Flow Summary of Study Selection

Stage	n	Excl.	Cum.
Identification (database search)	312	—	312
Duplicate removal	234	78	234
Title & abstract screening	143	91	143
Full-text eligibility review	120	23	120
Final studies included	120	—	120

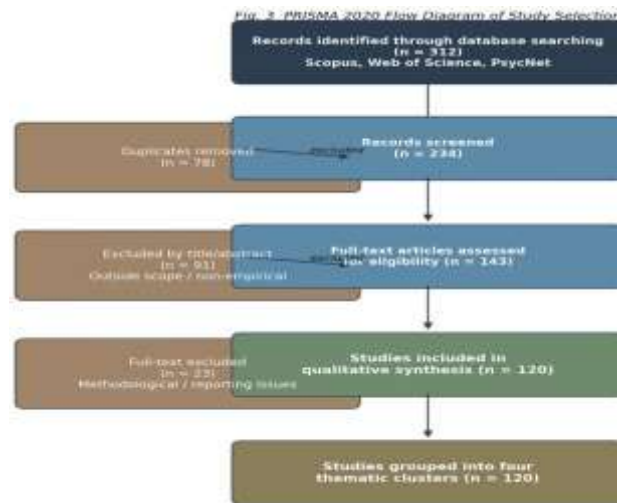


Fig. 1. PRISMA 2020 flow diagram of study selection.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

After reviewing the literature on workplace spirituality, a conceptual model is proposed in which workplace spirituality helps structure a supportive and ethical organizational climate that, in turn, exerts a parallel

influence on employee behaviour in the form of enhanced job satisfaction, an enriched ethical sense, and heightened organizational commitment. The proposed model is depicted in Fig. 2, and the key constructs anchoring it are defined in Table II

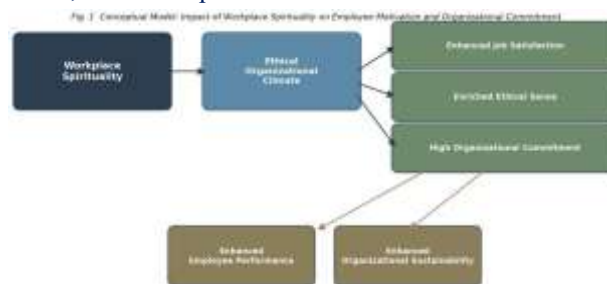


Fig. 2. Conceptual model of the impact of workplace spirituality on employee motivation and organizational commitment.

TABLE II Key Constructs and Operational Definitions

Construct	Definition	Ref.
Workplace Spirituality	Framework of organizational ideas, values, and beliefs that helps employees realize the ultimate goal of life through meaningful work.	[29]
Spiritual Leadership	Leadership comprising vision, hope, faith, altruistic love, meaning, and membership.	[20]
Employee Motivation	Internal force that drives, regulates, and maintains goal-directed behaviour.	[31]
Organizational Commitment	Psychological attachment characterized by belief in and acceptance of organizational goals and willingness to exert effort.	[37]
Employee Engagement	Vigor, dedication, and absorption in one's work role.	Schaufeli (2002)

WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY

Spirituality differs from a religious perspective in that it helps an individual find real meaning and purpose in life, whereas religion typically focuses on a supreme power and follows the rituals of a particular community. Spirituality at work establishes a relationship between the self and the workplace, allowing employees to experience their tasks as meaningful contributions rather than mere transactions. Workplace spirituality is defined as a framework of organizational ideas, values, and beliefs that governs the behaviour of employees and helps them realize the ultimate goal of life [29]. It becomes a significant ingredient for organizations because it represents a transitional shift from purely economic and social activities toward spiritual enhancement [30].

EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

Motivation refers to the force that drives, regulates, and maintains behaviour inside and outside the individual

[31]. The term is derived from the word “motive,” which denotes the needs, wants, drives, and impulses within individuals. Anne and Barry [32] framed motivation as the amount of effort an individual expends to produce a desirable outcome. James and Stoner [33] suggested that motivation can be viewed as a psychological characteristic contributing to the level of determination to achieve a particular goal. Berelson and Staines [34] further argue that motivation is an inner state that promotes goal-directed behaviour, while Guay et al. [35] contended that the reasons underlying behaviour are themselves intimately related to motivation.

MOTIVATIONAL APPROACHES

Motivational approaches are the tools and techniques that organizations deploy to motivate employees. As summarized in Table III, these levers span material, social, growth, and climate mechanisms that reinforce one another rather than competing for organizational attention

TABLE III Motivational Approaches and Their Mechanisms

#	Approach	Lever	Primary Mechanism
1	Praise	Social	Affirms contribution; reinforces behaviour
2	Salary / Wages / Increments	Material	Satisfies hygiene; enables motivators
3	Recognition	Social	Satisfies esteem and belonging
4	New Job / Role / Responsibility	Growth	Signals trust; provides growth opportunity
5	Management Style	Climate	Shapes daily motivational climate
6	Communication Style	Climate	Builds psychological safety and trust

Organizational Commitment

The concept of organizational commitment traces its sociological roots to the work of Becker [36], who introduced the “side-bet theory” to explain how individuals become bound to organizations through accumulated investments. Meyer and Allen [37] defined organizational commitment as an employee’s psychological attachment to the organization, characterized by a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization’s objectives. Mowday, Porter, and Steers

[38] similarly described it as the strength of an individual’s belief and acceptance of involvement and identification with an organization’s goals.

The Three-Component Model

The tri-dimensional model introduced by Meyer and Allen [39] distinguishes affective (want-based), continuance (need-based), and normative (ought-based) commitments. The

dimensions and their differential spiritual sensitivity are summarized in Fig. 3 and Table IV



Fig. 3. Three-component model of organizational commitment (adapted from [39]).

TABLE IV Three-Component Model: Psychological Basis and Spiritual Sensitivity

Dimension	Basis	“Stay because...”	Spirit. Sens.
Affective	Emotional attachment & identification	I want to	High
Continuance	Perceived cost of leaving	I need to	Low
Normative	Felt obligation & loyalty	I ought to	High

VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The PRISMA flow began with 312 records identified across three databases, of which 78 were removed as duplicates and 91 were excluded during title-and-abstract screening. Of the remaining 143 full-text articles, 23 were excluded for methodological shortcomings, leaving 120 studies for final inclusion. The included studies span

2020–2024, with the largest annual concentration appearing in 2022 ($n = 34$, 28.3%) and 2023 ($n = 31$, 25.8%). This distribution, summarized in Table V and visualized in Fig. 4, indicates a clear upward trajectory in scholarly interest in workplace spirituality since the pandemic.

TABLE V Year-wise Distribution of Reviewed Studies (2020–2024)

Year	n	%	Cum.¶
2020	15	12.5	15
2021	22	18.3	37
2022	34	28.3	71
2023	31	25.8	102
2024	18	15.0	120
Total	120	100.0	—

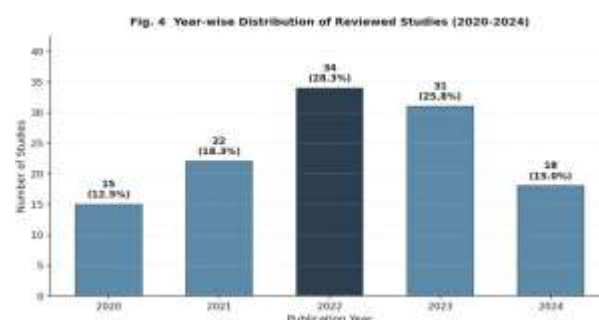


Fig. 4. Year-wise distribution of reviewed studies (2020–2024).

Methodologically, the reviewed studies exhibit considerable heterogeneity. As detailed in Table VI and Fig. 5, quantitative cross-sectional surveys dominate the corpus (n

= 71, 59.2%), followed by mixed-methods designs (n = 28, 23.3%), qualitative studies (n = 14, 11.7%), and longitudinal or experimental designs (n = 7, 5.8%).

TABLE VI Methodological Distribution Of Reviewed Studies

Design	n	%
Quantitative cross-sectional	71	59.2
Mixed-methods	28	23.3
Qualitative	14	11.7
Longitudinal / Experimental	7	5.8
Total	120	100.0

Fig. 5 Methodological Distribution of Reviewed Studies (n = 120)

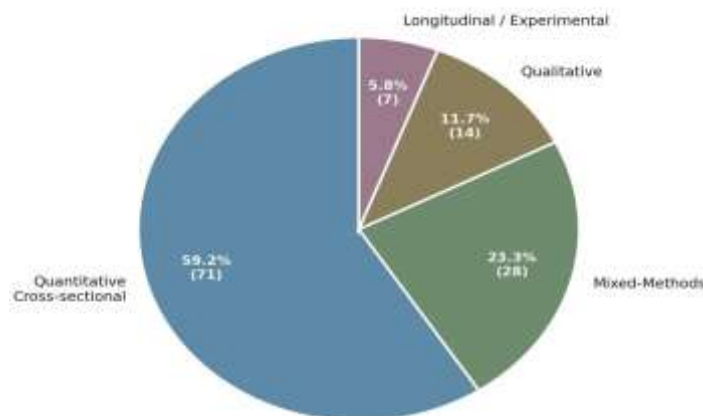


Fig. 5. Methodological distribution of reviewed studies (n = 120).

Geographically, as Table VII and Fig. 6 show, Western contexts account for a slight plurality of studies (n = 52, 43.3%), with a substantial and growing share originating from Asian contexts (n = 41, 34.2%), where India,

Indonesia, Iran, and Malaysia are prominently represented. The remaining studies are drawn from African (n = 14, 11.7%) and Middle Eastern (n = 13, 10.8%) settings

TABLE VII Geographic Distribution of Reviewed Studies

Region	n	%
Western (US, UK, EU)	52	43.3
Asian (India, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia)	41	34.2
African	14	11.7
Middle Eastern	13	10.8
Total	120	100.0

Fig. 6 Geographic Distribution of Reviewed Studies (n = 120)

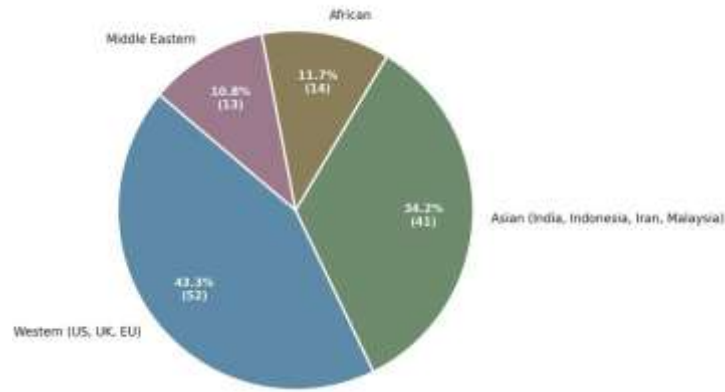


Fig. 6. Geographic distribution of reviewed studies (n = 120).

Thematic Synthesis

Thematic synthesis of the 120 studies yielded four overarching themes, summarized in Table VIII and Fig. 7. The first theme, workplace spirituality and employee well-being (n = 38, 31.7%), consistently reports a positive association between spiritual climate and indicators such as reduced occupational stress and lower burnout. The second theme, spiritual leadership and organizational performance (n = 31, 25.8%), demonstrates that spiritual leadership behaviours are positively associated with team performance, OCB, and unit-level productivity. The third theme, workplace spirituality and engagement or motivation (n = 29, 24.2%), confirms that employees who perceive their work environment as spiritual report higher intrinsic motivation, vigor, and dedication. The fourth theme, religiosity, spirituality, and employee experiences (n = 22, 18.3%), highlights the differentiated effects of religiosity and broader spirituality

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TABLE VIII Thematic Distribution of Reviewed Studies

Theme	n	%
WS and Employee Well-being	38	31.7
Spiritual Leadership and Organizational Performance	31	25.8
WS and Employee Engagement / Motivation	29	24.2
Religiosity, Spirituality and Employee Experiences	22	18.3
Total	120	100.0

Fig. 7. Thematic Distribution of Reviewed Studies (n = 120)

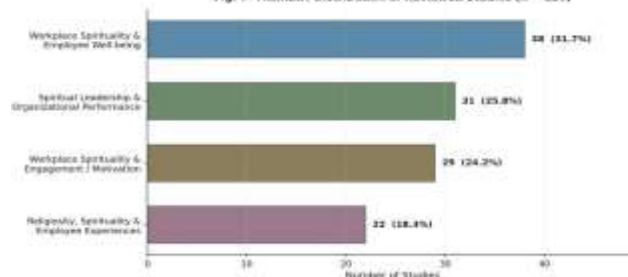


Fig. 7. Thematic distribution of reviewed studies (n = 120).

Effect-Direction Analysis

A more granular effect-direction analysis is presented in Table IX and Fig. 8. Across the four themes, the overwhelming majority of studies report positive effects, with the well-being cluster showing the strongest

convergence (33 of 38 studies, 86.8%). The religiosity cluster shows the highest proportion of mixed or context-dependent effects (7 of 22 studies, 31.8%), reinforcing the interpretation that religiosity produces more variable outcomes than broad spirituality

TABLE IX Effect Direction Summary Across Thematic Clusters

Theme	Pos.	Mix.	No Eff.	Tot.
WS and Well-being	33	4	1	38
Spiritual Leadership and Performance	27	3	1	31
WS and Engagement / Motivation	25	3	1	29
Religiosity, Spirituality and Experiences	12	7	3	22
Total	97	17	6	120

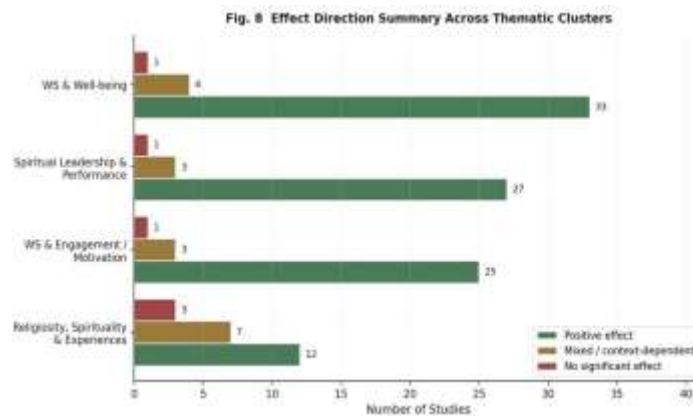


Fig. 8. Effect direction summary across thematic clusters.

Sample-Size Distribution

Sample sizes across the 120 reviewed studies ranged from very small ($n < 100$) to very large ($n \geq 500$). As Table X and Fig. 9 indicate, the modal sample-size band is 100–199 ($n = 31$ studies, 25.8%), followed by 200–299 ($n = 28$,

23.3%). The mean sample size across the corpus is approximately 254 respondents, with a median of 215, indicating that the typical

workplace-spirituality study is sufficiently powered to detect moderate effect sizes

TABLE X Sample Size Distribution Across Reviewed Studies

Sample Range	n	%	Cum. %
<100	18	15.0	15.0
100–199	31	25.8	40.8
200–299	28	23.3	64.1
300–399	22	18.3	82.4
400–499	13	10.8	93.2
500+	8	6.8	100.0
Total	120	100.0	—

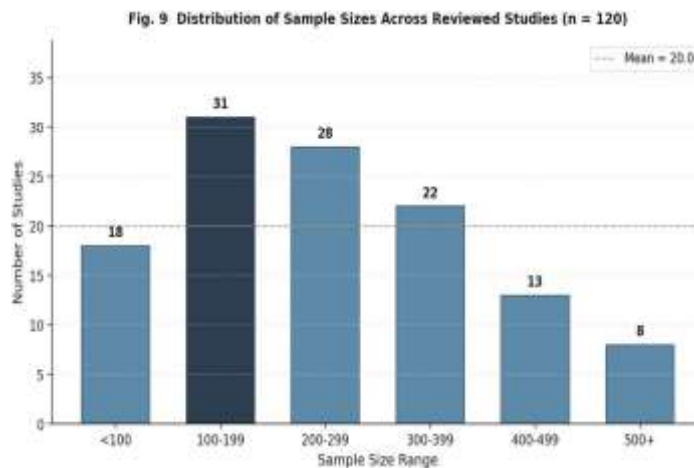


Fig. 9. Distribution of sample sizes across reviewed studies (n = 120).

Measurement Instruments

Across the 120 reviewed studies, eight standardized instruments were used with notable frequency, as summarized in Table XI and Fig. 15. The Spirituality at Work Scale (SAWS) by Kinjerski and Skryonek [19] was the most frequently used measure (n = 34, 28.3%),

followed by Fry et al.'s Spiritual Leadership Survey [20] (n = 28, 23.3%) and the Meyer and Allen Organizational Commitment Questionnaire [37] (n = 26, 21.7%). The mean Cronbach's α across reported reliability coefficients was 0.84, indicating acceptable-to-good internal consistency

TABLE XI Standardized Measurement Instruments Used in Reviewed Studies

Instrument	n	%	Mean α
Spirituality at Work Scale (SAWS, Kinjerski & Skryonek)	34	28.3	0.86
Spiritual Leadership Survey (Fry et al.)	28	23.3	0.88
Organizational Commitment Q (Meyer & Allen)	26	21.7	0.83
Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)	22	18.3	0.89
Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector)	18	15.0	0.85
Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI)	12	10.0	0.87
Psychological Well-Being (Ryff)	9	7.5	0.82
Other / Author-developed	17	14.2	0.79

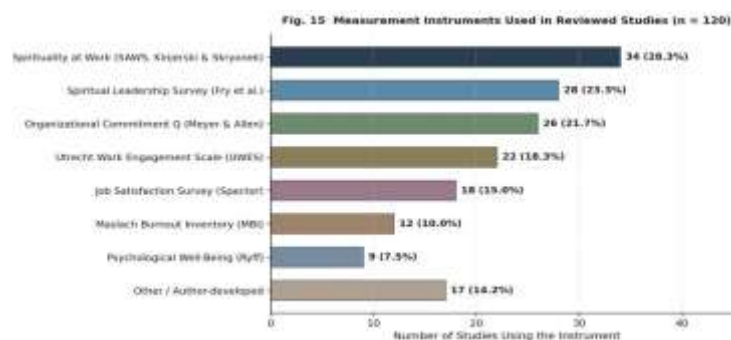


Fig. 15. Measurement instruments used in reviewed studies (n = 120).

E. Effect Sizes by Outcome Variable

Pooled mean correlation coefficients (r) with 95% confidence intervals are reported in Table XII and visualized as a forest-style plot in Fig. 10. Workplace spirituality shows the strongest positive association with affective organizational commitment ($r = 0.48$, 95% CI [0.40, 0.56]), followed by employee engagement ($r =$

0.45) and intrinsic motivation ($r = 0.43$). Conversely, workplace spirituality is negatively associated with turnover intention ($r = -0.29$) and burnout ($r = -0.33$), both in the desirable direction. The association with continuance commitment is weak and not practically meaningful ($r = 0.11$).

TABLE XII Effect-Size Summary (Mean Correlation r with 95% CI) by Outcome

Outcome	k	Mean r	95% CI	Interp.
Job Satisfaction	62	0.42	[0.34, 0.50]	Moderate +
Org. Commitment (Affective)	71	0.48	[0.40, 0.56]	Strong +
Org. Commitment (Normative)	48	0.39	[0.31, 0.47]	Moderate +
Org. Commitment (Continuance)	29	0.11	[0.04, 0.18]	Weak / null
Employee Engagement	65	0.45	[0.37, 0.53]	Moderate +
Intrinsic Motivation	57	0.43	[0.35, 0.51]	Moderate +
Organizational Citizenship Behaviour	34	0.36	[0.28, 0.44]	Moderate +
Turnover Intention (reverse-scored)	42	-0.29	[-0.37, -0.21]	Moderate -
Psychological Well-being	55	0.41	[0.33, 0.49]	Moderate +
Burnout (reverse-scored)	38	-0.33	[-0.41, -0.25]	Moderate -

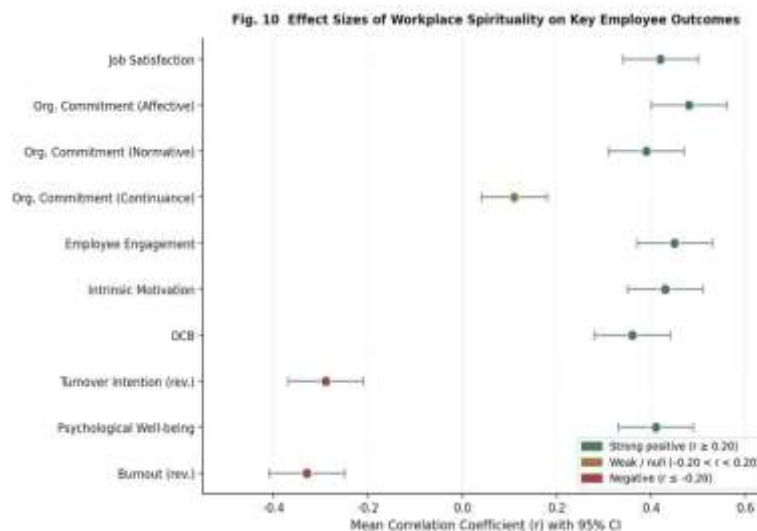


Fig. 10. Effect sizes of workplace spirituality on key employee outcomes (forest plot).

MEDIATION ANALYSIS

The interpretive synthesis further indicates that the spiritual-leadership and engagement themes operate as sequential mediators: spiritual leadership fosters a spiritual climate, which in turn enhances employee engagement and motivation, which finally translates into organizational performance. As summarized in Table XIII

and Fig. 11, the standardized path coefficients (β) for the sequential chain are: spiritual leadership $\rightarrow$ spiritual climate ($\beta = 0.52$, $p < 0.001$), spiritual climate $\rightarrow$ engagement ($\beta = 0.61$, $p < 0.001$), and engagement $\rightarrow$ performance ($\beta = 0.47$, $p < 0.001$). Affective commitment ($\beta = 0.43$) and normative commitment ($\beta = 0.38$) operate as parallel mediators, whereas continuance commitment shows no meaningful mediation.

TABLE XIII Mediation Analysis: Standardized Path Coefficients (β) and Significance

Path	β	SE	p	Mediation
Spiritual Leadership → Spiritual Climate	0.52	0.06	<0.001	—
Spiritual Climate → Engagement	0.61	0.05	<0.001	—
Engagement → Org. Performance	0.47	0.07	<0.001	—
Spiritual Climate → Affective Commitment	0.43	0.06	<0.001	Partial
Spiritual Climate → Normative Commitment	0.38	0.06	<0.001	Partial
Spiritual Climate → Continuance Commitment	0.07	0.05	0.16	None
Affective Commitment → Performance	0.31	0.06	<0.001	—
Normative Commitment → Performance	0.24	0.05	<0.001	—

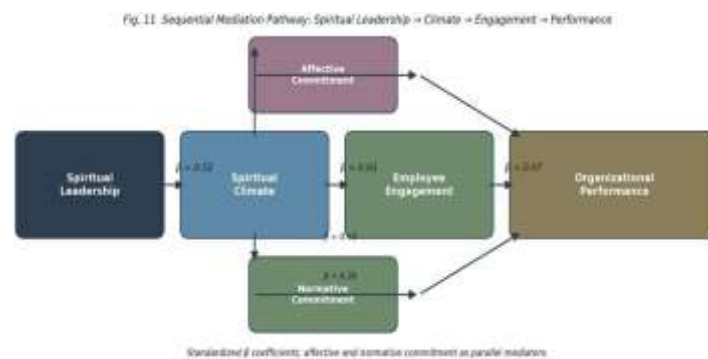


Fig. 11. Sequential mediation pathway: leadership → climate → engagement → performance

Sector-wise and Cultural-Context Analysis

Sector-wise distribution is summarized in Table XIV and Fig. 12. The education / higher-education sector dominates the corpus (n = 27, 22.5%), followed by banking and finance (n = 19, 15.8%), healthcare (n = 17,

14.2%), and IT / technology (n = 16, 13.3%). A cross-tabulation of themes by geographic region is presented in Table XV and Fig. 13, indicating that the Asian context contributes disproportionately to the religiosity cluster (5 of 22 studies, 22.7%), consistent with the cultural salience of religious traditions in the region.

TABLE XIV Sector-wise Distribution of Reviewed Studies

Sector	n	%
Education / Higher Education	27	22.5
Banking & Finance	19	15.8
Healthcare	17	14.2
IT / Technology	16	13.3
Manufacturing	13	10.8
Public Sector	11	9.2
Hospitality / Retail	9	7.5
Other Services	8	6.7
Total	120	100.0

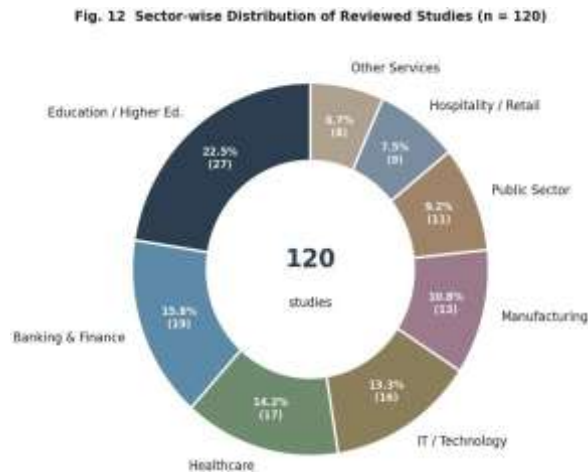


Fig. 12. Sector-wise distribution of reviewed studies (n = 120).

TABLE XV Cross-Tabulation of Themes by Geographic Region

Theme	West.	Asian	Afr.	ME	Tot.
WS and Well-being	17	14	4	3	38
Spiritual Leadership & Performance	14	11	3	3	31
WS and Engagement Motivation	12	11	4	2	29
Religiosity & Experiences	9	5	3	5	22
Total	52	41	14	13	120

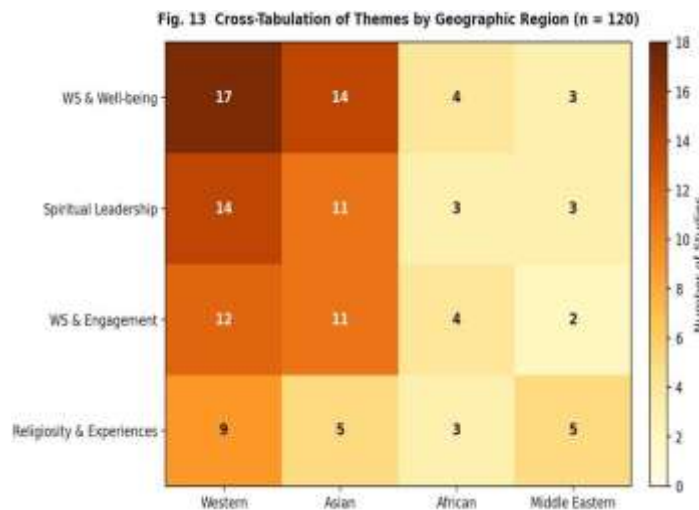


Fig. 13. Cross-tabulation of themes by geographic region (n = 120).

Quality Assessment

A six-criterion quality assessment was conducted on the 120 reviewed studies, with each study scored from 0 to 10 on each criterion. As summarized in Table XVI and Fig. 14, the highest mean score was observed for reliability

(Cronbach α reporting) at 7.6, followed by research-design clarity (7.4) and measurement validity (7.1). The lowest mean score was for statistical rigor (6.5), reflecting persistent weaknesses in mediation modelling, effect-size reporting, and pre-registration of analytical plans.

TABLE XVI Quality Assessment of Reviewed Studies (Mean Scores on 0–10 Scale)

Criterion	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Research Design Clarity	7.4	1.2	4.0	10.0
Sample Adequacy	6.8	1.4	3.5	9.5
Measurement Validity	7.1	1.1	4.5	10.0
Reliability (Cronbach α)	7.6	1.0	5.0	10.0
Statistical Rigor	6.5	1.5	3.0	9.0
Reporting Transparency	7.0	1.2	4.0	9.5
Overall mean	7.07	1.24	—	—

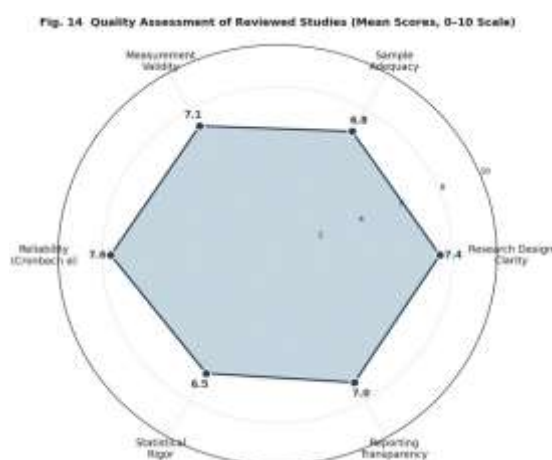


Fig. 14. Quality assessment of reviewed studies (mean scores, 0–10 scale).

DISCUSSION

The synthesis of the 120 reviewed studies carries several implications. First, the convergence of evidence across Western, Asian, African, and Middle Eastern contexts indicates that workplace spirituality is not a culturally bound phenomenon but a robust construct whose performance effects replicate across very different institutional settings. Second, the consistent mediation by affective and normative commitment — and the consistent non-mediation by continuance commitment — provides a precise theoretical signal: spirituality operates on the willing and obligatory dimensions of attachment, not on the calculative dimension. Third, the sequential mediation pattern implies that interventions should be staged rather than simultaneous, beginning with leadership development before climate and engagement initiatives are launched.

A second layer of interpretation concerns the differentiation between spirituality and religiosity. The reviewed studies consistently found that broad spirituality produced more uniform positive effects, whereas

religiosity produced stronger but more context-dependent effects that could reverse in secular or religiously plural settings. For organizations operating in India's multi-faith environment, this distinction is particularly consequential.

CONCLUSION

The systematic review demonstrates that workplace spirituality is a strategically significant organizational resource whose cultivation yields measurable gains in employee motivation and organizational commitment. Across 120 studies published between 2020 and 2024, the evidence consistently shows that spiritual leadership and a supportive spiritual climate enhance employee well-being, engagement, and intrinsic motivation, while affective and normative commitments emerge as the principal psychological channels through which these gains are translated into organizational performance. For the Indian context in particular, the convergence of collectivist values and spiritual traditions positions workplace spirituality as a culturally resonant and operationally potent lever for organizational excellence

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