

Workplace Spirituality, Glass Ceiling Beliefs and Subjective Success

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Abstract- There is a growing interest in the field of workplace spirituality and glass ceiling. Till date, no research has explored the connection between the two topics. In this paper, the relation between workplace spirituality and glass ceiling beliefs is described. In addition, the mediating role of glass ceiling beliefs in the relationship between workplace spirituality and subjective success which has emerged to be one of the most important organizational outcomes has also been proposed. First, a model of workplace spirituality and glass ceiling beliefs is presented in which three dimensions of workplace spirituality (community, meaningful work and inner life) relate to the glass ceiling through four beliefs (acceptance, resignation, denial and resilience). Second, a mediation model of glass ceiling beliefs in the relationship between workplace spirituality and subjective success (career satisfaction, work engagement, physical & psychological well-being and job happiness) is presented. The paper concludes with a discussion of the theoretical and practical implications of the proposed models.

Index Terms- Workplace spirituality, Glass ceiling beliefs, Subjective success, Women

I. INTRODUCTION

Workplace spirituality is the latest trend in management (Miller, 1998; Wagner-Marsh and Conley, 1999; Shellenbarger, 2000; Krebs, 2001; Brown, 2003; Kale and Shrivastava, 2003; Milliman et al., 2003; Wong, 2003; Carrette and King, 2005; Gogoi, 2005; Singhal and Chatterjee, 2006; Case and Gosling, 2010; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010; Pfeffer, 2010). Numerous researchers claim that workplace spirituality is difficult to define (Laabs, 1995; Leigh, 1997; Brenda Freshman, 1999; Krishnakumar and Neck, 2002; Mitroff, 2003; Singhal and Chatterjee, 2006; Oswick, 2009; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010). There are more than seventy definitions of workplace spirituality and yet none is universally accepted (Markow and Klenke, 2005; Gotsis and Kortezi, 2008; Karakas, 2010).

Today's organizations suffer from spiritual impoverishment (Mitroff and Denton, 1999). Numerous changes in the work environment have instilled insecurity, fear, uncertainty and chaos in minds of employees (Harman, 1992; Cacioppe, 2000; Kennedy, 2001). Corporate crimes, ethical scandals, downsizing, financial crises, economic recession and competition have polluted the organizational climate (Biberman and Whitty, 1997; Cacioppe, 2000; Neal, 2000; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003a; 2003b). As a result, employees feel cynical, distanced and vulnerable. Employees these days are lost and insecure due to inner spiritual shortage (Gawain, 2000). Workaholism has become a serious and growing problem for all employees across the world (Gini, 1998; Rifkin, 2004). This leads to stress and loss of spirituality, illnesses, fatigue, fear and guilt (Killinger, 2006). Increasing stress leads to higher absenteeism and lower productivity (Cartwright and Cooper, 1997). Most employees experience overwork in their workplaces (Galinsky et al., 2005). Hard work and long hours can be unhealthy for employees as they pursue external rewards rather than inner peace (Burke, 2006). There is unfriendly environment with people acting artificial, playing down others and putting on masks (Neal, 1999). Downsizing has reduced the morale and commitment of employees (Brandt, 1996; Duxbury and Higgins, 2002; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003a; 2003b). Employees feel lost, disengaged, unappreciated and insecure in the workplaces (Meyer and Allen, 1997; Sparrow and Cooper, 2003). Apart from this, executives report unhappiness, dissatisfaction (Barrett, 2004), psychological isolation and alienation (Harman, 1992; Bolman and Deal, 1995; Cavanagh, 1999), vacuum and a lack of meaning in their work lives (Dehler and Welsh, 1994; Cavanagh, 1999; Pratt and Ashforth, 2003) and there is decline of respect, trust and confidence in management (Shaw, 1997; Burack, 1999). Employees feel a need for spiritual connection due to the changing organizational structure and uncertainties in the workplace (Harrington et al., 2001; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003a, 2003b). Gull and Doh (2004) observed that where spirituality is absent, there is a lack of understanding that we are deeply connected.

This explains why a growing number of managers and employees are resorting to meditation, reflection, spiritual practices and sports exercises (Dehler and Welsh, 1994; Cartwright and Cooper, 1997). Spirituality could increase employees' morale, commitment, well-being and productivity (Krishnakumar and Neck, 2002; Karakas, 2010) and reduce their stress. Aburdene (2005) observed that seekers turn to the spiritual path for anything and everything. Neal, Lichtenstein and Banner (1999) suggested that spirituality will allow people to loosen their grip on reality and let societal transformation and paradigm shift to occur.

Workplace spirituality research is in its early stage (Dent et al., 2005; Duchon and Plowman, 2005; Sheep, 2006). Most of the workplace spirituality literature is individualistic and does not focus on broader social concerns (Mitroff and Denton, 1999). Researchers have noted that empirical research on the effects of workplace spirituality on organizational outcomes is inadequately examined (Milliman et al., 2003; Duchon and Plowman, 2005) and lacks rigor and thinking (Gibbons, 2000). The studies that have dealt with the effect of workplace spirituality on employee attitudes often assume that it would always be positive (Gibbons, 2000) without statistical analysis.

Since the 1980's, numerous researchers have documented the glass ceiling phenomenon in major employment sectors. Working women are struggling with work-life balance, stress, harassment, unfair treatment, discrimination and insecurity in the workplace (Manisha and Singh, 2016). Women's failure in reaching the top management level is being attributed to the 'glass ceiling' which is a metaphor that describes the obstacles and hurdles that prevents women's ascent. Women are unaware of the glass ceiling when they enter but as they climb, it suddenly becomes apparent and blocks their upward movement. Numerous studies have validated the existence of a glass ceiling and several studies have qualitatively examined it. There is a dearth of studies that have explored the antecedents and outcomes of women's attitudes towards the glass ceilings in organizations.

Given the importance of women in the workforce, combined with the increasing disconnection employees feel with their inner selves and the growing difficulties women face in the workplace, a key concern for most organizations these days is to promote women's contribution in the workplace.

Research Questions

1. Does workplace spirituality predict glass ceiling beliefs?
2. Do glass ceiling beliefs mediate the relation between workplace spirituality and subjective success?

II. WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY

Neck and Milliman (1994) defined workplace spirituality as "expressing a desire to find meaning and purpose in life," "a transcendent personal state," "living by inner truth to produce positive attitudes and relationships," and "a belief of being connected to each other and desire to go beyond one's self-interest to contribute to society as a whole."

Ashmos and Duchon (2000) described workplace spirituality as "a recognition that employees have an inner life which nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work, taking place in the context of a community."

Grzeda and Assogbavi (2011) suggested that workplace spirituality consists of those management behaviors driven entirely by spiritual values, teachings, or beliefs, regardless of their source, creating connections between behavior and personal spiritual meanings which are cognitively acknowledged and affectively valued by the manager.

Ashmos and Duchon (2000), operationalized three dimensions of workplace spirituality at the individual level, which are essentially employee perceptions of various aspects of an organization (Duchon and Plowman, 2005) namely, meaningful work, community and inner life.

- 1) Community or connectedness occurs at the group level of human behaviour and is based on the belief that people see themselves as connected to each other. Community is a place where people can experience personal growth, are valued and have a sense of working together. It refers to the extent to which employees feel being a part of their work community where they "can experience personal growth, be valued for themselves as individuals, and have a sense of working together". It involves a deeper sense of connection among people, including support, freedom of expression (Mitroff and Denton 1999) and represents the fellowship dimension of spirituality (Vaill, 1998).
- 2) Meaningful work is a work-related dimension of human experience that occurs at the individual level of human behaviour and is based on the belief that each person has his/her own inner motivations and truths and desires to be involved in activities that give greater meaning to his/her life and the lives of others (Hawley, 1993; Ashmos and Duchon, 2000). This refers to "a sense of what is important, energizing, and joyful about work".
- 3) Inner life occurs at the individual level of human behaviour and reflects an individuals' hopefulness, awareness of personal values and concern for spirituality.

Apart from inner life, some researchers have operationalized positive organizational purpose as the third dimension of workplace spirituality. Positive organizational purpose refers to the extent to which employees perceive their organization as having a positive purpose in relation to employees, society, etc.

Milliman, Czaplewski, and Ferguson (2003) and Kinjerski and Skrypnek (2004) argued that workplace spirituality should involve three levels: individual, group, and organizational, and the dimensions representing these three levels are meaningful work, shared feelings in work communities and alignment with organizational values instead of inner life.

- 1) Meaningful work. This refers to the individuals' in-depth feelings toward work meaning and purpose and connection between work and the meaning of life.
- 2) Shared feelings in work communities. This refers to interpersonal and profound connections and relationships. This means that work relationships are based on trust, support, communication and employees support each other as families (Brown, 2003).
- 3) Alignment with organizational values. This is the organizational level of workplace spirituality. Individuals would experience powerful feeling from alignment with organizational missions or values. This means that the organizational values would enhance the workplace spirituality of employees (Brown, 2003). When organizational values encourage the employees to contribute, help the society or work towards the larger good, the employees' workplace spirituality is enhanced (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000).

Petchsawanga and Duchon (2009) observed that in an asian context, four themes namely, compassion, mindfulness, meaningful work and transcendence define workplace spirituality.

- 1) Compassion refers to deep awareness of and sympathy for others (Twigg and Parayitam, 2006) and desire to relieve others' sufferings (Farlex, 2007).
- 2) Mindfulness is defined as a state of inner consciousness in which one is aware of one's thoughts and actions moment by moment.
- 3) Meaningful work is defined as one's experience that his/her work is a significant and meaningful part of his/her life (Duchon and Plowman 2005).
- 4) Transcendence is a mystical experience dimension described as "a positive state of energy or vitality, a sense of perfection, transcendence, and experiences of joy and bliss" (Kinjerski and Skrypnek, 2006).

Ashforth and Pratt (2010) suggested that spirituality at work has three major dimensions: transcendence of self, holism and harmony, and growth.

- 1) Transcendence of self involves a connection to something greater than oneself and an expansion of one's boundaries to encompass other people and things.
- 2) Holism means the integration of the various aspects of oneself, while harmony is the sense that this integration is synergistic and informs one's behavior.
- 3) Growth refers to self-development and self-actualization and the realization of one's aspirations and potential.

The present study considers the individual workplace spirituality dimensions of community, meaningful work and inner life. Inner life is a holistic dimension because it is an integration of personal identity and work role identity (Prabhu, Rodrigues and Kumar, 2017). Sheep (2006) observed that human beings become complete when they can fully express their 'self'.

III. GLASS CEILING BELIEFS

The metaphor 'glass ceiling' refers to the underrepresentation of women in top positions in organizations. In other words, it is the barrier women face when climbing the organizational ladder. The term 'glass ceiling' was coined by Hymowitz and Schellhardt (1986) in the Wall Street Journal. The glass ceiling is invisible to women from the bottom when they start their careers but later stops them from attaining equality with men (Morrison et al., 1987). The phenomenon is called 'ceiling' as there is an obstacle to upward advancement and 'glass' because these obstacles are not immediately apparent and are an unwritten and unofficial policy. Although women are able to get through the front door of managerial hierarchies, at some point they hit an invisible barrier that blocks any further upward movement. The glass ceiling hypothesis suggests that obstacles to promotion increase for both men and women as they move up the management level, but the barriers intensify more for women than for men (Baxter and Wright, 2000).

Jackson, O'Callaghan and Leon (2014) described the glass ceiling as unique form of discrimination characterized by gender or racial inequalities that are not explained by other job-relevant characteristics of the employee.

There are several qualitative studies on glass ceiling based on in-depth interviews (Morrison, White and Van Velsor, 1992; Ragins, Townsend and Mattis, 1998; Goward, 2001; Wrigley, 2002; Marthur-Helm, 2006; Stone, 2007; Kumra and Vinnicombe, 2008, Murniati, 2012). Some researchers have quantitatively studied the glass ceiling (Terborg et al., 1977; Dubno et al., 1979; Lyness and Thompson, 1997; Jackson, 2001; Wood and Lindorff, 2001; Bergman, 2003 and Elacqua et al., 2009).

There is ample evidence that glass ceiling exists for women employees in nearly all sectors and regions (Weyer, 2007).

Smith (2012) using the role congruity theory of prejudice against female leaders (Eagly and Karau, 2002) and Wrigley's (2002) concepts of denial, negotiated resignation and acceptance, developed the career pathways survey. The career pathways survey has been designed for women at all management levels. The CPS measures the four glass ceiling beliefs namely, acceptance, resignation, denial and resilience.

A. *Acceptance*

Acceptance is the belief that women prefer other life goals such as family involvement than developing a career. It explains why women are satisfied and don't seek promotions. Acceptance is pro-family/anti-career advancement set of beliefs. It depicts women's pessimism regarding promotions due to which they stop making efforts towards top positions.

B. *Resignation*

Resignation is the negative belief that women suffer many more negative consequences than men when seeking career advancement. It explains why women give up and withdraw from the workplace due to social and organizational obstacles. It depicts women's dissatisfaction with their careers eventually leading to disinterest.

C. *Denial*

Denial is the belief that men and women face the same issues and problems in seeking leadership. It shows why women believe that glass ceilings don't exist. Denial stems from optimism and depicts high satisfaction and interest in pursuing career advancement.

D. *Resilience*

Resilience is the belief that women are able to overcome barriers and break glass ceilings. It shows that women feel they have the potential to move forward in their careers. This is an optimistic belief that explains why women after acknowledging the existence of gender barriers, work hard to attain promotions and equal footing with men.

IV. SUBJECTIVE SUCCESS

Subjective or intrinsic success refers to the success as sensed, perceived or felt by the individual oneself. It is measured through the beliefs, opinions, emotions or feelings of the individual and not through facts. Subjective career success refers to all aspects relevant concerning one's individual career satisfaction (Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley, 1990). Seibert and Kraimer (2001) define subjective success as an individual's subjective evaluation of the present achievements compared to his personal goals and expectations. Researchers have recommended further studies on subjective success for organizational benefits (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005; Fisher, 2010).

This study used four important indicators of subjective success namely, career satisfaction (Judge, Cable, Boudreau, and Bretz, 1995; Boudreau, Boswell, and Judge, 2001; Ng, Eby, Sorenson and Feldman, 2005; Judge and Hurst, 2008; Abele, Spurk, and Volmer, 2011), work engagement, physical well-being, psychological well-being and job happiness (Carr, 1997; Clark, 1997; Armstrong-Stassen and Cameron, 2005; Burke, Burgess and Fallon, 2006; Orser and Leck, 2010). In the present study, the terms psychological well-being and emotional well-being have been used interchangeably. Also, the terms, work engagement and employee engagement, career satisfaction and job satisfaction have been used interchangeably.

A. *Career Satisfaction*

Career satisfaction is the satisfaction that individuals derive from the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of their careers, including pay, advancement and developmental opportunities (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990). Jen-Ruei Fu (2010) defined career satisfaction as the level of overall happiness experienced through one's choice of career.

Job satisfaction is confined to the present job (Heslin, 2005) and might be an inadequate measure of career success because subjective success indicates satisfaction over a longer time frame and wider range of outcomes. Although both job satisfaction and career satisfaction are indicators of subjective success, the latter is more appropriate.

B. Work Engagement

Schaufeli et al. (2002) defined work engagement as a positive, fulfilling state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption.

- 1) Vigor is characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one's work and persistence even in the face of difficulties. Shirom (2003) defined it as employees' physical strength, emotional energy and cognitive liveliness.
- 2) Dedication refers to being strongly involved in one's work and experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge.
- 3) Absorption is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work.

May, Gilson and Harter (2004) operationalized a three-dimensional concept of engagement having a physical, emotional and cognitive component. Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002) describe engagement in terms of cognitive vigilance and emotional connectedness. They suggest that engaged workers know what is expected of them, have what they need to do their work, have opportunities to feel an impact and fulfilment in their work, perceive that they are part of something significant with co-workers they trust, and have chances to improve and develop.

C. Physical & Psychological Well-Being

Physical well-being relates to the lack of illnesses (Ware et al., 1996). Psychological well-being is a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community (Centre for Disease Control, 2011).

D. Job Happiness

There is no clear consensus on what "happiness" means. Lyubomirsky, King and Deiner (2005) described happiness as the experience of joy, contentment, or positive well-being, combined with a sense that one's life is good, meaningful and worthwhile. Diener and Biswas-Diener (2008) defined happiness as subjective well-being, which involves both positive and negative affect with cognitive influences. Subjective well-being comprises happiness and life satisfaction. Thus, happiness is a narrower concept than subjective well-being (Bruni and Porta, 2007). Economists use the terms "happiness" and "life satisfaction" interchangeably as measures of subjective wellbeing (Easterlin, 2004).

Job happiness is a positive concept which results in a better work relationship among employees in a work environment (Bagheri, Akbari and Hatami, 2011). Subjective well-being is the scientific term for happiness (Diener, Lucas and Oishi, 2002; Veenhoven 2012) and is the label given to various forms of happiness taken together. Happiness involves three components: the amount of positive affect or joy, a satisfaction rating over a period, and the lack of negative affect or depression and anxiety (Argyle and Lu, 1990).

V. WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY AND SUBJECTIVE SUCCESS

Numerous studies have validated the relation between workplace spirituality and subjective success indicators. The most relevant literature has been provided below.

A. Workplace Spirituality and Career Satisfaction

Some researchers had suggested a relationship between workplace spirituality and work satisfaction (Neck and Milliman, 1994; Turner, 1999; Ashmos and Duchon, 2000; Krishnakumar and Neck, 2002). Milliman, Czaplewski and Ferguson (2003) hypothesized a relationship of workplace spirituality with five important job attitudes including intrinsic work satisfaction. In this study, workplace spirituality at organizational level comprising meaningful work, sense of community and alignment with organizational values was measured using spirituality at work scale (SAWS; Ashmos and Duchon, 2000). Intrinsic work satisfaction was measured by the scale based on motivation hygiene theory (Herzberg et al; 1959). Structural equation modelling showed that all three dimensions of workplace spirituality were significantly correlated with five employee job attitudes variables. Thus, it was concluded that workplace spirituality

enhances intrinsic work satisfaction. Numerous researchers have validated this theory empirically (Fairbrother and Warn, 2003; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003a, 2003b; Nur and Organ, 2006; Robert et al. 2006; Clark et al. 2007, Chawla and Guda, 2010, Usman and Danish, 2010; Altaf and Awan, 2011, Bodia and Ali, 2012, Gupta et al., 2013; Hassan, Nadeem and Akhter, 2016). Several studies using the workplace spirituality at personal level dimensions of community, meaningful work and inner life have arrived at the same conclusion.

B. Workplace Spirituality and Work Engagement

Previous research had suggested a relationship between workplace spirituality and engagement (Mirvis, 1997; Kinjerski and Skrypnek, 2004; Kolodinsky et al., 2008; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010). The model proposed by Saks (2011) suggests that workplace spirituality is directly related to employee engagement and indirectly related to employee engagement through Kahn's (1990) three psychological conditions (i.e. meaningfulness, availability, and safety) for employee engagement. Three dimensions of workplace spirituality namely, transcendence, sense of community, and spiritual values have been shown in the model (Ashmos and Duchon 2000; Milliman et al. 2003; Jurkiewicz and Giacalone 2004; Ashforth and Pratt 2010). The theory has been validated by several researchers (Catwright and Holmes, 2006; Bakker and Demerouti, 2008). The model holds for the workplace spirituality dimensions proposed by Ashmos and Duchon (2000) (Devi, 2016) and Kinjerski and Skrypnek (2006) (Danish et al., 2014).

C. Workplace Spirituality and Employee Well-being

There is ample evidence for the link between spiritual well-being and physical & psychological well-being (Udermann, 1999; Mackenzie et al., 2000; Calicchia and Graham, 2006; Lustyk et al., 2006). Also, spirituality leads to subjective well-being or happiness (Emmons, 1999; Caras, 2003; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003a, 2003b; Sreekumar, 2008; Marlin, 2009; Walker, 2009).

Hettler (1977) proposed a six-dimensional model of employee wellness with spiritual well-being as one of the main components. This shows that spirituality is an integral part of one's holistic health. Spirituality enhances employee well-being (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003a; 2003b) thereby leading to higher organizational performance (Neck and Milliman, 1994; Reave, 2005). Stress, workaholism and overwork results in loss of spirituality, fatigue, illness, fear and guilt (Killinger, 2006). As a result, many employees are resorting to spiritual practices to cope with stressors at work (Cartwright and Cooper, 1997).

Based on these suggestions, Karakas (2010) proposed that incorporating spirituality at work increases employees' well-being by increasing their morale, commitment, and productivity and decreases employees' stress, burnout, and workaholism in the workplace. This theory has been validated by several researchers (Marschke et al., 2011; Lun and Bond, 2013; Kumar and Kumar, 2014; Pawar, 2016; Yaghoubi and Motahhari, 2016; Khatri and Gupta, 2017).

VI. GLASS CEILING BELIEFS AND SUBJECTIVE SUCCESS

Smith (2012) using snowball sampling collected data from 258 women executives serving in different organizations in Australia. Glass ceiling beliefs namely, acceptance, resignation, denial and resilience were measured using the 38-item career pathways survey (CPS; Smith et al., 2012). Correlation and regression analysis was performed using SPSS. The results are summarized in following sections.

A. Glass Ceiling Beliefs and Career Satisfaction

Career satisfaction was measured using the career satisfaction scale (Greenhaus et al., 1990). Correlation analysis revealed a significant association between resignation ($r = -0.13$, $p < 0.01$), denial ($r = 0.27$, $p < 0.01$) and resilience ($r = 0.14$, $p < 0.05$). Acceptance did not show significant relationship with career satisfaction. Regression analysis showed a significant effect of denial on career satisfaction ($\beta = 0.30$, $p < 0.001$). The glass ceiling beliefs predicted 17% variance in career satisfaction.

B. Glass Ceiling Beliefs and Work Engagement

The 9-item Utrecht work engagement scale (UWES-9; Schaufeli, Bakker and Salanova, 2006) was used to measure work engagement. Results revealed a significant association of work engagement with denial ($r = 0.15$, $p < 0.05$) and resilience ($r = 0.14$, $p < 0.05$). Acceptance and resignation were not found to be significantly associated with work engagement. Regression analysis showed acceptance ($\beta = -0.16$, $p < 0.05$), denial ($\beta = 0.19$, $p < 0.01$) and resilience ($\beta = 0.15$, $p < 0.05$) significantly predicted work engagement. The overall effect of glass ceiling beliefs on work engagement was significant ($R^2 = 0.12$, $p < 0.01$).

C. Glass Ceiling Beliefs and Physical & Psychological Well-Being

Physical and psychological well-being was measured using 6 items from the SF-12 Health Survey (Ware et al., 1996.1). Resignation was found to be negatively related to physical well-being ($r = -0.16$, $p < 0.05$) and psychological well-being ($r = -0.27$, $p < 0.01$). Denial

was positively associated with psychological well-being ($r = 0.18, p < 0.05$) but not with physical well-being. Acceptance and resilience were not significantly associated with physical and psychological well-being. Resignation significantly predicted physical well-being ($\beta = -0.21, p < 0.01$) and psychological well-being ($\beta = -0.25, p < 0.01$). The glass ceiling beliefs predicted 7% variance in physical well-being and 10% variance in psychological well-being.

D. Glass Ceiling Beliefs and Job Happiness

The 4-item subjective happiness scale (Lyubomirsky and Lepper, 1999) was used to measure job happiness. Denial ($r = 0.19, p < 0.01$) and resignation ($r = -0.20, p < 0.01$) were significantly related to job happiness. Acceptance and resilience were not found to be related to job happiness. Resilience ($\beta = 0.14, p < 0.05$) and resignation ($\beta = -0.17, p < 0.05$) significantly predicted job happiness. The glass ceiling beliefs predicted 10% variance in job happiness.

VII. WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY AND GLASS CEILING BELIEFS

Although workplace spirituality and glass ceiling beliefs are independent topics, a careful review of the definitions and dimensions suggest that they are connected. The theoretical framework of the connection is based on optimism theory (Scheier and Carver, 1992). Dispositional optimism is a stable expectancy that good things will happen in life (Scheier and Carver, 1992). Workplace spirituality, resilience and denial are positive psychological constructs while acceptance and resignation are negative psychological constructs. Acceptance and resignation are negative beliefs and denial and resilience are positive beliefs about the glass ceiling. Optimism is associated with acceptance and resilience while pessimism is positively associated with resilience (Scheier and Carver, 1992). Psychological capital (Luthans et al., 2004) is a positive psychological construct comprising hope, self-efficacy, resilience and optimism. Luthans, Youssef and Avolio (2007) defined psychological capital as “an individual’s positive psychological state of development that is characterized by: having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; persevering toward goals, and when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resilience) to attain success”. Emmons (1999) suggested that spirituality enhances self-esteem, hope and optimism. Workplace spirituality is positively related to psychological capital dimensions of hope, self-efficacy, resilience and optimism (Jena and Pradhan, 2015). This suggests that workplace spirituality is an antecedent of optimism which leads women to believe that glass ceilings do not exist or can be broken. On the other hand, a lack of individual spirituality could result in low self-esteem and pessimism leading one to believe that it is difficult or futile to break glass ceilings. Therefore, workplace spirituality is associated with acceptance, resignation, denial and resilience as depicted in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 Proposed model of workplace spirituality and glass ceiling beliefs



Individual spirituality dimensions of community, meaningful work and inner life were used as measures of workplace spirituality as it was important to study the inner self of the women managers that formed their beliefs.

Proposition 1: Workplace spirituality (community, meaningful work and inner life) will be negatively related to acceptance

Proposition 2: Workplace spirituality (community, meaningful work and inner life) will be negatively related to resignation

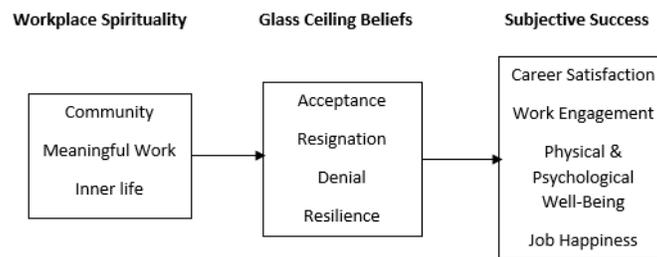
Proposition 3: Workplace spirituality (community, meaningful work and inner life) will be positively related to denial

Proposition 4: Workplace spirituality (community, meaningful work and inner life) will be positively related to resilience

VIII. WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY, GLASS CEILING BELIEFS AND SUBJECTIVE SUCCESS

Workplace spirituality is positively associated with subjective success indicators, career satisfaction (Milliman et al., 2003), work engagement (Saks, 2011), physical & psychological well-being and job happiness (Karakas, 2010). Glass ceiling beliefs namely, acceptance, resignation, denial and resilience are related to the subjective success indicators (Smith, 2012). As per the arguments laid in the previous section, workplace spirituality is an antecedent to glass ceiling beliefs. Glass ceiling beliefs are an antecedent to subjective success indicators. Therefore, it is possible that the effect of workplace spirituality on subjective success is mediated by glass ceiling beliefs. Figure 1.2 depicts the proposed model showing glass ceiling beliefs as mediator between workplace spirituality and subjective success.

Figure 1.2 Proposed model depicting mediating effect of glass ceiling beliefs on the relationship between workplace spirituality and subjective success



Proposition 5: Acceptance mediates the relationship between workplace spirituality and subjective success

Proposition 6: Resignation mediates the relationship between workplace spirituality and subjective success

Proposition 7: Denial mediates the relationship between workplace spirituality and subjective success

Proposition 8: Resilience mediates the relationship between workplace spirituality and subjective success

IX. IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH

The model of workplace spirituality and glass ceiling beliefs provides numerous directions for further research. Firstly, glass ceiling beliefs could be considered as an outcome of workplace spirituality among women. Secondly, future research could incorporate other dimensions of workplace spirituality such as transcendence, mindfulness, positive organizational purpose or alignment with organizational values. Thirdly, measures for glass ceiling could be developed that explore other beliefs apart from the ones described in the career pathways survey (Smith, Crittenden and Caputi, 2012). Also, researchers can use existing scales that measure perceptions, attitudes and opinions among women regarding the glass ceiling to test the model.

The mediation model of glass ceiling beliefs in the relationship between workplace spirituality and subjective success offers numerous avenues for researchers. Glass ceiling beliefs could be considered as an antecedent of subjective success indicators such as sense of identity (Law, Meijers and Wijers, 2002), organizational identification (Hall, 1976; Judge, Cable, Boudreau and Bretz, 1995), work-life balance (Finegold and Mohrman, 2001), self-worth, pride in achievement, fulfilling relationships, job commitment etc. (Nicholson and Waal-Andrews, 2005). Finally, experimental research could test the workplace spirituality interventions for improving glass ceiling beliefs and subjective success among working women.

X. IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The model of workplace spirituality, glass ceiling beliefs and subjective success proposed in the paper offer a new approach for improving glass ceiling beliefs and subjective success among working women. Organizations could learn from spiritual organizations that promote values such as trust, faith, respect, justice, conscientiousness etc. Programmes could be designed that help to enhance women's individual spirituality such as inner life, meaningful work, sense of community. Group meditation sessions could help to bring about an atmosphere of togetherness and brotherhood in the organization. Also, it could alleviate the tendency to compete and replace it with mutual respect and cooperation.

In summary, organizations looking to improve the self-esteem, glass ceiling beliefs and subjective success among women must understand the potential of workplace spirituality. Lastly, there may be numerous predictors of glass ceiling beliefs and subjective success that require exploration. However, enhancing workplace spirituality would lead to successful women in the workplace.

XI. CONCLUSION

Workplace spirituality and glass ceiling beliefs are both emerging topics. However, they have evolved independently of each other. In this paper, the connection between them through the optimism theory (Scheier and Carver, 1992) have been explored. Glass ceiling beliefs demonstrates the positive effect of workplace spirituality. Also, integration of workplace spirituality, glass ceiling beliefs and subjective success would result in a more wholistic approach to studying the three topics.

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