WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY AS PREDICTOR OF ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR AMONG PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The role of the public sector in the growth, development and advancement of any modern society cannot be overemphasized. Therefore it is of utmost importance for public sector administrators to focus on creating a conducive and versatile work environment with the intrinsic capacity of bringing out the innovative and productive tendencies in employees essential for public sector governance in the 21st century. This study examines workplace spirituality as predictor of organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) in the public sector of Lagos state. A cross-sectional sampling method was used for this study with a sample size of 150 spread across different ministries and agencies in the state. Copies of a questionnaire were distributed to respondents, comprising mainly of staff of the Lagos State public Service, with 135 found usable. Three hypotheses were stated and the result shows that meaningful work, sense of community and alignment with organizational values has significant positive relationship with OCB. The study discovered that alignment with organizational values made the highest contribution, followed by sense of community, with meaningful work making the least contribution. The study recommends that employee's ability to align with organizational values coupled with innate capacity to develop a sense of community should form a core part of the recruitment/selection process. This we believe will ultimately culminate in meaningful work and workplace spirituality as an integral part of the organizational culture.
Keywords: Organisational citizenship behaviour, workplace spirituality, Public sector

Introduction
Examining the concept of workplace spirituality as antecedent of organizational citizenship behavior among employees is comparatively an emerging area of research among scholars, and this has led to a quantum growth in the level of interest amongst researchers over the past decade (Ahmad & Omar, 2015; Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). In present day work-oriented organizations there seems to be a subtle attempt at denying the fact that workers are both rational and self-motivated human beings and that such motivations can extend way beyond the mundane and actualization of self-centered aspirations (Hicks, 2003). Consequently, there seems to be a realization amongst human resource practitioners   and academics that establishing and promoting workplace spirituality as a norm in organizational culture can both enhance performance and productivity (James, Miles, & Mullins, 2011). Empirical research has also proved that workplace spirituality has multiplier effects on employee ability to tackle complex issues, positive spontaneous responses, among others (Weitz, Vardi, & Setter, 2012), coupled with the capacity to regulate employee workplace behavior (James, Miles, & Mullins, 2011) and improving work outcomes, thereby culminating in higher citizenship behavior within organizations. In the work environment, personnel with enhanced levels of work spirituality experience work satisfaction and fulfilment while the contrary is the experience of workers with lower levels with the associated tendency of displaying negative work attitudes (Petchsawanga & Duchon, 2009).

This construct according to Ashmos and Duchon (2000) is viewed as employees having inner drive to achieve certain objectives around them. Having a good relationship with colleagues is imperative for spirituality in the work place (Gupta, *et al.* 2013). The literature has identified three dimensions for work place spirituality; sense of community, meaningful work, and alignment with organizational values which relates to the individual level, group level and organizational level respectively (Milliman, *et al.* 2003). Due to incessant misperception between religion and spirituality, there is an attendant misunderstanding of the differences between the two constructs. Spirituality focuses on the notion that individuals have an inner life that needs nourishment through the channel of meaningful and purposeful work and a sense and feeling of community and connectedness with colleagues in the workplace (Milliman *et al.*, 2003). This study aims to establish a link between organizational citizenship behaviour and workplace spirituality in the public sector.

Organ (1988), while elaborating on the OCB construct defined it as a behaviour that is entirely left to the employees' discretion, and without any expectation of reward yet promoting and advancing the smooth running of the systems and structures of the organization both in the short and long run. Dyne (1995), defined it as discretionary behaviour which goes beyond existing role expectations.

In spite of the growth in the volume of research and studies focusing on organizational theory in the recent past, empirical research that focuses on spirituality within public sector organization seems to be relatively terse (Houston & Cartwright, 2007), specifically within the Nigerian setting. The literature is of

the view of the need to further investigate this area of research especially among public sector workers (Houston & Cartwright, 2007). Furthermore, Wal, *et al.,* (2008), in their research incorporating public sector organizations there is still the need for extensive empirical investigation taking into cognizance the fact that employees have diverse experiences and motivations, role differences, variance in organizational structure, culture and context that might impact on the development of the dimensions of workplace spirituality (Cardador & Rupp, 2011, p. 158). This work is an effort targeted at examining employee motivations within the public sector and specifically to establish an empirical basis, highlighting the benefits if any of workplace spirituality in this crucial sector and its tendency to lead to OCB.

Literature Review
Theoretical framework
Social Exchange theory of Work Place Spirituality

This theory was developed by Blau in 1964, where the author identifies social exchange as a relationship that is centred on a subjective and interpretive interaction with others aimed towards an exchange of symbolic and non-symbolic rewards. He posited that individuals continue to be active participants in social situations as long as there is a perception of corresponding and proportionate benefits to be derived. Aselage and Eisenberger (2003) categorized these exchange of resources as either impersonal or socio-emotional in nature. The central principle of the theory is that individuals or groups involved in this exchange offer assistance, raising a reciprocal response from the other party in providing a corresponding level support and benefit (Yoon & Lawler, 2005). This is hinged on the theory that social exchanges reinforces feelings of mutual responsibility, appreciation, and trust amongst the actors in the exchange process, laying a foundation of social/group cohesion and harmony, coupled with an informal micro social order in the absence of obligatory contracts (Yoon & Sur, 2003)

This study is of the opinion that an effort by organizational leaders creates a supportive organizational atmosphere has the likelihood of arousing and encouraging traits of fair-mindedness in their employees. Based on this perception of fair treatment which is in agreement with social exchange theory, will consequently help improve employee OCB through work spirituality

Organizational Theory of Workplace Spirituality

According to DiMaggio (1998) how organizations impact their operational settings and how they contribute to the dynamics of social structure in their work environment, has been a centre of attention. Subsequently, the transformational process of contemporary organizations has become a germane issue for scholars.

According to Overholt, Connally, Harrington and Lopez, (2000), the functioning of organizations is core to open systems view of organizations with subsystems aligning and flourishing with one another as they support their strategic objectives: so organizational and strategic alignment or realignment becomes the

key competence of leadership impacting positively on their immediate environment

Conceptual Framework

Definitions and Explanations of Spirituality at Work

Mitroff and Denton (1999) expounded the theory of workplace spirituality as a sense of connection with the totality of one's self, others and the feeling of aligning oneself with others and the entirety of humanity. Organizations are increasingly embarking on spiritual journeys, this spiritual journey does not indicate initiating religious beliefs and practices within the work setting (Galen & West 1995).

According to Galen and West (1995), companies like Ford and Boeing, have all initiated an incorporation of a spirituality process into their workplace. Robbins (2013) added his own contribution by stating that work spirituality as connected to work performance is not about planned religious observance of dogma, neither is it about Deity or divinity. Rather, work spirituality identifies that employees are spiritual beings with a spiritual core sustained by meaningful work within a communal context. Apprehension about an employee's inner life was not worthy of consideration in the perfectly rational model, but just as it has been revealed that research of human emotions advances the frontiers of organizational behaviour, an understanding of spirituality can enhance an understanding of employee behaviour within a global economy (Robbins, 2013).

Furthermore, workplace spirituality comprises of three dimensions according to Milliman, *et al* (2003) focusing on the individual level, group level and organizational level, comprising of "meaningful work, sense of community and an alignment with organizational values".

Meaningful work

Ashmos and Duchon (2000) posits that a critical feature of workplace spirituality includes the quest for a more extensive sense of how meaningful the work is and the resultant effect of adding value to impact lives, while at the same time aligning with the values of the organization. Kahn (1990) opine that when people feel they have the ability to help and become valuable to their environment, they become meaningfulness. The spirituality standpoint posits that an individual seeks meaning and purpose in work, besides extrinsic considerations such as making money (Hudson, 2014). Notwithstanding the reality of the importance of financial considerations, it is not the most important (Mitroff, 2003). The purpose of work goes beyond being stimulating and inspiring, but work is a calling, an avenue to satisfying humanity's hunger for significance by creating a deeper meaning to life in general (Duchon & Ashmos, 2005).

Sense of community

The discovery and establishment of this dimension is vital to today's employees. The failure of the group to establish a sense of unity and connectedness (Conger, 1994), the decline of conventional support systems within family and religious structures (Leigh, 1997) has placed a demand on the workplace to replace these
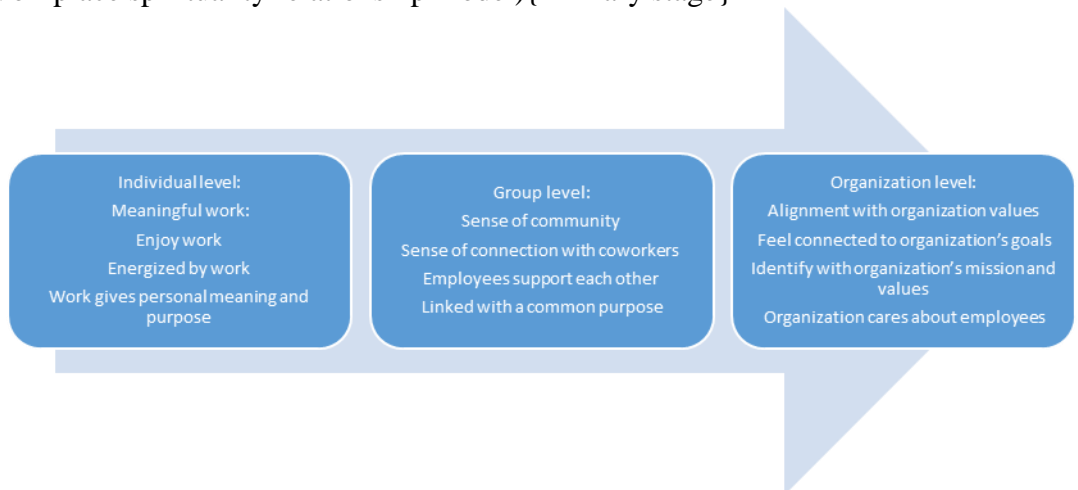
afore-mentioned social structures as principal bases of community for most staffers. Employees now thirst for newer channels of connectivity and unity within a mutually beneficial vision that goes beyond extrinsic considerations (Miller, 1998).

Researchers have emphasized that organizations should not be considered as soulless organizations beneficial only for churning out goods and services but also an aggregation of human beings that nurture and promote nourishing and significant life experiences that cuts across all strata, with substantial social values and results for the public (Frost, Dutton, Mailis, Liliusi, Kanov & Worline, 2006).

*Alignment with organization values*
This dimension opines that employee's value, personal life, purpose and mission of the organisation must align (Milliman *et al.,* 2003). This alignment brings together a proper functioning of the organisation and the employees; therefore transforms into an organization whose values transcend the conventional modelling of corporate citizenship worthy of emulation, but also becomes a values based, ethical organizational model, making above normal contribution to society (Milliman *et al.,* 2003).

Fig.1 Individual ⟹ Group ⟹ Organization (Workplace spirituality relationship model){Primary stage}

Individual level:
Meaningful work:
Enjoy work
Energized by work
Work gives personal meaning and purpose

Group level:
Sense of community
Sense of connection with coworkers
Employees support each other
Linked with a common purpose

Organization level:
Alignment with organization values
Feel connected to organization's goals
Identify with organization's mission and values
Organization cares about employees

Source: Researcher, 2018

Fig.2 Individual ⟹ Group ⟹ Organization, Workplace spirituality relationship model {Secondary stage}
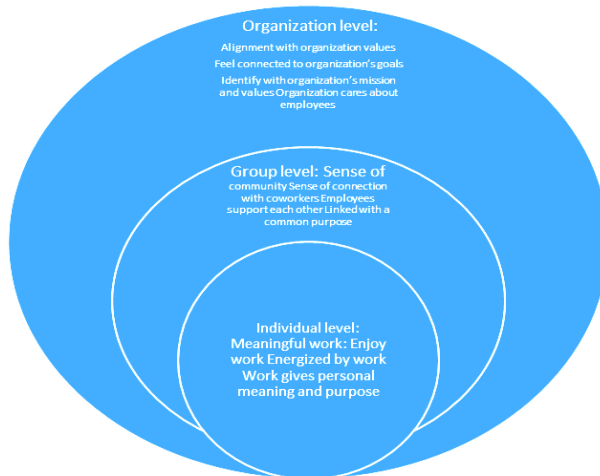
Source: Researcher, 2018

Organizational Citizenship Behaviour
The definition of Organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) has evolved with multiple revisions since the concept first made its entrance into academic research in the late 1980s. OCB refers to behaviours and actions that the employee initiates of his own volition devoid of any intrinsic or extrinsic motivations. Notwithstanding the fact that OCB might indirectly facilitate future rewards for the employee, it must simultaneously promote the smooth running of the systems and structures of the organization with minimal friction and conflict (Organ, 1988, p. 4).

Workplace spirituality and OCB
Sense of community could be considered a vital element that encourages employees to imbibe OCB. Based on this description, workers with a higher than average sense of community will more likely than not demonstrate pro-social behavior, which is the readiness to help, protect, or promote others wellbeing (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990). Therefore, this pro-social behavior that employees have in their workplace can motivate them beyond the normal call of duty, towards coworker and the organization (Li *et al.,* 2010). Sense of community exists in a workplace, the possibility of forming consensus and a corporate sense of safety, whether it be by individuals or groups becomes a normal feature (Manion & Bartholomew, 2004). In line with this position, literature claims these characteristics assists the atmosphere of mutual trust that inspires employees to help other employees and the organization. Therefore:

Hypothesis 1 – a sense of community will lead to OCB in the public sector of Lagos State.

Meaningful work is the second dimension that motivates employees towards OCB. According to Moorman and Harland (2002), since OCB is compelled by a positive attitude employees develop about their jobs, employees who perceive meaningfulness in their will probably be more willing to give their best to the organisation. In particular, the meaning that people perceive about their job makes them feel connected to their work environment. According to Van Dyne and Pierce (2004) when employees perceive an innate connection with their work, there is a tendency to be involved in extra-role behavior. This perception is explained by the theory of psychological ownership, which submits that everyone has a strong inclination to connect with any endeavor once there is a strong sense of emotional attachment (Pierce *et al*, 2003). Accordingly, individuals who identify their work as meaningful are more disposed and keen to offer themselves to assist their colleagues in the workplace. Therefore:

Hypothesis 2 - meaningful work will lead to OCB in the public sector of Lagos State.

Finally, the alignment with organizational values could also be viewed as a predictor of OCB. Alignment with organizational values can be defined as the feeling employees have about themselves, how thy go about their work, what they contribute to the organisation and how such contributions are in sync with the organization's values" (Vaill, 1998, p.218). When employees are given the opportunity to express themselves, it could attract favorable consequences to the workgroup and the organization (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). From a theoretical standpoint, the link between alignment with organizational values and OCB can be sustained employing the self-concept theory (Shamir, 1991), which propounds that work tends to become a motivation for the employee when there is an alignment between the employee's inner life and the work itself. Thus, workers who perceive a strong connection between themselves and the workplace are certainly likely to exhibit OCB. Therefore:

Hypothesis 3 – alignment with organizational values will lead to OCB in the public sector.

Research Method
A cross-sectional sampling method was adopted for this study. A total of 150 questionnaires was distributed to public sector employees working with Lagos state spread across the Lagos State Internal Revenue Service, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Establishments, Training and Pension and the Office of the Surveyor-General. Forty questionnaires each was distributed to the Lagos State Internal Revenue Service, Lagos State Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Establishments, Training and Pension, while the Office of the Surveyor General was apportioned thirty questionnaires. This was done in order to get a holistic view of the public sector employees if Lagos State.

OCB was measured with Williams & Anderson (1991) 16 items scale with a five Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Ashmos and Duchon (2000) scale was employed to measure dimensions of work spirituality on a five point Likert scale.

RESULTS
Table 1 – Frequency

Variable	Frequency	Percentage %
Gender		
Male	66	48.9
Female	69	51.1
Total	**135**	**100**
Marital Status		
Married	94	69.6
Single	37	27.4
Divorced	4	3.0
Widow(er)	**-**	-
Total	**135**	**100**
Age		
21-30	25	18.5
31-40	86	63.7
41-50	20	14.8
51 & above	4	3.0
Total	**135**	**100**
Qualification		
OND/NCE	6	4.4
BSc/HND	73	54.1
MBA/MSc	51	37.8
Others	5	3.7
Total	**135**	**100**
Length of service		
1-5 years		
6-10 years	37	27.4
11-15 years	83	61.5
15 years & above	9	6.7
Total	6	4.4
	135	**100**
Staff Level		
Junior staff	36	26.7
Senior staff	81	60.0
Management staff	18	13.3
Total		
	135	**100**

An analysis of the questionnaires received showed that 66 of the respondents were male, while 69 were female representing 48.9 and 51.1 respectively. Of the 135

respondents, 94 are married, 37 are single while 4 are divorced. The age distribution ranged from 21-30 representing 18.5%, 31-40 representing 63.7%, 41-50 representing 14.8% and 51 and above representing 3%. The academic qualifications were OND/NCE – 6, BSc/HND – 73, MBA/MSc – 51 and other qualifications – 5. Thirty seven of the respondents had been in the public sector for 1-5 years, eighty three between 6-10 years, nine between 11-15 years and six had served for 15 years and above. The junior staff represented 26.7%, senior staff 60% and management staff 13.3%.

Table 2. Correlation Result of OCB, MW, SOC and AOV

Variables	Mean	SD	OCB	MW	SOC	AOV
OCB	3.53	.60	1			
MW	3.85	.63	.54**	1		
SOC	3.86	.67	.64**	.69**	1	
AOV	3.37	.80	.68**	.64**	.58**	1

Key: OCB: Organizational Citizenship behavior; MW: Meaningful work; SOC: Sense of community; AOV: Alignment of values

Employing Pearson correlation, the result shows that OCB and meaningful work dimension were significantly related (r = 54; p < .05). Also, sense of community and OCB were significantly related (r = 64; p < .05). Alignment of values also significantly correlated with OCB (r=.68; p < .05).
In order to establish the extent to which dimension of work spirituality influence OCB, both individually and jointly, a regression analysis was employed.

Table 3: Regression Result of MW, SOC and AOV on OCB

Variable	B	Beta	t	Sig	R	R^2	F	P
(Constant)	1.094		4.79	.000				
MW	-.02	-.02	-.27	.79	.74	.55	54.01	<.05
SOC	.34	.38	4.63	.00				
AOV	.37	.47	6.01	.00				

Dependent variable: OCB
Key: OCB: Organizational Citizenship Behavior; MW: Meaningful work; SOC: Sense of community; AOV: Alignment of values

The result of the regression analysis shows that the R is .74, the R^2 value is .55 showing that 55% of the variation in OCB is as a result of the independent variables. The overall mode is significant (F = 54.01; p < .05). Individually all the dimensions independently contributed to the model. Alignment with organizational values made the highest contribution, followed by sense of

community, while meaningful work making the least contribution. However, only alignment with organizational values and sense of community made the highest positive and significant contribution to the model.

Discussion
The present study examined the relationship between dimensions of workplace spirituality and OCB in the public sector as previous studies has basically focused on the private sector with the assumption that the conclusions and recommendations can be adopted by the public sector. Though organizational models specifically tailor made for the private sector can be adapted for public sector usage, major modifications are essential due to the cultural differences between employees of these sectors and work environment. This study further establishes the fact that whether in the public or private sector, an alignment with organizational values and a sense of community is critical in building a spiritual workplace culminating in extra-role behaviors.

This type of organizational climate can consequently boost the disposition and enthusiasm of other employees which makes them more involved in their job (Zhang & Jia, 2010). With workplace spirituality is evident that honesty, reliability, justice, empathy, responsibility and trust is evident in such organization (Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2004). In this research, alignment with organizational values made the highest contribution to the study followed by a sense of community. It can thus be inferred that a perception of meaningful work might be tied to personal and organizational values alignment coupled with a sense of community and acceptance. According to Kolodinsky et al (2008) this kind of work atmosphere tends to lower employees' frustration at work. In addition, if employees feel they are well taken care of they are likely to respond positively towards the organization. This suggested in research as a factor that creates a perception of meaningful work with the resultant stress reduction and promotion of psychological well-being of employees (Lawrence & Callan, 2011).

Conclusions and recommendations
The necessity of extra-role conducts culminating in organizational citizenship behaviors is of utmost importance across all strata of public sector management and governance. This study is of the position that workplace spirituality has a pivotal role to play as a predictor of such behaviors. However, this study posits that to make the acculturation process seamless, public sector management need to adhere to the following recommendations:

1. Workplace spirituality should become an integral part of the HR policy in the public sector.
2. As work in the public sector is perceived as service driven, it is important to note that only individuals with a service orientation as part of their innate values might flow in a public sector setting. Therefore employee recruitment and selection should be highlighted in order to employ the

right staff with the necessary traits and tendencies that might easily align
with the values of the service.

3. Public sector management should focus on policies and procedure that
   build an atmosphere of workplace spirituality both for the profiting of
   coworkers and the sector as a whole.

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