

## **Linking Workplace Spirituality and Employee Commitment in Malaysian Public Service Organizations**

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### **ABSTRACT**

For more than two decades, antecedents of employee commitment have been studied. However, few scholars have promoted spirituality as an antecedent of commitment, especially among public service employees, and the findings on the relative contribution of different spirituality dimensions to commitment were inconclusive. This study examined the experience of spirituality at work and its linkage with affective commitment among employees from four Malaysian public rural development organisations. Workplace spirituality was examined in terms of meaningfulness of work, sense of community and alignment of employee and organisational values. Questionnaire-based survey data from 274 employees were analysed. The findings indicated that the employees experienced a great sense of meaningfulness of work, sense of community and alignment with organisational values. The meaningfulness of work and alignment of values dimensions of spirituality significantly affected employee affective commitment to the organisations. However, the sense of community did not significantly affect commitment. Workplace spirituality dimensions explained 26.7% of the variance in affective commitment. Implications of the findings and suggestions for future research are discussed.

*Keywords:* Affective commitment, Malaysia, public service, workplace spirituality

### **ARTICLE INFO**

*Article history:*

Received: 30 June 2017

Accepted: 11 May 2018

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Workplace spirituality refers to “the recognition that employees have an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in a community” as defined by Ashmos and Duchon (2000). They asserted that to

achieve an understanding of employees holistically, there is a need to nurture employees' spiritual development, besides employees' intelligence quotient (IQ) and emotional quotient (EQ) development. The three dimensions of workplace spirituality at three levels, meaningful work (individual), sense of community (group) and alignment with organisational values (organisation), were empirically identified and measured by Milliman, Czaplewski and Ferguson (2003).

The concept of workplace spirituality has been largely excluded in empirical studies due to the sustained confusion as to how workplace spirituality differs from religion. Individuals who experience spirituality at work have souls that are nourished, and they experience a sense of meaning in the tasks they perform and feel connected to members of their organisation (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Milliman et al., 2003). The feeling of connectedness with colleagues at work has also been emphasised by Gupta, Kumar and Singh (2013). Meaningful work is something that an employee seeks besides a paycheck, and the employee attempts to develop as a whole person who is connected to his or her true self and to the workplace community as well as to the transcendent (Hudson, 2014).

However, there are scholars who argue against the belief that spirituality at work is distinctly different from religion. De Jongh (2011) argued that spirituality and religion are interconnected and overlapping since religious traditions primarily serve as the roots of spirituality. King, Reilly and Hebl (2008) believed that omitting religion from

studies on workplace spirituality could be problematic and futile as contemporary workplaces are ultimately an extension of employees' lived life where they bring a diversity of spirituality practices and expressions, including religious-based spirituality, to work. Despite the absence of a widely accepted definition (Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2006), there seems to be a consensus on the multifaceted nature of the spirituality construct, which involves the search for something meaningful that transcends our lives as shown by the notable works of Ashmos and Duchon (2000), and Milliman et al. (2003).

Besides defining and measuring workplace spirituality, interest in empirical studies on workplace spirituality has grown among contemporary researchers. Over the years, there has seemed to be a fundamental shift in organisational studies from a mechanistic paradigm to a spiritual paradigm where contemporary organisations eventually turn their attention to acknowledging and nourishing values such as ethical and moral leadership style, since by embracing workplace spirituality, organisations are able to realise continuous profitability, social responsibility and business sustainability (Wahid & Mustamil, 2017).

The previous notion that spirituality is unimportant to organisational effectiveness and efficiency, and that spirituality and management in organisations are incompatible has been opposed, and gradually they are recognised to be linked together so as to improve work outcomes

(James, Miles, & Mullins, 2011). This might partly be due to the belief that spirituality is more difficult to define and measure.

Researchers and practitioners realise that promoting spirituality at work may help improve organisational outcomes such as employee performance (James et al., 2011), work engagement and organisational citizenship behaviour (Ahmad & Omar, 2015; Petchsawang & McLean, 2017), productivity and contribution to the organisation, decision-making and problem-solving abilities, intuitive and creativity capacities and efficient use of resources, both human and material (Weitz, Vardi, & Setter, 2012). Additionally, organisations that promote spirituality grow faster, increase their efficiencies and have higher return rates than organisations that do not (Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2004). If appropriately integrated in management, spirituality can reduce employee turnover (Ghadi, 2017). Conversely, the lack of support for spirituality may result in possible negative effects, including job dissatisfaction and workplace deviant behaviour (Ahmad & Omar, 2014). Apart from these possible negative effects, it must be acknowledged that in some organisations, when employees only bring their physical bodies to work, not their inner self or soul, and the lack of workplace opportunities and support to experience meaningful work, sense of community and personal fulfilment with a sense of joy, a serious threat is posed to employees' emotional attachment or commitment to their organisation (Rego & Cunha, 2008).

However, empirical research on workplace spirituality as an antecedent of organisational commitment is still scarce. To date, such research has been examined mostly in the North American and European contexts (Bell-Ellis, Jones, Longstreth, & Neal, 2015; Milliman et al., 2003; Rego & Cunha, 2008), with a few exceptions in Asian countries such as that done by Campbell and Yen (2014), and Indartono and Wulandari (2014). Further, the need to investigate the spirituality-commitment relationship in different cultures has been emphasised by Vandenberghe (2011), while it has also been pointed out that the strength of the relationship might vary in different cultures (Fischer & Mansell, 2009). A review of literature in the following section of this paper indicated that findings on the relative contribution of different spirituality dimensions to employee commitment were inconclusive. Given the limited literature and the inconclusive findings, this study examined the experience of spirituality at work and its linkage with affective commitment among Malaysian public service employees. Workplace spirituality was examined in terms of meaningfulness of work, sense of community and alignment of employee and organisational values.

This study added literature on workplace spirituality where limited studies on the linkage between spirituality and organisational commitment exist. We present theoretical and empirical evidence on how employee experience of spirituality at work helps to explain their organisational commitment. While there have been

investigations on this linkage among employees in higher education institutions (Bell-Ellis et al., 2015; Campbell & Yen, 2014) and the banking sector (Indartono & Wulandari, 2014), as well as among working students in higher education institutions (Rego & Cunha, 2008), to the best of our knowledge, this is the first spirituality-commitment study conducted among employees in the government's rural development organisations.

Additionally, we used Houston and Cartwright's (2007) findings to support our study. They found that employees in government public service occupations were more spiritual in terms of the experience of interconnectedness, meaningfulness of life, compassion for others and transcendence than other employees. This study intended to address two gaps in research on workplace spirituality and public service organisations; the first was the spirituality-commitment linkage and the second was the differences in employees' spiritual experience in different organisational contexts. If organisations that nurture workplace spirituality such as public service organisations are shown to boost levels of employee commitment, this may honour the claim that spiritual expression at work has its important role in fostering this positive outcome and the disregard of such expression has to be addressed.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Workplace Spirituality

Workplace spirituality has been defined by many scholars. It has been defined as a framework consisting of organisational

values that enhances the experience of transcendence among employees through the work process, promoting employees' sense of connectedness to others in the organisation such that they experience joy and a sense of completeness (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). According to Csiernik and Adams (2002), workplace spirituality involves valuing, sharing, caring, acknowledging and respecting employees as well as connecting employees' talents and energies in meaningful or fulfilling goal-directed behaviour. It refers to the experience of relatedness and trust among employees, prompted by individual goodwill, ensuing a motivational organisational culture characterised by solidarity and reciprocity and leading to improved organisational performance (Marques, Dhiman, & King, 2005). Despite the many definitions of workplace spirituality, scholars have not come to a consensus on a unified definition. However, we found in our literature review that Duchon and Plowman (2005) concluded that meaningful work, sense of purpose and connectedness are the main components of most definitions.

One of the first scales for measuring workplace spirituality was developed and tested by Ashmos and Duchon (2000). Building on Ashmos and Duchon's (2000) work, Milliman et al. (2003) defined a spiritual workplace as a workplace where an individual is allowed to express his or her inner self through meaningful work within a community context. Milliman et al. (2003) added the third dimension of workplace spirituality, namely alignment

with organisational values in place of inner life. Rego and Cunha (2008) used these three dimensions, meaningfulness of work, sense of community and value alignment, based on three reasons. Firstly, these dimensions were considered important in past studies. Secondly, it is expected that these dimensions were associated with work attitudes and behaviour. Thirdly, the dimensions allow for a parsimonious investigation of workplace spirituality. In this study, we focused on these three dimensions.

### **Spirituality in Public Service**

Literature on spirituality in public service focusses on issues related to the prevalence of spirituality, spiritual perspectives and practices as well as legal issues on spirituality among public service employees. Houston and Cartwright (2007) examined whether workers in government public service organisations are more spiritual than those in other types of occupation. They found government public services were more spiritual in terms of attitude compared with employees from other types of organisation. Belief in the spiritual dimensions of compassion for others and transcendence were more prominent among public service employees, as was with experience of interconnectedness and meaningfulness of life.

The literature has shown the integration of spirituality in several work settings such as healthcare and education and there seems to be some commonalities. The commonalities include the need for

access to spiritual resources and spirituality assessment. Wilfred (2006) identified the factors predicting spiritual care perspectives and practices among nurses and healthcare workers, and found that their individual and personal spirituality influenced their spiritual care practices and perspectives. According to Lowery (2005), with the growing interest in spirituality in American higher education, it is absolutely important that administrators and faculty in public colleges and universities are familiar with legal issues and their implications when trying to address spirituality more effectively. Considering the lack of focus on outcomes of workplace spirituality in literature on the public service, this study focussed on the linkage between workplace spirituality and organisational outcome, specifically affective commitment among employees in the government public service.

### **Model of Workplace Spirituality and Commitment**

Fry, Latham, Clinebell and Krahnke (2017) proposed a model that links workplace spirituality to employee commitment. According to this model, workplace spirituality produces a sense of calling and membership or sense of community, which are linked to affective commitment. The sense of calling instilled through leaders who are spiritual provides a sense of meaningfulness of work that fosters employee affective commitment to the organisation. Fry et al. (2017) did a study on recipients of the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program award and found that

spiritual leadership was linked positively and significantly to organisational commitment. Other studies have shown that meaningful work correlates positively with affective commitment (Humphrey, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007; Korek, Felfe, & Zaepfnick-Rothe, 2010). Although Fry et al.'s (2017) model has not explicitly included alignment of values between employees and the organisation as an antecedent of commitment, as demonstrated by Milliman et al. (2003), others argue that when employees experience a sense of meaning at work, there exists compatibility between employees' and organisational values in the work environment (Campbell & Yen, 2014; Rego & Cunha, 2008; Vandenberghe, 2011). Such compatibility between the employee and the environment leads to organisational identification, a basis for affective commitment.

With regard to membership or sense of community in this model, it is proposed that there is an association between membership and commitment (Vandenberghe, 2011). As widely recognised, an employee's sense of belonging to an organisation is positively linked with affective commitment (Humphrey et al., 2007; Korek et al., 2010). Fulfilling group members' need for belonging generates identification among group members (Ricketta, 2008). Psychological ownership with four dimensions comprising self-efficacy, self-identity, sense of belonging and accountability is positively associated with affective commitment (Avey, Avolio, Crossley, & Luthans, 2009). Theoretically, affective commitment is grounded on group

membership, and people whose affective commitment is high tend to be motivated by the goals set by the group (Johnson & Yang, 2010).

### **Workplace Spirituality and Affective Commitment**

According to Meyer and Allen (1991), organisational commitment includes three components: affective commitment, which represents an involvement in and identification with the organisation; normative commitment, which reflects loyalty resulting from an employee's obligation towards the organisation; and continuance commitment, which represents attachment to the organisation derived from a perceived cost attached to leaving the organisation. An employee is affectively committed to the organisation when he or she becomes involved in the organisation, views the involvement as valuable, and/or derives identity from such involvement. Among the three forms of commitment, research has shown affective commitment to be the strongest and most reliable predictor of positive organisational outcomes such as performance (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002).

Milliman et al. (2003), the first to empirically study outcomes of workplace spirituality, examined the association between the three dimensions of spirituality (meaningful work, sense of community and alignment of values) and five work attitudes, including affective organisational commitment among part-time MBA students in business school in the United

States. Almost all of these students worked full-time. Accordingly, meaningful work, sense of community and value alignment explained affective commitment, besides other work attitudes. The three dimensions of spirituality affected commitment differently. The results of their study showed that alignment of values has a stronger effect on commitment than other dimensions of workplace spirituality.

A study by Rego and Cunha (2008) examined the impact of five spirituality dimensions (sense of community, value alignment, sense of contribution, sense of joy at work, opportunities for inner self) on the three forms (affective, normative and continuance) of organisational commitment among Portuguese employees. The results of their study showed that the spirituality dimensions affect each of the commitment dimensions differently. The five dimensions of spirituality explain affective commitment the most compared with normative and continuance commitment, where the explained variances for the two latter forms of commitment are very much lower. Affective commitment is affected by sense of joy, alignment of values and sense of community. Sense of enjoyment, which is part of the meaningful work dimension based on Milliman et al.'s categorisation of spirituality dimensions, contributes the most to the variance in affective commitment (2003).

The relationships between spirituality dimensions and commitment among Malaysian academics have been studied by Campbell and Yen (2014). The three

dimensions of workplace spirituality (value alignment, opportunities for inner life and work enjoyment and contribution to society) have a positive impact on affective commitment. Value alignment, sense of enjoyment and contribution to society explain affective commitment more than opportunity for inner life. A similar study among Indonesian employees in the banking sector by Indartono and Wulandari (2014) revealed that overall workplace spirituality significantly contributed to organisational commitment, although this study did not examine the contribution of each spirituality dimension to each component of commitment.

A study conducted in the United States investigated the impact of four spirituality dimensions on organisational commitment, namely sense of community, engaging work, spiritual connection and mystical experience, among academics from two universities (Bell-Ellis et al., 2015). After removing the mystical experience dimension from the regression analysis due to multicollinearity, the sense of community and engaging work dimensions contributed more than the spiritual connection dimension to the variance in commitment.

Based on the literature review, with the exception of Bell-Ellis et al. (2015), the rest of the researchers studied workplace spirituality in terms of at least two, if not all, of the three dimensions proposed by Milliman et al. (2003). Additionally, there seems to be inconclusive findings on the relative contribution of different spirituality dimensions to affective commitment.

Hence, there is a need to further examine the spirituality-commitment linkage and in this study, drawing from Vandenberghe's model (2011) and other empirical literature, we propose the following hypothesis: There is a significant positive relationship between the dimensions of workplace spirituality and affective commitment.

## METHODS

### Sample and Procedure

We determined the sample size using Cohen's (1988) formula. For a study involving multiple regression analysis with three independent variables, a power value of 0.8 and an  $\alpha$ -value of 0.05, the required minimum sample size is 200. The participants in this study comprised employees involved in poverty alleviation programmes from four public rural development organisations in Malaysia. Only employees with a minimum of a three-year work experience were studied since we considered this span of time as being sufficient for an employee to experience some form of workplace spirituality. Proportionate sampling was used, where from a population of 1133 employees, a sample of 283 employees were selected (25%) from each of the four organisations. With permission from the general manager of each organisation, self-administered questionnaires were distributed and we obtained 274 usable questionnaires.

### Measurement

**Workplace spirituality.** Twenty-one items were adopted from the Spirituality at Work scale by Milliman et al. (2003). The scale consisted of three dimensions: meaningful work (six items), value alignment (eight items) and employee sense of community (seven items). A sample of the items for measuring the dimensions of meaningful work is, "My work is connected to what I think is important in life," while for sense of community, a sample is, "I believe employees genuinely care about each other" and for alignment of values, "I feel positive about the values of the organisation." Using a seven-point rating scale from 1 – strongly disagree to 7 – strongly agree, employees were requested to indicate their level of agreement with the statements.

**Affective commitment.** Affective commitment was measured using Allen and Meyer's (1997) six-item scale. Among the three dimensions of organisational commitment, we studied affective commitment since research has shown that it is the strongest and most reliable predictor of positive work outcomes (Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003). For example, Fazio Gong, Sims and Yurova (2017), and Allen, Evans and White (2011) as well as Morin et al. (2011) have shown significant relationships between affective commitment and employee turnover and citizenship behaviour, respectively. The

scale has response options from 1 – strongly disagree to 7 – strongly agree. This scale measures the extent to which an individual is emotionally attached to the organisation. A sample item is, “I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation.”

**Analysis of data.** The Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficients of the scales used to measure the variables were calculated. The coefficients for the three dimensions of workplace spirituality and affective commitment were acceptable (more than 0.7) (Table 1). To describe the study sample and variables, frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation were computed. We conducted a zero-order correlation analysis to examine the relationships among the variables and multiple regression analysis to

determine the contribution of the predictor variables to affective commitment.

Table 1  
*Reliability of variables*

Variable	Number of items	Cronbach’s alpha
Meaningful work	6	0.94
Sense of community	7	0.92
Alignment of values	8	0.94
Affective commitment	6	0.75

## RESULTS

The employees’ demographic characteristics are shown in Table 2. Out of 274 employees in this study, 38.7% were males and 61.3% were females. In terms of age, a substantial proportion (60.2%) were younger employees, aged below 40 years, and the mean age was 38.66 (SD=10.87). Approximately half (50.3%) had higher education qualifications.

Table 2  
*Demographic characteristics of respondents (n=274)*

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD
Gender				
Male	106	38.7		
Female	168	61.3		
Age			38.66	10.87
20-30	81	29.6		
31-40	84	30.6		
41-50	44	16.1		
≥51	65	23.7		
Education				
Higher School Certificate	84	30.7		
High School Certificate/Vocational School Certificate	52	19.0		
Diploma	66	24.1		
Bachelor’s	70	25.5		
Master’s	2	0.7		

Table 3 presents the mean, standard deviation and inter-correlation among the variables. Overall, the employees experiences high levels of spirituality at their workplace. The highest mean score was for meaningful work. The mean scores for sense of community and value alignment were slightly lower and about the same. All the three dimensions of spirituality correlated significantly with affective commitment, with the lowest correlation coefficient at 0.391 ( $p < 0.01$ ). The correlation coefficients for the spirituality dimensions were acceptable ( $< 0.9$ ) (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). Additionally, the collinearity statistics indicated that the

tolerance values of all the predictor variables were less than 1, and the variance inflated factor was less than 10. Hence, there was no evidence of collinearity effects.

The regression analysis results are presented in Table 4 and show how the three spirituality dimensions explain affective organisational commitment. Meaningful work and alignment of values contributed significantly to affective commitment. However, sense of community did not significantly contribute to commitment. Overall, the three spirituality dimensions contributed 26.7% of the variance for affective commitment.

Table 3  
Mean, standard deviation and correlation

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4
Meaningful work	6.00	0.74	-			
Sense of community	5.74	0.77	0.82**	-		
Alignment of values	5.70	0.80	0.79**	0.84**	-	
Affective commitment	5.70	0.980	0.50**	0.39**	0.49**	-

Note: \*\*  $p < 0.01$

Table 4  
Regression analysis for variables predicting affective commitment

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	<i>t</i>
Constant	1.75	0.44		4.00***
Meaningful work	0.62	0.13	0.47	4.68***
Sense of community	-0.28	0.15	-0.22	-1.93
Alignment of values	0.33	0.13	0.27	2.54**

Note: \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$   
 $R^2 = 0.27$ ; Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.26$ ;  $F_{3,481} = 30.44$ ,  $p < 0.001$

## DISCUSSION

Based on the means of the three dimensions of spirituality, the results indicated that the employees experienced high levels of meaningful work, sense of community and value alignment. For meaningful work and sense of community, the results were in line with those obtained by Houston and Cartwright (2007), whose study revealed that employees in public service organisations regarded themselves as spiritual. Moreover, the experience of interconnectedness, or sense of community, was greater for employees in the public service than for non-public service employees. According to Houston and Cartwright (2007), public service implicitly attracts individuals with the inclination of fulfilling the needs of others, fulfilling their own needs through service to others and developing themselves through meaningful work.

The correlation analysis revealed that meaningful work was significantly associated with affective commitment. A synthesis of common features of meaningful work based on a review of empirical and theoretical work by Ghadi, Fernando and Caputi (2015) revealed that meaningful work resulted when an employee understood perfectly task expectations and how the employee's role contributed to the goals of the organisation. The literature review shows that meaningful work motivates an employee through fulfilment of purpose in life, increasing employees' emotional attachment to the organisation. Our findings on meaningful work were in line with those of Campbell and Yen (2014), Indartono and

Wulandari (2014), Milliman et al. (2003) and Rego and Cunha (2008).

In this study, alignment of values was significantly correlated to affective commitment. The results suggested that the organisations in this study provide an environment that takes employees into consideration and they are responsive to their employees' sense of values, and such an environment enhances employees' affective commitment or emotional attachment to their organisations. Our results supported those of Rego and Cunha (2008) as well as Indartono and Wulandari (2014).

The results also indicated that sense of community was significantly correlated to affective commitment. Employees who interacted and identified themselves with the group they worked with and viewed their inner self as connected to the inner self of others or had a deep sense of connectedness to others tended to be emotionally attached to the organisation. In other words, a deep sense of connectedness among employees, which involves care, support, respect, recognition and freedom to express oneself, accentuates their affective commitment. Our correlation results were in line with those of Campbell and Yen (2014), Fry et al. (2017), Milliman et al. (2003) and Rego and Cunha (2008).

According to studies conducted by Milliman et al. (2003) and Rego and Cunha (2008), the three dimensions of spirituality affected commitment differently. In terms of the strength of the relationships, they found that alignment of values had a stronger effect on commitment than other

dimensions of workplace spirituality. However, in our study, out of the two dimensions that contributed significantly to affective commitment, meaningful work contributed more than alignment of values. As in Rego and Cunha's study (2008), affective commitment was affected by sense of joy, alignment of values and sense of community. Sense of enjoyment, which is part of the meaningful work dimension based on Milliman et al.'s (2003) categorisation of spirituality dimensions, contributed the most to the variance in affective commitment. This results seemed to be consistent with our result.

As expected, the two spirituality dimensions, meaningful work and alignment of values, contributed significantly to affective commitment. Employees' experience of meaningful work could explain more deeply why individuals are more emotionally attached to their organisation than the experience of value alignment. However, sense of community does not significantly contribute to commitment. It seems that the two other dimensions, meaningful work and value alignment, are more influential in explaining affective commitment than sense of community.

Our results, with respect to the link between meaningful work and sense of community, were consistent with theoretical and empirical evidence. The model of workplace spirituality and commitment by Vandenberghe (2011) as well as previous empirical findings discussed earlier in this paper (Campbell & Yen, 2014; Milliman et

al., 2003; Rego & Cunha, 2008) suggested that when employees find meaning at work or experience a sense of enjoyment and contribution to society, as well as interact and identify themselves with the work group, they become more affectively committed to their organisation. Concurrently, our study suggested that neglecting certain aspects of spirituality, namely meaningful work and sense of community at work, can lead to lower employee affective commitment.

Contrary to the notion that bureaucracy in the government service has negative implications on employees' souls (Weber, 1958), there was evidence that the employees in this study were spiritual and their spirituality inspired commitment to public service. Efforts to develop and nurture an ethic of public service grounded on the foundation of spirituality are well-suited with the nature of public service employees. The human resource division of these organisations should encourage managers to redesign jobs such that employees can experience meaningful work and find the job more fulfilling. Berg, Dutton and Wrzesniewski (2013) emphasised the importance of crafting jobs in such a way that employees find meaning and identity at work. Additionally, they asserted that job crafting leads to positive organisational outcomes. Besides job redesign, there is a need to improve spirituality climates in order to promote affective commitment. In organisations where employees' spiritual needs are satisfied by the experience of enjoyment and the feeling of being valued

and respected at work, it is probable that employees will be more emotionally attached to their organisations.

There were a few limitations to this study. First, the collection of data through self-report and common method variance, which may lead to statistical relationships that are inflated, could have been limitations. Future studies may use a method that allows data for the independent and dependent variables to be collected from two different sources. Second, the study sample was limited to Malaysian employees in government public service organisations; hence, we may not be able to generalise the results to employees in the private sector or in other industries. Future researchers may collect data from both government and private service organisations so that comparisons of spirituality experience as well as the spirituality-commitment link in different settings can be better understood.

## CONCLUSION

The study contributed by narrowing the gap in the public administration literature, which has few studies on workplace spirituality in the public service. Recognising the scarcity of literature linking spirituality and commitment in the public service, this paper helps us better understand the potential positive influence of personal spirituality experience at work on commitment that can result when organisations support employees' needs in terms of spirituality. It is therefore pertinent for organisations to cultivate a spiritual climate to improve employees' affective commitment to their

organisation. Without further investigation into the spirituality-commitment link, a more comprehensive understanding of employee commitment will remain unachieved.

The results imply that the climate within which employees perform work is important in enhancing commitment. It is therefore pertinent for human resource professionals in organisations to cultivate a spiritually rich climate by providing employees with a sense of the organisation's purpose and values, fostering alignment between individual goals and the organisation's vision, promoting a sense of community among members and providing opportunities for personal fulfilment as well as expressing appreciation for employees' contribution.

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