

Measuring the Positive Effects of Religiosity and Spirituality on Employees' Performance at the Workplace in Ghana

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Abstract

Man's attitude to work and response to others behaviour stem from the inner beliefs and level of spiritual growth. This research looked at the main positive effects of religiosity and spirituality on employees' performance at the various workplaces. The research aimed at achieving the following objectives. Firstly, to examine the extent to which religiosity and spirituality affects employees' performance at the workplace and to assess the practice of religiosity and spirituality at the workplaces. The practices of religiosity and spirituality were daily prayers, wearing of clothing, forming groupings and joining all staff to have service. The positive effects of religiosity and spirituality on employee performance include the fact that it breeds harmony at workplaces, workers are conscientious about their work, and workers respect each other. Mixed method was adopted in this research where both qualitative and quantitative data were collected concurrently. The questionnaire was used to gather data with the random sampling as the main technique. The findings revealed that there is a positive linear trend between performance and religiosity and spirituality. Also, employees who are religious and spiritual tend to work harder to increase productivity. Additionally, It was revealed that majority of the workers make good use of the organizations' resources and further keep the excesses or the leftovers very well to enhance performance and profitability at workplace. Finally, the research revealed that religiosity and spirituality has helped to improve work ethics. It is recommended that The Human Resource Manager (HRM) must institute measures to regulate all religious and spiritual activities so that productivity at the workplace will be enhanced.

Keywords

Religiosity, Spirituality, Employees' Performance

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1. Introduction

When we make the statement that the spiritual values starts or emanates from the originators or founders, it is supported that workplace spirituality originated in the United States as far back in the early 1920's where a group of workers formed a movement at the grass root where members wanted to come to the workplace and practice their faith [15]. It must be noted that when organisations mergers and also when it is

bought by another company, the morale of the employees tend to go down since their fate in the hands of the new employers are unknown [11]. As a result of this imbalance psychologically, workers then resort to spiritual exercises to find solace and to heal all their internal pains and agony they are experiencing from the deadly effects of company takeovers or sales and mergers. The 21st century is full of organisational competitions as each tries to outdo the other. It would be necessary therefore to seek assistance from the

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Most High to help one to survive in the rough competitive market in the face of even global or the world economic recession [18]. By so doing, workers will be able to bring out the best of their spiritual potential [2]. A common idea being generated here is that if all workers are allowed to practice their religion and spirituality individually or jointly, they will feel complete with themselves and cope with others and the world at large.

By allowing employees to be spiritually minded, not only is the organisation helping to develop employees' spiritual life, but it also connects the organisation to the employees [10]. This reminds us of the old taboo when the mentioning of the name of God at the workplace was prohibited. It is common knowledge that employees are motivated by managers who encourage them to have meaning and purpose in their work schedules and lives. Such organisations will continue to enjoy the support of the employees which will go a long way to keep it in business for a long time [6]. These authors further stipulate that workers' psyches are soothed when spiritually minded programmes are put in place at the workplace thereby improving higher productivity. They go on to state that workers want to have their souls being appreciated or acknowledged as complete individuals in the workplace, become more job-focused and not ready to compromise their values [3].

It must be stated that every organisation is composed of individuals from heterogeneous social, economic, political and religious backgrounds. Those who profess similar or same religion tend to move together naturally. They may eat, dress and even share all things in common including private matters [5]. There are various ways and gestures employees use to express their gratitude and mindsets concerning their wellbeing and acts or deeds which are good. That is when someone performs any good deed, it is appreciated by saying may God bless you. In greetings, they respond by saying that by god's grace all is well. This really demonstrates that they believe and rely in the Divine for their sustenance and progress [7]. Acts of vices are equally expressed negatively and at times referring the perpetrator to be dealt with by the Divine or spirit beings. Therefore, it is important for the Human Resource Manager to identify these diversities at the workplace for proper formulation of policies and programmes [13, 9]. Muslims for example may prefer to be given the chance to break for prayers at times specified for that purpose and want to break early for Friday prayers or *Jumma* prayers. They may go together depending on their number, instead of ensuring that they wait till normal closing every day or informing them to stay till closing. This will demoralize the employees [12].

The way employees dress outside working hours and during work if the organisation does not prescribe any dress code,

how they go out to have fun, and share information differ from one religion to another [2]. For instance, it will be appropriate for the Human Resource Manager to know and appreciate that most of the workers would not like to be associated with or see alcoholic drinks at the annual get together meetings since most Muslims and Christians abhor alcoholic drinks. In the same way, some will also prefer to be given alcohol as their beliefs do not prevent them from taking it [10]. Human Resource Managers will then be able to coordinate all these dynamics to ensure the success or smooth running of the organisation as a form of informal reward system which it is hoped will ensure industrial harmony in Ghana and the world in general.

2. Materials

Positive Effects of Religiosity and Spirituality on Performance

It has been pointed out that workers of today find it extremely daunting to detach their work from their spiritual daily activities [1]. Employees continue to seek meaning in the work they perform in order to bring their lives in equilibrium. This stems from the fact that currently, no employee wants to work under an autocratic leader or manager and in an environment which degrades humanity [3]. Effective manifestation of religiosity and spirituality at the individual, the group and the company levels yields great benefits [17]. Some of these benefits accrued from the practice of spirituality at the workplace include being creative, improved production processes, better service to customers, being honest and trustworthy, having personal fulfillments, and being committed to the work one does. These ultimately culminate in higher performance levels in the organisation [13]. In addition, workers who experience the feeling that they are directly connected to their work enjoy total peace of mind, internal or inner strength, serenity, sanity, calmness, and show patience and further demonstrate right attitude to work [16, 2, 8]. The end result or product in better performance by employees is to help produce quality products and services [15]. The researcher agrees with East and opines that due to these benefits, it will be prudent for the Human Resource Manager to watch out to the best way of achieving consistent workplace harmony using religiosity and spirituality [6].

In work places where spirituality has been clearly seen to be in operation, such organisations have performed better in terms of profitability. It is obvious that the more spirited companies outperform the others by 400 to 500 percent, in terms of net earnings, Return-On-Investment (ROI) and shareholder value [4]. Added to this assertion is the statement that companies that have promoted religiosity and spirituality

witnessed greater success and higher profits [11]. Workplace religiosity and spirituality can result into intuition, which also results in creativity [10].

It postulates that any time workers are given the opportunity to exhibit their spiritual life at the workplace, they demonstrate a high sense of creativity which in turn produce excitement and contentment in them [1]. Thompson supported Turner by adding that bringing their spiritual sides to work will thereby lead to successes in monetary terms for the company [4]. This assertion is totally true as the aim of every company is to make more profits. In the same way, the performance of the organisation is duly influenced by religiosity and spirituality which is positively found there [14]. Furthermore, workers' creativity, contentment, working in teams, and total dedication to the course of the organisation were enhanced in organisations which enabled religiosity and spirituality to flourish at its workplaces [18]. In the case of individuals experiencing fulfillment, it was observed that enhancing or promoting religiosity and spirituality will bring about workers going through total completeness or wellbeing anytime they report for work. The end product of this is the greater levels of individual fulfillment and the higher morale which in turn results in high performance in the organisation derived from successes in monetary terms.

In relation to commitment that when there is a rise in commitment which comes about as a result of spirituality, it paves the way for "Trustful Climate" at the place of work [3]. This commitment encompasses that of the workers to the company and also the company's commitment to quality and that of the buyer [17]. Workers' attitudes in companies where religiosity and spirituality operates freely is positive, they serve as supporters and exhibit high levels of commitment as compared to the organisation where there is negative activities or where spirituality is stifled [5]. This means that workers' religiosity and spirituality affects their performance at work.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

The research was conducted in an area where there are varied groups of people so the descriptive research design was considered appropriate. The study fits within the framework of descriptive survey research design because the researcher collected data and reported the way things were without manipulating any variables. The descriptive research design investigates into the conditions or relationships that exist, practices that prevail, beliefs or attitudes that are held. This design was considered appropriate for the study as it allowed the researcher to use questionnaire to obtain responses from

participants and provide insight [13]. The data was collected from primary and secondary sources. The questionnaire was used to obtain the primary data from the respondents. The secondary sources used were from existing literature sources.

3.2. Sample Frame and Sample Size

This refers to the total number of employees in the town or district capital under study. The capital was made up of various categories of people who work in different departments and agencies and with diverse educational, economic, social, political and religious backgrounds. The district capital has a working population of one thousand five hundred and seventy eight (1578).

Respondents were selected from the different sectors in the district capital. The breakdown is as follows. Ninety-two (92) employees were selected from the district education service. Forty (40) employees were selected from the health sector. They were selected from the health administration offices and the main hospital staff. The District Assembly workers also were not left out and the number of workers who were willing and available was thirty (30). The National Health Insurance staff also were included and twenty (20) of their employees helped to answer some questionnaires. The Ghana Police Service staff in the district capital also contributed in answering and had ten (10) respondents. Again, ten (10) National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO) staff was included in the selection of the respondents. Ten (10) employees of the Ahafo-Ano Premier Rural Bank Limited (AAPRB) were chosen to answer some of the questionnaire. Five (5) respondents each from the Non-Formal division and the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) were chosen. It was out of this population that the sample for the research was selected to answer the questionnaire. A sample size of a two hundred and seventeen (217) respondents was chosen for convenience sake.

3.3. Data Collection Instruments

After the selection of the sample size of a two hundred and seventeen (217) respondents from a total town working population of one thousand five hundred and seventy eight (1,578) they were given the instrument for the collection of data for presentation and analysis. Questionnaire was chosen after considering different instruments. It must be stated that the questionnaire was the main data collection instrument used in this research. The questionnaire was used because it allows respondents to remain anonymous when they answer the questions and respondents can also complete a questionnaire at a time when it is convenient for them. The close-ended type of questionnaire was used for the study. The reason was that it was easier for respondents to complete, and the answers are much easier to code and analyze.

3.4. Data Analysis Techniques

The data collected were subjected to quantitative analysis using the SPSS software or excel and presented in the form of figures and tables. From the programme, frequency counts and percentages were collected for the analysis then regression analysis was made. It must be observed that SPSS is able to handle large amount of data, and given its wide spectrum of statistical procedures purposefully designed for social sciences, it is quite efficient. These helped the research data to be properly analysed and interpreted to know the number of respondents in terms of percentages who represented the majority of views or opinions and those who are in the minority interests. Those who were in the middle

category were also identified. Then inferences were made concerning the various stances and opinions expressed about the questions put to them.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1. Employee Performance at the Workplace

From the Table below, respondents gave answers to the questions that they perform their works with no or less supervision as follows: 33.5% agreed, 25.3% strongly agreed, 7.2% slightly agreed, 14.5% disagreed, and 3.2% neither agree nor disagree while 12.7% strongly disagreed.

Table 1. Employee Performance Measure.

Employee performance Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
*I perform my work with no or less Supervision	28 (12.7)	32 (14.5)	7 (3.2)	7 (3.2)	16 (7.2)	74 (35.5)	56 (25.3)
*I work within the stipulated time allocated for the work assigned to me only	15 (6.8)	26 (11.8)	14 (6.3)	16 (7.2)	31 (14)	71 (32.1)	47 (21.3)
*I focus all attention on my work to avoid mistakes	4 (1.8)	4 (1.8)	5 (2.3)	8 (3.6)	17 (7.7)	111 (50.2)	71 (32.1)
*I make sure that the materials Given to me are used well	5 (2.3)	3 (1.4)	1 (0.5)	6 (2.7)	16 (7.2)	109 (49.3)	80 (36.2)
*I always try to prevent wastages of resources given to me to work with	4 (1.8)	3 (1.4)	2 (0.9)	4 (1.8)	29 (13.1)	101 (45.7)	77 (34.8)
*I assist my colleagues who find difficulties in handling their assigned duties	4 (1.8)	4 (1.8)	3 (1.4)	7 (3.2)	32 (14.5)	110 (49.8)	60 (27.1)
*I sometimes seek clarity from my supervisors whenever I face work problem	7 (3.2)	9 (4.1)	2 (0.9)	8 (3.6)	27 (12.2)	104 (47.1)	63 (28.5)
*I am always provided with the required quantity of materials needed to work with	22 (10)	37 (16.7)	10 (4.5)	16 (7.2)	32 (14.5)	69 (31.2)	34 (15.4)
*I keep or protect the materials I work with well when there are leftovers	2 (0.9)	6 (2.7)	2 (0.9)	7 (3.2)	36 (16.3)	111 (50.2)	55 (24.9)

Source: Field survey, 2014 *1 (0.5%) missing from the system.

The majority were in support indicating their level of experiences at their workplaces. Then, most workers were in favour of the suggestion of working within the stipulated time allocated for the works assigned to them only. These were their responses: 32.1% agreed, 14.0% slightly agreed and 21.3% strongly agreed. Few of them did not support the assertion and gave their reactions with these answers: 6.8% strongly disagreed, 11.8% disagreed, 6.3% slightly disagreed and 7.2% neither agree nor disagree. It could be seen that, majority again focus all their attention on their work to avoid mistakes as depicted in these responses: 50.2% agreed, 32.1% strongly agreed, 7.7% slightly agreed but 1.8% disagreed, 1.8% strongly disagreed, 2.3% slightly disagreed and 3.6% neither agree nor disagree.

This shows the diverse nature of workers at the workplace with different attitudes to work which affect performance. As to the ways they/workers use the material given to them, 49.3% agreed to the question that they use them well, 36.2% strongly agreed, 10.4% slightly agreed, 14.8% neither agree nor disagree, 8.0% disagreed, 2.3% strongly disagreed and 0.5% slightly disagreed. This shows that majority make good use of the organizations' resources to

enhance performance at workplace. In the same vein, the majority favoured the suggestion that workers endeavour to prevent wastage of resources given to them to work with. Good attitude to the use of resources was demonstrated with these answers: 45.7% agreed, 34.8% strongly agreed, 13.1% slightly agreed, but 1.8% strongly disagreed, 1.4% disagreed, 0.9% slightly disagreed and those who were neutral were 1.8% to the question.

Also, most workers were of the opinion that, they assist their friends who found difficulties in handling their assigned duties. Their responses are as follows: 49.8% agreed, 27.1% strongly agreed, 14.5% slightly agreed, but 1.8% disagreed, 1.8% strongly disagreed, 1.4% slightly disagreed and 3.2% showing their neutrality in this issue. At least it is heartwarming to see that most workers are ready and willing to help those in difficulties at their assigned duties. Then, workers were quick to accept that sometimes they seek clarifications from their supervisors in times of problems. Majority still gave approval with 47.1% agreeing, 12.2% slightly agreed, 28.5% strongly agreed and 3.6% being neutral. However, 4.1% disagreed, 3.2% strongly disagreed and 0.9% slightly disagreed. Availability of

materials enhances high productivity and workers provided these answers to show that they were always provided with the required quantity of materials needed to work with. 31.2% agreed, 14.5% slightly agreed, 15.4% strongly agreed and 7.2% neither agree nor disagree. However, 16.7% disagreed, 10.0% strongly disagreed and 4.5% slightly disagreed.

Similarly, a majority were of the view that they kept the leftover materials well after work. Their responses were that, 50.2% agreed, 16.3% slightly agreed, 24.9% strongly agreed and 3.2% neither agree nor disagree. But, those with contrary views gave these answers: 2.7% disagreed, 0.9% each strongly disagreed and slightly disagreed. They showed that they were good workers with their organizations at heart. The researcher supports the authorities of the field who share their views on performance of employees due to their religiosity and spirituality. For instance, it has been pointed out that workers of today find it extremely daunting to detach their work from their religious and spiritual daily activities [9]. Employees continue to seek meaning in the work they perform in order to bring their lives in equilibrium. This stems from the fact that currently, no employee wants to work under an autocratic leader or manager and in an environment which degrades humanity [15].

Effective manifestation of spirituality at both the individual and the organizational levels yields great benefits [17]. Some of these benefits accrued from the practice of religiosity and spirituality at the workplace include being creative, improved production processes, better service to customers, being honest and trustworthy, having personal fulfillments, and being

committed to the work one does. These ultimately culminate in higher performance levels in the organization [14]. In addition, workers who experience the feeling that they are directly connected to their work enjoy total peace of mind, internal or inner strength, serenity, sanity, calmness, and show patience and further demonstrate the right attitude to work. The end result or product in better performance by employees is to help produce quality products and services [3].

4.2. Regression Analysis of Religiosity and Spirituality on Employee Performance

When there is evidence that two variables are correlated, it may be of interest to describe the relationship between them using regression analysis [6]. Regression analysis seeks to find regression models that best describe the relationship that exists between two or more variables. The purpose of regression is to explore the dependence of one variable, in this case performance, on others, in this case gender, age, educational level, spirituality and religiosity.

The general regression model is:

$$p = \alpha + \beta x + \epsilon$$

Where *p* is the value of the response variable or the dependent variable, *x* the value of the predictor variable or the independent variable, α and β the regression coefficients and ϵ is the random error term. The Table 2 below depicts the analysis of variance (ANOVA) results on the regression model.

Table 2. ANOVA.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	R-value	p-value
Regression	38.781	4	9.695	12.587	0.435	0.000
Residual	166.377	216	0.770			
Total	205.158	220				

Source: Field survey, 2014.

To find out whether the regression model is statistically significant, analysis of variance test was conducted and the outcome is in the Table 2 above. The correlation coefficient value (R-value) of 0.435 means that performance and the independent variables are correlated. This implies that there is a positive linear trend between performance and the independent variables. The F-value of 12.587 and p-value of 0.000 which is less than the error margin of 5% indicate that

the regression model is good for prediction.

The constant of the regression model is 4.257 which is the performance of employees when all the independent variables are zero. The t-value of 6.615 and p-value of 0.000 shows the constant value is statistically significant and can be included in the model.

Table 3. Regression Coefficients.

	Coefficients (β)	t-value	p-value
Constant	4.257	6.615	0.000
Gender	0.076	1.205	0.230
Age	0.063	1.000	0.318
Religiosity Spiritually	0.430	6.976	0.000
Level of Education	0.063	1.012	0.312

Source: Field survey, 2014.

The coefficient of gender is 0.076 which is not significant based on the t-value of 1.205 and p-value of 0.230 which is greater than alpha value of 0.05. This means that the coefficient of gender cannot be included in the model. Also, the coefficient of level of education is highly insignificant and cannot be included in the model. It could also be inferred from the Table that the coefficient of age is also not significant based on p-value 0.318 which is greater than alpha value of 0.05. The coefficient of religiosity spiritually is highly significant. This coefficient has a positive relationship with performance. This means that as religiosity spiritually increases, performance also increases. The regression model is:

$$p = 4.257 + 0.430 (\text{Religiosity_Spirituality})$$

This empirical findings shows that religiosity and spirituality positively impacts employee performance and is supported by the views expressed in literature that allowing employees to practice their religiosity and spirituality ultimately culminate in higher performance levels in the organisation [12].

5. Conclusion

The study was conducted with the objective of understanding the positive effects of religiosity and spirituality on employees' performance at the workplace in the Mankranso district of Ashante Region in Ghana. It was identified that workers performance is influenced by their involvement in religious and spiritual issues in the district. About ninety percent of the respondents practiced religiosity and spirituality in their work places. Evidence from the field also suggests that the level of positive work attitudes and relationships exhibited by employees produce or results in high productivity resulting from increased performance. When effectively supported, it can be the pillar for enhancing economic development among the various organisations in Ghana because most employees concentrate fully on their works, keep materials well, prevent wastages and protect leftovers to the best of their abilities and higher organizational performance and productivity leads to greater profitability and sustainability.

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