From Concept to Science

Continuing Steps in Workplace Spirituality Research

Peter C. Hill, Carole L. Jurkiewicz, Robert A. Giacalone, and Louis W. Fry

The organizational sciences are not immune to our culture’s burgeoning interest in religion and spirituality, and such interest is taxing the capacity of scholars to keep pace both theoretically and methodologically. Elementary attempts at understanding workplace spirituality began in the early 1990s as evidenced in books, articles, and special journal issues or sections (e.g., Journal of Managerial Psychology, Journal of Management Inquiry, Journal of Management Education, Organization, and Journal of Organizational Change Management). However, much of this early work emerged in the form of theoretical advocacy and organizational case study rather than through empirical investigation, and it became increasingly clear that systematic scientific study to address this salient aspect of organizational life was necessary.

PROGRESS IN THE STUDY OF WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY

Such recognition has spurred scientific efforts, resulting in a growing empirical literature and conceptual sophistication. A formal interest group with a primary focus on the intersection of management, spirituality, and religion was founded in the Academy of Management, the professional organization for scholars in business management. The Handbook of Workplace Spirituality and Organizational Performance (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003), a 32-chapter landmark publication, established a new paradigm for the field. A second edition of the handbook, an indication in itself of the strong interest in workplace spirituality as well as an increasing acceptance of its scientific legitimacy, was published in 2010.
The charge in both editions of the *Handbook of Workplace Spirituality and Organizational Performance* (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003, 2010b) was clear: a scientific, data-based approach to workplace spirituality. While conceptual development was important, the editors and the contributors maintained that the study of workplace spirituality also needs to demonstrate effects in order for it to be seen as a legitimate discipline in the field of organizational science. While the potentially constructive benefits of spiritual pursuits have been lauded effectively in psychological (Koenig, 1998) and medical (Koenig, McCullough, & Larson, 2001) writing, the organizational treatises prior to the first handbook focused on the normative, humanistic necessity of workplace spirituality. Indeed, if for no other reason, these scholars served an important function in introducing the concept to organizational leaders. But organizations, by their very nature, are far less interested in ideologies concerned with normative necessities and ultimately more entrenched in outcomes. Legitimizing workplace spirituality, therefore, required a demonstrable positive impact of spiritual variables on workplace-related functioning. Without this demonstration, the topic of workplace spirituality would be marginalized as a philosophical and impractical pursuit.

Defining and Conceptualizing Workplace Spirituality

Among the numerous definitions of workplace spirituality, three dimensions are frequently identified: (1) an inner life that is brought to the workplace; (2) the desire to find work purposeful and meaningful; and (3) a sense of connectedness and community often exemplified through commitment, sharing, and mutual obligation (Badrinarayanan & Madhavaram, 2008; Fry, 2005a). Definitions frequently used in the workplace spirituality literature include the following as examples:

- “The recognition that employees have an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of community” (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000, p. 137)
- The recognition “that people have both a mind and a spirit, seek to find meaning and purpose in their work, and desire to connect with other human beings and be part of a community” (Robbins, 2003, p. 542)
- “Aspects of the workplace, either in the individual, the group, or the organization, that promote individual feelings of satisfaction through transcendence” (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2010b, p. 13).

What is clear in these definitions is that spirituality has a clear interior focus—an inner, subjective experience that reflects core values—but one that is integrated with and facilitated by an organizational milieu.

Just as psychologists of religion and spirituality have grappled with and differed on the conceptual relationship between religion and spirituality (see Oman, Chapter 2, this volume), so too have workplace spirituality researchers shown considerable variability on the extent to which they see these two constructs related. For example, in their review of 87 scholarly articles Dent, Higgins, and Wharff’s (2005) found that 29% of the articles defined spirituality only as a religious construct, 17% made no reference to religion in defining spirituality, and 21% defined spirituality as both a religious and nonreligious...
construct. The remaining one-third of the articles made no mention of the relationship of spirituality to religion. For scientific study to advance, researchers in this field must clarify the degree to which spirituality in the workplace should be connected to or independent of religion. One issue, repeatedly stressed throughout this chapter, that may help clarify the relationship spirituality should have with religion is whether workplace spirituality is being conceptualized at the individual or the organizational level.

At the individual level, what is clear is that the focus of workplace spirituality should be the private realm of the interior life, which is now commonly designated by the term “spirituality.” However, for many, the spiritual life is made explicit through doctrinal teachings of religion and should be respected as such. Thus, a major challenge for workplace researchers is to be able to conceptualize and measure a spirituality that for some is independent of religion (and for some of these, religion may even have a negative connotation), yet for others is best captured through codified beliefs. From this perspective, spirituality is necessary for religion but religion is not necessary for spirituality. Workplace spirituality can, therefore, be inclusive or exclusive of religious theory and practice. However, for a thorough understanding, both a religious and nonreligious spirituality must be investigated.

However, at the organizational level, workplace spirituality should be distinguished from religion unless, of course, religion is directly related to the organization’s mission (e.g., mosques, churches, or synagogues; some mission organizations; religiously affiliated educational institutions). Conceptualizing workplace spirituality through the lens of religious traditions and practice is potentially divisive in that, to the extent the religious tradition is exclusivist (i.e., it views its teachings as the only source of spiritual truth), there will be those who do not share in the tradition (Cavanaugh, 1999). Furthermore, religious practices often conflict with the social, legal, and ethical foundations of business, law, and public and nonprofit administration (Nadesan, 1999). Imbuing religion into workplace spirituality has the potential to foster zealotry at the expense of organizational goals, offend constituents and customers, and decrease morale and employee well-being (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2010b).

Nevertheless, a general agreement with the broad definitional and scientific parameters introduced in the two editions of Giacalone and Jurkiewicz’s (2003, 2010a) handbook have successfully provided a foundation for the study of workplace spirituality upon which many avenues of inquiry, though some still in infancy, have blossomed. We review some of this literature later in this chapter. However, in a nascent field that has undergone enormous change, where theoretical advocacy and organizational case study are increasingly being supplanted by scientific data, the question of direction continues to loom large. What are the variables of interest? What conceptual distinctions are appropriate? What should the focus of measurement be? It is to these questions that researchers have turned in moving the study of workplace spirituality from advocacy to a science. It is also to these same questions that workplace spirituality and the psychology of religion and spirituality become intertwined and to which scholars in the latter field have much to offer to a conceptual and empirical grounding for the former. For researchers in the psychology of religion and spirituality, this is yet another example of putting into practice Emmons and Paloutzian’s (2003) call for a multilevel interdisciplinary paradigm, which “recognizes the value of data at multiple levels of analysis while making nonreductive assumptions concerning the value of spiritual and religious phenomena” (p. 395).
The Psychology of Religion and Workplace Spirituality

While many may have expected workplace spirituality to emerge from research on the psychology of religion and spirituality, this is not at all the case. Largely for the purposes of scientific credibility, the field of workplace spirituality was born of organizational and social psychology, ethics, and management. The disconnection between these fields can be best understood if we consider that the psychology of religion, particularly over the past 40 years, has been characterized by data gathering, while the study of workplace spirituality, as already noted, emerged through theoretical advocacy and organizational case study.

However, there are discernible indicators that cross-fertilization between the two fields is occurring. First, the existence of this chapter in both the first and now the second edition of this volume represents the recognition of workplace spirituality as an important application of the psychology of religion and spirituality. In fact, even our authorship team, with the addition of the first author (a psychologist of religion and spirituality, whereas the other authors all come from the field of management) to this second edition chapter, is a sure sign that these two disciplines can (and should) work together. Second, a recent edited volume (Hill & Dik, 2012a) has been published with the expressed purpose of drawing on the strengths of the scholarly literature in the psychology of religion and spirituality to help provide scientific moorings for the emerging discipline of workplace spirituality. The Hill and Dik volume is the first of an interdisciplinary series titled Advances in Workplace Spirituality: Theory, Research and Application. The purpose of the series is to “draw from a wide variety of stakeholder disciplines to promote integrative thinking with the broad goal of adding to the value of workplace spirituality theory, research, and its application” (p. vii), to which the editors of the first volume rhetorically respond, “What better place to ground this emerging field than in the psychology of religion and spirituality?” (Hill & Dik, 2012a, p. vii). Perhaps a fruitful relationship has only begun.

A Meaning-Making Approach

Just as meaning holds promise as a central and unifying construct to the psychological study of religion (Paloutzian & Park, Chapter 1, this volume), so too it provides a framework for understanding workplace spirituality. People often consider the “big picture” kinds of questions (e.g., “What makes life worth living?” “What are my deepest held values?”) in terms of their work. Such considerations may also include how the answers to those questions line up with the organizational mission and culture. For example, when a colleague of one of the authors was asked why he left his lucrative position as a computer programmer at a successful customized t-shirt company to go to graduate school (and eventually earn a considerably lesser income in an academic position), he replied that, quite simply, he did not want to make t-shirts for the rest of his life. In essence, his spiritual strivings would not be fulfilled.

At the Individual Level

Later in this chapter, we more thoroughly discuss the distinction between individual and organizational workplace spirituality. For now, it is sufficient to point out that meaning can be made at both levels. At the individual level, Park (2012; also Chapter 18, this
volume) persuasively contends that religion and spirituality are major players in both global meaning systems (beliefs, goals, values, and sense of purpose) as well as how meaning is made in specific contexts that are often stressful in nature. Park’s (2012) review of the workplace literature suggests that spiritually based meaning systems can influence such aspects of the workplace as career choice and development, on-the-job conduct, work-related stress and coping, as well as work-related well-being.

At the Organizational Level

Spirituality is often predicated on shared beliefs, visions, and values such that, though few organizations may think of themselves as spiritual entities, there is frequently a certain organization identity that reflects at least implicit (and sometimes explicit) values and norms from which individuals may experience a sense of connection and personal growth (Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2004; Kolodinsky, Giacalone, & Jurkiewicz, 2008). Ashforth and Pratt (2010) point out that various types of organizations (among those at least somewhat receptive to spirituality) will likely exert different levels of control. For example, some organizations, especially those that may be explicit in describing their spiritual orientation, can be described as spiritually directing in that the organization itself has an explicit cosmology that is directly connected to its mission and practices, including some that may be imposed on individual employees. Examples of spiritually directive organizations include ServiceMaster, Chick-fil-A, and some network marketing organizations such as Amway or Mary Kay. This need not necessarily imply that individuals have to be forced to adopt the organizational culture; few of such organizations require wholesale adoption, and, regardless, in many cases individuals self-select to be part of that culture. Pointing out both the benefits (e.g., the facilitation of spiritual community and personal fulfillment, an enhanced sense or organizational unity, the potential for greater likelihood of organization goal achievement) and liabilities (e.g., conformity pressure, the possibility of limited diversity and adaptability, an unhealthy resistance to change) of spiritually directing organizations, Ashforth and Pratt characterize such organizations as having “strong cultures that provide clear and often distinctive hooks for spiritual strivings” (p. 49).

Other organizations, according to Ashforth and Pratt (2010), are spiritually enabling in that they allow individuals “to discover their own idiosyncratic transcendence, whether through prayer groups, meditation, yoga, journaling, spiritual retreats, or other means” (p. 47), the primary benefit of which is a personalized ownership of one’s spiritual journey. An enabling approach, too, has its advantages (e.g., increased personal commitment, enhanced diversity and possible creativity, worker satisfaction) and disadvantages (e.g., potentially highlighting individual differences that may weaken organizational unity, sanctioning unusual and potentially divisive practices). Between the extremes of spiritually directing and enabling organizations are what the authors call partnering organizations that involve a mix of the benefits and liabilities of the other two approaches.

Regardless of organizational characteristics, the spiritually attuned organization as an entity can play a key role in facilitating a sense of meaning and purpose beyond bottom-line results or simply drawing a paycheck. The extent to which such meaning-making influences workplace functioning, at both the individual and the organizational level, is a topic fertile for further research.
CRITICAL ISSUES IN ADVANCING THE SCIENCE OF WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY

In calling for a scientific inquiry into workplace spirituality, Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, (2010b) identify four major weaknesses that must addressed if this newly emerging paradigm is to achieve acceptance within the scientific community: (1) the lack of an accepted, conceptual definition; (2) inadequate measurement tools; (3) limited theoretical development; and (4) legal concerns. To attend to these weaknesses and to advance a workplace spirituality paradigm rooted in science, three critical issues, all of which lie at the heart of scientific inquiry, including the theory-building and testing process central to it (Dubin, 1978), need to be addressed: levels of conceptual analysis; conceptual distinctions and measurement foci; and clarification of the relationship between criterion variables. Though considerable progress has been made regarding each issue since we first identified them in the first edition of this volume, these three critical issues remain if we are to advance a scientifically based workplace spirituality paradigm.

Level of Conceptual Analysis

Individual Spirituality

As repeatedly noted, workplace spirituality can be conceptualized at both the individual and the organizational level of analysis. At the individual level, workplace spirituality refers to a personal set of values that promote the experience of transcendence through the work process, thereby facilitating a sense of connectedness to others in a way that provides feelings of completeness and joy (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2010b; Heaton, Schmidt-Wilk, & Travis, 2004). When employees bring their spirituality and related values to work, such spirituality might be considered an integrative spirituality in which personal spirituality is woven into various facets of the job. Conversely, when employees fail to bring their spirituality into work, it would be defined as a segmented spirituality. Segmented spirituality may be the result of the individual’s unwillingness to bring spiritual beliefs to work (don’t want to share this part of one’s life, fear of reprisal), or it may be a function of the individual’s inability to enact his or her spiritual beliefs (don’t know how to integrate such beliefs into one’s work). Thus, in understanding workplace spirituality at the individual level, we must determine not only the level of spirituality but also the level or integration of that spirituality into the organizational environment. Of course, some employees may sense that spirituality should not be carried into the work environment at all.

Those factors that predict the extent to which employees bring spiritual values into the workplace have not been determined. Surely some factors may be at the dispositional level, such as level of spiritual commitment, spiritual well-being, or spiritual intelligence. For example, Paloutzian, Emmons, and Keortge (2010) suggest that the need for transcendence or a healthy sense of well-being applies to life on the job in much the same way as functioning in society as a whole. They also contend that Emmons’s (2000) concept of spiritual intelligence—that ability to experience transcendent states of consciousness, to maintain overarching spiritual strivings through which other life pursuits are organized and integrated, and to regulate one’s behavior virtuously (such as showing compassion, granting forgiveness, expressing gratitude, and behaving humbly)—will likely impact the degree to which spiritual values are brought to the workplace setting. Similarly, Hill and Dik (2012b) recommend that workplace researchers employ Allport’s (1950) notion of...
intrinsic and extrinsic religious motivation, which also can be conceptualized and measured in spiritual but nonreligious ways, to better understand how spirituality is carried to the workplace.

**Organizational Spirituality**

At the organizational or strategic level, workplace spirituality is a descriptor of the organization as an entity, including such characteristics as organizational values, human resource systems, and organizational plans for the future (Milliman, Ferguson, Trickett, & Condemi, 1999). In this sense, workplace spirituality can be thought of as a framework of organizational values evidenced in the culture that promote employees’ experience of organizational transcendence through the work process, and facilitates their sense of being connected to others in a way that provides feelings of completeness and joy (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2010b). As such, workplace spirituality at this level can be considered both in terms of vision and cultural values, and both approaches are of value in understanding workplace spirituality (Pawar, 2008).

**The Interaction of Individual and Organizational Spirituality**

Kolodinsky et al. (2008) found that workers’ positive attitudinal outcomes often depend on a person–organization (P-O) fit; that is, the match between workers’ spiritual values and their perceptions of the spiritual values exuded by the organization (e.g., stressing openness, connection, truth, personal development and growth, work-related meaning and purpose, servant leadership, and sharing). In general, shared P-O values have been documented to indicate strong P-O fit and positive work attitudes (Balazas, 1990), operating unit performance (Enz & Schwenk, 1991), and both job satisfaction and lower turnover rates (O’Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991). Across five separate cross-sectional samples, Kolodinsky et al. found that especially perceptions of organizational spirituality positively predicted organizational identification, job involvement, and satisfaction with work rewards and negatively predicted work frustration. Somewhat surprisingly, personal spirituality appeared to be a less robust predictor of the outcomes studied. Their results suggest that even if the workers themselves are not personally spiritual, they desire workplaces perceived as exhibiting spiritual values, causing the researchers to conclude that “the establishment of a spiritual climate through modeling servant leadership, open communication, and valuing individual differences will go a long way to affecting worker perceptions and attitudes” (p. 476). Still much work needs to be done with regard to understanding the effect of organizational spirituality on workers—questions such as how perceptions of organizational spirituality are formed, how such perceptions are transferred to individuals, what specific spiritual attributes are valued by prospective employees, and what spiritual values help predict positive worker outcomes, remain largely unexplored.

**Conceptual Distinctions and Measurement Focus**

Conceptually, there are aspects of workplace spirituality, particularly at the individual level, that are theoretically and empirically connected to other areas, notably those behaviors and dispositional traits identified in the areas of positive psychology (Snyder
& Lopez, 2001) and character ethics (Lickona, 1991). While the work of Fry (2005b), Emmons (2003), Emmons and Paloutzian (2003), Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2010a), Giacalone, Jurkiewicz, and Dunn (2005), and Jurkiewicz and Giacalone (2004) have identified the core values, attitudes, and behavior of ethical and spiritual well-being, their approach integrates and envelopes other frameworks, theories, and concepts. For example, both Fry (2005b) and Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2010a) use conceptualizations that are mainstays in social psychology and political science.

Among other issues, such conceptual overlaps raise concerns over measurement. With many good treatises written on spiritual and religious measurement (see Hill, Chapter 3, this volume; Hill & Hood, 1999; Hill & Pargament, 2003; Hill & Edwards, in press; MacDonald, Friedman, & Kuentzel, 1999; MacDonald, Kuentzel, & Friedman, 1999), none has confronted the complexity of firmly distinguishing among these conceptual overlaps, nor have they addressed whether such conceptualizations can be aggregated at a macro (organizational) level. Getting to the root of this complexity is critical if workplace spirituality is to develop as a scientific area of inquiry. We know from related research on postmaterialist values (Inglehart, 1990) that conceptual ambiguities, when coupled with measurement problems, create voluminous research output that focuses on conceptual problems rather than theoretical advances. In the case of postmaterialist values, for example, the assessment problems have embroiled researchers in trying to determine the number of dimensions involved, the level at which responses can be aggregated, and the theoretically appropriate way to determine how a hypothesis might be tested (e.g., Davis & Davenport, 1999). Another example, familiar to many psychologists of religion and spirituality, is the conceptual and measurement ambiguity surrounding Allport’s (1950) theory of intrinsic–extrinsic religious motivation (see Hill & Edwards, in press, for further discussion). Such difficulties have caused Kirkpatrick and Hood (1990) to suggest that the emphasis by psychologists of religion on Allport’s theory has actually worked against the field’s theoretical advance.

Workplace spirituality research is now in a similarly difficult stage of development. The lack of conceptual clarity related to level of analysis makes measurement questionable. Whether we assess at the individual or the organizational level depends on one’s conceptualization, but since there is no agreement on the level of analysis, researchers must decide for themselves. Such decisions are pivotal in developing foundations for further research. This lack of clarity is an example of unrationaized categorization at the theoretical level (Fry & Smith, 1987; Stanfield, 1976) and, like the research on postmaterialist values and religious intrinsic–extrinsic motivation, could result in a hodgepodge of empirical studies that, even though reliable and valid, will serve to diffuse rather than solidify theory building on workplace spirituality.

Establishing Clear Relationships with Criterion Variables

Even if spirituality’s normative sense of goodness is acknowledged (e.g., employee completeness and joy as integral parts of the organizational culture, the incorporation of humanitarian concerns and outcomes), organizations (especially the power elite) are likely to remain disinterested in creating spiritual workplaces without a demonstrable, bottom-line (though not necessarily financial) type of outcome associated with it. Therefore, creating spiritual workplaces will require demonstrating that workplace spirituality is aligned to organizational goals (Fry & Slocum, 2008; Fry, Matherly, & Ouimet, 2010).
The legitimacy of this association has been discussed by Fry (2003, 2008), who notes that, by understanding the vision of the organization and being empowered with the autonomy to act as they see fit, participants have an experience of competence in that, through their work, they are making a positive difference in other people’s lives, which in turn enriches their own. It is such outcomes, ultimately based in the satisfactions that result from work performed as if it were a calling (Dik & Duffy, 2009; Dik, Duffy, & Eldridge, 2009; Dik, Duffy, & Tix, 2012), that will result in higher levels of organizational commitment, productivity, and reduced stress—the same organizational goals most often reported as affective outcomes of organizational research. Conceptually, organizations would be interested in workplace spirituality if it demonstrated either a positive relationship with desirable outcomes or an inverse relationship with undesirable outcomes. These relationships need not be directly tied to a financial outcome (such as increased individual productivity or decreased theft), but could be tied indirectly to financially related outcomes such as associations with positive employee attitudes (yielding lower turnover), lowered rates of illness (reducing healthcare costs and absenteeism), or improved public image (yielding more interest in the company).

One possible line of research is to examine the role that perceived organizational spirituality has in relation to commitment to the organization. For example, research (e.g., Randall & O’Driscoll, 1997) has identified two dimensions of commitment to an organization: calculative commitment and affective commitment. Calculative commitment reflects an exchange relationship orientation whereby commitment to an organization is contingent upon perceived benefits in relation to costs. In contrast, affective commitment involves identification and involvement with the organization on the basis of perceptions of similar values and goals. Thus, employees who remain with an organization because of a calculative commitment may feel that they have no choice but to remain (an extrinsic motivation), whereas those whose stay is affective based remain with the company because they want to (an intrinsic motivation). Research has shown affective (calculative) commitment is positively (negatively) related to supervisor ratings of overall job performance and promotability of their subordinates (Meyer, Paunonen, Gellattly, Goffin, & Jackson, 1989) as well as to positive work-related attitudes such as satisfaction with supervisors and coworkers, job involvement, and overall job satisfaction (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). The extent to which an organization with a perceived spiritual climate might facilitate an affective commitment and its attendant benefits is ripe for empirical research.

**FURTHER ADVANCING WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY: THE EXAMPLE OF SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP THEORY**

We now discuss a conceptualization of spiritual leadership, proposed by Fry (2003, 2005b, 2008; Fry et al., 2010), that we believe addresses the three critical issues just discussed (level of conceptual analysis, conceptual distinctions, and clarification of relationship between criterion variables) and, therefore, is an example of the types of theories necessary for further advancing the empirical study of workplace spirituality. Fry’s causal theory of spiritual leadership is developed within an intrinsic motivation model that incorporates inner life, vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love, theories of workplace spirituality, and spiritual well-being through calling and membership. The purpose of
spiritual leadership is to tap into the fundamental needs of both leader and follower to create vision and value congruence across the strategic, empowered team, and individual levels and, ultimately, to foster higher levels of ethical, spiritual, and psychological well-being, positive human health, life satisfaction, organizational commitment and productivity, corporate social responsibility, and financial performance.

As indicated at the top of Figure 31.1, spiritual leadership is defined as comprising the values, attitudes, and behaviors that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one’s self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual well-being through calling and membership, which, in turn, enhances individual and organizational outcomes. This entails:

1. Creating a vision wherein organization members experience a sense of calling in that their life has meaning and makes a difference;
2. Establishing a social/organizational culture based on altruistic love whereby leaders and followers have genuine care, concern, and appreciation for both self and others, thereby producing a sense of membership that promotes feelings of being understood and appreciated.

The foundation of spiritual leadership, as indicated toward the left side of Figure 31.1, begins with an acknowledgment of the importance of an inner life, frequently involving a spiritual practice (e.g., spending time in nature, prayer, meditation, reading inspirational literature, yoga, observing religious traditions, or writing in a journal) that relates to the worker’s fundamental sense of individual and social identity. As further suggested in Figure 31.1, organizational cultures that support their members’ inner life have employees who are more likely to develop the values of altruistic love in pursuit of a transcendent vision and the hope/faith to achieve the vision that ultimately produces the worker trust, intrinsic motivation, and spiritual well-being necessary to optimize important individual and organizational outcomes. “Doing what it takes” through hope and faith in the organization’s vision keeps followers looking forward to the future and provides the desire and positive expectation that fuels effort through intrinsic motivation. In pursuing the vision, an organizational culture based in the values of altruistic love is also received by followers. This drives out and removes fears associated with worry, anger, jealousy, selfishness, failure, and guilt and gives one a sense of membership—that part of spiritual well-being that gives one an awareness of being understood and appreciated. This is, of course, one of the most fundamentally motivating factors in the workplace overall. This intrinsic motivation cycle results in an increase in one’s sense of spiritual well-being (e.g., calling and membership) and ultimately in positive personal, group, and organizational outcomes such as increased ethical and spiritual well-being, life satisfaction, organizational commitment and productivity, corporate social responsibility, and financial performance.

To date, the theory has been tested in a diverse range of organizations, including schools, military units, city governments, police, and for-profit organizations. These studies have found support for the spiritual leadership causal model and the general reliability and validity of its measures. Initial findings include a significant positive influence of spiritual leadership on employee life satisfaction, organizational commitment and productivity, sales growth, and other unit performance outcomes (Fry, Hanna, Noel, & Walumbwa, 2011; Fry et al., 2010; Fry, Nisiewicz, & Vitucci, 2007; Fry, Nisiewicz, Vitucci, & Cedillo, 2007; Fry & Slocum, 2008; Fry, Vitucci, & Cedillo, 2005).
Continuing Steps in Workplace Spirituality Research

Still, however, research on several fronts is necessary to establish the validity of spiritual leadership theory before it should be widely applied as a model of organizational and professional development toward the end of fostering systemic change and transformation. For example, outcomes across levels (e.g., ethical and spiritual well-being; joy, peace, and serenity; corporate social responsibility, financial performance) hypothesized to be affected by spiritual leadership (Fry, 2005a; Fry & Slocum, 2008; Fry et al., 2010) need to be validated. Additional longitudinal studies are needed to test for changes in key variables over time, particularly as relating to performance. Studies, too, are needed that incorporate more objective performance measures from multiple sources (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Lee, 2003). Also, the conceptual distinction between spiritual leadership theory variables and other leadership theories, such as authentic leadership, ethical leadership, and servant leadership in relation to workplace spirituality, should be refined (Fry, 2003; Fry, Matherly, Whittington, & Winston, 2007; Fry & Whittington, 2005). Further, research might investigate whether these theories are perhaps mutually reinforcing or serve to moderate the effects of one another. Finally, further conceptual refinement between spiritual leadership theory variables and other workplace spirituality and workplace religion theories and constructs is needed in order to advance this key new paradigm in organizational studies. This kind of research fertility is precisely why the theory is so valuable and why it is put forward here as the type that will advance the study of workplace spirituality.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY RESEARCH

Although important research in workplace spirituality has been conducted and considerable advancement has been made since the first edition of this Handbook was published in 2005, our claim then that workplace spirituality research is in the initial concept/elaboration stage of development (Hunt, 1999; Reichers & Schneider, 1990) still applies.
It, therefore, follows that the four components viewed as necessary and sufficient conditions for the development of any theoretical model (Dubin, 1978) continue to remain important to the study of workplace spirituality at this point in time: (1) identifiable units or variables of interest to the researcher; (2) congruence as defined by the laws of relationship among units of the model that specify how they are associated; (3) boundaries within which the laws of relationships are expected to operate; and (4) contingency effects that specify system states within which the units of the theory take on characteristic values that are deterministic and have a persistence through time (see also Fry & Smith, 1987). It is toward fulfilling these components that scholarship in workplace spirituality must continue to focus.

Drawing upon the expertise of psychologists of religion and spirituality is crucial to the development of the science of workplace spirituality. The fact that psychologists of religion and spirituality have produced a volume (Hill & Dik, 2012a) devoted specifically to the workplace will no doubt be an invaluable aid in furthering the discipline.

Finally, it is likely that research in workplace spirituality will continue to expand in the years ahead. Promising topical areas for theoretical development and empirical research in workplace spirituality include the nonprofit sector (Alexander, 2010), crisis and disaster management (Cigler, 2010; Jurkiewicz, 2010), and politics and leadership (Bowen, Ferris, & Kolodinsky, 2010), each of which attest to the relevancy and vibrancy of this area of research and the breadth toward which future research can be directed.

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