

From Workplace Ethos to Employee Performance Effectiveness: An SOR Approach Using PLS-SEM to Examine the Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

The core intention of this study is to deeply explore the effects of spirituality on the employee performance of the banking sector. It, therefore, examined three dimensions of spirituality, i.e., roles of meaningful work, inner life, and sense of community, and their influence on employee performance through their job satisfaction as a mediator. A quantitative approach is used; therefore applied PLS4.0 and SPSS were applied for data analysis. The data was collected from 225 employees of the conventional banks of Karachi City. Convenience sampling was employed to collect the data timely manner. The findings therefore revealed that all three dimensions of spirituality i.e. meaningful work, inner life and sense of community significantly impact employee performance, with mediating role of the job satisfaction, therefore, these relationships, suggesting that fostering a spirituality enriches work environment and can enhance employee performance at large, it can also enhance their job satisfaction and reduces burnout ratio.

Keywords: Spirituality, Meaningful Work, Inner Life, Sense of Community, Job Satisfaction, Employee Performance.

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Introduction

The banking sector is a crucial element in any country's economy, contributing to financial stability and economic growth. It enables capital formation, credit allocation, and ensures the smooth functioning of monetary systems (Kumar et al., 2023). Employee performance in banks directly impacts service quality, customer satisfaction, and overall financial performance. Given the competitive nature of the banking industry, especially in Pakistan, it is observed that fostering a work environment promotes high employee engagement, satisfaction, and performance (Radha & Aithal, 2023). Certain recent studies have started examining the role of workplace spirituality in enhancing employee performance, particularly in non-Western contexts like Pakistan, where spiritual and religious values are an integral part of societal life. The focus of this research revolves around three dimensions of spirituality, i.e., meaningful work, inner life, and sense of community, and their impact on employee performance. These dimensions are explored through their mediating relationship with job satisfaction. Spirituality has been linked to job satisfaction in several studies (Labetubun & Dewi, 2022; Çınar et al., 2024). While direct

impact of these dimensions on performance, particularly in Pakistan's conventional banking sector, remains underexplored. In Pakistan, employees spend a significant portion of their time at work, often leaving little time for personal or leisure activities. This commitment to work drives the expectation that work should be meaningful and provide a sense of purpose. Although many view spirituality as a tool for comfort and peace, however, in certain cases, constraints of time often prevent its practice. This has led organizations to focus on creating work environments that foster a sense of purpose and meaning, benefiting both employees and the organization (Amalia et al., 2021; Nurzaman & Amalia, 2022). Employee satisfaction has long been a concern for organizations, yet many firms have not adequately addressed it. Research in this area is still in its early stages, with a growing shift toward understanding the internal needs of employees (Obregon et al., 2022). Addressing these needs, however, is critical, as failure to do so may negatively impact both employees and organizational performance (Jena, 2022; Adanu, 2024). As employees seek self-actualization, spirituality in the workplace becomes a powerful tool to enhance morale, honesty, and trust factors that positively influence performance (Nawaz et al., 2024). These competencies are essential in the banking sector, where employees face constant pressure and stress. Existing literature also highlights the importance of spirituality in shaping employee behavior. Spirituality differs from religiosity, which emphasizes faith and adherence to specific religious practices. It further focuses on personal meaning and connecting to higher ethical values. Even though both have been shown to influence organizational behavior and performance, they operate in different ways. Spirituality fosters a positive outlook, enhances employee dedication, and leads to improved performance. (Obregon et al., 2024). The gap in literature lies in understanding how workplace spirituality influences job satisfaction and performance of the employees, particularly how workplace spirituality positively impacts job satisfaction and performance of the employees. (Asutay et al., 2024) It is crucial to explore the complex relationship between spirituality and performance in diverse cultural settings like Pakistan. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the impact of spirituality on employee performance, considering job satisfaction as a mediator. By focusing on Pakistan's banking sector, where spirituality plays a significant role in employees' personal and professional lives. The study will provide empirical insights into the interplay between these factors and how they contribute to organizational success. Understanding this relationship will allow organizations to develop strategies that enhance employee well-being, foster a positive work environment, and improve performance. Furthermore, this research will contribute to the literature by offering a multidimensional view of spirituality, integrating it with job satisfaction to create a more holistic understanding of employee performance. This approach aligns with recent findings emphasizing the need to consider both the direct and indirect effects of spirituality in the workplace. (Chirico et al., 2024). In summary, the importance of addressing the spiritual needs of employees cannot be overstated. Organizations that fail to recognize the value of spirituality in the workplace risk undermining employee performance. This research seeks to demonstrate that integrating spiritual dimensions and job satisfaction into organizational strategies can lead to improved outcomes for both employees and organizations in the highly competitive banking sector.

Problem Statement

The banking sector plays a pivotal role in Pakistan's economic stability, but it faces challenges related to employee performance and job satisfaction, often affected by the country's cultural and religious values. While previous research has established that spirituality can

significantly impact employee performance, particularly in banking sectors, the role of these factors remains underexplored in the context of Pakistan's banking industry. Existing studies have found that workplace spirituality positively affects employee job performance, particularly by fostering intrinsic motivation and organizational commitment (Hassi et al., 2021). But there is a critical need for research that investigates how different dimensions of spirituality interact with job satisfaction to influence performance outcomes. In Pakistan, spiritual practices, especially those grounded in Islamic teachings, play a central role in shaping workplace culture and employees' behavior. Given the high turnover rates and challenges in maintaining employee motivation in Pakistan's banking sector. Karthikeyan & Lalwani (2019) critically explored the effectiveness of spirituality as a tool to improve performance beyond monetary incentives. Modern organizational practices often emphasize financial and career-related motivations. However, there is a growing recognition that spiritual elements can be leveraged to create a more fulfilling and productive work environment. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by exploring how the dimensions of spirituality influence employee performance, with particular attention to the mediating role of job satisfaction.

Research Questions

How do the three dimensions of spirituality (meaningful work, inner life, and sense of community) impact employee performance in the banking sector in Pakistan?

1. To what extent does job satisfaction mediate the relationship between spirituality and employee performance?
2. To what extent (spirituality) does meaningful work, inner life, and sense of community mediate by job satisfaction enhance employee performance in the banking sector in Pakistan?

Significance of the Study

While workplace spirituality has been widely discussed in literature, confusion often arises due to the overlapping perceptions of individual and workplace spirituality, which impacts the credibility of existing empirical studies. (Mhatre & Mehta, 2023). Similarly, spirituality is often used interchangeably despite being a distinct construct. Previous research has often failed to differentiate the distinct roles of workplace spirituality and individual spirituality separately, therefore leading to inconsistent results in their effects on employee performance and job satisfaction. This study addresses this gap by using distinct measures for individual spirituality to better understand their relationship with employees' performance and job satisfaction. Therefore, the existing literature has thoroughly examined spirituality about employee job performance. (Siregar et al., 2023). However, there remains a significant variation in findings, suggesting the need for clearer and more reliable evidence. Additionally, past studies have mingled workplace spirituality with individual spirituality, leading to a lack of generalizability and credibility. (Fanggidae et al., 2019). By addressing this issue, the study aims to provide clearer insights into how individual spirituality affects employee performance. The significance of this study lies in its examination of the impact of spirituality on employee performance in the Pakistani conventional banking sector, where an area where empirical evidence remains scarce. (Sarmad et al., 2018). The existing body of literature is enriched by largely focusing on the direct effects of spirituality without considering the indirect mechanisms and their effects. Moreover, the study will provide empirical evidence on the differing effects of spirituality in conventional banking

versus Islamic banking, where religiosity plays a more prominent role. While religiosity is crucial in Islamic banking, its role in conventional banking is less understood, making this research particularly relevant in the context of Pakistan's mixed banking sector. This research offers practical implications for improving job satisfaction and overall performance in the banking sector. Finally, this research contributes to understanding the role of spirituality in emerging economies like Pakistan, which differ from Western contexts. The findings can inform managerial policies aimed at creating a supportive, purpose-driven work environment, offering strategies for banking institutions to enhance employee performance and reduce turnover. Whereas the study's unique contribution comes from exploring the mediating role of job satisfaction. This research will not only fill a significant gap in the literature but also offer practical guidance for managers in the banking sector.

Theoretical Foundation Based on SOR Framework

Mehrabian & Russell (1974) first proposed the stimulus-organism-response (SOR) model, which offers a valuable framework for investigating the intricate changes in employee performance linked to spirituality. This paradigm states that an organism's psychological attitude (O) is impacted by external factors (S), which drives an organism to react (R). It has been widely used in research such as user trust, experience, electronic word-of-mouth, and behavioral changes (Yasir et al., 2024). Moreover, for technology, the behaviors have been changed that are used for the protocols of the technology. Research supports the usefulness of SOR in distinguishing employee performance from spiritual stimulation to actual responses, making it an essential tool for examining how Spirituality-based factors impact employees in their domains (Nasir et al., 2023). The SOR framework is employed in this research to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the specific catalysts of employee performance and their relationship to spirituality. This will help to better understand how spiritual aspects ultimately promote job satisfaction and enhance individual performance (Bella et al., 2021).

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

Spirituality - Meaningful Work

In spirituality, the Meaningful Work dimension refers to the sense of purpose and meaning that employees find in their routine work. Research indicates that when employees perceive their work as meaningful, they are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and committed to their jobs, leading to enhanced job performance (Schaufeli, 2021; Saxena & Prasad, 2022). Meaningful work provides a sense of fulfillment and alignment to the employees with their values, which has been positively correlated with higher levels of job performance and lower turnover intentions (Dubey et al., 2022). Workplace spirituality has become an important concept in organizational behavior, highlighting its potential to enhance employee performance. Spirituality in the workplace is generally defined as a sense of purpose, meaningfulness, and association that employees feel towards their work and with their organization. This concept is increasingly recognized for its positive impact on various organizational outcomes, including employee performance (Arneliza et al., 2023). Research shows that workplace spirituality significantly influences employee attitudes and behaviors, which are critical determinants of employee performance. For instance, when employees perceive a sense of spirituality supported in their workplace, they are more likely to exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction, organizational

commitment, and citizenship behavior, all of which contribute positively to job performance (Jena, 2021). Furthermore, spirituality fosters a positive work environment where employees feel valued and are respected by enhancing their job engagement and productivity (Nwanzu & Babalola, 2021). The connection between workplace spirituality and employee performance is also well-documented. Additionally, spirituality is linked to lower stress levels, as employees with a strong sense of spiritual well-being are better equipped to handle workplace pressures, reducing burnout and enhancing job performance (Sahetapy, 2023). Moreover, spirituality in the workplace promotes a sense of community and shared values, which are essential for fostering teamwork and collaboration. Employees who feel spiritually aligned with their organization's mission are more likely to contribute positively to team dynamics and overall organizational success (Iqbal et al., 2021). This sense of belonging and alignment with organizational values not only motivates employees to perform better but also encourages them to go beyond their formal job requirements, thereby enhancing overall organizational performance (Mahfud, 2023). Therefore, appended hypothesis is generated:

H₁: *Spirituality - meaningful work significantly impacts employee job performance.*

Spirituality- Inner Life

The inner life dimension of spirituality refers to employees' introspective and reflective practices, which help them connect with their inner selves and maintain a balanced and resilient approach to work. This inner dimension promotes emotional stability and psychological well-being, which are critical for sustained employee performance, especially in high-pressure work environments (Labetubun & Dewi, 2022). Organizations that encourage practices supporting the inner life, such as mindfulness and meditation, have been found to foster greater employee resilience and improved job performance (Alruwayti, 2023). After the COVID-19 pandemic, spirituality got more attention from scholars. In this regard, Kallarakkal et al., (2024) conducted a review paper on the lethargic behaviors to find out the impact of spirituality on employee job performance. Therefore, they revealed that it is a determining factor that helps to prevent the appearance of chronic and acute anxiety. Similarly, spirituality is perceived as a source of coping and a stress reducer, which has been associated with the highest level of resilience. Whereas, the effects on the recovery of emotional and mental health, together with their coping in critical events, are of great importance. Past studies have shown that spirituality is closely related to commitment and productivity within organizations (Kaplan & Norton, 2004; Frye & Matherly, 2007; Hajevar & Kharazian, 2016). When employees feel a sense of spirituality in the workplace, they are more likely to exhibit higher levels of dedication to their work and demonstrate increased productivity. Additionally, spirituality has been found to have a positive impact on various unit-level outcomes, including employee performance and organizational commitment (Fry et al., 2001; Ghasemi & Naruyi, 2016). It fosters a sense of belonging and connection among employees, leading to improved performance and a stronger commitment to the organization's goals. Therefore appended hypothesis is generated:

H₂: *Spirituality-Inner Life has a significant impact on employee job performance.*

Spirituality- Sense of Community

The sense of community within the workplace involves creating an environment where employees feel connected to their colleagues and the organization. This dimension of spirituality fosters a collaborative and supportive work atmosphere, which enhances teamwork and collective efforts, thereby boosting overall employee performance (Gotsis & Grimani, 2017; Nwanzu & Babalola, 2021). Past studies have shown that a strong sense of community at work is associated with increased job satisfaction and a stronger commitment to organizational goals, which, in return, enhances productivity and organizational performance (Sahetapy, 2023). Moreover, spirituality in the workplace promotes a sense of community and shared values, which are essential for fostering teamwork and collaboration. Employees who feel spiritually aligned with their organization's mission are more likely to contribute positively to team dynamics and overall organizational success (Iqbal et al., 2021). This sense of belonging and alignment with organizational values not only motivates employees to perform better but also encourages them to go beyond their formal job requirements, thereby enhancing overall organizational performance (Mahfud, 2023). Furthermore, the literature highlights the role of spiritual leadership in influencing employee performance. Leaders who demonstrate spiritual qualities, such as empathy, integrity, and humility, are more likely to inspire similar behaviors among their employees, leading to a more cohesive and productive work environment (Latiff, 2021). Such leadership not only fosters a positive workplace culture but also drives employees to perform at their best by aligning their values with those of the organization. Therefore, the study supports the following hypothesis:

H₃: *Spirituality - Sense of Community has a significant impact on employee job performance.*

Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction

The ideology of spirituality has grabbed the attention of scholars and experts. Interestingly, 70 above explanations have been found to explain workplace spirituality, however, none of them is accepted as a universally acknowledged definition. Workplace spirituality for individuals “augments an increment in the gauge of cheerfulness, job fulfillment, devotion, and commitment” (Khan et al., 2021). The study of Giacalone & Jurkiewicz (2003) claimed that workplace spirituality does have an influence on individuals’ attitudes and, hence, plays an essential role. According to Gupta & Sharma et al., (2016), workplace spirituality is positively linked to job satisfaction as it has been found as the most effective response coming from individuals. The authors further argued that dimensions of spirituality are important to achieve inner self needs, as they would help in generating positive responses. Thus, a significant nexus exists between individual spirituality and job satisfaction. Meaningful work has a positive influence on job satisfaction, while community at the workplace also upgrades the satisfaction level. Fairbrother & Warn (2003) explored spirituality and job satisfaction in the context of navy trainees. They revealed that workplace spirituality is directly linked to job satisfaction. Other studies also suggested a direct relationship between meaningful work and job satisfaction (Mitroff & Denton, 1999). Various studies in the field of medicine claimed that nurses and other professionals show more satisfaction with work when a spiritual environment is provided to them (Reineck & Furino, 2005). Chawla & Guda (2010) conducted a study in the context of sales employees to identify the relationship between spirituality and job satisfaction. The study revealed a positive association among constructs. Literature also argues that spirituality affects

social connection among individuals as it promotes harmony and natural provocation, resulting in a satisfied workforce (Milliman et al., 1999). According to Gupta & Sharma (2016) & Massiah et al., (2024), spirituality at the workplace is quite an obligation as it can boost employee morale, effectiveness, and volubility. Spiritual environment advocates shared values and principles useful for employers to lift the aura of the workforce and develop a satisfied workforce. Therefore, the study in the context of mediating effect generates the appended hypotheses:

H₄: Job satisfaction has a significant impact on employee performance.

H₅: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between meaningful work and employee performance.

(H_{5a}) Job satisfaction mediates between a sense of community and employee performance

(H_{5b}) Job satisfaction mediates between inner life and employee performance.

Research Design and Methods

Scale Measurement Development

Table 1: Scales measuring the study variables:

Construct	Measurement Scale	Number of Items
Employee performance	(Bommer et al., 1995; Churchill et al., 1985; Rodwell et al., 1998)	9 items
Sense of Community	(Chawla & Guda, 2010)	9 items
Meaningful Work	(Chawla & Guda, 2010)	7 items
Inner Life	(Chawla & Guda, 2010)	5 items
Job Satisfaction	(Blau, 1987; Saeed et al., 2014; Susskind et al., 2000)	4 items

Study Foundation and Participants' Profile

Data was collected through the online questionnaire, which was distributed among employees of the conventional banks of Karachi city, Pakistan. The survey was chosen due to its ability to reach a large and geographically dispersed sample, ensuring a broad representation of the population. A total of 225 responses were obtained from employees of the top five banks of Karachi City. "The minimum sample size should be ten times the maximum number of arrowheads pointing at a latent construct in a PLS-SEM. Therefore, the number of participants for the research was deemed sufficient. Geographically, the place and population as focused on Karachi city, which was selected as the primary site for data collection due to its diverse population as a major economic hub in Pakistan. The city's demographic diversity and concentration of financial institutions made it an ideal location for capturing a wide range of employee perspectives within the banking sector of Pakistan.

Table: 2 (Population Demographics)

Classification	Characteristics	Frequency	Sample (%)
Gender	Male	125	55.56%
	Female	100	44.44%
Age	22-32	95	42.01%
	33-43	74	32.89%
	44 years and above	56	24.89%
	Less than 1 year	30	13.01%
Job Experience	Between 1 to 2 years	40	17.78%
	Between 2 to 5 years	80	36.01%
	Between 5 to 10 years	75	33.33%
	10000-30000	65	29.01%
Income	30001-50000	75	33.33%
	50001 and above	85	37.78%

Measurement Model Assessment

As discussed, the first step is to assess the outer model, which is known as the *Measurement Model*. The said model establishes a measurement competency, hence placing emphasis on each item of the adopted variable, intended to measure a specific variable. To put another on the process, it can be said that the measurement model uncovers the reliability and validity of survey items that are adopted for the study. In PLS-SEM, there are two criteria normally considered to assess the *Measurement Model* (Ramayah et al., 2011). One is that the nature of the relationship among the constructs conclusively relies on the reliability and validity of the measures. And second one is the suitability of the *Measurement Model* can be evaluated by scrutinizing the *Individual Item Reliabilities, Convergent Validity, and Discriminant Validity*. Individual item reliability was assessed using Composite Reliability (CR) and Internal Consistency Reliability. Convergent Validity is assessed by Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Discriminant Validity (DV) through outer loadings and the Fornell-Larcker Criterion. Internal consistency is normally used to assess the consistency of outcomes between items of the same test. It evaluates the adopted items to measure the constructs and offers similar scores (Hair et al., 2014). Therefore, internal consistency reliability is being measured through CR (Composite Reliability) in the present study. Hair et al. (2014) argued that, unlike Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability values lie between 0 to 1. In addition, the threshold set by scholars indicates that CR values should not be less than 0.6. However, a value of 0.7 or above would be considered more reliable (Henseler et al., 2009). Similarly, a value between 0.6-0.7 is considered decent in the case of Cronbach Alpha, however, if the values lie between 0.7 and 0.9, then it may be regarded as more adequate (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1978; Henseler et al., 2009). As mentioned earlier, reliability analysis is necessary to check the internal consistency of the constructs. This way, the study can confirm that items related to the scale are correlated and measure the variable correctly. In Table 3, reliability is confirmed due to the acceptable alpha values, which are higher than 0.60. Although Composite Reliability is also used to check reliability, however, it is a better approach compared to Cronbach's Alpha. (Barroso et al., 2009). Since Cronbach's Alpha has few drawbacks, the CR method is more rigorous, hence, it provides better insights. (Starkweather, 2012).

First, factor loading was calculated, and according to standard criteria, item loading values should be greater than the cut-off value, which is 0.50. In Table 3, we can see that all the loaded items exceed the threshold criteria, hence confirming data reliability. Table 3 also confirms the reliability of the model because all the CR values are greater than 0.8 (Hair et al., 2010). Therefore, the results show that all of the study variables contain a high level of internal consistency. Construct Validity refers to “the extent that the results obtained from the use of a measure fit the theories around which the test is designed” (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). According to Bagozzi et al., (1991), Construct Validity is classified into two validity types: Convergent and Discriminant validity. However, the Convergent Validity talks about the model validity and refers to “the extent to which measures of the same constructs are theoretically related to each other”. Based on the definition, it can be stipulated that the Convergent Validity pinpoints the degree of correlation among variables. Scholars normally argue that convergent validity can be measured via AVE and should be equal to or greater than 0.5 (Hair et al., 2012). It means that the 0.5 AVE value shows adequate convergent validity. In other words, latent variables explain "half of the variance of its indicators and also specify an adequate convergent validity". In the present research, convergent validity is examined through AVE, and the outcomes given in Table 3 indicate that the AVE of each construct exceeds the recommended threshold value. Therefore, it can be said that the convergent validity of the outer model is established.

Table 3: (Loadings: Cronbach’s Alpha, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extract)

Category	Variable	Indicator	Loading	Cronbach’s Alpha	CR	AVE
Spirituality	Sense of Community (SOC)	SOC1	0.756	0.83	0.87	0.53
		SOC2	0.728			
		SOC3	0.762			
		SOC4	0.788			
		SOC5	0.779			
		SOC6	0.789			
		SOC7	0.755			
		SOC8	0.712			
		SOC9	0.750			
	Meaningful Work (MW)	MW1	0.675	0.88	0.78	0.55
		MW2	0.657			
		MW3	0.645			
		MW4	0.612			
		MW5	0.678			
		MW6	0.735			
		MW7	0.677			
Job	Inner Life (INL)	INL1	0.797	0.71	0.76	0.55
		INL2	0.784			
		INL3	0.737			
		JS1	0.789	0.95	0.95	0.53

Satisfaction (JS)	JS2	0.713
	JS3	0.678
	JS4	0.750
	EP2	0.713
Employee Performance (EP)	EP3	0.779
	EP4	0.763
	EP5	0.789
	EP6	0.735
	EP7	0.777

In Table 3, all the Cronbach values exceed the threshold criteria. Hence, confirms the data's reliability. However, it should be noted that not all the item loading values were greater than 0.5. Thereby, items with lesser value were deleted from the model. Besides this, Table 3 also confirms the composite reliability of the model because all the CR values are greater than 0.8 (Hair et al., 2010). This indicates that all of the study variables contain a high level of internal consistency.

Structured Model Assessment

As mentioned earlier, once the measurement model (outer model) is examined and the reliability and validity of the model are established, the next step is to evaluate the outer model (Structural Model) results. This involved assessing the outer model's predictive abilities and the relationships between the constructs. According to Hair Jr. et al., (2014), the key criteria for assessing the structural model in PLS-SEM are the significance of the path coefficients, coefficient determination (R^2). The present study did a systematic analysis of the structural model to test hypotheses. The assessment started with the evaluation of the direct relationship of IVs with DV. As discussed, path coefficient size was evaluated via PLS-SEM, and its significance was calculated through bootstrapping. In the first stage, the direct association of variables is evaluated, which covers all the hypotheses. By introducing job satisfaction as a mediator, the relationship of IVs with mediators was evaluated, which covers hypotheses H4-H5 and H5a-H5b. Moreover, the relation between the mediator and DV was also evaluated to test H4 and H5. The assessment of the mediation effect with the indirect path coefficient was observed, which covers hypotheses H5-H5a & H5b. Referring to hypotheses 4-5, results revealed a positive and significant relationship of spirituality with employee performance, as the p-values are less than 5% with a beta coefficient of 0.168, hence, supporting H1, H2, and H3. So, it was observed that the spiritual relationships share a positive and significant relationship with employee performance and job satisfaction as a mediator.

Table 4: (Hypotheses Testing - Direct Relationships)

Hypotheses/Path	Path Coefficient	T Statistics	P-Value	Decision
SOC -> EP	0.168	2.025	0.043	Supported
MW -> EP	0.10	2.03	0.02	Supported
INL -> EP	0.513	0.13	0.25	Supported

Mediation Analysis

As mentioned earlier, mediation analysis has also been performed in this study. Mediation analysis is normally performed to assess the indirect association of the independent variables with the dependent variable in the presence of another variable that provides another path link between said variables. Preacher & Hayes (2008) argued that various mediation techniques and tools are present, including the famous serial approach known as the Baron & Kenny (1986) method. Moreover, the Sobel (1982) test, product distribution, and bootstrapping techniques are also famous for their mediation techniques. In addition, the bootstrapping method is a familiar and popular one that represents the sample distribution of the indirect effect (Sobel, 1982; Baron & Kenny, 1986; Hoyle & Robinson, 2004; MacKinnon et al., 2007). Bootstrapping starts with the estimation of the path model of the direct association of IVs with DVs when the mediator is not present. The path estimation model is assessed at the second stage of mediation analysis and in the presence of a mediator. At this stage, the entire focus is on IV-MED relationships and MED-DV relationships, whether these are significant or not. However, it is not enough to conclude the whole mediation process. The study aims to assess the mediation effect of job satisfaction on employee performance. By employing the bootstrapping method, Table 5 indicates that the path coefficient of all study predictors in the presence of a mediator is positive. It is quite clear from Table 5 that job satisfaction mediates the positive relationship between spirituality and employee performance. However, job satisfaction fully mediates the relationship between SOC (Sense of Community), MW (Meaningful Work), & INL (Inner Life), and employee performance, as the p-values are less than 5%.

Table 5: (Mediation Test of the Variables)

Hypotheses/Paths	Path-Coefficient	T-Statistics	P-Value	Decision
SOC-> JS ->EP	.232	5.36	.001	Supported
MW-> JS ->EP	.345	0.67	.003	Supported
INL-> JS ->EP	.264	4.75	.043	Supported

Discussion and implications

The study articulated research questions based on identified gaps. The results of each hypothesis, with their relevance to the past literature, have been discussed in the literature. The study scrutinized three dimensions of an individual's spirituality: sense of community, meaningful work, and inner life. Results indicate these dimensions affect employee performance positively. Inconsistent with the literature, it is argued that the individual's spirituality at the workplace helps employees channel their energies in the right direction (Maryati & Astuti, 2022). This inculcates that the entire process of spirituality is a self-discovery process through which employees get an opportunity to discover their true purpose in life. Spirituality also shapes ethical behavior, which would result in developing a stronger team and better relationship dynamics at the workplace. This eventually helps employees deliver better work performance (Kirklikçi, 2022). However, the insignificant relationship between inner life and employee performance enlightens the concept and at the same time leads to negative consequences in the form of worker exploitation. Moreover, spirituality can also give birth to cults due to escalating

group thinking and their inclination. Finally, the other possible explanations are linked to new generations and their work ethics, which lack core spiritual values (Wijaya et al., 2021; Farooq et al., 2023). Contrasting much with the literature, certain past studies argued that meaningful work enhances job satisfaction and, consequently, employee performance (Dubey et al., 2022) and also provides a sense of purpose. However, in the Pakistani banking sector, rigid job structures prioritize operational efficiency over personal fulfillment, limiting opportunities for employees to perceive their work as meaningful. Whereas, bureaucratic processes diminish the perceived meaningful work and affect overall satisfaction (Albrecht et al., 2021). High-pressure environments can overshadow the intrinsic fulfillment of the employees derived from their job roles (Pio, 2021), and cultural emphasis on external achievements may diminish the impact of internal fulfillment (Bal & Kökalan, 2021). This lack of perceived personal value may explain why job satisfaction does not mediate the relationship. As expected, a sense of community ultimately enhances job satisfaction by fostering a supportive environment (Buonomo et al., 2023). Integrated employees are more likely to feel satisfied, as social interactions mitigate job stress (Wijaya et al., 2021). Community sense, however, enhances employee commitment and contributes to higher job satisfaction levels (Khusanova et al., 2021). Fostering collaboration is crucial for maintaining employee morale in high-pressure environments, as discussed by Mathew et al., (2019). However, the mediating role of job satisfaction underscores the importance of fostering certain social connections among employees at work. Providing a sense of community can improve job satisfaction and enhance individual job performance (Pio, 2021). In light of the generated hypotheses, inner life has been linked to improved job satisfaction of the employees, which subsequently enhances employee performance (Pio, 2021). Individuals who cultivate a rich inner life often experience greater job satisfaction because their work aligns with their values and beliefs. Supporting employees' inner lives may be essential for improving job satisfaction and performance in industrial sectors like banking. Therefore, the provision of such space for personal reflection by employees is very crucial. Supporting employees' inner lives leads to higher job satisfaction, translating to better performance (David & Iliescu, 2020). This is pertinent in the Pakistani banking sector, where spiritual practices are highly valued, whereas organizations supporting spiritual well-being that improvements may be seen in job satisfaction and individual performance. Reflective practices can enhance job satisfaction by allowing employees to reconnect with their values (Abualigah & Koburtay, 2022). Fostering an environment supporting the inner life of employees can increase job satisfaction and boost performance (Nwachukwu et al., 2022).

Practical Implications

The workplace spirituality inception has caught the attention of scholars within organizational psychology. It allows organizations to learn and generate an engaging workforce. In light of the findings, it is revealed that spiritual orientation at the organizational and individual level affects employee well-being and boosts employee performance. It means that firms need to make sure that their employees' spiritual aspirations are well respected and stimulated with care. This helps them to build wholesome growth, which eventually leads to exceptional work performance. A spiritual environment helps courage development and makes the relationship with employees more honest and empathetic. Interposition of job design should also be encouraged by firms, especially focusing on autonomy in work profile, as it may create a safe and spiritual room for employees. Firms must also adopt employee-friendly practices to promote

extra-role behavior that would eventually benefit organizations in the long run. When fair and supportive treatment is given to employees by nurturing their spiritual side, they may cultivate a positive attitude, which boosts work performance. The associated work with line managers as they are responsible for communicating the company's vision, goals, and messages to employees. Similarly, they are also responsible for making sure that the exerted efforts are enough to create comfort for employees because this makes them feel that they are truly a part of the greater success. Moreover, firms' HR policies must be in line with their vision and values. However, these policies must also foster the spiritual growth of employees throughout their journey. Plausible interventions and mechanisms to advance person-organization fitness are necessary to create a committed and engaged workforce. Fitment can only be possible when HR managers develop mentoring programs for their employees through which employees can absorb the experiences from the workplace and their associates. This initiative would increase the strength and stability of employees, through which they would gain a clear understanding of the true meaning of life on a broader level. Managers can get a chance to reap the potential benefits by creating an environment that has spiritual principles such as openness, acceptance, and tolerance of others' viewpoints and their diverse sets of values. This inclination encourages employees to accept the support they receive from the organization in the form of increased participation. When organization philosophies are being communicated with a clear understanding, it helps to maintain the legacy of transparency and unknot the ill feelings of the workforce. Therefore, the organizations should also make themselves aware of the fact that this new generation has different work ethics through which they not only assess their work duties but also organizational policies. Thus, firms must make sure that they are employee-friendly.

In light of the study findings, it can also be illustrated that spirituality at work can enhance individuals' performance. It means that organizations should design such activities that would reinforce spirituality and enhance employee performance, such as "adaptive performance, task performance, and contextual performance". The study also suggests honing the principles that would target spirituality in workplace settings. The study also shows support for spirituality studies to an extent where the effectiveness of its practices can be explored dimension-wise, and the concept must not be taken as a size fits for. This way, workplace spirituality can be viewed as a contingent matter that goes through all the requirements and characteristics of work duties that are to be performed at an organization. Banking institutions are also advised to offer their views to employees via values that contain a spiritual aura so that the workforce can experience togetherness and positivity within the organization and society. Higher spirituality at the workplace, when absorbed by employees, will produce valuable outcomes. Thus, banks should be able to communicate positive values via spiritual principles. In Pakistan's crisis, along with post-pandemic consequences, employees experience higher levels of stress, particularly in the banking industry, which is a crucial service sector. In such a situation, higher management of banks must be involved in programs that enhance employee spirituality, which would ultimately increase employee performance.

Conclusion

The core aim of the study is to investigate the influence of spirituality on employee performance in the presence of job satisfaction as a mediator. For spirituality, the study considered three dimensions of spirituality. The study identified a gap in the literature by

synthesizing the variables. The study devised an appropriate methodology for the core findings to achieve the overall objectives and goals of the study. The objectives were set by reviewing the literature critically. In addition, the study provides practical and theoretical contributions to create awareness among organizations and leaders. Conclusively, we can say that this research work has indeed added valuable knowledge to the literature by providing empirical evidence from emerging economies. From the analysis, the banking sector is encouraged to use spiritual practices. After scrutinizing spirituality, job satisfaction, and their linkage with employee job performance, the supported hypotheses offer implications for personnel and emphasize particular practices for improving employee performance and the future outlook of the firm. The proven association between employee performance and spirituality implies that spiritual practices not only enhance employee performance but also make the organizational environment pleasant, which eventually makes the workforce more productive. Such motives also indicate that organizations are focusing on such employees and empowering them to showcase their full participation, which either directly or indirectly increases the chances of core goals being achieved timely manner.

Limitations of the Study and Future Directions

Besides the length of full contributions, the study is full of limitations as well. Since the study is one of the few works to investigate outlined constructs in the Pakistani context, Therefore, the present investigation and its outcomes are yet to be considered exploratory. Other limitations of the study are as follows: the study only considered those employees of the conventional banking sector who were willing to participate and could reveal their information openly. It was also assumed that the responses were sufficient in terms of knowledge and were answered truthfully with the conscious mind. Also, employee performance was considered as a whole. Hence, no acknowledgment of other dimensions. Furthermore, a cross-sectional design was employed to collect data from the employee perspective. The Five-point Likert scale was used to assess the indicators. Moreover, the sampled data were collected from the Karachi region only. The study has also investigated the impact of spirituality only. Several other variables are relevant but have not been explored in this study. Similarly, to investigate the indirect impact, the study used job satisfaction as a mediating variable. Due to the limited scope of this study, several other factors have not been explored. The population of the study belonged to the city of Karachi, and due to the limited scope of this study, the study was confined to collecting data from only the city of Karachi. Lastly, A cross-sectional design was applied, and due to this, the results might not be robust. Hence, other research designs, such as longitudinal, can be used to test the results more clearly. The study considers job satisfaction as a mediator to explore the impact of spirituality on employee performance. Thus, future scholars may consider other factors such as "citizenship behavior, work-life balance, employee engagement, and motivation, as moderators or mediators to scrutinize the relationship further. Since the model has been evaluated from the perspective of employees at the individual level, hence, the model can be replicated for exploration at the organizational level. Moreover, the results can also be contrasted with various other sectors and demographics. Generally, studies have been focusing on the role of organizations toward employee performance; however, the present study sheds light on employees' roles with the consideration of an individual's spirituality and follower-centric approach in an organizational context, thus representing the theoretical contribution of research.

Due to the consideration of certain spiritual practices, future studies are asked to review another model to gain more clarity and fruitful knowledge.

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