Workplace Spirituality, Organizational Politics and Employee Wellness: A Research agenda

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ABSTRACT

Spirituality in workplace has caught snowballing attention of the popular literature and organizational practitioners; however it still is far away from being considered an established theory in management sciences. Although there are innumerable articles available on workplace spirituality, still it lacks a comprehensive definition and elucidation of the concept owing to the complexity of the construct. In this article, the authors review various literature streams to explore what dimensions and attributes are considered to be important and effective in terms of practical applications of spirituality in the workplace. It also provide a conceptual framework that covers the research in workplace spirituality and its relationship with the comparatively under-researched constructs of organizational politics and employee wellness. The paper concludes with a discussion on the gap areas across the various research domains and a discussion of the important areas for future research.

Keywords: literature review; workplace spirituality; individual spirituality; organizational spirituality; organizational politics; employee wellness.
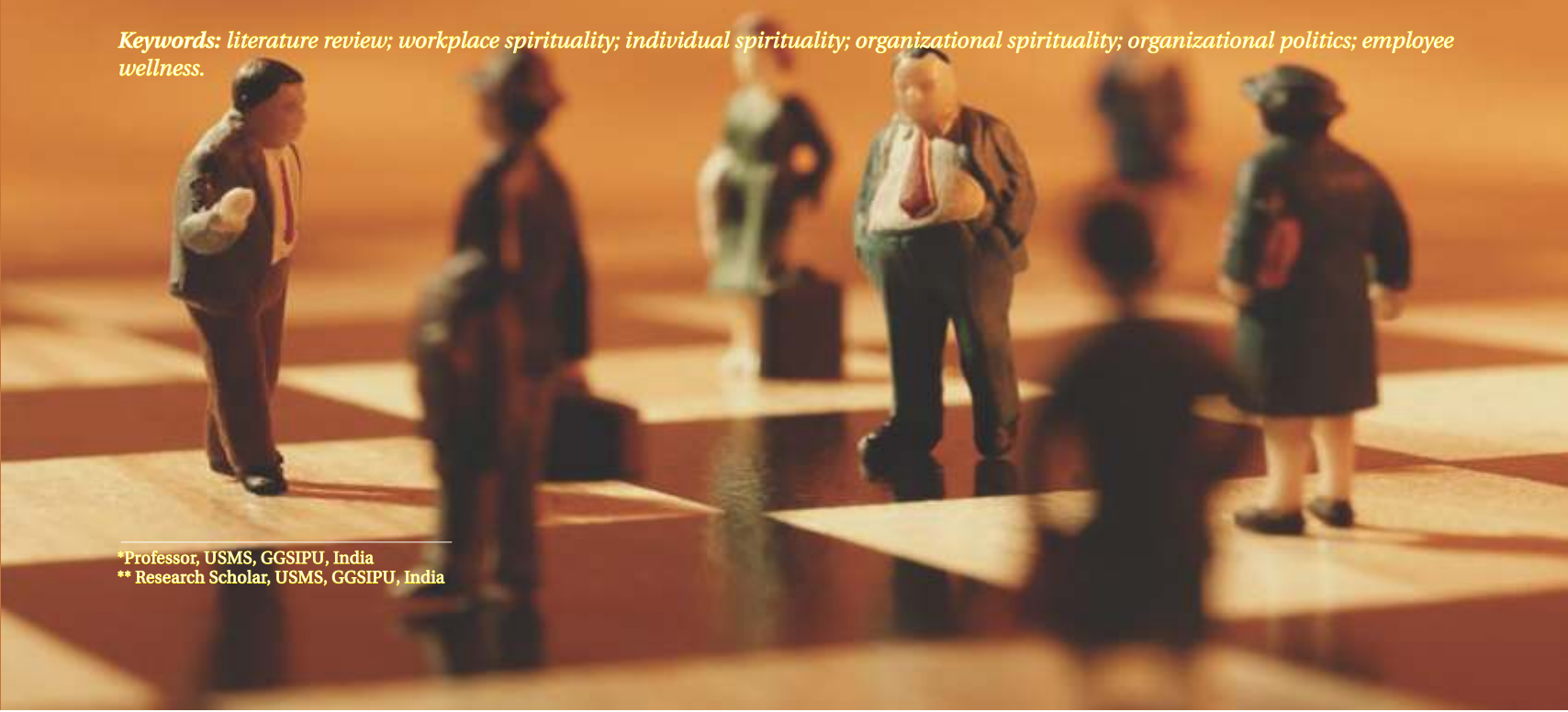
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INTRODUCTION

As far as the human history is concerned, spirituality has occupied a significant place in the lives of human beings. Beliefs and practices relating to some higher power, authority, or presence beyond the physical plane have always formed a part of most civilizations and cultures. Furthermore, it has become important to distinguish religion from spirituality as recently many people have begun to define themselves as "spiritual, but not religious".

The spiralling interest in spirituality in corporations and businesses around the world is apparent and manifested through various theoretical and methodological attempts by organizational consultants (Barrett, 2003). The Corporate world is gradually realising the spiritual side of individuals and their immense potentials (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003; Kolodinsky et al., 2007; Marques et al., 2007; Mitroff & Denton, 1999). The soaring importance of workplace spirituality can be mapped by the launch of innumerable spirituality courses in management studies and social sciences; roaring sales of bestsellers like 'Spiritual Audit of Corporate America' (Mitroff and Denton, 1999), 'Spirit at Work' (Conger, 1994), Corporate America (Whyte, 1994); special issues of renowned journals such as the Journal of Organizational Change Management (1999& 2003), Journal of Management Inquiry (2005) and the Leadership Quarterly (2005). Furthermore, a separate unit was created to focus on increasing interest in spiritual issues - the 'Management Spirituality and Religious Interest Group' (MSR Group) within the 'American Academy of Management' in 1999 (Brown, 2003).

Literature is interspersed with the ideas about why there has been such immense interest in workplace spirituality and grown so widely in recent times. Unprecedented and ever-increasing instability in organizational settings (Mitroff, Mason and Pearson, 1994), caused by innumerable factors, have trickle-down effects that are widespread and genuinely felt by most of the workers (Pfeffer, 1998). However, in spite of the increasing interest, not much theoretical development has been achieved until now. Most of the perspectives in the field has been primarily subjective, conceptual, or theoretical in nature (Lund Dean, 2003). Scholars believe that much of the interest in spirituality as an academic topic has grown perhaps as a result of the confluence of different events. The growing attention in the past one and a half decade was focused on investigating the association between workplace spirituality and myriad benefits it brings to the organization (Biberman & Whitty, 1997; Mitroff & Denton, 1999; Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). The focus of most of the research indeed has been in the direction of examining the benefits it brings to the organizations and how workplace spirituality has developed into a distinct area of study.

This literature synthesis aims at exploring the existing literature stream on spirituality at workplace and attempts at bringing together various views on the meaning, definitions and dimensions of spirituality and how it is perceived at varied levels of expression such as individual, team and at the organizational level. This research aims to explore and discuss a variety of researches undertaken on the motley potential benefits and negatives related to its manifestation in the workplace. This article primarily focuses on identifying the gaps in the studies within and across different research streams and develop a theoretical framework that covers the research on workplace spirituality and its relationship with the other much researched organizational constructs like employee wellbeing and organizational politics. The relationship propositions based on our literature review may certainly be useful in directing important avenues of future research.

METHODOLOGY

The authors conducted an extensive exploration of prior literature, utilising a range of online databases to shortlist an all-inclusive and its associations with other organizational constructs to study. In addition, we also hunted Google Scholar for studies that included any of the below mentioned key terms. The databases used were:

Emerald Fulltext; Elsevier's Business, EBSCO host and Research Gate Besides, a few published and unpublished theses from *UMI Proquest dissertation* databases were also studied for further insights.

The key terms used for reaching out the included articles for this paper from amongst the various journals are:

Spirituality, Workplace Spirituality, Spirit at work, Spirituality at workplace, organizational spirituality, dimensions of spirituality, spiritual values, organizational values, transcendence, inner life

Additionally, review time was dedicated towards researching the domain of employee wellness and organizational politics.

This paper is organized as follows: Literature relevant to workplace spirituality is discussed first, wherein different aspects of spirituality at workplace as identified in earlier research are discussed, then the notion of spirit at work (individual spirituality) and organizational spirituality and its constituting dimensions are identified. After this, the employee wellness construct, the existing models in the wellness domain and its most important elements are examined. Finally the attempt is made at investigating the relevant literature on organizational politics and its inherent components- both negative connotations as well as positives. The review also explores the linkages between these constructs and presents the proposed theoretical framework for future exploration.

The Concept of Spirituality Review of literature shows innumerable definitions ad perspectives on spirituality. As the term 'spirituality' offers varied meanings to the interpretation by different people, it is quite challenging to have a common, agreeable definition. This part of the study will assess the advancement in conception of the essence of spirituality and especially focus on its association with religiosity.

The word 'spirituality' originates from the word 'spirit' coined from the Latin word 'spiritus' meaning 'breath' – breath of life (Pfeffer, 2000). This implies that spirit is the life-breath which helps in kindling both the singular and organization pursuits with fresh lease of life.

Although the workplace spirituality is gaining attention, still the debate on what constitutes spirituality is a never-ending one. Skelley (1996) explained spirituality as: (i) human ability to seek self-transcendence; (ii) religious part of life to help connect self with otherworldliness; (iii) A specific experience by way of following a particular religion Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Christian, Muslim to help creating self-transcendence. Spirituality as defined by King & Nicols (1999) is the search of righteousness, meaning of life, inner strength and connection with other forms of life and a supreme connect. In summation, spirituality is that which comes from inner self, beyond the basic existence of life.

Canda, Nakashima, and Furman (2004) have proposed that the individual spirituality may be expressed through the religious or nonreligious forms; nevertheless the term spirituality embraces religiosity but is not limited to it alone. Garcia-Zamor (2003) reasoned that the basic beliefs in spirituality and religion are similar but not identical and they may or maynot coexist in an office setting; however it is important to appreciate that both are distinct. Anderson (2000) suggested that religion is the path that some choose to nurture their spirit. Much of the literature on spirituality separatedShankar', "Spirituality is like the banana, and religion is like the peel. What's happening is that people are holding on to the peel and throwing away the banana". opposed to adherence to exclusivity, dogmatic beliefs, the concept of spirituality from that of religion (Piedmont, 2001).

According to renowned spiritual leader, Ravi Shankar, popularly known as 'Sri Sri Ravi As rituals and practices in institutionalised religion, spirituality is characterized as an inclusive, self-driven and universal human feeling. Spirituality is considered to have a broader ambit than religion.

Spirituality is looked upon as a private, all-inclusive and a widespread feeling of one universe of human sensitivity, as opposed to adherence to dogmatic beliefs, rituals or practices of a particular religious institution or tradition (Marques, Dhiman and King, 2007).

From the discussion above, it thus is clear that spirituality involves the search of human beings' meaning and purpose of existence, while religion is an organized effort to connect to a higher power or God with aid of rituals and practices. Therefore the researchers postulate that spirituality sans religion is a feeling of self-transcendence which extends beyond the mundane life yet remains connected to it. It must be noted that although historically spirituality has been rooted in religion; the outlook of workplace spirituality is not associated with any particular religion (Korac-Kakabadse et al., 2002).

CONCEPTUALIZING DEFINITION AND DIMENSIONS OF WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY

After establishing the link between spirituality and religiosity and articulating how "spirituality" will be interpreted in this study, we now need to consider spirituality at workplace. Further review of the key articles brought up two basic issues; first is how to define spirit / spirituality at workplace and identify its core dimensions and secondly to identify the level at which it occurs - individual/ group/ organisational. We attempt to find appropriate explanation to both these issues by examining prominent empirical studies.

Karakas (2010) reviewed the literature and discovered more than seventy definitions of spirituality at workplace and it is fascinating to note that despite this there still is no broadly established definition of spirituality (Markow and Klenke, 2005). Laabs (1995) specified that it is simpler to elucidate what does not constitute spirituality in business than it is to define what does. He further stated that "defining spirituality in the workplace is like capturing an angel - it's ethereal and beautiful, but mystifying".

Workplace spirituality although considered to be an extremely subjective and philosophical theory, most of the academic explanations concede that it comprises of a sense of entity, deep connections at workplace and work values (Gibbons, 2000). Widely known for their path-breaking study, Mitroff and Denton (1999) have viewed workplace spirituality as an exploration of one's ultimate goal in life, to acknowledge the importance of developing strong ties with co-workers and also have an alignment with the values of the organization. Table 1 gives a snapshot of the various definitions found in literature review.

Table 1: Representative Sampling of Definitions for Workplace Spirituality found in the Literature Review

Definitions given	Source
That vast realm of human potential dealing with ultimate purposes, higher entities, with God, with life, compassion and purpose	Tart (1975)
The human dimension within human experience	Shafranske & Gorsuch (1984)
The human dimension that transcends the biological, psychological, and social aspects of living	Mauritzen (1988)
Our response to a deep and mysterious human yearning for self-transcendence and surrender	Benner (1989)
A subjective experience of the sacred	Vaughn (1991)
A personal life principle which animates a transcendent quality of relationship with God	Emblen (1992)
An inner experience an individual has that can be evidenced by his or her behaviour	McCormick (1994)
Expressing our desires to find meaning and purpose in our lives and is a process of living out one's set of deeply held personal values	Neck & Miliman (1994)

Definitions given	Source
Spirituality is an individual's inner source of inspiration	Dehler & Welsh (1994)
How the individual lives meaningfully with ultimacy in his or her response to the deepest truths of the universe	Bregman & Thierman (1995)
A human attitude consisting of affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions	Beazley (1997)
Spirituality in the workplace is about people seeing their work as a spiritual path, as an opportunity to grow personally and to contribute to society in a meaningful way.	Neal (1997)
That which involves ultimate and personal truths	Wong (1998)
The basic feeling of being connected with one's complete self, others and the entire universe	Mitroff & Denton (1999)
Universal aspect of human experience concerned with the search for a sense of meaning, purpose, and morally satisfying relationships with self, other people, the universe, and ultimate reality, however a person or group understands it	Canda and Furman (1999)
The personal experience of ultimate concern	Emmons (2000)
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)
Workplace spirituality involves positively sharing, valuing, caring, respecting, acknowledging, and connecting the talents and energies of people in meaningful goal-directed behaviour that enables them to belong, be creative, be personally fulfilled, and take ownership in their combined destiny	Adams and Csiernik (2001)
An individual state of being, the essence of the inner-self, and the part of life that transcends the basic five senses but is as real as the physical realm	Klenke (2003)
A framework of organizational values evidenced in the culture that promotes employees' experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected to others in a way that provides feelings of completeness and joy.	Giacalone & Jurkiewicz (2003)
Spirituality seems to point to the intuitive, non-rational, meditative side of ourselves, the side that strives for inner and outer connection and a sense of wholeness	Forman (2004)
Spirituality is a deeply intuitive sense of relatedness or interconnectedness to the world and the universe in which we live	Eckersley (2000)
Some internal substance, belief, attitude or emotion that influence people's behaviour	Moore & Casper (2006)
An experience of interconnectedness and trust among those involved in a work process, engendered by individual goodwill; leading to the collective creation of a motivational organizational culture, epitomized by reciprocity and solidarity; and resulting in enhanced overall performance, which is ultimately translated in lasting organizational excellence	Marques (2006)
Spirituality concerns creating a sense of transcendence, or vocation, through one's work and foster bonds of connectedness between employees experiencing completeness, fulfilment and self-actualization in their work	Gotsis and Kortezi (2008)
Aspects of the workplace, either in the individual, the group or the organization that promote individual feelings of satisfaction through transcendence	Giacalone & Jurkiewicz (2010)

While a precise and universally recognized definition of workplace spirituality has yet not been established, a number of themes have been consistently identified in the course of research. Ashmos and Duchon (2000) recognized and established the theory of spirituality at work by ascertaining its dimensions and its presence at three levels that of individual level, the work- unit level, and the organizational level.

Milliman et al. (2003) based their study on the work undertaken by Ashmos and Duchon. They took three of the seven identified dimensions for the individual level viz., inner life, meaning at work and community. Their research endorses the findings of Ashmos and Duchon (2000) and the authors provide some early critical empirical evidences of the positive impact of workplace spirituality on the employee work attitudes and the organization. Rego and Pina e Cunha (2008) studied the impact of five dimensions of workplace spirituality viz., meaningful work, sense of community, sense of contribution to society, alignment between organizational and individual values and inner life on organization commitment. Houston and Cartwright (2007) point out that within the research literature there are four common components to the definition of spirituality and the combination of experiencing the Transcendence, love and compassion, interconnectedness, coupled with the journey to find meaning in life leads to a profound sense of belonging and inspires the spiritual person to serve the common good.

Kinjerski and Skrypnek (2004) carried out a qualitative study comprising of in-depth interviews and written surveys on 14 professionals who were asked to reveal their individual experiences of spirit at work. As contrast to the other investigators of the field who spoke about spirituality at workplace (Mitroff & Denton, 1999; Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003); on the basis of the results of their work, the authors repositioned the construct as the 'spirit at work' which focuses on individual experiences at work. Further in their 2006 article, Kinjerski & Skrypnek provided the following comprehensive definition:

"Spirit at work is a distinct state that is characterised by cognitive, interpersonal, spiritual, and mystical dimensions. Spirit at work involves: (1) engaging work characterised by a profound feeling of well-being, a belief that one is engaged in meaningful work that has a higher purpose, an awareness of alignment between one's values and beliefs and one's work, and a sense of being authentic; (2) a spiritual connection characterised by a sense of connection to something larger than self; (3) a sense of community characterised by a feeling of connectedness to others and common purpose; and (4) a

mystical or unitive experience characterised by a positive state of energy or vitality, a sense of perfection, transcendence, and experiences of joy and bliss" (Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2006a; p. 12)

Table 2: Summary of select studies on dimensions of Spirituality in the Workplace

Dimensions of Spirituality in the Workplace	Inner Life	Meaningful Work	Sense of Community	Blocks to Spirituality	Personal Responsibility	Positive connections	Contemplation	Alignment with Organizational values	Work Unit values and community	Transcendence	Love & Compassion
Ashmos & Duchon (2000)	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×		×
Milliman et al. (2003)		×	×					×			
Sheep (2006)	×	×	×						×	×	
Kinjerski & Skrypnek (2006)	×	×	×							×	
Houston & Cartwright (2007)	×	×								×	×
Kolodinsky et al. (2008)		×				×		×			
Rego & e Cunha (2008)	×	×	×					×		×	
Badrinarayan Shankar Pawar (2009)		×	×					×			
Petchaswang & Duchon (2009)	×	×	×							×	
Nasina & Doris (2011)		×	×					×	×		

The authors have proposed anywhere from three to 20 dimensions of workplace spirituality. These dimensions have wide variations. Sheep (2006) confers that despite this diversity, a conceptual convergence of workplace spirituality as a multidimensional theory. The dimensions and themes representing spirituality at workplace as identified during the literature review have been presented in Table 2 above.

Based on the review of literature, Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003) defined workplace spirituality as

"a framework of organisational values evidenced in the culture that promotes employees' experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected to others in a way that provides feelings of completeness and joy".

The paper by Kolodinsky et al. (2008) has given the following three distinct thoughts on workplace spirituality-

    Application of personal spirituality at the workplace, implying assimilation of individual spiritual values and beliefs at work

    Organizational spirituality as individual perception of the spiritual values embodied within organizational boundaries

    Interactive workplace spirituality involving the interplay between spiritual values of the individuals and the organizational values.

Kolodinsky et al. (2008) believed that the above way of postulating workplace spirituality fits the concept of person-

organization fit, that is, the match between workers' spiritual values and their perceptions of the spiritual values exuded by the organization.

Marques (2005) endorsed the view presented by Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003) that employees have an inherent yearning for assimilating their individual and organizational values, assuming their profession to be an extension of their inner expression. The inherent values within the workplace spirituality construct have been collated in the Table 3 given below.

Table 3: Listing of the values embodied in workplace spirituality studies

Attributes	Author	Remarks
Equality, Honesty, Compassion, Avoiding Harm, Respect, Peace, Justice, Forgiveness, Service, Duty, Trustworthiness, Being a good citizen, Peace, Thankfulness	Jackson (1999) Kriger & Hanson (1999)	Taken from an article by McGhee & Grant (2008) - Spiritual values from world's main religions (Sikhism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Bahaism, Confucianism & Jainism)
Integrity, Humanism, Awareness, Meaningfulness, Responsibility, Love, Inner Peace, Truth, Humility, Service to others	Giacalone & Jurkiewicz (2003)	Manifestation of spirituality
Integrity, Humanism, Awareness, Meaningfulness, Responsibility, Love, Inner Peace, Truth, Humility, Service to others	Giacalone & Jurkiewicz (2003)	Manifestation of spirituality
Forgiveness, Kindness, Integrity, Empathy, Honesty, Patience, Courage, Trust, Humility, Service to others	Fry (2003)	Tied to spiritual leadership – comes under altruistic love
Benevolence, Generativity, Humanism, Integrity, Justice, Mutuality, receptivity, respect, Responsibility, Trust	Giacalone & Jurkiewicz (2010)	Values framework of workplace spirituality
Honesty, Forgiveness, Hope, Gratitude, Humility, Compassion, Integrity	Fry (2005)	Set of core values reflected by a spiritual being
Respect, Understanding, Openness, Ethics, Honesty, Self-motivated, Giving, Trust, Kindness, Team orientation, Peace & Harmony, Acceptance, Creativity, Appreciation, Helpfulness	Joan Marques, S. Dhiman & R. King (2005)	Vital themes for a spiritual workplace

It becomes evident from the review of literature above that there is no dearth of definitions and identified components of workplace spirituality; also there are many possible levels of analysis for workplace spirituality such as individual, group, team, organisational level and interactive observations.

WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL OUTCOMES

No research gains prominence in academic and organizational sciences unless its benefits and outcomes are mapped with it. It is generally an accepted notion that implementation of workplace spirituality leads to creation of an amiable work environment which then creates a mutually beneficial situation for both employees and the employers. Individual accomplishment and high morale are closely related to exceptional performance, therefore, have a straight bearing on the financial success of the organizations (Milliman et al., 1999; Krishnakumar & Neck, 2002). Hence, workplace spirituality studies largely looks at organizational constructs such as commitment to the organization, turnoverintention, job satisfaction, job involvement, OBSE, employee morale, turnover, and absenteeism among others.

Duchon and Plowman (2005) explored the linkage between the workplace spirituality and work unit (team) performance and leadership. The results of this study indicated that work unit performance is superior when there is feeling of community among its members and that their leaders score higher on a measure of spirituality at work further signifying the existence of distinctive management practices which could be associated with spiritually enriched work units. Bosch (2009) observed that the spiritual practices help in lowering the stress levels in organizations and also that spirituality influences the decision making virtues of people and assists them to effectively associate with people in organizations. The authors have attempted to summarize the organizational outcomes associated with workplace spirituality in Table 4.

Past research have successfully shown both positive and inverse associations between various dimensions of Workplace spirituality and attitudinal/ behavioural outcomes, however critical areas in modern organizational setup such as employee wellness and perceptions of organizational politics are still unexplored. So, this study focusses on analysing the association of workplace spirituality with some of the lesser researched constructs in management sciences, i.e., employee wellness and organizational politics. Figure 1 is our proposed theoretical model for the purpose of this conceptual review.

While research into well-being has been ongoing for some time, it has only recently captured the interest of management scholars. Employee wellness is one outcome that has attracted very little attention in the scientific research related to workplace spirituality. World Health Organization defined health as a

balanced state of physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence if any disease. Further development of the definition of health has led to the usage of the term 'wellness', which is defined as a process by which one thoroughly identifies areas of life that needs to improve and subsequently make better lifestyle choices (Owen, 1999 as cited in Evans 2004). Travis & Ryan (2004) argued that wellness is subjective and it is difficult to accurately define and measure the construct.

Many scholars have explored

Table 4: Review Summary of relationship of workplace spirituality and organizational outcomes

Dependent variables	OCB	Job Satisfaction	Organization Commitment	Organization based Self-esteem	Organizational Identification	Leadership	Organizational Performance	Ethics	Job Involvement	Organizational Frustration	Workplace stress	Turnover Intention	Counterproductive work behaviour	Absenteeism	Organizational Politics	Personality	Wellbeing
Furnham (1998)								×									
Perrewe & Zellars (1999)											×						×
D Elam (2000)																	×
Y. Hoong (2000)		×										×					
Fabricator et al. (2000)																	×
W. D. Thompson (2000)											×	×		×			
Tepper (2001)	×																
Sirgy et al. (2001)		×															×
Kolodinsky et al. (2003)															×		
Milliman et al. (2003)		×	×	×						×		×					
Rego & Pina eCunha (2003)			×														
Donofrio (2004)																×	×
Fry (2005)			×			×	×	×									
Matherly & Fry (2006)			×			×	×										
Hui-O Liu (2008)	×				×												
Marshke (2008)		×	×														
Kolodinsky et al. (2008)					×					×							
McKee (2008)						×											×
Pawar (2009)		×	×							×							
Salami (2010)											×		×				
Drake (2011)				×													
Chand & Koul (2012)		×									×						
Tevichapong (2012)	×	×			×		×					×					×
Heinsohn (2012)	×	×	×							×							
Chavers (2013															×		

and categorised the various dimensions comprising wellness. Depken (1994) observed that most of the academic scholars explain wellness as an all-encompassing concept including dimensions like physical, psychological/emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual. Wellness as defined by Greenberg (1985), is the assimilation of five dimensions; he further concedes of a high level wellness as balance among them. Renger et al. (2000) established wellness as comprising of the following dimensions: physical, emotional, social, intellectual, spiritual and additionally included environmental wellness to ascertain the significant bearing of one's environs.

The perceived wellness model proposed by Adams et al. (1997 defined it as the way of living that involves balanced growth in the physical, social, emotional, occupational, intellectual and spiritual dimension of human existence. The authors proposed that wellness is all about maintaining balance among dimensions and it is never static.

National Wellness Institute (NWI) cofounder, Dr. Bill Hettler proposed the interdependent model of total wellness, universally referred to as the "Six Dimensions of Wellness", constituting of physical, social, emotional, occupational,

Table 5: Summary of select studies on dimensions of Employee Wellness theory

Dimensions of Employee Wellness	Physical	Psychological/ Emotional	Social	Intellectual	Occupational	Spiritual	Environmental	Cultural	Economic
Adams et al. (1997)	×	×	×	×	×	×			
Hettler (1998)	×	×	×	×	×	×			
Anspaugh et al. (2004)	×	×	×	×	×	×	×		
Travis & Ryan (2004)	×	×	×	×	×	×	×		
Hales (2005)	×	×	×	×	×	×	×		
Heliwell (2005)	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Myers et al. (2005)	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
May (2007)	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Dolan et al. (2008)	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Diener et al. (2009)	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×

intellectual and spiritual dimensions. Hettler (1980) was instrumental in introducing the dimension of occupational wellness; he argued that wellness is a gradual progression of understanding its importance and actively make optimum lifestyle choices. So, through a six dimensional model an individual realises the significance and contribution of the interconnectedness of each dimension towards healthy living.

The above table summarises presence of several key dimensions of theory of wellness i.e., physical, psychological/emotional, social, intellectual, spiritual, occupational, environmental, cultural and economic.

Physical Wellness: Wellness was originally recognized and studied from the physical viewpoint of health and it was generally supposed to include the physical aspects of health like physical activity, nutrition and taking care of oneself (Cooper, 1977). The deviations in physical wellness included physical disabilities, physical injuries and sexually transmitted diseases. Helliwell (2005) established that positive attitude about maintaining good health lead to high scores of wellness.

Emotional/ Psychological Wellness: Emotional wellness is recognised as the acceptance and control of one's feelings and a truthful, affirmative value of self-worth, knack of dealing with adverse life situations, stress handling and above all ability to maintain mutually satisfying relationships (Adams et al., 1997). According to Helliwell (2005), it is a constant process of becoming aware of one's feelings and managing it in a positive manner to present an optimistic view of oneself and other human beings.

Social Wellness: Social wellness comprises of the human necessity of making a connect and becoming comfortable with others, willingness to convey one's feelings, desires and opinions, have mutually supportive relationships and intimacy (sexual interaction) and having a conducive social environment and making contributions to society at large (Renger et al., 2000).

Intellectual Wellness: Intellectual wellness as explained by Hales (2005) is lifetime commitment to learning so as to develop requisite knowledge, skills and abilities to have a fulfilling life and share one's knowledge with others. Adams et al. (1997) believed that it is also important to have the perception of being revitalized by a recurrent process of intellectually stimulating activities.

Spiritual Wellness: Scholars (Hettler, 1980; Adams et al., 1997; Renger et al., 2000) have defined spiritual wellness as the process of pursuing meaning and purpose of one's existence. Spiritual wellness encompasses the understanding of vagaries of life and realising that the universe cannot be apprehended as out of one's own realm of experience.

Occupational Wellness: This dimension is related to having an optimistic attitude towards one's personal and professional work. Hettler (1980) and Anspaugh et al. (2004) defined occupational wellness as the professional enrichment and satisfaction achieved by an individual in the course of fulfilling job responsibilities and the extent to which he is able to assimilate his values with that of the organization. So, occupational wellness is about succeeding in creating a balance between the professional responsibilities and personal commitments.

RESEARCH ON WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY AND EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

In their review of the physical and emotional benefits of spirituality, Larson and Larson (2003) reported that studies have demonstrated religious and spiritual practices are associated with improved health behaviours, such as smoking cessation, diminished alcoholism and increased physical activity and

more extensive social relationships. Many studies have displayed linear relationships with spirituality and lower levels of psychological distress (Laubmeier, Zakowski, & Bair, 2004), higher quality of health life and psychological well-being (Dalmida, 2006), and improved sleep quality and status of health (Phillips, Mock, Bopp, Dudgeon, & Hand, 2006). With such potential benefits, it is perhaps not surprising that Lund Dean and Fornaciari (2007) while exploring the management, spirituality and religion literature found that 17% of empirical studies done by researchers from the domain between 1996 and 2005 were in the health care field.

PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS

Politics in organizations is a sacrosanct fact of life; for years it has been generally believed that behaviour in and of organizations is most often political in nature. As long as there are human beings, politics will be played in the workplace. Some people are better adapted to participate in organizational politics than others, because of their values, ethics and the work habits from the environment in which they grew up.

Ferris et al. (1989) defined organizational politics as "a social influence process in which behaviour is strategically designed to maximize short-term or long-term self-interest, which is either consistent with or at the expense of others' interests".

Researchers have commonly suggested that organizational politics generally have a negative influence on employees and their working environment (Ferris et al. 1989, 2002; Kacmar and Baron 1999). We have presented a summarised view of the elements of organizational politics ranging both in negative and positive context in Table 6.

Bacharch (2005) have revealed that many of the organizational members may believe in the inevitability of the political behaviour at workplaces particularly when someone is interested in advancing in the organizations (promotion) or being recognized as a good employee or an effective manager by the employers and the fellow co-workers. Even the managers were found to be achieving their goals effectively with the help of organizational politics. As a matter of fact, some aspect of 'good' politics in the leadership behaviour, general managerial decisions and valid HR practices may actually lead to win-win consequences for the employer, the employees and the organization as a whole.

Based on studies conducted in the 1950s and 1960s, May (2007) propositioned a strong argument for the involvement of powerful aspects of organizational politics arising due to organizational conflicts in creating positive and resourceful influence on the organization. Pfeffer (1981) believed that the organizational conflicts and power politics acts as balancing forces between those who have power and those who don't and thus improves the organization's agility and ability to deal with a dynamic environment, prevent organizational inertia, prevent herd mentality and fruitfully supplement the decision-making processes. Employees who are apt at handling the organizational politics are more productive than those who are not able to do so.

Organizational politics is most often considered adversarial because it can potentially disrupt organizational efficiency and effectiveness (Kacmar et al., 1999). Politics is said to consume productive time of the employees, restrict the sharing of information and can have serious damaging effects on organizational functioning.

Nonetheless, organizational politics may also have some positive outcomes. Some of the studies such as Gandz & Murray (1980) and organization. In this context, the study by Maslyn et al. (2005) is also significant as it established the need for having a complete picture of organizational politics by including its positive sides along with negatives

Table 6: Summary of select studies on elements of organizational Politics

Perceptions of organizational Politics	Self-serving behaviour	Go along to get ahead	Co-workers content	Cliques Content	Pay and promotion content	General political behaviour	Negative political behaviour	Positive political behaviour	Influence tactics	Ethical behaviour	Persuasion	Ref to super-ordinate goals	Development of coalitions & networking	Reconciliation of competing agendas	Organizational democracy
Kipnis et al. (1980)	×								×						
Ferris et al. (1989)	×	×			×	×									
Kacmar and Ferris (1991)		×	×	×	×	×									
Patricia Buhler (1994)		×	×		×						×				
Valle and Perrewe (2000)	×														
Zanzi and O'Neill (2001)									×						
Fedor et al. (2002)							×	×							
Vigoda (2003)	×								×						
Gunn & Chen (2006)												×	×	×	
Kurchner-Hawkins and Miller (2006)									×					×	×
Butcher and Clarke (2008)														×	×

RESEARCH ON WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS

Researchers have suggested that the presence of organizational politics is inherent in all organizations (Gandz & Murray, 1980). At times excessive conflicts hinder the development of a community feeling within the organization. Inevitably, this will bring out the worst in people and make the organization become very political. Excessive politics in the organization is mitigated by development in spirituality at workplace (Tan 2006).

Joan Marques (2010) contended that there are common ground of support,

connections, and reciprocity between workplace spirituality and organizational politics. However, on one hand, the organizational politics provide benefits for a handful of workers and make others suffer; workplace spirituality is geared towards unbiased work practices and bringing in all the stakeholders in its fold by incorporating a team spirit which envelopes the entire unit or the organization involved.

Kolodinsky et al. (2005) believed that the leaders have a decisive role in extending the benefits of spirituality to all the individuals in the organizations, by dispersing the negative influences of organizational politics and accommodating workplace spirituality. They view organizational politics as being disruptive vis-à-vis workplace spirituality as having unifying features. The negativities of organizational politics can surely obstruct the positivity that can be brought about by accommodating spirituality at workplace and to become spiritually effective, the organization requires a balancing factor like "inspiring and enabling organizational leadership" (Kinjerski and Skrypnek 2006).

In this research we take a two-pronged approach of evaluating the perceptions of organizational politics, one including the classical conceptualization of a negative connotation of politics and on the other hand viewing politics as a positive construct in the organizations' interest. This view is consistent with Ferris et al. (2002) who has brought up the positive side of political behaviour, although political yet bringing positive consequences for the actor or others in the M. James (2005) in her doctoral thesis postulated that spirituality contributes in making employees feel generally even when the organizational environment is not secure. The sense of spirituality at work is the reason why the individuals react differently to the negativities in the work environment. A spiritual approach helps in restoring faith and achieves a balanced view about contradicting continuums of good and bad, safety and danger, justice and injustice and eventually will lead to buffering the effects of negative organizational perceptions. Supporting this viewpoint, Tan (2006) argues that presence of unwarranted organizational politics is mitigated by development in spirituality at workplace.

SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH GAPS FOUND IN THE LITERATURE REVIEW ANALYSIS

Even though spirituality at workplace has been popularised in the recent years, the subject is still awaiting the desired attention from the management scholars. The study of workplace spirituality calls for an intense investigation of theoretical organizational concepts as the essential topics of management and the very basis of the business conduct, lie in them.

This study observed the important gaps and point out future research areas in Table 7 after reviewing both the perspectives

Table 7: Summary of select studies detailing the research gaps found in the Literature Review Analysis

Authors	Title	Year	Journal	Abstract	Research Gaps
Summary of studies on Workplace Spirituality					
Ashmos & Duchon	Spirituality at Work – A conceptualization and Measure	2000	*Journal of Management Inquiry Vol.2, Iss 9, Pg 134-145*	To offer a conceptualization and definition of SAW and present empirical evidence for it	Dimensions of WPS needs to be validated through empirical investigation in different etups/locations/samples Need to investigate its contribution in the organization
Duchon & Plowman	Nurturing the spirit at work: impact on work unit Performance	2005	*The Leadership Quarterly Vol.16, Iss5, Pg 807- 833*	Exploratory study to examine "work unit" spirituality and explore its relationship with work performance	Small sample used Other work settings/ sector need to be explored Different location to be considered
Kinjerski & Skrypnek	Creating organizational conditions that foster employee spirit at work	2006	*Leadership & Organization Development Journal Vol. 27, Iss 4, Pg 280-295*	identify organizational factors that foster an individual's experience of spirit at work	Very small sample Need to study other population Need to empirically investigate its relationship with organizational outcomes
Petchsawanga & Duchon	Workplace Spirituality, Meditation, and Work Performance	2012	*Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion Vol.9, Iss 2, Pg 189-208*	It examine how an organization might enable more productive work practices by encouraging the expression of its employees' spiritual	Study conducted in Thailand with Buddhist-centric culture, which encourages meditation practice The spirituality measures need to be replicated to see its validity in other

Authors	Title	Year	Journal	Abstract	Research Gaps
				selves in an eastern context	context Dimensions of WPS – Meaningful work, compassion, mindfulness, transcendence need to be explored
Summary of Studies on Workplace Spirituality and Organizational Politics					
Fedor, D., Maslyn, J., Farmer, S., & Bettenhausen, K.	Perceptions of Positive and Negative Organizational Politics: Roles of the Frequency and Distance of Political Behavior	2008	*Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 38(1), 76-96*	This study examined factors that contribute to an understanding of both a positive and a negative side of perceptions of politics.	Need to see whether outcomes of political behaviour or the process of politics in organizations has more significant effect on organizational members on various parameters (such as workplace spirituality)
Poon, J. M.	Situational antecedents and outcomes of organizational politics perceptions.	2003	*Journal of Managerial Psychology, 18(2), 138-155.*	Employees who perceived a high level of politics in their workplace reported higher levels of stress, lower levels of job satisfaction, and higher levels of intention to quit than did employees who perceived a low level of politics.	Researchers should identify and examine new variables – such as workplace spirituality (i.e. workplace practices that allow employees to connect with their inner self, develop their spiritual values, and experience work meaningfulness) – for predicting perceptions of organizational politics as well as explore the effects of POPS
Miller, Brian K. Rutherford, Matthew a. Kolodinsky, Robert W.	Perceptions of Organizational Politics: A Meta-analysis of Outcomes	2008	*Journal of Business and Psychology, Vol.22, Issue 3, pg: 203-222*	Strong negative relationships between POP and job satisfaction and between POP and org. comm., moderately positive relation-ships between POP and the outcomes of job stress and turnover intentions, and a non-significant relationship between POP and in-role job performance. Moderator tests show that age, work setting and cultural differences have contingent effects on certain POP relations.	Primary studies are required to better determine the true nature of the relationship between POP and absenteeism, job involvement, justice reactions, trust, spiritual orientation and, actual political behaviour, as these relationships have been studied too infrequently to be meta-analysed as of yet.
Kolodinsky, R. W., Bowen, M. G., & Ferris, G. R.	Embracing workplace spirituality and managing organizational politics: Servant leadership and political skill for volatile times	2003	*The handbook of workplace spirituality and organizational performance (pp. 164–180*	***Conceptual Paper:*** Workplace spirituality and organizational politics coexist in most organization Effective organizations seek to minimize the factors that give rise to organizational politics and encourage spiritual practices at work	Subjective research on POP, construct must be explored empirically

Authors	Title	Year	Journal	Abstract	Research Gaps
Ely Weitz , Yoav Vardi & Ora Setter	Spirituality and organizational Misbehaviour	2012	*Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion*	Spirituality can mitigate the intention to misbehave at work and thus moderate the relationship between multilevel workplace antecedents and a measure of OMB Highly spiritual people more sensitive and vulnerable to elements of misbehaviour in their surroundings	Need to study the direct relationship of WPS and POPS, rather than mediating effect Need to study the concept of organizational level justice to be ensured through WPS leading to perceptions of Org politics
Komala, K., & Anantharaman, R. N.	Rationale for Spirituality in Organizations.	2004	*NIIT Centre for Research in cognitive systems*	**Literature Review:** Some of the prevalent cultural norms that make discussion of religion or spirituality (like politics) taboo in the workplace hamper the expression of spirituality	Need to see whether outcomes of political behaviour or the process of politics in organizations has more significant effect on organizational members on various parameters (such as workplace spirituality)
Joan Marques	Workplace spirituality versus workplace politics: what's wrong with becoming a "NON"?	2010	*Human Resource Management International Digest, Vol. 18 Iss: 4 pp. 3 - 6*	WP spirituality and org politics share common grounds of support, connections, reciprocity and community. Org politics distinguishes who will be eligible for special favours and advancement, while WP spirituality refrains from such bias. The org's culture is the overarching element, which determines all interactions and upward or downward flows within the organization. Based on the existing org culture, the nature and severity of the org's politics are developed and nurtured	Many workers choose to leave these highly political environments, and become NONs (no fiefdom, outsider, no fit). Even though they may have experienced severe setbacks in their collaborative efforts, they may still maintain relationships with one or more powerful individuals in the highly political workplace, which are often translated into mentorism.
Summary of Studies on Workplace Spirituality and Well-Being					
Janine Elizabeth, Gauther	Spirituality, health locus of control, and wellness in organizational health promotion and wellness programs	2001	*Journal of Clinical Health Psychology*	To explore individual's level of spirituality, health locus of control, and participating in wellness activity (primarily physical activity)	Research on relationship between spirituality, health LOC and positive wellness behaviour (including all dimensions)
DAVID A. ELAM.	An Exploration of the Relationship Between Spirituality and Emotional Well-Being	2000	*Doctor of Philosophy Degree in* **Clinical Psychology,** *at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale*	This study examined the relationship between spirituality	Need to examine the relationship of spirituality with total wellness.

Authors	Title	Year	Journal	Abstract	Research Gaps
				and both negative and positive affect. In addition, this relationship was investigated with stress included to determine possible moderator effects of spirituality. Religiosity and spirituality were also compared in these analyses. Subjects	
Passagorn Tevichapong	Individual spirit at work and its outcomes	2012	*70th Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management*	Investigate the relationships between individual spirit at work and three employee work attitudinal variables (organisational identification, job satisfaction and psychological well-being) and three organisational outcomes	Wellness test to include further dimensions of well-being other than psychological well-being
J J de Klerk	Spirituality, Meaning In Life, And Work Wellness: A Research Agenda	2005	*International Journal of Organizational Analysis; 2005; 13, 1;*	Explores work wellness variables like work orientation, certainty, Biographics, Career commitment, Job involvement, work satisfaction; from a spiritual framework through the construct of meaning in life	Need to explore how organizational culture and leadership style influence sense of meaning in life. Also need to empirically explore the employee wellness constructs as determined by six dimensions model
Clarissa Saunders-Newton	Spirituality and well-being in the daily lives of African American women	2011	*Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Occupational Science*	Investigated relationship between spirituality and well-being as defined by a narrative reasoning process - A qualitative research design using narrative interview strategies	Need to empirically explore the wellness dimensions as defined by Complete wellness model characterised by six dimensions
Summary of Studies on Organizational Politics and Well-being					
KaijaTuomi, Sinikka Vanhala, Erkki Nykyri and Minna Janhonen	Organizational practices, work demands and the well-being of employees: a follow-up study in the metal industry and retail trade	2003	*Great Lakes Herald – April 2007 Volume 1, Issue 1*	Increases in the promotion of employee well-being, in opportunities for influence and development, improvements in work organization and supervisory support, and decreases in conflicts and uncertainty at work were all associated significantly with positive development with respect to well-being. Several features of organizational practices are strongly associated with employees' well-being	Need to empirically explore the direct and indirect effect of organizational politics

Authors	Title	Year	Journal	Abstract	Research Gaps
Marques, Joan F.	Spiritually or politically driven behavior: differences in the workplace	2010	*Development And Learning In Organizations, Vol. 24 NO. 6 2010*	Conceptual Paper: political motives may lead to faster outcomes, but not to lasting performance excellence, as they will ultimately become transparent and lead to negative long-term outcomes. Spiritual motives, on the other hand, will lead to the exact opposite: slower, but lasting progress and wellbeing for the organization and its stakeholders.	Need to empirically explore the relationship between spirituality, organizational politics and employee wellbeing

that of psychology of religion/spirituality and management science.

CONCLUSION AND SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

It is clear from the above analysis that the investigation of workplace spirituality requires a careful examination of the organization theory and some of its concepts as they form the very basis on which business is conducted. Some of the key-points of the analysis are:

The definition of spirituality at workplace provides for an all-encompassing conceptual framework at three levels – individual, team and organizational level. Most of the studies have incorporated only individual spirituality at work and only a few have spoken about the organizational spirituality, the researchers/ academicians must adopt a all-inclusive model to analyse/ harness the benefits of spirituality at work

Scholars have observed that it is imperative to have more scientific investigation on the link of workplace spirituality with the organizational outcomes as it is still lagging (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003; Duchon and Plowman, 2005; Milliman et al., 2003). First attempts of statistical analyses have been made; yet a cohesive empirical understanding of the construct is still lacking.

A plethora of scholarly literature was found linking spirituality with wellness, most of them just accounting for partial conception of wellness, particularly physical wellbeing. Some other studies worked in the area of psychological wellbeing or emotional wellbeing; however none of the studies really took into account a multidimensional approach of measuring wellness and looking at its relationship with workplace spirituality to have a complete picture.

Some literature regarding workplace spirituality and its alleviating effect on perceptions of organizational politics was also identified but most of the studies considered organizational politics in a negative context, this study recognizes the need to include the positive side of organizational politics too. Also, there is a need to analyse the moderating/ mediating impact of organizational politics on the probable positive relationship of spirituality and employee wellbeing which has not been yet explored.

The conceptual framework provided by this qualitative research needs to examined through empirical enquiry.

To summarise, workplace spirituality undeniably is currently one of the most thought-provoking topic in management sciences and is looked upon as the universal remedy for all the ills of working life. Research in the field is still in the developing phase and the need is to systematically handle the issues pertaining to the definitions and methodology of its measurement to make it more viable. Employee wellness is yet another hot topic as businesses have realised that a healthy workforce is a productive workforce and thus it makes perfect business sense to promote wellness programs at work. Furthermore, power politics in organization is a reality and positive politics as opposed to negative, help in building employee confidence and motivates them to work harder. This is in turn increases productivity and helps in employee retention too. Thus it is imperative for both the academicians and organization practitioners to recognise the significance and implement spirituality at work to encourage better results and performance from both the employees as well as organization at large.

Appendices

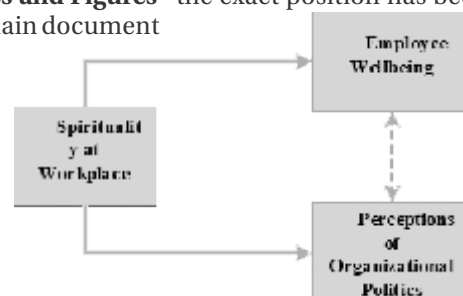**Tables and Figures–** the exact position has been indicated in the main document

Figure 1: Proposed Theoretical Framework

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