Original Research Article

The Effect of Thriving and Workplace Spirituality on Innovative Work Behavior and Career Adaptability Among Railway Employees

Pratiksha Kulkarni[1], Reshma Murali[2]

[1]Post Graduate Student, Department of Psychology, SMT. Maniben M P Shah Women's College of Arts and Commerce (Matunga, Mumbai)epartment of Psychology, Nagindas Khandwala College, Mumbai.
[2]Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, SMT. Maniben M P Shah Women's College of Arts and Commerce (Matunga, Mumbai)

Corresponding author: Pratiksha Kulkarni
Email – Kpratiksha0902@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Introduction-This research aimed to study the effect of Thriving and Workplace Spirituality on Innovative Work Behavior and Career Adaptability among railway employees (TC) because of the competitive environment they experience.
Method- The participants were 105 railway employees between the age of 40-60 years, residing in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The purposive and snowball sampling methods were used for the study. The scales used were - Thriving at work scale (Porath et al,2012), Spirit at work scale (SAW) (Kinjersky, 2013), Innovative work behavior (Jesson, 2009), Career Adapt Abilities Scale – short form (CAAS- SF) (Maggiori et al, 2012). The data were analyzed using 4 independent 't tests'.
Results-Thriving had a significant effect on Innovative Work Behavior and Career Adaptability among railway employees. Thus Thriving might act as an advantage in the competitive work environment of TCs. Since Thriving cannot be developed individually as a skill, there is a need to study Workplace Spirituality. Results obtained suggest that there was no significant effect of Workplace Spirituality on Innovative Work Behavior which can be attributed to the Covid-19 situation. Later analysis shows that Workplace Spirituality has a significant effect on Career Adaptability, suggesting that the Workplace Spirituality plays will help in better career adaptability among railway employees.
Conclusion- Thriving is considered to be a human aspect of sustainability which is important to produce high performance. Thus if we can enhance Workplace Spirituality for railway employees, they might experience Thriving which will eventually contribute to enhancing IWB and Career Adaptability.

Keywords: Thriving, Workplace Spirituality, Innovative Work Behavior, Career Adaptability, Railway Employees.

INTRODUCTION

Competition is a very important survival method for individuals, organizations, and society [1]. The work environment has become competitive today. To create a competitive advantage in such a competitive climate, sustainability is necessary for high performance. Thriving is considered the human aspect of sustainability [2]. Thriving is a positive construct. But it can't be developed individually as a skill, it is an effective motivational state [2]. We need a proper working environment to develop these skill sets that move beyond energy and relate to the sense of connectedness. Thus there is a need for organizations to create a spiritual work environment [2]. Past studies suggest that Thriving and Workplace Spirituality play an important role in Innovative Work Behavior and Career Adaptability.

When we are trying to apply this in the context of railway employees (TC), competition and stress are high. Innovative Work Behavior in terms of TC might include various ways to deal with passengers and finding ways to reach monthly targets etc. Also, adaptability is an important factor in the middle adulthood age group, because there are constant changes that are taking place within the work context to produce high performance. Therefore there is a need to study these variables among railway employees. The main aim of the research is to study the effect of Thriving and Workplace Spirituality on Innovative Work Behavior and Career Adaptability among railway employees.

Thriving
Spreitzer et al., in 2005 [3] have defined thriving as a combined two- dimensional structure consisting of learning and vitality.
Workplace Spirituality
Experience and sense of being connected and joy, recognition of inner life meaningful work in the context of work [2].
Innovative Work Behavior (IWB)
IWB is defined as the "generation of an employee's novel or adopted ideas, process, practices, and procedures for individual, group or an organization." [4].
Career Adaptability
Savickas in 1997 [5] defines career adaptability as an " individual's ability to cope with the tasks of preparing and participating in work roles and with unpredictable adjustments promoted by changes in work and working conditions."

METHODOLOGY

Hypothesis
There were 4 hypotheses proposed based on the aim of the study for 4 proposed variables.
Null Hypothesis
- **NH1**- There is no significant difference in the level of Innovative Work Behavior for employees scoring high on Thriving compared to employees scoring low on Thriving.
- **NH2**- There is no significant difference in the level of Career Adaptability for employees scoring high on Thriving compared to employees scoring low on Thriving.
- **NH3**- There is no significant difference in the level of Innovative Work Behavior for employees scoring high on Workplace Spirituality compared to employees scoring low on Workplace Spirituality.
- **NH4**- There is no significant difference in the level of Career Adaptability for employees scoring high on Workplace Spirituality compared to employees scoring low on Workplace Spirituality.

Alternate Hypothesis
- **AH1**- There is a significant difference in the level of Innovative Work Behavior for employees scoring high on Thriving compared to employees scoring low on Thriving.
- **AH2**- There is a significant difference in the level of Career Adaptability for employees scoring high on Thriving compared to employees scoring low on Thriving.
- **AH3**- There is a significant difference in the level of Innovative Work Behavior for employees scoring high on workplace spirituality compared to employees scoring low on workplace spirituality.
- **AH4**- There is a significant difference in the level of Career Adaptability for employees scoring high on Workplace Spirituality compared to employees scoring low on Workplace Spirituality.

Participant
The target population for this proposed research was railway employees belonging to the middle adulthood age group (Age: 40-60 years). According to Eric Ericson's stages of psychosocial development, the age range for middle adulthood is 40-65 years. But 60 is an age of retirement, therefore only 40-60 years of age range was considered for this research. Only the Railway employees (TC- Ticket collector or Ticket checker) residing in Mumbai, Maharashtra with basic English proficiency were included as a participant in the study.

Research Design
A quasi-experimental design was used for this research because there is no control group, no random selection, and no random assignment like a true experimental design.

Sampling Method
Purposive sampling was used as a sampling method for this study.

Scales of Measurement
The four variables mentioned in the study were operationally defined using the following scales.

1. **Thriving at Work Scale (Reliability-.86, Validity-.75)**

This scale is developed by Christine Porath and Gretchen Spreitzer in 2011[6]. It measures two constructs-learning and vitality (reliability- 0.85 and 0.78). Participants responded on 6 points Likert scale – 1-strongly disagree – 5-strongly agree. Scores were obtained for each subscale by averaging the scores. Higher and lower scores were derived using a median split. The total score for thriving was obtained by taking a composite of the two subscales.

2. **Spirit At Work Scale (SAW) (Reliability-0.85, Validity- 0.35-0.81)**

The spirit at work scale is developed by Van Kinjersky in 2013[7]. It measures workplace spirituality based on 4 work-related dimensions. The four concept subscales are engaging work, sense of community, mystical experience, and spiritual connection. Participants respond on a 6-point Likert scale-1 (completely untrue) to 6(completely true). Scores of the 4 subscales were summed to create the SAW score (α = 0.93). Higher and lower scores were derived using a median split.

3. **Innovative Work Behavior (Reliability- 0.95, Validity-0.35)**

Jesson in 2009 developed this unidimensional scale to measure innovative work behavior among employees [4]. Participants give their responses for the 9 items on 5 points Likert scale- 1-never-5-always. The total score was obtained by summing up all the responses where a higher score indicates a high level of innovative work behavior. The reliability scores obtained are 0.95 and the validity score is 0.35.

4. **Career Adapt Abilities Scale – Short Form (CAAS- SF) (Reliability-0.89)**

CAAS- SF is developed by Christian Maggiori, Jerome Rossier, and Mark L. Savickas in 2012[5]. It includes four subscales: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. Participants give their responses on a 5 point Likert scale – 1- not strong to 5 – strongest. The total score was obtained by summing up all the responses where higher scores indicate higher career adaptability.

The target population ie Railway employees (TC) filled their responses to the above questionnaires via a google form.

Method of data analysis
The appropriate tool of analysis was 't test'. It is used to compare the means of two groups and assess whether the means of two groups are statistically different from each other. Four independent t-tests were performed to study the difference between the 4 variables.

Ethical considerations
The approval was taken from the College Ethical Board for this study. Consent was taken from the participants before filling out the form. The demographic details taken from participants were kept confidential at all times and were not used for any other purpose. Participants had a right to withdraw from the study at any stage if they wished to do so. The participants were provided with basic information about the purpose of this study before the data collection.

The statistical tool of analysis used was the 't test', therefore 4 independent t-tests were administered to study the relationship between 2 independent variables (Thriving and Workplace Spirituality) and 2 dependent variables (IWB and Career Adaptability).

RESULTS

Table 1 Descriptive statistics and t values- for Innovative Work Behavior and Career Adaptability based upon high and low levels of thriving among Railway employees
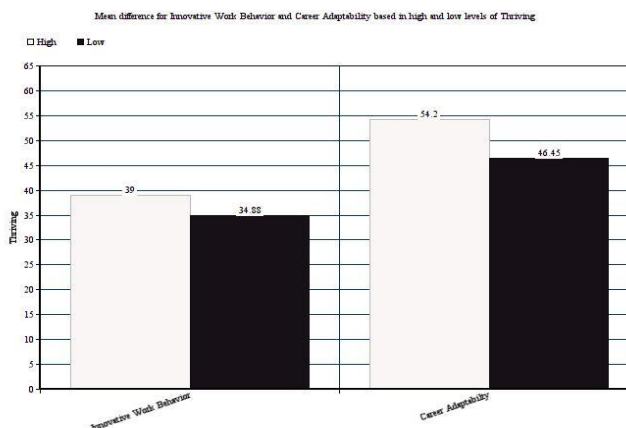
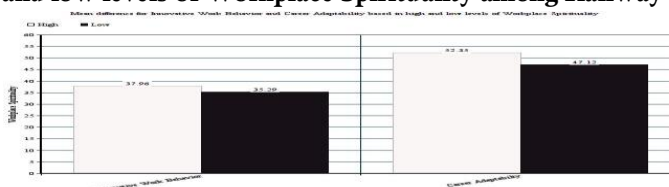| Descriptive Statistics and t computation- for Innovative Work Behavior based upon the high and low level of Thriving among Railway employees.								
	Thriving	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**	**t**	**Df**	**Significance (Two-Tailed p)**
Innovative Work Behavior (IWB)	High	44	39.00	5.536	0.835	3.076	101.557	0.003
	Low	60	34.88	8.103	1.046			
Descriptive Statistics and computation of t value- for Career Adaptability based upon the high and low level of Thriving among Railway employees.								
	Thriving	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std Error Mean**	**t**	**df**	**Significance (Two-Tailedp)**
Career Adaptability	High	44	54.20	5.725	0.863	4.532	91.508	0.001
	Low	60	46.45	11.445	1.478			

According to table 1, The t value obtained for IWB is 3.076 at df 101.557 which was found to be significant at the 0.05 level. Thus a significant difference in the level of IWB for employees scoring high on Thriving compared to employees scoring low on Thriving.

It can also be seen that the t value for Career Adaptability obtained is 4.532 at df 91.508 which was found to be significant at a 0.05 level. Thus a significant difference in the level of Career Adaptability for employees scoring high on Thriving compared to employees scoring low on Thriving.

Table 2 Descriptive statistics and t values- for Innovative Work Behavior and Career Adaptability based upon high and low levels of Workplace Spirituality among Railway employees

Descriptive Statistics and computation of t value- for Innovative Work Behavior based upon the high and low levels of Workplace Spirituality among Railway employees.								
	Workplace Spirituality	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**	**t**	**df**	**Significance (Two-sided p)**
Innovative Work Behavior (IWB)	High	52	37.96	6.574	0.912	1.867	98.474	0.065
	Low	52	35.29	7.962	1.104			
Descriptive Statistics and computation of t value- for Career Adaptability based upon the high and low levels of Workplace Spirituality among Railway employees.								
	Workplace Spirituality	**N**	**Mean**	**Std Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**	**t**	**df**	**Significance (Two-tailed p)**
Career Adaptability	High	52	52.35	8.538	1.184	4.532	91.508	0.001
	Low	52	47.12	11.057	1.533			

According to table 2, It can also be seen that the t value obtained for IWB is 1.867 at df 98.474 which was not significant at the 0.05 level. Thus there is no significant difference in the level of IWB for employees scoring high on Workplace Spirituality as compared to employees scoring low on Workplace Spirituality.

The t value obtained for Career Adaptability is 4.532 at df 91.508 which was found to be significant at a 0.05 level. Thus a significant difference in the level of Career Adaptability for employees scoring high on Workplace Spirituality compared to employees scoring low on Workplace Spirituality.

Figure 1 and 2 shows the graphical representation of the mean difference between variables based on table 1 and 2 respectively.

DISCUSSION

The main aim of this research is to study the effect of Thriving and Workplace Spirituality on Innovative Work Behavior and Career Adaptability among railway employees.

It was hypothesized that 'There is no significant difference in the level of Innovative Work Behavior for employees scoring high on Thriving compared to employees scoring low on Thriving.' An independent 't test' was performed to determine whether there was a significant difference between the mean levels of IWB based on the high and low levels of Thriving. Thus based on the results obtained, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was accepted.

The obtained results are similar to the findings of Lyndon S et al., in 2018[8] who researched the effect of thriving on innovative behavior in an organization. Results indicate that thriving at work helps employees to get engaged in innovative work behavior. Further analysis suggests that the two dimensions of thriving i.e. learning and vitality, learning better predicts innovative work behavior. Another research similar to the obtained results was conducted by Riaz, Xu, and Hussain in 2018 [9]. The study shows that thriving was positively related to organizational support for innovation and IWB.

The target population was 105 railway employees (TCs) belonging to 40-60 years of age. They already have served more than 10-15 years of duty by this age, which makes them more experienced than the younger age group. They are likely to learn more and experience growth at their workplace. This might help them feel motivated toward work that might contribute to their IWB. When looking from the perspective of railway employees (TC), few of IWB is related to finding ways to deal with the passengers and looking for the various ways to meet the monthly targets, etc. With the years of learning and growth, these aspects may be facilitated. Carmeli and Spreitzer in 2009[10] state that thriving enhances innovative work behavior. Thriving is considered to be an important catalyst because learning and growth at work can help recognize problems better and generate new ideas. Also when individuals experience positive affect, they are likely to engage in creative thinking and their problem-solving skills are enhanced [11]. When individuals experience positive emotions, their thought-action repertoire gets broadened [11]. This acts as an aid to increase their psychosocial resources. Thus the individual can come up with new ideas. Vitality also acts as part of intrinsic motivation thus

contributing to innovative behavior [10]. This might explain why Thriving promotes Innovative Work Behavior and thus help to understand the significance of the data.

It was hypothesized that ' There is no significant difference in the level of Career Adaptability for employees scoring high on Thriving compared to employees scoring low on Thriving.' An independent 't test' was performed to determine whether there was a significant difference between the mean levels of Career Adaptability based on the high and low levels of Thriving. Thus based on the results obtained, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was accepted.

The obtained results can be explained with one of the past research done by Coetzee in 2019[12] where he introduces career counseling theory by presenting goal facilitation assistance as a hypothetical focal point for understanding the joins between the three concepts of hierarchical career instrumentally, career adaptability, and thriving at work inside the boundary conditions of individuals' life (age). Moderated-mediation analysis appeared to suggest that career instrumentally to be positively related to thriving at work through career adaptability for the 30s move candidates i.e. (25–39 years). There was another study conducted by Jiang in 2017 [13]. This study was done to look at the mechanism underlying the connection between proactive personality and career adaptability. Results indicate that a proactive personality promotes thriving at work, which successively improves career adaptability. Additionally, the effect of thriving on career adaptability was stronger for those with low instead of high proactive personalities.

When an individual is thriving, they experience a sense of growth and momentum which makes them feel energized and alive and they try to learn more about their work [6]. As stated earlier as the target population belongs to the 40-60 years age range, they are likely to be more experienced. Because of the number of years of experience, they are likely to learn and experience growth. According to the socially embedded model of thriving [3], there are three agentic factors- task focus, exploration, and heedful thinking. Thriving serves as the gauge for an individual to analyze a positive developmental path under career and work contexts. This positive developmental path results from thriving, a self-adaptation process that helps individuals to acquire a range of self-regulatory resources for sustained thriving and future development [3]. This self-adaptation process can also be applied to career adaptability thus explaining the role of Thriving in Career Adaptability and thus helping in understanding the significance of the data.

The next hypothesis states that 'There is no significant difference in the level of Innovative Work Behavior for employees scoring high on Workplace Spirituality compared to employees scoring low on Workplace Spirituality.' An independent 't test' was performed to determine whether there was a significant difference between the mean levels of IWB based on the high and low levels of Workplace Spirituality. Thus based on the results obtained, the null hypothesis was accepted and the alternate hypothesis was rejected.

Workplace spirituality creates awareness and helps individuals experience a sense of consciousness. It gives a sense of obligation and loyalty to the organization [14]. Thus it enhances employees' intuitive appeal to the purpose, which increases their innovation and may voluntarily engage in behavior like innovative work behavior.

The work environment of TCs has become very competitive because of meeting monthly targets. When looking from the perspective of railway employees (TC), few of IWB is related to finding ways to deal with the passengers and looking for the various ways to meet the monthly targets, etc.

Few factors that can be attributed to results not being significant were identified during the interaction with some of the employees. One potential factor for the results not being significant is that the data was collected during the Covid-19 lockdown period. Railways were shut during this period and all the employees were either at home or those who were working would go to work only once or twice a week. Only frontline workers were allowed to travel under strict rules and restrictions. Because of this, there was no scope for employees to get engaged in IWB.

Another potential factor contributing to results not being significant can be intrinsic motivation. This can be explained by the theoretical model of workplace spirituality and innovative work behavior given by Ranasinghe and Samarasinghe in 2019 [15] which states that when the workplace spirituality level expands, the innovative work behavior additionally increases. Furthermore, workplace spirituality affects intrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation affects innovative work behavior, and intrinsic motivation impacts the connection between workplace spirituality and innovative work behavior. Intrinsic motivation is one factor in the componential theory of creativity that prompts uplift the person's creative behavior.

And on a similar line, Self-determination theory states that employee freedom, competence, and relatedness in their work exercises prompt intrinsic motivation [15], and when employees think that their work is meaningful can contribute to psychological resources required for intrinsic motivation [15]. Because of the Covid-19 period, there were restrictions as to how many numbers of employees can work per day, and because of the low number of on-field employees, there might be a low sense of community. Because of the restrictions imposed on the working pattern, there was no flexibility and freedom. These are the few factors that might have contributed to a lower level of intrinsic motivation. Thus this might explain the reasons for the results not being significant.

It was hypothesized that 'There is no significant difference in the level of Career Adaptability for employees scoring high on Workplace Spirituality compared to employees scoring low on Workplace Spirituality.' An independent 't test' was performed to determine whether there was a significant difference between the mean levels of Career Adaptability based on the high and low levels of Thriving. Thus based on the results obtained, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was accepted.

The obtained results are similar to the research done by Sony and Mekoth in 2017[16]. The result shows a positive association between three dimensions of workplace spirituality and FLE adaptability. It was also found that FLE adaptability has a positive impact on job outcomes (job satisfaction and job performance). Swisher in 2015 [17] has done another study in this area. Results found that spirituality, religiosity, and spiritual coping had significant contributions to the variance in adaptation to stress over personality[17].

The P-O fit model of Workplace Spirituality by Singhal and Vallabh in 2014 [18] explains the interactive context of a person and organization that influences the spiritual needs of individuals. The final stage is the outcomes of workplace spirituality on how people perceive them. This outcome process is reconciling self where individuals use their cognitive processes to adapt to one's need for an immediate work environment. In such an environment individuals perceive the work environment as conducive to self-expression and purpose which help them connect to one's authentic self. It also leads to self-adjustment and handling situations better when self-expression is compromised. Gwinner et al. in 2005 stated that intrinsic motivation tends to play a positive role in employees' adaptability, as well as intrinsic motivation, is an important characteristic of a spiritual employee [16]. Because of more than 10 years of duty, railway employees are likely to experience intrinsic motivation, and a sense of community and are likely to find meaning in their workplace. These are important factors of Workplace Spirituality that lead individuals to adapt better to their work environment. Thus applying the context of employee adaptability to career adaptability can explain the role of Workplace Spirituality in Career Adaptability and help to explain the significance of the data.

The approximate majority of the participants fall between the age range of 43-55 years and fewer being on either side ie. 40-42 years and 56-60 years. Among them, almost 43% of them were female participants and 54% were male participants.

Considering the above study there are certain limitations to the study. The study was conducted during Covid 19 period through an online survey. Another limitation of this research data obtained was limited to the geographical area. (Mumbai district) and was limited to TCs. The study was limited to the middle adulthood age group only (40-60 years). The research does not consider the differentiation between the male and the female population having basic English Proficiency. Purposive sampling used in the study makes it lack generalization.

Considering the above study there could be certain future implications. The major future implication is the need to conduct this study post-Covid situation and can adopt gender differences. Future studies could be extended to other types of railway employees and consider the younger population to understand their perception of the workplace. Various workshops could be conducted to enhance Workplace Spirituality. Lastly, considering past literature, a few other variables such as Work Engagement, Job Satisfaction, Team Learning, Organizational Support, Well Being could also be incorporated.

It can be concluded that a Thriving does enhance Innovative Work Behavior and helps in Career Adaptability among railway employees. Thus Thriving might act as an advantage in the competitive work environment of TCs. Since Thriving cannot be developed individually as a skill, there is a need to study Workplace Spirituality. Results obtained suggest that there was no significant effect of Workplace Spirituality on Innovative Work Behavior which can be attributed to the Covid-19 situation. Later analysis shows that Workplace Spirituality

has a significant effect on Career Adaptability, suggesting that the Workplace Spirituality plays will help in better career adaptability among railway employees. Thriving is considered to be a human aspect of sustainability which is important to produce high performance. Thus if we can enhance Workplace Spirituality for railway employees, they might experience Thriving which will eventually contribute to enhancing IWB and Career Adaptability.

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