

A TRANSFORMATION FROM THE CAGES OF SPIRITS TO THE SPIRITUAL ORGANIZATIONS: DIFFERENT SOLUTIONS TO EMPLOYEE ORIENTED ISSUES

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Abstract

Nowadays, changes in socioeconomic compositions, advancement in technology, consumption mania, increasing speed of digital contents, momentary satisfactions from the increasing speed of access to information, stress in the workplace, fear from loneliness or being isolated from the society lead individuals to search for or attribute a meaning both to their personal and work life. The impact of this search in work places is seen in the form of differences in the personal perception of occupation and expectation from it. Employees who spend most of their daily life in the workplaces has become people asking why they are doing what they do at work and querying what benefit does their occupations bring to themselves and to the society.

Despite all efforts in increasing the performance of employees in organizations that has only production oriented operations, the loss of motivation in workplaces cannot be prevented. Organizations for profit that do not inquire a mission become “cages for the spirit” of their employees in time.

With the awareness of all these issues in work places, in this study we discuss the need to create different solutions to people oriented institutional problems through the use of emotional intelligence and spiritual quotient. The importance of the terms; spiritual quotient, spiritual institutions, emotional intelligence, mission inquiry, and enrichment and expansion of vision in the literature will be search carefully, and a content analysis for these terms will be done. Through this analysis, we will discuss if new horizons can be created in the field of human resources management.

Keywords: Spiritual quotient, spiritual organization, employee issues

Introduction

“The 20. Century was born up on the materialism and discover the matter; came across the soul at the edge of the matter. I believe 21st century will search for the soul and introduce it so as to overcome all the outdated knowledge” Robert Ornstein (Bozdağ, 2010, p. 110). Current life styles verifies the righteousness of Robert Ornstein, the author of “New Psychology”. Changes in socioeconomic compositions, advancement in technology, consumption mania, increasing speed of digital contents, momentary satisfactions from the increasing speed of access to information, stress in the workplace, fear from loneliness or being isolated from the society lead individuals to search for or attribute a meaning both to their personal and work life. The impact of this search in work places is seen in the form of differences in the personal perception of occupation and expectation from it. Employees who spend most of their daily life in the workplaces has become people asking why they are doing what they do at work and querying what benefit does their occupations bring to themselves and to the society (Kesken & Ayyıldız, 2008, p. 729).

Every human being has physical, emotional, social, cultural, spiritual and intellectual needs. In order to maintain the integrity of own, a human has to satisfy her/his intangible needs beside the tangible needs. It is generally experienced that biological, psychological and social needs are put in the list, but the spiritual dimension of human beings are ignored while her/his needs listed. However, it is well known that spiritual side of human beings has also a major importance in dealing with issues (Kostak, 2007, p. 105).

It is easy to deal with matter oriented issues in organizations. They can be solved by rational methods and experiences since they are tangible. However, it is harder to realize, indicate, and solve intangible problems such as spiritual and emotional once. Therefore, they require more time for solution as well. Unsolved spiritual and emotional problems in organizations are between the most important factors that prevent the growth and progress of organizations. In these organizations the cause for inefficiency and failures are mostly because of the lack of the spiritual and emotional abilities of employees rather than their technical and intellectual incapability (Acar, 2002, p. 2).

According to D. Zohar (1997), leaders in businesses of 21st century should cultivate an ability of using all existing intellectual, emotional, and spiritual resources. Modern models that focus only on cognitive abilities ignore the majority of the resources (Summak & Özgan, 2007, p. 265).

The Search for a Mission in Institutions

A managerial approach that is based only on having more production would demotivate the spirit of innovation while it increases the competition. It also would cause a recession while it targets employees to work in harmony, and would provoke obedience take place of loyalty among employees. Organizations managed in this manner become “prisons of human spirit” as W. Bennis defined. People who can rescue the spirit from this captivity will be those employees and managers that ask the question “why” to her/his own and search for its answer.

According to V. Frankl, the first motivation of live to human beings is the search for the meaning of life. One will feel the life vacuous and shallow if the vigorous need of her/his is not satisfied. The main contemporary issue for most of us is spiritual because the majority does not get this need of us be satisfied (Zohar & Marshall, 2004, p. 35).

P. Drucker once said about Frederic Taylor, founder of scientific management, that after analyzing the sand shoveling he has never thought about asking the questions “What is this work?” and “What is it done for?”. To Drucker, Taylor searched answers only for the question “How is it done?”. About 50 years later after Taylor, neither did Elton Mayo ask the questions “What” and “Why” while he was helping the foundation of the theory on human relations. Mayo always searched for the best method to connect cables together while he was practicing the Hawthorne Studies with Western Electric. However, questions that need to be asked to increase the efficiency especially in information and service sectors are what is the work and what it is done for rather than how it is done. According to Drucker, the most doable and highest increase in productivity is based on the redefinition of the task (Drucker, 1996, p. 104).

Spiritual Institutions

Nowadays emotional and spiritual abilities are used beside the management information in designing the relations between human beings and organizations. This method is considered as adjusting the management by an emotional mind and honesty. Increasing number of academic studies on this method indicates a breaking point in management sciences. It is also a significant development to have emotional and spiritual abilities which have been considered as the topic of religious studies be analyzed through scientific methods instead of being seen as a “magic-taboo”. Management sciences need information that helps in holistically analyzing human as the center of management, leadership and organization, and redesigning managerial minds (Summak & Özgan, 2007, pp. 269-270).

One of the reasons for spirituality movement to get remarkable places on the agenda and to be that popular is the strain of our cotemporaries in communicating with the self and finding themselves spiritually in a deep nothingness and vacuity. The resulting attempts to fill this spiritual gap occurs in the form of activities carried out for intangible goals. People who have never met each other before, but give up the use of a refrigerator for having a part of a social media campaign that is against global warming, or those who punishes a company by not consuming its product because of its insensitivity to environmental pollution, or those who collect plastic bottle caps for a campaign that provides wheel chairs for people with disabilities can be seen as examples to these attempts. To overcome the feeling of nothingness and vacuity, some people establish spiritual connections between self and the others from all around the world. In this way they meet around the same sensations and ideas, renew their selves, change their viewpoints, understand others while continue living based on their own beliefs, but find an opportunity to approach others with a tolerance. Similar examples can also be seen among those who are occupied in the same work environment.

According to Fry spirituality is a source of high organizational commitment, productivity, and lower stress (Fry L. W., 2003, p. 713). Employees facing spiritual dimension to life embody their quest for simplicity, meaning, self-expression, and interdependence on behalf of something greater (Karakas, 2010, p. 4).

The main aim of the term “workplace spirituality” which is associated with the implementation of the spirituality to work life is to create an intrinsic motivation through meeting need of the beliefs, self-sacrifices, and belongings of employees in the work place, and to increase the level of organizational goals and business success at the end (Karadağ, 2009, s. 1361).

Spiritual leadership is defined as the leadership style of people who aim to reveal the survival of employees, try to answer their search for the meaning, adopt the servant leadership style, and strive for the development of the employees. Spiritual leader focuses first on people, then on strategy. S/he starts searching for the sources of an issue with self rather than some external factors (Kesken & Ayyıldız, 2008, p. 746).

History shows that most of managements that lasts long and is accredited by people who are ruled has justice and conscience-based applications. When we think in emotional and spiritual dimensions and examine the fact that contemporary managers has just started exploring advices showing the path of virtue and wisdom to managers in the past, we will make a deduction that suggests that confidence, conscience and principles of justice are moral values that are above ages, and a management that does not have an emotional and spiritual dimension will not last long (Summak & Özgan, 2007, pp. 268-269).

In this context, spirituality, spiritual organization, spiritual leadership, and spirituality of workplace are frequently used terms in literature that are directly related with spiritual intelligence. The differences between these terms and spiritual intelligence are tried to be defined. Managers’ and employees’ intensive need for understanding the meaning of organization and personal commitment for the organization will be satisfied only by the development of spiritual intelligence.

Spiritual Quotient (SQ)

Spiritual Quotient is a skill set that people embody the spiritual resources, values, and their qualities while they consider the existing issues, solve problems in everyday life, make wise decisions, and increase the prosperity through their daily routine (Forghania et al, 2014, p. 292; Akgemci & Bekiş, 2013, p. 288). In another words, spiritual intelligence can be defined as the practical application of spiritual abilities that are already exist potentially.

Spirituality is to know who you are while spiritual intelligence is the awareness of the reason of existence and governing a life based upon that awareness (Chaudhary & Aswal, 2013, p. 1510). For personnel managers, employees can be promoted because of their emotional intelligence level (EQ) although they get the job because of their cognitive intelligence level (IQ). However, Zohar states that having a high IQ and EQ will not be enough because people also need to use their spiritual intelligence level (SQ) while interacting others in the era when all the thinking models are changing. It is because the spiritual intelligence brings people the ability to create new, to change the rules, sense of moral, to understand strict rules and stretch them via compassion, and to perceive a consciousness through compassion and see incidents with different dimensions (Zohar & Marshall, 2004, p. 18). Spiritual intelligence also gives more meaning to life, and increases productivity of one’s life span by uncovering her/his potential.

Zohar indicates that lower IQ causes people not to be able to solve rational problems, while lower EQ cause them to behave like an outsider, and have a lower mental attitude. However, he says, a lower SQ hurts one’s understanding of reason for the existence. Therefore, one should not ignore the importance of developing a sufficient spiritual intelligence (Zohar & Marshall, 2004, pp. 226-227).

Zohar mentioned 12 properties of spiritual intelligence, which has an active role in enriching our inner word. They are; self-consciousness, spontaneity, guidance of vision and values, holism, mercy, celebration of diversity, field independence, tendency to ask the main questions or radically questioning, ability to reframe, constructive use of difficulties, humility, and approach to professionalism (Zohar, 2004).

Ability acquired by spiritual intelligence is among those that can be developed. The development of consciousness of spiritual intelligence increases the employee’s perception of work, and positively affects their ability of transaction. This positive approach also provides an establishment of new perspectives into employees which minimize conflicts between each other.

Spiritual intelligence helps people to overcome their ego, self-centeredness and greediness, to understand their selves better, and to have a strong awareness, determination and courage in their initiatives. People with higher SQ exhibits determinations and honesty in overcoming the challenges, and evaluates incidents by their intuitions (Aydıntan, 2009, p. 260). They possess high level of flexibility and open mindedness as an individual, but do not show resistance to change (Zohar & Marshall, 2004, p. 30). Organizations made by people with spiritual resources prone to teamwork as a whole. Individually, these people have a personality that listens, learns, experiments, creates, develops and gets the environment developed (Baloglu & Karadağ, 2009, p. 173).

According to S. Cooks et al, leaders with high SQ not only have the obvious and explicit faith and personal values that guides their activities, but also have organizational vision that will take employees to the aim of their existence and affect their attitude as well as resources to determine the values. These people can think outside the system, and do not have fear from differences in organizations because of their strong beliefs. They produce innovatively, can change the rules, and do the reorganization (Aydıntan, 2009, p. 259; Çakar, 2014, p. 44). They serve better to the employees, organizations, and customers thanks to their connection with own and the ability of putting the self aside humbly (Baloglu & Karadağ, 2009, p. 176). These people can quickly get rid of uncertainty, errors and impasses. After they overcame these issues, they may also be more successful than ever before. They can easily adopt themselves when they find a meaning after they questioned their existence (Kesken & Ayyıldız, 2008, p. 739).

One of the reasons that makes researchers to consider the existence of a strong relation between spiritual intelligence and the perception of work is the fact that the source of this perception is as much likely to be spiritual as it is physical. Therefore, it is considered that spiritual intelligence plays an important role in directing the perception of work as desired.

Studies about spiritual intelligence have not been discussed enough in Turkish literature while they have been well accepted and studied in the international literature. There is need in scientific studies that reflects and combines the perspectives of positive sciences and metaphysics on the topic. Spiritual intelligence is a new research area that stands for a lot of questions to be directed.

Conclusion

It will be too optimistic to claim that there exist enough researches done in the 21st century on understanding and introduce spirit in a way that exceeds what we already know about it. Modern human still searches for the meaning of life. The continuity of this search also means that employees question their jobs in all its aspect. This searching and interrogation process seems to continue in at an increasing trend as long as the desire of the spirit of human, as a complex entity, remains neglected. Prisons of human spirit become more complex while the thought of obeying the manager postpones the concepts of employee engagement. Keys to these prisons are the questions for “what” and “why” in inquiring a vision. Answers to these questions will reveal human’s search for the meaning of the life, which is the primary motivation of human. The question “how” which is the key component of classical approach to management could not serve as a cure for the needs of modern man.

Today, emotional and spiritual management is needed beside the knowledge management to construct an organization with spiritual identity. It is essential to have managerial mind that is captured by positivism to be interpreted by metaphysical notions. By this approach, the short-time existence of organizations consists of employees trapped in the feeling of emptiness spiritually can be solved. The conservative attitudes of institutions results employees to search for the satisfaction of their needs in social media. The meet of the virtual environment with the abstract concept of spirituality has raised intangible issues such as lack of organizational loyalty, stress and impairment of motivation. Spirit oriented concepts should be reviewed by organizations. Then they should be translated to business life to build spiritual organizations. The type of leadership needed in these organizations will be servant leadership. It can be seen that managements that is not formed based on justice, conscience, virtue, and wisdom will not be successful in the long-term. Strategic efforts to relieve the need for spiritual wisdom at an institutional level will provide an opportunity re-evaluate the concepts of IQ and EQ. Spiritual institutions who know what they are needs spiritual intelligence to manage their awareness in this regard. The ability of developing spiritual intelligence in institutions will also attract the attention of new generations who takes place in institutions in an increasing rate such as Y generations. Employees who overcome their ego and aware of spiritual wisdom will also contribute the increasing level of flexibility of organizations. Leaders with spiritual intelligence will improve the effectiveness of strategic management.

In this paper we discuss the concepts that have begun to find its place in the international literature at an increasing acceleration. Such studies should be taken by an interpretative approach at national and institutional level, and synthesized by the positive science and metaphysics. This effort can create opportunities, especially for developing countries, for strategic management practices that seem unnecessary or could not find a place to itself to be applied. If everything changes, it is necessary to accept the need for a change in management science, and construct spiritual models for its development.

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