



Facilitating Workplace Spirituality: A Philosophical Lens Through Kashmir Saivism

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Received: 19 April 2026 | Accepted: 29 April 2026 | Published: 15 May 2026

Abstract

'Work is Worship' is a philosophical idea that comes from ancient Indian teachings and is deeply rooted in Indian Philosophy. Workplace spirituality is a Western approach, but missing its Indian ingredient, i.e., our Indian philosophy. Workplace spirituality has increasingly gained attention in modern organizational studies as scholars explore how inner awareness, meaning, and connectedness influence individuals at work. In modern workplaces, employees often seek not only professional success but also a sense of purpose and harmony in their environment. A spiritual approach derived from Indian philosophical traditions offers valuable insights into understanding such experiences within organizations. In Indian culture, spirituality refers to the realization or experience of oneness with all beings. This sense of oneness is reflected in workplace spirituality through feelings of interconnectedness among individuals. In this context, Indian philosophical traditions provide meaningful perspectives that can help understand and enhance workplace spirituality. In this study, we combine the emerging Western approach of Workplace Spirituality, merging some concepts of Indian philosophy, specifically Kashmir Saivism. This conceptual paper explores workplace spirituality through the philosophical lens of Kashmir Saivism. The goal is to understand the concept of workplace spirituality by examining selected philosophical insights from Kashmir Saivism and seeing how these ideas can support its development. The paper focuses on strengthening individual spirituality at work through three primary dimensions of Kashmir Saivism: Universal Consciousness (Chaitanya), Self-Recognition (Pratyabhijñā), and Unity of Existence (Advaita). By aligning these philosophical ideas with workplace spirituality, the study examines how awareness, interconnectedness, and self-realization can lead to meaningful work experiences and ethical engagement in organizations. This thorough research underscores the importance of Indian philosophical thought in the modern management framework and suggests that insights from Kashmir Saivism can strongly relate to our understanding of spirituality in organizational life.

Keywords: Workplace Spirituality; Kashmir Saivism; Consciousness; Self-Recognition; Unity of Existence.

1. Introduction

The changing and growing nature of modern organizations is demanding the involvement of spirituality in the workplace. In this stressful work environment, employees are seeking not only professional success but also a sense of inner satisfaction that is ethically and morally aligned. The studies show this concept as defining workplace spirituality, portraying it as a sense of inner fulfilment, meaningful work, mindfulness, and a feeling of belonging to the community within the organization (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). Studies and research on this dimension of organizations link mindfulness, employee engagement & workplace spirituality that strongly correlate (Petchsawang & Mclean, 2017). According to the studies so far, most of the organizations are using this concept more for improving productivity rather than for deeper moral and ethical transformation and development of employees (Gupta et al 2020). Many scholars and researchers have explored the influence of the Indian philosophical traditions in understanding workplace spirituality,

specifically through the Bhagavad Gita. Several studies highlight the concept of Karma Yoga and Dharma on ethical and spiritual behavior, which are impactful for personal fulfillment at work (Srilalitha & Supriya, 2019). Moreover, the philosophical insights of Kashmir Saivism remain relatively underexplored in organizational studies. In this context, this paper aims to consider this gap by analysing the workplace spirituality through the philosophical lens of Kashmir Saivism, focusing on its key concepts of Universal Consciousness (Chaitanya), Self – Recognition (Pratyabhijna), & the Unity of Existence (Advaita).

2. Literature Review

Spirituality is emerging as an approach in organizations as they realize that work is more than just achievement and targets; it is about meaning, values, and inner fulfillment. Various research has explained it from different perspectives; hence, the concept is somewhat illusory. For example, De Klerk (2005) related spirituality to a sense of life's purpose, i.e., when one experiences meaningful work, there will be higher work satisfaction and mental health. On the other hand, Long et al. (2021) viewed that most literature is differentiated and encouraging outcomes rather than considering deep human experiences. However, one of the critical issues concerns how organizations function spirituality- primarily to enhance productivity or motivation. According to Gupta et al. (2020), this is a complete misinterpretation of spirituality, which is rooted in ethical values and cultural change. Hence, instead of changing organizational thinking and practices, spirituality is often interpreted as gaining quick organizational results. Hence, several scholars are drawn to Indian philosophy, which explores life and work entirely as one. According to Pardasani et al. (2014), the ideas of Karma Yoga, Guna theory, and Pancha Kosha could connect inner development to outer action. In other words, the work should not be disconnected from the personal value system but should instill a profound sense of responsibility and purpose. This is relevant in sustainable development and the broader vision of Viksit Bharat, where growth will be economic, ethical, and inclusive. The Bhagavad Gita explains how spirituality can be practiced in daily work.

Srilalitha and Supriya (2019) consider it a channel for a positive and ethical work climate. Karma Yoga, explained by Sivakumar and Kamalakhannan, is among the most significant spiritual concepts globally. The authors explored Karma Yoga due to their interests with the way intention appears in human actions. The concept involves a focus on proper intention and the mindful balance of the individual's thoughts, the researchers' idea of the connection between work and humanity. The practical teachings contain various elements of leadership, such as efficiency and ethical decision-making, as well as the principles, for instance, awareness and responsibility. Dhamija et al. (2023) used numerous elements of leadership in their study, for instance, ethical choices to represent comfort, humanity, and gentleness. Beyond the Gita, systems like Kashmir Saivism provide several repeating insights from the unified consciousness and the dynamic reality in the background. According to Pandit (1997) and Dyczkowski (1987), reality is not divided, which creates a unified form and slightly dynamic consciousness; however, the workplace is more complex than it looks. Several actions give the work purpose, focusing on areas where actions turn into responsibility and ethical values change to a sustainable vision. Chowdhury (2023) used realistic quantities of collective well-being. Maheshwari (2021) comprises layers of higher consciousness that are slightly deeper, contributing to the growth of the manager's empathetic action. Thanki (2023) has a set of spiritual tools for measuring psychological well-being as the author applied organizational principles. The research also contains a sense of depth since it is based on Kashmir Saivism and its background. The study seems to consist of three triangles, i.e., Chaitanya, Pratyabhijna, and Advaita. This research applied the principles of philosophy while exploring Viksit Bharat. While concepts from the Gita are present on a single side of the study, there is still scope for philosophies like Kashmir Saivism. The present discussion explores a strong emphasis on ethical practices, as they are directly observable aspects of organizational settings, while sustainable values remain closely aligned with them. However, the relationship between spirituality and ethics is already positively relevant. Western organizational studies often treat spirituality in a limited or instrumental manner. As a result, a few dimensions of workplace spirituality appear unexplored or overlooked, leading to an incomplete understanding of the concept. In contrast, Indian philosophical traditions provide a more balanced and holistic framework for understanding workplace spirituality, where ethical conduct, sustainability, and inner awareness are interconnected. The focus on measurable outcomes in existing research can sometimes harm the broader sense of workplace spirituality, limiting it to just targets and achievements rather than deeper transformation. Within this

context, the vision of Viksit Bharat reflects a more structured and comprehensive approach, aligning ethical values with sustainable development. The insights of Kashmir Saivism further strengthen this perspective by highlighting key philosophical principles such as consciousness, self-recognition, and unity of existence. The framework can be understood as an integration where Indian philosophy performs a key position, supported by related dimensions that together create a balanced and deeper understanding of workplace spirituality. While the focus remains on spiritual reflections within the workplace, several areas still require deeper research to achieve conceptual clarity and completeness.

3. Objectives

1. To explore the concept of workplace spirituality in modern organizational research.
2. To observe key philosophical insights from Kashmir Saivism to spiritual awareness and ethical living.
3. To analyse how these dimensions can support workplace spirituality.

4. Research Methodology

This paper explores a conceptual research design based on the analysis of secondary data. It reviews existing literature, including research papers, articles, theses, books, and studies related to workplace spirituality and Kashmir Saivism. Relevant academic sources were selected to understand the emerging concept of workplace spirituality and its ethical and philosophical foundations from an Indian perspective. A qualitative and interpretive approach has been adopted to examine the ideas and viewpoints of both domains. This paper aims to establish a connection between the two concepts, which come from Western and Indian philosophical perspectives. The Western approach relates to spirituality at work, emphasizing ethics, interconnectedness, and insights from Kashmir Saivism. By analyzing the selected descriptive and conceptual literature, the goal is to find a balance between workplace spirituality and Kashmir Saivism. This study does not involve primary data collection and relies solely on secondary literature. The findings are primarily interpretative and do not aim for empirical generalization.

5. Philosophical Framework

1. Introduction to Philosophical Base

Kashmir Saivism is a non-dual spiritual philosophy that supports and works as a primary concept of the unity of consciousness in the sense of reality. This philosophy, as a whole or in generalization, considers or views that there is a connection between the individual self and universal consciousness as fundamentally linked concepts. It covers concepts like awareness and realization of human experiences. This approach of Kashmir Saivism within the Indian thought brings together the two concepts of inner awareness & external action. It not only relies on materialism but also inculcates the values and beliefs of spirituality in the routine life, including workplaces where much of the time is invested by humans.

2. Universal Consciousness – Chaitanya

Kashmir Saivism builds its fundamental principle on the concept of Universal consciousness- Chaitanya. It views that consciousness is not just limited to our individual self but also shared and emerges in all beings. By linking universal consciousness to workplace spirituality, we get the output of meaningful work. As this concept is understood as awareness in our thoughts, actions, & interactions within the organizations. Meaningful work or mindfulness at work denotes the pure universal consciousness. The principles of Kashmir Saivism, through Chaitanya, will not only improve productivity but also lead to enhancing the quality of work and awareness at work.

Self-Recognition – Pratyabhijna

The second important concept of Kashmir Saivism is Pratyabhijna, which means self-recognition, or realization of one's own self. This philosophy suggests that individuals should be aware of their true nature by aligning their inner potential with the higher perspectives. The work, viewed by this concept, is not just limited to targets and achievements, they should have a connection with the higher and deeper spiritual purpose. The employees' intent and purpose should reflect in their work and actions, which will help them achieve better engagement and personal growth.

3. Unity of Existence – Advaita

This concept of Advaita, which also mean non-duality, refers to the unity of existence and the interconnectedness of all beings. Advaita, as a concept, highlights that individuality is a delusion and all beings are a part of that larger whole. In

the work environment, we can view this concept as a sense of community. By connecting the third principle of Kashmir Saivism and workplace spirituality, we can build a work environment that will reinforce belongingness, collaborative efforts, a feeling of oneness, and mutual respect among employees. Harmony should prevail at the workplace with the feeling of collectiveness and not individualism.

4. Linking the Philosophy to Workplace Spirituality

The three concepts of Kashmir Saivism, i.e., Universal Consciousness – Chaitanya, Self – Recognition- Pratyabhijna, & Unity of Existence- Advaita, are perfectly aligned with concepts of Workplace Spirituality, i.e., Meaningful Work, Self- Awareness/Personal Growth, Sense of Community. By applying these insights from Kashmir Saivism, workplace spirituality can be suggested not merely as an instrument/ tool for improving productivity but as a deeper sense of higher purpose. This will simultaneously grow in personal as well as the organization’s transformation, highlighting and promoting ethical values and sustainable living within Indian Philosophy.

KASHMIR SAIVISM	MEANING	WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY
CHAITANYA	Universal Consciousness	Meaningful Work
PRATYABHIJNA	Self-Recognition	Personal Growth & Self-Awareness
ADVAITA	Unity of Existence	Sense of Community

6. Discussion

‘Work is Worship’ is a philosophical idea that comes from ancient Indian teachings and is deeply rooted in Indian Philosophy. The current study examines the concept of Workplace spirituality through the philosophical lens of Kashmir Saivism. Facilitating workplace spirituality through Kashmir Saivism, it suggests an environment that is beyond just functional operations. Moreover, spirituality at workplaces is not just introduced as an instrument but as a pure perspective to fulfil a higher purpose. Prior studies recommend that workplace spirituality is linked with meaning at work, purpose & sense of community (Ashmos & Duchon,2000), and practices such as mindfulness have been found to enhance engagement & well-being (Petchsawang &McLean, 2017). However, as highlighted in existing literature, organizations often adopt spirituality as an instrument for improving productivity rather than as a deeper cultural and ethical transformation (Gupta et al 2020).

In this study, the philosophical perspectives of Kashmir Saivism provide a more integrated concept of workplace spirituality. One of the three principles of Kashmir Saivism, i.e., Universal Consciousness- Chaitanya, facilitates knowledge in thoughts, actions & work, emphasizing individuals’ involvement in their work with mindfulness & responsibility. Alignment of Universal Consciousness with mindfulness helps in seeking meaning at work in the work environment. Second of the three principles in Kashmir Saivism, i.e., Self– Recognition- Pratyabhijna, encourages one to understand one’s inner self. Realization of our own thoughts & perspective that should align positively with our purpose and intent. These principles/concepts are when applied to workplaces leads to achieving higher purpose and achievements that are beyond materiality. This also helps individuals to grow both personally and professionally.

Moreover, the third principle of Kashmir Saivism, i.e., Unity of Existence-Advait, supports the idea of interconnectedness among employees. These concepts help individuals develop a sense of community, belonging, trust, harmony, and cooperation within the organization. This concept does not believe in bifurcating approaches, as it encourages promoting interconnectedness rather than individualism. It suggests that employees view their workplace’s purpose and their own purpose as unified with one intent. Existing literature on workplace spirituality has been linked with the Bhagavat Gita, which emphasizes that our actions should be faithful and clear without malice. Insights from Kashmir Saivism suggest

taking workplace spirituality further by fostering deeper focus, awareness, knowledge, ethics, values, and inner realization at work. All these approaches help build or develop employees not just to perform external duties but also to realize their higher purpose, foster mindfulness for better engagement, and cultivate a sense of belongingness within the community. Thus, combining these philosophical insights from Kashmiri Saivism with workplace spirituality brings a meaningful framework and fundamentals for understanding workplace spirituality as a holistic process.

7. Conclusion

This paper highlights the role of Kashmir Saivism in understanding workplace spirituality. Workplace spirituality, as a Western concept encourages more as a tool/instrument at workplaces to improve productivity & performance. By aligning the insights from the Kashmir Saivism, this study facilitates a better understanding of workplace spirituality and presents both the interdisciplinary concepts as one philosophy. The selected concept of Universal Consciousness- Chaitanya, Self- Recognition- Pratyabhijna, Unity of Existence Advaita, suggests a deeper understanding, awareness, and mindfulness at workplaces experiences.

The discussion views that workplace spirituality is not limited to external actions, but also helps employees to grow professionally and personally while having cordial and collective relationships. This paper also builds an environment of sustainable development that includes ethics, morals, and values within Indian philosophy.

However, the study is limited to only a few selected principles of Kashmir Saivism. The philosophical tradition itself is wide/broad and includes several important concepts such as Spanda (Cosmic Vibration), Tattvas (Principles of Reality), and Shakti (Divine Energy). These principles also play a potential and influential role in future research for understanding workplace spirituality. Further research can explore these dimensions for empowering the application of Indian philosophical thought in organizational settings and everyday life.

Overall, the study integrates the relevance of Indian philosophy in modern management and encourages further studies for better correlation and combination of Kashmir Saivism in understanding workplace spirituality.

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Cite this Article:

Sharma, V. (2026). Facilitating workplace spirituality: A philosophical lens through Kashmir Saivism. International Journal of Humanities, Commerce and Education, 2(5), 67–72.

Journal URL: <https://ijbce.com/> **DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.59828/ijbce.v2i5.69>