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WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY: EMPLOYEE CONNECTION TO WORK ENVIRONMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS

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Abstract. The study focused on workplace spirituality as a connector of the employee to the work environment and working conditions in the face of economic recession or depression by using the manufacturing organizations as the unit of analysis. The study identified the place of workplace spirituality in employee connection to work environment and working conditions and the relationship between all the components of workplace spirituality and work environment and working conditions. A questionnaire was used as the research instrument and was randomly administered to the respondents in the selected manufacturing organizations where in 187 copies of the questionnaires were found useable. It was found that workplace spirituality has a significant place in employee connection to the work environment and working conditions and that alignment of values one of the dimensions of workplace spirituality has a significant and positive relationship with the work environment and working conditions. It was concluded that employee connection to the work environment and working conditions in the face of economic recession or depression can be derived through the alignment of values, interconnectedness, and meaningful work. However, it was recommended that there should be a minimum safety benchmark for all the parties in the industrial organizations to prevent hazardous work environments and working conditions.

Key words: workplace spirituality, working life, work environment, employee well-being, working conditions, employee connection.

Introduction

The evolution in workforce management heralded the evolvement of human resource management in the 19th Century to signify a better way to manage people at work. This places an enormous premium on people at work, wherein their needs are incorporated into the overall organizational objectives without prejudice to any stakeholders' interests in the workplace. The aftermath of COVID-19 has further made organizations show more concern towards their employees and their activities in the environment, thereby seeking the well-being of the individual employee and that of the communities at large knowing fully well that work is central to employee's life and the course of their life, especially their mental and physical health. To respond to this new order in the workplace, the focus shifted to the need for constant changes and adjustments in the working life of the

employees to ensure that working life is healthier, sustainable, and attractive to engage them, being aware of risks that exist in the workplace which is domiciled in the work environment and working conditions.

The changes and adjustments in the working life of every employee towards sound mental and physical health are contingent upon the work environment and working conditions which often serve as a sword of double edges on account of their significance to employers and employees (Akinruwa, Babatunde, & Ogah, 2024). According to Kabari (2021), the work environment and working conditions are the two major key factors among other factors being used by employees when appraising their workplace and the outcomes of the appraisal invariably determine their mindset towards responding to their organic role in the organization i.e., the desire to identify needs and dynamics of the organization and willingness to take

initiatives and demonstrate expertise or passion in filling the vacuum without prejudice when such roles were not explicitly assigned. Evolving from the appraisal of the work environment and working conditions are mutual benefits if positive and mutual loss, if negative. Therefore, employee working conditions are essential to the overall health of an organization especially in a competitive environment in order to promote positive industrial outcomes.

The rationale behind the mutual benefits and loss is the degree of alignment between individual and organizational goals. In the views of Bashir, Amir, Jawaad, and Hasan (2020) working conditions can significantly impact employees' mental well-being, health and safety, and productivity when there is congruence between an individual employee and organizational goals because working conditions are the physical and psychological conditions that workers are exposed to while working. The work environment revolves around the physical (technology, space, comfort, temperature), social (communication, team dynamics, leadership, development, integration, work-life balance, well-being, diversity, and inclusion), and cultural conditions (values, norms, beliefs, traditions, practices) where employees perform their operational activities from time to time and this explains why work environment and working conditions are often seen as Siamese twins (Owota & Elliot, 2022).

However, a poor work environment can be a potent force in the survival, growth, and profit of an organization on account of unethical behaviour, unsupportive relationship, unfair treatment, unclear communication, physically dangerous and unhealthy environments as well as outdated technology, poor lighting, poor benefits, and poor workplace culture. Therefore, for any organization to meet its obligations towards all the stakeholders, there is a need to align individual goals with organizational goals, integrate personal beliefs with workplace beliefs to promote integrity, and give a sense of fulfillment, and interconnectedness within the organization, thus, ensuring organizational survival, growth, and profitability (Owota & Elliot, 2022).

Today, the economic and financial environment of business in Nigeria has greatly impacted the work environment and working conditions that employers could make available for individual employees to carry out their daily operational activities which are somewhat below ILO's decent work agenda standard. The implication is that employee suffers untold hardship in the workplace while carrying out their daily activities and constantly seek out a way to search

for a more convenient alternative job thus, leading to work abandonment and loss of qualified and competent personnel. Since the prevailing hardship in the economic and financial environment lingers, organizations are in search of strategies to adopt that will be cost-effective to alleviate the impact of the economic meltdown. Then, can workplace spirituality (WPS) be the missing link in the workplace that will connect and integrate employee personal beliefs with workplace beliefs to promote integrity, give a sense of fulfillment, and interconnectedness within the organization towards organizational survival, growth, profitability, and sustainability considering the economic and political environment of business in Nigeria? Therefore, the study seeks to investigate the place of workplace spirituality in employee connection to the work environment and working conditions; and examine the relationship between the components of workplace spirituality and work environment and working conditions.

Work Environment and Working Conditions

The high premium placed on employees in workplace settings by scholars signifies their importance as a valuable resource that has been linked to organizational survival, growth, and profitability which explains why the management of various organizations is more concerned about the well-being of employees in their respective workplace thus, reflected in the policies and practices manifesting or prevailing in the atmosphere of these organizations. (Zainon, 2020; Tomcikova & Coculova, 2020; Oginni, Ojo & Adesanya, 2019). One of the pieces of evidence of an employer's concern for employee well-being through policies and practices is evident in employee working conditions which is critical to employee well-being and work performance (Eluka & Okafor, 2014). Eluka and Okafor (2014) described working conditions as facilities that aid employees while at work for their convenience and comfort in their job performance. In the views of Sukalova (2021), working conditions represent a convex set of conditions, factors, and other elements affecting the worker who performs the assigned work tasks for the employer and significantly affects his productivity, well-being, health, and loyalty to the employer while the earlier work of Gerber *et. al* (1998) described working conditions as a phenomenon created by the interaction of employee with their organizational climate, and includes psychological as well as physical working conditions.

This implies that working conditions are the psychological and physical conditions that employees

are exposed to while performing their daily activities. However, Bashir *et. al* (2020) citing Ali, Ali, and Adan (2013) posited that working conditions refer to the working environment and aspects of an employee's terms and conditions of employment i.e., conditions in a workplace encompass everything from the working environment to an employee's terms and conditions of employment. It can then be posited that the work environment can clearly explain the nature of working conditions in any organizational setting at any given time because it comprises physical and emotional environments which can be classified into three i.e., physical environment, working conditions, and organizational culture. The work of Dzogbede and Asimah (2020) which was corroborated by the work of Baka and Saka (2023) posited that the physical environment covers the layout and amenities of an in-person office, with items such as desk space, lighting, and location.

In contrast, for remote workers, the physical environment refers to software, tools, and equipment. The working conditions summarise the terms under which an employee agrees to do their job such as physical environment, working hours and patterns, wages and salary, workload, overtime arrangements, holiday entitlement, employee benefits, support for working parents, interpersonal relationships, inclusion and diversity as well as managerial/employee support, reporting structure, and safety regulations. Organizational culture describes how an organization functions on a social level by incorporating both formal and informal structures at operational levels of activities such as organizational mission statement, open communication policy, office politics, and interpersonal relationships, etc., although informal structures are unsanctioned, it is still influential (Kabari, 2021). Baka and Saka (2023) however, posited that a good work environment and working conditions will reposition an organization towards improving employee well-being, high performance, job satisfaction, reduction in deviant behaviour, and enhanced quality of attraction.

This explains why Baka and Saka (2023) opined that the combination of these components determines what is obtainable in the workplace environment which often dictates and affects every employee's workflow and mood and concluded that 35% of job seekers would decline the perfect role if they didn't connect with organizational culture on account of clear evidence of meaningful rewards, opportunities for employees to grow, and advance their careers as well as respect and recognition. Creating a healthy work environment is always the dream of every em-

ployer since it enhances quality work, quality of attraction, a high level of productivity, and reduces employee attrition but sometimes becomes a mirage in the face of economic hardship faced by the organization, especially during the economic recession or depression (Khaled & Haneen, 2017). Zhenjing, Chupradit, Ku, Nassani, and Haffar (2022) believed that employees tend to show a higher level of task performance and commitment even in difficult situations, especially in a work environment characterized by unemployment where alternative jobs are scarce.

The works of Khaled and Haneen (2017) and Zhenjing, *et. al* (2022) were corroborated by the position of Jubril and Hammed (2024) that recession or depression hinders employers' desire to ensure a sound and healthy work environment however concluded that employees can be motivated towards higher performance with the use of relationship tools such as respect and recognition, meaningful work, sincerity, good rapport between management and employees at all levels, open communication, sense of belongingness, holism, etc. which has a low-cost implication. The earlier work of Dappa and Onuoha (2020) on work environment and employee performance explained that any organization operating on a going-concern would constantly encounter constraints from the government (dimensions of policies), nature (physical and development), and employee (quality of attraction and labour turnover) which explains why, the organizational work environment can never meet the expectation of employees or desire of employers. It was, however, concluded that the work conditions of any organization should be designed in such a way that the minimum requirements as specified by the government or ILO for the safety of all the stakeholders should be strictly adhered to without compromise. The conclusion of Shaari, Sarip, and Ramadhinda (2022) corroborated this. Further, it posited that what constitutes work environment acceptability is more of employee perception and their expectation is the provision of a comfortable workplace to work with a positive impact on employee well-being, mental health, and work balance.

Workplace Spirituality

The humanistic nature of the modern work environment, especially the 21st Century necessitated a win-win situation for both the employees and the organization on account of the strong connection existing between the mind and the body where scientific observers have shown that techniques such as meditation, mindfulness, prayer can reduce anxiety, fear, depression, and stress which are elements of

spirituality, thus introducing spiritual dimension to organizational life (Rathee & Rajain, 2020). This is the state of intimate relationship with the inner self of higher values, morality, and recognizing the truth of the inner nature of people. When applied to the workplace, it becomes workplace spirituality which explains the integration of personal spiritual beliefs with the workplace to promote a sense of fulfillment, integrity, and interconnectedness within the organization i.e., an experience of interconnectedness that is shared by all those involved in the work process with the awareness that each is individually driven by an inner power to raise and maintain their sense of honesty, kindness, and courage, thus, leading to the collective creation of an aesthetically motivational environment characterized by a sense of purpose, high ethical standards, acceptance, peace, trust, thus establishing an atmosphere of enhanced team performance and overall harmony (Krishnani, 2023; Rathee & Rajain, 2020). Therefore, workplace Spirituality is the framework of organizational values exhibited 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 a feeling of completeness and joy.

According to Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2014), workplace spirituality is that aspect of the workplace, either in the individual, the group, or the organization, that promotes individual feelings of satisfaction through transcendence. In the views of Robbins and Judge (2013) workplace spirituality is the recognition that people have both a mind and a spirit, seek to find meaning and purpose in their work, and desire to connect with other human beings and be part of a community while the earlier work of Ashmos and Duchon (2000) described workplace spirituality as the recognition that employees have an inner life that is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of community. Therefore, workplace spirituality has a clear interior focus (an inner), subjective experience that reflects core values but one that is integrated with and facilitated by an organizational milieu (Dent, Higgins, & Wharff, 2005). This implies that spirituality at work has three components: inner life, meaningful work, and community which was summarised by Ashmos and Duchon (2000) as meaning and purpose, interconnectedness, and alignment of values.

Meaning and Purpose revolve around acknowledging that employees need to perceive their work as meaningful and purposeful. It involves aspects like having a clear purpose, committing to organizational goals, making a significant contribution to the

company, and making a difference. For example, if employees find their work meaningful, their levels of job satisfaction are enhanced, thus leading to lower turnover rates. Interconnectedness involves fostering a sense of community within the organization where employees feel a sense of belonging, mutual respect, empathy, and understanding i.e., a feeling of sense of community among employees, causing them to feel valued and part of a bigger picture, thus heightening their contentment in the workplace and alignment of values is the belief that employees should be able to align their personal values, ethics, and morale with the values of the organization. This alignment results in a higher sense of fulfillment and job satisfaction because employees who align their values with the organization tend to experience higher job satisfaction, improved motivation, and increased dedication towards the organization. It is evident that workplace spirituality leads to various positive outcomes, such as increased job satisfaction, boosted productivity, and a motivational work climate (Jaya & Sandeep, 2018). Also, it helps in nurturing and retaining talent, creating a positive corporate image, and improving organizational performance as well as encouraging employees to bring their authentic selves to work, increased levels of productivity, work quality, and employee engagement (Krishnani, 2023).

Despite the growing significance of workplace spirituality, there are several misconceptions about workplace spirituality. One of the most common misconceptions is that workplace spirituality revolves around religion i.e., instilling specific religious beliefs or practices in the organization. In truth, workplace spirituality goes beyond religion, it focuses on connecting with inner life, seeking personal authenticity, and interconnectedness as well as finding a sense of purpose in work (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2014). This should not be confused with religion which refers to a specific set of beliefs and practices, spirituality in the workplace transcends religiosity and emphasizes individuals' quest for ultimate meaning and purpose, interconnectedness with others, and alignment with their core values. Therefore, it is important to note that this doesn't necessarily imply religious practices at work. Instead, it means enhancing feelings of purpose, connectedness, and compatibility between personal and organizational values, thus, fostering well-being and work satisfaction. Another misconception is that only non-profit organizations or those involved in philanthropic activities can foster workplace spirituality. This is untrue as any organization, regardless of its nature of business, can cultivate workplace spirituality because it focuses on

creating an environment where employees can find meaning, purpose, and a sense of belonging (Rathee & Rajain, 2020). Some believe that workplace spirituality is a panacea for all organizational issues, but it's not a quick fix or a means to gloss over organizational problems. Instead, it's a journey and a long-term commitment to creating a work environment that is emotionally and spiritually nourishing (Sadeghi, Zamani & Mamasani, 2015).

Incorporating spirituality in the workplace can lead to various positive impacts such as employee morale, productivity, commitment, creativity, decreased turnover rates, mutual respect, a caring and positive work environment, understanding, and empathetic leaders as well as loyalty to the organization (Krishnani, 2023). Jaya and Sandeep (2018) posited that organizations instituting workplace spirituality benefitted from increased profitability, customer satisfaction, market share, employee retention, productivity, improved organizational culture, quality of work, and employee engagement. This was also corroborated by Kendall (2019) that the practice of workplace spirituality enables organizations to attain a greater sense of satisfaction at work, fulfillment, and growth of the individual work becomes meaningful and valuable, psychological safety is enhanced by values of collaboration and understanding and promote the ability to be creative as well as ethical behaviour. In the same vein, it also supported the earlier position of Ghosh (2013) who posited that workplace spirituality has a profound impact on employee well-being, increased job satisfaction, reduced stress levels, better work-life balance, and improved workplace relationships. In addition, it fosters a strong sense of community and interconnectedness among employees wherein opinions, values, and individual contributions are recognized and appreciated, thus, promoting a feeling of belongingness with a positive effect on a sense of community, and mental health, leading to happier and healthier employees. The works of Williams (2023) on workplace spirituality and work ethics supported this position. The work adduced that workplace spirituality creates a sound ethical work environment encompassing attributes such as commitment, integrity, professionalism, and responsibility heralding increased levels of trust among employees and management, thus promoting efficient teamwork and collaboration for the overall well-being of the organization and employees.

Spirituality in the workplace is good and ideal for organizations to survive, grow, and make profit, however, the operationalization of workplace spiri-

tuality techniques has always been the limitation on account of the application of different strategies that encompass the cultivation of personal spiritual practices, fostering an organizational culture that embraces spiritual values, and promoting leadership styles and policies that allow for the integration of individual and organizational values (Sree Raj, 2011). It is important to know that the objective is not to enforce a spiritual perspective but to create an environment where employees can have the freedom to express and integrate their spiritual values at the workplace. In the views of Krishnani (2023) providing opportunities for meaningful work that aligns with personal and organizational values that will enliven the spirit at the workplace, especially in the face of economic hardship is a challenge. Not only that, creating an inclusive, diverse, and respectful environment is crucial on account of management prerogatives. Srivastava and Gupta (2022) concluded that the decision to practice spirituality in the world of work will benefit both the organization and employees in the short and long run without prejudice if properly implemented.

Kendall (2019) asserted that all the benefits adduced forward by Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2014) as a result of institutionalizing workplace spirituality such as a sense of relevance and purpose to employees' lives, a better work ethic and work-life balance, greater respect for diversity in the organization, lower stress for employees, less ego and less organizational conflict, increased competitive advantage, mentoring and supportiveness, high levels of creativity and innovation, respect for the conservation of resources would be lost and resulted into blurring lines between personal and professional life, religious discrimination or exclusion, discomfort among employees who do not share the same beliefs, or fostering a cult-like organizational culture if the operationalization of the techniques fail to take into consideration the dynamism of organizational culture, prevailing economic conditions. Williams (2023) supported the earlier works of Shrestha (2017) and Ghosh (2013) where it was concluded that introducing spirituality in the workplace is good however, it should be done with caution so that employees may not confuse it with religion and may blame the organization for bringing in religious convictions. There is a need for strong conviction as most of the employees would like to work in a secular environment where work is separated from faith hence, the need to be convinced that spirituality is different from religion and that whatever is being done is for the good of the individual and the organization (Srivastava & Gupta, 2022).

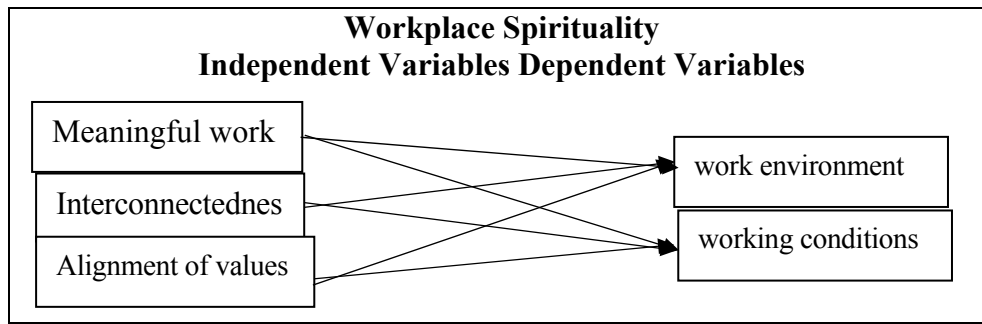


Figure 1 – Conceptual framework of the study

Figure 1 was based on the focus of the study which seeks to understand the place of workplace spirituality in employee connection to the work environment and working conditions and examine the relationship between workplace spirituality and work environment and working conditions. Thus, six hypotheses were formulated to understand the direction of the objectives of the study as follows;

H₁: Meaningful work has no relationship with the work environment.

H₂: Meaningful work has no relationship with working conditions.

H₃: Interconnectedness has no relationship with the work environment.

H₄: Interconnectedness has no relationship with working conditions.

H₅: Alignment of values has no relationship with the work environment.

H₆: Alignment of values has no relationship with working conditions.

Methodology

The study was domiciled in manufacturing organizations of Lagos State, Nigeria because the research study focused on work environment and working conditions. Data for this study were collected through the use of primary (questionnaire) and secondary (journal articles) data wherein the research instrument developed by Shrestha (2017) for workplace spirituality, Nanzushi (2015), and Manu (2015) for the work environment and working conditions were adopted as a set of questionnaires to elicit information for both independent and dependent variables of the study. The adopted structured questionnaire used was in line with 5-point Likert scales ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1); and the scales were summed to create an overall score for each variable, with higher scores indicating the

higher levels of respective constructs. Workplace spirituality measures had Cronbach's alpha values of 0.71, work environment measures had an alpha value of 0.64, and working conditions measures had an alpha value of 0.78.

The total population for the study was 478 employees from which the sample size of 218 was obtained through Yamane's sample size formula and a total of 201 copies of the questionnaire were returned from employees of the selected organization in Lagos, Nigeria but 187 copies of the questionnaires were found useful. For the analysis of the data, descriptive and inferential statistics were used where the descriptive statistics were in the form of mean and percentage distribution reports and the inferential statistics had Pearson's correlation analysis and linear regression analysis in order to measure the relationship between workplace spirituality and work environment and working conditions as well as explaining the influence of workplace spirituality on work environment and working conditions.

Results

It was evident from Table 1 that male respondents dominated the respondents from the selected manufacturing organizations with 126 respondents representing 67.4% as against female respondents of 32.6% i.e., there are more male respondents than female respondents among the research sample size respondents. The age of the respondents shows the degree of maturity among the respondents with the age range of 31yrs – 40yrs and 41yrs – 50yrs thus, representing a combined percentage of 65.2%. In contrast, the other respondents were not considered as immature respondents. On work experience, the range of 11yrs – 15yrs, 16yrs – 20yrs, and 21yrs & above representing a combined 79.1% indicated sta-

bility in the workforce with a low level of attrition and qualified to understand what constitutes standard work environment and working conditions. The marital status of the respondents shows that the majority of the respondents were married with few of the respondents out of marriage representing 25.1%

while 18.2% were yet to be married which implies sustainability of family responsibility and source of livelihood. The educational qualifications of the respondents show that respondents are educated and knowledgeable enough to understand the contents of the questionnaire without prejudice.

Table 1 – Analysis of Demographic Variables of the Respondents

Variables	Frequency Distribution	Percentage
Gender		
Male	126	67.4
Female	61	32.6
Total	187	100
Age		
Less than 20yrs	22	11.8
20yrs – 30yrs	23	12.3
31yrs – 40yrs	67	35.8
41yrs – 50yrs	55	29.4
51yrs – 60yrs	20	10.7
Total	187	100
Marital Status		
Single	34	18.2
Married	106	56.7
Widow	29	15.5
Widower	10	5.3
Divorced	8	4.3
Total	187	100
Work Experience		
Less than 5yrs	17	9.1
5yrs – 10yrs	22	11.8
11yrs – 15yrs	38	20.3
16yrs – 20yrs	87	46.5
21yrs & above	23	12.3
Total	187	100
Educational Qualifications		
‘O’ level	34	18.2
National Diploma	22	11.8
1 st Degree	102	54.5
2 nd Degree	17	9.1
Professional Membership	12	6.4
Total	187	100

Source: Field Survey 2024

Objective 1: To determine which components of workplace spirituality have a high frequency for employee connection to the work environment and working conditions.

Based on the review of the relevant literature, three components of workplace spirituality were identified as generic to all organizations including mean-

ingful work, interconnectedness, and alignment of values which can provide an enabling environment for organizations to survive, grow, and make profit. These components formed the basis of objective 1 i.e., to determine which of the components of workplace spirituality have a high frequency for employee connection to the work environment and working conditions.

Table 2 – Descriptive analysis of the components of workplace spirituality in the selected manufacturing organizations connecting employees to work environment and working conditions

Components of workplace spirituality	Measurement Scales/Percentage (%)					Mean Scores	Std. Dev.	Mean Score	R
	SA	A	N	D	SD				
Meaningful work	94(50)	55(29)	20(11)	11(6)	7(4)	4.048	0.384	3	A
Interconnectedness	49(26)	128(68)	10(5)	-	-	4.209	0.450	2	A
Alignment of values	61(33)	119(64)	7(4)	-	-	4.289	0.472	1	A

*Source: Field Survey, 2024; Remarks = R where Agreement (A) is $\geq 3/0$ and Disagreement (D) is ≤ 3.0

The results in Table 2 show that all the dimensions of workplace spirituality were connected to the work environment and working conditions with each meeting the benchmark criterion set for agreement decision at a weighted mean of ≥ 3.0 . Therefore, alignment with values ranked highest with a mean score of 4.289 and standard deviation of 0.472, this was followed by interconnectedness with a mean score of 4.209 and standard deviation of 0.450 while meaningful work was ranked third with a mean score of 4.048 and standard deviation of 0.384. The overall implication of this result was that alignment with values i.e., individual and organizational values will be the most feasible component of workplace spirituality to connect employees to the work environment and working conditions even in the wake of economic hardship. It will be a reliable avenue for employees to express their contentment with the work environment and working conditions. The availability of interconnectedness will further reinforce the con-

nection of employees to their work environment and working conditions on account of what it can bring to the organization i.e., fostering a sense of community within the organization where employees feel a sense of belonging, mutual respect, empathy, understanding, and meaningful work will provide employees with a sense of purpose thus understanding the existence of the organization. Hence, objective 1 which seeks to understand the place of workplace spirituality in work environment and working conditions was achieved.

Objective 2: To examine the relationship between components of workplace spirituality and work environment and working conditions.

Objective 2 was derived from the problem of the study which was one of the focuses of the research study and the result of the analysis was presented in matrix form in order to understand the dimension of the correlation and the relationship.

Table 3 – Pearson Correlational Matrix for the variables of the study

Row	Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1	Work environment	1				
2	Working conditions	0.832	1			
3	Meaningful work	0.582	0.627	1		
4	Interconnectedness	0.624	0.761	0.611	1	
5	Alignment of values	0.712	0.813	0.671	0.661	1

**Correlation is significant at < 0.05 level (2-tailed)

It was evident from the result obtained in Table 3 that there exists a positive correlation between and among all the components of the study's variables which was found to be significant at < 0.05 level. Therefore, there are positive

significant relationships among all the components of workplace spirituality, work environment, and working conditions of the study. The result in Table 4 summarizes all the hypotheses tested for the study.

Table 4 – Summary of Pearson Correlation Results for the six (6) hypotheses of the study

Hypotheses	1	2	3	4	5	6
Correlation	0.582	0.627	0.624	0.761	0.712	0.813
Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Remarks	Confirmed	Confirmed	Confirmed	Confirmed	Confirmed	Confirmed

Table 4 result shows that all six (6) null hypotheses stated for the study should be rejected and all the alternate hypotheses should be accepted on account of positive correlation of the results. The study confirmed that there exists a positive relationship among the variables of the research study. It was also evident from Table 4 that hypothesis number six (6) has the highest positive correlation result indicating that alignment of values (individual and organization) will influence employee perception of what constitutes working conditions and ditto for interconnectedness and working conditions. Therefore, the study confirmed the significance of alignment of values, interconnectedness, and meaningful work in employees' work environment and working conditions.

Discussion

From the analysis of the respondents' demographic information, it was found that the manufacturing sector which was the unit of analysis was dominated by the male gender. The respondents were knowledgeable to understand the contents of the research instrument, matured on account of their age, and had spent a considerable number of years in the service of the organizations, thus, making the respondents to understand the trends in the economic and financial environments vis-à-vis the prevailing work environment and working conditions in the last two decades. It was also found that the majority of the respondents were married which signifies stability and a low attrition rate in the workforce on account of the need to sustain family responsibility and source of livelihood.

The results of the study confirmed the significant place of workplace spirituality in work environment and working conditions by adducing forward that workplace spirituality will provide avenue for employees to express their degree of contentment, reinforce their connection, foster a sense of community within the organisation, and make employees feel a sense of belonging, mutual respect, empathy, and understand the existence of the organisation which invariably will usher in positive industrial

outcomes such as increased profitability, customer satisfaction, market share, employee retention, productivity, and improved organisational culture as well as quality of work and employee engagement as noted by Jaya and Sandeep (2018) and Kendall (2019) which was the expectation of good work environment and working conditions as posited by Bashir, Amir, Jawaad, and Hasan (2020) that working conditions can significantly impact employees' mental well-being, health and safety, and productivity when there is congruence between an individual employee and organisational goals. This was also supported by the position of Baka and Saka (2023) that a good work environment and working conditions will reposition an organization towards improving employee well-being, high performance, job satisfaction, reduction in deviant behaviour, and enhanced quality of attraction.

This was also in line with the position of Krishnani (2023) that workplace spirituality helps in nurturing and retaining talent, creating a positive corporate image, and improving organizational performance as well as encouraging employees to bring their authentic selves to work, increased levels of productivity, work quality, and employee engagement although creating alignment with personal and organizational values that will enliven the spirit at the workplace, especially in the face of economic hardship is a challenge but Srivastava and Gupta (2022) concluded that the decision to practice spirituality in the world of work would benefit both the organization and employees at short and long run without prejudice if properly implemented. Williams (2023) concluded that introducing spirituality in the workplace is good however, it should be done with caution so that employees may not confuse it with religion and blame the organization for bringing in religious convictions. Similarly, the shortfall as a result of poor work environment and working conditions such as unethical behaviour, unsupportive relationships, unfair treatment, unclear communication, physically dangerous and unhealthy environments as well as outdated technology, poor lighting, poor benefits, and poor workplace culture can be accommodated and enhanced by

the practice of workplace spirituality (Akinruwa, *et al*, 2024; Jubril & Hammed, 2024).

The study confirmed there exists a positive relationship between the components of workplace spirituality and the work environment and working conditions. The works of Baka and Saka (2023) opined that the combination of these components determines what is obtainable in the workplace environment which often dictates and affects every employee's workflow and mood and concluded that 35% of job seekers would decline the perfect role if they didn't connect with organizational culture on account of clear evidence of meaningful rewards, opportunities for employees to grow, and advance their careers as well as respect and recognition buttressed this position. The earlier work of Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2014) also validated the outcome of the research study that workplace spirituality is that aspect of the workplace, either in the individual, the group, or the organization, that promotes individual feelings of satisfaction through transcendence. Kabari (2021) also supported the result of the study by positing that work environment and working conditions are the two major key factors employees look out for in employment appraisal decisions which often determine their mindset towards the organizations in terms of personal and organizational needs, values and initiatives without any form of prejudice.

The study's result showed clearly that alignment of personal and organizational values through working conditions is beneficial to both the employees and the organization which corroborates the position of Owota and Elliot (2022) that for any organization to meet its obligations towards all the stakeholders, there is a need to align individual goals with organizational goals, integrate personal beliefs with workplace beliefs to promote integrity, give a sense of fulfillment, and interconnectedness within the organization, thus, ensuring organizational survival, growth, and profitability. The positions of Khaled and Haneen (2017) and Zhenjing, *et. al* (2022) negated the alignment of personal and organizational values in the face of economic hardship faced by the organization, especially during an economic recession or depression which often prevents employers from creating a healthy work environment and this does not prevent employees from attaining a higher level of task performance and commitment even in such difficult situations, especially the work environment that is characterized by unemployment where alternative jobs are scarce. The position of Shaari,

Sarip, and Ramadhinda (2022) supported the study's outcome and Owota and Elliot (2022) without discarding the positions of Khaled and Haneen (2017) and Zhenjing, *et. al* (2022) by alluding that the work conditions of any organization should be designed in such a way that the minimum requirements as specified by the government or ILO for the safety of all the stakeholders should be strictly adhered to without compromise and that what constitutes work environment and working conditions acceptability are more of employee perception and expectations are the provision of a comfortable workplace to work with a positive impact on well-being, mental health, and work balance.

Conclusion

The crux of the study was contingent upon the need for organizations to survive, grow, and make profit and, at the same time motivate the workforce by an enabling work climate not inimical to their aspiration, well-being, and safety. However, the economic hardship faced by industrial organizations as a result of the financial meltdown culminating in an economic recession or depression for these organizations propelled the study to ask a question, if workplace spirituality as a practice can be a means or tool to connect employees to the work environment and working conditions towards the attainment of organizational objectives under unfavourable economic conditions (economic recession or depression) using manufacturing organization as the unit of analysis.

The study examined the three (3) components of workplace spirituality vis-à-vis work environment and working conditions and found that workplace spirituality has a significant place in employee connection to work environment and working conditions and also found that alignment of values (individual and organization) will influence employee perception of what constitutes acceptable work environment and working conditions and ditto for interconnectedness on work environment and working conditions as well as meaningful work on work environment and working conditions. Therefore, the study concluded that employee connection to the work environment and working conditions in the face of economic recession or depression can be attained through the alignment of values, interconnectedness, and meaningful work i.e., all the dimensions of workplace spirituality. However, there must be a minimum safety benchmark for all the parties in the industrial organizations.

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