

## **Dark Leadership and its Impact on Work Place Spirituality: An Empirical Study**

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### ***Abstract***

*Leadership has an imperative mastery on employee and organisational outcomes. In particular, leaders shapes the culture of the organisation, role model behaviour for employees and develop inter and intra personal relationships between themselves and their followers. states that employees with low spiritual intelligence has a strongly relationship between abusive supervision and workplace deviance compared to individuals with high spiritual intelligence. This paper examines the leader's destructive behaviour and its impact on work place spirituality. The structured questionnaire was adopted to collect the data from 217 BPO employees in Coimbatore. The results of the study shows there is a significant positive and negative relationship between the variables of destructive leadership on workplace spirituality. The study highlights the findings of previous research, and suggestions for future studies, and provides a practically useful measure of destructive leader behaviour in organizations.*

*Background of the study: Leadership has an imperative mastery on employee and organisational outcomes. In particular, leaders shape the culture of the organisation, role model behaviour for employees and develop personal relationships between themselves and their followers.*

*Research objective: The objectives of the study is to explore a the destructive behaviour and its impact on workplace spirituality*

*Method: Questionnaire method was used with the sample of 217 respondents working in BPO companies in Coimbatore by using snow ball sampling. The researcher had adopted ex-post facto research design.*

*Results: The results of the study shows there is a significant positive and negative relationship between the variables of destructive leadership and workplace spirituality.*

*Conclusion: The study offers a range of applicable suggestions for the policy makers and the organizations of this sector.*

**Keywords:** *Destructive leadership, Workplace spirituality, behaviour, subordinate and organizational outcome.*

## Introduction

Leadership has an imperativemastery on employee and organisational outcomes. In particular, leaders shapes the culture of the organisation, role model behaviour for employees and develop personal relationships between themselves and their followers. Depending on the type of leadership exhibited and the quality of the interactions between leaders and followers, leadership can provoke the outcomes either positive or negative. These outcomes of leadership make the impact across three levels, i) the individual level, ii) the group level, and iii) the organisational level. These outcomes are important as they include factors such as employee job satisfaction, employee work effort, financial profit, and work quality.

The review of over number of studies shows that there is a dependability between spiritual values & practices and effective leadership. Principles that have been considered spiritual ideals, such as integrity, honesty, and self-effacement, these characteristics makes an effect on leadership success. In the same way, practices that are traditionally associated with spirituality in day to day life have also been connected to leadership effectiveness. The crucial leadership skills such as showing respect for others, demonstrating fair treatment, expressing caring and concern, listening responsively, recognizing the contributions of others, and engaging in reflective practice can make the followers to be more engage towards the work, and they put the hardest commitment toward the work they does.

The potential for negative outcomes resulting from popular leadership approaches has been established in the very few leadership literature. Previous studies have suggested that the transformational and charismatic leadership might have a dark side (Khoo and Burch, 2008). Explicitly, the narcissism, has been suggested as a restrictive factor in the context of transformational and charismatic leadership.

Sankowsky (1995) had describe how the dark side of charismatic leaders and narcissism, influence their followers into a cycle of exploitation. The researcher states that, the charismatic narcissistic leader makes a majestic vision and encourages subordinates to accomplish it. However, the followers are finding themselves in a difficult situation caused by the leader's hopefulness and overconfidence. With the result of that, the follower's performance was not achieved as per their leader's expectations. They fall behind expectations and suffer beyond their hard work and their performance. External influences will be the primarily blamed by the leaders for undermining their mission, later the leader's blame will shift to the followers. Rather accepting the blame as a challenge they are habituated to accepting their leader's viewpoint. Instead of building their followers' self-worth and efficacy, the leader degenerates the confidence of followers and creates them as highly dependent individuals in the organizations. Similarly, spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality are often accepted as being good for the employee and beneficial for the organization (Lips-Wiersma et al., 2009). However, for all the good that comes from it, there can be a dark side to workplace spirituality, and one can make both positive and negative associations to it (Freshman, 1999). While some employees can find meaningful ways to express themselves at work, many people may still struggle to practice their spirituality and may have disengaging experiences (Grant, 2004)

## Review of Literature

The negative perception towards the leaders are found by the followers when the leaders are treating them unfairly and disrespectfully, undermining them, violating their trust, breaching the psychological contract between them, or exhibiting psychologically abusive behaviour (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2013; Schyns & Schilling, 2013). Destructive leadership can be conceptualized as both individual and group phenomena, where either one or a few employees

perceive themselves as, or where a leader behaves in a destructive way with all employees (Schyns & Shilling, 2013).

James & LeBreton(2010) have stated that the leader may or may not have self-awareness or perception that they are instigating detriment to the individual. Instead, the leader may develop indirect reasons for the actions of destructive behaviour to maintain the ego and self-esteem. Since the position and the power makes the leader to maintain the ego and their self-esteem.

The quantitative correlational research was carried out by Herman (2008) to find the degree of relationship exists between organizational servant leadership and workplace spirituality for a diverse group of employees working in a variety of organizational setting. The data was collected through mail questionnaire with the sample of 440. The result of the study shows that there is positive correlation 78% relationship exists between organizational servant leadership and workplace spirituality.

Geaney (2003)attempted to provide a model for spirituality leadership competency for business students and leaders. Interview schedule was conducted with senior level executives and CEO's to discuss how the spirituality in work place is important for a business leader. Based on the literature in leadership research, and interviews, Spirituality Leadership Competency Model has been developed. The competencies and behaviors describe leaders who believe in parting a sustainable legacy, are concerned towards their followers' inner and outer selves, inspire followers, and have a positive impact on their community and global economic stability.

The relationship between the workplace spirituality and organizational commitment had been analyzed by Marschke et al. (2009) with the sample of 163 respondents was considered for the study by collecting the data through structured questionnaire. The result of the study shows that

there is no significant relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational commitment.

Daniel (2012)had studied the impact of workplace spirituality on employee Outcomes such as job satisfaction turnover intention and organizational commitment among US and Mexican employees. Data was collected through questionnaire with 304 samples. The results of the study shows that there is a significant correlation between workplace spirituality and job satisfaction( US 58)(Mexican 56), turnover intention ( US 56)(Mexican 48), organizational commitment ( US 60)(Mexican 58) and innovative behaviour (US 23)(Mexican 33).

Ajala ( 2013) impact of workplace spirituality and employees well-being at the industrial sector in Nigeria. The descriptive survey research design with the ex-post-facto type was used for the study. The data was collected with Sample of 275 participants through questionnaire. The participants were selected from the Food & Beverages, Publishing, Agro allied industrial sectors in Oyo state, Nigeria. the empirical finding shows that dimensions of spirituality at workplace (meaningful work, purposeful work, and sense of community/interconnectedness) has significant positive impact of 61% on the employees well being.

Meng (2016) had done theoretical study on leadership, motivation and motivation based leadership, leadership spirituality and theories of leadership and work place spirituality. The study states that the value based leadership approach is a core competent to impart the followers. The leaders needs for spiritual survival and idealistic enough to encourage the coworkers through the basic values of humility, charity, and legitimacy while serving the followers and other relevant stakeholders.

Hamid et al.(2016) this study describes subordinates' perception towards leader's abusive supervision behaviour, and its impact on work place deviance with the moderation of spiritual

intelligence. The Primary data were collected with 136 employees from several manufacturing organizations in Selangor. The results of the study shows that individuals with low spiritual intelligence are strongly moderated the relationship between abusive supervision and workplace deviance compared to individuals with high spiritual intelligence.

A theoretical work was done by Naidoo (2014) with various literature which focussed on the potential of spiritual leadership that transform and contributes to the success of an organisation. The author states that the workplace spirituality has budding for leadership development and it allows employees and front-runners to act from personal truth, integrity, values and ethical practice. Also that the spiritual leadership is a fundamental needs for both leader and follower for the survival of spirituality, which makes the employees more organizationally committed.

### Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to assess the relationship and the impact of destructive leadership behaviour on workplace spirituality of the employees.

### Research Question

Does any relationship exist between destructive leadership and work place spirituality?

### Research Hypotheses

- There is no significance relationship between unintentional behaviour (destructive leadership) and Workplace spirituality.
- There is no significance relationship between volitional behaviour (destructive leadership) and workplace spirituality

### Research Methodology

This study determines the relationship of destructive leadership and work place spirituality and empirically investigate the correlation relationship among the study variables, so this study is designed an ex-post facto research design. The study has two main variables i.e. Workplace spirituality is dependent variable and destructive leadership is independent variable are considered in order to analyze the impact among BPO employees.

Coimbatore is an emerging hub for IT and ITES Multinational companies, among the delivery location in Tier II cities. Total number of BPO employees who are working in Coimbatore was consider for this study. Among a total, snow ball sampling was used to derive the sample of 217 form the target population.

The primary data was collected using the questionnaire method. On the basis of previous literature, structured questionnaire were used as an instrument for collecting the data. Questionnaire with five subscales measuring each of the constructs .the sub scales were assessed by using a 4 point Likert scale were strongly agree-1 agree-2 disagree-3 strongly disagree-4. 250 questionnaires were distributed and 216 were collected back within a short span of time. The reliability of scales were analyzed using Cronbach alpha, shown in the below table, suggested cut-off value of 0.70 or higher (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994) were work place spirituality had scored 0.851 and destructive leadership has the alpha value of 0.745 which indicates a high level of internal consistency.

**Table 1: Reliability Statistics**

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Workplace Spirituality	.851	25
Destructive Leadership	.745	32

Based on the factor loadings, convergent validity of the constructs was evaluated. A construct's convergent validity is predictable if the items are significantly related to the factor (Nunnally and

Bernstein, 1994). Also, a standardized factor loading of 0.50 or higher, ideally 0.70 or higher, provides strong evidence of convergent validity (Hair et al., 2006).

## Analysis and Interpretation

**Table 2: Demographic Profile of the respondents**

Gender		
	Frequency	Percent
Male	151	69.6
Female	66	30.4
Total	217	100.0
Age		
	Frequency	Percent
Below 30 years	46	21.2
31-40years	89	41.0
41-50years	64	29.5
Above 51 years	18	8.3
Total	217	100.0
Experience		
	Frequency	Percent
Less than 10 years	56	25.8
10-20 years	79	36.4
21 to 30 years	72	33.2
more than 30 years	10	4.6
Total	217	100.0
Education		
	Frequency	Percent
Graduate	106	48.4
Post Graduate	111	51.2
Total	217	100.0

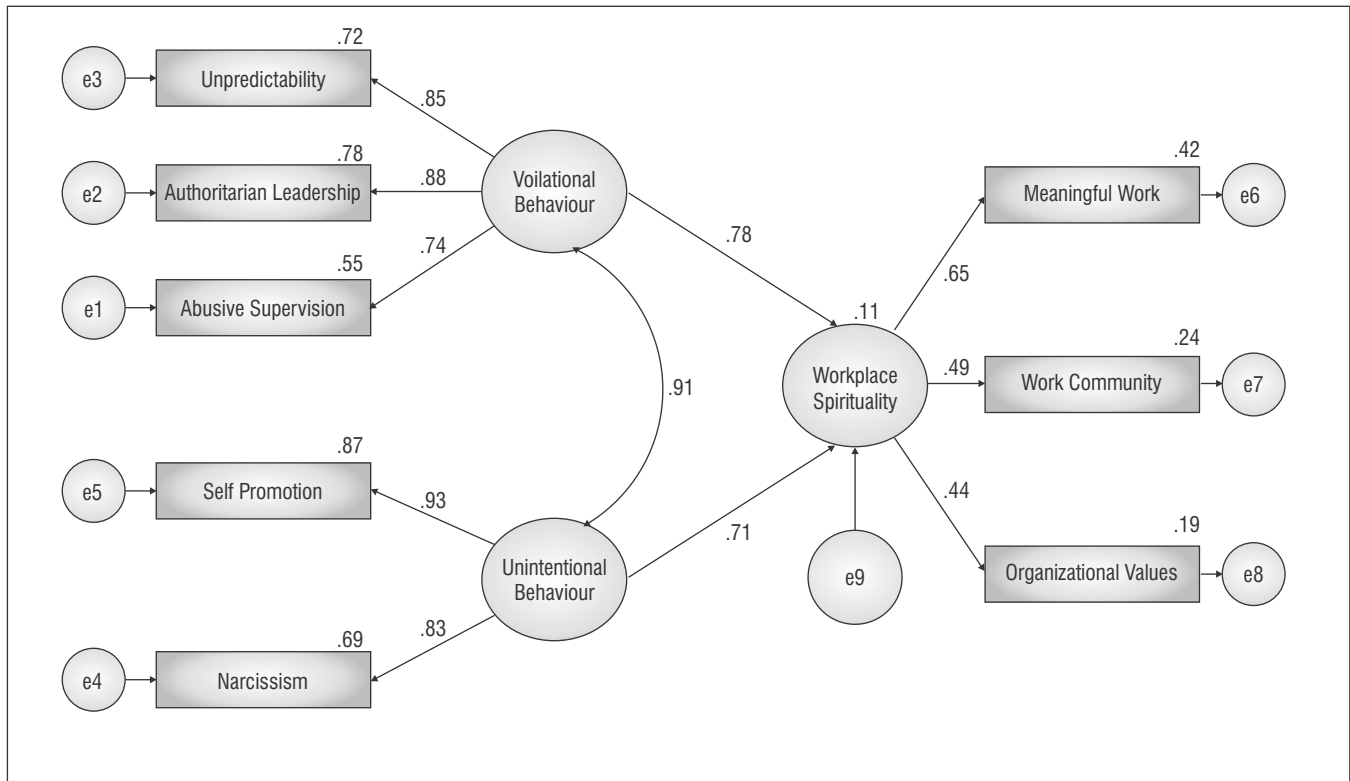
Monthly Income		
	Frequency	Percent
Below Rs. 30,000	44	20.3
Rs. 30,001 to Rs. 60,000	67	30.9
Rs. 60,001 to Rs. 90,000	68	31.3
Above Rs. 90,000	38	17.5
Total	217	100.0
Marital Status		
	Frequency	Percent
Married	136	62.7
Unmarried	81	37.3
Total	217	100.0

The above table shows the percentage analysis of demographic profile of the respondents,

To test the above hypothesis structural equation modeling AMOS 20 was used. The fig 1 shows the variables of destructive leadership behaviour and

workplace spirituality where destructive leadership (volitional and unintentional behaviour) is independent variable and workplace spirituality (meaningful work, work community and organizational values) is dependent variable.

**Fig 1: Structural equation modeling of destructive leadership and work place spirituality**



**Table 3: shows the model fitness of the data**

	<b>X<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>df</b>	<b>X<sup>2</sup>/df</b>	<b>GFI</b>	<b>AGFI</b>	<b>CFI</b>	<b>IFI</b>	<b>RMSEA</b>
Criteria for Goodness of fit			3:01	≥ 0.9	≥ 0.9	≥ 0.9	≥ 0.9	≤ 0.05
Model Goodness of fit	89.7	32	3.22	0.94	0.88	0.95	0.95	0.04

$\chi^2$ : chi-square, df: degrees of freedom  $\chi^2/df$ : normed chi-square, GFI: goodness-of-fit, AGFI: adjust goodness-of-fit, CFI: comparative fit index, IFI: incremental fit index, RMSEA: root mean square error of approximation, SRMR: standardized root mean residual.

The above table shows the fit index, the model fits well to the data for the BPO employees. Hence, the

null hypothesis that “The model has good fit” is accepted. The alternate hypothesis is rejected.

**Table 4: Correlation (Standardized regression weight) values and the Hypotheses of the study variables**

No.	Dependent Variable	←	Independent variable	Estimate	Null Hypotheses	Results
Ho1	workplace spirituality	←	Unintentional Behaviour (Destructive Leadership)	0.71*	There is no significance relationship between unintentional behaviour and psychological well-being	Rejected
Ho 2	workplace spirituality	←	Volitional Behaviour (Destructive Leadership)	-0.78*	There is no significance relationship between volitional behaviour and psychological well-being	Rejected

$P \geq 0.05$ , \*Significant, #Not Significant

The above table shows the Correlation (Standardized regression weight) values and the Hypotheses of the dimensions of destructive leadership and workplace spirituality. The unintentional behaviour has the positive

correlation ( $r = 0.71$ ) on workplace spirituality. The volitional behaviour has a high strong negative correlation ( $r = -0.78$ ) on workplace spirituality. Hence the both null hypotheses were rejected.

**Table 5: Standardized ML Parameter Estimates, critical value and path significance**

Hypo thesis	Paths		Estimate	Std.Err	Std. Err	P	r (correlation)	
H <sub>01</sub>	Workplace Spirituality	←	Volitional Behaviour	-0.34	0.16	-2.11	0.035	-0.78
H <sub>02</sub>	Workplace Spirituality	←	Unintentional Behaviour	0.4	0.2	1.97	0.045	0.71
H <sub>03</sub>	Abusive supervision	←	Volitional Behaviour	1				0.744
H <sub>04</sub>	Authoritarian Leadership	←	Volitional Behaviour	0.83	0.06	13.01	***	0.881
H <sub>05</sub>	Unpredictability	←	Volitional Behaviour	0.85	0.06	12.55	***	0.849
H <sub>05</sub>	Narcissism	←	Unintentional Behaviour	1				0.834
H <sub>06</sub>	Self-promotion	←	Unintentional Behaviour	1.03	0.06	16.3	***	0.93
H <sub>07</sub>	Meaningful Work	←	Workplace Spirituality	1				0.647
H <sub>08</sub>	Work Community	←	Workplace Spirituality	0.67	0.2	3.27	0.001	0.491
H <sub>09</sub>	Organizational Values	←	Workplace Spirituality	0.45	0.14	3.26	0.001	0.438

The table 5 shows the estimates of relationship of each paths coefficients. In structural equational modeling each paths are the hypothesis. Based on that,  $H_{01}$  Workplace spirituality and unintentional behaviour, shows that there is a significant (at 5%) positive relationship with path estimates of 0.71 (71%) between unintentional behaviour and workplace spirituality.

$H_{02}$  . Workplace spirituality and volitional behaviour. The results shows that there is a negative relationship between Workplace spirituality and volitional behaviour with path estimates of -0.78 (-78%) which is significant. Therefore the results supports that if a leader behaves volitional like abusing his supervision or acts in a commanding fashion or unpredictable of his anger are having negative relationship with workplace spirituality of subordinates.

$H_{03}$  . Self-promotion and unintentional behaviour, the hypothesis ( $H_{03}$ ) is supported fully with a significant (at 1%) and positive relationship between the Self-promotion and unintentional behaviour with the estimate of 0.93(93%).

$H_{04}$  - Narcissism and unintentional behaviour, the hypothesis ( $H_{04}$ ) path estimates shows with a significant (at 1%) and positive relationship between the Self-promotion and unintentional behaviour with the estimate of 0.83(83%).

$H_{05}$  - Abusive Supervision and volitional behaviour, the hypothesis ( $H_{05}$ ) path estimates shows with a significant (at 1%) and positive relationship

between the Abusive Supervision and volitional behaviour with the estimate of 0.74(74%).

$H_{06}$  - Authoritarian Leadership and volitional behaviour, the hypothesis ( $H_{06}$ ) is supported fully with a significant (at 1%) and positive relationship between the - Authoritarian Leadership and volitional behaviour with the estimate of 0.88(88%).

$H_{07}$  - Unpredictability and volitional behaviour, the hypothesis ( $H_{06}$ ) is supported fully with a significant (at 1%) and positive relationship between the - Unpredictability and volitional behaviour with the estimate of 0.85(85%).

$H_{08}$  - Meaning full work and workplace spirituality, the hypothesis ( $H_{07}$ ) has significant path and positive relationship between the Meaning full work and workplace spirituality with the estimate of 0.65(65%).

$H_{09}$  - work community and workplace spirituality, the hypothesis ( $H_{05}$ ) is supported fully with a significant (at 1%) and positive relationship between the work community and workplace spirituality with the estimate of 0.49(49%).

$H_{10}$  - Organizational Value and workplace spirituality, the hypothesis ( $H_{06}$ ) is supported fully with a significant (at 1%) and positive relationship between the Organizational Value and workplace spirituality with the estimate of 0.44(44%).



Table 6: Squared Multiple Correlations

Variables	Estimate
Workplace Spirituality	.106
Organizational Values	.192
Work Community	.241
Meaningful Work	.418
Self-Promotion	.865
Narcissism	.695
Unpredictability	.722
Authoritarian Leadership	.776
Abusive supervision	.553

The Squared multiple correlation value represents the proportion of variance that is explained by the predictors of the variable in research question. It was determined that 11% of the variance associated with workplace spirituality is accounted for by its two predictors— volitional behaviour and unintentional behaviour (destructive Leadership behaviour). Hence, the overall impact of destructive leadership behaviour on subordinate's workplace spirituality is 11% of variance that is explained.

#### *Dimensions of Destructive leadership*

Destructive leadership has two sub dimensions i.e., volitional behaviour and unintentional behavior. From the above table the square multiple correlation of sub dimensions shows the proportions of variations that explains the volitional behaviour and unintentional behaviour. Abusive supervision, authoritarian leadership and unpredictability are the three factors that measures the volitional behaviour. Were Abusive supervision explains the 0.55 (55%) of variance that is proportion to volitional behaviour,

authoritarian leadership explains 0.78 (78%) of variance that is proportion to volitional behaviour, and unpredictability explains 0.72 (7%) of variance that is proportion to volitional behaviour . self-promotion and narcissism are the two factors that measures unintentional behaviour . were self-promotion explains 0.87 (87%) of variance that is proportion to unintentional behaviour, Narcissism explains 0.69(69%) of variance that is proportion to unintentional behaviour.

#### *Dimensions of Workplace Spirituality*

Workplace spirituality has three factors to measure (meaningful work, work community and organizational values). From the above table the square multiple correlation of sub factors shows the proportions of variations that explains the subordinate's Workplace spirituality. Were, Meaningful work explains 0.42 (42%), work community explains 0.24 (24%), organizational values 0.19 (19%), of variance that is proportion to workplace spirituality.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The study confirmed the importance of workplace spirituality among BPO employees. In addition, the researcher examined the correlations between destructive leadership and workplace spirituality, the presented model explained the nature of psychological well-being by 18%, and volitional behaviour has negative relationship of -78% (-0.78) and Unintentional behaviour has positive relationship of 71% (0.71) on work place spirituality. Kelloway et al (2005) had studied that negative leadership may be a root cause of workplace stress. Similarly, the leadership and workplace spirituality are often accepted as constructive for the organization and employee as well (Lips-Wiersma et al., 2009). However, for all the negative leadership that comes from a leader, there can be a dark side to workplace spirituality, and one can make both positive and negative associations to it (Freshman, 1999).

Hence it is suggested that as the most immediate expression of leadership in the organization by the supervisor will have influence a varied range of psychosocial job conditions including work community, relationship among coworkers. Despite the potential benefits of spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality, organizations should consider certain relevant aboveboard issues. To avoid destructive behaviour by a leader the organization should ensure that there is a workplace spirituality exists among the leader and follower. The key success for an organization is that, while they hiring the personal, they should also consider people's attitudes and values rather than their technical abilities. Some of the practices for building a positive and supportive climate the organization can include celebrations for new employees, Holding outdoor meetings when possible assignment of senior employees as mentors for new ones, and having a session on showing the culture of the organization, Encouraging employees to get to know each other better (hobbies, likes and dislikes) Help employees connect with nature by bringing in natural features

in the organization, these all things which would help the employee to feel as a part of the family.

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