

Impact of Individual Spirituality on Job Performance: The Mediating Role of Gratitude

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Abstract

Job performance has become an important concern for organizations facing increasing pressure to improve employee productivity, effectiveness, and overall Organisational competitiveness. Drawing upon positive psychology theory, this study examines the role of gratitude as a psychological mechanism linking individual spirituality and job performance. Individual spirituality is increasingly recognized as an important psychological resource that promotes meaning, purpose, emotional balance, and resilience among employees. Gratitude, as a positive emotional state, has also been associated with enhanced motivation, interpersonal relationships, and workplace well-being. The study collected data from 625 employees working in 25 manufacturing organizations in Punjab, India. A quantitative cross-sectional research design was adopted, and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to test the proposed relationships. The findings revealed that individual spirituality had a significant positive effect on gratitude and job performance. Gratitude also positively influenced job performance and significantly mediated the relationship between individual spirituality and job performance. The results indicate that spiritually oriented employees are more likely to develop gratitude, which further enhances motivation, workplace relationships, and employee effectiveness. The study contributes to the Organisational behaviour literature by providing empirical evidence regarding the mediating role of gratitude in the spirituality-performance relationship within manufacturing organizations. The findings also offer practical implications for managers and HR practitioners seeking to improve employee well-being, engagement, and performance through spirituality and gratitude-based workplace initiatives.

Keywords: Gratitude, Individual Spirituality, Job Performance, Manufacturing Organizations, Mediation, Punjab.

Introduction

Modern organizations are increasingly recognizing the importance of psychological and emotional resources in improving employee well-being and Organisational performance. Within the field of positive Organisational behaviour, scholars have highlighted the role of positive psychological strengths such as individual spirituality and gratitude in shaping workplace attitudes and behaviour (1). Individual spirituality refers to an internal search for meaning, purpose, connectedness, and self-awareness that is independent of formal religious affiliation (2). In Organisational settings, spiritually oriented employees are more likely to experience emotional stability, ethical awareness, resilience, and intrinsic motivation, which positively influence work outcomes (3, 4). Similarly, gratitude is regarded as an important positive emotion associated with psychological well-being, interpersonal harmony, and enhanced motivation (5). According to the broaden-and-build theory, positive emotions such as gratitude broaden

individuals' cognitive processes and help build enduring psychological and social resources that improve functioning and adaptability at work (6). In recent years, growing attention has been directed towards understanding how internal psychological strengths influence employee performance. Manufacturing organizations operate in highly demanding environments characterized by workload pressure, repetitive tasks, operational stress, and strict performance expectations. Under such conditions, employees often require psychological resources that can sustain motivation and improve work engagement. Existing literature suggests that employees with stronger spiritual orientations tend to demonstrate greater commitment, resilience, and purpose-driven behaviour (7, 8). Spirituality encourages individuals to perceive their work as meaningful and aligned with personal values, thereby increasing satisfaction and persistence in challenging work situations. These characteristics become especially significant in manufacturing

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environments where emotional exhaustion and disengagement are common concerns.

Gratitude has also emerged as a critical psychological construct in Organisational research. It is generally defined as a positive emotional state arising from the recognition and appreciation of beneficial experiences and supportive relationships (9). Employees who experience gratitude are more likely to build stronger interpersonal relationships, display cooperative behaviour, and maintain positive workplace attitudes.

Although spirituality and gratitude have independently received considerable scholarly attention, limited empirical studies have examined their combined influence on job performance, particularly within manufacturing organizations (10). Existing research has primarily focused on workplace spirituality rather than individual spirituality, even though personal spiritual beliefs and values significantly influence employee attitudes and behaviour (11). Individual spirituality differs from organized religion because it reflects a personal and internalized process of meaning-making and connection with transcendent values (12, 13). Workplace spirituality has also been conceptualised as a framework that encourages employees to align personal values with organisational goals while fostering meaning, connectedness, and purpose in work settings (14). The importance of meaning, self-actualisation, and personal growth in shaping human behaviour has also been emphasised in humanistic psychology literature, which recognises spirituality as an important dimension of individual development (15). It has been suggested that spirituality helps employees develop mindfulness, ethical awareness, and emotional balance, all of which are essential for effective workplace functioning (8). Spirituality has been described as a system of personal values and ethics guiding individual behaviour (16).

Several empirical studies have indicated that spirituality positively influences gratitude and workplace outcomes. Research has shown that spiritually oriented individuals tend to exhibit greater emotional flourishing, perseverance, and ethical behaviour (17, 18). Gratitude has been identified as an important psychological mechanism through which spirituality influences positive workplace attitudes and behaviour (19).

Employees with higher spiritual orientation are more likely to appreciate workplace support, recognize positive experiences, and develop stronger emotional connections with colleagues and organizations. Previous studies conducted in different cultural settings have also found that spirituality positively predicts Organisational citizenship behaviour, innovation, and task performance through gratitude (20).

Hypothesis Development

In collectivist societies such as India, gratitude is strongly associated with moral and social values, which may further strengthen its influence on workplace relationships and employee behaviour (21). Similarly, Indian perspectives on spirituality emphasize concepts such as Karma, Bhakti, Raja, and Jnana Yoga, which promote self-awareness, discipline, and purposeful living (21).

Based on the preceding discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Individual spirituality has a positive effect on gratitude.

Recent research has further indicated that workplace spirituality positively influences innovative work behaviour, employee development, and organisational effectiveness, thereby supporting the broader relevance of spirituality in workplace settings (22). Job performance remains one of the most important constructs in Organisational behaviour research because it reflects the extent to which employees contribute to Organisational goals and productivity. Job performance consists of behaviours under the individual's control that contribute to Organisational effectiveness (23). Later studies distinguished between task performance and contextual performance, both of which are essential for Organisational success (24). In modern workplaces, job performance is influenced not only by technical skills and Organisational resources but also by emotional and psychological factors that shape motivation, persistence, and workplace engagement. Gratitude, as a moral and emotional resource, encourages employees to perceive their workplace positively and motivates them to reciprocate Organisational support through improved performance (25). Employees experiencing gratitude are often more enthusiastic, cooperative, and committed to their work roles, which

ultimately enhances Organisational effectiveness. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Gratitude has a positive effect on job performance.

Existing literature also indicates that spirituality directly contributes to higher job performance. Employees with stronger spiritual orientations often display greater resilience, ethical conduct, and commitment towards Organisational responsibilities (7, 8). Spirituality provides employees with a sense of purpose and emotional balance that enables them to cope effectively with workplace stress and demanding work conditions. These findings suggest that spirituality acts as an important psychological resource in improving employee productivity and behavioral outcomes in manufacturing organizations. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Individual spirituality has a positive effect on job performance.

Furthermore, gratitude may act as an important mediating mechanism explaining how spirituality influences employee performance. Employees who derive meaning and fulfilment from spiritual values are more likely to develop gratitude, and this positive emotional state subsequently enhances their motivation, interpersonal relationships, and work behaviour (19). In collectivist societies such as India, gratitude is often associated with social reciprocity, moral obligation, and mutual respect, which may strengthen its mediating influence within workplace settings (21). However, despite growing theoretical support, empirical evidence examining gratitude as a mediator between individual spirituality and job performance remains limited, especially in emerging economies and manufacturing sectors. Furthermore, gratitude strengthens social reciprocity and encourages employees to contribute beyond formal job responsibilities (25-27).

Therefore, this study attempts to address these research gaps by examining the mediating role of gratitude in the relationship between individual spirituality and job performance among employees in manufacturing organizations in Punjab, India. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Gratitude positively mediates the relationship between individual spirituality and job performance.

Methodology

Research Design

The study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional design and used survey data. The measurement items used in this study were adapted from already-validated, widely used scales in the Organisational behaviour literature. Individual spirituality was measured using items adapted from established workplace spirituality scales (28). Gratitude was measured using items adapted from the Gratitude Questionnaire (GQ-6) (29). Job performance was measured using previously validated scales frequently used in Organisational behaviour research (30). The responses to all items were scored on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Sampling Procedure

The target population for this study was the employees in the top 25 manufacturing organizations in the state of Punjab, India (approximate GPS coordinates 31.1471° N 75.3412° E). Manufacturing firms were chosen because they are representative of high-pressure, high-demand environments where job stress is prevalent. Purposive sampling was considered appropriate because respondents at the supervisory level and above were expected to possess sufficient Organisational understanding to evaluate the study constructs. A purposive sampling technique was adopted by identifying the top twenty-five manufacturing organizations in the state of Punjab in terms of revenue. In the second stage, respondents at the supervisor level and above were approached to ensure proper understanding of questionnaire items. Large manufacturing organizations were selected because they possess structured Organisational systems, formal HR practices, and diverse employee groups, which provide an appropriate setting for examining spirituality, gratitude, and job performance. These organizations also ensure greater operational consistency and accessibility of respondents for empirical investigation.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria for this study comprised full-time employees at the supervisory level or above in selected manufacturing organizations, with at least 1 year of work experience. Respondents were selected because they were expected to possess sufficient Organisational understanding to

evaluate the constructs of spirituality, gratitude, and job performance effectively. The exclusion criteria included temporary employees, interns, contractual workers, and respondents with incomplete or inconsistent questionnaire responses. Employees below supervisory level was also excluded to ensure reliability and relevance of responses.

Data Collection Procedure

A structured questionnaire was distributed personally and electronically to the respondents. Initially, 700 questionnaires were circulated, out of which 648 responses were received. After eliminating incomplete and inconsistent

questionnaires, 625 valid responses were retained for final analysis, resulting in an effective response rate of approximately 89.3%. Respondents were informed about the survey for academic purposes before continuing with the questionnaire.

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents participating in the study. The profile includes gender, age, monthly income, and total work experience of employees from manufacturing organizations in Punjab. The demographic distribution indicates that respondents came from diverse professional backgrounds and experience levels, thereby enhancing the representativeness and reliability of the collected data.

Table 1: Demographic Profile

Demographic Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	370	59.2
	Female	255	40.8
Age	19-35	255	40.8
	36-45	195	31.2
	46-55	175	28.0
Monthly Income	<50,000	300	48
	50,000-1,00,000	225	36
	>1,00,000	100	16
Total Experience	0-5 Years	163	26.08
	6-10 Years	260	41.6
	More than 10 Years	202	32.32

The demographic analysis indicates that male employees constituted many respondents, although female participation was also substantial. Most respondents belonged to the age group of 19–45 years and possessed considerable work experience. In terms of income distribution, a large proportion of employees reported monthly earnings below ₹50,000 reflecting the diverse economic background of participants included in the study.

Data Analysis Technique

Previous research has also highlighted that gratitude contributes positively to employee well-being and psychological health through emotional and cognitive mechanisms, reinforcing its relevance in organisational studies (26). The present study uses the reflective measurement model; that is, all the constructs are reflectively measured. Reflective measurement models are evaluated through indicator reliability, construct reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity assessment (27). The validity assessment is concerned with two kinds of validity. The first

type is convergent validity for each measure which is assessed using the average variance extracted. The second type is the discriminant validity which is the comparison of all measures in a construct in the same model with the help of the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations. The first step in the process of an evaluation of a reflective measurement model is to examine the outer loadings of the indicators (27). Although a loading value of 0.70 or higher is preferred, indicators with loadings below 0.60 may be kept in certain situations, such as if they are statistically significant, and if the composite reliability is greater than 0.70 and the average variance extracted (AVE) is greater than 0.50. The multicollinearity was examined through VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) values. Common method bias was assessed using Harman's single-factor test. The first factor explained less than 50% of total variance, indicating that common method bias was not a serious concern. All the indicators point out that the values of VIF are very much less than the

critical value of 3.3 indicating no cause for concern regarding collinearity.

Results

The outer loadings and VIF values for the constructs are presented in Table 2. Table 2 presents the outer loading values and variance inflation factor (VIF) statistics for all indicators

included in the measurement model. Outer loading values were examined to assess indicator reliability, whereas VIF values were used to evaluate multicollinearity among indicators. The results indicate acceptable loading values and no serious multicollinearity concerns among the constructs.

Table 2: Outer Loadings and VIF Values for the Constructs

Variables	Items	Outer Loadings	VIF
Gratitude	GQ1	0.804	2.468
	GQ2	0.840	2.482
	GQ3	0.809	2.222
	GQ4	0.821	2.526
	GQ5	0.636	1.546
	GQ6	0.712	1.690
Individual Spirituality	IS1	0.757	1.498
	IS2	0.849	2.136
	IS3	0.858	2.277
	IS4	0.791	1.790
Job Performance	JP1	0.709	2.337
	JP2	0.778	2.484
	JP3	0.757	2.517
	JP4	0.681	2.380
	JP5	0.768	3.112
	JP6	0.739	2.119
	JP7	0.662	1.861
	JP10	0.621	1.531

Note: VIF = Variance Inflation Factor.

The findings demonstrate that most outer loading values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory indicator reliability. Indicators with slightly lower loadings were retained because of their statistical significance and acceptable construct reliability values. Furthermore, all VIF values remained below the critical threshold, confirming the absence of multicollinearity issues in the model.

The second criterion that was examined in the measurement model is internal consistency reliability. Cronbach's alpha is traditionally used to measure internal consistency using the intercorrelations among the items of measurement. Both Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) scores range between 0 and 1, with the higher this value, the better the reliability is. Based upon the measurement model table, all constructs had greater than the recommended threshold (0.70), indicating

acceptable to high internal consistency reliability as shown in Table 3. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is usually used to assess convergent validity, whereby 0.50 or more is considered proper convergence. The AVE values obtained in this study are shown in Table 3, showing good evidence for convergent validity. Overall, the results of this study confirm that all constructs in the measurement model meet the requirements of convergent validity in terms of the adequacy and strength of the measurement structure.

Table 3 presents the reliability and convergent validity results of the measurement model. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values were examined to assess the internal consistency reliability of the constructs, while average variance extracted (AVE) values were used to evaluate convergent validity.

Table 3: Reliability and Convergent Validity Results of the Measurement Model

Variables	Alpha	AVE	CR
Gratitude	0.863	0.599	0.866
Individual Spirituality	0.831	0.664	0.836
Job Performance	0.889	0.502	0.890

Note: AVE = Average Variance Extracted, CR = Composite Reliability.

The results demonstrate satisfactory internal consistency reliability because all Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70. Similarly, all AVE values were above the recommended threshold of 0.50, confirming adequate convergent validity for all constructs included in the study.

Discriminant validity is the degree of difference between a construct and other constructs. The establishment of discriminant validity means a construct is differentiated and includes elements not covered by other constructs in a model. The HTMT analysis further supported the discriminant validity because all HTMT values were less than the conservative threshold of 0.85, as shown in Table 4. Together, these results give strong

evidence that constructs demonstrate adequate discriminant validity, hence supporting the reliability and validity of the measurement model. Table 4 presents the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) values used to assess discriminant validity among the constructs. The HTMT criterion evaluates whether each construct is empirically distinct from other constructs included in the proposed research model.

All HTMT values were below the recommended threshold of 0.85, thereby confirming satisfactory discriminant validity among the constructs. These findings indicate that each construct measured a conceptually distinct phenomenon within the study framework.

Table 4: HTMT Results for the Measurement Model

	Gratitude	Individual Spirituality	Job Performance
Gratitude			
Individual Spirituality	0.837		
Job Performance	0.793	0.800	

Note: HTMT = Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio.

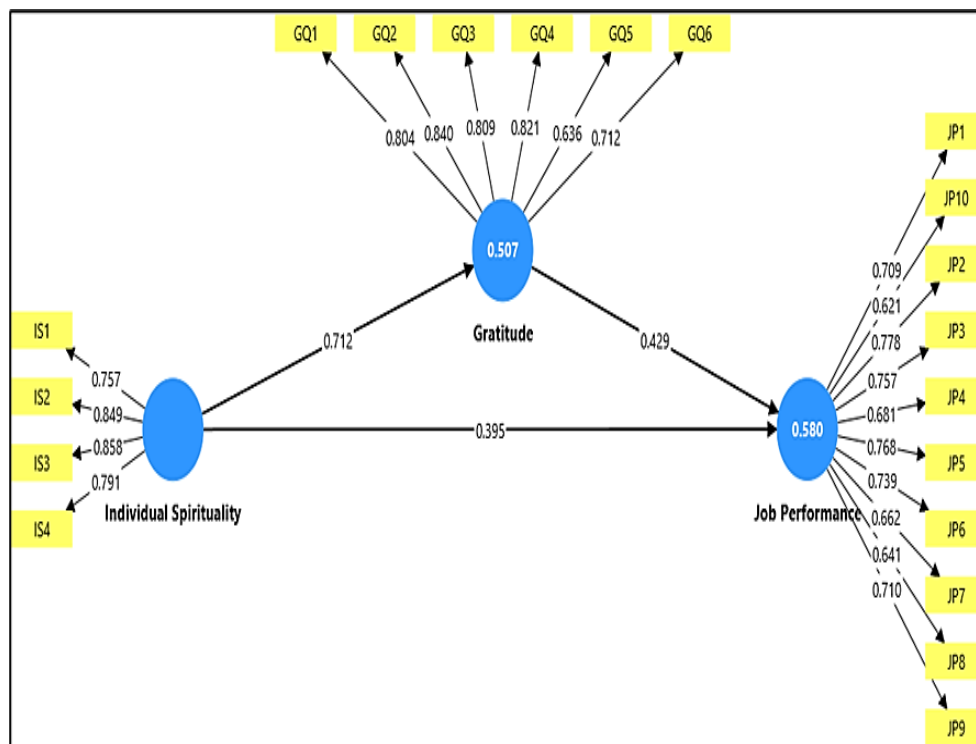


Figure 1: Structural Model Assessment

Structural Model Assessment

The results of the direct path analysis show that all hypothesized relationships were positive and significant, as shown in Figure 1 and Table 5.

Figure 1 presents the structural model assessment illustrating the hypothesised relationships among individual spirituality, gratitude, and job performance. The model includes both direct and

indirect paths examined in the study to evaluate the proposed research hypotheses.

Table 5 presents the direct path analysis results for the proposed hypotheses. The structural relationships were examined using beta coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values to determine the significance and strength of the hypothesised relationships among the constructs.

Table 5: Path Analysis

Path	Beta Value	T statistics	p-value	Hypothesis Status
Individual Spirituality → Gratitude	0.712	38.062	< 0.001	Supported (H ₁)
Gratitude → Job Performance	0.429	11.161	< 0.001	Supported (H ₂)
Individual Spirituality → Job Performance	0.395	9.953	< 0.001	Supported (H ₃)

Note: β = Standardized Beta Coefficient.

The path analysis results indicate that all hypothesised relationships were positive and statistically significant. Individual spirituality demonstrated a strong positive influence on gratitude and job performance, while gratitude also significantly enhanced job performance. Therefore, all direct hypotheses proposed in the study were supported.

Mediation Analysis

The analysis of mediation showed that there is a significant mediating effect of gratitude on the relationship between Individual Spirituality and

Job Performance, as shown in Table 6. Overall, the findings provide compelling evidence that gratitude is an important psychological mechanism of how individual spirituality contributes to better job performance.

Table 6 presents the indirect path analysis results examining the mediating role of gratitude in the relationship between individual spirituality and job performance. The mediation analysis was conducted to determine whether gratitude functions as a psychological mechanism linking spirituality and employee performance outcomes.

Table 6: Indirect Path Analysis Result

Mediating Path	Beta Value	p-value	Type of Mediation	Hypothesis Status
Individual Spirituality → Gratitude → Job Performance	0.305	< 0.001	Partial	Supported (H ₄)

Note: β = Standardized Beta Coefficient.

The mediation analysis confirmed that gratitude significantly mediated the relationship between individual spirituality and job performance. These findings suggest that spiritually oriented employees are more likely to develop gratitude, which subsequently enhances workplace motivation, interpersonal relationships, and overall job performance.

Discussion

The results of the study present meaningful insights into the internal psychological resources, such as spirituality and gratitude, in employee behaviour and performance. The strong relationship between individual spirituality and gratitude suggests the possibility that spiritually

oriented employees have a cognitive and emotional infrastructure that allows them to recognise positive experiences more easily. Spirituality improves the themes of awareness, mindfulness, and a sense of connectedness that motivates human beings to see workplace interactions in a different light: with appreciation instead of negative thoughts. This is consistent with positive psychology research, which considers spirituality a facilitator of emotional well-being (31). The significant effect of gratitude on job performance shows that positive feelings are a central player in the strengthening of job effort and productivity. Gratitude strengthens interpersonal relationships and employees' sense of belonging, and motivates employees to give

something in return to organisational support in the form of high performance. According to broaden and build theory, gratitude broadens employees' mindsets and helps them build psychological, social, and cognitive resources that contribute to long-term success in the workplace (6).

Recent studies have similarly reported that workplace spirituality positively contributes to employee engagement, emotional resilience, psychological well-being, and organisational effectiveness in contemporary work environments (17, 18). Recent evidence has also demonstrated that workplace spirituality positively influences employee performance, organisational trust, and work satisfaction across demanding organisational environments (32, 33). Emerging organisational behaviour research also suggests that gratitude strengthens employee adaptability, workplace flourishing, and positive behavioural outcomes in demanding organisational settings (21, 22).

In demanding environments such as manufacturing organisations, this is an especially significant emotional resource, since it helps employees to cope with stress, to stay motivated, and to maintain performance standards despite challenging circumstances. The positive direct influence of individual spirituality on job performance even further promotes the argument for spirituality as not only a personal belief system, but a behavioural guide to influence conduct at work. Spiritually inclined employees are often more focused, are more ethically aware, and intrinsically motivated. They tend to do their jobs diligently and stay committed even in the face of pressure. In environments where people are engaged in repetitive work with heavy workloads and tight deadlines, spirituality gives meaning, resilience, and moral guidance to the employee; this, in turn, enhances performance. The mediation analysis showed that gratitude is an important mechanism explaining the effects of individual spirituality on performance. Employees deriving meaning from spiritual beliefs enjoy higher levels of gratitude, and this emotion motivates them to go for higher performance at work. The mediation result provides a greater degree of distinction on how internal values are translated into external behaviour, which adds richness to the current organisational behaviour theories.

Similar findings regarding the positive role of spirituality in improving job performance through psychological mechanisms have been reported previously (19). Positive associations between spirituality and workplace outcomes have also been observed in earlier studies (20). Previous research has similarly reported that spirituality positively predicts workplace behaviour and employee outcomes. The present study further extends previous research by examining gratitude as a mediating mechanism in the Indian manufacturing context. These findings collectively indicate that spirituality and gratitude function as important psychological resources that enhance employee performance in demanding organisational environments.

Conclusion

Practical Implications

The results offer several actionable insights for managers, HR practitioners, and policymakers within a manufacturing organisation. Since individual spirituality showed a strong influence on the variables of gratitude and performance, organisations may wish to introduce workplace spirituality initiatives in the form of mindfulness programmes, reflective workplace sessions, value-based leadership training, and opportunities for personal growth. These initiatives can help employees to build emotional resilience and purpose, which in turn can improve performance. The significant effect of gratitude on job performance implies that a culture of appreciation should be fostered in organisations. Managers can say thanks at team meetings, reward employee successes, and design systems of peer-to-peer appreciation. From an HR standpoint, the results point to the importance of well-being interventions. Organisations can offer counselling services, stress management workshops, ergonomic improvements, and flexible work arrangements to better facilitate a more supportive environment. Employees who feel supported emotionally and valued are more likely to develop a sense of gratitude and show greater performance. Finally, training and development programs should include modules to create emotional intelligence, empathy, resiliency, and positive communication skills. Employees equipped with these capabilities are better prepared to manage stress and work well together

and at high levels of performance, particularly under a demanding manufacturing environment.

Limitations and Future Research

This study is limited to manufacturing organisations in Punjab and uses a cross-sectional design, which restricts causal interpretation. Future studies may employ longitudinal designs and include multiple industrial sectors to improve generalisability.

The study presents robust empirical evidence that spirituality and gratitude are powerful psychological resources with meaningful influence on employees' behaviour and job outcomes.

Individual spirituality was revealed to improve job performance directly as well as through the mediating influence of gratitude. These results indicate that employees with spiritual depth develop a strong sense of appreciation that motivates them to perform better and contribute positively towards organisational goals. The findings contribute to the study of organisational behaviour as they show that spirituality has an impact on workplace performance beyond being a belief system and how it activates emotions. Gratitude becomes an important emotional mechanism that fuels motivation, interpersonal relationships, and job commitment. Practically, the study is a pointer to how organisations should pursue spiritual development, emotional wellness, and cultures based on gratitude to enhance employee performance and satisfaction. Overall, this research provides a greater understanding of the internal psychological strengths and their impact on the external workplace behaviour. The findings highlight the importance of fostering emotional and spiritual abilities among employees to create a more engaged, resilient, and high-performing workforce.

Abbreviations

AVE: Average Variance Extracted, CR: Composite Reliability, HTMT: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio, PLS-SEM: Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling, VIF: Variance Inflation Factor.

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Author Contributions

The specific contributions regarding conceptualization, methodology, formal analysis, and writing have been distributed among the authors equitably.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no actual or potential conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript.

Data Availability

The datasets generated by the survey research during and/or analyzed during the current study are available in the Mendeley repository. The compiled data can be made available from the corresponding author on a reasonable request.

Declaration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Assistance

During the preparation of this work, the author(s) used generative AI to improve the language of the article. After using this tool/service, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication.

Ethics Approval

The ethical guidelines for the handling and use of human subjects were followed. Participation was voluntary, and anonymity was guaranteed. Respondents were informed about the survey for academic purposes before participating.

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