LOKASAMGRAHA

ABSTRACT

Workplace environments which recognize employees as human beings, and not just mere resources, tend to foster behavioral patterns which create significant benefits for the organization. Encouraging workplaces to cultivate such environments requires sturdy contextual crafting, elaborating systematically, the underlying assumptions as well as the rationale. A study of literature on prominent traditional philosophies which point to the necessity and benefits of creating such responsible workplaces, also becomes imminent. This article is an exploration on the convergence of thoughts on workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors, from the revered '*Lokasamgraha*' concept of the Bhagwad Gita. After analyzing the principal conceptual dimensions of workplace spirituality, and organizational citizenship behaviors, particular emphasis is placed upon *Lokasamgraha* as the most elaborate and inclusive framework for justifying workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors. It places both concepts in the larger context of *Lokasamgraha* and outlines the associated research and its implications. The purpose is to allow for a deeper insightful understanding of these concepts through the development of *Lokasamgraha*, as an inquiry field, subsequently contributing to the successful application in organizational theories.

KEY WORDS: Lokasamagraha, Workplace Spirituality, Organizational citizenship behaviors.

INTRODUCTION

Employees today are more and more, seeking to bring their entire selves to work, both in body and spirit. The evolution of the Resources based view (Penrose,1959) to the potential based view(Zohar & Marshall,2004) of 'man' signifies this point(Pandey,2008:72). The idea of checking out the soul at the gates when coming to work, no longer seems to appeal. As Peter Pruzan in his interview with Nilofer Merchant, President, Rubicon Consultants, USA, in 'Leading with Wisdom', points out, most people wish to live in alignment with their basic values, ethics, and belief systems(2007:176). It is often upto organizations to create such environments. Nichols (1994) in the Harvard Business Review has raised the issue of spirituality by emphasizing that companies must find ways to harness soul searching on the job. Management academics had never been totally blind to the spiritual perspective of work (Pandey & Gupta,2008). Fry (2003) suggests that workplace spirituality incorporation is a part of organizational change required to make a transition to a suitable organizational form required for the future. Institutions do not exist to serve their own purposes, rather to serve the need of societies and their peoples (Agle, Donaldson, Freeman, Jensen, Mitchell & Wood, 2008).

Workplace Spirituality when evidenced by employees, encourages them to demonstrate extra-role, pro-social behaviors(Delbecq,1999; Fry,2003; Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2004;Giacalone & Jurkeiwicz,2003) - behaviors which are not part of the job description. These organizational citizenship behaviors are performed by the employee as a result of personal choice, contributing positively to the overall organizational effectiveness (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Paine, Bachrache,2000). The purpose of this article is to extend theoretical research on workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors by drawing on the knowledge of an ancient

Indian traditional thought from the Bhagwad Gita, *Lokasamgraha*.[1] Although there are different

viewpoints in the study of workplace spirituality, it can be indicated that the influences of

religions and cultures are usually mentioned (Mitroff & Denton, 1999; Wilber, 2000; Claude &

Zamor, 2003; Hicks, 2003; Sheng & Chen, 2007; Stephen, 2007; Sheng, 2008; Gotsis & Kortezi,

2008; Zafar, 2010). The concept of workplace spirituality as a research field originated in the

West (Conger, 1994) and hence most of the research regarding workplace spirituality is

embedded in Western cultures, economics and religions (e.g. Christianity). Very few are

discussed from Eastern viewpoints. Such an approach is likely to yield insights into relationships

which have not yet surfaced in the large literature reserve to date.

Particularly, this paper is organized in the following way: First, it briefly introduces the

ideas of workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors as they are referenced in

contemporary literature. Then it describes *Lokasamgraha,* from the Bhagwad Gita, and reviews

its potential for deepening the relationships between workplace spirituality and organizational

citizenship behaviors. It outlines the justification for this choice, and points out that this thought

system existed prior to the modern day conceptualization of workplace spirituality and

organizational citizenship behaviors, indicating that one may reference *Lokasamgraha* to derive

greater significance and meaningful strength to these relatively modern adaptations. Modern day

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[1] Lokasamgraha is the most significant advice given by Lord Sri Krishna to the warrior Arjun, (Mahabharata) as the later makes sense of the task he has set out to perform, battling the demons of fear and guilt in his mind. Lord Krishna was said to have spoken the Bhagavad-Gita to Arjuna on the battlefield of Kuruksetra in 3102 B.C.; prior to the commencement of the Mahabharata war. This date corresponds to 1700 years before Moses, 2500 years before Buddha, 3000 years before Jesus and 3800 years before Prophet Mohammed.

fragmented studies of these two ideas may have gaps, which can be addressed by the holistic approach of *Lokasamgraha*. The article concludes with direction for future research.

This paper is to be looked upon as a modern activist interpretation and relevance of the traditional ideology of *Lokasamgraha.*

Workplace Spirituality

Researchers (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003; Gotsis & Kortezi,2008) have noted that there are several definitions of workplace spirituality. However, employee experiences of meaningful work, community, and transcendence are commonly included in these definitions, though the labels and nomenclature used for these vary (Duchon & Plowman, 2005; Fry, 2003; Giacalone & Jurkiewicz,2003). These definitions of spirituality share a number of common elements: reconnection to the inner self (Pawar,2009); a search for universal values that lift the individual above egocentric strivings; i.e..meaning and belief of a higher purpose than the self (Ashforth & Pratt,2003);deep empathy with all living beings(interconnectedness/community) (Mirvis,1997; Corner,2008) and finally, a desire to keep in touch with the source of life (Krishnakumar & Neck, 2002). Literature review points out the presence of enough and more acknowledgment of the 'inner spirit'; and that there exists a 'soul', indicating the need to recognize the 'whole' or 'complete*'* employee at the workplace (Ashforth & Pratt 2003; Giacalone & Jurkiewicz 2003; Pfeffer, 1998). A review of all these definitions that coexist, could be summarized as:

'A *sense of meaning and purpose through work, recognition that employees have an inner life that needs nourishment and is nourished by meaningful work, and an environment that*

encourages interconnectedness or community, wherein employees interact with one another and work is performed in the context of a larger society good'. (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000).

In the past, too, many thinkers, and researchers like Jung (1933) Frankl (1978) and Maslow(1971), in the field of positive psychology have written about one or more of the factors of human 'spirit' and 'harmony'. In his work ''On Becoming Person'' Carl Rogers (1961) expressed his belief about people having basically positive direction toward their true being and the human power to reflect and transcend in 'fully functioning personality' and flourish in the right condition. Another reference to the existence of a soul at the workplace is what Aristotle quoted:' The function of man is activity of soul in accordance with reason.' (Ethics1.7). Socrates assumed, that if we are to live well and happily, 'We must place the highest priority on the care of our souls.' (2000:847). Indian philosophers like Shri Aurobindo[2] (1973) asked people to 'feel spirit' while spending each and every moment of their lives. He asked people to integrate spirit in their daily lives. He was of the opinion that, when a person discovers his true self and the power of divinity lying within, it brings about a rise in his level of consciousness; this allows him to experience transcendence, an opportunity to grow and evolve, and to contribute positively to community and society in a meaningful way. Vinoba Bhave[3] quotes:" The service that is being rendered to the world through my external actions can itself viewed from within be described as spiritual exercise. The service of creation and the development of the spirit do not demand two different courses of action; service and spiritual growth are not different things. For both, the

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2 Shri Aurobindo(15August,1872 –5,December,1950), born Aurobindo Ghose, was an Indian nationalist, philosopher, yogi, guru, and poet.

3 Vinayak Narahari "Vinoba" Bhave was an Indian advocate of nonviolence and human rights. Often called Acharya, he is best known for the Bhoodan Movement. He is considered as a National Teacher of India and the spiritual successor of Mohandas Gandhi

effort made and the action performed is the same."(Agarwal,1995:50). It can be inferred from the suggestions outlined above that the human 'being' part that, constitutes the 'employee' referenced in our discussion, raises consciousness of a 'spirit' or a 'soul' within employees reporting to work, in turn making it essential for workplaces to recognize and harness this.

Though workplace spirituality as a formal domain of research, is in its early stage (Dent, Higgins & Wharff,2005; Duchon and Plowman, 2005; Sheep, 2006) it has seen a significant growth in global interest in the last decade. The recognition of workplace spirituality means seeing the workplace as populated by people who have both a mind and a spirit and believing the development of the spirit is as important as the development of the mind (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000:136). All great traditions, however, have at some level, always encouraged a search for meaning and purpose and living in harmony and one can establish references in ancient Indian holy scriptures like the Vedas and the Bhagwad Gita,. Therein, the 'atman' or soul is stated to be far superior to, or beyond the 'buddhi', often referred to as the 'purusha.' A physical body is not the person in entirety at all. Realms of established spiritual disciplines affirm that beneath the 'I' and 'me' there exists an unchanging 'self'; one that is beyond the personal empirical self, one that is beyond duality and distinction, and one which can be known by immediate intuitive experience. The Bhagwad Gita, states that our individual consciousness (Atman) is not separate from the organizational and universal consciousness (Brahman). Lord Sri Krishna said that "*The senses are said to be superior to the body, the mind is superior to the senses, and intellect is superior to the mind and that which is superior to the intellect is He (Self, Atman)."* The 'inner voice' is the Atman or Self and the 'heart or intuition' symbolizes the Brahman (Universal Self or God consciousness). When you follow your heart and intuition and listen to your inner voice, you actually link your "Atman" with the Brahman' and hence can unleash the infinite power to

succeed. … Shri Bhagwad Gita (chapter2,verse17). The Bhagwad Gita, teaches a man how to attain spiritual perfection by performing ones duty (work). It inspires him to perform actions; it is the means to attain success (Gita6/3).' The Vedanta, the oldest Sanskrit Scriptures on Hinduism says of 'spirituality'-not only can this be realized in the depth of forests or caves, but by men in all possible conditions of life (Vivekanand, 1896), including, as we exhort, the workplace.

This perspective as offered above, sourced in various socio-cultural factors, views spirituality as positively influencing numerous organizational outcomes. 'New sources of competitive advantage, including workplace spirituality, are being identified, such as creativity (Basadur, 1992; Woodman, Sawyer & Griffin, 1993), innovation (Cho & Pucik, 2005; Walker, 2005) tacit knowledge (Grant,1997) and so on. Workplace spirituality is an important research area because it has a ''potentially strong relevance to the well-being of individuals, organizations, and societies" (Sheep, 2006) and its scientific study ''may bring forth a new development in the organizational science'' (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). Long & Mills (2010) advocates workplace spirituality as necessary for organizations and the individuals who work in them to prosper. Carole & Robert (2004) express that workplace spirituality-related factors with performance can be shown to triangulate three areas: motivation, commitment, and adaptability. To be more specific, workplace spirituality is generally treated in literature as the missing attribute of organizational life, in the absence of which our understanding of corporate reality remains limited and incomplete (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2008:576).

Employees are no longer happy working as 'mere workers' at their workplaces and organizations are awakening to the fact that the engagement has to include body, spirit and mind! As Judith Neal, publisher of the 'Spirit at Work' newsletter says: "People are saying, 'that's enough. We're more than just a cost to the organization. We have spirits. We have souls. We

have dreams. We want a life that's meaningful. We want to contribute to society. We want to feel good about what we do."'(Neal,1995). To align themselves to this emerging world view, organizations are making room for the spiritual dimension at workplace, a dimension that has less to do with rules and order and more to do with meaning, purpose, and a sense of community (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). The study of spirituality in the business/work environment has become increasingly prevalent in the work environment with a growing number of employees seeking value, support, and meaning in their work as well as their lives (Cash, Gray, & Rood, 2000). Organizations need to "see, think and behave holistically", which is a mental revolution in self-aware consciousness (Kilmann, 2001). Thus, the challenge before organizations is to bridge the gap between profit-centric and purpose-centric management (Chow, 2007).

Significance of organizational citizenship behaviors in our Discussion

Despite the growing interest in citizenship-like behaviors, a review of the literature in this area reveals a lack of consensus about the dimensionality of this construct. Organizational citizenship behavior has been of increasing interest to both scholars and managers. Interest in citizenship-like behaviors expanded from the field of organizational behavior to a variety of different domains and disciplines, including human resource management, hospital and health administration, community psychology, industrial and labor law, strategic management international management, military psychology and economics. Over a decade and a half has passed since Dennis Organ and his colleagues first coined the term "Organizational Citizenship Behavior". Drawing on Chester Barnard's concept of the "willingness to cooperate," and Daniel Katz's distinction between dependable role performance and "innovative and spontaneous behaviors," Organ defined organizational citizenship behaviors as:

"Individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization." (Organ, 1988).

Studies are aimed at understanding and assessing the role of organizational citizenship behaviors   in organizations and the benefits that accrue to the firm as a result of them (Krilowicz & Lowery, 1996; Podsakoff, Ahearne & Mackenzie, 1997). Organizational citizenship behaviors have been noted to have contributed favorably to organizational outcomes, such as service quality (Bettencourt & Brown,i 1997; Bell & Menguc, 2002), organizational commitment (Podsakoff, McKenzie & Bommer, 1996), job involvement (Dimitriades, 2007), and leader-member exchange (Bhal, 2006; Lo, Ramayah & Kueh, 2006). Milliman, Czaplewski & Ferguson(2003), report the encouraging role of workplace spirituality in building unity within organizations, which leads to greater teamwork and collaboration and reduced occurrences of absenteeism and employee turnover. Being in touch with our 'real self', makes us more relaxed, energized and committed towards our goals (Pandey & Gupta, 2008). They go beyond the identified 'in-role' behaviors to demonstrate 'extra-role' behaviors, doing things that work in favor of the organization or the work unit (conscientiousness, altruism, civic virtue, sportsmanship and courtesy). Katz and Kahn (1978) pointed out that organizational citizenship is important in organizations. Organizational citizenship behaviors have been described in literature as being essential for achieving superior returns (Khan & Rashid, 2012).

Researchers have also analyzed in vigor the antecedents which induce such behaviors at the workplace. Podsakoff et al.(2000) found that attitude, such as Organizational Commitment, is positively correlated to organizational citizenship behaviors. Smith, Organ and Near (1983) and Bateman and Organ (1983) conducted the first research on the antecedents of organizational

citizenship behavior, finding job satisfaction to be the best predictor. Tan and Geh (2009) provided a theoretical model linking workplace spirituality with organizational citizenship behavior through organizational commitment as the mediator and tested it empirically. Workplace spirituality was seen to have a significant positive impact on organizational citizenship behaviors. Further, Liu (2008) established a positive relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors as well. Setiyawati and Abdul Rehman (2007) in their study exploring the spirituality and personality correlates of organizational citizenship behaviors recognized that meaning of life had a positive significant impact on Organizational citizenship behaviors. One of the most studied correlates of spirituality in the workplace is organizational citizenship behavior and its dimensions (Porshariati, Dousti & Moosavi, 2014). A growing body of research into organizational citizenship behaviors suggests that employees demonstrate greater extra-role performance when they experience a strong connection to their organization and have found a sense of meaning and purpose in their daily work (Van Dyne, Graham & Dienesch, 1994). Employees experiencing workplace spirituality have been found to perform better due to increased feelings of motivation and meaning in their work (Garcia-Zamor, 2003). Rastgar, Zarei, Davoudi & Fartash, (2012) through their research found that workplace spirituality has a significant positive influence on organizational citizenship behaviors. Harmer (2008) established that there is a significant positive relationship between employees organizational citizenship behaviors and spirituality. Also it was recognized in a recent study that spirituality had a positive influence on organizational citizenship behaviors (Kutcher, Bragger, Srednicki & Masco, 2010).

Justification for the Choice of Lokasamgraha

The choice of *'Lokasamgraha',* as the philosophical tributary to the concept of workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors, has several justifications. It is estimated that the concept of *Lokasamgraha* will have an essential contribution to a better – that is deeper and more meaningful – understanding of workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors. To elucidate, workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors are generally treated in contemporary literature as distinct and separate components of corporate life, on account of which our understanding of corporate reality could remain limited and compartmentalized. The development of *Lokasamgraha*, as an inquiry field, could positively influence this comprehension and its application. The expected positive combined impact of workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors in organizational reality, and the need to elaborate and defend a more inclusive framework that could transcend the inadequacies of both these ideas, makes for a compelling case. Universalizing these concepts through *Lokasamgraha*, to offer unique, albeit universally held viewpoints, has been propounded. Firstly, literature review of traditional philosophies reveals that *Lokasamgrah*a is counted amongst the richest traditional philosophies worldwide, and its position in the Bhagwad Gita, fairly unchallenged. Vinoba Bhave (Vinayak Narahari Bhave), considered the Indian Spiritual successor of Mahatma Gandhi,[4] identified *Lokasamgraha* as one of the most important expressions in the Bhagwad Gita, not occurring in the Upanisads[5] (Gita Tatva Bodh, 1981). Sri

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[4] Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi,(2,October 1869 – 30, January 1948)Mmahatma Gandhi, known as the Father of the nation, was at the forefront of the Indian Independence Movement in 1947.

[5] The Upanishads are a collection of vedic texts that are said to contain the oldest and most original teachings of Hinduism.

Aurobindo (Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, 1997) in his Essays on the Bhagwad Gita, has referred to *Lokasamgraha* throughout his narrations. This philosophy continues to draw interest in research, through multiple translations, interpretations and contextualization by scholars and intellectuals including Satya Agarwal (1995;1997), Manali Londhe (2014) Shrinivas Tilak(2007) and Jagat Pal(2001). Many early great thinkers such as Albert Einstein, Mahatma Gandhi, Albert Schweitzer, Madhvacarya, Adi Sankara and Ramanuja have all contemplated and deliberated upon this message of the Bhagavad-Gita. Although the word itself appears only twice in the actual elucidation of the Bhagwad Gita, experts who have studied this scripture, concur that the principles of *Lokasamgraha,* form the DNA of the message that Lord Sri Krishna proffers to Arjuna. "The term covers a multitude of social and political forms of behavior and attitudes of mind and is perhaps more central to the meaning the Bhagwad Gita should have for modern man than its traditional other-worldly interpretation."(Agarwal, 1997). Its vastness of application and relevance permits for versions to coexist in historical and philosophical texts, including our modern interpretation, referencing *Lokasamgraha* as a theoretical tributary to thoughts on workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors.

Secondly, we state, the inherent message of '*Lokasamgraha'* itself, is the reason for establishing this analogy. To elaborate, the Bhagwad Gita states implicitly that the object of ***all*** actions should be *Lokasamgraha* (Agarwal, 1997:119). Its literal translation indicates involvement with the world, bringing the world together, welfare of the world. Literature on both workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors, as we examine in the subsequent sections, suggest self-transcendence and interconnectedness, both of which in other words, indicate welfare of a larger community (world) and bringing the world together. Therefore, as we proceed to compare these references, we advocate through this paper, that *Lokasamgraha* is very

relevant to workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors. This suggestion is also based on several academic discussions on the need for organizations to connect everything about their existence, with the oneness of the cosmic, and the co-existence/interdependence of employees (Nouwen, 1989). This discussion attempts to lay out the resemblance between these theories. The modern 360 degree stakeholder view recommended for organizations, and the principle of unity of existence- the view that the entire human race (also other living beings) is a family (vasudhaiva kutumbhkam), are other ideas comparable to *Lokasamgraha,* in the light of this discussion.

Last but not the least, the purpose of *karma* or human action gets a new meaning from Lord Sri Krishna's statement that he himself works for *Lokasamgraha* and his warning of a grave crisis in the World if he did not do so (Agarwal, 1997:32). Lord Sri Krishna says, his teaching is applicable to not only Arjuna, the warrior, but to all human beings. He states, "Your vision is narrow because you do not look beyond your own good or that of your near and dear ones, svajanam. But you have to take into account the society and the world, the LOKA (III.20). By all means, strive for your personal goals, but also keep in mind the larger social and world goals of preserving dharma and order, and of achieving harmony, unity and universal welfare, Lokasmgraha."(Agarwal, 1995:32). We infer from this, that a narrow vision, or a selfish attitude, hampers the welfare of humanity. A review of literature in this context reveals that organizations strive to encourage in their employees, a sense of connection (camaraderie), and meaning and purpose in their work, in order to effect pro-organizational behaviors, in other words, welfare (Kolodinsky, Giacalone & Jurkeiwicz, 2008). Thus, this way forward, we provoke deliberations on how *Lokasamgraha,* encompasses the dual ideology of workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors.

The notion of *Lokasamgraha* clearly emphasizes the value of positive social action meant to facilitate social welfare. These ideas make the case of strong traditions of socially driven actions in personal life. It suggests that voluntarism is in -built in the relational notion of selfhood or the idea of 'being' –personal existence -delineated in the Indian thought which has the elements of individual and social both aspects as central in its construction.(Dalal,2006).

Lokasamgraha: The Building Block of Workplace Spirituality and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

A fundamental clarification at this stage in our discussion is of our choice of workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors as derivatives of *Lokasamgraha.* To begin with, the relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors, leads us to refer to the wisdom of *Lokasamgraha.* Within its wisdom we find a deep confluence of thoughts. Swami Ranganathananda,[6] a Hindu monk, teacher and preacher of Swami Vivekananda's[7] philosophy has aptly summarized this confluence as: "Narrow-mindedness, secretiveness and hatred spring always from a sense of separateness. The sense of separateness gives rise to all kinds of selfish desires; the desire to hide one's thoughts and possessions from others, the desire to exploit or overcome somebody else and so on. But when this sense of separateness vanishes, such calculations also vanish, leaving in their place a feeling of universal friendship and benevolence towards other beings"(Agarwal, 1995:48). An extension of this

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[6] Swami Ranganathananda, born Shankaran Kutty, was a Hindu monk of the Ramakrishna Math order. He served as the 13th president of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission.
[7] Swami Vivekananda (2,January,1863 – 4,July,1902), born Narendra Nath Datta was an Indian Hindu monk and chief disciple of the 19th-century saint Ramakrishna. He was a key figure in the introduction of the Indian philosophies of Vedanta and Yoga to the Western world.

thought to the context of a workplace would mean that the more employees are in synch with one another, experience community and meaning and purpose, the lines separating them fade away, and from that emerges a common purpose and desire for common good. Swami Vivekananda conveys: "Atmano moksartham jagaddhitaya ca" which means that overcoming self-interest, and universal welfare or common good, can be achieved simultaneously! A summary of the confluence of thoughts and interpretations of Lokasamgraha, with contemporary literature on Workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors is illustrated through the table below:

Insert Table 1 about here

The word *Lokasamgraha* connotes 'social harmony', as well as the 'world of preservation', because its two component words 'Loka' and 'samgraha' have more than one meaning each. 'Loka' denotes *mankind* or the *world* and 'samgraha' implies *protecting*, *keeping, regulating* (Agarwal,1997:119). Though interpreted in several ways, all notations of *Lokasamgraha* propagate some commonalities- viz, the good of the society (Agarwal,1995) and unity/oneness. "According to S. Radhakrishnan[8](1976), *Lokasamgraha,* stands for the unity of the world, the interconnectedness of society."(Radhakrishnan,1976, as cited by Chakraborty,1996) We pause here as we lay out the comparable perspectives of these connotations with our review of the table above.

There is a vastness of definitions and conceptualization of workplace spirituality in literature, as presented earlier in this paper. Yet, one can identify three broad common themes, a)

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[8] Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan was an Indian philosopher and statesman who was the first Vice President of India and the second President of India from 1962 to 1967.

the recognition of a 'spirit' or 'soul' in the employee; that there exists an inner life which seeks nourishment, and that is nourished by meaningful work at the workplace; b) a sense of meaning and purpose through the work itself, and c) interconnectedness/ community at work.

'Nirmamo nirahamkarah', without any sense of 'mine' or egoism and devoid of pride (verse II.71), is the *Lokasamgraha* message of Lord Sri Krishna in the Bhagwad Gita (Agarwal,1997:320). A look at a similar position in contemporary literature, on workplace spirituality, is the recognition of an inner self, or a soul that exists in employees, beyond the mortal body or mind. In other words, it is the acknowledgement that beyond the 'me' and 'myself', there exists something much deeper- an inner life or spirit which is part of larger universe and constellation of other beings.

Workplace spirituality involves experiencing meaning and fulfillment through the work. Swami Vivekananda (1953) said: "When we are inspired by the work itself then surely nothing else is required." The idea of performing actions which by virtue of their nature dedicate the outcome to a general good, or a higher power, or God, i.e. *'Karma –samarpanam',* is extended to what Sri Aurobindo calls 'surrender without reservations' or 'samarpanam of sarvadharman' (Agarwal,1995:184). Such complete dedication according to Sri Aurobindo leads to universal good, or *lokasamgraha.* This interpretation also reflects the relationship we have expressed earlier, that exists between workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors. One can infer that finding meaning and purpose through the work by itself, leads to the materialization of L*okasamgraha*. 'Nishkarma Karma' (Agarwal, 1995:45) or the absence of hankering after fruit is Lord Sri Krishna's message of *Lokasamgraha* in the Bhagwad Gita, A rational interpretation is 'finding meaning and purpose in the work itself', rather than the end result alone. Therefore, when the work itself provides meaning and purpose, the employee

experiences immense satisfaction through the execution of the function of the work itself. In other words, when one expounds energy in the wisdom of the work per se, a sense of meaningful purpose is experienced. Lokmanya Tilak[9], too emphasized his understanding of how *Lokasmgraha* indicates finding meaning and purpose, by stating that "Service that is rendered to the world through external actions can itself be viewed from within as a spiritual exercise." The service of creation and the development of the spirit do not demand two different courses of action; service and spiritual growth are not different things. "For both, the effort made and the action performed is the same."(Agarwal,1995:50). Therefore, work and spirituality need not be mutually exclusive. On the contrary, work is spirituality.

The sense of interconnectedness or community is the other critical facet of our discussion on workplace spirituality and *Lokasamgraha.* It has been expressed in modern literature as:

"T*he belief that people see themselves as connected to each other and that there is some type of relationship between one's inner self and the inner self of other people." (Maynard, 1992).* The essence of community is that it involves a deeper sense of connection among people, including support, freedom of expression, and genuine caring. "Work itself is being re-discovered as a source of spiritual growth and connection to others" (Mirvis, 1997:193).

There are several notable and cited interpretations of *'lokasamgraha'* in the Bhagwad Gita, but what remains universal is their conformity to the idea that the universe establishes interdependence and connectivity. Lord Sri Krishna implies Interconnectedness through his sermon **'**Samah sarveshu bhuteshu', i.e.the same towards all beings (18.54); This suggests an

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[9] Bal Gangadhar Tilak, born as Keshav Gangadhar Tilak, was an Indian nationalist, journalist, teacher, social reformer, lawyer and an independence activist. He was the first leader of the Indian Independence Movement.

attitude of 'sameness' towards fellow workers. Dr. Sarvapelli. Radhakrishna, and Vinoba Bhave both validate the notion of interconnectedness, by positioning, 'brotherhood' and a view of 'world solidarity' or 'community' as their interpretation of *Lokasmgraha* (Agarwal,1995). *Lokasamgraha,* highlights the concept of interconnectedness because it emphasizes that we are truly human only when we are interconnected with the universe, and in community with other persons. Lokmanya Tilak asserts, "When a man of knowledge understands that there is one atman created in all human beings, the trend of his mind must naturally be towards a common welfare, *Lokasamgraha."* Therefore, active noble sentiments full of sympathy towards all created beings must arise in the mind of a man, who has had this realization that interconnectedness exists and there are relationships beyond the self(Agarwal,1995:28). This argument can be extended rationally to include employees in the workplace as well. We put forward that when the firm is understood as a community, the purpose of management is neither to benefit one collection of individuals, as owner-value-maximization theories claim, nor to benefit many collections of individuals, as stakeholder theories tell us, but to benefit the community, as well as the larger communities of which it is a part. Dr. Sarvapelli Radhakrishnan, articulates that *Loksamgraha* stands for the unity of the world, the interconnectedness of society….(S. Radhakrishnan on the Bhagavad Gita op cit;139(Agarwal, 1993:299). The emphasis of *Lokasamgraha,* is on a 'world view'; world solidarity, which requires us to acknowledge the whole pattern of our life in universal context. The Gita requires us to lay stress on brotherhood. *Vinoba Bhave* interprets *Lokasamgraha* as 'keeping people together and on the right path'(Agarwal,1997:347). The emphasis is on '*together'*. R.*N. Dandekar*, Author of Sources of Indian Tradition, states in his essay on *Lokasamgraha*: 'The Gita teaches that man has a duty to promote *lokasamgraha* or stability, solidarity and progress of

society (community). A community (society) can function properly on the function of interdependence of its various constituents. As an essential constituent of society, therefore, man must have an active awareness of his social obligations'(Agarwal,1997:299); In other words, an employee's connections with his environment and the ecosystem within which he operates.

As outlined earlier, literature begets that Workplace experiences of meaning and purpose, inner life and interconnectedness could be pre-cursors to organizational citizenship behaviors demonstrated by employees in the workplace. However, the concept of *Lokasamgraha* further displays the implicit wisdom that the essence of all actions is action for the common good. In Samkaras's words, "He sees that whatever is pleasant to himself is pleasant to all creatures, and that whatever is painful to himself is painful to all beings. Even as he desires good to himself, he desires good to all."(Agarwal, 1995:47). It presses that though workplace spirituality is a precursor and a condition to encourage such pro-social behaviors, the virtue of work itself should be the achievement of a 'larger good' or 'community welfare.' *Lokasamgraha,* in the Bhagwad Gita propagates behavior towards the common welfare as the basic purpose of action in itself. It supersedes all notions that behavior and actions should also *result* in community benefit, by advocating that the intrinsic virtue of action is common good, transcendence over ego and self interest. Mahatma Gandhi has said "The good of the individual is contained in the good of all."(Agarwal,1995:50). As detailed by Agarwal(1997), *Lokasamgraha*, includes aspects of service, like Altruism, responsibility, often labeled civic virtue in contemporary references, cohesiveness, which includes oneness and connectedness, courtesy, that is doing to others as we would to ourselves, and sportsmanship, or promulgation of social harmony. Contemporary research too, as pinpointed in our earlier discussion, has identified altruism, civic virtue,

courtesy, sportsmanship and conscientiousness as facets of demonstrative organizational citizenship behaviors. We explore the convergence of thoughts as follows.

Altruism, a form in which organizational citizenship behavior manifests, can be defined as discretionary behavior that has the effect of helping a specific other person with an organizationally relevant task or problem (Organ1988:11). *Lokasmgraha,* too, speaks of a wide social goal, calling for an attitude of 'sympathy and compassion'- even mindedness towards all people; '*samah sarvesu bhutesu'*-(sloka 18.54). We note here the similarities of both these notations of Altruism. As one helps another with an organizationally relevant task, an attitude of sympathy and compassion is manifested(Agarwal,1995:47). The Bhagwad Gita, while expounding the message of L*okasamgraha,* also uses the word 'samya' to denote even-mindedness towards all people (Slokas V.19 and VI.33). Those who have *samya* are also called, *Samadarsinah* (sloka V.18). The foundation of such equal vision *samadrishti* is of course, the Vedantic philosophy that the same atman resides in each being (Agarwal,1995:47).The philosophical term used in the Bhagwad Gita (Sloka VI.32) is *atmaupamya* meaning equality of others with oneself, but in practice, reflects equal vision through sympathy towards all!

Conscientiousness, or actions that go well beyond the minimum mandated role requirement is another form in which Organizational citizenship behavior presents itself (Organ,1988). A meaningful analogy is Mahatma Gandhi's interpretation of *Lokasamgraha* in his fight for freedom. It was not enough for the Mahatma that *Lokasamgraha* formed the central ideal of *Satyagrahi* (non-violent non-cooperation). It was equally important to the Mahatma that the means to achieve this was also 'right' and 'correct'.(Agarwal,1995:184). The form of

behavior, in other words, displayed was as critical as the motive and the outcome achieved, confirming conscientiousness.

Civic Virtue manifests as the behavior on the part of an individual that indicates that he/she responsibly participates in, is involved in, or is concerned about the life of the company (Organ,1988). Swami Vivekananda has drawn attention to bringing about a 'unity of purpose' and 'cooperative effort' in the society for a just cause, as his version of the ideology of *Lokasamgraha(*Agarwal,1995). This in other words indicates responsible participation, involvement and concern about the life of the company, and in its modern avatar- civic virtue. The underlying message here is not to push people around against their will, nor is it to perpetuate their ignorance. The plea is in favor of slow and steady effort to educate and encourage others to follow voluntarily with the examples being set. Thus, *Lokasamgraha*, if properly understood, can make people aware of their responsibility and can provide rationale for curbing unnecessary expenditure, consumption and reducing waste and pollution.

Sportsmanship(Organ,1988) shows the willingness of the employee to tolerate less than ideal circumstances without complaining. It finds parallels in Lord Sri Krishna's description of *Lokasamgraha* "Even-mindedness of two types –in success and failure, and towards all" (Agarwal,1995:46). This can be inferred that a spirit of balance in both victory and defeat, and fairness towards others, i.e. fellow workers in an organization, is a true sign of sportsmanship.

Swami Chinmayananda[10] and Mahatma Gandhi both cite *Courtesy,* i.e. efforts of preventing harmful behavior (Organ, 1988) as the essence of the message of *Lokasamgraha.* "All causes for sorrows in social life would be no doubt removed, if the good and socially conscious members of a community were to feel satisfied in enjoying the remnants of their cooperative work performed in true spirit." States Swami Chinmayanada (Agarwal,1997:348). This draws attention to the importance of pro-social behavior, or behavior that aims at general welfare. Mahatma Gandhi stated "Violence vanishes before Ahimsa (non-violence) prevails.' (Agarwal, 1995:27). Thus, the Mahatma propounded the inherent meaning of *Lokasamgraha.* Its literal implication is the performance of actions which prevent problems. For goodness to prevail, all negative must be prevented.

Lokasamgraha, in the table above enlightens us with its parallel allusions through the teachings and translations of various learned men. Although the term L*okasamgraha* explicitly occurs only twice in the Bhagwad Gita (3.20&3.25), there are several other terms or phrases that implicitly refer to it throughout, cross positioning and adding dimensions to its interpretation.

Summary and Conclusion

On one hand, we conclude, contemporary research is striving hard to determine the relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors. On the other hand is the existence of the ideology of *Lokasamgraha* that has been validated by some of

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[10] Swami Chinmayananda Saraswati was a Hindu spiritual leader and teacher who inspired the formation of Chinmaya Mission, a worldwide nonprofit organisation, to spread the knowledge of Advaita Vedanta.

the greatest thinkers and philosophers ever. They have affirmed through their explanation of *Lokasamgraha* that themes of workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors(as we identify them today) are two sides of the same coin. Both coexist and denote the ultimate truth of 'universal interconnectedness and welfare'. *Lokasamgraha* embraces and denotes the recognition of the human spirit, the fact that human beings are inter-dependant, that they desire meaning and purpose in action, and that all action should by virtue be action for common welfare. L*okasamgraha* possesses multiple facets. Irrespective of the side studied, its relevance envelopes our modern day fragmented view of workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors, encouraging us to examine in depth the real relationships. As Agarwal (1995) asserts that the term *Lokasamgraha*, being non-sectarian, secular, comprehensive, and wide enough to be able to include even modern concepts, gives rise to possibilities of associating there-with new forms of socially beneficial ideas and work programs. The driving force is to encourage the recognition of the human spirit at work, and to acknowledge the benefits for both the workplace and the organization as a result of this recognition.

This paper argues that the notion of 'good for the community' and 'welfare of all' has been in existence for hundreds of years and highlighted through the teachings of great scholars and philosophers. They have also accentuated the prerequisite conditions for the emergence of this spirit of common welfare, pointing to the experience of meaning and purpose in vocation, and a sense of interdependence. It could also be fair to propose that for present day relevance, employees experiencing a sense and meaning in their work through their work itself, which contributes to a larger purpose than the immediate self, display behaviors for the welfare of the organization; in other words, they engage in organizational citizenship behaviors. This consequently implies that managers of organizations should foster appropriate atmospheres in

workplaces, like workplace spirituality to engage employees in extra-role behavior. When employees experience favorable conditions in the workplace, they try harder than before to reach organizational objectives. Liedtka (1996) suggests that business organizations that exhibit these caring tendencies will have better economic performance than organizations based on other foundations. Organizations that are based on and focus on human relationships, and come across as 'caring organizations' would have better economic performance than a rational or political one (Dobson & White; 1995). A broader and comprehensive understanding of work, through the lens of *Lokasamgrah*a can salvage mankind from the pitfalls of selfish material existence. Through this article, we have attempted to examine the role of an ancient and fundamental system of beliefs and values in providing a framework that enlightens how people need to relate themselves to their work and to each other in the context of the vocation. Such holistic understanding of work results in less occupational stress, improved personal well-being, and other positive work and societal outcomes

Lokasamgraha, or Working towards a common welfare, was prevalent not just at the time of Sri Krishna, (as studied in the Bhagwad Gita) but also through the words of Lord Rama, A Hindu God. The only difference is the word 'Mangalam' meaning 'the good of people' that has been used instead of '*Lokasamgraha'* in the Ramcharitramanas[11] of Tulsidas. The word 'Mangalam' meaning 'the good of all' occurs in the opening verse of the Ramcharitramanas (written by Tulsidas) and also in many other verses of the Hindi rendition of the Ramayana. Whilst we work towards refining our understanding of workplace spirituality and its relevance in encouraging pro organizational behaviors, we should build upon the richness that is offered to us

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[11] Ramcharitramanas is an epic poem in Awadhi, composed by the 16th-century Indian poet Goswami Tulsidas. The core of the work is a poetic retelling of the events of the Sanskrit epic Ramayana, centered on the narrative of Rama, the crown prince of Ayodhya.

to build our frameworks, from the theory of *Lokasamgraha.* The protective and world preservation aspect of *Lokasamgraha* is highlighted by Sri Krishna when he says that if he were to cease such work, the lokas as well as the people would be destroyed. The *Lokasamgraha* concept if properly understood can make people aware of their responsibility and can provide a rationale for curbing unnecessary consumption, and reducing waste and pollution, similar to the modern concept of CSR (corporate social responsibility). The cohesive aspect of *Lokasamgraha* lends support to activities which create feelings of mutual cooperation and togetherness, encouraging inter-religious tolerance and fellow-feeling, necessary components of harmonious and tolerant workplaces. Fighting against evil and injustice is a part of *Lokasamgraha* and the possibility of doing this peacefully, reinforces the ethical principles of Lokasamgraha, and can articulate the need for ethical businesses. To sum up, an attempt to approach workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors in isolation, could lead to a fragmented discussion, and a holistic approach through *Lokasamgraha*, could fill in the gaps and offer meaningful and comprehensive insights into organizations and corporate life.

Scope for Further Research

The Bhagwad Gita, loved as the "Song of the God" is considered by eastern and western scholars alike to be amongst the greatest spiritual books the world has ever known. However, there exist other rich philosophies and traditions that may be studied in depth to derive meaning and perspective to the concepts of workplace spirituality and organizational citizenship behaviors, and their relationship. Believers of different religions are "co-pilgrims guiding one

another towards the one transcendent goal" (Pope John Paul II,1986. cited in Maryknoll Brothers Newsletter, 2010). The belief of UBUNTU, from South Africa, for example, can be examined for its resemblance to *Lokasamgraha* and its contribution to the idea of organizational citizenship behaviors, respectively. The Japanese philosophical concept KYOSEI of 'cooperative living' can also be inspected in great detail to derive inspiration and insights. Independent research into each of the components of these accepted wisdoms can be conducted to understand the impact they have on business outcomes as well.

Lokasamgraha can be further studied in the light of Corporate Citizenship. Important questions on this role of corporations are being raised particularly at a time when there are growing demands for a critical review of the institutions of business and society (Moon, Crane & Matten, 2005). The ethical challenges of contemporary globalization, competitiveness and the concept stress on the natural human environment can be understood better from this Lokasamgraha perspective and there is growing literature on the role of the secular concept of Lokasamgraha, on Service learning, too. (Chatterjee, 2009).

TABLE 1

Confluence of Thoughts

	Lokasamgraha	Workplace Spirituality	Organizational citizenship behaviors
Concepts	**Lokmanya Tilak:** When a man of knowledge understands that there is one atman created in all human beings, the trend of his mind must naturally be towards a common welfare: *Lokasamgraha (*Agarwal,1995:28*)*	"The recognition that employees have an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of community"(Ashmos & Duchon, 2000).	Individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization (Organ,1988)
Components			
Inner Life	**Lord Sri Krishna***: nirmamo nirahamkarah;* without any sense of 'mine' or egoism and devoid of pride (2.71),	Employees have both a mind and a spirit and the development of the spirit is as important as the development of the mind. Existence of a 'soul' in human beings.	

Meaning & purpose	**Lord Sri Krishna:** *Nishkarma karma-*. Absence of hankering after fruit and finding meaning and purpose in the work itself, creates a feeling of harmony and connection. (Agarwal, 1995:45 **Lokmanya Tilak: S**ervice that is rendered to the world through external actions can itself be viewed from within as a spiritual exercise. (Agarwal,1995:50)	Employees want to be involved in work that gives meaning to their lives; each person has his or her inner motivations and truths and desires to be involved in activities that give greater meaning to his or her life and the lives of others.	
Interconnectedness	***Lord Sri krishna:*** *Samah sarveshu bhuteshu:* the same towards all beings (18.54). ***Dr.S.Radhakrishnan***: The emphasis of Lokasamgraha, is on a world view, world solidarity, which requires us to acknowledge the whole	The belief that people see themselves as connected to each other and that there is some type of relationship between one's inner self and the inner self of other people (Maynard,	

	pattern of our life in universal context. (Chakrabarty,1996) The Bhagwad Gita requires us to lay stress on human brotherhood. ***Vinoba Bhave:*** 'keeping people together and on the right path.' (Agarwal, 1997:347). ***R.N. Dandekar:*** *M*an has a duty to promote lokasamgraha or stability, solidarity and progress of society (community). A community (society) can function properly on the function of interdependence of its various constituents. (Agarwal,1997:299)	1992; Miller, 1992).	
Altruism	Samah sarvesu bhutesu-sloka (18.54); an attitude of sympathy and compassion-even mindedness towards all		Behaviors that have the effect of helping a specific other person with an

	people; *Atmaupamya* meaning equality of others with oneself-equal vision through sympathy towards all! Gita (Sloka VI.32)		organizationally relevant task or problem (Organ, 1988).
Conscientiousness	**Mahatma Gandhi:** It was not enough that the ideal of Satyagrahi (non-violent non- cooperation) should be Lokasamgraha or the welfare of all. It was important that the means to achieve this was also 'right' and 'correct'. The form of behavior, in other words, displayed was as critical as the motive and the outcome achieved. (Agarwal,1995:184).		Behavior on the part of the employee that goes well beyond the minimum role requirements of the organization, in the areas of attendance, obeying rules and regulations, taking breaks, and so forth.(Organ, 1988)
Civic Virtue	**Sri Vivekananda:** bringing about a 'unity of purpose' and 'cooperative effort' in the		Behavior on part of an individual that demonstrates

	society for a just cause (Agarwal,1995).		responsible participation, involvement and concern about the life of the company (Organ, 1988).
Sporstmanship	**Lord Sri Krishna:** Even-mindedness of two types –in success and failure, and towards all. (Agarwal,1995:46).		Willingness of the employee to tolerate less than ideal circumstances without complaining (Organ, 1988).
Courtesy	**Swami Chinmayananda:** 'All causes for sorrows in social life would be no doubt, removed, if the good and socially conscious members of a community were to feel satisfied in enjoying the remnants of their cooperative work performed in true spirit (Agarwal,1997:348). **Mahatma Gandhi:** Violence		Behavior on the part of an individual aimed at preventing work-related problems with others from occurring (Organ, 1988).

	vanishes before Ahimsa (non-violence) prevails; actions which prevent problems.(Agarwal,1995:27).		

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