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## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

# Religion, spirituality, and well-being: A systematic literature review and futuristic agenda

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**Abstract**

Informed by religion and psychology literature, this study reviews the literature on religiosity, spirituality, and psychology to support existing theory development in the current emergence of “Management, Spirituality, and Religion” field of study, encourage new contextual thinking and develop a framework to guide businesses on the integration of spirituality and religiosity at work given their documented benefits in relation to personal well-being and productivity. Using the Web of Science (WoS) database, the paper reviews and synthesizes recent research in a systematic, transparent, and reproducible manner. In addition, to verify and include the state-of-the-art of high-quality scientific articles, we refer to the Chartered Association of Business Schools list leading to the adoption of the following criteria: (a) journals listed in the ABS ranking as 3- and 4-star class, (b) indexed under the field of ethics (i.e., ETHICS-CSR-MAN), (c) articles published between 2000 and 2021, and (d) topical relevance. The review extends the existing literature by developing a framework for organizations that helps in identifying possible linkages between religiosity, spirituality, and employee well-being. This was done by (1) extending the six indicators of Ryff's well-being framework, (2) highlighting potential spiritual practices for individuals and organizations and their implications, and (3) presenting a framework that is contextualized to the extent possible and that can serve as a useful guide for organizations. Insights from our review yield in turn two key propositions: (1) workplace spirituality and individual spirituality are both important for employees' well-being, and (2) individual religiosity is an important factor for personal well-being. This offers in turn reinvigorated awareness and new insights into the topic under study. The study highlights in closing an array of future possible research directions.

**KEYWORDS**

literature review, religiosity, spirituality, well-being

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## 1 | INTRODUCTION

People, in workplaces, seek to maintain their psychological well-being (Abrams, 2010; Belwalkar & Vohra, 2017; Pawar, 2016). Religion and spirituality, as suggested by Kolodinsky et al. (2008) and Krause (2019), can support people in coping with their stressful lives and intense work pressures (Zou et al., 2020; Zou & Dahling, 2017). As noted by Altaf and Awan (2011, p. 93), “workplace spirituality is one way to deal with stressful overload conditions.” However, in some countries, religious or spiritual people may encounter religious discrimination (Cantone & Wiener, 2017; Fox, 2013), which may adversely impact their psychological well-being (Rippy & Newman, 2006). These conflicting views (e.g., Achour et al., 2011) encouraged us to review pertinent recent research on this topic and develop a model that is contextualized to the extent possible and that can serve as a useful guide for organizations in relation to the successful integration of religiosity and spirituality.

Studies on people's well-being and happiness have been steadily on the increase in recent years (e.g., Ribeiro et al., 2021; Robina-Ramírez et al., 2021; Rosifah et al., 2019; Sandıkcı et al., 2016), but little is known about the mechanism underlying the role of spirituality and religiosity (Han et al., 2019; Milliman et al., 2017). Theorizing on views of well-being has so far concentrated on a narrow conception linked with, for example, social well-being (e.g., Pawar, 2016), financial well-being (e.g., Shim et al., 2009), emotional well-being (Sarofim et al., 2021), physical well-being (Suleman et al., 2021) or mental well-being (e.g., Jnaneswar & Sulphrey, 2021), while ignoring spiritual well-being or religious implications for well-being. In addition, although previous studies have considered how “spirituality at work [...] decreases employee stress, burnout, and workaholism” (e.g., Fry, 2003; Garcia-Zamor, 2003; Karakas, 2010, p. 93), far less attention has been accorded to the psychological outcomes of spirituality and to our knowledge, no consolidated literature review on this topic has been conducted in recent years. Our systematic literature review advances theorizing on the broader literature on well-being in the context of work and workplaces by treating religiosity and spirituality as predictors and well-being as an outcome. This, in turn, advances religion and psychology literature by providing a new multilevel model of the interplay between spirituality, religiosity, and well-being and also by offering a conceptual clarification regarding the implications of spirituality at both individual-level and workplace-level for well-being.

As noted by Kutcher et al. (2010, p. 319), “religion and faith are often central aspects of an individual's self-concept, and yet they are typically avoided in the workplace.” Therefore, in response to prior calls (e.g., Hammer & Cragun, 2019; Hashemi et al., 2020; Milliman et al., 2017; Park et al., 2018; Phipps & Benefiel, 2013) to offer fresh and contextual understanding of the interplay between spirituality, religiosity, and psychological well-being, the present study seeks to unearth the main theoretical/conceptual and practical underpinnings in relation to the topic of religion and spirituality and their implications for workers' psychological well-being in organizations.

Specifically, to conceptually underpin the argument in this study, we define psychological well-being following Ryff's (1989) framework of well-being. Although this framework has been coined three decades ago, it is still widely used (e.g., Friedman et al., 2019; Hao & Xiao, 2021; Koburtay & Alzoubi, 2021; Koburtay & Syed, 2021) and “has had widespread scientific impact” (Ryff, 2018, p. 242), simply because it relates to positive functioning that can be considered particularly relevant in organizational settings. In addition, this framework has been updated/validated by Ryff (2018) and Friedman et al. (2019). In relation to spirituality and religiosity, we conceptualize spirituality as practices including prayer, meditation, reading scripture, or religious practices (Roof, 2015). Religiosity is defined as the extent to which a person follows their religion principles and rules.

This paper's novelty lies in (1) challenging the existing conception of well-being as solely connected with materialism or biologically based factors through capturing the interplay between individuals' spirituality, religiosity, and well-being, (2) developing a framework for businesses, and (3) highlighting the contextual extension of Ryff's framework by extending its model to spiritual practices of well-being and thus suggesting several avenues for improved well-being for individuals and organizations. In practice, this paper underscores the importance of encouraging employers and managers to embrace the positive aspects of spirituality and religiosity by creating a space for workers to practice their spiritual traditions and religious rituals. In addition, it is hoped that this paper will stimulate more informed research in this important field.

This study is structured as follows. First, the methodology of reviewing the literature is discussed, including the exclusion and inclusion criteria, sample of articles, and data analysis. Second, the paper presents the findings based on an extensive review of the literature. Finally, the paper offers a pertinent discussion and conclusion and highlights opportunities for future research.

## 2 | METHODOLOGY OF THE REVIEW

There are several taxonomies of literature review, including integrative (e.g., Cooper, 1982), analytical, traditional, and systematic review (Briner & Denyer, 2010; Callahan, 2014; Cooper & Hedges, 2019; Torraco, 2005). The taxonomy categorizes reviews according to: (a) focus, (b) goal, (c) perspective, (d) coverage, (e) organization, and (f) audience (Cooper, 1988). In this study, both traditional and systematic literature reviews (SLR) were used. The traditional approach included studies with no pre-defined criteria to offer a more comprehensive awareness of the topic under study, while the systematic approach was carried out to answer the research questions and to provide a replicable, transparent, and unbiased coverage (Linnenluecke et al., 2020; Weed, 2005) of the literature on the links between religion and psychology. Drawing on Linnenluecke et al.'s (2020) study and informed by Cooper and Hedges's (2019) procedure, we followed a systematic review which incorporates five steps: (1) problem formulation, (2)

literature search or data collection, (3) data evaluation, (4) data analysis, and (5) interpretation of results. A comparable methodology was recently adopted by several researchers including Koburtay et al. (2019), Hackett and Dilts (2004), and Parris and Peachey (2013) studies. The following sub-sections explain our usage of the SLR in terms of the inclusion and exclusion standards that were adopted, the search procedure, analysis, and the final sample of the selected articles. Then, the interpretation and presentation of the results are offered followed by a discussion and synthesis of the main findings and their relevance and a roadmap for future research.

## 2.1 | Inclusion and exclusion criteria

In the first stage of our SLR, we conducted a search on the WoS journal database as it contains a large set of journals. The WoS Institute for Scientific Information database is an interdisciplinary and allows access to abstracts and references, encompassing around 12,000 journals.

In addition to the WoS, and to avoid the inclusion of any random piece of information and also to ensure the inclusion of high-quality state-of-the-art scientific articles, we refer to the Chartered Association of Business Schools (CABS, 2021) list. The CABS (2021) list has been followed because it includes an academic journal guide (AJG) that gives both authors and scholars greater clarity for the classifications for the journals in terms of domain, strength and speciality. In addition, the CABS was adopted because its AJG is based upon peer review, editorial, and expert judgments following from the evaluation of publications, and is informed by statistical information relating to citation. Other ranking lists may be used in the future.

The inclusion and exclusion criteria for the WoS search were as follows: (a) articles published between 2000 and 2021, and (b) topical relevance. For the CABS (2021) search, the following inclusion and exclusion criteria were used: (a) journals listed as 3-star and 4-star, (b) indexed under the field of ethics (i.e., ETHICS-CSR-MAN), (c) articles published between 2000 and 2021, and (d) topical relevance (Linnenluecke et al., 2020).

According to criteria (a) and (b) in the WoS search, we conducted an electronic database search of 25 journals which are as follows: *African Journal of Business Management*; *Career Development International*; *Cogent Business & Management*; *Corporate Governance-The International Journal of Business in Society*; *Employee Relations*; *European Journal of Operational Research*; *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*; *International Journal of Business and Society*; *International Journal of Consumer Studies*; *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*; *International Journal of Educational Management*; *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*; *The Journal of Indian Management & Strategy*; *Journal of Consumer Affairs*; *Journal of Consumer Behavior*; *Journal of Consumer Marketing*; *Journal of Family Business Management*; *Journal of Islamic Marketing*; *Journal of Macromarketing*; *Journal of Managerial*

*Psychology*; *Journal of Nursing Management*; *Personnel Review*; *Service Industries Journal*; *Social Responsibility Journal*; *South Asian Journal of Business Studies*.

According to criteria (a) and (b) in the CABS (2021) search, we conducted an electronic journal database search of 20 journals ranked as 3-star and 4-star journals in the Chartered Association of Business Schools (CABS, 2021), and indexed under the field of ethics. However, in light of criterion (d), and after reading the aim and scope of the journals, five journals have been directly excluded for being potentially less relevant to the topic at hand, including: *Gender and Society*; *Gender, Work and Organization*; *California Management Review*; *Harvard Business Review* and *MIT Sloan Management Review*.

In total, 15 journals were included in our subsequent search as follows: *Academy of Management Journal*; *Academy of Management Review*; *Administrative Science Quarterly*; *Journal of Management*; *Academy of Management Annals*; *British Journal of Management*; *Business Ethics Quarterly*; *Journal of Management Studies*; *Academy of Management Perspectives*; *Business and Society*; *European Management Review*; *International Journal of Management Reviews*; *Journal of Business Ethics*; *Journal of Business Research*; *Journal of Management Inquiry*.

## 2.2 | Search methods and final sample

After resorting to the above-mentioned journals, an electronic databases search was conducted for all published articles using Journals' Websites, Summon (for SLR), and Google Scholar (for traditional review). In our search, we used keywords and specified the time-period of the publication (2000–2021) in light of the inclusion and exclusion criteria identified above. This was applied in both databases (i.e., WoS and CABS).

The keywords used in the selected journals are as follows: religion, religiosity, religious, spirituality, well-being/wellbeing and happiness/happy. The same keywords were used in all the selected journals to ensure an unbiased coverage of the search. According to this initial search, 356 articles (i.e., their titles include one or more key word) were found in the selected journals.

In the second stage of the search, the authors reviewed the titles and abstracts of this initial pool of articles to exclude irrelevant articles. In this stage, we screened all articles by reading their abstracts to determine whether they fit the scope of our SLR or not. The screening process resulted in eliminating 286 articles. Following this screening phase, 70 articles met the inclusion criteria and selected for final analysis. A similar methodology was conducted by Koburtay et al. (2019), Hackett and Dilts (2004), and Parris and Peachey (2013) who selected 45, 38, and 39 studies, respectively, in their review. Table 1 shows the distribution of the selected articles based on the journals' names.

For further clarity, the authors developed a "Prisma" (preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses) flowchart (Figure 1) to summarize the synthesis process (Page et al., 2021).

TABLE 1 Initial pool of articles

Time span of search: 2000–2021	
Journal	Number of articles
<i>Journal of Business Ethics</i>	32
<i>Journal of Business Research</i>	5
<i>Journal of Management Inquiry</i>	2
<i>African Journal of Business Management</i>	1
<i>Cogent Business &amp; Management</i>	4
<i>Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society</i>	1
<i>Employee Relations</i>	1
<i>European Journal of Operational Research</i>	1
<i>European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology</i>	1
<i>International Journal of Business and Society</i>	1
<i>International Journal of Consumer Studies</i>	1
<i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>	1
<i>International Journal of Educational Management</i>	1
<i>International Journal of Organizational Analysis</i>	1
<i>The Journal of Indian Management &amp; Strategy</i>	1
<i>Journal of Consumer Affairs</i>	1
<i>Journal of Consumer Behavior</i>	1
<i>Journal of Consumer Marketing</i>	1
<i>Journal of Family Business Management</i>	1
<i>Journal of Islamic Marketing</i>	1
<i>Journal of Macromarketing</i>	1
<i>Journal of Managerial Psychology</i>	1
<i>Journal of Nursing Management</i>	3
<i>Personnel Review</i>	2
<i>Service Industries Journal</i>	1
<i>Social Responsibility Journal</i>	1
<i>South Asian Journal of Business Studies</i>	1
<i>Career Development International</i>	1

### 2.3 | Data analysis

During the stage of data analysis, we created a detailed summary table that offers a comprehensive overview of a sample of the articles included in our review. This table informed the development of the results, including the development of the main propositions to capture the probability of developing any possible sub-propositions. In this table, all articles were grouped based on the main aims of this study and sorted in relation to two main themes: (a) religiosity and well-being and (b) spirituality and well-being. This led to a better depiction of how different themes are interrelated. We used this analysis to further explore the interlinkages between topics/subtopics, to evaluate the quality and quantity of evidence, and finally to conclude our main findings (see Table 2).

In a subsequent stage, a consistent approach was followed to analyze all articles (i.e., 70). Key points were extracted from all articles to precisely map our analysis. These key elements are as follows: (a) The aims and objectives of the study, (b) the methodology, (c) the theory, (d) the results and findings, and finally particular attention was accorded to (e) the calls for future research to highlight gaps in the field. In a later stage, to summarize and link all thematic conclusions logically, all information retrieved from the articles was placed into matrices (i.e., tables). At the end of the analysis process, the results were summarized and presented in thematic propositions. This is further explained in the next section below (see Literature Review and Thematic Propositions).

## 3 | LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEMATIC PROPOSITIONS

The following sections offer a conceptual discussion of the main constructs in this study. The first sub-section defines religiosity and spirituality at work. The second sub-section synthesizes the meaning of psychological well-being by offering a systematic review of its various classifications. The third sub-section discusses the implications of workplace religiosity and spirituality for employees' well-being.

Guided by our research question, this third sub-section highlights the key themes and propositions identified in our review of the literature. Insights from our review yield two key propositions as follows: (1) individual's spirituality and spirituality at work are important for enhancing workers' psychological well-being, and (2) individual's religiosity is important for workers' psychological well-being. The review also compiles five sub-propositions.

### 3.1 | Religiosity and spirituality at workplaces

There is an ongoing debate in the literature in relation to how to differentiate between religiosity and spirituality (Fernando & Chowdhury, 2010; Phipps & Benefiel, 2013). In fact, the two concepts refer back to the same epistemology with some difficulty in disentangling the two constructs. Yet some previous studies have highlighted that they are quite different (e.g., Chowdhury, 2018; Chowdhury & Fernando, 2013; Gupta et al., 2014) distinguishing between the two concepts by referring to spirituality "as an idiosyncratic, multifaceted, elusive concept: difficult to be captured in a common definition" (Karakas et al., 2015; Karakas, 2010, p. 91), while defining religiosity or religion as a system that includes beliefs and practices (Rodrigues & Harding, 2008; Smith, 1995). The literature shows that there are extrinsic and intrinsic types of religiosity (see Wang et al., 2021). Allport (1950) proposed that extrinsic religiosity relates to practices that make use of religion for social (or business) benefits, while intrinsic religiosity relates to practices that are in light of the inherent goals of religion (cited in Chowdhury & Fernando, 2013). Vitell et al. (2009) define religiosity as the way that a person's religious beliefs are manifested.

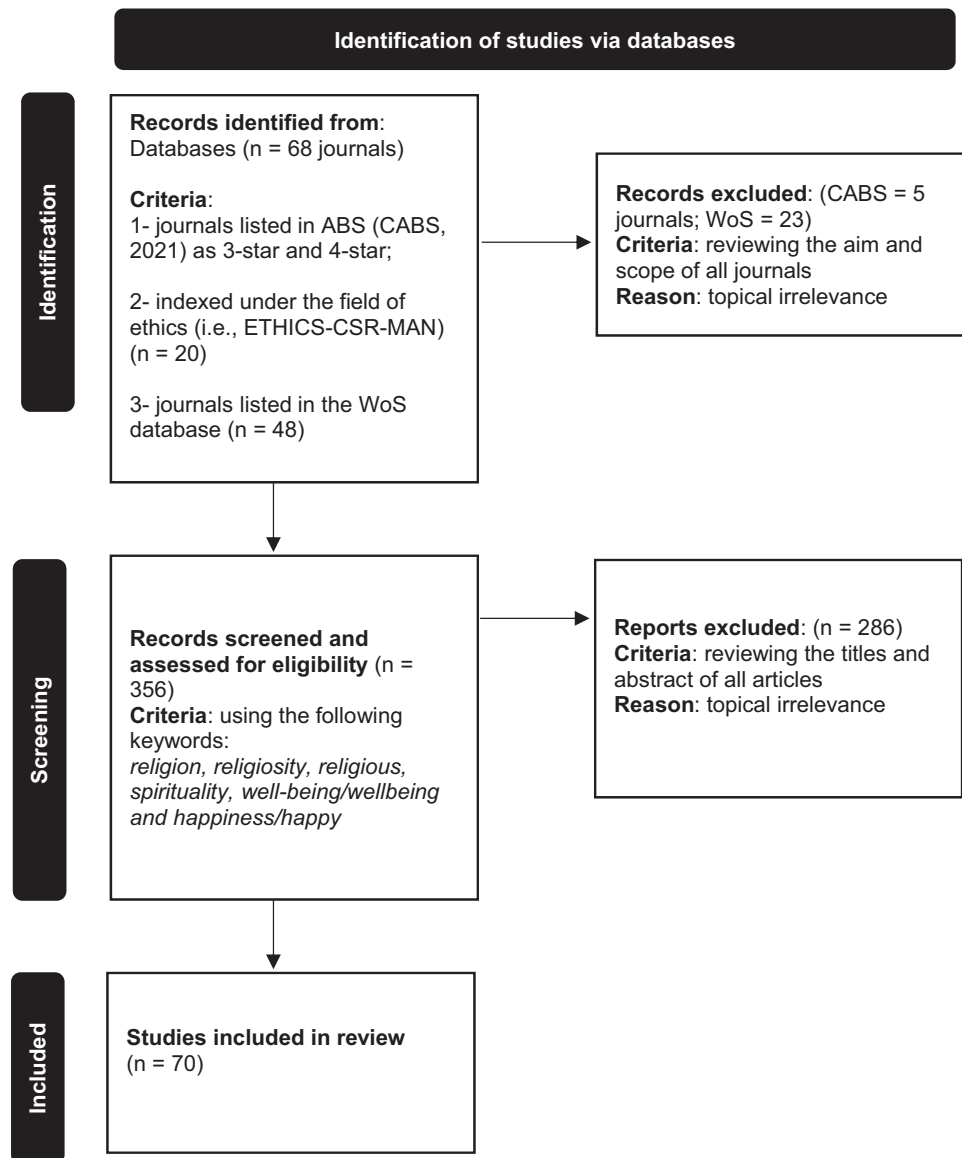


FIGURE 1 Prisma flowchart.

Inside workplaces, there was no acknowledgement that the human spirit or spirituality plays a key role until the early 1990s (Bayighomog & Araslı, 2019; Delbecq, 2013; Neal, 2013a). As suggested by Neal (2013b, p. 3), when people live based on their “spiritual values in all parts [of life], including work, things seemed to get better.” In this regard, spirituality at work carries slightly different connotations from individual spirituality (Altaf & Awan, 2011; Rocha & Pinheiro, 2021). For example, Jurkiewicz and Giacalone (2004) present a values framework of workplace spirituality that includes benevolence, humanism, integrity, justice mutuality, receptivity, respect, responsibility, and trust. At work, as proposed by Gupta et al. (2014), there are four dimensions for spirituality: meaningful work, sense of community, organizational values, and compassion. Zhang (2020) proposes three similar components of workplace spirituality: meaningful work, sense of community, and alignment of values. This spiritual

environment can be fostered through offering justice practices, such as respect for diversity, respect for employees' personal values, and healthy employer–employee relations (Gupta et al., 2014).

According to Karakas et al. (2015), there are three themes of collective spirituality which are as follows: transcendence, connectedness, and virtuousness. Another common and widely used model for spiritual workplaces was developed by Stephenson (2014). Stephenson's (2014) model is specific to Muslim workers and suggests the inclusion of some spiritual facilities or services, such as prayer time provision, reformatted working hours for Muslim staff during Ramadan, Qibla (i.e., direction to make prayer) stickers, prayer mats and copies of the Quran, built-in ablution facilities. Lips-Wiersma and Mills (2014) theorize workplace spirituality by focusing on concepts, such as a whole person, self-reflexivity, deeper meanings of existence, and existentialist view.



TABLE 2 A sample of the reviewed articles

[Author/s, publication year]	Religiosity and well-being	
	Methodology	Key findings
Chowdhury (2018)	Panel members of an online national consumer panel of an Australian market research firm were invited to participate in this study. 503 Australian consumers participated in the study	The results demonstrate that intrinsic religiosity is positively related to voluntary simplicity; however, there is no relationship between extrinsic religiosity and voluntary simplicity. The relationship between intrinsic religiosity and voluntary simplicity is sequentially mediated by communal/personal well-being and environmental well-being
Giacalone and Promislo (2010)	Using data from psychological, criminological, and epidemiological sources	Unethical practices (e.g., bullying, workplace harassment, and victimization) are linked with diminished well-being
Giacalone et al. (2016)	Study 1 206 students enrolled in an MBA program at an eastern United States research University were asked to respond to a questionnaire on Qualtrics Study 2. 254 students enrolled in the MBA program at three different universities completed a series of measures as part of a class exercise	This paper reports the findings of two separate studies showing that individual differences in moral attentiveness, moral identity, idealism, relativism, and integrity were associated with differences in a wide range of well-being measures. Of particular significance is not all ethical orientations were found to contribute to well-being. In fact, some negatively impacted individual levels of well-being
Kutcher et al. (2010)	Participants were 218 individuals who were employed on at least a part-time basis	Mixed results suggest that religiosity can be related to stress and burnout, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior
Rahimnia and Sharifirad (2015)	Data were obtained from a field sample of 212 healthcare providers with patient contact at five hospitals in the North East of Iran. Initially, collected data were analyzed with multiple confirmatory factor analyses. Then, structural equation modeling was applied to test proposed hypotheses	Authentic leadership negatively impacted attachment insecurity. Attachment insecurity proved to be a factor impinging upon job satisfaction. On the contrary, higher levels of attachment insecurity were associated with higher levels of perceived stress and stress symptoms. It was revealed that attachment insecurity partially mediated the relationship between authentic leadership and job satisfaction and fully mediated the relationship between authentic leadership, perceived stress, and stress symptoms
Wood et al. (2013)	Using survey data from 1733 UK mental health workers, a structural equation model was designed to test these hypotheses following a bootstrap approach.	The results support an explanation of the effect of discrimination on well-being in terms of organizational justice perceptions for discrimination from managers and from visitors, but less so for discrimination from co-workers or from patients
Yang (2014)	Two groups of independent data were collected and a multi-group analysis was conducted before pooling together for a two-step structural equation modeling test.	The results revealed that ethical leadership has a negative direct effect on employee well-being which offers significant findings for the meaning of ethical leadership in the Chinese culture
[Author/s, publication year]	Spirituality and well-being	
	Methodology	Key findings
Promislo et al. (2017)	Using a questionnaire, the sample was a set of adults in the U.S. who were working full-time or part-time	Results indicated that the interactive model successfully predicted three different measures of well-being, specifically physical symptoms, stress, and subjective vitality. Results are discussed in terms of extending materialism-postmaterialism theory, both with respect to refining the materialism construct as well as its associations with new criterion variables
Rego and e Cunha (2008)	The sample comprises 199 employees from 118 organizations	The findings indicate the good psychometric properties of the authentizotic climate measure, and suggest that (a) affective well-being, mainly enthusiasm and vigor, explain unique variance of self-reported performance and (b) the perceptions of authentizotic climates explain unique variance of stress, affective well-being and self-reported performance

TABLE 2 (Continued)

[Author/s, publication year]	Spirituality and well-being	
	Methodology	Key findings
Rego et al. (2010)	A convenience sample of 216 individuals from 14 organizations operating in Portugal was collected	The main finding is that the perceptions of OV (organizational virtuousness) predict some OCB (organizational citizenship behaviors) both directly and through the mediating role of AWB (affective well-being). The evidence suggests that OV is worthy of a higher status in the business and organizational psychology literatures
Roof (2015)	A cross-sectional study was performed to examine self-reported individual spirituality as measured by the DSES and employee engagement measured using the UWES-9 including the dimensions of vigor, dedication, and absorption. 124 usable surveys were collected from a snowballing convenience sample	Empirical support was found for relationships between individual spirituality and engagement, vigor, and dedication but not for the engagement dimension of absorption
Tejeda (2015)	The sample consisted of employed managers participating in an online networking service with the geographic catchment in the southeastern United States. A total of 500 invitations were sent and 292 individuals completed the survey resulting in a response rate of 58.4%	Spiritual well-being was related to job satisfaction even when the adverse workplace conditions of job frustration, work tension and victimization were present
Viot and Benraiss-Noailles (2019)	The questionnaire was sent by e-mail to employees of companies in the "Nouvelle-Aquitaine" region of France. There were 595 viable questionnaires	The results of an empirical study of 595 employees show that the presumption of organizational benevolence is positively linked to employee well-being. The effect is indirect, as it is mediated by the perceived level of organizational support. The existence of a link between employee well-being and intention to quit the company is also confirmed
Zhang (2020)	Using a sample consisting of 458 employees in various organizations in China	Two dimensions of WPS are positively associated with UPB. Also the results of this paper show that each of the three dimensions of WPS has a significant positive relationship with job satisfaction. Furthermore, this study successfully confirms the mediating effect of job satisfaction in the relationship between WPS dimensions and UPB

To conclude, it is clear that most authors, as noted by Rocha and Pinheiro (2021) and Roof (2015), grapple with operationalizing spirituality (i.e., a power beyond the individual), but the majority of studies reveal that it includes elements of prayer, meditation, reading scripture, or religious practices. In the workplace, spirituality includes elements of benevolence, humanism, integrity, justice mutuality, receptivity, respect, responsibility, trust, sense of community, compassion, and alignment of values.

Table 3 summarizes both spirituality practices and religiosity components according to the reviewed literature.

### 3.2 | Workers' well-being

Well-being and happiness are important dispositions for people's lives (Belwalkar & Vohra, 2017; Senasu et al., 2019; Wu et al., 2017). Although many studies were conducted toward determining some key indicators of well-being and happiness (e.g., Ayala et al., 2017; Cordero et al., 2017; Maham & Bhatti, 2019; Pathak & Muralidharan, 2021), the results are vague and

inconsistent (Senasu et al., 2019). Some studies show that well-being comprises indicators pertaining to alleviated anxiety or frustration and general physical health (Karakas et al., 2015) like normal blood pressure and heart condition (e.g., Rahimnia & Sharifirad, 2015). These are some of the common indicators of top psychological functioning and order (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Other studies define well-being as a "positive psychological state that arises from how an individual perceives and assesses their life" (Viot & Benraiss-Noailles, 2019, p. 3). Ayala et al. (2017) suggest that well-being incorporates personal characteristics (e.g., income, materialism, religiosity, community mindedness, sleep quality), as well as contextual elements (e.g., day of the week and the presence of companions).

Questions related to "how are you" or "are you fine" seem simple, but the answer to such simple questions invariably invokes complex considerations. This complexity comes from the debate linked to what defines optimal psychological functioning. Some individuals perceive money and being wealthy as important indicators for happiness, while others perceive true love, spirituality (see Gaston-Breton et al., 2021), and a rosy disposition as important factors of



TABLE 3 Religiosity and spirituality at work

Author(s)	Spirituality at work	Author(s)	Religiosity
Jurkiewicz and Giacalone (2004)	Benevolence; Humanism; Integrity; Justice mutuality; Receptivity; Respect; Responsibility and trust	Byrne et al. (2014)	Apologies from others
Gupta et al. (2014)	Meaningful work; Sense of community; Organizational values; Compassion	Rahimnia and Sharifirad (2015)	Authenticity
Zhang (2020)	Meaningful work; Sense of community; Alignment of values	Wood et al. (2013)	Anti-discrimination
Karakas et al. (2015)	Transcendence; Connectedness; Virtuousness	Hashemi et al. (2020)	Belief in creator [Allah]
Stephenson's (2014)	Prayer time provision; Reformatted working hours for Muslim staff during Ramadan; Qibla stickers; Prayer mats and copies of the Quran; Built-in ablution facilities	Park et al. (2018)	Religious coping styles
Lips-Wiersma and Mills (2014)	A whole person; Self- reflexivity; Deeper meanings of existence; Existentialist view		

happiness and well-being (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999). Hwang and Kim (2018) argue that the concept of happiness may be perceived as broadly synonymous with both subjective and psychological well-being factors relating to quality of life. Happiness is indeed often conceived as an intrinsic personality trait linked with the positive psychology tradition (Hwang & Kim, 2018).

In light of this study, defining a person as healthy and stable and psychologically in good shape is approached based on the concept of “psychological well-being” (PWB). Well-being is generally defined and approached from two different perspectives: the hedonic and the eudaimonic view (Pathak & Muralidharan, 2021; Ryff, 1989). The hedonic view defines well-being as the ability to attain pleasure and avoid pain (Joshani & Niknam, 2019; Ryan & Deci, 2001). The eudaimonic view on the other hand perceives well-being as the ability to develop one's potential (e.g., Friedman et al., 2019; Koburtay & Syed, 2021; Ryff, 2018).

As recently highlighted (Stephan, 2018), previous studies on the relationship between religiosity/spirituality and well-being have focused primarily on its hedonic constituents—particularly, life satisfaction and happiness (e.g., Belwalkar et al., 2018)—rather than on its eudaimonic dimensions (Ryff, 2019). The eudaimonic view is more critical for assessing the implications of religiosity and spirituality for one's well-being over time, that is, meaning in life, self-acceptance, and personal growth aspects of religious/spiritual people. Therefore, our approach moves beyond the hedonic view, and thus allows us to demonstrate the various dimensions of eudaimonic well-being through which religious/spiritual people attain greater value and well-being. Specifically, we follow Ryff's (1989) eudaimonic notion as it conveys direct linkages with psychological well-being. Ryff's (1989) eudaimonic view of well-being includes six factors or indicators (i.e., positive relationships, environmental mastery, autonomy, a feeling of purpose and meaning in life, self-acceptance, and personal growth). Table 4 illustrates these dimensions.

### 3.3 | Implications of spirituality and religiosity for well-being

Although previous studies show a positive relationship between spirituality in the workplace and workers' well-being and satisfaction (e.g., Aboobaker et al., 2019; Aboobaker et al., 2021; Baber et al., 2021; Gupta et al., 2014; Hunsaker, 2020; Zhang, 2020), Bell-Ellis (2013) found that the relationship between spirituality at workplace and specific organizational behaviors (including satisfaction) was stronger in the non-faith-based organization, in comparison to the faith-based organization. While one may anticipate the opposite, additional efforts are needed to determine specific mechanisms that may influence the relationship between spirituality and well-being. In an attempt to address this gap, this section highlights our key findings (propositions) as identified from our review of the literature. First, it starts with a general review of the pertinent literature to explain the interplay between spirituality and religiosity with personal well-being and then it reports the main findings. As shown below, insights from this review yield two key propositions and also compiles five sub-propositions.

“Workplace spirituality is a young area of inquiry with potentially strong relevance to the well-being of individuals, organizations, and societies” (Sheep, 2006, p. 357). Park et al. (2018), for example, suggest that fulfilling an individual's spiritual needs is linked with their well-being. As a spiritual practice, prayer is positively linked with individual's well-being (Puchalska-Wasył & Zarzycka, 2019). Similarly, Hammer and Cragun (2019) tested how daily spiritual experiences (DSE) factors are important for some common indicators of well-being, such as satisfaction, meaning in life, and physical and mental health. They show that DSE are associated with people's well-being. Maham et al. (2020) also provide an insight on how happiness can be enhanced within organizations by the practices of Islamic spirituality (see Rosifah et al., 2019).

TABLE 4 Ryff's (1989) Eudaimonic model of well-being

Dimensions of well-being	Description
Self-acceptance	Having a positive view of oneself Acknowledging and accepting the multiple parts of oneself Feeling positive about one's past
Purpose in life	Having goals in life and a sense of direction in one's life Feeling that one's present and past has meaning Having a reason for living
Environmental mastery	Being able to control, and effectively use resources and opportunities
Positive relationships	Having warm, satisfying relationships with people Being concerned with the welfare of others Being empathic, affectionate, and intimate with others Understanding the reciprocity of relationships
Personal growth	Feeling a need for continued personal improvement Seeing oneself as getting better and being open to new experiences Growing in self-knowledge and personal effectiveness
Autonomy	Being independent and determining one's own life Being able to resist social pressures to think or behave negatively Evaluating one's life by internal standards

As argued by Jurkiewicz and Giacalone (2004, p. 135), "organizational cultures that evidence high levels of workplace spirituality are believed to have a positive effect on employee motivation." Otake-Ebode et al. (2019) collected data from 51 branches of a retail organization in the United Kingdom. Results show that spirituality at the workplace is positively linked with ethical climate, prosocial motivation, and moral judgment, as indicators of one's eudaimonic well-being. Adding to this, Pawar (2016) found that workplace spirituality has a positive relationship with emotional, psychological, social, and spiritual well-being.

Promislo et al.'s (2017) study highlights the importance of materialism–post-materialism to well-being. Post-materialism, as conceptualized in their study, includes key aspects of spirituality, such as belongingness, sense of community, and concern for quality of life. The results show that post-materialism is linked with well-being, while materialistic values are linked with depression and anxiety (e.g., Giacalone et al., 2016). Along similar lines, Jnaneswar and Sulphay (2021) found that mindfulness and self-compassion influenced the mental well-being of employees, while Leung et al. (2011) found that career success, social connectedness, and self-esteem are associated with both psychological and physical well-being. Moreover, Karakas's (2010, p. 93) proposes that "incorporating spirituality at work (a) increases employees' well-being [...] and (b) decreases employees' stress, burnout, and workaholism".

Tejeda (2015) explored the impact of spiritual well-being as a positive factor on job satisfaction when adverse workplace experiences are reported. The results show that even when the adverse conditions of job frustration, work tension, and victimization are in place, the spiritual human being is likely to experience job satisfaction. Similarly, Kolodinsky et al.'s (2008) study shows that spirituality is negatively related to organizational frustration.

In relation to some other spiritual concepts, Xu et al. (2018) paid attention to the impact of positive reflection, as a spiritual factor, on well-being. They note that positive reflections can reduce

the undesirable emotional exhaustion and enhance people's well-being. The literature also highlights the important implications of virtuousness (Rego et al., 2010), benevolence (Luu, 2019; Viot & Benraiss-Noailles, 2019), integrity (Prottas, 2013), and humanism (Salas-Vallina et al., 2020) (as spiritual concepts) for well-being and happiness.

The aforementioned discussion shows that workplace spirituality and self-spirituality are key factors for people's well-being (e.g., Aboobaker et al., 2021; Chowdhury & Fernando, 2013; Fernando & Chowdhury, 2010; Rego & e Cunha, 2008; Shelton et al., 2019; Zhang, 2020). Based on the reviewed literature in terms of how spirituality enhances well-being, the following propositions were developed:

**Proposition 1** *Individual's spirituality and spirituality at work are important for enhancing workers' psychological well-being.*

**Proposition 1a** *Individual's belongingness, connectedness, virtuousness, deeper meanings of existence, and self-reflexivity are important for enhancing workers' psychological well-being.*

**Proposition 1b** *Prayer and reciting scripts are important for enhancing workers' psychological well-being.*

**Proposition 1c** *In workplaces, value humanism, benevolence, integrity, justice, mutuality, respect, and trust are important for enhancing workers' psychological well-being.*

**Proposition 1d** *In workplaces, prayer time provision and availability of prayer facilities are important for enhancing workers' psychological well-being.*

In relation to the impact of religiosity on well-being, Hashemi et al. (2020) found that “engagement in religious activities, and belief in [Allah] provide individuals with a sense of significance, positive emotions, self-esteem, positive relations, sense of meaning, and purpose in life” (Hashemi et al., 2020, p. 8). In a similar approach, Park et al.'s (2018) study tested how religious coping styles are linked with individual's well-being. The results suggest that a proper religious coping style positively enhances key indicators of well-being. The results also show the adverse impact of a negative religious coping style on well-being. Similarly, Kutcher et al. (2010) sought to examine the role of religious beliefs and practices in shaping an employee's reactions to some negative psychological outcomes, such as stress and burnout. They note that, people need to have a strong social relations and support and a purpose in life and work, all of which are important factors, in order to enhance their overall well-being, and that, “for many, religion provides these kinds of solutions” (Kutcher et al., 2010, p. 320). Specifically, Karakas et al. (2015) note that the belief that people are accountable to God, and their success in the hereafter depends on their performance in this life on earth will add a new perspective to the valuation of things and deeds in their lives.

Chowdhury (2018) tested the link between religiosity and voluntary simplicity (a sense of well-being) through the mediator role of personal and environmental well-being. The results show that religiosity leads to voluntary simplicity, which also leads to more psychological well-being. The relationship between the two variables was mediated by personal well-being and environmental well-being. From an Islamic point of view, the Quran presents that idea of voluntary simplicity in the following verse: “Those who, when they spend, are not extravagant and not miserly, but hold a just (balance) between those (extremes)” (Al-Furqan, 25:67). Similarly, Maham and Bhatti (2019) sought to understand how the practice of *Taqwa* (i.e., being conscious and cognizant of God of truth) influences employee happiness. The findings suggest that *Taqwa* has a positive impact on employee happiness.

The following discussion shows the link between ethics (see Adil, 2021; Adnan et al., 2020; Çetin, 2021) and people's well-being. According to the literature, ethics is linked with people's well-being (Chughtai et al., 2015; Giacalone et al., 2016; Schwepker et al., 2021; Yang, 2014). As argued by Ip (2010, p. 106), the link between ethics and personal well-being is straightforward because “ethics-based workplace well-being generates job satisfaction, and hence enhances positive personal well-being.” Ip (2010) says that justice is basically the core of ethics, and thus organizational justice (e.g., procedural and distributive justice) is linked with workers' well-being. Based on a sample consisting of 902 managers from different organizations, Huhtala et al. (2011) found that the managers' perceptions of the ethical culture were associated with their occupational well-being. Hwang and Kim (2018) suggest that ethical practices are positively associated with happiness. Similarly, Giacalone and Promislo (2010) found that unethical practices (e.g., bullying, workplace harassment, and victimization) are linked with diminished well-being, while Schwepker et al. (2021) found that ethics is positively related to employee well-being.

In relation to some other religious values and practices (e.g., authenticity, apologies from others, and anti-discrimination), previous studies suggest that these are important factors for people's well-being. For example, Byrne et al. (2014) examined the relationship between leader apologies and follower well-being, the results show that leader apologies positively enhance followers' well-being and emotional health. In relation to authenticity, Rahimnia and Sharifirad (2015) note that authentic leadership is positively linked with job satisfaction, and negatively linked with perceived work stress, and stress symptoms. Wood et al. (2013) show that discrimination has negative effects on its victims' well-being and health. From these studies, we provide preliminary evidence and support for our argument—that is, religiosity is important for people's well-being, simply because authenticity, ethics, and anti-discrimination are embedded in different religions and these are known to significantly enhance well-being (Karakas et al., 2015).

Overall, several studies indicate that religiosity influences well-being (e.g., Minton et al., 2018; Moschis & Ong, 2011; Sandıkcı et al., 2016; Sarofim et al., 2021) in terms of tackling several dimensions of well-being, such as “self-identity, self-esteem and meaning and satisfaction in life” (Chowdhury, 2018, p. 156). Based on the reviewed literature in terms of how religiosity enhances well-being, Proposition 2 and 2a were developed.

**Proposition 2** *Individual's religiosity is important for workers' psychological well-being.*

**Proposition 2a** *Individual's religious coping styles, belief in God, ethical practices, authenticity, justice, and apologies from others—as components of religiosity—are important for workers' psychological well-being.*

Figure 2 below depicts and consolidates our main propositions and findings. This figure compiles two main propositions. The first one suggests that workers' level of spirituality and the availability of spiritual practices at their work are important for their well-being. At the individual level, this review suggests that people's belongingness, connectedness, virtuousness, deeper meanings of existence, and self-reflexivity enhance their well-being (Proposition 1a). Also prayer and reciting scripts are important for one's well-being (Proposition 1b). In relation to spirituality at work, this study shows that workplaces that integrate and value humanism, benevolence, integrity, justice, mutuality, respect, and trust can improve their workers' well-being (Proposition 1c). Also, prayer time provision and availability of prayer facilities are linked with workers' well-being (Proposition 1d). Here, considering these propositions and previous studies, we stress on the importance of finding a congruity or match between both “individuals” and “workplace” spirituality in order to enhance their psychological well-being. For example, those individuals who wish to practice their spiritual values (e.g., prayer) inside the work, will be satisfied and happy having prayer rooms or spaces inside the buildings. This notion applies to other spiritual values and practices (e.g., respect, trust, sense of community etc).

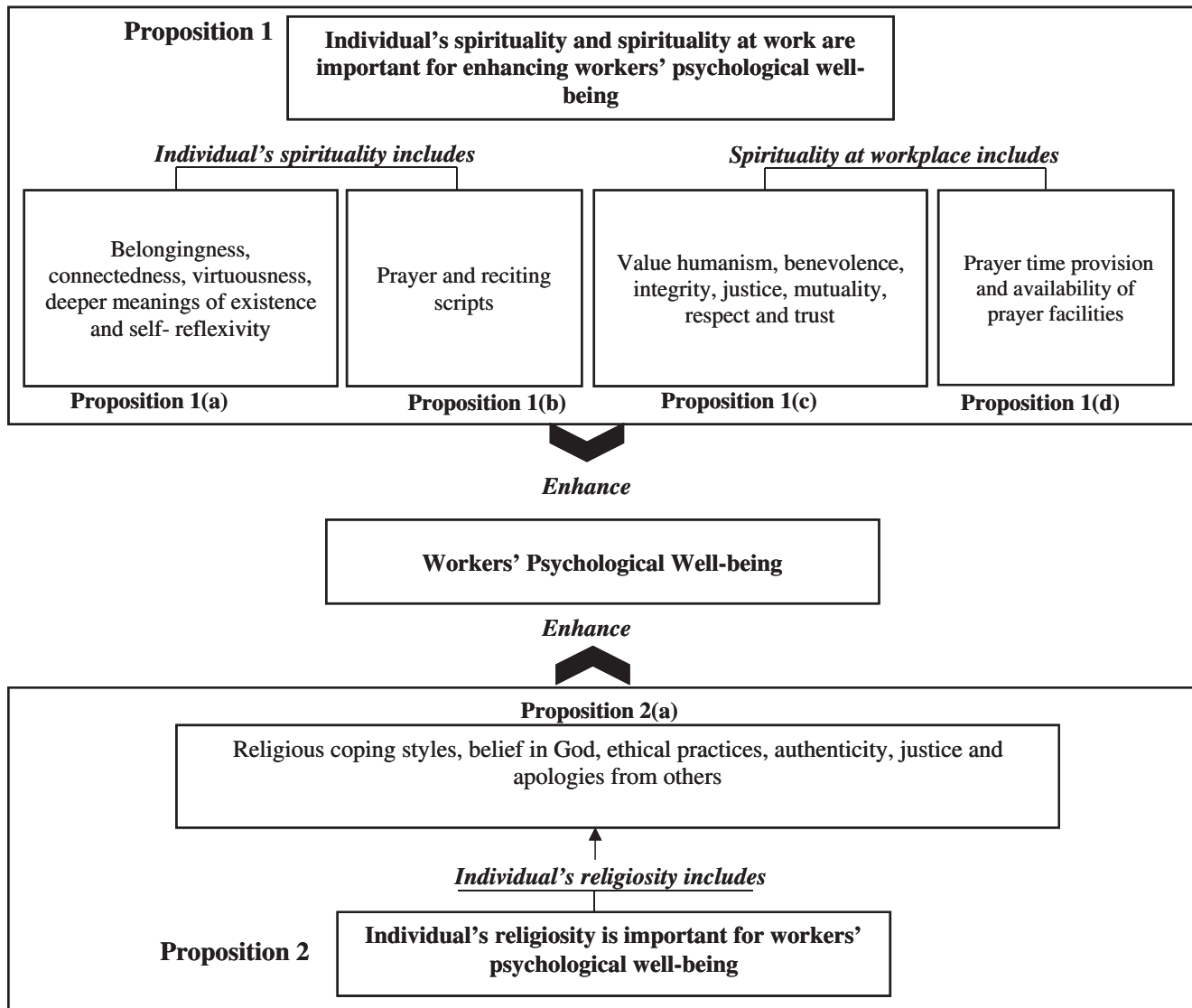


FIGURE 2 A multilevel model of the interplay between spirituality, religiosity, and well-being.

The second main proposition implies that workers' religiosity is of importance to enhance their psychological well-being. This review suggests that people's religious coping styles and belief in Allah are important for their well-being and satisfaction. In addition, ethical practices, authenticity, justice, and apologies from others—as components of religiosity—are linked with people's well-being (Proposition 2a).

Our framework is thus built around the argument that spirituality and religiosity are important for people's well-being and thus can be applied as a heuristic framework in different organizations operating in several geographic locations.

#### 4 | DISCUSSION

The literature has yielded limited insights into the impact of workplace spirituality and religiosity on well-being (Otaye-Ebede et al., 2019). This study includes both traditional and systematic

reviews of the literature on religiosity, spirituality, and well-being to consolidate the existing threads for future theory development and synthesize a framework that can be useful in guiding businesses wishing to nurture spirituality and religiosity given their manifold positive implications as suggested in this review. Guided by our research question, insights from our review yield two key propositions as follows: (1) individual's spirituality and spirituality at work are important for enhancing workers' psychological well-being, and (2) individual's religiosity is important for workers' psychological well-being.

This study extends Ryff's (1989) six indicators of well-being framework and highlights several additional indicators of well-being for individuals and organizations. For example, in addition to Ryff's six indicators of well-being, our literature review highlights key indicators of well-being that may be enhanced through spirituality and religiosity, such as satisfaction, physical and mental health, motivation, sense of significance, positive emotions, self-esteem, voluntary simplicity, and self-identity.

This study also offers a more comprehensive view of spirituality inside organizations. It suggests that workplace spirituality may include an environment of humanism, benevolence, integrity, justice, mutual-ity, receptivity, respect, trust, sense of community, compassion, alignment of values, and meaningful work. These key components are all derived from the literature. For example, Altaf and Awan (2011) perceive spirituality inside organizations as entailing the practice of well-ness procedures, fairness, ethics, support, encouragement of spiritual change, diversity, and core values. These values are important for workplace spirituality in Muslim and non-Muslim Majority Countries.

In relation to self-spirituality, our literature review proposes some practices, values, and beliefs that are linked with individuals' spirituality as follows: praying, reciting scripts, positive reflections, belongingness, connectedness, virtuousness, religious practices, deeper meanings of existence, existentialist beliefs, and self-reflexivity. In light of Proposition 1 in this study, it is clear that an individual's spiritual beliefs and practices as well as spirituality in the workplace are important factors for enhancing workers' psychological well-being.

Moving to the individual's religiosity, this study noted that previous literature stresses on specific religious practices and beliefs that are considered as important factors for enhancing people's well-being. These religious practices and beliefs are as follows: belief in creator [Allah], religious coping styles, ethical practices, authenticity, justice, anti-discrimination, apologies from others. In light of Proposition 2 in this study, all these individuals' religious beliefs and practices are important factors for enhancing workers' psychological well-being. Thus to conclude, we argue that "the juxtaposition of management with insights from spirituality and religion holds much promise" (Delbecq, 2013, p. 695).

## 5 | IMPLICATIONS

The contributions in the current review were compiled despite theory shortage and managerial challenges. "Workplace spirituality, as a field of inquiry, is new but important" (Pawar, 2014, p. 439). While workplace spirituality has experienced growing interest, researchers have highlighted some inadequacies in the existing research and literature and indicated additional research requirements to present a better and more comprehensive understanding of this topic (Pawar, 2014). Despite the scholarly efforts and contributions of existing studies (e.g., Kernochan et al., 2007; Sheep, 2006), there is still a dearth in research on the topic of spirituality and well-being (Tejeda, 2015) which limits the extension and application of these concepts in organizations. This study sought to address this gap. The following two sections highlight the implications for theory and practice.

### 5.1 | Theoretical implications: Extension of Ryff's framework of psychological well-being

From a theoretical viewpoint, this paper's novelty lies in (1) challenging the existing conception of well-being as solely connected with

materialism or biologically based factors through highlighting the interplay between individuals' spirituality, religiosity, and well-being, (2) developing a framework for businesses, and (3) highlighting the contextual extension of Ryff's framework by extending its model to spiritual practices of well-being and identifying several spiritual and religious dimensions that can contribute to enhanced well-being for individuals inside organizations. This section discusses this third point in more detail.

This paper contributes to Ryff's (1989) theory of well-being in three ways. First, based on our review of articles published within a 20-year time span, we argue that spiritual practices are linked with the six dimensions of Ryff's view of well-being. Our review thereby provides an extension to Ryff's conceptual repertoire with typologies of religiosity and spirituality and makes an important contribution in this respect.

Second, because prior studies have focused mainly on the hedonic constituents of well-being (e.g., life satisfaction and happiness) (e.g., Bell-Ellis, 2013), rather than on its eudaimonic view, this paper consolidates the existing literature through investigating how spiritual/religious practices may account for a better psychological functioning than what is traditionally known through the eudaimonic view. This extends Ryff's theory by suggesting that these elements of spiritual/religious practices better explain the eudaimonic view of well-being.

Third, theorizing a materialism/biologically based view of well-being has so far resulted in a narrow understanding of the conception of well-being and ignored the spiritual implications for well-being. In this review, by treating spirituality and religiosity as predictors and people's well-being as an outcome, we advance the existing theory development in the broader literature on well-being in the context of work and workplaces.

Thus to conclude, because this review is the first that considers the interplay between spirituality, religiosity, and well-being, we argue that the juxtaposition of Ryff's (1989) theory with insights from spirituality and religion holds much promise. Our study thereby constitutes specific contributions to Ryff's (1989) theory through offering novel theorizations of well-being (i.e., spiritual well-being, see Biag & Angeles Jr, 2021).

### 5.2 | Practical implications

This review points toward several relevant implications for organizations and workplaces. From a policy perspective, our key propositions suggest that managers and policymakers may need to be more sensitive toward the possible implications of spirituality for employees' psychological well-being. This, in turn, encourages organizations to train employees to understand and embrace the positive aspects of workplace spirituality. Different approaches to impart these values should be incorporated in the workplace. For example, spiritual development workshops and programs should be a part of the HR training activities to see how these programs may impact workers' well-being. In practice, many companies worldwide are



now presenting several sessions, classes, and seminars on awareness and achievement of spirituality (Altaf & Awan, 2011). These companies should pay attention to the psychological outcomes of these spiritual sessions and try to track these overtime for optimal results.

One further practical direction for policymakers and managers is to explore how to develop spiritual facilities for workers inside workplaces (see Stoner, 2013). While this study does not determine a technique for advancing spirituality, it does present some important insights into its benefits; and thus encourages managers to support spirituality in the workplace by allowing workers to meditate and pray and offering prayer facilities when feasible. One further suggestion for managers is to maintain a culture of humanism, benevolence, integrity, justice, mutuality, respect, and trust which have been shown through this systematic literature review to have immense benefits for well-being and productivity within organizations.

In a wider view, a bipartisan collaboration between governmental committees and private organizations may be considered to embrace spirituality and religiosity. This can be implemented, as mentioned above, through sessions, classes, and seminars on awareness and importance of spirituality. Adding to this, HR directors and managers are advised to consult their employees about their spiritual and religious needs and accordingly accommodate these needs in the workplace. To ensure a good accommodation, HR managers may include spiritual facilities as a part of their quality checklist. Moreover, employers may consider employees' spiritual well-being by having prayer time provision and allocating prayer spaces and facilities. There may be a constant monitoring policies to track the trajectory of the HR practices in this regard.

## 6 | LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

A key limitation of the present study is that concepts, such as well-being and spirituality, are culturally and socially specific and can be operationalized differently in the literature. To address this issue, future studies may investigate how and why people define these concepts in certain societies, and, to what extent cultural traditions and customs do in fact shape and influence these definitions.

Another limitation is that the literature review in this study is limited to journals that appeared in the WoS database and the CABS ranking list as only 3- or 4-star class, and under the ETHICS-CSR-MAN domain. Future researchers who wish to conduct literature reviews on the same topic are advised to include journals listed in other ranking lists and indexed under different domains. For example, future research may include articles published in journal of management, spirituality, and religion due to its high relevance.

The development of workplace spirituality as an area of scientific inquiry encourages further empirical studies to test the framework introduced here. Therefore, a key suggestion for future studies is to statistically test the framework that was developed in this study, using different research design and study sites. In addition, there is a need for multilevel research to examine the impact of workplace spirituality and religiosity at both the organizational

and country levels. Moreover, specific research questions that are subject to testable premises may be considered, such as highlighting the most important spiritual facility or religious practice that is connected with people's well-being and happiness. This can be approached through diverse research designs and study locations.

Furthermore, because this study focuses on spirituality and religiosity in general, without considering one specific religion (e.g., Islam, Christianity), we encourage future research to replicate this study in an attempt to develop a more focused understanding through studying the links between religion, spirituality, and well-being, from a specific religion's perspective or point of view. However, in light of our review, further research on religion, spirituality, and well-being is needed in non-Western contexts, including the Middle East or South Asia, because the majority of studies have been conducted in Western arenas.

## 7 | CONCLUSION

Although there is a substantial number of articles that have studied well-being and happiness within various disciplines (e.g., Hao & Xiao, 2021; Hashemi et al., 2020; Koburtay & Syed, 2021), workplace spirituality has played a minor role in previously published reviews. Strikingly, to our knowledge, the interplay between spirituality and well-being has not been the focus of any systematic reviews. Therefore, our review sought to address the dearth of inclusive reviews by offering a SLR of previous research on the linkages between the constructs under study.

Our SLR consolidated the existing theory development and stimulated new conceptual thinking on the interlinkages between spirituality, religiosity, and well-being. It thus helps to advance religion and psychology literatures by developing a novel multi-level model and by offering a conceptual clarification regarding the implications of spirituality for well-being. Within similar lines, our review contributed to the conceptualization of "workplace spirituality," "individual spirituality," and "individual religiosity" by synthesizing propositions from previous studies (see Figure 2). By integrating the different conceptual components of spirituality and religiosity into our model, we advance previous work and depict a way forward to commonly understand and conceptualize the phenomenon. We hope that our review will inspire further theoretical and empirical research on spirituality and well-being within and outside workplaces.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analyzed in this study.



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