

The Effects of Spirituality and Religion on Job Satisfaction: A Qualitative Study on Industrial Environments

Maneviyat ve Dinin İş Tatmini Üzerinde Etkisi: Endüstriyel Ortamlar Üzerine Nitel Bir İnceleme

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Abstract

This study investigates the influence of spirituality and religion on the work experiences of individuals within industrial production sectors in Türkiye. Specifically, it aims to elucidate the role these factors play in shaping job satisfaction, perceptions of organizational justice, and mechanisms for coping with occupational stress. While the broader research project utilized an Exploratory Sequential Mixed-Methods design to map the comprehensive landscape of job satisfaction, this article presents an in-depth analysis of the qualitative data collected in the final phase of the inquiry. The qualitative component was conducted with participants from diverse occupational categories employed at a textile factory in Sakarya province. By concentrating on this specific qualitative dataset, we seek to provide a nuanced, contextual understanding of how religious beliefs and spirituality inform the interpretation, experience, and management of work—a dimension frequently obscured in purely quantitative assessments.

The findings reveal that religious beliefs and spiritual practices serve a constructive function in framing employees' perceptions of their work environment. Participants indicated that rituals, including daily prayer (namaz), supplication (dua), and congregational worship, foster emotional equilibrium, offer psychological respite under demanding conditions, and operate as effective strategies for mitigating work-related stress. Furthermore, religious convictions appear to reinforce perceptions of trust, fairness, and solidarity within the organizational context, particularly in situations that might otherwise challenge justice perceptions. A particularly salient finding concerns the protective, or buffering, function of religion. Participants reported that their faith helps to contain work-related stress, dissatisfaction, and problems, thereby preventing negative spillover into personal and family domains. This functional effect not only contributes to enhanced job satisfaction but also supports individuals' overall life satisfaction and psychological well-being. In conclusion, the study demonstrates that spirituality and religious practices extend beyond the private sphere, functioning

as significant psychosocial resources that bolster employee well-being, resilience, and organizational adjustment within industrial work settings.

Keywords

Sociology of Religion, Job Satisfaction, Job Stress, Faith and Work, Workplace Spirituality, Religion in Work.

Öz

Bu çalışma, Türkiye’de endüstriyel üretim sektörlerinde çalışan bireylerin iş deneyimleri üzerinde maneviyatın ve dinin etkilerini incelemektedir. Araştırma, maneviyat ve dinin iş doyumunu, algılanan örgütsel adalet ve işle ilgili stresle başa çıkma süreçlerindeki rolünü anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. İş doyumunun bütüncül yapısını ortaya koymak üzere tasarlanan daha geniş kapsamlı proje, Keşfedici Sıralı Karma Yöntem desenine dayansa da bu makale yalnızca araştırmanın son aşamasında elde edilen nitel bulgulara odaklanmaktadır. Nitel veri toplama süreci, Sakarya ilinde yer alan bir tekstil fabrikasında farklı mesleki konumlarda çalışan katılımcılarla yürütülmüştür. Sakarya’daki tekstil fabrikası çalışanlarından elde edilen nitel verileri odağa alarak, dini inançlar ve maneviyatın emek süreçlerinin algılanışı, iş deneyimlerinin anlamlandırılması ve ilişkisel dayanma biçimlerinin oluşumunda nasıl bir kaynak ve dayanak noktası hâline geldiğini derinlikli ve bağlamsal bir çerçevede tartışmayı amaçlamaktayız. Araştırma bulguları, dini inançlar ve manevi pratiklerin çalışanların iş ortamını algılama biçimlerinde yapıcı bir rol oynadığını göstermektedir. Katılımcılar; namaz, dua ve toplu ibadet gibi ritüellerin duygusal dengeyi desteklediğini, zorlayıcı çalışma koşullarında psikolojik rahatlama sağladığını ve işin stresine karşı etkili bir başa çıkma mekanizması sunduğunu ifade etmiştir. Bunun yanı sıra dini inançların, özellikle adalet algısını zedeleme potansiyeli taşıyan durumlarda, örgüt içinde güven, hakkaniyet ve dayanışma duygusunu güçlendirdiği görülmektedir. Araştırmanın en dikkat çekici bulgularından biri, dinin koruyucu (tampon) işlevine ilişkindir. Katılımcılar, inançlarının iş stresinin, memnuniyetsizliğin ve çalışma kaynaklı sorunların kişisel ve aile yaşamlarına taşmasını engellediğini belirtmiştir. Bu işlevsel etki yalnızca iş doyumunu yükseltmekle kalmayıp, bireylerin genel yaşam memnuniyetine ve psikolojik iyi oluşuna da anlamlı katkılar sunmaktadır. Genel olarak bu çalışma, maneviyat ve dini pratiklerin özel alanla sınırlı olmadığı; aksine, endüstriyel çalışma ortamlarında çalışanların iyi oluşunu, dayanıklılığını ve örgütsel uyumunu destekleyen önemli sosyal ve psikolojik kaynaklar olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Din Sosyolojisi, İş Doyumu, İş Stresi, İş Yerinde Maneviyat, İş Yaşamında Din, İnanç-İş İlişkisi.

Giriş

Human beings possess enduring spiritual and moral dimensions along with physical ones. Religions play a significant role in shaping this spiritual dimension. Religion influences not only the individual but also society through the individual. The integration of religion into the structure of society can be referred to as religious objectification. Humans shape the world mentally with their consciousness and beliefs. In other words, as suggested by Peter Berger, society is a product of man. There can be no social reality apart from man. On the other hand, man is a product of society. Accordingly, religion is a “dialectical phenomenon” and forms an integral part of social reality. This means that religion is constantly shaped by and shaping the society in which it exists. In this bilateral relation, Berger names three steps; externalization, objectivation, and internalization. Externalization refers to the continuous expression of human existence into the world, through both physical and mental activities. Objectivation occurs when the results of these activities (both physical and mental) gain an existence that appears independent and separate from their creators, confronting them as an external reality. Internalization is the process by which people reabsorb this reality, converting it back from the structures of the objective world into the structures of their subjective consciousness (Berger, 1967, 4). In the context of workplace research, this dialectical model provides a conceptual foundation for understanding how religious orientations and organizational structures mutually influence employees' perceptions, behaviors, and coping strategies.

A person's connection with God is essentially a part of the process of self-realization, understood here as the gradual recognition and actualization of one's own capacities, values, and inner potential. Beyond their primary functions of providing meaning to life and maintaining social order, religious beliefs support individuals' pursuit of self-realization. In this sense, spirituality and religious beliefs play a crucial role in the individual's journey of knowing himself and revealing his own potential

(Özdoğan, 2005). Within contemporary organizations, this existential search for meaning frequently manifests in employees' attempts to integrate personal beliefs, moral values, and identity into their professional experiences, thereby shaping motivation, interpersonal relations, and fairness perceptions.

At this point, it is essential to clarify what is meant by the concepts of spirituality, religiosity, and morality as used throughout this article. This study differentiates these constructs analytically by defining spirituality as a continuous individual search for meaning and structural inner coherence, and religious belief as adherence to an institutionalized system of faith. The relationship between spirituality, religiosity, and job satisfaction has become an increasingly prominent topic within the organizational behavior literature, and a precise conceptual distinction is particularly important in culturally diverse societies to ensure analytical clarity. In this framework, spirituality refers to the individual's search for meaning, wholeness, and inner harmony in work life (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000); religiosity denotes the cognitive and emotional orientation toward the sacred (Pargament, 2001); and the moral dimension encompasses the individual's tendency to guide behavior in accordance with ethical principles (Ferrell, Fraedrich and Ferrell, 2025).

Spirituality and religious beliefs in the workplace are not only crucial for employees and employers but also for their contribution to overall organizational performance, competitiveness, and sustainable success. This approach extends beyond the physical and mental contributions of employees, encouraging their spiritual engagement, which can boost organizational commitment, motivation, and productivity (Poole, 2006; Marques, 2008). The fast-paced, stressful, competitive, and complex nature of the business world pushes individuals to seek values-based solutions and achieve personal harmony— as a state of inner balance in which one's beliefs, values, emotions, and professional roles are experienced as broadly consistent with one an-

other. The integration of spiritual and religious values into the work environment offers employees a space for inner harmony and search for meaning in competitive and stressful workplaces. Promoting spiritual values and religious beliefs in the workplace can enhance employee engagement, boost customer satisfaction, and foster a work culture that is more attuned to environmental and ethical concerns (Dyck – Schroeder, 2005).

Spirituality in the workplace should be considered not only from a religious perspective but also from a business-specific angle. It should not be forgotten that the workplace encompasses individuals with diverse religious beliefs as well as those without any religious beliefs. The primary goal here is interaction and idea exchange, not religious conversion. Hence, spiritual practices in the workplace aim to foster deeper empathy and connection among employees by displaying a supportive attitude towards religious diversity and individual beliefs.

The inclusion of spirituality in the business world is gaining increasing importance due to various factors such as the shrinking of support networks, the aging workforce, changes in organizational structures, and layoffs. These developments highlight that fostering a spiritual dimension in the workplace is vital not only for the well-being of individual employees but also for ensuring organizational success. The increasing significance of spirituality and religion in corporate management practices and strategies is widely acknowledged and has been closely associated with job satisfaction. When the workplace reflects and affirms employees' spirituality and religious commitments, their personal values and aspirations are more likely to resonate with organizational life, which in turn fosters higher levels of job satisfaction and commitment and supports both individual well-being and organizational success.

Despite the growing body of international scholarship, much of the existing literature has been produced in Western contexts and predominantly within service-sector organizations. The coexistence of Türkiye's secular institutional framework with

strong societal religious sensibilities renders this research domain culturally distinctive. Moreover, the examination of these dynamics within industrial rather than service-oriented workplaces further enhances the significance of the current study. In this context, the present research contributes to the literature by investigating how employees' spirituality and religion relate to job satisfaction, perceived organizational justice, and strategies for coping with work stress in Türkiye's industrial production sectors. By focusing on textile industry workers and drawing on qualitative field data, the study fills an important gap in both the Turkish and the broader international literature.

Literature Review

The academic literature on job satisfaction suggests that job satisfaction depends on many variables. In general, factors affecting job satisfaction can be examined in two groups: individual and environmental (Ellickson – Logsdon, 2001). Personal features include age, gender, education level, marital status, personal characteristics, values, and expectations. Environmental features include wage, promotion opportunities, incentives, attitudes of the employer and other coworkers, working conditions, hardness of work, experience and ability, organizational justice, social status of the profession, and worker's general life satisfaction.

There is an extensive body of research on job satisfaction. Many studies focus on some of the factors listed above and try to determine the level of impact of those factors. However, when examining the factors affecting job satisfaction, it is evident that issues related to spirituality and religion are generally neglected in the literature (Neubert – Halbesleben, 2015, 859). Yet, as we will share below, there is substantial evidence showing that religion significantly affects job satisfaction.

When individuals are able to integrate self-defining attributes—such as ethnicity, gender, or religious identity—into their work environment, their overall sense of

well-being and satisfaction tends to increase. Nevertheless, the secularization trend of the 20th century not only impacted individual and social life but also extended its influence into the realm of business. Indeed, business life was also a part of religion in ancient times. According to Weber, the primary motivation that gave rise to capitalism was the Protestant work ethic. Calvinist ideology perceived success in business as a means to draw closer to God, considering worldly labor as preparation for the afterlife (Weber, 2005).

In the long run, the role of religion in business life began to diminish. In his remarkable work, *the Secular City*, Harvey Cox discussed three important impacts on work life. Accordingly, *the separation of places of work and residence*, *the bureaucratic organization of work*, and *the emancipation of work from religion* are the new facts. As work became separated from religion, people began to assign less religious meaning to their jobs and came to view work as a mainly secular activity. Cox further suggests that individuals may improve their professional success by distancing themselves from religious influences (Cox, 2013, 225).

The exclusion of religion from the business world has become so commonplace that some academics have even begun to debate whether there should be any place for religion in courses such as “management education,” where they train future managers. The ongoing discussions highlight reasons such as the fact that religious ethics, unlike modern and contemporary philosophical ethics, may not emphasize reason, voluntarism, individual autonomy, consequences, or rules to the same extent. This has led to questioning the relevance of focusing on religion within the scope of courses like management education. However, Epstein (2002) argues that management education has a legitimate role in integrating teachings from religious traditions into business ethics and other courses.

We have outlined several personal and environmental factors that shape job satisfaction. Crucially, many of these determinants are themselves influenced by religious

belief, either explicitly or implicitly. For example, individual value systems—central to employees' expectations, motivations, and ethical orientations—are often formed and reinforced through religious socialization. Likewise, a sense of meaning and purpose in life, which many religious traditions cultivate, can enhance overall well-being and thereby contribute to greater satisfaction at work. Furthermore, spirituality, particularly when situated within institutionalized religious frameworks, may shape employees' attitudes, moral judgments, and coping strategies in ways that extend beyond formal ritual practice. Taken together, these dynamics suggest that religiosity and spirituality can exert a deeper and more pervasive influence on job satisfaction than is typically acknowledged in the organizational behavior literature (Ghazzawi et al., 2016).

Research indicates a positive relationship between spirituality and religiosity in the workplace and job satisfaction, highlighting the significance of spirituality as a topic in Human Resource Management (HRM). It has been suggested that religious practices and spirituality in the workplace can positively influence employees' levels of job satisfaction, fulfill their personal needs, and thereby increase job satisfaction (Alewell et al., 2022). Research conducted in various regions of the world, focusing on different business sectors and religions, generally points to a positive correlation between religion and job satisfaction.

Neubert & Halbesleben utilized the 2010 Baylor Religion Survey (BRS), conducted by the Gallup Organization, to explore the impact of the interaction between spiritual calling and job satisfaction on organizational commitment within the U.S. population. Their findings indicate a significant correlation between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, even when controlling for various demographic and work-related variables (Neubert – Halbesleben, 2015). Research points to a positive relationship between religiosity and job satisfaction in public servants as well as private sector employees. Based on data from the General Social Survey spanning from 2000 to 2016, Bednarczuk's analysis, employing an ordered logit model, revealed that religious

bureaucrats tend to be more satisfied with their jobs compared to their nonreligious counterparts (Bednarczuk, 2019).

Comparing the results of different countries can sometimes be misleading at first glance due to varying cultural expectations, religious doctrines, and life conditions. The study conducted by Ghazzawi et al. in California, USA, provides noteworthy data by comparing job satisfaction among employees belonging to five different religions. Ghazzawi et al. compare the job satisfaction of individuals adhering to Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism. The study categorizes religions into “transcendent” and “immanent” categories, with Buddhism and Hinduism classified as immanent religions, while Christianity, Islam, and Judaism are considered transcendent religions. Ghazzawi et al. begin the study with the hypothesis that job satisfaction in transcendent religions would be higher due to their teachings. This study discovered that the level of religious commitment does impact job satisfaction; however, the relationship is not particularly strong ($r=0.182$). Moreover, it found that individuals belonging to immanent and transcendent religions, with the same degree of religious intensity, exhibit varying levels of job satisfaction. Contrary to expectations, followers of immanent religions displayed a significant positive correlation with job satisfaction, whereas followers of transcendent religions did not. This outcome suggests the potential utility of further investigation along these lines. Additionally, the study concluded that income acts as a moderating factor in the relationship between religious commitment and job satisfaction, with higher-income workers tending to report greater satisfaction. As evident from this study, controlling for variables outside of religion (such as age, gender, education, and income) may not fully equalize or nullify their impact on the results, making it challenging to measure the influence of religion accurately. Despite this limitation, it is notable that the research revealed that the effect of religious affiliation on job satisfaction is limited (Ghazzawi et al., 2016).

Comparisons conducted within European countries specifically regarding Christianity also indicate some differences. The results suggest that the sectarian and regional differences have effects on job satisfaction. Fargher et. al by using the European Values Study (EVS) 1999/2000 data compare cultural heritage and job satisfaction in Eastern and Western Europe. The analysis uncovered several strong relationships between basic cultural values including religion and job satisfaction, with traditional cultural values exhibiting a particularly strong influence on workers' wellbeing in Western Europe. However, the job satisfaction of Eastern European workers appeared largely unaffected by these values and beliefs. The writers explain this difference by the secularizing effect of Communism (Fargher et al., 2008).

In this Western and Eastern Europe comparison, the 2015 International Social Survey Program (ISSP) data indicates a similar result. In their analysis, Fialova and Belanova found that while the Western European countries generally report significantly higher levels of job satisfaction compared to their Eastern counterparts, the results indicate that religion has no significant effect on job satisfaction in either of the regions. However, the data highlights denominational differences. In the West, religious affiliation influences a broader range of work attitude measurements compared to the East. Workers in Western Europe are more satisfied with their jobs than those in Eastern Europe, with average job satisfaction scores of 5.4 and 5.2, respectively—a difference that is statistically significant at the 1% level. In both regions, Protestant affiliation is associated with higher job satisfaction, while Eastern Orthodox and Other Christian affiliations are linked to lower job satisfaction. Considering the distinct institutional, cultural, economic, and historical backgrounds of these two groups of countries, they analyzed the effect of religion as a factor determining job satisfaction and work attitudes in these regions. The findings show that religion tends to be a less important factor on work attitudes in post-communist European countries compared to Western European countries. The results reveal that sectarian differences within the

same religion may also have an impact on job satisfaction. Therefore, considering a religion as an inseparable whole in evaluations can be misleading (Fialova – Belanova, 2020).

When it comes to Islamic countries, we also observe a positive effect of religion on job satisfaction. Particularly in fields with intense work performance, such as the healthcare sector, employees can increase their job satisfaction by seeking their reward from Allah, thereby overcoming the stress caused by the high work tempo (Alotaibi 2016). Islamic work ethics (IWE) directly and positively affects job satisfaction and job performance (Smadi et al., 2023).

Considering Türkiye, which is the focus of our research, there are studies indicating that job satisfaction is positively influenced by both religiosity and workplace spirituality (Balcı Arvas, 2023). While the spiritual environment at work is important, it cannot be regarded as the sole or the most significant reason for job satisfaction. If religion were the most crucial factor, the highest job satisfaction would be found among employees of religious institutions. However, Baltacı's research on *Job Satisfaction, Job Stress, Burnout, and Turnover Intentions of Employees of Religious Affairs* (2018) shows that employees of religious institutions experience high levels of job stress, moderate burnout, and consequently, a low level of job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction should not be viewed solely as personal fulfillment. In the long term, workplace satisfaction offers many advantages (Freeman, 1978). Spirituality in the workplace creates an organizational culture that employees feel happier and perform better (Garcia-Zamor, 2003). These spiritual feelings and beliefs help solve work-related problems, increase employee satisfaction, and promote inner peace. Additionally, spirituality and religious beliefs in the workplace can boost productivity and profitability (Karakas, 2010).

Overall, all these findings indicate a positive relationship between religion and

job satisfaction. However, despite this, we still see that most companies do not include this aspect in their internal studies on job satisfaction. Although there are countless studies regarding personal religiosity and job satisfaction, they usually have overlooked the issue of whether the workplace respects an individual's religious beliefs or not.

In the case of Türkiye, the secular character of the state has historically led to the exclusion of religiosity measures from official censuses, resulting in a lack of longitudinal and comprehensive datasets. Consequently, studies on religion have largely been conducted through the individual initiatives of academics and students, and even the few nationwide surveys available are limited in scope and irregular in frequency. All these limitations heighten the importance of investigating religion and spirituality through focused empirical research. Against this backdrop, the present study examines how spirituality and religion contribute to job satisfaction within Türkiye's private industrial sector. By situating the analysis within a context where secular institutional structures coexist with strong societal religiosity, the study offers insights that are both culturally specific and underrepresented in the existing literature.

Methods

This research examines the effects of employees' spirituality and religious beliefs on job satisfaction within industrial manufacturing settings. The study was designed using an Exploratory Sequential Mixed-Methods approach, in which each stage systematically informed the next. All ethical approval procedures for this study were completed in accordance with the relevant regulations of Ankara University, and the qualitative fieldwork phase was completed in December 2019. While the overall project employed a mixed-methods strategy, the present article reports only the qualitative components of this broader study. Consequently, the findings are context-specific and not intended to be statistically generalizable. In addition, the qualitative data were col-

lected solely in the textile sector and within a limited regional and organizational setting, which does not allow for systematic comparison with other branches of industry. Sectarian diversity and theological differences among participants were not examined in detail and therefore fall outside the scope of this analysis. The data are also based on self-reports obtained at a single point in time, which precludes longitudinal assessment of change. A further limitation concerns the theoretical framing of religion: the analysis primarily focuses on the instrumental and functional roles of religious beliefs and practices in relation to workplace experiences (e.g. coping with stress, perceiving justice, sustaining job satisfaction), while more transcendental or purely theological dimensions of spirituality are not systematically explored, focusing instead on its practical implications in the workplace. Taken together, these features mean that the results should be interpreted as exploratory insights into the relationship between spirituality, religious beliefs, and job satisfaction in a particular industrial context, rather than as findings that can be straightforwardly generalized to all workplaces or religious populations.

Background of the study

This study was designed using an Exploratory Sequential Mixed-Methods approach to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the workplace environment. In the initial exploratory phase, face-to-face focus group discussions were conducted with a total of 20 employees, equally divided between blue- and white-collar roles. These sessions were designed to identify preliminary themes related to workplace values without researcher interference.

The analysis of these discussions highlighted 22 prominent phenomena—*communication, teamwork, objectivity, discipline, constructiveness, adaptability, solution-orientedness, justice, managerial skills, honesty, sincerity, embracement, responsibility, patience, respect, job skills, self-improvement, altruism, involvement, truthfulness, unselfishness, and courage.*

Considering all the prominent elements mentioned above in the focus group interviews, a survey form was created for the quantitative phase of the research. A metal factory with 300 employees in Istanbul and a textile factory with 500 employees in Sakarya were selected as the sample group. The survey was applied to a total of 400 employees, 200 employees from each factory. Based on the data obtained from the surveys, the fundamental factors affecting job satisfaction have been identified in terms of the problems experienced in the workplace. These aspects are grouped into 3 main thematic areas: *Job Enjoyment*, *Perception of Justice at Work*, and *Job Stress*.

The three core themes—job enjoyment, perception of justice at work, and job stress—are consistent with prior research that treats organizational justice and job stress as key determinants or correlates of job satisfaction. A substantial body of empirical work has shown that employees' evaluations of fairness in decision-making processes, resource distribution, and interpersonal treatment are closely linked to their overall job satisfaction and organizational attitudes (e.g., Ozel – Bayraktar, 2017). Likewise, studies on occupational stress indicate that high levels of job-related strain are typically associated with lower job satisfaction and increased withdrawal intentions (e.g., Bike Esen, 2020). In addition, research that conceptualizes job satisfaction in affective terms frequently operationalizes it through indicators of job enjoyment, demonstrating that enjoying one's work is a central facet of overall job satisfaction (e.g., Halawi, 2024). From this perspective, existing studies have sometimes focused on a single dimension—such as workplace stress, job enjoyment, or organizational justice—or have jointly examined justice and stress in relation to satisfaction (e.g., Ouyang et al., 2015). Our quantitative findings therefore align well with this literature, but also extend it by showing that, in our sample, all three dimensions—job enjoyment, perception of justice at work, and job stress—emerge simultaneously as salient components of workers' job satisfaction.

The current qualitative focus

While the quantitative phase identified which factors were central to job satisfaction, it did not explain how employees utilize spirituality and religion to navigate these issues. Therefore, we returned to a qualitative approach in the final phase to examine the relationship between spirituality/religion and the three thematic areas that had emerged as central to job satisfaction: job enjoyment, perception of justice at work, and job stress. In this final stage, in-depth interviews were conducted with ten employees, five white-collar and five blue-collar, all working in a textile factory in Sakarya (Table 1). During the interviews, participants were asked two questions for each thematic area, supported by additional probing questions. As a result, the focus of this phase was not to rediscover which topics are salient for workers in relation to job satisfaction—that work had already been done in the earlier stages—but rather to explore how, and to what extent, religion and spirituality are woven into these already established themes.

All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using thematic coding. An initial codebook was developed inductively from a close reading of the transcripts, and then refined in light of the three core themes identified in the quantitative phase (job enjoyment, perception of justice at work, and job stress). Coding was conducted by two researchers, who compared and discussed their coding decisions to reach consensus on the final set of themes.

Table 1. Profile of Interview Participants

Demographic Info	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10
Gender	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	M	M	M
Age	35	39	45	22	34	24	22	28	45	41
Marital Status	Married	Married	Married	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Married	Married
Education	Univ.	High School	Primary School	Univ.	Univ.	Univ.	High School	Primary School	High School	Primary School
Experience	4	12	16	1	1	1	1	8	17	2
Job Group	White-collar	White-collar	Blue-collar	Blue-collar	White-collar	White-collar	Blue-collar	Blue-collar	White-collar	Blue-collar
Job Position	Specialist	Specialist	Technician	Worker	Specialist	Specialist	Worker	Operator	Manager	Operator
Salary	Min. wage X 2	Min. wage X 2	Min. wage X 2	Min. wage	Min. wage X 1,5	Min. wage X 1,5	Min. wage	Min. wage X 1,5	Min. wage X 4	Min. wage X 1,5

Hence, the quantitative phase mainly served to identify which dimensions of the work experience (such as job enjoyment, perceived justice, and job stress) are foregrounded in workers' minds when they think about their jobs. In principle, such themes could have been derived solely from the existing literature; however, we deliberately chose to elicit them inductively from employees' own descriptions of their work environment. The subsequent qualitative phase then deliberately introduced religion and spirituality as explicit points of inquiry, even though these had not prominently surfaced in the initial discussions about job satisfaction and work-related issues. By asking targeted questions about the links between religion and the three core themes (Table 2), the third phase made it possible to show, for example, how perceptions of justice at

work may be implicitly supported or reinforced by religious understandings. For this reason, the detailed survey procedures and quantitative results are not presented in this article; the analysis centers instead on the qualitative findings, which directly address the study's primary concern: the extent to which religion and spirituality are embedded within the key dimensions of job satisfaction identified in the earlier stages.

Table 2. Spiritual Feelings and Religious Beliefs with Job Satisfaction Relationship Interview Form

Theme	Main Questions	Sub-question Subjects	Related Elements	
Job Enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do your spiritual feelings/religious beliefs shape your happiness and sense of fulfillment at work? • How do your spiritual feelings/religious beliefs affect your job satisfaction in your work environment? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job enjoyment • Feeling excited • Enthusiasm and eagerness to work • Boredom 	Feeling valued	Respect for experience in the workplace, appreciation of the job, and the employee's feeling valued
			Colleagues	Harmony, solidarity, competition, and discrimination in the workplace
Perception of Justice at Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do your spiritual feelings/religious beliefs shape your sense of justice in the workplace? • How do your spiritual feelings/religious beliefs influence your feelings regarding fairness in the workplace? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions made within the organization • Actions of superiors • Fairness of wages among employees • Compensation 	Managerial qualities	Supportive attitudes of leaders and colleagues in the workplace
			Ability to express thoughts	Freedom to express opinions freely at work and report problems to superiors
Job Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do your spiritual feelings/religious beliefs affect your work stress? • What is the impact of your spiritual feelings/religious beliefs on your coping mechanisms for job stress? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional exhaustion • Burnout • Work energy 	Workplace decisions	Negative treatment due to misunderstandings or mistakes at work

Results & Discussion

The focal points of the participants were determined through the answers to the questions we posed under 3 basic thematic areas: “Job Enjoyment”, “Perception of Justice at Work” and “Job Stress”. The answers obtained from the interviews were grouped into three dimensions: *Spiritual feelings and religious beliefs*, *Workplace values and conditions*, and *Religious emotional state* (Table 3). We observed that responses were concentrated on the following topics:

Spiritual feelings and religious beliefs; patience, tolerance, positivity, helpfulness, pragmatic approach, social harmony (empathy, understanding, establishing good relationships), respect, work ethics (honesty, transparency, morality, halal/lawful earnings, discipline), responsibility (family, conscience, livelihood, loyalty), justice (seeking justice, asserting rights, fairness), make time for yourself, self-care, submission (seeking refuge in Allah, trust in Allah), worship (pray, supplication, commitment to religious practices), gratitude, success, and love (towards work, managers).

Workplace values and conditions; feeling valued, harmony with colleagues (solidarity, competition, connection), managerial attitude and approach, opportunity to express opinions, and stance towards workplace decisions.

Religious emotional state; apart from the positive reflections of religion on work life such as commitment to faith, the influence of faith, and seeking refuge in religious values, negative reflections of religious feelings that emerged in the interviews have also been coded in the table (Table 3).

Dimension	Focal point	Participant 1			Participant 2			Participant 3			Participant 4			Participant 5			Participant 6			Participant 7			Participant 8			Participant 9			Participant 10			
		JE	JW	JS	JE	JW	JS	JE	JW	JS	JE	JW	JS	JE	JW	JS	JE	JW	JS	JE	JW	JS	JE	JW	JS	JE	JW	JS	JE	JW	JS	
Spiritual feelings and religious beliefs	Patience	√			√		√	√			√	√			√					√		√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
	Tolerance, positivity	√					√						√																			
	Helpfulness	√	√								√	√						√														
	Pragmatism	√	√																						√		√	√				
	Social harmony (empathy, understanding, good relationships)	√	√	√							√			√			√	√			√		√									
	Respect	√			√						√	√		√			√				√											
	Work ethics (honesty, morality, halal/lawful earnings, discipline)	√	√	√										√	√	√	√	√			√					√	√					
	Responsibility (family, conscience, livelihood, loyalty)				√			√	√	√	√			√			√			√				√		√			√		√	
	Justice (seeking justice, asserting rights, fairness)					√			√								√		√	√	√											
	Make time for yourself, self-care				√	√	√				√	√		√	√	√	√				√	√										
	Submission (seeking refuge in Allah, trust in Allah)				√	√	√				√																√	√	√		√	
	Worship (pray, supplication, commitment to religious practices)						√	√		√				√						√			√		√		√		√		√	
	Gratitude																								√		√			√		
	Success																			√						√						
	Love (towards work, managers).	√		√																√		√					√					
Workplace values and conditions	Feeling valued	√			√			√			√			√			√			√		√		√		√			√			
	Harmony	√	√		√		√	√		√	√			√				√	√	√		√						√				
	Managerial attitude and approach	√	√		√			√			√			√			√	√	√	√		√		√		√			√			
	Opportunity to express opinions		√				√	√						√					√		√							√	√			
	Stance towards workplace decisions		√		√	√			√		√	√		√	√				√		√				√			√	√			
Religious emotional state	Religious feelings are not prominent		√																√		√	√										
	Religious beliefs have an indirect and limited influence	√		√										√																		
	Attach importance to religious practices and values				√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√			√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Stress suppresses religious practices						√																									
	Religious feelings are negatively affected						√				√		√								√											
The belief that one will earn rewards by fulfilling religious values													√																			

Table 3. Interview Results

*JE: Job Enjoyment, JW: Justice at Work, JS: Job Stress, **√; The related concept or matter is associated.

The academic literature on job satisfaction, as we presented in the theoretical framework of this article, generally suggests that there may be a strong relationship between spirituality and job satisfaction. In fact, a more careful reading shows that while some field studies support such propositions, in others, the relationship is not very strong. We conducted a preliminary focus group discussion to determine the research questions. It was surprising that religious and spiritual issues were not addressed intensively by the participants. The lack of a sense of deprivation in religious terms in the workplace may have influenced this outcome. The workplace where the study was conducted has a prayer room where people can perform their prayers. Additionally, adjustments to work hours are made during Ramadan. People can comfortably fulfill their religious practices, and there are no restrictions. For example, employees can take a break for Friday prayers. The participants, who do not experience difficulties in fulfilling their religious obligations, seem to have overlooked this issue. Instead of positive factors affecting job satisfaction, negative factors and the problems workers face became the central focus of the discussion.

The results suggest that it is possible to address the prominent spiritual dimensions and religious beliefs in three main axes: a) ethical and moral principles, b) spiritual dispositions and inner characteristics, and c) religious practices (Table 4).

Table 4. Prominent Spiritual Orientations and Religious Beliefs

Ethical and moral principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work ethics (honesty, transparency, morality, lawful earnings, discipline) • Justice (the pursuit of justice, seeking one's rights, fairness) • Helpfulness • Responsibility (family, conscience, making a living, loyalty) • Pragmatic approach
Spiritual dispositions and inner characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patience • Tolerance, positivity • Social harmony (empathy, understanding, building good relationships)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect • Gratitude • Submission (seeking refuge in God, reliance on God) • Love (for work, manager, etc.) • Mental break/self-care • Success
Religious practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing prayer, supplication, commitment to religious practices

a. Ethical and moral principles

The integration of universal moral values and ethical norms in industrial and work environments fundamentally transforms the approach to work. Transparency, ethics, and discipline define the standards of quality and safety at every level of production processes, while the pursuit of justice, claims of rights, and equality play a leading role in defending workers' rights and creating a fair working environment. Virtues such as mutual assistance, a sense of responsibility, and loyalty strengthen teamwork and support the development of strong social relationships within the organization. A pragmatic attitude enables flexibility in work procedures and the adoption of innovative solutions. These ethical and moral principles significantly contribute to the sustainability of businesses and factories, shape their responsibilities to society, and define their market identity, while also promoting the professional and personal development of individuals.

Emphasis on lawful earnings and honest labor is central to work life in Islamic communities. In our research, some participants stated that they prioritize earning halal income and viewing their work as an act of worship. These findings indicate that Islamic beliefs have a significant impact on the perception of justice and spiritual values in the workplace. The study also revealed that Islamic beliefs have an influence on the perception of justice in the workplace. Some participants mentioned that, in situations of injustice and inequality at work, they tend to rely on Allah and entrust these matters to Him. This allows individuals to

approach workplace injustices from a spiritual perspective and helps them maintain inner peace.

This axis therefore encompasses employees' expectations of honesty, justice, responsibility, fairness, and prosocial behavior in the workplace. Participants articulated their normative views about "what ought to be done" at work through these moral and ethical codes. For some, the obligation not to leave colleagues alone in difficult situations was explicitly grounded in religious teachings on mutual assistance:

"When I feel like walking away, what stops me is not wanting to leave my colleague in a difficult situation. I like helping; our religion also advises mutual assistance, so leaving someone alone feels wrong to me." (P4)

Perceptions of unfair workload distribution and restricted voice emerged as central concerns, reinforcing our earlier finding that organizational justice is one of the most critical determinants of job satisfaction. When workers felt that tasks, rewards, or managerial decisions were unfair, they reported strong negative emotions and a sense of being devalued:

"When a task is supposed to be done by two people but I am left alone, the whole workload falls on me, yet I still receive the same pay. This creates a strong sense of injustice for me ... Even when we think some decisions taken by our superiors are not appropriate, we cannot say anything; I feel as if we have no right to object. This undermines my sense of justice." (P4)

Some workers also emphasized their sensitivity to injustices suffered by colleagues, particularly those they perceived as being in a weaker position, indicating that perceptions of fairness extend beyond purely individual concerns and include a prosocial, other-regarding dimension:

"I am more affected when I see injustice done to others. I can try to compensate for something done to me, but having to just watch when it happens to someone else

lowers my morale.” (P6)

At the same time, religiously grounded understandings of halal earnings encourage employees to continue fulfilling their duties despite perceived injustice. In this sense, the discomfort produced by unfair treatment is, at least partly, counterbalanced by the moral and spiritual reassurance of earning an honest livelihood:

“Knowing that every minute I work counts as halal income motivates me; my conscience is clear because I earn my living through my own effort.” (P4)

“When I cannot do justice to the task assigned, my conscience is disturbed. If I work here and earn my bread from here, I feel that I am obliged to do the best I can.” (P6)

Taken together, these narratives illustrate a tension in which feelings of injustice—experienced both personally and on behalf of others—undermine job satisfaction, while religiously informed notions of responsibility and lawful income motivate continued effort and provide a form of moral consolation.

Economic constraints and the reality of working at or near the minimum wage were also interpreted through a moral-religious lens of gratitude and endurance. Rather than framing low pay solely as a structural injustice, some participants emphasized the necessity of “getting by” and sustaining life, drawing on religious notions of gratitude (*şükür*) and patience (*sabır*) to make sense of their situation. As one worker put it:

“Wages are the same everywhere; after all, we work for the minimum wage. There is nothing to do; one has to get by somehow in life. You just need to be grateful and keep working.” (P8)

This statement illustrates how economic hardship is normalized and morally re-framed: the emphasis is not on contesting wage levels, but on accepting them as part of one’s fate and responding with gratitude and continued effort. In this way, religiously inflected moral codes help workers to cope with structural constraints, even as they implicitly

acknowledge the limits of their bargaining power in the labor market.

For some participants, personal morality and professional discipline were highlighted alongside, or even prior to, explicitly religious references. Here, ethical commitment is not only grounded in faith but also in an internalized sense of duty and professionalism:

“Beyond my spiritual feelings, I work according to my personal morality and work discipline. I think work ethics and merit should come to the fore.” (P9)

At first glance, this account seems to foreground a secular, professional ethic rather than a distinctly religious one. However, the same participant also invokes patience as a key resource in dealing with workplace problems:

“When I face problems, patience comes to the fore; I try to stay calm so that I can make better decisions.” (P9)

In the Turkish context, *sabır* is a virtue that is deeply embedded in religious discourse, even when it is not explicitly labeled as such. Thus, even a participant who claims to prioritize “personal morality and work discipline” over “spirituality” continues to draw, at least implicitly, on a moral vocabulary shaped by religious tradition. This suggests that workers’ ethical repertoires are not neatly divided into secular and religious domains; rather, they are hybrid assemblages in which professional ideals of merit and discipline are intertwined with religiously rooted concepts such as patience, gratitude, and lawful earning.

Taken together, these narratives show that workers’ ethical and moral orientations cannot be reduced to purely religious or purely secular categories. Instead, economic realities, religious teachings on gratitude and *halal* income, and individualized concepts of work ethics and self-discipline jointly shape how employees evaluate their conditions, manage dissatisfaction, and strive to maintain a sense of dignity in low-paid industrial work.

b. Spiritual dispositions and inner characteristics

In the professional life, establishing a balance between an individual's inner world and

the external environment is critically important. Inner characteristics such as patience, tolerance, social harmony, respect, gratitude, submission, and love contribute to areas like resilience in the face of challenges, building healthy relationships through empathy, mutual recognition of values, fostering trust during difficult times, and expressing positive emotions in work and management. These qualities help enhance both individual and professional success, as well as overall quality of life. Particularly in the workplace and factory environments, these spiritual and internal traits have a decisive impact on teamwork, leadership, employee motivation, and workplace atmosphere. Practices such as taking mental breaks and dedicating personal time boost individual well-being, thereby increasing productivity and contributing to both professional and personal growth. Therefore, the integration of spiritual beliefs and inner character traits plays a central role in achieving sustainable success and satisfaction in the workplace. It also fosters the creation of a positive work environment for factories and businesses. This approach allows companies to build more harmonious, highly motivated, and generally more productive working environments.

The research reveals that religious rituals and spiritual values play a significant role in coping with stress in the workplace and increasing job satisfaction. Many participants mentioned that they tend to rely on Allah and entrust their difficulties to Him when faced with challenges at work. This indicates that religion serves as a source of support in individuals' stress-coping mechanisms. For instance, some participants find peace by going to the workplace masjid and enhance their spiritual well-being through prayer. These findings highlight that Islamic beliefs hold a central place in individuals' work lives and provide support in dealing with daily challenges:

“When I get angry or stressed, I usually recite dhikr silently; it really helps me calm down.” (P4)

“When I struggle, I first step back and take a breath; then I pull myself together by telling myself to be patient.” (P4)

These accounts illustrate how spiritual practices and inner self-talk are used to interrupt escalating stress and create a momentary psychological distance from the problem. In this sense, spirituality functions as a practical coping mechanism rather than only as a set of abstract beliefs. Other participants emphasized the need to pause and reset when under intense strain, framing this process as both a psychological and spiritual recalibration:

“Under stress my system almost shuts down, but once I stop for a bit and pull myself together, I start to think again about what I can do.” (P6)

For this participant, pausing, regaining composure, and then re-engaging with the task reflects an inner resilience that is not strictly separated from spiritual experience. The same worker linked spiritual well-being to feelings of competence and productivity:

“Producing something, being busy with a task, is good for me in spiritual terms. When I feel competent, I become more attached to my job.” (P6)

Here, the sense of “doing a good job” not only increases professional commitment but is also experienced as spiritually uplifting. The boundary between psychological self-efficacy and spiritual satisfaction becomes blurred. Inner states such as care, attentiveness, and pride in one’s work also emerged as important for maintaining a positive relationship with the job:

“If you do your work properly and cleanly, your job becomes easier and you start to like it.” (P8)

This statement suggests that emotional attachment to one’s work can grow out of a disciplined and careful approach to tasks. Doing the job “properly and cleanly” is both a technical and a moral standard, which in turn shapes job enjoyment.

c. Religious practices

This axis encompasses behavioral expressions of faith such as prayer, supplication (du‘ā), remembrance (dhikr), gratitude, ritual observance, and engagement with a religious community. Commitment to such practices has the potential to support individuals’ mental

and emotional well-being at work and to shape their interactions in the workplace. Rituals like daily prayer and silent supplication strengthen individuals' ability to cope with stress and routine pressures, while contributing to the development and reinforcement of inner traits such as patience, tolerance, and empathy. These practices often function as brief moments of withdrawal from the production environment, providing mental cleansing and personal time, and enabling employees to return to their tasks more focused and emotionally balanced. They also offer a moral perspective and guidance in ethical decision-making processes, and can foster mutual understanding and respect, thereby supporting teamwork and social cohesion. In this sense, religious commitment emerges as an important factor not only for the well-being and development of individual employees but also for the relational climate and performance of the organization.

The interviews indicate that religious rituals occupy a concrete place in everyday work routines, especially as a means of short-term emotional regulation. Some participants described going to the factory prayer room (masjid) or performing brief prayers during moments of acute strain:

“When I feel very overwhelmed at work, I go to the prayer room and perform two units of prayer; when I come out, I feel calmer and more collected.” (P4)

Here, prayer functions as a structured pause in the workday, providing both physical distance from the shop floor and a spiritual framework for regaining composure. Religious practice thus becomes a micro-intervention that helps to reset emotional equilibrium. At the same time, the inability to consistently perform these rituals, due to the intensity of the workload, can itself be a source of distress, reflecting the strong sense of obligation attached to religious duties:

“Because of the workload I sometimes miss the prayer times; this upsets me because I feel as if I have failed to fulfil a responsibility. I make up the prayers when I go home,

but this wears me out.” (P4)

This narrative reveals a tension between the temporal rhythms of industrial production and the prescribed times of ritual worship. Failing to meet religious obligations generates a feeling of moral shortcoming, even when employees attempt to compensate later, which shows how deeply religious practice is woven into their understanding of responsibility. Other participants mentioned silent remembrance and Qur’an recitation as practices that provide immediate psychological relief:

“Silently reciting dhikr often relaxes me immediately; I feel spiritually supported.”
(P4)

“When I feel very distressed, listening to the Qur’an calms me. Its melody and meaning soothe my soul; I even listen with earphones while working.” (P6)

In these accounts, dhikr and Qur’an listening are not separate from work but integrated into it—practiced during or alongside productive activity. Religion operates as a background resource that accompanies the work process, offering comfort without necessarily disrupting the workflow. Participants also framed prayer and supplication as sources of trust and hope, linking religious practice directly to their work outcomes:

“When I perform the prayer, one’s heart relaxes. I pray that my work will go well.”
(P8)

“Praying gives me a sense of leaning on something; spirituality has a great effect on how I cope with stress.” (P6)

Here, prayer is experienced simultaneously as emotional release (“one’s heart relaxes”) and as an act that symbolically supports the desire for things to “go well” at work. The sense of “leaning on something” expresses the idea that religious practice provides an external anchor in situations that might otherwise feel beyond one’s control. Finally, reli-

gious beliefs about divine justice and the virtue of patience shape how some workers interpret negative experiences and regulate their initial reactions:

“When something happens to me, I trust in the Creator’s justice; this thought gives me strength to endure.” (P9)

“In the first moment I choose to be patient; if you do not show patience, a small negative feeling can later lead to irreversible consequences.” (P9)

These statements highlight the cognitive dimension of religious practice: even when no ritual act is being performed at that moment, beliefs about God’s justice and the moral value of patience guide how employees frame and respond to difficulties. Trust in divine justice provides a narrative that helps them endure perceived injustices, while patience functions as a preventive strategy against impulsive reactions that could harm workplace relationships or job security.

Taken together, the three thematic axes discussed above—ethical and moral principles, spiritual states and inner characteristics, and religious practices—also point to some ambivalent effects of religious beliefs and spiritual resources on workers’ experiences of job satisfaction. In some cases, workplace problems appear to be partially “isolated” or contained through religious interpretations, which can enhance subjective well-being and job satisfaction in the short term. Reliance on faith, trust in divine justice, and the belief that one’s livelihood is ultimately provided by God may help individuals endure adverse conditions and maintain emotional balance. However, this buffering effect may also have unintended consequences in the longer term, such as contributing to the normalization and habituation of structural problems. Standing up against injustices at work is perceived as a highly risky and demanding process; many workers fear dismissal even when they consider pursuing their legal rights. Over time, this can push employees toward patterns of learned helplessness.

The findings reveal a paradoxical role of religion in the industrial workplace. On the

one hand, concepts such as *tawakkul* (trust in God) and *sabır* (patience) operate as an important buffer, protecting workers' well-being against the corrosive effects of low wages and high stress. On the other hand, this buffering effect risks turning into a mechanism of organizational silence. When structural injustices—such as unfair workloads or low pay—are framed as tests of faith or as matters of fate to be endured with patience, employees may unintentionally suppress their legitimate demands for organizational change. While this form of “spiritual coping” benefits the organization in the short term by reducing conflict and turnover, it may hinder the development of a genuinely just work environment by obscuring the root causes of dissatisfaction. In this sense, spirituality functions not only as a source of personal comfort but also as an informal stabilizer of industrial hierarchies. From a Marxist perspective, one could argue that, in such contexts, religion may cause to create a “false comfort zone” that alleviates the experience of exploitation without necessarily transforming the underlying conditions. On the other hand, the factors that drive workers into silence are not limited to religion alone. Individual characteristics, early upbringing, and broader processes of cultural socialization—such as norms of deference to authority and conflict avoidance—also contribute to fear-based silence (Kish-Gephart et al., 2009).

For some participants, religious beliefs did not have a direct or salient impact on job satisfaction. These individuals tended to link their sense of satisfaction and fulfilment at work primarily to the social dynamics of the workplace, the quality of relationships with colleagues, and their own personal motivation strategies. In such cases, the influence of religious belief on job satisfaction appears to be indirect and mediated through interpersonal relations and the social climate rather than operating as an explicit, self-acknowledged determinant.

A further complication arises from the difficulty of analytically distinguishing the sources of what we have coded as “spiritual dispositions.” For example, the emphasis on “patience” in the workplace may be rooted in Islamic teachings, but it may equally reflect culturally transmitted norms. In a society with a strong traditional family structure, respect for

authority and patience in the face of frustration are reinforced not only through religious discourse but also through broader cultural expectations. In this sense, patience can be understood as the product of both religious instruction and cultural accumulation. If we accept that religion plays a formative role in shaping culture, then it is also plausible to speak of an indirect, background influence of religion. In other words, religious sensibilities may lie at the core of many apparently “secular” inner resources—such as patience—that workers mobilize in interpreting and managing their everyday experiences at work.

Building on this observation, it is important to clarify more explicitly how we distinguish, at an analytical level, between religious and cultural traits in the discussion. In this study, we treat religious traits as those dispositions and practices that participants themselves frame in explicitly theological or devotional terms—for example, by referring to God, worship, the Qur’an, or religious obligation—whereas we speak of cultural traits when similar dispositions are described in relation to family upbringing, workplace norms, or “the way things are done” in society. At the same time, we acknowledge that in everyday life these domains are tightly intertwined: religious traditions have historically shaped local moral cultures, and cultural expectations influence how religious teachings are interpreted, prioritized, and enacted. Concepts such as patience, respect, and tolerance in our data should therefore be understood as hybrid constructs that carry both religious and cultural layers, rather than as neatly separable categories. Although Western literature often draws a sharp line between institutional “religiosity” and personal “spirituality”, our data suggests that for Turkish industrial workers, these domains are inextricably linked. When a worker exercises “patience” (a spiritual disposition), they often explicitly reference “God’s will” (a religious doctrine). Therefore, attempting to analyze workplace spirituality in Türkiye solely through secular definitions of “inner meaning” misses the theological scaffolding that supports these feelings. Future research in Muslim-majority industrial contexts should treat these concepts as a “spiritual-religious continuum” rather than separate analytical bins.

Conclusion

The findings of this qualitative study suggest that spirituality and religion play a meaningful role in shaping employees' experiences of job satisfaction, coping with work-related stress, and perceptions of justice in the workplace. Participants frequently described religious beliefs, prayer, and other forms of worship as important psychological resources that help them endure demanding working conditions, regulate negative emotions, and sustain a sense of purpose at work.

A key contribution of this study is to highlight the buffering role of religion in the relationship between workplace stress and broader life satisfaction. In many of the narratives, faith functioned as a protective shield that prevented work-related pressure, perceived injustice, and dissatisfaction from spilling over into family life and everyday social relationships. In this sense, religiosity and spirituality operated not only as correlates of job satisfaction, but also as resources that mitigated the extra-organizational consequences of stressful and unjust work environments.

A second contribution concerns the importance of the Turkish context for understanding the religion-work nexus. The study was conducted in a setting where a secular state framework coexists with strong social religiosity and comparatively limited longitudinal data on religious life. By documenting how workers in this context interpret and mobilize religious beliefs and spiritual feelings in relation to job satisfaction, justice, and stress, the article adds culturally specific evidence to a literature that has been dominated by Western settings and service-sector occupations.

Third, the study underscores the value of examining spirituality and religion within industrial work environments. Much of the existing research on workplace spirituality focuses on professional or service organizations; by contrast, this research was carried out in a textile factory characterized by intense physical labor, hierarchical structures, and relatively

low wages. Showing how spiritual orientations and religious practices are woven into the everyday routines of industrial workers contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of religion in the world of work.

At the same time, the findings indicate that religion does not operate in isolation. Some participants framed their job satisfaction and stress management primarily in terms of personal ethics, professional discipline, and pragmatic coping strategies. This suggests that spiritual values interact with moral commitments, cultural norms, and organizational conditions rather than functioning as a single, dominant determinant of job satisfaction. Nevertheless, the results point to the importance of treating religiosity and spirituality as analytically significant dimensions when examining how employees evaluate and respond to their working conditions.

From a practical perspective, the study implies that organizations may benefit from policies that respect and accommodate employees' spiritual and religious needs, without imposing any particular belief system. Providing reasonable opportunities for religious practice, fostering a climate of respect for different convictions, and recognizing the moral concerns of workers can support well-being and resilience in demanding industrial settings. In this regard, spirituality can be understood as a potential resource for aligning employees' values with organizational life and for navigating the complex challenges facing contemporary workplaces.

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