THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPIRITUAL ENGAGEMENT AND THE NEED FOR RECOVERY FROM WORK AMONG ADJUNCT FACULTY AT ONLINE COLLEGES

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A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor

of Philosophy

Omega Graduate School

Graduation Date

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ABSTRACT

The abstract appears at the front of the report, but it is written after all else has been completed. An abstract is a short unbiased summary (no more than 350 words) of the main elements of the completed research, so it is never part of a proposal. An abstract includes: introduction to the subject, description of what was done, results, and the meaning of it all. It captures the content of Chapters 3, 4, and 5 in extremely condensed form. This may be the most difficult part of the dissertation to write because it must clearly describe the whole in a few words.

Decide what will be of most value to your reader. If it were a sports story, you'd tell who won (the result), what sport it was (procedure), who played (context), and why it was important (significance). Same thing here. Make sure that it is clear to someone who knows nothing about the topic of your research. It is brief—just an overview to show that it was a carefully executed study. (A report of an NFL game doesn't recite the rule book.) State each hypothesis and whether it was supported or not supported. Brag objectively about the significance if you wish. You may use energetic language even though it is written in formal style (APA 6th, 2.04, p. 25). The page is counted, but no page number is shown.

DEDICATION [Optional]

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS [Optional]

Acknowledgments are short and vivid like thank you's at the Academy Awards but more sincere. Mention only the most meaningful helpers. Place on its own page, centered three inches from the top of the page.

EPIGRAPH [Optional]

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Unbalanced job demands and resources can lead to work related stress and burnout among adjunct faculty in online colleges. Helping employees access personal spiritual resources could increase work engagement and recovery from work. These issues are examined by this research. This chapter introduces the problem and its background, the context of this research, its significance, hypotheses to be tested, and assumptions about this type of research*.*

Problem Statement

It is not known if there is a relationship between spiritual engagement and the need for recovery from work among adjunct faculty in online colleges.

Background of the Problem

A gap in the literature existed among Christian social researchers studying the effects of spiritual engagement on non-ministerial professions. A handful of research existed on these constructs among pastors and ministers. However, the same research questions were not being conducted for adjunct faculty in online colleges. As well as the significant gap in empirical research, Christian social researchers were not integrating faith into the workplace, which left many Christians to rely on resources based on incompatible worldviews such as atheism, humanism, and pantheism.

Non-Christian scholars built an extensive research base over the past four decades addressing work engagement, recovery from work, stress, and burnout. There were two primary worldview perspectives that the current research established. First, a humanistic worldview limited the employee resources and work demands to material objects such as compensation, promotion, and benefits or temporal circumstances such as supervisor feedback, environmental pressures, emotional demands, and so forth. Within the humanistic framework, there was no acknowledgment of spiritual resources available for the employee to mitigate work-related stress and burnout. Employers and employees were relegated to negotiate between material, tangible resources, and demands to improve work engagement and productivity. Pantheism was a second existing worldview with research support in employee work engagement. Several studies have demonstrated the positive effects of mindfulness on relieving work-related stress and increasing work engagement.

Setting of this Research

*Move from historical and demographic generalizations to more specific identification of the local expression of the problem where you will study it. Where is it? How many people are affected in that area? How are they affected? How do you have access to these people?*

Thesis Statement

This quantitative correlational study will investigate the relationship spiritual engagement and the need for recovery from work among adjunct faculty in online colleges.

Null Hypotheses

H0 There is a no statistically significant correlation between spiritual engagement and the need for recovery from work among adjunct faculty in online colleges.

Alternative Hypotheses

Ha1 There is a statistically significant correlation between spiritual engagement and the need for recovery from work among adjunct faculty in online colleges.

Scope of the Research

*The scope of your project sets clear parameters for your research. A scope statement will give basic information about the depth and breadth of the project. It tells your reader exactly what you want to find out, how you will conduct your study, the reports and deliverables that will be part of the outcome of the study, and the responsibilities of the researchers involved in the study. The extent of the scope will be a part of acknowledging any biases in the research project. Defining the scope of a project: focuses your research goals; clarifies the expectations for your research project; helps you determine potential biases in your research methodology by acknowledging the limits of your research study; and identifies the limitations of your research.*

*Typically, the information that you need to include in the scope would cover the following: 1. General purpose of the study; 2. The population or sample that you are studying; 3. The duration of the study; 4. The topics or theories that you will discuss; and 5. The geographical location covered in the study.*

Research Assumptions

*Assumptions are those things we take for granted in the study: statements by the researcher that certain elements of the research are understood to be true. While assumed, they should still be explicitly stated in the body of the dissertation, usually in chapter 1. Assumptions are made about (a) the theory under investigation, (b) the phenomenon under investigation, (c) the instrument, (d) the methodology, (e) the analysis, (f) the power to find significance, (g) the participants in the study, and (h) the results.*

The following assumptions are made regarding this study: a) the closed-ended Likert scale instruments to be used will elicit reliable responses; b) the respondents will fully understand the questions they will be asked; c) the respondents will provide honest expressions of their knowledge; and d) the researcher will conduct the research design and methodology in a consistent manner.

Significance of the Research

Higher education is relying more on adjunct faculty to deliver course instruction rather than full-time tenured faculty (Murray, 2019). There is a heightened state of stress and exhaustion experienced by adjunct faculty (Han et al., 2020). Moderate to high need for recovery results in burnout, a psychological condition characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and diminished sense of personal accomplishment (Maslach et al., 2001). Focusing on spiritual engagement as a resource for employee work engagement may enable adjunct faculty working in an online environment to experience recovery from work and relief from work-related stress leading to decreased burnout. Current literature focused on adjunct faculty promotes negotiating job demands and resources to achieve job satisfaction and well-being. However, there is a gap in the literature concerning spiritual engagement of adjunct faculty to reduce the need for recovery from work. Spiritual resources are a class of personal resources derived from a connection with the divine being (Hashemi et al., 2017). Spiritual engagement differs from workplace spirituality by focusing on individual practices rather than the organizational environment.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of current literature is conducted as part of this research paper. The literature studied is directly related to the thesis of this paper. The information, summarized in this chapter, helps to shape the hypothesis listed in Chapter 3.

Sources Consulted

The literature review was obtained from journals and books at the National Library of Congress, the Akron University Bierce Library, the Youngstown State University Maag Library, and Omega Graduate School. Systematic bibliographic searches were performed to find relevant English language, peer-reviewed, studies from several databases including but not limited to SAGE, Springer, Science Direct, Elsevier, PsychINFO, ERIC, ProQuest, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar.

Abstracts, titles, and keywords of studies were searched using combinations of the following terms: “work engagement”, “spiritual resources”, “spirituality at work”, “spiritual engagement”, “adjunct faculty burnout”, “job resources”, “need for recovery”, “sabbath rest”.

A search of article bibliographies identified additional current scholarly, peer-reviewed articles. Authors and other experts will be contacted for unpublished studies. Interviews will be conducted with other professional experts in spiritual engagement practices.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between spiritual engagement and the need for recovery from work among adjunct faculy in online colleges. The problem is that it is unknown if there is a relationship between spiritual engagement and the need for recovery from work among adjunct faculy in online colleges. This quantitative correlational study will evaluate the relationship between spiritual engagement and the need for recovery from work among adjunct faculty in online colleges.

Historical/Conceptual Background

The Problem of Work

According to the American Psychological Association’s (APA) 2021 Work and Well-being Survey of 1,501 U.S. adult workers, 79% of employees had experienced work-related stress the month before the survey. Nearly 3 in 5 employees reported negative impacts of work-related stress (APA, 2020). Increased technological advancements have created a more significant strain on individual employees. The primary economic model of capitalism overemphasizes productivity and efficiency, often at the expense of employee well-being. Western society located the identity and worth of the individual on their contribution to economic gain. Consumerism has become the vehicle for social status and an external marker of well-being. The 'Great Resignation' of 2021 initiated by the global COVID-19 pandemic was a societal reaction to the problematic working conditions of the 21st century. Some interpret the workforce reaction as a refusal to work. Alternatively, it may be possible to classify the large-scale resignations as a reevaluation of the meaning of work for the individual in a post-pandemic era.

Higher education was relying more on adjunct faculty to deliver course instruction rather than full-time tenured faculty (Murray, 2019). There was a heightened state of stress and exhaustion experienced by adjunct faculty (Han et al., 2020). Moderate to high need for recovery results in burnout, a psychological condition characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and diminished sense of personal accomplishment (Maslach et al., 2001). Workplace conflicts had the strongest correlation to employee burnout (Danauske, Raisiene & Korsakiene, 2023). Adjunct faculty were experiencing exhaustion, burnout, and greater work-family conflict. The current adjunct model also has severe human and moral costs: faculty members often live on poverty wages without benefits, job security or career trajectory. The existing dominant workplace models, Job Demand-Resources and Job Crafting, fail to integrate spiritual engagement adequately and thus only able to offer a partial remedy.

Focusing on spiritual engagement as a resource for employee work engagement may enable adjunct faculty teaching in an online environment to experience recovery from work and relief from work-related stress leading to decreased burnout. Current literature focused on adjunct faculty promotes negotiating job demands and resources to achieve job satisfaction and well-being. However, there is a gap in the literature concerning spiritual engagement of adjunct faculty to reduce the need for recovery from work. Spiritual resources are personal resources derived from a connection with the divine being (Hashemi et al., 2017). Spiritual engagement differs from workplace spirituality by focusing on individual practices rather than the overall organizational environment.

Motivation Theory in the Workplace

Several motivation theories within organizational psychology inform workplace management. Each motivation theory is built on prior assumptions of general human behavior. This chapter examines the dominant workplace motivation theories.

**Hobfoll's Conservation of Resources Theory.** Most employees are inherently concerned with maintaining resources and preventing loss. Employees experiencing high strain have decreased job satisfaction and increased likelihood of burnout or turnover. Hobfoll's conservation of resources theory (1989) explains why individuals seek resources and respond when resources are threatened. Conservation of resources (COR) theory explains human motivation in the workplace proposing that "…individuals will strive to maintain, preserve, cultivate, defend, and build those resources that they value" (Dewe, 2017, p. 429). According to Hobfoll's theory, stress is a reaction to a threat or loss of real or perceived resources (Holmgreen et al., 2017; Hobfoll et al., 2018). Conservation of Resources theory claims the primary motivator is to seek to obtain, retain, and protect resources to avoid stress, be psychologically healthy, and have positive flow experiences. However, COR does not identify which resources provide the ultimate benefit.**Deci & Ryan's Self-Determination Theory.** Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of basic human needs has fundamentally shaped motivation theories in psychology. Deci and Ryan contextualize Maslow's theory in the workplace to describe employee needs. By studying employee behavior, Deci & Ryan (2000) have determined that employees have innate psychological needs, i.e., autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The degree to which the needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are met will determine the degree of employee job satisfaction, performance, and well-being (Goštautaitė, Bučiūnienė, & Milašauskienė, 2022). Rigby and Ryan (2018) described top-down management approaches often neglected critical and potent intrinsic motivational capacities within individual employees. Human resource management in the 21st century shifted emphasis from organizational, top-down employee engagement models toward individual, bottom-up approaches. From an individualistic perspective, employees exhibit three basic human needs: a) relatedness, the need to have close, affectionate relationships with others; b) autonomy, the need to control the course of their lives; and c) competence, the need to be effective in dealing with the environment (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Gagné et al., 2022).

**Csikszentmihalyi's Theory of Flow.** Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) seminal research on flow in athletics and competition has been applied to organizational psychology, causing greater insight into employee behavior in the workplace. Wolfgiel & Czerw (2017) defined flow as an "optimal autotelic experience, deep satisfaction or elation when the body or mind undertook a large voluntary effort to accomplish something difficult and worthwhile" (p. 220). Three components of work-related flow are task absorption, work enjoyment, and intrinsic motivation (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Bakker, 2008; Kahari, Mildred, & Marion, 2020; van Oortmerssen et al., 2020). Studies in work-related flow are a precursor in organizational psychology for recent studies in work engagement, burnout, and the need for recovery from work. Work-related flow and engagement share the vital dimensions of absorption in one’s work. However, work engagement refers to an overall mindset, whereas work-related flow refers to a momentary experience (Mikakangas et al., 2010; Rodriguez-Sanchez et al., 2011; Schaufeli et al., 2002; van Oortmerssen et al., 2020).

Caution should be observed in seeking flow experiences due to potential adverse effects. The addictive nature of autotelic experiences, such as flow, could lead to neglect in other significant areas of life (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Wolfigiel & Czerw, 2017). The experience of freedom and loss of self-criticism may cause individuals to constantly seek this flow state (Partington, Partington, & Olivier, 2009). This habit-forming tendency has been thoroughly explored in various fields, such as athletics, music, art, and video gaming (Chou & Ting, 2003). Therefore, to prevent negative consequences of flow, e.g., addiction, antisocial behavior, neglect of family or sleep, and other areas., it is worth the effort to broaden the range of the flow experience onto various spheres of life without focusing excessively on one of them (Schuler, 2012; Ramsay & Lorenz, 2020; Wolfigiel & Czerw, 2017). However, the offered solution of seeking flow in other areas of life to avoid the harmful effects of flow does not naturally lead to spiritual engagement. This highlights the importance of maintaining spiritual engagement, e.g., sabbath rest and meditation, which could counteract the addictive nature and restore work-life balance.

**Effort-Recovery Model.** Provides another theory of human motivation that connects physiological systems and psychological systems. Three components of the Effort-Recovery Model: 1) employees use psychological resources to deal with work-related activity; 2) resource usage leads to task performance and resource decline; and 3) recovery can begin when the work -related demands end (Meijman & Mulder, 1998). There are four classic recovery experiences: a) psychological detachment, which is not thinking about work during nonwork hours; b) relaxation, which is having a low activation level; c) mastery, which is facing a positive challenge to learn something new; and d) control, which is having a feeling of control over nonwork time (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007; Bennett, Bakker, & Field, 2017). The roots of the ERM can be found in several developments in organizational psychology. First, Lazarus & Folkman's (1984) distinguished work demands as either challenge demands or hindrance demands. Crawford et al. (2010) support these findings in their study. The stress-appraisal approach (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) shows that work demands could be positive or negative and helps recategorize work characteristics as challenge demands, hindrance demands, and job resources (Cavanaugh, Bowell, Roehling, & Boudreau, 2000). Challenge demands are work demands (i.e., time constraints, workloads, etc.) that become stressful but also contribute to employee self-efficacy (Bennett, Bakker, & Field, 2017), autonomous motivation, and increased work engagement in a problem-solving activity. However, problem-solving rumination during nonwork time is negatively related to psychological detachment (Querstret & Cropley, 2012). Employees struggle to find relaxation experiences. Podsakoff, LePine, & LePine (2007) demonstrated that work characteristics are positively related to long-term effects such as burnout and performance but have less to do with employee affect and energy resources. Emphasis is placed on employees' need for recovery after work to manage short-term effects of fatigue, exhaustion, and vigor. Short-term effects vary daily (Sonnentag, 2012; Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012).

Current Societal Concern

Organizational Psychology Models

The two dominant work engagement models in organizational psychology are the Job-Demands Resources model (Demerouti et al., 2001) and the Job-Crafting Theory (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). The Job-Demands Resources theory views all job characteristics (i.e., psychological, organizational, physical, and social) from an organizational perspective as either demands or resources. Job demands (e.g., high-pressure situations, emotionally demanding work, etc.) increase strain leading to cynicism, work-related stress, and potential burnout. Job resources help employees accomplish goals and mitigate the effects of job demands (Van Wingerden, Derks, & Bakker, 2017). Job resources (e.g., compensation, career advancement, peer support, etc.) lead to employee motivation, engagement, and productivity (Zhang & Parker, 2019). Employers use this top-down management approach to design jobs balancing demands and resources.

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model is a dominant perspective in organizational psychology. It appears that JD-R is less about provoking strategies for change and more about describing the dynamics of employee job effects.By definition, the JD-R model is all of the job characteristics from an organization’s perspective that categorize all characteristics as job demands or job resources. Research demonstrates that individual employees may vary in classifying a job demand as positive (i.e., challenge demand) or negative. Therefore, how can a job characteristic be inherently categorized as a challenge or hindrance demand without factoring in the effect on the employee?

The Job-Crafting Theory is an employee-initiated approach to shaping the work environment to fit individual needs when and as the employee feels necessary (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2012; Petrou et al., 2012). Employees engage in crafting through three domains, i.e., tasks, relationships, and cognitions. Job crafting presupposes an employee's proactive personality to initiate the job crafting process (Niessen, Weseler, & Kostova, 2016). The job crafting process demonstrates positive benefits of employee work engagement, such as vigor, dedication, and absorption (Oprea et al., 2019). Some research suggests that job crafting has adverse side effects, such as misaligned goals, unequal access, overwork, and exploitation (Demerouti, Bakker, & Halbesleben, 2015; Hood, 2019; Boehnlein & Baum, 2022).

Several authors attempted to bring these two theories together. “Job crafting behaviors are characterized by four dimensions: increasing structural job resources, increasing social job resources, increasing challenging job demands, and decreasing hindering job demands” (Ferreira et al., 2022, p. 9). However, the Job Crafting model (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) and Job-Demands Resources model (Tims et al., 2012) maintain significant differences. They differ in how they define crafting content, with Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) focusing on changes in task/relational/cognitive boundaries, whereas Tims et al. (2012) focused on changes in job characteristics. They also differ concerning the purpose or aims underpinning crafting, with Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) considering crafting as a way to improve meaning and work identity, whereas Tims et al. (2012) considering crafting as a way to balance job resources and demands to achieve person-job fit" (Zhang and Parker, 2019, p. 127).

Job Demands-Resource theory advocates borrowing and conducting research that measures personal resources such as self-efficacy and optimism. Xanthopoulou et al.’s (2007) study, working with the JD-R theory, demonstrated that job resources tend to increase personal resources, thus, resulting in positive individual and organizational outcomes. As job resources are more accessible to employees, then employees will sense greater personal resources (e.g., self-efficacy, optimism) and remain engaged in the organization. Xanthopoulou et al.’s (2007) study claim to confirm the JD-R model and expand the model by locating personal resources within the framework. Bakker & Demerouti (2007) argue for including personal resources with the JD-R model based on Xanthopoulou et al.’s (2007) study. Bakker & Demerouti (2007) argue that “personal resources partly mediated the relationship between job resources and work engagement, suggesting that job resources foster the development of personal resources” (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, p. 323). In another study, Bakker & Demerouti (2008) explain the reasoning for expanding the JD-R model is based on Xanthopoulou et al.’s (2007) study showing how personal resources affect work engagement and that personal resources and job resources are interrelated. Nevertheless, the authors then recommend further research to establish the inclusion of personal resources in the JD-R model. The fact that personal and job resources are related to increased work engagement and decreased exhaustion is clear. However, the question is whether the JD-R model is designed and intends to incorporate personal resources. Though the original studies in Job Demands-Resource theory excluded personal resources, more recent studies have expanded the model to be more inclusive. Their preference for resources to be exclusively organizational rather than personal. Bakker & Demerouti (2017) allow the JD-R model to encompass personal resources and job crating.

Current Research Relevant to Key Ideas and Phenomena

Hobfoll bases the conservation of resources theory on an "evolutionary need to acquire" resources (Hobfoll et al., 2018). However, in Matthew's gospel, Jesus also connects the concept of stress to acquiring resources (*New International Version,* *1973/2011*, Matthew 6). From a biblical perspective, stress increases with the preoccupation with more resources. Hobfoll and Jesus address the perception of a lack of available resources. The distinctive difference is that Jesus' approach locates the provision of resources in God's covenant with his people. In contrast, Hobfoll assumes that the world is a place of scarcity in which self-preservation strategies are necessary for survival. Perceiving the world as a threatening place where resources are scarce can be connected to the post-Fall reality in Genesis.

The two dominant work engagement models in organizational psychology are the Job-Demands Resources model (Demerouti et al., 2001) and the Job-Crafting Theory (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Each model has significant inadequacies from a Christian worldview perspective. The theoretical model of the Job-Demands Resources theory is based on a unidirectional relationship between the employer/employee. As a top-down approach to organizational behavior, employers are responsible for designing jobs with a proper balance of demands and resources. Job resources are believed to help employees accomplish goals and mitigate the effects of job demands (Van Wingerden, Derks, & Bakker, 2017). Job demands lead to eventual burnout, and job resources lead to work engagement. This dynamic presupposes a nonmutual, even adversarial, relationship between employer and employee. In this model, there is no room to recognize the potential of employees to have internal motives for productive work and accountability. The burden of accountability is placed on management, and the employee is considered a passive player in the relationship. This model does not allow for mutual goal setting and alignment between management and the employee.

Though Job-Crafting takes an opposite bottom-up approach to organizational behavior, it is incompatible with a Christian worldview perspective on work and employee well-being. First, the Job-Crafting theory presupposes a proactive employee to begin the process of job crafting (Teng & Chen, 2019; Vermooten et al., 2019). The outcomes of job crafting could lead to greater work engagement and job satisfaction or potentially overwork and exploit the employee at the cost of the employee's well-being (Bolino et al., 2016; Harju, Kaltiainen, & Hakanen, 2021). Experts identify the potential for employee exploitation as the 'dark side' of Job-Crafting; however, there is not an adequate explanation for how to avoid this downside (Demerouti, Bakker, & Halbesleben, 2015; Hood, 2019; Boehnlein & Baum, 2022). The Job-Crafting model prioritizes work productivity as the Job-Demands Resources model over employee well-being. The burden of responsibility for rectifying an imbalance of demands and resources is left to the proactive employee. Employees without proactivepersonalities cannot access the Job-Crafting model's benefits (Niessen, Weseler, & Kostova, 2016; Vermooten et al., 2019). Studies show conflicting evidence about the ability of employees to job craft in all occupations. Some authors argue that specific work environments and industries may be hostile or incompatible with a proactive employee seeking job crafting (Rudolph et al., 2017), whereas Petrou et al. (2012) stated that job crafting can occur in any occupational context.

Spiritual Engagement

Bickerton et al. (2014) was the first study to operationalize spiritual resources as a subcategory of personal resources within Hobfoll's (1989) Conservation of Resources (COR) theory. Spiritual resources, defined as beliefs, practices, and experiences that result from a connection to the divine, include a secure attachment to God, collaborative religious coping, and calling (Bickerton et al., 2014). Atttachment to God is considered a personal resource at work because it buffers work demands; however, the authors do not define secure attachment to God. Collaborative religious coping is an "active coping style that combines self-help with seeking the support and involvement of God," and calling is defined as a "summons to a particular work activity that originates from a transcendent sacred source" (Bickerton et al., 2014, p. 372).

One of the more significant conclusions Bickerton et al. (2014) found was that spiritual resources had a more significant effect on work engagement than job resources among religious workers. This finding supports personal resources within the conceptual framework of Job-Crafting and agrees with Demerouti et al.’s (2001) insistence that Job Demands-Resources model (JD-R) should only include organizational resources job control, autonomy, promotion, and task variety. Though the Bickerton et al. (2014) study offers significant advancement of spiritual resources to manage job demands, personal resources are not conceptually part of the JD-R model. The Job Demands-Resources model identifies job characteristics as demands on the employee or a resource the employee can leverage against the demands. However, the founding authors explicitly state that the demands and resources are considered inherent in the job design and cannot include individual employee characteristics (Demerouti et al, 2001). As a result, employees can leverage spiritual resources to improve work engagement. This study would have better fit spiritual resources within the Job-Crafting model since it provides employees the capacity to achieve work engagement from a bottom-up conceptual approach.

Bickerton et al. (2014) inaccurately cites Demerouti et al.’s (2001) founding study on JD-R model as claiming that job resources and personal resources promote work engagement (Bickerton et al., 2014, p. 371). However, Demerouti et al. (2001) take the position that "in our study, we focus on external resources because there is no general agreement regarding which internal resources can be considered stable or situation independent - and which can be changed by adequate job design" (p. 501). The full scope of job resources included feedback, job rewards, job control, participation, job security, and supervisor support (Demerouti et al., 2001) which are strictly confined to job characteristics rather than personal resources.

Defining spirituality "spirituality, the human craving for connection with the transcendent, the desire to integrate the self into a meaningful whole, and attaining one's potential…" (Nwanzu & Babalola, 2021, p. 127). Spirituality can be loosely defined as "the basic feeling of being connected with one's complete self, others, and the entire universe" (Mitroff & Denton, 1999, p. 83). Three factors compose spirituality: connecting to the work community, finding significance at work, and accessing individual hopefulness (Arokiasamy & Tat, 2020). Cavanagh (1999) defined the concept as “the desire to find ultimate purpose in life, and to live accordingly.” Ashmos and Duchon (2000) defined spirituality at work as “recognition of an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of community.” Workplace spirituality has been defined as “a framework of organizational values evidenced in the culture that promote employees’ experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected to others in a way that provides feelings of completeness and joy” (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). Pawar (2008) defined workplace spirituality as “employee experiences of self-transcendence, meaning, and community in the workplace and it also acknowledges that these experiences could come from various mechanisms including organizational ones.”

"According to the theory of workplace spirituality, employees feel connected to their colleagues and the institutions they work for and a congruence between their values and the values of the institution. They feel a sense of accomplishment in the job. All these factors are an indication that the employees feel as part of the system, they tend to work with a purpose, building esteem in the job and in a way feel a sense of belonging to the institution" (Arokiasamy & Tat, 2020, p. 859).

"The study throws light on the fact that if the academic employees find the leadership style at the university is transformational with increase in idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration; this positively affects the intention of the employees to stay with their current institutions and achieve greater job satisfaction and enrichment thus reducing the turnover rate of academic employee’s departure to other institutions" (Arokiasamy & Tat, 2020, p. 860).

As educators experience a need for recovery, school administrators should be looking for new ways to offer spiritual resources. This is additive to the role spirituality plays in well-being. The study shows well-being is affected by decreasing burnout and increasing job satisfaction. This study should provide a significant basis for advocating spiritual engagement. “The proposed research model shows that spiritual resources have multiple simultaneous and cross-functional functions. This means that they simultaneously help to weaken emotional burnout and strengthen job enthusiasm, and then simultaneously and intermittently reduce redundancies and ultimately increase wellbeing” (Hashemi et al., 2017, p. 18). "Spiritual resources are a class of personal resources derived from a connection with a sacred being. This includes beliefs, customs, and activities related to the sacred, and increase a person's flexibility as well as his perception of control and influence over his environment" (Hashemi et al., 2017, p. 2). "Meaningfulness can be defined as the value of a work that relates to the ideals or norms of individuals" (Hashemi et al., 2017, p. 4). "Secure attachment to God is defined as a sense of a supportive relationship from God or a divine experience in personal life or work. Religious coping strategies use religous behaviors and beliefs to facilitate problem-solving in order to prevent or reduce the emotional consequences of stressful living conditions (Koenig, Pargament, & Nielsen, 1998). Sanctification of work is defined as the consideration of a particular work activity that originates from a transcendent sacred source (Estger, Pickering, Sheen, & Dick, 2010)" (Hashemi et al., 2017, p. 5). The results showed that spiritual resources, both directly and indirectly through emotional exhaustion and work engagement, have significant effects on employees' work well-being and turnover intention. The results also indicated that spiritual resources, despite cultural and religious differences, can increase the perception of control, the sense of meaning and calling and flexibility in the employees, thereby reducing emotional exhaustion and increasing work engagement (Hashemi et al., 2017).

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research design and methodology for this quantitative correlational study. The problem statement summarizes the research, followed by a thesis statement concerning what will be done in the research and a list of the null hypotheses that will be tested. Operational definitions explain the survey questions and responses used to describe variables in the hypothesis. Assumptions regarding the research methodology, study limitations, and ethical compliance are explained. Procedures for gathering research are detailed and include a population and sample groups description. Two instruments…

regarding the relationship between spiritual resources and the need for recovery from work among adjunct faculty at online universities. This approach describes the extent to which predictor variables relate to outcome variables (Plano Clark, 2015). The applicability of a correlational design for this study is discussed in depth in this chapter. The research plan, including the methodology, study participants, procedures, analysis method, and ethical concerns, are also primary components of this chapter.

Problem Statement

The problem is that it is unknown if there is a relationship between spiritual engagement and the need for recovery from work among adjunct faculty at online colleges.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study is to investigate the relationship between spiritual engagement and the need for recovery from work among adjunct faculty in online colleges.

Thesis Statement

This quantitative correlational study will investigate the relationship between spiritual engagement and the need for recovery from work among adjunct faculty at online colleges.

Null Hypotheses

H0 There is no statistically significant correlation between spiritual engagement and the need for recovery from work among adjunct faculty in online colleges.

Alternative Hypotheses

Ha1 There is a statistically significant correlation between spiritual engagement and the need for recovery from work among adjunct faculty in online colleges.

Operational Definitions

Spiritual engagement refers to practices that "awaken, strengthen, or deepen a person's intimacy or connection with God, and are intended to refresh by connecting the heart with the head” (Schwanda, 2010, as cited in Roof et al., 2017, p. 219). The most widely accepted spiritual practices identified in the literature are meditation, prayer, reading sacred texts, fasting, worship, and spiritual rest or Sabbath (Roof et al., 2017, p. 220).

Sabbath rest is "considered a blessed rest from toil and troubles; it is an engagement in the work of God, and a matter of obedience. The Sabbath rest reminded God's people that their lives and land belonged to God. Israelites interpreted the Sabbath as a right ordering of life, and keeping it signified a right relationship with God, with people, animals, and the land" (Gallagher, 2019, p. 7). In addition to the observance of an official stop from work activity, rest is also an "inward attitudinal respite and reflection on God. Virtuous rest involves the Sabbath heart--the orienting of our hearts and minds towards God, reflecting on His presence, enjoying His creation, and humbly admitting that He is sovereign" (White et al., 2015, p. 2).

Spiritual resources are a "class of personal resources derived from a connection with a sacred being. This includes beliefs, customs, and activities related to the sacred, and increase a person's flexibility as well as his or her perception of control and influence over his or her environment" (Hashemi, 2017, p. 2).

Recovery from work "The four most researched recovery experiences are psychological detachment, not thinking about work during nonwork time; relaxation, having a low activation level; mastery, facing a positive challenge to learn something new; and control, having a feeling of control over nonwork time" (Bennett, Bakker, & Field, 2017, p. 262).

Work engagement is a "positive fulfilling psychological state characterized by a) vigor - high levels of energy and resilience; b) dedication – experiencing a sense of significance, pride, and challenge; and c) absorption – being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work" (Schaufeli, 2017, p. 121).

Burnout is an ever-increasing phenomenon impacting employees caught meeting the high employer demands for productivity and maximum profit while neglecting the employees' overall well-being (Gallagher, 2019). Burnout has become part of the common vernacular mainly due to the groundbreaking work of Maslach & Jackson’s (1981) study and the development of an instrument measuring burnout among workers in the human services sectors. However, significant shortcomings of this instrument have led to reconceptualizing employee burnout to incorporate the strenuous work performed in other fields. The Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI; Demerouti et al., 2008) was developed in favor of the more inclusive conceptualization. Demerouti et al. (2001) explains that the OLBI includes two dimensions, exhaustion, and disengagement from work, where “Exhaustion is defined as a consequence of intensive physical, affective, and cognitive strain…[and] disengagement refers to distancing oneself from one's work and experiencing negative attitudes toward the work object, work content, or one's work in general” (pp. 499-501). This conceptual shift has led to social researchers preferring the OLBI dimensions of exhaustion and disengagement to measure burnout through the symptoms of tiredness, mental weariness, emotional exhaustion, extreme or prolonged fatigue, etc. (Bernales-Turpo et al., 2022).

Work-related flow has been studied in various contexts over the past five decades. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) described *flow* as a mental state of operation in which a person is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and success during a specific athletic or leisure activity. It is an "autotelic experience, deep satisfaction or elation when the body or mind undertakes a large voluntary effort to accomplish something difficult and worthwhile" (Wolfigiel & Czerw, 2017, p. 220). The characteristics of flow measured during work activity are described as a) a task absorption - a state of total concentration where employees are preoccupied with work; b) work enjoyment - an effect of cognitive and affective evaluation of experienced flow at work; and c) intrinsic work motivation - performing a professional task in order to experience the pleasure and satisfaction that comes from this activity" (Wolfigiel & Czerw, 2017, p. 221).

Job resources "refer to those physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that may do any of the following: a) be functional in achieving work goals; b) reduce job demands at the associated physiological and psychological costs; and c) stimulate personal growth and development" (Demerouti et al., 2001, p. 501).

Job demands "refer to those physical, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical or mental effort and are therefore associated with certain physiological and psychological costs (e.g., exhaustion)" (Demerouti et al., 2001, p. 501).

Job crafting "the physical and cognitive changes individuals make in the task or relational boundaries of their work" (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001, p. 179). Through the proce of job crafting, employees "shape the boundaries of their jobs and create a work environment that fits their preferences, skills, and competences" (Tims et al., 2015, p. 914). "Job crafting is the process whereby employees, through their personal initiative, adjust their work environment to ensure that their need for congruence with their environment is met and to improve the meaningfulness of their work-related activities (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). As opposed to other bottom-up but reactive approaches to job redesign (e.g. employee participation in job redesign), job crafting denotes a self-initiated proactive work behaviour" (Craft 1995 as cited in, Vermooten et al., 2019, p. 1).

Assumptions About Methodology

Quantitative research attempts to establish relationships between variables within a population. Quantitative research requires researchers to use numeric data to describe the attitudes, behaviors, or opinions of the sample population under study (Creswell & Creswell, 2009). The research must strive for objectivity and remain independent from the study subjects. This researcher assumes that the study's theoretical framework accurately reflects the phenomena being studied. The variables in this study are assumed to be measurable with validated and reliable instruments. This quantitative study addresses the potential correlations between the variables. Multiple variables are measured for each participant and statistics are used to determine the magnitude and direction of the associations among the variables (Plano Clark, 2015). The theoretical framework is assumed to accurately reflect the phenomena being studied. Therefore, the results of your study are limited by the accuracy of the theoretical framework to reflect the phenomena under study.

Limitations of the Study

*Limitations are those elements over which the researcher has no control. In most instances, any assumption you make becomes a limitation.*

Ethical Compliance

In preparation for conducting this study, I will complete the National Institutes of Health (NIH) training course, “Protecting Human Research Participants” (see Appendix XX). Additionally, I undertook to insure the protection of all participants through the use of a formal consent form that:

* Explained the purpose of the research;
* Described the quantitative data collection procedures and expected interview lengths;
* Disclosed a participant’s right to withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason;
* Described how a participant’s right to privacy were protected through the use of pseudonyms;
* Included procedures for adhering to federally regulated institutional review board guidelines.

I will secure all data on a web-based HIPPA compliant server monitored through a password-protected personal computer with limited access and accessibility.

While conducting this study, the ethical rules and considerations for research withhumans currently enforced in the United States and those outlined by the American PsychologicalAssociation were followed. All participants will be informed of the objectivesand scope of the research and their rights according to the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects in the United States (Federal Register, n.d., [45 CFR 46.116](https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2017-01058/p-818)).The participants who agreed to participate in the study will sign an informed consent letter.Participation in this study is voluntary and does not involve payment.

Procedures for Gathering Data

Population

The population consists of part-time and full-time adjunct faculty working in online colleges and universities in the United States midwest region. Some institutions offer online programs or online courses mixed with traditional face-to-face courses. Other institutions strictly offer online programs and courses. This study will only be concerned with adjunct faculty teaching online. Adjunct faculty, by definition, are considered part-time employees of the university. However, many adjunct faculty work at multiple universities or colleges to collectively obtain full-time workloads. The population for this study will be any faculty with adjunct status.

The Sample

The sample was taken from three online colleges and universities located in the midwestern United States. However, the faculty may be located across the country or international.

Instrument(s)

This research usedc two validated instruments, the Spiritual Engagement Instrument (SpEI; Roof, Bocarnea, & Winston, 2017) and the Need for Recovery Scale short-form (NFR; Stevens et al., 2019). The purpose of these two instruments is to measure an individual’s spiritual engagement in correlation to that individual’s need for recovery from work.

The Spiritual Engagement Instrument (SpEI; Roof, Bocarnea, & Winston, 2017) is a tool that measures factors of spiritual engagement in four dimensions (i.e., worship, meditation, fasting, and rest). The SpEI is scored on a six-point Likert scale: strongly agree, moderately agree, mildly agree, mildly disagree, moderately disagree, and strongly disagree. The SpEI can measure the four dimensions in conjunction with other social constructs, such as job satisfaction or leadership behaviors in the workplace (Roof et al., 2017). The Cronbach alpha values for each of the four dimensions of the SpEI are: worship 0.94, meditation 0.96, fasting 0.98, and rest 0.96. The four factors explain 85.24% of the variance (Roof et al., 2017).

The Need for Recovery Scale (NFR) developed by Stevens et al. (2019) is a validated short-form version of the Danish Need for Recovery Scale. The short-form scales can reduce the burden on researchers and respondents of creating and validating a short-form Danish version of the NFR Scale (Stevens et al., 2019). The short-form NFR scale consists of three items (exhausted at the end of a work day, hard to find interest in other people after a work day, it takes over an hour to recover from a work day fully) demostrated excellent validity and responsiveness compared to the Danish nine-item scale (Stevens et al., 2019). The Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC) score is 0.88, identical to a Cronbach alpha score. The ICC Responsiveness score is 0.80 (Stevens et al., 2019, p. 11). The authors state, “Moreover, our assessment of construct validity demonstrated that this short-form version is consistent with the full 9-item scale. Therefore, we assert that a short-form version of items 2, 6, and 7, provides the best approximation of the underlying constructs captured by the full 9-item Danish NFR Scale” (Stevens et al., 2019, p. 12). The Need for Recovery short-form version is scored on a five-point Likert scale.

Data Collection

Research participants will be allowed to complete the demographic and assessment surveys through an online survey application. Survio survey software will host the online survey. Participants will be provided an email link with a unique code associated with each survey. Participants will answer a short survey of questions associated with the two validated instruments identified in this study (See Appendix XX). Participants will be assigned a unique identifier associated with data collection and analysis. Personally identifying information will not be shared with the researcher.

Time Schedule

Table x. Time Schedule

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Task | Date |
| Pre-proposal development |  |
| Turn in proposal prior to defense |  |
| Defend proposal |  |
| Secure permision to distribute survey |  |
| Gather the survey data |  |
| Organize and analyze the data |  |
| Revised Chapters 1, 2, and 3 |  |
| Write Chapter 4 |  |
| Write Chapter 5 |  |
| Send Chapters 4 and 5 to advisor |  |
| Add front and back matter |  |
| Submission of dissertation |  |
| Defense of dissertation |  |
| Submission of error-free dissertation |  |

Procedures for Analyzing Data

This researcher believed that spiritual engagement practices could improve work engagement and job satisfaction, thereby alleviating the need for recovery from work adjunct faculty. The hypothesis created to test this belief is shown here.

Organization of the Data

Analysis of the Data

CHAPTER 4: SUMMARY OF RESULTS

[Brief introductory paragraph.]

Descriptions of the Sample

Response Level

Demographic Data

Tests of the Hypotheses

Tests and Results of Hypothesis 1

Tests and Results of Hypothesis 2

Tests and Results of Hypothesis 3

Other Observations

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

[Brief paragraph of introduction to the chapter without a heading.]

Conclusions

Interpretation

Recommendations

[Appropriate Level 2 Headings of Your Choice]

Suggestions for Further Research

[BACK MATTER]

Many details are compiled in a section known as back matter. This information is more detailed than is needed for general comprehension of the purpose and outcomes of the research but is preserved in the report so that the entire process can be verified or repeated. Include all elements that were part of your research. These pages all carry page numbers.

Works Cited. All materials referred to in the text.

Related Works. (Rarely used). Materials used in the development of the project, but not cited in the text. These materials provide prerequisite or supplemental information not used in the research but that is closely related to the topic.

Appendixes

The author's vita

Index (Rarely used)

[OTHER BACK MATTER]

Anything else that is important to add follows the appendixes. Such items, which are optional and depend upon the nature of a particular project, could include:

Bibliography (materials consulted that contributed to your project but not cited)

Sources recommended for further information on the subject of the research

These are used uncommonly, but if you have materials that you believe must be included to enable optimal comprehension and use of the content, talk to your advisor about including them. Extraneous material diminishes the credibility of the study.

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Works read in preparation for a research study but not quoted, and thus omitted from the Works Cited section, may be listed alphabetically in an optional section entitled Related Works placed immediately after the Works Cited. The references follow the same APA 6th format. Use only if the information is useful to the reader lest you appear to be padding your report.

APPENDIX A

TITLE OF APPENDIX

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The plural form of "appendix" may be either "appendixes" or "appendices." The dictionary followed by APA 6th (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 2005) shows "appendixes" as the preferred form, as do most other current dictionaries. The appendixes follow immediately after the Works Cited and are placed in the sequence in which their material appears in the body of the dissertation. The appendixes that are included depend upon the nature of the research. Each has a title page identified by a letter—A, B, C and so on. (This book does not follow that practice.) Should you have more than 26 (!), continue from Z as AA, AB, AC.

An appendix may contain only one item although that item may be multiple pages. For example, a survey would be in one appendix, but a permission form for a minor child to fill out the survey would be in another. Include all material that would help a naïve reader to comprehend exactly what you did, but only if the material is relevant. Do not open yourself to criticism of padding out a weak report.

Side margins of an appendix may be narrowed to accommodate a data table, but reducing the size of the table is generally preferred. If the size of a figure or historical document is reduced, insert that information on the title page for that appendix (E.g., Map is 80% of actual size.)

[Common Appendixes in Quantitative Dissertations]

Create a separate appendix for each significant element. Common components include:

All of the raw data collected for the project. This should be in an Excel spreadsheet or a similar recapitulation of the data. This is required.

Cover letter that accompanied a survey or other instrument.

A copy of every instrument unless it is a restricted instrument. If you created it and modified it after a pilot study, include the preliminary version. Include the scoring key for the instrument unless it is restricted.

Any instruction or other information given to participants. If given orally or by

recording, include the script.

Letter requesting permission to do research at a location or to sample a group.

Authorization received in response to a request for permission.

A copy of a release form signed by parent/guardian/conservator.

Forms for permission, release of information, or waiver of liability

CURRICULUM VITAE

A one-page vita is placed immediately after the last appendix. The vita includes significant summary information, including: date of birth; granting institution for previous college degrees with dates, degree nomenclature, and field of study; a brief summary of employment; and any other facts (such as awards) that describe your qualifications as a researcher. The information is limited so that it fits on one page with adequate white space.

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[Example Table]

Present your results here. Refer to the rubric for guidance on the content of sections in this chapter.