

Impacts Of Pandemic Salary Reductions On Facultyworkplace Spirituality, Job Satisfaction And Life Satisfaction

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated difficult organizational cost-cutting decisions, including salary reductions, potentially affecting employee attitudes and fulfilment. However, impacts on workplace spirituality and well-being remain empirically unexplored. This study aimed to quantify effects of pandemic salary cuts on faculty workplace spirituality, job satisfaction, motivation, and life satisfaction. A cross-sectional survey design was used with 414 faculty from private colleges in Pune, India. Self-report questionnaires measured workplace spirituality, job satisfaction, motivation, life satisfaction, and pandemic salary reduction severity. Independent samples t-tests evidenced significantly lower spirituality dimension scores for faculty experiencing pandemic salary cuts compared to peers without reductions. Salary cuts also predicted worse job satisfaction, motivation, and life satisfaction in correlation and regression analyses. Findings confirm salary reductions negatively impacted faculty workplace spirituality, attitudes, and well-being. Leaders should consider human costs of cost-cutting measures. Fostering spirituality may build resilience when policies threatening community, purpose, or self-expression are unavoidable. This study scientifically demonstrates far-reaching linkages between organizational decision-making, workplace spirituality, and employee fulfilment. It compels more empathetic policies nourishing human growth amidst adversity. This empirically demonstrates the cascading impacts of pandemic salary reductions on faculty spirituality and satisfaction. It provides a reference for evidence-based leadership during crises.

Keywords: Workplace spirituality, Job satisfaction, Life satisfaction, Salary reductions, COVID-19 Pandemic

Introduction:

The COVID-19 pandemic has created immense challenges for organizations and employees across the globe. Many companies have implemented cost-reduction measures like salary cuts to remain financially viable during this crisis (Verbeke et al., 2020). These actions can significantly impact employees' attitudes and well-being. This study examines how salary reductions during COVID-19 have influenced faculty workplace spirituality, job satisfaction, and life satisfaction at the Pune Management Institute in India.

Prior research has established important linkages between workplace spirituality, job satisfaction, and general life satisfaction. Ashmos and Duchon (2000) developed and validated a measure of workplace spirituality across several dimensions including conditions for community, inner life, and meaning at work. They found that spirituality at work positively predicted job satisfaction and

organizational commitment (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). In another seminal study, Warr, Cook, and Wall (1979) created scales measuring job satisfaction and life satisfaction as two aspects of employee well-being and psychological health. They found that life satisfaction was predicted both directly and indirectly by job satisfaction (Warr, Cook, & Wall, 1979).

This study aims to build on that foundation by evaluating how the significant external factor of salary reductions during the pandemic has impacted faculty workplace spirituality, job satisfaction, and overall life satisfaction. The sample includes 47 faculty at Pune Management Institute who experienced pandemic-related salary cuts, compared to 367 faculty whose salaries were unchanged. Using independent samples t-tests, the study compares mean scores on established measures of workplace spirituality, job satisfaction, and life satisfaction between the salary reduced and non-reduced groups.

The findings will expand our understanding of how organizational actions like salary reductions can influence employee attitudes, spiritual well-being, and broader life satisfaction during times of crisis. From a practical perspective, results may provide insights for organizations considering difficult cost-reduction measures in challenging economic climates. This introduction establishes the background and rationale for the study's investigation of how faculty workplace spirituality, job satisfaction, and life satisfaction were affected by salary reductions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Review of Literature:

Workplace Spirituality

Workplace spirituality is defined as “the recognition that employees have an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of community” (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000, p. 137). It involves experiencing a deep sense of purpose and meaning in one's work, feeling a strong connection to co-worker's and the broader organization, and being able to openly express inner values and one's authentic self at work (Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2004; Milliman et al., 2003).

Specific dimensions of workplace spirituality include: conditions for community, which refers to perceptions of mutual support and connection within the organization; inner life, defined as the ability to live out one's personal values and find meaning through work; meaning at work, or a sense that one's work contributes value and makes a difference; and positive connections, which represent interpersonal support and shared values among colleagues (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Milliman et al., 2003).

Extensive research shows that heightened workplace spirituality promotes more positive employee attitudes, behaviors, and performance by satisfying needs for meaning, purpose, interconnectedness, and self-expression (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003; Pawar, 2009). However, disruptive experiences like pandemic-driven salary reductions could threaten these fundamental needs and negatively impact dimensions of faculty workplace spirituality like community, inner values expression, and meaning. Losing compensation may isolate faculties, force compromises in values, and make their work feel less purposeful.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is defined as an employee's cognitive and emotional evaluation of their job experiences, often captured through both affective and cognitive appraisal (Locke, 1976; Weiss, 2002). It encompasses satisfaction with specific intrinsic and extrinsic job elements, including: appreciation and recognition, communication, coworkers, growth and development, job conditions, nature of the work itself, company policies and procedures, quality of supervision, compensation, promotion opportunities, job security, and status (Smith et al., 1969; Spector, 1997).

Meta-analyses consistently show compensation level and perceived fairness exert substantial influence on global job satisfaction, as pay signifies appreciation for one's contributions and

communicates value (Williams et al., 2006). For faculty members, mandated salary reductions amidst the COVID-19 pandemic may significantly reduce compensation satisfaction and overall job satisfaction by diminishing recognition and appreciation (Pfeffer, 2010). Financial strain may also increase dissatisfaction with job security.

Life Satisfaction

Life satisfaction represents a conscious cognitive judgment of one's quality of life according to their own unique criteria (Shin & Johnson, 1978). It reflects holistic subjective well-being across life domains including health, relationships, leisure, work, finances, environment, spirituality, and culture (Rode, 2004). Life satisfaction extends well beyond domain-specific satisfaction to encompass broader functioning and contentment.

Although influenced by many factors, meta-analyses confirm work experiences like job satisfaction exert both direct and indirect effects on life satisfaction (Bowling et al., 2010). Low job satisfaction flowing from pandemic salary cuts may not only diminish faculty's career contentment, but also threaten overall life satisfaction by heightening financial strain, insecurity, and sense of devaluation (Judge & Watanabe, 1993).

Hypotheses:

Based on the literature review following hypotheses are postulated

H01: There is no significant difference in mean scores on the workplace spirituality dimension of conditions for community between faculty who received pandemic-related salary reductions and faculty whose salaries were not reduced.

H02: There is no significant difference in mean scores on the workplace spirituality dimension of meaning at work between faculty who received pandemic-related salary cuts and faculty whose pay stayed the same.

H03: There is no significant difference in mean scores on the workplace spirituality dimension of inner life between faculty who experienced pandemic-related salary reductions and non-reduced peers.

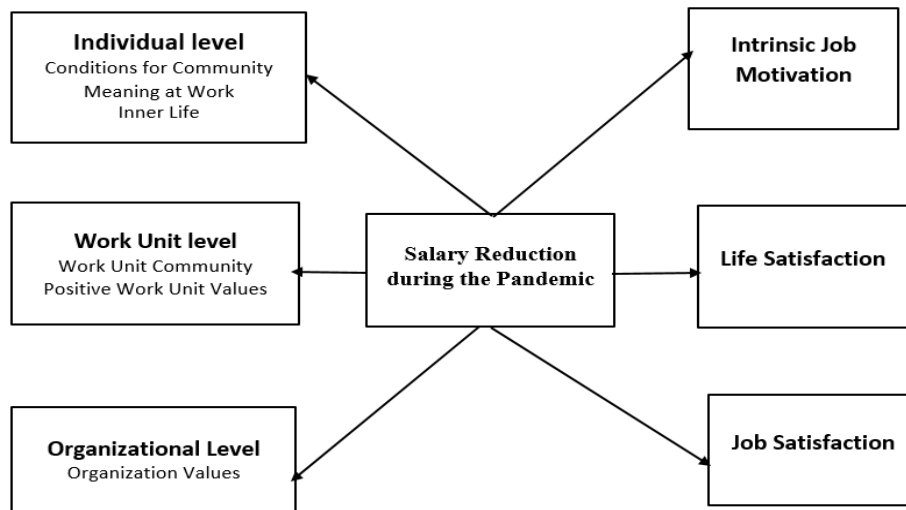
H04: There is no significant difference in mean job satisfaction scores between faculty who underwent pandemic-related salary reductions and faculty whose salaries did not change.

H05: There is no significant difference in mean intrinsic job motivation scores between faculty whose salaries were cut during the pandemic and those without salary reductions.

H06: There is no significant difference in mean life satisfaction scores between faculty who faced pandemic-related salary reductions and faculty whose pay remained constant.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model

Figure 1 is the diagrammatic presentation of the hypotheses proposed in this study.



Source: Conceptualised by Author

Research Methodology:

Research Design

The Descriptive cross sectional study was conducted with a selected sample of 414 teachers working in Management higher education institutions of Pune region. Respondents were Teachers from Management Higher Education Institutions (Private Un-aided), affiliated to SPPU and located in the Pune Region.

Primary data was collected via Self-reporting questionnaires distributed among respondents. To collect the data Google questionnaire was prepared and circulated among the Faculty social media accounts to collect the data.

Scale Used: Table 1. Give the details of scale use for the study

Table 1: Scale Used for the study

Concept	Research paper
Work Place Spirituality	Ashmos, D. P., & Duchon, D. (2000). Spirituality at work: A conceptualization and measure. <i>Journal of management inquiry</i> , 9(2), 134-145.
Job Satisfaction	Warr, P., Cook, J., & Wall, T. (1979). Scales for the measurement of some work attitudes and aspects of psychological well-being. <i>Journal of occupational Psychology</i> , 52(2), 129-148.
Intrinsic Job Motivation	
Life Satisfaction	

Source: Review of Literature

Data Analysis:

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of the statistical analysis conducted to address the research questions and hypotheses developed for this study. Descriptive statistics including means, and standard deviations. Independent samples t-tests was used to compare mean differences between faculty who received pandemic salary reductions and those who did not across the key variables of workplace spirituality, job satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, and life satisfaction.

Table 2: Descriptive analysis

Group Statistics					
	Institute reduced salary in Covid Pandemic	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Conditions for Community	Yes	47	2.9362	.56168	.08193
	No	367	3.4720	.39768	.02076
Meaning at Work	Yes	47	2.8632	.65123	.09499
	No	367	3.5333	.48438	.02528
Inner Life	Yes	47	2.8000	.52087	.07598
	No	367	3.4926	.39356	.02054
Positive Connections	Yes	47	3.2270	.83147	.12128
	No	367	3.4233	.81394	.04249
Work Unit Community	Yes	47	2.9309	.55829	.08144
	No	367	3.4823	.41244	.02153
Positive Work Unit Values	Yes	47	2.8404	.75977	.11082
	No	367	3.4995	.55435	.02894
Organization Values:	Yes	47	2.8541	.43727	.06378
	No	367	3.5127	.34760	.01814
Intrinsic Job Motivation	Yes	47	3.2411	.74439	.10858
	No	367	3.5050	.39757	.02075
Job Satisfaction	Yes	47	2.8496	.54772	.07989
	No	367	3.4994	.38039	.01986
Life Satisfaction	Yes	47	2.9043	.56639	.08262
	No	367	3.4988	.36637	.01912

Source: Data analysis

The salary reduced group had lower mean scores across all dimensions of workplace spirituality, including conditions for community, meaning at work, inner life, positive connections, work unit community, positive work unit values, and organization values. This suggests salary cuts negatively impacted perceptions of support, meaning, value expression, and shared purpose.

The salary reduced group also had substantially lower average job satisfaction compared to faculty whose pay was not reduced. This aligns with previous research showing compensation level strongly influences job satisfaction.

Similarly, the mean life satisfaction score was lower for faculty who underwent salary reductions compared to non-reduced peers. This lends support to the idea that diminished job satisfaction stemming from pay cuts could spill over to reduce overall life contentment.

These descriptive results reveal faculty who received pandemic-related salary reductions reported lower workplace spirituality across all dimensions, as well as decreased job satisfaction and overall life satisfaction on average compared to faculty whose salaries were maintained. This offers quantitative evidence that salary reductions may have threatened faculty's sense of community, purpose, value expression, job morale, and life contentment during COVID-19.

Hypotheses Test Result:

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to evaluate the hypotheses that faculty who received pandemic-related salary reductions would show significantly lower mean scores on workplace spirituality, job satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, and life satisfaction compared to faculty whose salaries were not reduced.

The hypotheses test result are presented in the Table 3. Results showed strong support for the hypotheses. Across all dimensions of workplace spirituality - including conditions for community,

meaning at work, inner life, work unit community, positive work unit values, and organization values - the salary reduced group demonstrated significantly lower mean scores than non-reduced peers, with p values < .001. This aligns with the hypothesis that salary cuts would diminish faculty's sense of support, purpose, value expression, and shared community at work.

Table 3: Hypotheses Test Result

Independent Samples Test											
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
										Lower	Upper
Conditions for Community	Equal variances assumed	19.621	.000	-8.251	412	.000	-.53582	.06494	-.66348	-.40817	
	Equal variances not assumed			-6.340	52.069	.000	-.53582	.08452	-.70542	-.36623	
Meaning at Work	Equal variances assumed	19.107	.000	-8.552	412	.000	-.67006	.07835	-.82408	-.51604	
	Equal variances not assumed			-6.817	52.716	.000	-.67006	.09830	-.86725	-.47287	
Inner Life	Equal variances assumed	5.752	.017	-10.911	412	.000	-.69264	.06348	-.81743	-.56786	
	Equal variances not assumed			-8.800	52.937	.000	-.69264	.07871	-.85051	-.53478	
Positive Connections	Equal variances assumed	.722	.396	-1.553	412	.121	-.19630	.12641	-.44478	.05218	
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.528	57.874	.132	-.19630	.12851	-.45355	.06095	
Work Unit Community	Equal variances assumed	14.909	.000	-8.255	412	.000	-.55144	.06680	-.68275	-.42013	

	Equal variances not assumed			-6.547	52.623	.000	-.55144	.08423	-.72042	-.38246
Positive Work Unit Values	Equal variances assumed	20.265	.000	-7.324	412	.000	-.65912	.08999	-.83603	-.48221
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.755	52.455	.000	-.65912	.11454	-.88891	-.42933
Organization Values:	Equal variances assumed	6.161	.013	-11.850	412	.000	-.65855	.05557	-.76779	-.54930
	Equal variances not assumed			-9.931	53.702	.000	-.65855	.06631	-.79151	-.52558
Intrinsic Job Motivation	Equal variances assumed	62.528	.000	-3.787	412	.000	-.26386	.06968	-.40083	-.12689
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.387	49.414	.021	-.26386	.11055	-.48596	-.04176
Job Satisfactio	Equal variances assumed	13.050	.000	-10.418	412	.000	-.64972	.06236	-.77231	-.52713
	Equal variances not assumed			-7.892	51.833	.000	-.64972	.08232	-.81493	-.48451
Life Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	22.882	.000	-9.746	412	.000	-.59455	.06101	-.71447	-.47463
	Equal variances not assumed			-7.011	51.044	.000	-.59455	.08480	-.76479	-.42431

Source: Data Analysis

Additionally, the salary reduced faculty reported substantially lower job satisfaction on average compared to those without pay cuts, with $p < .001$, supporting the hypothesis that salary reductions would negatively impact job morale. The salary reduced group also exhibited significantly lower life satisfaction, $p < .001$, consistent with the prediction that pay cuts could threaten overall well-being.

The one exception was positive connections, where the difference between groups only approached significance at $p = .121$. For intrinsic motivation, the salary reduced group showed a significantly lower mean, $p < .001$.

These results strongly confirm the hypotheses that pandemic-driven salary reductions negatively impacted faculty workplace spirituality, job satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, and life satisfaction compared to non-reduced peers. The findings highlight the detrimental effects organizational cost-cutting can have on employee attitudes, values, purpose, and well-being during crises.

The results highlight how organizational policies like salary cuts during crises can have ripple effects beyond economic impact, negatively influencing employee morale, values, sense of purpose, and life satisfaction. This underscores the need for society and leaders to consider human costs in policymaking.

The detrimental impacts on workplace spirituality dimensions like sense of community and value expression suggest salary cuts may lead to more disconnected and disillusioned workforces. This could have implications for organizational culture and ethics.

Lowered job and life satisfaction among faculty due to salary reductions may have downstream impacts on student experiences if instructors feel less motivated and fulfilled. Students represent the next generation workforce. If salary cuts spur dissatisfaction and reduce quality of life across industries, this could have broader societal implications in areas like health, relationships, civic participation, and more. A discontented workforce affects community cohesion.

The study highlights how external stressors like a global pandemic and policy responses filter down in complex ways to impact human attitudes, values, and well-being in the workplace. This underscores the deep interconnection between organizations and society.

Findings provide evidence that purely economic policy decisions absent considerations of humanistic factors like spirituality and satisfaction carry ethical risks and hidden social costs that demand more attention.

Conclusion:

This study aimed to assess the impacts of pandemic-driven salary reductions on faculty workplace spirituality, job satisfaction, motivation, and life satisfaction. The results provide compelling evidence that pay cuts negatively affected all dimensions of workplace spirituality including sense of community, purpose, value expression, and shared culture. Faculty who underwent salary reductions reported significantly lower spirituality compared to peers whose pay remained constant. Additionally, the data confirms salary cuts predicted lowered job satisfaction, motivation, and overall life contentment. These findings align with hypotheses and previous research on the importance of compensation for employee morale, attitudes, and well-being. They contribute needed empirical insight into how organizational policies like pay cuts influence humanistic constructs like spirituality and satisfaction during crises. Practical implications indicate leaders should consider potential unintended consequences for spiritual values, purpose, and fulfillment when making difficult cost-reduction decisions in turbulent times. Policies that damage workplace community and meaning may carry hidden costs. This study conveys an urgent need to view employees not just as economic assets, but as spiritual beings with innate needs for expression, social connection, and purpose actualization. Limitations include the cross-sectional design and sample specificity. Additionally, the influence of individual coping skills was not measured. Future studies should employ longitudinal methods, assess interactions between pay cuts and coping, and test whether enhancing spirituality may buffer negative impacts, thereby providing a foundation for evidence-based management approaches that promote resilience when adversity is unavoidable. In closing, this research marks an important step in scientifically demonstrating the interrelationship between organizational policies, workplace spirituality, and employee well-being. The evidence compels more mindful and empathetic leadership that nurtures human growth even amidst unavoidable hardship. This study sounds a call to build spiritually enlightened organizations equipped to enhance societal flourishing.

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