INVESTIGATING THE MODERATING EFFECT OF GENDER ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY AND EMPLOYEE LOYALTY

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Abstract: The human resource management (HRM) practices have been broadened to include a workplace spirituality (WS) dimension to increase employee loyalty to the organization. Employee loyalty plays a significant role in organizational development as well as economic growth around the world. The main purpose of this study is to investigate the moderating role of gender between workplace spirituality (WS) and employee loyalty (EL) in the Nigerian public sector. This study adopts a quantitative research approach. A survey, using a questionnaire, was conducted to obtain data from 500 public sector employees in Lagos state Nigeria. Structural Equation Modeling analysis using AMOS version 22 was conducted to determine the moderating role of gender between workplace spirituality and employee loyalty. The findings reveal that there is a strong causal relationship between workplace spirituality and employee loyalty in the Lagos state public sector. However, the worker's gender does not moderate the relationship between workplace spirituality and employees' loyalty. The study also establishes valid measures for workplace spirituality and employee loyalty constructs. It is evident from the findings that workplace spirituality is an underlying factor to reckon with in motivating an employee to be loyal to their organization. Hence, this study supports the use of workplace spirituality as one of human resource management practices dimension in the organization.

Keywords: Workplace Spirituality, Organization values, Sense of joy, Employees' Loyalty

1. Introduction

The growth and development of information and technology have created a new paradigm in managing employee concerns. As a result of divergence in communication, relationships, and strategic planning on employees' perceptions, loyalty in employees became a missing entity in an organization (Sheth et al., 2020). The decline of loyalty is becoming a syndrome in the business world today. Thus, it requires a critical review. For instance, managers in most organizations are desirous for organizational success regardless of their industry affiliation. The basic yardstick to achieve this success in the competitive business environment is having satisfied and loyal employees, who will ensure the completion of a business project. This foreshadows reliance on loyalty within the business environment (Rajput, Singhal & Tiwari, 2016)

Given the dynamic business environment, employers need to devise strategies to retain their experts and keep them loyal. By so doing, employers can avoid brain drain. However, it should be noted that sustained loyalty in any organization reflects management operations and practices, since these give clues to intending or existing employees about the company (Rana & Malik, 2017; Ribeiro & Gomes, 2016; Zhu et al., 2014). Hence, the operations and practices shape employees' perception of how they are treated. By implication, a satisfied employee is unlikely to seek another employment. Therefore, it becomes imperative to employ appropriate HRM policies. Particularly, those that can induce employee loyalty. By statute, HRM places great emphasis on the organizational structure by forming policies that enhance promotion opportunities, long-term development programs, and job security among employees. These are contributory factors towards employee loyalty.

Given this milieu, one of the practices or activities that can facilitate a positive impact on employee loyalty to the organization is workplace spirituality (WS). Spirituality is defined in this work as the state of being influenced by a supernatural being in ethics and deeds (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). A supernatural being refers to any 'sacred objects' of adoration believed to impact the ethics and deeds of a person.

Devendhiran and Wesley (2017) mentioned in their study that most organizations anticipate the inclusion of workplace spirituality as an alternative to physical and mental uprightness for their employees. Workplace spirituality is usually a combination of meaningful work connected to one's well-being. That is, the employee is living his or her life in the workplace environment in a meaningful way, which also goes in line with the organization's goals.

Workplace spirituality is an emerging paradigm that has the potential to guide organizational transformation and development to maximize the triple bottom line (Fry & Slocum, 2008; Rezapouraghdam, Alipour Arasli, 2018). Workplace spirituality is another strategy that can help an employee to be loyal to their organizations. It is an organization-based setting that promotes a happy workplace environment. It engenders employee-employer interactions. Workplace spirituality indicates a meaningful work environment wherein employees recognize that their work gives meaning or has a purpose for their lives, and community as well as people's feelings of connectedness to each other at work (Rezapouraghdam, Alipour & Arasli, 2018).

According to Ashmos and Duchon (2000); Pirkola, Rantakokko, and Suhonen (2016); Resource et al. (2015), the concept of workplace spirituality (WS) is now of growing interest. These authors pointed out that the understanding of WS by HR managers can provide a better idea about the environment in which employees conduct their activities. Garcia-Zamor (2003)

stated that many organizations are considering the incorporation of WS because it can create a positive relationship between the employee and the organization.

Dehaghi, Goodarzi & Arazi (2012) indicate in their findings that when employees experience workplace spirituality, they feel more effectively close to their organization, experience a sense of responsibility and loyalty to the organization. Daniel (2010) argued that an organization might sustain employee loyalty with the introduction of workplace spirituality. Krishnakumar and Neck (2002); Long and Mills (2010) reiterate the importance of workplace spirituality measures as necessary for every organization. This is because of its win-win outcomes – enhancing employee loyalty and achievement of organizational goals.

The prevalence of gender-track employee loyalty in an organization is now gaining momentum. Subjective evidence suggests that what makes women stay loyal to an organization is different compared to men (Igor, Buntak & Drožđek, 2015). Ong et al. (2014) identified that men have a lower turnover intention (high loyalty) than women. Inability to find job fulfilment forces women to leave their present jobs (Belkin, 2003; Leschyshyn & Minnotte, 2014; Ong et al., 2014). In the wake of these conflicting results, it is necessary to examine whether gender accounts for differences in an employee's loyalty when assessing HRM practices. To sum up, exploring the identified variables in the context of Nigeria will enrich the information in the study.

In Nigeria, where corruption seems to act as a destructive mode for government rules and regulations, indigenous and comprehensive challenges face organizational structure because of the disloyalty of employees in the workplace. Goel and Nelson (2008) see corruption as the use or abuse of public office for private gratification.

A study conducted by Ayodele (2010) on bribery and corruption in Nigeria, showed that between 5 % and 15 % up to 40 % were illegally spent on bribery and corruption provided to higher management officials in government offices, especially during the awarding, executing and payment contracts. Ayodele (2010) observes that about 80 % of productivity issues in organisation's work environment are due to issues bordering on loyalty, specifically among the public employees in Nigeria.

Over the years, the public sector in Nigeria has experienced loyalty related problems. These include stealing, diversion of resources for private use, falsification of contracts and disclosing official records and government classified information. All of these reduce the civil servants' 'Integrity' (Anger, 2002). Mustapha and Osaghae (2018) assume that the poor pay package contributes to this phenomenon amongst civil servants in Nigeria. This accumulated and accounted for employees reduced loyalty to their organization.

Regardless of the pay package, the civil service rules frown against disclosing classified information. They are expected to maintain secrecy in their respective official capacity on government documents. The oath of secrecy of 1962 has remained in force in the civil service to show the premium government places on official documents. An official who divulges official secrets in the civil service has divided loyalty (Oji & Eme 2014).

Divided loyalty increasingly becomes a problem for the government. Hence, the informed idea the government to embark on various reforms in the civil service such as the National Poverty Alleviation Programme (NAPEP) and Strategic Marketing Management Product (SMMP). Despite these reforms, studies have revealed no positive impacts have been made on restoring loyalty to the Nigerian public sector for effective service delivery (Osawe, 2017).

Currently, Nigeria lacks infrastructural and service development. To address this, there is a need to investigate whether the HRM practices of public institutions are effective in enhancing employee loyalty. A comprehensive HRM policy focuses on recruitment, training,

compensation, and an environment that fosters a meaningful life, promoting a culture of meritocracy, performance, and achievement among civil servants (Oji & Eme 2014).

Spirituality provides employees with a sense of community and connectedness to their workplace and a spirit of citizenship. Daniel (2010b); Kinjerski (2013) agreed that workplace spirituality (WS) could be a determinant of trust, respect, loyalty, responsibility, and honesty. These values can collectively function as a mediator for an employee's loyalty to an organization. Meanwhile, there is a need to know the effect of gender on employee loyalty in an organization. In the Nigerian context, the public service sector is currently facing tough competition for talent similar to most sectors experiencing a shortage of top talent resulting in gender and generation intense competition for loyalty in the country.

It is worth stating that some studies, for example, Klopotan, Buntak, and Drožđek, 2015; Ong, Zhang, Huey, and Hie, 2014 revealed that loyalty to an organization differs between male and female employees. Belkin (2003) argues that job fulfillment forces women to be less loyal to an organization. This supposedly brings the issue of gender loyalty into the current study. To this end, this study investigates the relationship between workplace spirituality, and employee loyalty, as well as the moderating role of gender, on the relationship between workplace spirituality and employee loyalty.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Workplace Spirituality (WS)

Workplace spirituality has become increasingly famous in recent times. It refers to a simple, flexible, and adaptive mindset toward core conducts of the great wisdom traditions but also reflects the understanding that, at the same time implies, the spiritual growth development process in an organization. Workplace spirituality embraces change and the development of consciousness. Workplace spirituality has been described by several scholars. Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2010) define it as characteristics or attributes of workers collectively or alone that support belief in transcendental satisfaction of human needs in an organization.

The definition of workplace spirituality is often cited in research work such as Gatling, Kim, and Milliman (2016); Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003). Gotsis and Kortezi (2008); Rathee and Sharma (2019) explained that human beings derive satisfaction via transcendental and connection with other spiritual bounds outside the mechanical/bureaucratic setting that are common in organizations. In a movement, this is to explain spiritual intelligence.

Korac-Kakabadse, Kouzmin, and Kakabadse Singh (2002; 2019) support previous researchers by affirming that organizations that institute spirituality in the workplace environment are more likely to have employees who are relaxed, devoted, and loyal to the organization. Noor and Arif (2011) equally espoused that workplace spirituality positively relates to employees' satisfaction and organizational success.

Relevant studies acknowledged that substantial numbers of research have concentrated on illustrating the components of workplace spirituality and its outcomes about a workplace environment (Kinjerski, 2013; Milliman, Czaplewski & Ferguson, 2003). Workplace spirituality stimulates a relationship that is particularly beneficial to an organization because it positively impacts performance, productivity, and organizational commitment (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Joelle & Coelho, 2019a).

There is growing evidence to suggest that workplace spirituality contributes to employees developing positive thoughts on organizational performance (Jurkiewicz & Giacalone 2019;

Shahbaz & Shakeel 2013). Spirituality in the workplace improves and increases organizational success regardless of environmental constraints. Often, the presence of spirituality in the workplace increases positive organizational assessment.

Chawla and Guda (2010); Sachdeva (2019) argue that the relationship between organizational performance and employee devotion should be a reciprocal of employee and organization satisfaction. Several studies have justified that a positive relationship between workplace spirituality (WS) and overall organizational performance has associated WS with employees' inner life like meaningful work, sense of community, and connection to other employees in an organization.

As acknowledged by Ashoms and Duchon (2000), WS focuses on the inner life of employees, for example, the meaningful workplace environment (community). Relationship in the workplace is about work passion and finding the purpose of life through connecting and relating to others freely in the workplace (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Karakas & Sarigollu, 2019; Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2004).

Workplace spirituality has commercial implications, such as reduced turnover, employee loyalty, productivity, and growth. These are features needed for a successful business. Hence, any study investigating the relationship between spirituality and some aspect of the business bottom line is worth undertaking. Apart from organizational benefits, individual benefits of workplace spirituality include "increased physical and mental health of employees, advanced personal growth, and an enhanced sense of self-worth" (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003).

Amin Mohamed et al. (2004) contends that "the stronger the spiritual factor of personality, the more tolerant the person is to work failure and less susceptible to stress." Mitroff (2003) asserts that workplace spirituality benefits individuals by allowing them to realize their full potential and "develop their complete self at work."

On this note, workplace spirituality is seen as a multiple-level pervasive force that affects employees, organizational, strategies, and structures. Therefore, it may suffice as a mediating factor on principles of HR practices with employee loyalty in an organization. For example, Neck and Milliman (1994) revealed that organizations in the United States are getting more inclined towards spiritual values to enhance employees' obligation toward the organization.

Van der Walt and De Klerk (2014) researched WS and one of the human resource practices using Pearson correlation. The result indicates that there is a high correlation between WS and employees' satisfaction. This result confirmed the results of previous researchers wherein they believe that WS can influence other organizational variables. Given the discussion on WS, this study seeks to adopt it and its components as mediating organizational variables to enhance employee loyalty.

Most definitions of workplace spirituality (WS) are consistent with that of Moore (2008), who defines WS as a ground that has a possibility of spirituality as a standard. However, due to variation in what constitutes spirituality, different WS dimensions may exist in every organization. Hence, workplace spirituality has been measured differently by different researchers.

Klenke (2005) argued that both employers and employees thought that WS is an aide to refurbish any fulfilment and virtues that might be of an obstacle to employee loyalty in achieving organizational goals. Kendall (2012) reveals that numerous scholars have written different scopes on WS, most specifically about the organizational environment. As such, categories of WS have been highlighted as variant by researchers (Kendall, 2012; Sheep, 2006). Ashmos and Duchon (2000) have established an underlying principle for constructing

and conducting evidence-based research on the measurement of workplace spirituality. Research conducted by Ashmos and Duchon (2000) proposed that workplace spirituality comprises inner life, meaningful work, and societal bond.

Sheep (2006) and Moore (2008) suggested four dimensions which is congruent with those of (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Joelle & Coelho, 2019b; Mumtaz, 2018; Rothmann, Weiss & Redelinghuys, 2019) to some extent though, they are not predominantly used in the literature.

In the study of Kolodinsky, Giacalone, and Jurkiewicz (2008), workplace spirituality was categorized into three levels, namely single person, corporate and collaborative. WS's personal level entails embracing personalized spiritual stay, norms, and mores in the work environment. Corporate level WS entails the description of personalized worker perception of corporate spiritual meaning and understanding. The collaborative level explained the nexus between individual spiritual mores and corporate level, which showed the level at which organizational spiritual comfort individual workers (Kale & Shrivastava, 2003b). What the organization stands for provides potential spiritual hooks for the individual, particularly for interconnectedness and growth.

Farmer et al. 2019; Palmer and Rock 1994; Scott 2005 argued that what organizations stand for can be conceptualized in terms of a continuum, ranging from those that involve relatively high loyalty that involve relatively more loyal to the organization. However, for the purpose of the study, emphasis is on inner life (sense of joy), meaningful work dimension, and alignment with the organizational value being the main themes of workplace spirituality on employee loyalty. These are discussed in the following sub-sections.

2.2   Sense of Joy (Inner life)

A foundation element in the concept of spirituality is the notion of inner life, and it is important to the functioning of an organization (Kale & Shrivastava, 2003b). A similar opinion reiterated by Kendall (2012) explained that workplace spirituality (WS) recognizes that organizational members have physical, emotional, and cognitive needs, but also spiritual needs.

Inner life is needed within individuals to understand and find purpose and value in themselves (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). In explaining the concept further, Standifer, Evans and Dong (2010) suggested that in a work context, inner life refers to working with a positive trait, creating a good relationship within oneself and to the people around the environment.

Inner life can also relate to the intentions to stay in the organization. For instance, Duchon and Plowman (2005a) noted that working in a place that can give the employee opportunities to express their inner life can lead to an appreciative employee. Employees express their inner life if the organization presents humanistic values and enables the employee to conduct meaningful work (Castro & Edralin, 2018; Doody, 2018; Rego & Cunha, 2008). Sheep (2006) and Brown (2018) stated that growth and development of the person's inner self is a major component of spirituality at work. Workplace environment with high levels of spirituality can provide workers with the proper conditions to experience personal growth and growth to their organization.

In addition, if organizations provide employees with the opportunity to express their inner life at work, it will translate into a satisfied and happy workforce, resulting in a friendly environment that accommodates employee loyalty for the organization.

2.3 Alignment with organizational values

Milliman et al. (2003) see organizational alignment value as strategies and policies designed for organizational culture and, at the same time to achieve the targeted goals. Further claimed on alignment can fully be manifested in an organization through the perfect and the fundamental factual principle of the organization standards. Based on the evidence from the literature, alignment cannot be seen in a single part but in the sight of both the connection of employee and organization. Milliman et al. (2003) also support the augment on organizational value alignment with a sense of ethics and integrity to foster the targeted goals.

Ashmos and Duchon (2000); Dehler and Welsh (1994) have a similar perception about organizational value alignment. It is described as understanding the value and consciousness of both employees and managers adequately. It is a functional tie between the organization and the employees. As much as alignment with organizational values can be understood between both management and employee, an employee's personal beliefs, values, ideas, and the organization's mission and purpose will be easily accomplished (Jackson & Burnes, 2019; Milliman, et al., 2003; Yusof, Yaacob & Rahman, 2018). Given this explanation, organizational values appear to be a potential WS dimension to offer a positive link between workplace spirituality and employee loyalty.

2.4 Meaningful Work Dimension

Spirituality at work addresses human activities relating to personal development, compassion, meaningfulness, joy at work, honesty, trust, job commitment, and the well-being of employees (Petchsawange & Duchan, 2012). Some of the organizations that monitor the company's progress through the introduction of spirituality in the workplace tend to be productive. A few of them include AETNA Hartford US, Toms of Maine, Ford Motor Company (Burack, 1999), also the World Bank (Laabs, 1995), AT&T, Chase Manhattan Bank, DuPont, and Apple Computer (Cavanagh, 1999).

A country like Nigeria has not gone far on studies seeking the implementation of workplace spirituality. However, few studies like Ajala (2013) researched spirituality in the industrial sector. Ahiauzu and Asawo(2009) comment on spirituality in manufacturing companies. Genty et al. (2017) discuss academicians. Other areas were focused but not specifically on civil servants in Nigeria's government sectors. Seemingly, a gap exists on workplace spirituality and employee loyalty in public Nigeria organisations.

In this context, it could be inferred that meaningful work to employees could bring passion to Nigerian civil servants, thereby engendering their happiness, commitment, and loyalty to the civil service jobs. It also accommodates a better understanding of the organization's business goals and practices, which would likely translate to improved performance.

Sheep (2006) discussed meaningful work as an individual desire to integrate their value with their work life. As also said by Milliman et al (2003) that it across to the existences and self-transcendent purpose for people to work with their inward value rather be once comfortable to some extent.

Meaningful work is all about the connection between the soul and work by tapping into work-related dimensions of human experience that are neither physical nor intellectual but spiritual (Ashmos & Dunhon, 2000). In addition, it was suggested that recognizing and involving with physical or mental activity to achieve a result brings about the workplace in a meaningful way. The individual spirituality established the kindness and support resulting from a good relationship with long term convey both individual and organisation with increased intrinsic, job satisfaction and employee loyalty (Aboobaker, Edward & Zakkariya,2019; Standifer, Evans & Dong, 2010).

2.5   Relationship between Workplace Spirituality and Employee Loyalty

Employee loyalty has been defined as a dimensional content related to organizational accomplishments, with behaviour and approach recognized with them (Gustomo et al., 2019). There is no way to explain how the loyalty of employees can be persistent without organizational efficiencies. It is known that loyalty and commitment are levels that bring about transformation (Angle & Perry, 1983). Therefore, from the moment they stepped into the workplace, they are influenced by others and function as interconnected parts of a united whole.

Naturally, employee loyalty would lead to improved organizational performance, profitability, and productivity based on a logical understanding of reciprocation of good deeds. Loyalty from employees to an organization manifests in an organization where necessary and adequate working facilities that create a conducive atmosphere or environment workplace spirituality (WS) are provided (Mandala & Astika, 2019). Hence, employees can give their full potential in terms of knowledge, skills or behaviours (Sutanto, Scheller-Sampson & Mulyono, 2018). With these, they work towards realising the organisation's overall goals, such as improved productivity, higher efficiency, and high-quality service orientation to clients. Karakas (2010, p. 89) highlighted some facts about WS and employee loyalty to include the logic of interconnectedness and community within and outside the organization, irrespective of the diversity.

Loyalty can be related to the good relationship among people based on the contract assigned even after the resolved agreement (Carbone, 1997; Cheng et al., 2019; Jansson & Wiklund, 2019). Loyalty is the root of functional interaction between organization and employee to become an organizational-based outcome. Employee loyalty is vital to an organization's success, as reported by researchers who considered the usefulness and benefits of WS to organization values. The report indicates that WS increases communal fullness with the thought that raises delight and commitment from both organization and employee loyalty (Krishna, Kumar & Neck, 2002).

Giacalone, Jurkiewicz, and Fry (2005) stated that employees' pleasure is surrounded by notification of WS attributes as such encourages loyalty of employees in an organization. Despite the relative insufficiency of scientific evidence supporting the positive outcome of WS, the different opinions in the scholarly literature about WS attribute improving employee loyalty, organizational performance, and commitment (Bhaskar & Mishra, 2019; Dehler & Welsh, 2003).

Meanwhile, Long and Helms Mills (2010) argued that workplace spirituality is necessary for organizations and individuals to prosper. Based on previous researchers, the effect of WS on work performance reveals a positive relationship as a spiritually guided employee is loyal to whatever he or she does (Joelle & Coelho, 2019b). Therefore, being loyal

is a step towards an employee's commitment. In other words, there is a relationship between a happy employee and the organization's workplace spirituality (Sandhu, 2019). An environment that gives employees the means to express their thoughts and evaluate the outcome brings about employee loyalty. In a nutshell, the preceding paragraphs highlighted some studies that affirm the role of gender difference in organization spirituality as it affects employee's loyalty

3.   Gender Difference

The significance of employees' loyalty may be moderated without looking into male and female roles in an organization. The influence of gender role difference and on the employees', loyalty is little known in the literature. This is surprising because if males' and females' loyalty differ, men and women then require different organizational strategies in HRM practices. More so, employees of different generations value and respond differently to loyalty programs. Hence, actions aimed at enhancing employees' loyalty are vital in HRM practices.

Gender difference brings in the perception that individuals relate to nature in some unique ways (Cross & Madson, 1997) ; therefore, within the business environment, it is perceived that certain organizational variables such as loyalty may be affected. The current study seeks to empirically investigate this phenomenon in the light of human resources practices, workplace spirituality, and employee loyalty.

Though researchers' (Baumeister and Sommer 1997; Cross and Madson 1997) theory about male versus female self-construal speak directly on loyalty, the differences between genders are sometimes uncompromising (Cross & Madson, 1997). Hence, both genders usually work in complement; organizations may have to deal with the loyalty differences that come with each group. In Nigeria, issues on gender differences are usually not swept under the carpet. Hence, it is sensitive in terms of appointment or leadership. This potentially also inspires the aim of the current study. Research has persistently found that females express greater work pleasure than males (Becker, 1985; Lincoln & Kalleberg, 1998; De Vaus & McAllister, 1991).

This statement is ascribed to women's diverse value structures and socialization whereby they place less emphasis on the self-sufficiency and promotion opportunities that are valued as a result of loyalty compared to men (Lincoln & Kalleberg, 1998; De Vaus & McAllister, 1991). These issues imply that a relatively shallow female employee may be more loyal than a male employee or vice versa. Hence, the effect of these differences on employee loyalty creates substantial attention to human resource managers and researchers for more investigation.

Previous findings on gender have continuously been the most common forms of segmentation in marketing practice (Putrevu, 2001). Specifically, gender has been frequently identified as a key moderator in consumer behaviour studies (Bendall-Lyon & Powers, 2002; Moutinho & Goode, 1995; Nysveen, Pedersen & Thorbjørnsen, 2005). However, gender is regarded as having a significant relationship with the overall perception of financial work (Yu et al., 2015). Thus, gender discrimination from different fields of studies has implications for the same economic system, as a result, it is thought that gender can moderate the relationship of WS, HRM practice, and employee loyalty in Nigerian public organizations.

3.1   Hypothesis Development

Cheng and Waldenberger (2013) claimed that women view themselves as reliant and loyal compared to men and that employees' loyalty to their company is based on concerns about losing something valuable. Gender diversity is among the recent issues discussed in the business world today. It was one of the main topics at the international conference on 26-27 October 2015. It was concluded in the conference that women workforce compared to men, have a significantly different level of loyalty to their organizations.

Numerous researches have been conducted regarding gender diversity on performance, loyalty, financial, and social commitment in an organization. Abdullah and Ismail (2017) justify a negative relationship between gender and investment. This might be a result of non-consideration of gender differences treatment in the organization. The study carried out by Hafsi and Turgut (2013) also supported that woman are more significant and positively related to the business societal performance of an organization.

Pang and Ma (2019); Zhang (2012) study showed a positive relationship of gender diversity to strength rating in an organization. This motivates hypotheses of gender relationship to workplace spirituality and employee loyalty in Nigeria public organisations.

Hypothesis 5: Gender positively moderate relationship between WS, HRM practice and employee loyalty in Nigeria public organization.

4. Methodology

The study was conducted among civil servant workers in Lagos state, Nigeria. to explore the functional interaction between HRM practices and employees' loyalty in Nigerian public organizations. This research was purely quantitative in nature employing the cross-sectional survey design. The population groups for this study are the benchmark for employees' loyalty in ministries operating as Lagos civil service. Hence, five ministries were sampled, and all the districts were approached. The names for the chosen ministries are (i) Ministry of Education, (ii) Ministry of Health, (iii) Ministry of Local Government and Community Affairs, (iv) Ministry of Economic and Development, and (v) Ministry of Establishment, training and pensions. A stratified random sampling design was adopted for the study to get the samples from different ministries. Based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample sizes table, 377 are essential to represent a population size of 20000. More specifically, the Raosoft sample size calculator (http://www.raosoft.com) estimate shows that for populations of 18,687 with a margin error of 5% and a 95% confidence interval, the required sample size of 377 respondents is needed. Given this, the present study adopted a 377-sample size.

The data was collected by distributing survey questionnaires among civil servants from different ministries in Lagos State, Nigeria. This study adopted and adapted measurements for HRM practices, workplace spirituality, and employee's loyalty. The items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale, which ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0 was used to compute the descriptive statistics, including the frequencies of the demographic profiles of the respondents. SPSS software is used for Principal Component Analysis (PCA) to reduce the items. Subsequently, an application of first and second-order CFA on the relationship among the variables of the study was conducted. For the single group analysis computation, Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) version 21.0 (Arbuckle and Wothke 2010) with Maximum

Likelihood Estimation (MLE) was used to perform confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modelling (SEM) in the single group.

4.1   Demographic Profiles of the Respondents

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Sample (n=360)

Demographic characteristics	Option	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	187	51.9
	Female	173	48.1
	Total	360	100
Age	Less than 25	33	9.2
	25 to than 35	125	34.7
	35 to less than 45	54	15.0
	45 less than 55	134	37.2
	55 less than 65	9	2.5
	More than 65	5	1.4
	Total	360	100
Working experience	Less than 2 years	50	13.9
	2 to less than 5 years	50	13.9
	5 to less than 10years	96	26.7
	10 to less than 15 years	51	14.2
	15 to less than 20 years	72	20.0
	20 to less 25 years	22	6.1
	25 years or more	13	3.6
	Missing	6	1.7
	Total	360	100

Table 2: Demographic Profile of the Sample (n=360)

Demographic characteristics	Option	Frequency	Percentage
Marital status	Single	103	28.7
	Married	246	68.3
	Divorced/ separated	6	1.7
	Widowed	4	1.1
	Missing	1	0.3
	Total	360	100
Tribe	Hausa	5	1.4
	Yoruba	300	85.0
	Igbo	28	7.8
	Others (please indicate)	20	5.7
	Missing	7	1.
	Total	360	100
Category of employment	Permanent	299	83.1

	Contractual	56	15.6
	Missing	5	1.4
	Total	360	100

4.2   Measures

The measures used in the research have been adapted from various studies previously researches. These scales have been tested and validated in different cultural contexts. For instance, workplace spirituality was measured with 14 items adapted from Ashmos and Duchon, 2000; Milliman et al., 2003, while Employee loyalty was measured by five items adapted from R.W.Y. Yee et al (2010) All the measures revealed a high level of reliability with Cronbach alpha above 0.7.

Table 3: Constructs-wise descriptive statistics and the Reliability

No	Construct	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach's alpha
1	Workplace spiritualty	3.553	.62326	0.874
2	Employees' loyalty	3.637	.61615	0.725

5.   Analysis And Result

5.1   Moderating effect of Gender hypothesis testing

Hypothesis: Gender positively moderate relationship between WS, HRM practice and employee loyalty in Nigeria public organization.

To evaluate the moderating effect on gender, the two groups of respondents, in terms of male and female, determine the moderating impact of this variable. The data are categorized into two (sub-groups) to describe the impact of male employees compared to the female employees. The figure below refers to a level of reaction towards loyalty through workplace spirituality.

The group representation of individual (n=360) for moderation in term of gender, the model's chi-square difference (ΔX^2) is tested. For getting this difference, added variance (add 1 in as variance) in all latent construct to create a constrained model then compute the substantial changes from the basic model (named unconstrained model). A significant difference in the model's chi-square value proves that at least one path of the independent and dependent variables is moderated with the moderator variable.

By using two different data sets, the AMOS model is produced in two different models. The models are labelled with two different names. If the chi-square value is significantly different between the two groups, then moderation occurs (Hair et al., 2010). The next stage of variance analysis is inevitable if there are no significant differences found between the models (Awang 2012). The analysis is computed comparing the chi-square value of both constrained and unconstrained model to its Degree of Freedom (df) for its significance. Significant in the difference clarifies the distinction between the groups.
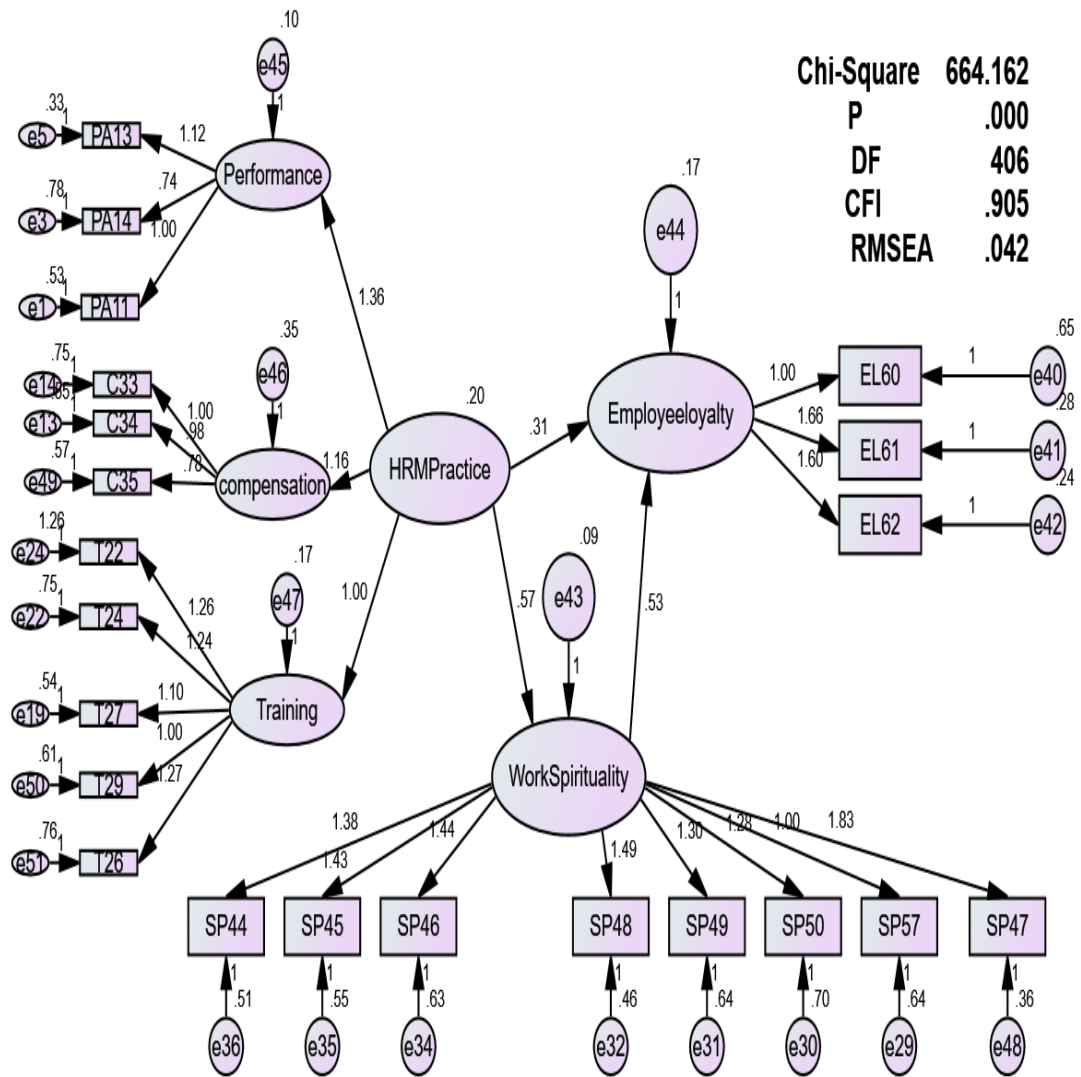
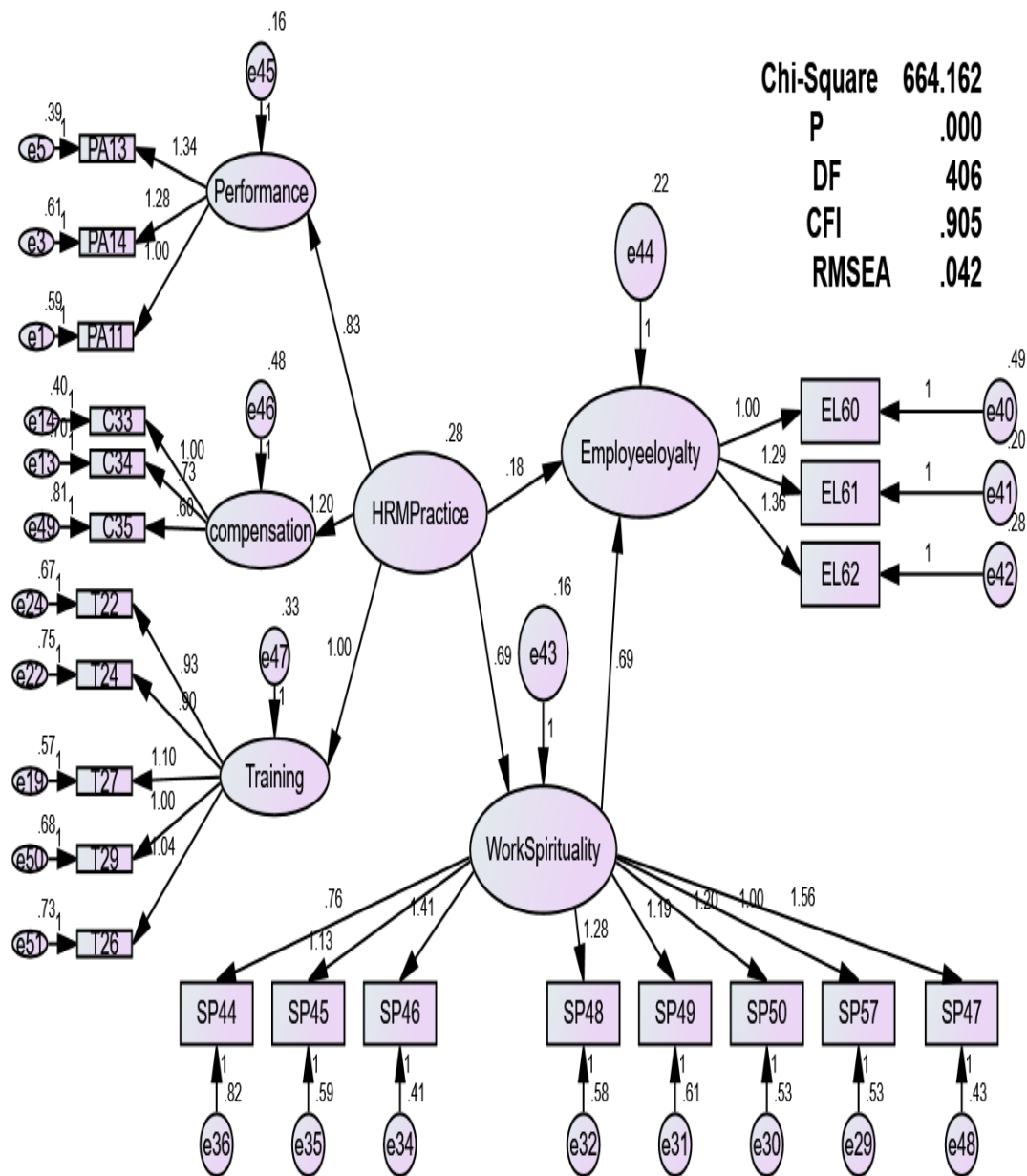Figure 1: Unconstraint (Baseline) Model Gender (Male)

Figure 2: Unconstraint (Baseline)

Based on Figure 1 and Figure 2 above, the baseline model for males and females finds no difference. Therefore, the researcher proceeds to evaluate constrained and unconstrained models. Both hypotheses' models have x^2 =664.162, df= 406, and CFI of 0.905 as shown above.
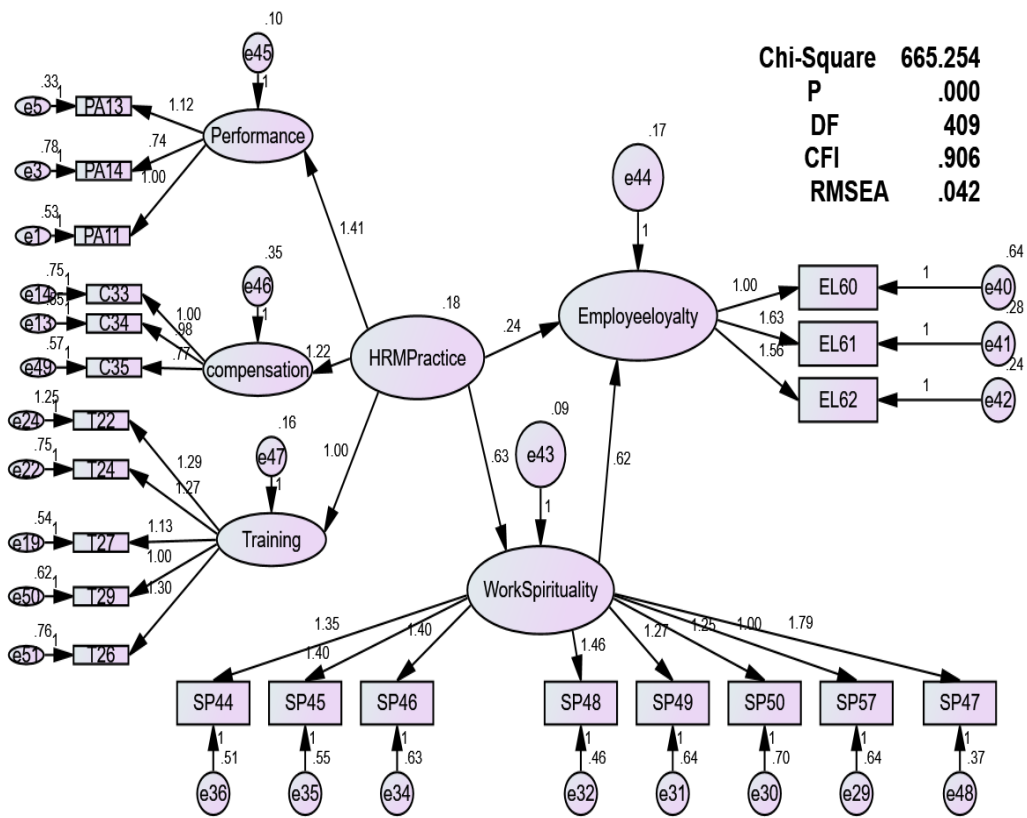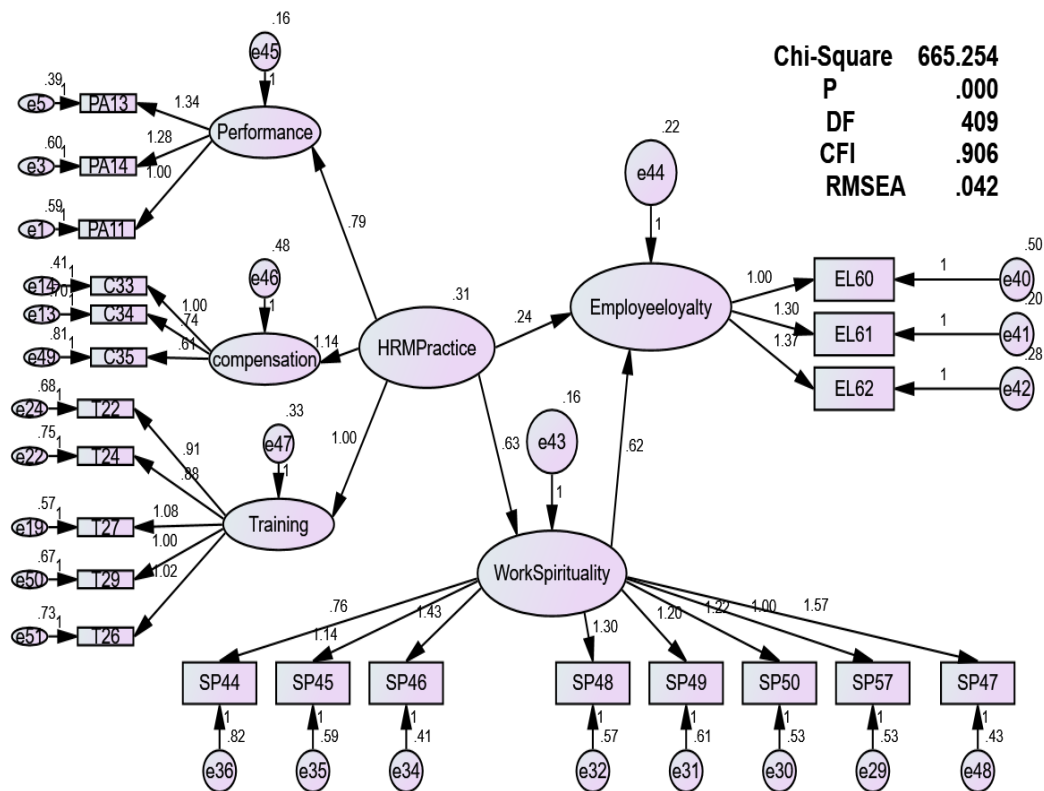
Figure 3: Constraint Model for Male

Figure 4: Constraint Model for Female

As shown in constrained and unconstrained models in figure 4.19 and figure 4.22 above, a non-significant difference is found between the groups of male and female models. Table 4 shows the details of differences in the chi-square for both constrained and unconstraint model. The difference (Δx^2) between the baseline model for male and female, and the constrained model ($x^2= 665.254$, df=409) is shown below.

Table 4: Comparison between Constraint and Unconstraint Model

	Constrained model	Unconstrained model4	Chi-square difference	Result on moderation	Result on hypothesis
Chi-square	665.254	664.162	1.092	Not Significant	Not Supported
DF	406	409	3		
Hypothesis 5: Gender positively moderate relationship between WS, HRM practice and employee loyalty in Nigeria public organization.				Not Supported	

Table 5: Chi-square Thresholds

	Chi-square	**Df**	**p-val**	**Invariant?**	Step 1. provide chi-square and df for
Overall Model					unconstrained and

Unconstrained	664.162	406			constrained models and provide the number of groups. The thresholds (green cells) will be updated automatically.
Fully constrained	665.254	409			
Number of groups		2			
Difference	1.092	3	0.779	YES	Groups are not different at the model level, however, they may be different at the path level.
Chi-square Thresholds					
90% Confidence	666.87	407			Any chi-square more than the threshold (Green Cells) will be variant for a path by path analysis. This is only applicable to models where you are changing one path at a time (i.e., have a difference of one degree of freedom)
Difference	2.71	1	0.100		
95% Confidence	668.00	407			
Difference	3.84	1	0.050		
99% Confidence	670.80	407			
Difference	6.63	1	0.010		

The difference between the chi-square values of constrained and unconstrained models is greater than the tabulated chi-square value. In other word, no significant difference is found between gender (male and female) chi-square ($\Delta\chi2$) constrained model (χ^2=664.162, df =406) and unconstrained model ($\chi 2$ =664.162, df =409) as shown in the table 4.24.

Thus, the difference in the chi-square value ($\Delta\chi2$ =1.092) while the difference in degree of freedom is 409-406 = 3 at the model level is not significant (p<0.00). For the test to be significant, the difference in chi-square value must be higher than the value of chi-square with 1 degree of freedom, which is 3.84 (Awang, 2015). Groups are not different at the model level; however, they may be different at the path level. Hence, the hypothesis is not supported.

6. Discussion

H1: Gender positively moderates relationship between WS, HRM practice and employees' loyalty in Nigeria public organizations (Not supported)
It is hypothesized that gender moderates the relationship between WS and employees' loyalty, and the relationship between HRM practices and employees' loyalty. That is, the role of gender has different outcomes in organizations. has been established that organizations with imbued WS enjoy exceptional profitability and growth (Alumona, 2016; May, Lau & Johnson, 1999). Sometimes, gender role is known to alter these organizational outcomes like employees' loyalty (Indartono et al., 2015). However, the result of this study suggests the opposite. It has no determining effect on employees' loyalty. It has no moderation role on the relationship between WS, HRM, and employees' loyalty. Hence, it is not significant, and the hypothesis is not supported.

7.   Conclusion

This study finds a positive functional linkage of workplace spirituality and employee loyalty, indicating the importance of workplace spirituality in the work environment. Because the absence of WS hinders a conducive work environment, HRM should concentrate on issues that reflect the benefit of WS. Most of the respondents perceive that the dimension of WS needs to be present within an organization. WS helps to minimize ingratitude, improve labour relations, increase employee personification, and positively impact their work and the organization. However, it is evident from the present study that employees' gender might not be a factor in moderating the relationship between workplace spirituality and employees' loyalty in the context of the Nigerian public sectors as proposed by some studies.

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