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APPLYING CRITICAL REALISM IN SPIRITUALITY AT WORK RESEARCH
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APPLYING CRITICAL REALISM IN SPIRITUALITY AT WORK RESEARCH

Purpose: To demonstrate how critical realism (CR) can be used in spirituality at work (SAW) research and to provide a practical example of CR in SAW research.

Design/methodology/approach: CR is a philosophical meta-theory that allows the stratification of spirituality into different levels of reality, advocates for research methods matching the ontology of the level investigated, and provides complementary methods of exploring this phenomenon's causal power in social contexts. The authors present a study where CR was used to explain how and why SAW influences ethics in organizational contexts.

Findings: The results demonstrate that CR provides a useful approach to bridging the positivist-interpretivist difference in SAW research. Moreover, a CR approach helped explain the underlying conditions and causal mechanisms that power SAW to influence ethical decision-making and behavior in the workplace.

Originality/value: While CR has been applied in management literature, negligible SAW material has utilized this approach. That which does exist is either conceptual or does not explicitly discuss their methods of data analysis or describe how CR concepts resulted in their findings. This paper addresses that lacuna. CR also provides value, as an alternative approach to SAW research, in that it allows the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods as complementary, not confrontational, approaches to the study of SAW while providing a more integrated and deeper view of SAW and its effects.

Paper Type: Viewpoint

Keywords: Spirituality at Work, Critical Realism, Ethical Decision-Making & Behaviour, Research Methodology

APPLYING CRITICAL REALISM IN SPIRITUALITY AT WORK RESEARCH

The Problem of Doing Spirituality at Work Research

One of the ongoing issues in the spirituality at work (hereafter SAW) literature involves how we investigate this phenomenon. Many authors argue for positivist approaches (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000, Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003b). Members of this camp contend that organizations need material proof linking SAW to performance and that analytical approaches are the best means of providing a normative understanding of this phenomenon. Opposing this view are those that argue for interpretivist approaches (Lips-Wiersma, 2003, Neal et al., 1999). For instance, Fornaciari and Dean (2001) argue that scientific knowledge is a partial truth, a truth that ignores inner meaning. They "challenge the dominance of the positivist paradigm in spirituality in organizations research, pointing out the absurdity of trying to factor analyse God" (p. 35).

Unfortunately, SAW is not easy to classify and can be problematic to measure. How we express spirituality tends to be value-laden and inherently personal. Unfortunately, human beings are complex non-rational and emotional creatures who tend to defy the neat, behaviourist definitions offered by the positivist model. As Lips-Wiersma (2003) argues, not only is one's expression of spirituality intensely unique to each individual, any inquiry into its nature or effects often bears the stamp of the researcher's own "values, assumptions and dogmas" (p. 406). Detaching our personal value systems from scientific inquiry is impossible. We must articulate and understand the impact of these values. Spirituality can never be fully defined or actualised; there is always going to be some mystery to it (Marcel, 1950).

Spirituality, however, may also be real. There is plenty of evidence to suggest this is the case (see e.g. Ferguson, 2010, Smith, 1988, Nelson, 2009, Moberg, 2002, Ferrer, 2002, Tart, 1975). In answering the question 'what is spirituality?' several common themes emerge repeatedly from the religious, philosophical and psychological literature.[1] This reflects a high degree of inter-subjective agreement as to what characterises this phenomenon. To reduce spirituality, and its impacts, to the relativist view that each person defines it for themselves is bordering on the inane and the fallacious. Such a diminution is senseless because then

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[1] These are discussed in a later section.

anything, from the trivial (e.g. having a bath) to the outright evil (e.g. Nazism), could be classified as being spiritual. This notion is also deceptive since it ultimately diminishes spirituality to meaninglessness. While individual spirituality is indisputably personal, it is, simultaneously, an encounter with a spiritual reality. If we take that reality away, then we exclude its power to influence a person's experience. Archer et al. (2004) contend the implications of this are significant:

> If a putative object of experience contributes nothing to the content of experience, the putative experience is not a genuine experience at all, but only an illusion of one. Thus, by methodologically absenting the object of experience… [We] end up losing altogether the very category of experience (p. 14).

Conversely, if spirituality were purely an apprehensible reality open to empirical measurement then positivistic methods would be appropriate for investigating it. However, each individual's perception and expression of their spirituality is inherently subjective. While common themes may be universal to spirituality, the conceptualisation and practice of spirituality as a whole, is heterogenic (see e.g. Washburn, 1990). What does that mean for research? At one level, we appear to have an overarching reality called "spirituality" which may be characterised by several common themes. On another level, this spirituality is "lived out" in multiple subjective individuals and collective realities. In this way, the study of spirituality lends itself strictly neither to a positivist nor to an interpretivist research paradigm alone.

Ken Wilbur (1997), a well-known exponent of spirituality, has noted a similar problem. In response, he has argued to bring back "the ghost in the machine" (p. 9). In research, this means addressing interior experiences in our exploration of reality. Such an approach brings new ideas to our attention that positivism alone with its emphasis on the exterior cannot accomplish. If we wish to know something completely, we must accommodate both realms of knowing. As Wilbur states:

> The fact that both of these approaches – the exterior and the interior – have aggressively and persistently existed in virtually all fields of human knowledge ought to tell us something – ought to tell us, that is, that both of these approaches are profoundly significant. They both have something of incalculable importance to tell us (p. 9).

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Does this mean SAW is unknowable and therefore inappropriate as a research topic? Like many other phenomenon (e.g. morals, emotions, personality) which are common social science topics, SAW is just as amenable to study. What is required, however, is a philosophical methodology that allows for the existence of a spiritual reality, even if not completely comprehended, while recognising the understanding and application of that reality in a variety of organizational contexts. Mixed methodologies may not be the answer since they often tend to wallpaper over (usually for pragmatic reasons) this difference (Danermark et al., 1997) although recent work by authors such as Zachariadis et al. (2013) seeks to resolve this problem. As Benefiel (2003b) has noted, the rising popularity of SAW suggests there is a need for more integrative methodologies and approaches that take this into account.

In several journal articles written between 2003 and 2005, Benefiel identified and attempted to address this problem. In particular, she focused on the work of Bernard Lonergan, a Jesuit Philosopher, and his 'operations of consciousness' as a way of bridging the object-subject gap. While there is no space to discuss Lonergan's work (which is extensive) nor Benefiel's application of it, what is of particular interest for this paper is that Lonergan posits an early form of critical realism (hereafter CR), which he applies to understanding spiritual realities (McGrath, 2002). Building on this idea, this paper's premise is that the philosophy of CR may be a solution to the methodological gap in much of the SAW literature. CR may allow for both positivist and interpretivist approaches to be both valuable and useful in understanding SAW. Certainly, some new approach is required if, as Benefiel (2005) notes,

> The debate seems to have reached an impasse. The two camps speak different languages and, more often than not, talk past one another. Many of the discussions seem to generate more heat than light (p. 726).

CR has become fairly common in organizational studies (see e.g. Fleetwood, 2005, Ackroyd, 2004, Easton, 2010). Moreover, there is a body of literature which posits that CR can help explain spirituality (Hartwig and Morgan, 2012, Helminiak, 1998, McGrath, 2002). However, these ideas have not been developed or applied within SAW research. As such, this paper will describe the key features of CR, how it might apply to the study of SAW and provide an example of this methodology in practice.

Applying Critical Realism in Spirituality at Work Research

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CR is a philosophical methodology between positivism and hermeneutics (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). This methodology arose as a critical response to both positivism and interpretivism, along with a different philosophical way of considering science. Its leading proponent Roy Bhaskar tried to address two fundamental questions about scientific knowledge in his seminal works: *A Realist Theory of Science* (1975) and *The Possibility of Naturalism* (1979). First, is it possible to have a systematic realist account of science without collapsing it into naturalism? Second, to what extent can one study society (i.e., the social world) in the same way as nature? Positivists' claim nature and society are best studied using the naturalist view while interpretivists argue the social sciences clarify the meanings of social events which are not open to a naturalistic methodology. Bhaskar, on the other hand, "defined naturalism as the thesis that there is (or can be) an essential unity of method between the natural and the social sciences" (p. 2). He claimed that reality can be understood using both natural and social science methods. While there are clearly differences in these approaches, Bhaskar contended that the nature of reality, and the knowledge of and relationships between objects restricts the possibility of naturalism. In fact, this is what enables social science research. Perhaps most importantly, Bhaskar insisted "that it is the nature of the object that determines the form of its possible science" (p. 3). Much has been written about CR since these initial developments (see e.g. Collier, 1994, Sayer, 2004, Danermark et al., 1997). From this literature, we can discuss four major interrelated ideas and their application to SAW.

First, CR recognises the existence of reality, independent of our beliefs about it. Bhaskar (1975) refers to this difference as the intransitive and transitive dimensions of knowledge. The things studied, physical processes and/or social phenomenon, are intransitive whereas theories of science and/or social science are transitive. In other words, the things we perceive about reality are transitive, whereas the actual underlying structures of reality, (i.e., what is objectively real), are intransitive. Collier (1994) notes "rival theories and sciences have different transitive objects (theories about the world) but the world they are about – the intransitive dimension – is the same; otherwise they would not be rivals" (p. 51). In other words, when our ideas and premises about reality alter, reality itself does not change. This, according to McGrath (2002), rescues ontology from absorption into epistemology and refutes the *epistemic fallacy* which is the flawed inference that "the structures of the world rest or depend upon human observation" (p. 212).

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It is certainly more challenging to use this idea in the social world. The transitive objects of social science, defined and understood within a social context, are unlike the natural world, which is produced naturally but understood socially. However, this does not mean social objects are less real (Danermark et al., 1997). Sayer (2000) contends that "for the most part [under a critical realist methodology], social scientists are cast in the modest role of construing rather than 'constructing' the social world" (p. 11). There is a difference between construal and construction. Construals of the world inform material constructions such as practices and organizational forms. As Sayer writes, "Once such social phenomena are constructed, they gain some degree of independence from their original constructers and from subsequent actors" (p. 7). For example, Marxism has long argued that there are laws within the social order that can be discovered and used to the advantage of some groups over others. These laws possess an ontological status, despite being social objects, and are amenable to a critical realist analysis (McGrath, 2002). For Fleetwood (2005), stating that entities exist independently "does not mean they exist independently of human activity. It merely means that they are not dependent upon the specific activities involved with identification" (p. 202). From a SAW perspective, this characteristic of CR suggests two things. First, spirituality may be a social reality that exists independent to our ideas about it; this reality has real effects on real people and real organizations. Second, when theorists change their mind about spirituality, they are construing new ideas about it, they are not be changing the underlying reality of spirituality.

Second, a critical realist approach reveals several things about the actual process of knowing reality. An observer observes from their point of view alone, there is no such thing as a God's-eye view available to human beings since such a view would be a view from nowhere (Nagel, 1986). Dependent on this idea is the notion that all human beings gather and understand information through a worldview which includes things like histories, prospects, narratives, mental models, cultural norms and so on. Moreover, an individual's worldview reflects the community from which they come. Consequently, the notion that one can be neutral when doing social science is fallacious. No one can act like a detached observer when conducting such research. A failure to recognise this results in the *ontic fallacy*. McGrath (2002) states this view "holds that knowledge is to be analysed as a direct, unmediated relation between a subject and being... [And] ignores the cognitive and social mechanisms by which knowledge is produced" (p. 218). In agreement with positivists, critical realists contend that reality may be observable and independent. Spirituality might be such a thing.

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However, they also hold that knowledge about spirituality is socially construed. Society consists of feeling and thinking human beings and their interpretations of spirituality needs to be explored.

So how does one resolve this juxtaposition between reality and our socially construed interpretations of this reality? Critical realists settle this issue by arranging reality in levels. Bhaskar (1975) refers to these different levels of reality as the *real*, the *actual* and the *empirical*. The *real* is what exists. This can be physical (e.g. molecules, plants and animals) or social (e.g. organizations and ideologies) and we may not necessarily understand their essence fully. Bhaskar also calls these objects mechanisms. A mechanism is that which has power to effect an outcome or event in the world (Danermark et al., 1997). The next level of reality, *the actual*, refers to the outcomes, the states of affairs or events that arise when the causal powers of *real* objects are activated. These outcomes, states Bhaskar, can also be mechanisms. Finally, the *empirical* level is our experience of these *real* and *actual* levels of reality. Again, such occurrences can have causal power and outcomes that inform further experiences (i.e., they can also be *real* or *actual*). For Bhaskar, not all levels of reality may be experienced. Just because we cannot observe something does not mean that it is not real. Moreover, mechanisms, and their causal powers, are also often unobservable but are nonetheless real. Reality cannot be contingent on observation alone; Bhaskar's three levels of reality cannot collapse into a singular level. Any research that does this results in a shallow consideration of the natural and social world.

Spirituality appears to stratify into different levels of reality. Ultimately, spirituality may exist independent of the knower, an intransitive meta-reality (Bhaskar, 2012). At this level, spirituality may concern the reality of what one's Ultimate Concern is ontologically in itself (McGrath, 2002). While it is not possible to know this ultimate reality fully, we can hypothesise its existence by exploring its actuality (i.e., what spirituality actually is). This is the focus of this research. Both the *real* and the *actual* are the structures of a spiritual reality and underlie our experience of it. At the same time, both the *real* and the *actual* are also mechanisms with causal power to create new emergent realities. Finally, individuals and groups experience this spiritual reality differently as they live it out daily in their workplaces. What people encounter is the reality of spiritualty and the causal power of its outcomes in their lives (Archer et al., 2004).

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Third, McGrath (2002) contends the three levels of reality interact with one another. How do they do this? First, ontologically each level could not exist without its preceding lower level. Second, causal mechanisms functioning at a certain level of reality explains those functioning at other levels. We can hypothesise the existence of lower-level unobservable mechanisms by examining their evident outcomes at higher levels. In this way, phenomena like organizational culture or SAW are emergent from these lower levels without being reduced to them. Furthermore, each emergent level of reality is self-existent, that is, has its own ontology. This is an important bulwark against reductionism. This ensures that the level of reality being investigated is matched with an appropriate research method. For example, if we were exploring Ultimate Reality in itself, then philosophy and/or theology may provide the best methods for investigation (see e.g., Bhaskar, 2012, Torrance, 1982). However, if we are exploring the social reality of spirituality and it's actualisation in organisational contexts, as is the case here, then methods from social science are more appropriate. It is important to note, however, that because spirituality involves human agents, who act with conscious intention and who allocate significance to phenomena, any method utilized must also incorporate this hermeneutic premise (Danermark et al., 1997).

Fourth, critical realists reject a correspondence theory of truth – the notion that truth is the agreement between belief and fact (Sayer, 2000). They do believe, however, in the possibility of *judgemental rationality* about the world. This means talking about reality as we think it is and developing arguments to support these views (Wright, 1992). According to Archer et al. (2004) comparing and evaluating these "existing arguments, we can arrive at reasoned, although still provisional, judgements about what reality is objectively like; about what belongs to reality and what does not" (p. 2). All these judgements are epistemologically conditional, open to new information or further re-evaluation. However, a point may be reached where arguments are so strong one can consider the case resolved. Critical realists call this "alethic truth, or the truth of reality as such" (p. 2). There may be new arguments yet to derive and critical realists must be open to such arguments, but it is unlikely. Some examples of alethic truth, states Archer et al., would include the shape of the earth, gravity and the existence of microbes. Of course, alethic truth does not yet exist for a great many things. This does not mean, however, that judgemental rationality does not apply, but rather it has not yet completed its task. Spirituality is a case in point. The ultimate truth about spirituality will undoubtedly remain indeterminate and inconclusive. However, this does not imply that one should minimise discourse about it and stop striving to understand it. A critical

realist paradigm allows us to discern, investigate, dispute and above all reason about construed meanings of spirituality. This process, in turn, brings us one-step closer to understanding spirituality.

For a critical realist, the explanation of what produces outcomes is important. Unlike the positivists who contend that causation is about investigating regularities between events in a closed system (Sayer, 2004), critical realists assert that

> Causation is more plausibly treated as based on causal powers or liabilities (susceptibilities) possessed by real objects, whose existence and exercise is not dependent on regularities between events (p. 11).

The exercise of causal powers can occur at any time or place because they are dependent on the ontology of the object of which they are properties. Consequently, the activation of these causal powers need not be regular. Hence, research designs focusing solely on the search for regularities are unlikely to have much explanatory power.

In summary, Danermark et al. (1997) note that "critical realism is a metatheory, which enables us to understand the importance of methodologies in a new way" (p. 163). A critical realist wants to understand the different levels of spiritual reality and their interaction. Moreover, since the nature of that reality is stratified, SAW researchers should focus on those elements of reality that can shed light on generative mechanisms and how these mechanisms manifest themselves in various organizational contexts. Finally, because these spiritual realities have their own ontology, investigation must utilise methods appropriate to that identity.

Using Critical Realism to Explain Spirituality's Influence on Ethics in the Workplace

The SAW literature is replete with statements that spirituality and ethics are connected, that spiritual individuals are more ethical than non-spiritual (or less spiritual) individuals, and that such individuals are of significant benefit to any organization (see e.g. Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003b, Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003a, Garcia-Zamar, 2003, Gotsis and Kortezi, 2008, Pawar, 2009, Guillory, 2000, Cavanagh and Bandsuch, 2002, Fernando and Chowdhury, 2010, Zsolnai, 2010). This research uses CR to explain why spirituality might result in ethical outcomes and how it might achieve this within an organisational context.

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In order to understand spirituality, religious, philosophical, psychological and management literature was scrutinised, and from this review two main findings emerged. The first of these found that spirituality was sourced often in a primary universal truth or Being (Emmons, 1999, Torrance, 1994, Ferguson, 2010), what Tillich (1952) labels our Ultimate Concern, or the broader meta-reality (Bhaskar, 2012) that powers our ability to be spiritual (i.e. the *Real*). The second finding was that spirituality encompassed four common themes (Sheep, 2006). The first theme, transcendence, involves spiritual individuals rising above their psychic/physical context to connect with the divine or Ultimate Concern (Ashforth and Pratt, 2003, Solomon, 2002, Downey, 1997). The second theme, interconnectedness, consists of spiritual individuals experiencing relatedness, harmony and oneness with others, life and the universe (Kale, 2004, Sass, 2000, Lapierre, 1994). The third theme, meaningfulness, entails spiritual individuals integrating their lives within a larger context that provides a sense of worth, helps cope with adversity and gives a purpose for living (Elkins et al., 1988, Emmons, 2000, Wink and Dillion, 2002). The final theme, innerness, has spiritual individuals developing an authentic self as they live out their spirituality responsibly on a daily basis (Cottingham, 2005, Helminiak, 2006, Estanek, 2006). From a CR perspective, these themes constitute the reality of spirituality *(the real)* and they have causal power, that is, when they are activated in people's lives they produce outcomes *(the actual)*. They are both psychological in that they reflect a mind-set, as well as behavioural in that this is who spiritual people are and this is what they do. Consequently, we can measure their impact *(the empirical)* since spirituality affects people in a bona fide manner.

The Extensive Phase

Typically, quantitative and qualitative methods[2] are seen as opposing approaches in SAW research (Benefiel, 2005). However, Danermark et al. (1997) contend that from a critical realist perspective both approaches are "meaningful – but in different ways – in the search for generative mechanisms, as well as in investigations of how mechanisms manifest themselves in various contexts" (p. 163). They fit as complementary empirical approaches within the particular meta-theoretical context of CR. If one wishes to identify how spiritual a certain population might be then an extensive approach may be useful, especially with large samples. Such an approach explores "the regularities, common patterns and distinguishing features of a population and how widely certain characteristics are represented" (p. 165). In other words,

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[2] To avoid confusion with traditional interpretations, Danermark et al. (1997) label these as extensive and intensive procedures. These are terms this paper uses from this point on.

extensive methods help describe broad characteristics of groups that are of interest in a particular context (Ackroyd and Karlsson, 2015, Zachariadis et al., 2013).

Given the focus in this research, the extensive approach was used to determine highly spiritual individuals for further in-depth study of situation-specific confluences of SAW. In this way, extensive approaches, state Danermark et al. (1997) provide "vital descriptive information, which may be useful as a support in a discussion about causal powers, and it contributes to generating questions of causality" (p. 175). They also inform research design by confirming and challenging the boundaries of inquiry. Typically, extensive methods include large scale surveys, formal questionnaires, psychometric scales and standardised interviews.

For the extensive phase, spirituality was measured across a population of 321 employees in four service organizations using Howden's (1992) Spirituality Assessment Scale (SAS – see Appendix 1). This instrument mirrored the understanding of spirituality found in the literature. Respondents scored on a Likert-type scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (SD = 1) to Strongly Agree (SA = 6) with possible total SAS scores ranging from 28 to 168. The instrument scores by summing the responses to all of the items across the above dimensions. Individuals who score 113-168 have a strong spirituality. Scores from 84-112 would represent fair spirituality. A score of 28-56 indicates weak spirituality. It was important that the scale reflected the four themes found in the spirituality literature. Many scales that purport to address spirituality do not often include these four interrelated themes and/or are overly theistic (see e.g. Wheat, 1991, Hall and Edwards, 2002). This scale had good validity (MacDonald et al., 1995) and had also been used in a number of other studies (see e.g., Meyer, 2003, Brennan, 2004, Gill et al., 2010). The reliability coefficient of the SAS used in this study was 0.80.

It was not problematic if such individuals self-reported in a socially desirable manner. An appropriate spirituality is, by nature, socially desirable and in the minimising of this, one runs the risk of eliminating the essence of the concept being measured (Seligman, Park, & Peterson, 2004). Individuals high in spirituality would naturally be inclined to behave in socially attractive ways (and therefore report them). As such, these persons have a "desirable sociality" as opposed to displaying social desirability. This research was interested specifically in such persons.

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As mentioned earlier, an extensive approach provides useful descriptive representative generalisations but it lacks explanatory power (Danermark et al., 1997). Recall, that the purpose of CR is to understand causal mechanisms' power to create new realities. A critical realist wants to explain why and how spirituality influences ethicality in an organizational context. An extensive method cannot not achieve this alone. However, in this instance, such an approach allowed us to identify spirituality amongst a population and to quantify the extent to which individuals viewed themselves as spiritual. This measurement was then utilised to select purposive case studies for the intensive phase of the research.

The Intensive Phase

If spirituality is a generative mechanism, then to investigate its causal power (i.e., what outcomes it produces) at work, one must examine spiritual individuals within their organizational contexts using an intensive approach. Such an approach addresses how spirituality works, how it produces change and what the agents actually did. To achieve this goal, it was vital to select cases that embody spirituality (Ackroyd, 2004). Case-based methods are common practice in intensive inquiry. In this research, they were not, however, a methodological approach but rather were about what kind of things were being researched (Stake, 2005). Case-based methods capture authentic data in context and allow themes to emerge. They are particularly useful in theory development which is a key goal for critical realist research (Bryne, 2009).

While it was feasible to select individuals of average or low spirituality, the purpose of this study meant participants should be spiritual enough for it to have causal effects. At the same time, spirituality appears to be a maturing process (Wink and Dillion, 2002, Colwell et al., 2006). Younger people may experience spirituality differently or less than their older counterparts and have less work experience on which to reflect. Consequently, older individuals may provide better data (Lips-Wiersma, 2001). Given the emphasis on multiple perspectives inherent within an intensive paradigm, a diversity of participants is preferred. Indeed, to identify common themes, and to make theoretical generalisations requires a pool of spiritually mature participants from varying demographic and organizational contexts. Using an extensive approach allows for the selection of cases that suit the research question. Recall that both extensive and intensive methods are two ways of exploring generative mechanisms (i.e. spirituality) and their causal power (i.e. outcomes and effects). Consequently, 31 subjects

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over the age of 35, who scored above 130 on Howden's (1992) scale, from four different organizations, and had a variety of demographic characteristics were selected for the intensive phase of the research.[3]

Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with these 31 participants (see Appendix 2 for interview protocol). The first part of the interview asked basic questions about the participant's background and job responsibilities. This aimed to help the participant relax, whilst gathering information about their work. Part two of the interview solicited information about the participant's understandings of spirituality and its potential connection to ethical behaviour. The findings from this section affirmed the spiritual themes from the literature and offered a way into exploring part three of the interview. As noted earlier by Ackroyd (2004), in CR "the subject matter has to reflect both its meaningfulness to actors and their location in a social reality" (p. 150). It is not just about the uniqueness of their social experience. Moreover, CR's relational epistemology and its emphasis on narratives requires collecting real-life stories of actual events (Wright, 1992). In such stories, people experienced and interpreted their actions within particular settings; they had a legitimate stake in what they were doing. Consequently, their choices, subsequent actions and their organizational contexts affected them in real ways. Hypothetical situations are unable to replicate this.

To achieve this authenticity, respondents narrated 2-3 critical ethical work incidents, discussed their management and explained any consequences. The purpose of this was to appreciate an individual's perspective of a real-life occurrence (Chell, 2004). To qualify, as an ethical incident, it had to have the potential to cause physical, psychological, spiritual and/or material harm to oneself, another, the organization or society as a whole. Such events were often dilemmas in that ethical obligations conflicted so that any possible resolution to the problem might be morally problematic. To be critical, the intent or purpose of behaviour had to be clear and the consequences had to be obvious so as to be sure of their effects.

According to Gremler (2004), there are several advantages of using such incidents. First the participants' provide their own understanding of the incident. This generates rich data about the context and allows participants to discuss what is relevant for them. Second, this approach

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[3] If researchers were interested in whether spirituality matters to ethical decision-making, as opposed to understanding how spirituality might influence behaviour (as is the case here), then a sample from the full range of spirituality scores, rather than from a restricted range, would be advisable.

lends itself to an analysis when (a) investigating a topic without much prior documentation, (b) exploring a phenomenon about which there is little prior knowledge, or (c) if a deeper explanation of a phenomenon is needed. Certainly, SAW reflects these conditions. Third, such incidents offer a beginning point to develop new ideas and explanations about SAW, a primary goal of CR. Finally, such an approach is a "culturally neutral method" (p. 67). This allows participants from multiple demographics to put forward their views.

To ensure accurate accounts of behaviour are being collected, critical incidents need to be significant. Schluter et al. (2007) claims that it is "widely accepted that extreme or atypical incidents are more easily recalled and distinguished than those that occur during standard operations" (p. 108). As part of this process, generic probing questions were utilised throughout the interview to clarify and expand on respondents' answers. Data accuracy is dependent on the ability of the interviewer to gain clear-cut behavioural descriptions. The critical realist approach requires a relational focus as participants describe events in their specific context. Supporting participants in their disclosure of incidents was important especially if they have ended in less than optimal outcomes (Chell, 2004). If appropriate, the specifics and sequence of questions were adapted to work with the interviewee's thought processes.

Memory of past events is often problematic especially when these need to be brought to the fore during the pressure of an interview. To combat this, an email primer consisting of brief feedback on their survey responses (i.e. their spirituality score), an explanation of the intensive phase of the research and a request for participants to reflect on several aspects was sent out one week prior to their interview. First, respondents were asked to think carefully about 2-3 critical ethical work incidents they were involved in over the last couple of years (any longer then people forget). Second, respondents considered if and how their spirituality influenced their choices, actions and outcomes in these incidents. Finally, respondents reflected on what effect the organizational context had. Normally, the sample scope of such a study reflects the number of incidents collected as opposed to the number of participants involved. While there is no hard and fixed number of incidents to collect, Schluter et al. (2007) suggest obtaining a minimum of 50 incidents. This provides an adequate amount of data that is of sufficient quality. While not as relevant here, this research collected 80 useful critical ethical work incidents.

<u>Data Analysis and Findings</u>

Induction

Data from the interviews was organised into files using NVivo and thematically analysed using a process adapted from Braun and Clarke (2006) and Attride-Stirling (2001). While thematic analysis is common within the SAW literature (see e.g. Fernando and Jackson, 2006, Issa and Pick, 2010, Kinjerski and Skrypnek, 2004), a critical realist approach differs in that it begins by inductively coding for 'demi-regularities' or tendencies, not deterministic regularity or causal laws (Fletcher, 2016). These tendencies can be seen in basic patterns or themes within the empirical data. Once these were determined, two more rounds of inductive analysis resulted in these 38 basic themes becoming 15 organising themes (middle-order themes that organizes basic themes into clusters of similar issues) and ultimately 5 global themes (super-ordinate themes encompassing the principal metaphors in the data as a whole) (Attride-Stirling, 2001) (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: Five Global Themes

Being Other-oriented	Spirituality is actioned by caring for others and making a positive difference in the world. Spirituality reduces selfishness and materialism while striving for fairness. Ultimately, it was about connecting to others at a deeper level.
Provides Guidance	Spiritual principles, rules and values guided ethical behaviour. For many, spiritual exemplars also provided reference points for making decisions and spirituality set boundaries as constraints against unethical behaviour.
Transcends Conditions	Spirituality provided a transcendent perspective, a bigger picture that individuals used to reframe incidents and act in ways reflective of a broader spiritual reality.
Being Authentic	Spiritual individuals want to be true to their spirituality and not to allow organisational forces to govern their actions. Consequently, authenticity was about participants living out their spirituality with integrity.
Affects Well-being	Dealing with challenging organisational incidents affected an individual's well-being positively after a spiritually informed action. In negative cases, it helped participants have hope regarding outcomes while strengthening their spirituality.

For the purposes of understanding how the global themes emerged, the following details how the global theme '*Provides Guidance'* was determined. Initial analysis resulted in 13 codes with a similar focus on spirituality providing direction. Several of these were comparable, some were incorrectly coded and some were redundant and so by engaging in an iterative process, these 13 codes converged into the six basic themes. Each of these six basic themes was determined according to fixed criteria. The first basic theme, *Aids in Decision-Making*

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(22 sources, 49 data extracts), involved spiritual direction that did not refer to principles, codes, rules and values. The second basic theme, *Has a Spiritual Awareness (17 sources, 31 data extracts)*, included spiritual sensations or feelings directing participants. The third basic theme, *Provides Principles, Codes & Rules (22 sources, 42 data extracts)*, explicitly referred to spiritual principles, codes, rules and values. The fourth basic theme, *Spiritual Practices (6 sources, 13 data extracts)*, concerned specific spiritual actions (e.g., prayer, meditation) that assisted in directing behaviour. This theme did not include references to holy writings, as these were included in the first basic theme. The fifth basic theme, *A Spiritual Example (13 sources, 23 data extracts)*, consisted of examples of spiritual persons or mentors. Respondents often compared themselves with these individuals (e.g., Jesus Christ, Buddha) who became standards for behaviour. The final basic theme, *Provides Boundaries (20 sources, 35 data extracts)*, consisted of responses indicating spirituality acted as moral boundary or limitation.

A further re-reading of these themes converged them into two organising themes: *Acts as a Framework (27 sources, 135 data extracts)* and *Standards to Compare Against (22 sources, 58 data extracts)*. The first of these incorporated data from the four basic themes indicating that spirituality acted as a framework that provided direction in making ethical decisions. The second organising theme comprised data from the remaining two basic themes in which spirituality acted as a standard/boundary against which participants evaluated their behaviour. In this sense the final global, *Provides Guidance (31 sources, 193 data extracts)* included both spiritual direction for decision-making as well as standards to compare choices and resultant actions against. Table 2 below provides a summary of this process. A similar approach determined all five global themes.

Table 2: Thematic Analysis of a Global Theme: Spirituality *Provides Guidance for Behaviour*

Thirteen Basic Ideas, Concepts or Consistencies.	Six Basic Themes	Two Organising Themes	One Global Theme
Provides a standard, provides clarity, spiritual practices, provides contrast, decision-making tool, spiritual sense, recognise limitations, looking in the mirror, provides boundaries, provides example, provides a foundation, restricts	1. Aids in Decision-Making (22 interview sources, 49 data extracts) 2. Principles, Codes & Rules (22 interview sources, 42 data extracts) 3. Spiritual Awareness (17	1. Acts as a Framework (27 sources, 135 data extracts) 2. Standards to Compare Against (22 sources, 58 data extracts)	*Provides Guidance (31 sources, 193 data extracts)*

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behaviours, and provides principles, codes and/or rules.	interview sources, 31 data extracts)		
	4. Spiritual Practices (6 interview sources, 13 data extracts)		
	5. Spiritual Example (13 interview sources, 23 data extracts)		
	6. Provides Boundaries (20 interview sources, 35 data extracts)		

Validity for CR is determined by whether the generative mechanism (i.e., spirituality) is 1) involved in the observed events in the field (Zachariadis et al., 2013), and 2) present in other domains (i.e. wherever spiritual people are). The participant narratives affirm the first requirement. This research, however, did not examine other domains in which participants were involved. However, we did ask seven 'spirituality experts' (4 workplace chaplains, 2 spirituality coordinators and 1 workplace counsellor) to evaluate the inductive themes using a scale from 1 (not accurate) to 5 (completely accurate). The average score from this evaluation was 4.7/5. These experts, with a combined 105 years of experience in this area, agreed that these findings represent who spiritual people are and how they act at work. This assessment meets the second requirement of critical realist validity.

Abduction

The next step in a critical realist analysis is abduction or theoretical re-description (Fletcher, 2016). This is a process of inference from participants' accounts of their social contexts to sociological theorising about it. As Fletcher notes, "this raises the level of theoretical engagement beyond thick description of the empirical entities, but with an acknowledgement that the chosen theory is fallible" (p. 8). Applying relevant ideas from the spirituality/management literature to these global themes resulted in the following theoretical explanation as to how spirituality influences ethical outcomes.

Participants had an inherent spiritual consciousness (Mayer, 2000, Zsolnai, 2011, Fernando and Jackson, 2006) that was, in part at least, directed towards the welfare of others (Ashar and Lane-Mahar, 2004, Grof, 1998, Mitroff and Denton, 1999). This other-orientation influenced participants' cognitive maps of their organizational contexts which included standards and norms for perceiving, interpreting, believing and acting in accordance with

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their spiritual values and ideals (Lips-Wiersma, 2001, Spohn, 1997, Koenig, 2005). As a result of this spiritual guidance, participants acted in ways that transcended workplace conditions that discouraged ethical or encouraged unethical behaviour (Emmons, 1999, Shakun, 2001, Frankl, 2000). Participants were motivated to operate this way in order to be authentic to their spirituality (Kinjerski and Skrypnek, 2004, Rozuel and Kakabadse, 2010, Van Dierendonck and Mohan, 2006). When individuals were spiritually authentic, they reported an enhanced sense of well-being (Emmons et al., 1998, Ciarrocchi et al., 2008, Vandenberghe, 2011). In instances where they were not authentic, they conveyed diminished welfare (Sheep, 2006, Rozuel and Kakabadse, 2010, Karakas, 2010).

The following provides a real-life illustration of this theoretical explanation. Daeron is an Claims Handler in a large insurance company. He recounted a critical incident focusing on his dealings with people affected by a 2011 earthquake. In this, he highlights the conflict between the rules of the company and helping his clients:

> So with one of the situations I have with my company, as a well-known company, they did not necessarily care about the clients. So they tended to pay out claims but only according strictly to the policy wording. Moreover, they would put rules and regulations in place that kept evolving in order to do that. Therefore, the dilemma I had is, you know, I work for this company, which pays me my salary, but at the same time, I took the job on to help people in Christchurch. Therefore, I am caught between batting for the company versus batting for the client.

When asked how this made him feel as a spiritual person, Daeron's response indicated his *conscious other-orientation*:

> Part of being in this job is to try to help people. And you talk about compassion, yeah, so trying to help and serve people which is what insurance is set up for...We no longer seem to be helping people, or the people come second to money, whereas it should be the other way around. At the same time, there's fraud and there's people having a go, people expect the world and complain, so there is that portion of them. However, the majority of people are pretty good and deserve to be helped as best as possible.

Daeron was quick to point out the role of *spiritual guidelines and boundaries* in this dilemma:

> Okay, so I guess at the time I'm thinking well, you know, is this conflicting with, is what I'm doing right or wrong? Am I feeling convicted of doing something wrong because of spirituality? Is the Holy

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Spirit telling me don't do this, or which way to go? So I think I was being Spirit led. I felt quite comfortable to go down this road, pursue it and take it through to the end.

Daeron's answer to this ethical dilemma was to circumvent the organisational rules and to pay out clients even at the risk of his own job position and financial security. He *transcended his own interests and that of the organisation* to help these people:

So quite often I batted for the client, I looked for opportunities wherever I could to pay claims for the client, even though that actually went away from the rules and regulations of the company...There was some wheeling and dealing and maybe, as I say, when I was younger maybe there's no way I would do that because I was probably more black and white. Now I would, yeah, I've changed in the fact of wanting to help people so how can I pay something, get under the radar and yet it still lines up.

When asked why he acted in this way, Daeron's answer reflected his desire *to live an authentic spiritual life*:

It's [spirituality] everything, so every day you want to be living for God, living for the kingdom. If it's not of the kingdom then you don't want to be doing it, so that's part of who I am, it is a part of everyday life. So to me, [it is about] helping others, in this case we're to help other people, you know their lives are decimated, so common sense tells us to pay what we can to get their house repaired, to put them in temporary accommodation, to get them some help. So what is living for Kingdom? [It is] helping others.

For Daeron, the consequence of these actions was an *enhanced sense of well-being* and the repetitive likelihood of such behaviours in other contexts:

I felt good about doing it, the client was happy. You know, the company should've paid it anyway; it's just that common sense went out the window...Maybe it [spiritually informed action] just reinforces where I'm at. When you make a decision and do things like that it reinforces that this is where I am at, this is how I operate, these are the decisions that I make and that I'm comfortable doing it and this is in the zone. Therefore, I will continue to operate like that even in a new role, if I can, you take that with you wherever you go.

The above is an exemplar of spiritual enactment in an organisation. The participant, constrained by certain conditions, was confronted with an ethical dilemma. His spirituality provided an awareness of others and the necessity to care for them. This guided his behaviour to manoeuvre around these limitations such that his clients got the support they required.

When asked why he did this, the participant articulated the desire to be authentic to his spirituality, to live it daily. While there were certainly risks for the participant, he was happy to act this way since it reinforced his spirituality and encouraged him to behave similarly in other comparable situations.

Retroduction

The final step of a critical realist analysis is retroduction. For Fletcher (2016), the goal of retroduction "is to understand the contextual conditions for a particular causal mechanism to take effect and to result in the empirical trends observed" (p. 9). Based on the participant feedback from part (iii) of the interview (see Appendix 2), and after theoretical re-description, several underlying conditions were posited as enhancing spirituality at work.

Organizations that developed goals accounting for higher goods such as being socially responsible (as well as external goods, e.g., profit) were more likely to encourage spiritual outcomes (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003a, Gotsis and Kortezi, 2008). Organizational cultures that provided opportunities and resources for people to be open with their spirituality, without risk of being excluded or alienated (Karakas, 2010) in a manner that gave them constructive feedback (Krishnakumar and Neck, 2002) were also found to encourage actions in the workplace that positively reinforced spiritual ends (Parboteeah and Cullen, 2003).

At the same time, organizations that externalised the moral costs of their actions (Giacalone, 2004), that were more focussed on profit and short-term goals (Lips-Wiersma and Nilakant, 2008), that were more rationalistic/technocratic (Bouckaert, 2011), and that had structures, policies and procedures that discouraged spiritual thought and practice (Pfeffer, 2003) tended to limit the spiritual outcomes. This often promoted guilt and self-condemnation as spiritual people realised their loss of authenticity (Fernando and Jackson, 2006). For Rozuel and Kakabadse (2010) such persons become compartmentalised, risk harming their spiritual identity, and can develop psychopathologies. Interestingly, this is likely to increase unethical conduct (Trevino et al., 1998, Anand et al., 2004, Lips-Wiersma and Nilakant, 2008).

Again, we turn to Daeron for evidence of these structural conditions and their impact. When asked about the focus of his company, he was clear that this was an organisation concerned with economic priorities:

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> The company has no interest in being proactive and looking to pay and to help you as a client. We're only interested in paying what we have to pay within our wording. If we can get away with it then we will not pay it...The Company comes first, before people. Profit comes first before people. The company comes first, even with our staff; they don't even care about staff. Once we have finished our jobs, once that certain department had finished their jobs they'd be cut and gone. Actually, their contracts are due this weekend, and they still have not had any notification of extension. Often the day before they've offered renewed contracts, so people are trying to make decisions on their future, but they don't care about people. They just care about the brand and profit…For me, that particular company, they were a nonsense. They've got values that they never stand by at all. Total front window, this is who we are, but that's not actually who they are and they don't operate like that.

When asked how this influenced him, Daeron noted that the focus on profit, on rules and regulations and not people, inhibited his capacity to be spiritual:

> That organisation probably hindered my spirituality. So that's why I didn't want to get wrapped up in these rules and regulations kind of like a strait jacket. You break them off and you try and work through things to get a result without going too far down, over the line wherever that line is, of actually doing something that you probably shouldn't do. So maybe I've just got a wider boundary than what others have got…If the [organisation] culture is more interested in money, the brand, rules and regulations, yeah, it restricts how you can operate spiritually within that.

When questioned how this made him feel, his response was telling. In regards to his actions he "felt good about doing it" but overall, the organization's culture left him with a loss of spiritual authenticity:

> I feel kind of torn between what I believe spiritually and what my organization tells me I can and can't do. It's frustrating, I feel frustrated not being able to be true to myself…I'll probably leave this company soon.

Conclusion and Future Research Implications

This paper discusses and demonstrates the use of CR in SAW research. While the management literature provides some examples of research using CR, there have been limited studies that describe how CR informs their methods of data analysis or their findings. This is especially true of SAW research.

This research addressed the question of how and why spirituality might influence ethical behaviour in organisations. It commenced by identifying what spirituality actually is from the literature – its social reality as it were. It employed this knowledge to select an instrument mirroring this reality (Howden, 1992) and utilised it to measure the spirituality of 321 employees from several organisations in New Zealand (the extensive phase). From this survey, 31 highly spiritual individuals were interviewed about their ethical experiences in the workplace, and the potential role spirituality had in their decision-making and behaviour (the intensive phase). Through inductive analysis of these interviews, five themes emerged to which ideas and concepts from the SAW literature was applied to generate a theoretical description of how and why spirituality influences ethical behaviour in organisations. Finally, this research sought to understand the context within these organisations that encouraged or discouraged SAW.

The contribution of this research is twofold. First, it demonstrates how critical realism may be used in SAW research. As a philosophical methodology, CR is better than positivism and hermeneutic approaches alone since both suffer from flat ontologies – that is neither approach allows for the causal mechanisms, thus their explanations only refer to what is evidenced empirically (O'Mahoney and Vincent, 2014, Sayer, 2000). CR advocates using both extensive (i.e., quantitative) and intensive (i.e., qualitative) complementary approaches to convey knowledge about the mechanism of spirituality, its causal power, and the interaction of the organizational context (Danermark et al., 1997). Second, through a process of induction, abduction and retroduction, this research explains how and why spirituality influences moral conduct in organisations and provides some understanding of the context required for SAW to either flourish or be diminished. As Easton (2010) notes, CR is appropriate for researching any context, irrespective of the number of participants, if "the process involves thoughtful in depth research with the objective of understanding why things are as they are" (p. 119). The SAW literature is replete with claims that spirituality enhances ethical behaviour in organizations (see e.g. Cavanagh and Bandsuch, 2002, Mitroff and Denton, 1999, Zsolnai, 2010) but there is little explanation as to how and why it might do this. CR offers an alternative, and improved, means of cognising and elucidating this causal relationship.

From a critical realist perspective, with its focus on judgemental rationality and alethic truth, research is iterative and ongoing. The validity of particular generative mechanisms is seldom established once and for all (Ackroyd, 2004). This research attempted to demonstrate how

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spirituality relates to ethics in the workplace. Enrichment of the current study could involve interviewing people who are not spiritual (or less spiritual) or are from organisations that do not have a service focus to see if similar findings would arise. Management alone could also be a specific focus. Future studies could aim to collect data through journals, diaries and secondary data. This may provide better retroductive understandings of what makes SAW and its outcomes possible. For example, a narrative-biographical approach could be envisaged since it positions the individual and their experiences within a life story and would provide useful insights into spiritual development and spirituality's impact on their behaviour over time.

There has been some writing investigating the relationship between organisational culture/identity and SAW (see e.g. Barrett, 2003, Carroll et al., 2014, Parboteeah and Cullen, 2003, Vandenberghe, 2011, Sheep and Foreman, 2012, Rashid and Ibrahim, 2008). However, much of this work is either descriptive or quantitative and fails to explain why such a relationship exists. While some retroductive analysis occurred in this study, it only identified the contextual mechanisms (e.g. culture, organisational goals, management roles etc.) that enhanced or constrained SAW. However, very little was understood about how and why these mechanisms did this. More work needs to be done in this area.

For example, in the cases where spirituality was encouraged, were there some managerial discourses (e.g. being spiritual is good for the organisation) that were more prevalent than others, and that in certain contexts (e.g. in service organisations focussed on human good) employees were more inclined to accept this managerial version of the "truth", however this might be constructed? To better understand this, comparative analysis could be utilised to demonstrate whether managers who matched their rhetoric with the spirituality of their employees were more successful in encouraging SAW and its consequences. This may help develop new theory that connects organisational outcomes with broader cultural contexts. Alternatively, and drawing on existing ideas (Lips-Wiersma et al., 2009, Bell and Taylor, 2004), one might consider the role of hierarchy and power in organisations in order to explain why employees with the opportunity for advancement have a greater interest in being complicit with managerial discourses about SAW.

As O'Mahoney and Vincent (2014) note, a successful CR study offers a new and often unanticipated view of things. That which was previously unobserved becomes the basis of

new understanding. This study achieves this in explaining how and why spirituality affects ethical behaviour in organisations and by identifying contextual mechanisms that encourage this outcome.

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APPENDIX 1: HOWDEN'S (1992) SPIRITUALITY ASSESSMENT SCALE[4]

DIRECTIONS: Please indicate your response by circling the appropriate letters indicating how you respond to the statement. There is no "right" or "wrong" answer. Please respond to what you think or how you feel at this time.

MARK:
"SD" if you STRONGLY DISAGREE
"D"   if you DISAGREE
"DM" if you DISAGREE MORE than AGREE
"AM" if you AGREE MORE than DISAGREE
"A"   if you AGREE
"SA"   if you STRONGLY AGREE

1.	I have a general sense of belonging	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
2.	I am able to forgive people who have done wrong to me	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
3.	I have the ability to rise above or go beyond a physical or psychological condition	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
4.	I am concerned about destruction of the environment	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
5.	I have experienced moments of peace in a devastating event	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
6.	I feel a kinship to other people	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
7.	I feel a connection to all of life	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
8.	I rely on an inner strength in hard times	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
9.	I enjoy being of service to others	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
10.	I can go to a spiritual dimension within myself for guidance	SA	D	DM	AM	A	SA
11.	I have the ability to rise above or go beyond a body change or body loss	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
12.	I have a sense of harmony or inner peace	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
13.	I have the ability for self-healing	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA

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[4] Permission to us the SAS was given by Dr. Judy Howden

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14.	I have an inner strength	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
15.	The boundaries of my universe extend beyond usual ideas of what space and time are thought to be	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
16.	I feel good about myself	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
17.	I have a sense of balance in my life	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
18.	There is fulfilment in my life	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
19.	I feel a responsibility to preserve the planet	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
20.	The meaning I have found for my life provides a sense of peace	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
21.	Even when I feel discouraged, I trust that life is good	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
22.	My life has meaning and purpose	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
23.	My innerness or an inner resource helps me deal with uncertainty in life	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
24.	I have discovered my own strength in time of struggle	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
25.	Reconciling relationships is important to me	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
26.	I feel a part of the community in which I live	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
27.	My inner strength is related to a belief in a Higher Power or Supreme Being	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA
28.	I have goals and aims for my life	SD	D	DM	AM	A	SA

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SCORING INSTRUCTIONS

Total Scale: 1-28 Items

Subscales:

Transcendence
   Items: 3, 5, 11, 13, 15, 21

Unifying Interconnectedness
   Items: 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 19, 25, 26

Purpose & Meaning in Life
   Items: 18, 20, 22, 28

Innerness
   Items: 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 23, 24, 27

Scoring:[5]

Strongly Disagree (SD)	= 1
Disagree (D)	= 2
Disagree more than Agree (DM)	= 3
Agree more than Disagree (AM)	= 4
Agree (A)	= 5
Strongly Agree (SA)	= 6

The instrument scores by summing the responses to all of the items across the above dimensions. Individuals who score 113-168 have a strong spirituality. Scores from 84-112 would represent fair spirituality. A score of 28-56 indicates weak spirituality.

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[5] Howden's (1992) original scale started with SA and ended with SD. However, this proved confusing for respondents and also for calculating spirituality scores. Consequently, the order of the scale was changed to the above.

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR PRIMARY STUDY

Introduction to research – looking at how individual spirituality influences ethical behaviour in the workplace; focussing on persons who score high on the Spirituality Assessment Scale (SAS), who are over 30 and currently work full-time or part-time in organisation constrained by market conditions and financial goals.

Participants are given feedback on SAS scores and provided with a definition of spirituality prior to the interview via email. Reviewed this information prior to interview starting. Also via email, participants were asked to reflect on critical ethical incidents during the last two years of their careers.

The interview process is recorded (agreement). Data is confidential. I am interested in your experiences and personal accounts, so please mention anything you think relevant even if I do not ask the question specifically. If at any point, you need some time to reflect, want clarification on something, want to edit some of your story or need a coffee break, then please let me know.

Part (i): Current Position & Background

1. What is your name, age and length of time in your current organisation?
2. What is your job title? Can you briefly describe your responsibilities?

Part (ii): Spirituality & Critical Ethical Incidents

1. What do you think spirituality is?
2. Is spirituality different from religion? If yes, how?
3. How important is spirituality to you in your daily life?

As previously mentioned via email, organisational life often involves tensions between spiritual, moral and organisational demands. Often these tensions result in ethical incidents as described in your interview primer. For the purposes of this study, I would like you to describe in your own words and in as much detail as possible 2-3 critical ethical incidents in your work career in the last two years where you feel this has been case.

Prompt Questions for the Critical Incident:

- What made this a critical ethical incident?
    - Why did this incident happen?
    - How did it happen?
    - With whom did it happen?
    - What was their response?
    - How often do such incidents occur in your organisation? (Depending on answer, why?)

- How do you think your spirituality influenced your choices and actions in this incident?

- How do you think your organisational culture affected your ability to be spiritual in this incident?

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- How do you think your role within the organisation affected your ability to be spiritual in this incident?

- Were you able to express and act on your spiritual preferences in this instance? If yes, why? If no, why not?

- Was the incident, dilemma or event resolved in alignment with your spiritual values? If yes, how? If not, why not?

- How did you feel about the consequences of your choices and actions from a spiritual perspective?

- How do you think the incident and your response affected your own spiritual development?

Part (iii): Spirituality Effects

1. How freely can you express your spirituality in your organisation?
   a. Can you give some examples?

2. What factors, in your opinion, appear to interfere or inhibit spirituality in your organisation?
   a. Can you give me some examples of these factors?

3. How else has being a spiritual person in your workplace been or not been useful?
   a. Can you give some examples?

Final Question: Would you like to add, modify or delete anything from the interview?