

Impact of Organizational Virtuousness on Workplace Spirituality with the Mediating Role of Perceived Organizational Support

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Abstract

This paper aims to analyze the relationship between organizational virtuousness and workplace spirituality with the mediating role of perceived organizational support. Data was collected from 250 employees working in the telecommunication sector of Pakistan through a questionnaire. Data was analyzed using Hayes' PROCESS macro (a statistical technique). The study reported a statistically significant relationship between organizational virtuousness and workplace spirituality and also proved perceived organizational support as a partial mediator between these two variables. The findings make an important contribution to the literature available on positive psychology/organizational behavior, especially positive organizational scholarship (POS). The findings also suggest the organizations to adopt practices and procedures that help to create a climate of virtuousness.

Keywords. organizational virtuousness, perceived organizational support, workplace spirituality

1. Introduction

These days organizations are showing a growing interest in social responsibility and corporate ethics due to the decline of morals and positivity at the workplace (Magnier-Watanabe,

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Uchida, Orsini, & Benton, [2020](#); Cameron, Bright, & Caza, [2004](#); Lukaszewski, Stone, Barclay, Markel, & Yugo, [2012](#)). Following this trend, researchers and practitioners are diverting their interest towards virtue and inducing virtuousness in organizations' policies (Friedman & Brown, [2018](#)). Organizational virtuousness is linked with the resilience and long-term productivity of organizations because of its core features embedding ethical values, positive influence on individuals, and improving the common good (Cameron et al., [2004](#); Kooshki & Zeinabadi, [2016](#)). Virtue is mostly debated in theological paradigms; however, current theoretical conjectures and applications make it an important topic in organizational and human resource researches. Previous researches encompassing virtuousness intended to understand the behavior of employees in an organization, whereas contemporary studies explore the character of virtuousness in various organizational domains, such as profitability, creativity, turnover, and performance (Barclay, Markel, & Yugo, [2012](#)). Lee, Lovelace, and Manz ([2014](#)) argued that managers depend on non-physical resources to revamp organizational and employee performance in today's organizational environment. These non-physical resources encompass creativity, innovation, virtue (Abedi, Astaneh, & Abooe, [2015](#); Beadle, [2017](#)), organizational virtuousness (Kooshki & Zeinabadi, [2016](#)), spirituality (Benefiel, Fry, & Geigle, [2014](#); Pawar, [2014](#)), and workplace spirituality (Gatling, Kim, & Milliman, [2016](#); Rego, Ribeiro, & e Cunha, [2010](#)).

Workplace spirituality has become a prominent feature of contemporary organizational culture. It enhances an employee's sense of responsibility which directly impacts the overall work productivity and organizational growth (Islam, Khan, & Asad, [2019](#)). A higher level of spirituality enhances employees' mental wellness, so it is pertinent to investigate organizations and their employees' spiritual standpoint. Empirical evidence proves that organizations generating a positive and supportive work environment are more likely to have employees who are high on workplace spirituality (Caza, Barker, & Cameron, [2004](#)). Therefore, organizational virtuousness tends to enhance workplace spirituality. Digging more into the relationship between organizational virtuousness and workplace spirituality, the role of organizational support comes up as an essential factor that can

mediate the relationship between these two variables (Akgunduz, Alkan, & Gök, [2018](#); Meyer, [2018](#)). Perceived organizational support has attracted considerable interest because it views the relationship between the organization and employee from an employee's perspective (Kurtessis et al., [2017](#)). It depicts the exchange between the employee and the employing organization, which has been defined as “an extensive discernment showing an extent to which the organization esteems (employees’) commitments and thinks about their prosperity” (Akgunduz et al., [2018](#)).

As per organizational support theory, employees develop observations and interpretations based on how much concern their organizations show for them (Kurtessis et al., [2017](#)) as organizational support. Accordingly, the current study investigates the relationship between organizational virtuousness and workplace spirituality and analyzes the mediating impact of perceived organizational support on the said relationship. A gap exists in the literature concerning the study of positive constructs, such as organizational virtuousness and workplace spirituality. Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi ([2000](#)) reported that behavioral studies are predominantly inclined toward exploring the negative aspects of organizational behavior. So, this study contributes to the growing body of positive literature in the study of organizational behavior and positive organizational scholarship (McGhee & Grant, [2008](#); Meyer, [2018](#); Wang, [2018](#); Rojas, [2018](#)). Theoretically, the study also fills the gap by employing the measure designed by Cameron et al. ([2004](#)) in the under researched context of Pakistan while developing its relationship with other positive outcomes, that is, workplace spirituality and perceived organizational support (Brewster, Mayrhofer, & Farndale, [2018](#)). When employees encounter virtuousness within the organization, they build up a sense of purpose at work culminating in workplace spirituality that plays a vital role in an organization's productivity. Moreover, workplace spirituality has been linked to organizational performance (Garcia-Zamor, [2003](#)), job satisfaction (Iyer, [2018](#); Ke & Deng, [2018](#)), and organizational commitment but its relationship with organizational virtuousness has been ignored. Additionally, the current study gives a pragmatic analysis that uses

a more refined statistical technique, that is, Process macro by Hayes, Montoya, and Rockwood, ([2017b](#)).

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses

2.1. Organizational Virtuousness

Organizational virtuousness refers to organizational milieu in which basic features such as forgiveness, compassion, optimism, trust, and integrity are enacted at the personal, organizational and communal levels (Milliman, Czaplewski, & Ferguson, [2003](#); MacIntyre, [1984](#)). This concept is an offshoot of positive organizational psychology, which postulates the proposition of connecting an organization's virtuousness with employees' best functioning at work through a sense of adherence, positive meaning, and involvement (Cameron et al., [2004](#)). Relevant to the high urgency of social responsibility and corporate ethics in the corporate sector, virtuousness is reckoned cardinal as a source of attaining individual and organizational prosperity (Beadle, [2017](#)). Employees' cognizance of virtuousness within an organization inclines them to display positive demeanors; emotions boost employee impression and employee interaction with the organization (Caza et al., [2004](#); Nikandrou & Tsachouridi, [2015](#)).

This paper adopts the five dimensional model of organizational virtuousness presented by Cameron et al. ([2004](#)) to conceptualize perceived organizational support and workplace spirituality. Organizational virtuousness is an apportioned view used to substitute negativity with positivity and rehearsing it generally escorts to shared results, for example, expanded morale, fulfillment, and learning (Barbaranelli, Paciello, Biagioli, Fida, & Tramontano, [2018](#)). Organizational trust subsumes graciousness, amiability, thought, and regard for others and demonstrates an organizational setting wherein representatives rely on each other. Organizational compassion involves a hierarchical setting in which representatives care about each other and where demonstrations of sensitivity and comfort are pervasive among workers (Ashmos & Duchon, [2000](#)). Organizational integrity relates to a setting encapsulated by respectability, reliability, and respect. Forgiveness alludes to pardon for errors, which are accepted as open doors to gain new and useful knowledge and are quickly excused. Employees' belief is based on optimism in an organization that

imparts them with a conviction of beating the obstacles and ending up triumphant (Cameron et al., [2004](#)).

Subjection to the five kinds of organizational virtuousness assists employees to perceive their work environment in an efficacious way as a source of vitality and recuperation, thus leading to positive dispositions and meaningful practices at work. Addressing the call for research on organizational virtuousness (Friedman & Brown, [2018](#)), we scrutinized it as an imperative precursor for workplace spirituality. Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi ([2000](#)) shifted the trend from pathological research to positive research in organizational studies. Previously, the investigation of brutishness and egotistical aspects of human conduct was emphasized. Later on, patterns rose that emphasized the positive aspects of human behavior. Researchers have ignored positive dimensions within the organizational context because of specific reasons, predominantly due to the philosophical tone of the subjects that are studied in positive scholarship. Besides, adverse occasions have a greater impact on individuals' psyche and behavior (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, [2001](#)). The last reason can be the absence of scientific scales used for measuring these positive constructs in management sciences (Dutton, Frost, Worline, Lilius, & Kanov, [2002](#)). On these grounds, positive studies remain scant (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, [2003](#)). This study explores positive constructs methodically and adds knowledge to the existing body of positive organizational scholarship.

2.2. Organizational Virtuousness and Workplace Spirituality

Organizational virtuousness is related to employees' perceptions about the organization's acts and virtuous practices such as optimism, forgiveness, trust, compassion, and integrity (Friedman & Brown, [2018](#)). Individuals build a comprehensive view of the organization's standard of behavior, principles, and whether their organization acts as a custodian of the employees or not (Dutton & Dukerich, [1991](#)).

Keeping in view the social exchange interpretation (Blau, [1964](#)), organizational virtuousness offers acceptance, veneration, respect, and consideration that induce employees to reciprocate the organization with constructive conduct and deportment. The

literature regarding organizational virtuousness pivots to the theory of social exchange, which propounds that employees reciprocate the positive and virtuous attitude of the organization towards them with their prosocial behavior (Moorman & Miner, [1998](#)) and affective commitment (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexinkle, Lynch, & Rhoades, [2001](#); Armeli, Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Lynch, [1998](#)). Hence, we expound that the perception of employees related to organizational virtuousness is linked positively to workplace spirituality. Friedman and Brown ([2018](#)) built up the theoretical relationship of organizational virtuousness with workplace spirituality. They argued that the frequent experiencing of positive emotions by employees makes them more capable of broadening and building themselves into a spiritual being within an organization which ultimately leads to workplace spirituality. Spirituality encompasses different dimensions (Neck & Milliman, [1994](#)) and multiple views. Krishnakumar and Neck ([2002](#)) contended that specific definitions and importance of spirituality is because of the substantial individual nature of the word. "For instance, one view characterizes spirituality as something beginning from within the person. Another view considers spirituality to be fixing to one's religious connection. Still, another viewpoint contends that spirituality includes existential inquiries; for example, what is the significance of my work? Also, for what reason am I doing this work?" (Krishnakumar & Neck, [2002](#)).

There are two basic courses through which organizational virtuousness enhances workplace spirituality. The first course incorporates an upgraded spirituality through positive feelings (Friedman & Brown, [2018](#)) of work and sentiments of bliss and culmination. This particular course demonstrates that organizational virtuousness typifying workplace spirituality is successful because of maximum productivity, making such organizations dominant in the marketplace. Armeli et al. ([1998](#)) argued that the organizations which focus on high workplace spirituality supersede the rival organizations due to the fast attainment of their objectives. Regarding personal evolution, comprehensive benefits of spirituality encompass employees' enhanced mental and physical abilities that promote personal development and an exalted sense of self-worth.

The other path connecting organizational virtuousness and workplace spirituality is established on the basis that organizational virtuousness distances employees from fatalistic emotions, contexts, and compartments (Cameron et al., [2004](#)). It also encourages employees to develop a sense of compassion, connection, forgiveness, morality, and meaning that shapes and nurtures workplace spirituality among employees.

H₁: There is a positive relationship between organizational virtuousness and workplace spirituality.

2.3. Mediation of Perceived Organizational Support between Organizational Virtuousness and Workplace Spirituality

According to Emerson ([1976](#)) social exchange is not simply a theoretical concept; indeed, it is also a framework that analyzes the movement of valuable things such as resources through a particular focus on the social process (Emerson, [1976](#)). Moreover, social exchange is the exchange of activity based on tangible or intangible communal transactions between two parties (Cook, Cheshire, Rice, & Nakagawa, [2013](#)). This definition elaborates and analyzes the nature of return which remains unspecified (Blau, [1964](#); Konovsky & Pugh, [1994](#)). According to exchange theorists, social exchange is of four basic types, which are productive, negotiable, reciprocal, and generalized exchange (Molm & Cook, [1995](#)). In the current study, we dealt with reciprocal exchange which involves a sequence of independent give and takes relationships among two actors over the course of time (Lawler, Thye, & Yoon, [2000](#)). Employees reciprocate the virtuous treatment of their organizations by calibrating their attitudes and behaviors accordingly (Rego, Ribeiro, Cunha, & Jesuino, [2011](#)). Activities performed by organizations that are included in organizational virtuousness remain instrumental in garnering an exchange relationship between an organization and its employees based on reciprocity arrangement (Friedman & Brown, [2018](#)).

Virtuous contexts and organizational virtuousness transform and improve the employer-employee relationship and subsequent employee reactions (Tsachouridi & Nikandrou, [2016](#)) and create positive spiritual emotions in employees (Arnold, Turner, Barling, Kelloway, & McKee, [2007](#)). So, positive organizational virtuousness leads employees to express gratitude for working in a

virtuous organization (Batistic, [2018](#)) and they have an acute sense of perceived organizational support (Rego et al., [2011](#); Ruiz-Palomino & Martinez-Canas, [2014](#)). Similarly, Tsachouridi and Nikandrou ([2016](#)) posit that employees experiencing organizational virtuousness perceive their organization as supportive. Thus, the current study hypothesizes that organizational virtuousness has a positive relationship with perceived organizational support.

Employees have a higher level of spirituality at the workplace when more employees perceive the organization to be supportive. Moore and Casper ([2006](#)) posited that perceived organizational support by employees determines the level of workplace spirituality. Pawar ([2009a](#)) argued that perceived organizational support includes an apparatus that facilitates employees to experience transcendence, leading to workplace spirituality. Therefore, this study hypothesizes that perceived organizational support increases the level of workplace spirituality.

Connecting the three constructs, the current study proposes that virtuous organizations enhance perceived organizational support in employees and also nurture the perceptions of meaningful work, which makes employees feel valuable emotionally and intellectually (Arnold et al., [2007](#); Rego et al., [2011](#)). They establish strong feelings of gratitude towards their organization and reciprocate it by developing good moral values and a meaningful relationship. As Rego et al. ([2011](#)) put it, "They feel that they are completing important work, in this manner bringing their whole self (physical, mental and spiritual) to the organization" (Rego et al., [2011](#)); and thus, increase their workplace spirituality. Since core values of workplace spirituality involve virtuous moral values and meaningful relationships with others (McGhee & Grant, [2008](#)), they thus induce alliance, the opportunity of articulation, certifiable minding, and the importance of work among employees.

Empirical research indicates that employees who perceive organizational support reciprocate it by bearing significant positive emotions, attitudes, and behaviors (Baran, Shanock, & Miller, [2012](#); Tsachouridi & Nikandrou, [2016](#)) at the workplace (Eisenberg et al., 2001; Moorman, Blakely, & Niehoff, [1998](#)). Conforming to the above arguments, the current study suggests that organizational virtuousness affects employees' perception and

they perceive their organization to be supportive. This, in turn, creates positive emotions of being valued and they reciprocate the organization by improving their spirituality at work. So, perceived organizational support mediates the relationship between organizational virtuousness and workplace spirituality.

H₂: Perceived organizational support mediates the relationship between organizational virtuousness and workplace spirituality.

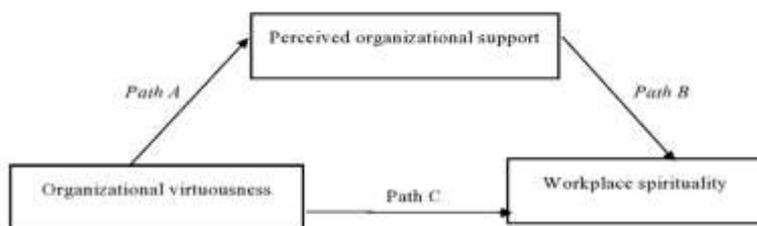


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

3. Research Methodology

To test the statistical relationship existing between the variables of the study, quantitative method was used. A questionnaire was adapted to collect the data. Pilot study was conducted to refine the data collection instrument. Thirty participants were recruited in order to secure the responses needed for testing the questionnaire. The instrument underwent minor modifications before it was deployed to collect the data. The respondents chosen for this study comprised employees from the telecommunication sector of Pakistan. The human resource department of each organization was first contacted to explain the purpose of the study and to seek permission for data collection. After obtaining the consent of human resource managers to collect the data, the questionnaire was administered to the employees. The respondents were given assurance regarding anonymity and confidentiality. For generating data, systematic random sampling technique was employed. This technique helps to increase representativeness while collecting data from a large number of respondents, such as customers or employees. This technique

ensures that the study population is evenly sampled, it is neither over-represented nor under-represented and thereby the use of this technique increases the generalizability of the study (Taherdoost, 2016; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). The details of employees and headcount were collected from the human resource department of each organization. For the sake of randomness, every fifth employee was offered to fill the survey for the study. As data was collected from a single source, that is, from the employees of the telecommunication sector of Pakistan, this might have created measurement error and common method bias due to the tendency of the respondents to give positive responses (Lindell & Whitney, 2001). To counter the problem of common method bias, Harman's single factor test was applied (Harman, 1976). The table below gives the details pertaining to responses from each institute. We generated a 91.6% response rate from the respondents. A questionnaire survey was managed by each researcher for the study. After an in-depth analysis of the data, 180 responses from our survey were selected to be suitable for statistical analysis.

Table 1. Distribution of the Questionnaire and Response Rate

Business Organizati	Distribu	Return	Not	Respo	Valid
	ted	ed	Return	nse	Respo
PTCL	60	55	5	91%	49
Jazz	30	25	5	83.33%	22
Telenor	60	56	4	93.33%	46
Zong	50	48	2	96%	45
Ufone	50	45	5	90%	38
Total	250	229	21	91.6%	200

Organizational virtuousness was measured through the scale suggested by Cameron et al. (2004), workplace spirituality by Pawar (2009b), and perceived organizational support by Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa (1986). We gathered the data for variables comprising four demographic and three unobserved variables (perceived organizational support, organizational virtuousness, and workplace spirituality). Demographic information does not relate to the theoretical

framework but respondents' age, job, and education help researchers to know more deeply about the subject matter.

4. Data Analysis

A preliminary statistical analysis was conducted to identify the missing values and outliers. Descriptive analysis was performed and it fulfilled all assumptions; there was no problem found related to multi-collinearity and the data was normal and linear. Following the rule of 10% missed observations, those responses were skipped that had 10% missing observations. There was no detection of outliers in the data; meanwhile, the demographics of the participants were checked statistically through frequencies.

Table 1 shows the frequencies for age, gender, tenure (in years), and educational qualification of the respondents. 51% (102) of respondents in our study were males and 49% (98) were females, out of a total of 200 surveyed respondents. The percentage of respondents who belonged to age group 18-25 is 52%, whereas 32% respondents belonged to the age group 26-30. Similarly, 11% respondents belonged to the age group 31-40 and 6% respondents belonged to the age group 40 and above. Pertaining to the categorization of education, the number of respondents with a bachelor's degree and a master's degree was 97 each and the number of those with other qualifications was 13. The number of respondents who had a job experience of 1 year was 66. Moreover, 104 respondents had an experience of 1-5 years, 19 respondents had an experience of 6-10 years and 11 respondents had an experience of more than 11 years. Frequency based data related to the respondents' age, gender, work experience, and education is given in Table 2.

Table 2. Demographics of the Respondents

Age	F	Gender	F	Work Exp	F	Edu	F
18-25	104	Male	102	< 1 year	66	Bachelors	90
26-30	63	Female	98	1-5 years	104	Masters	97
31-40	22			6-10 years	19	Others	13
>=40	11			>=11 years	10		
Total	200		200		200		200

Table 3 presents descriptive statistics, reliability, and correlational analysis. It can be inferred from the table that the mean value of all variables in the study is approximately 3 and the standard deviation is less than 0.9. Normality was checked through the skewness and kurtosis coefficients of each variable. The mean score is slightly negatively skewed as shown by the skewness coefficient but the coefficient's value is below 1. So, it can be ignored as it is not significant. The value of kurtosis is also in the acceptable range. It can be observed that the Cronbach's alpha values (Nie, Bent, & Hull, [1975](#)) of all the three constructs are greater than or almost 0.7. These values show that the constructs used to measure each of the three unobserved variables indicate internal consistency. It is critical to conduct correlation analysis prior to regression analysis because it is not possible to form predictions and meaningful results without it (Lee & Nicewander, [1988](#)). It computes the potency of the linear association between two variables (Cronk, [2004](#)). A higher correlation indicates a stronger relationship between variables. Table 3 provides the result of the correlation coefficient of all variables of the study. There is a moderately strong positive correlation between organizational virtuousness and workplace spirituality ($r=0.656$, $p<0.01$), weak positive relationship between organizational virtuousness and perceived organizational support ($r=0.292$, $p<0.01$), and a moderate positive relationship between organizational virtuousness and workplace spirituality ($r=0.360$, $p<0.01$).

According to Table 4, since all the data was collected from a single source, that is, the employees of the telecommunication sector of Pakistan, this may have created measurement error and common method bias that may have originated with the tendency of the respondents to give positive responses (Lindell & Whitney, [2001](#)). To counter this problem and to identify the existence of common method bias in our data, we applied Harman's single factor test. According to the values given in Table 4, it is 38.2% (which is less than 50%) and it shows that there is no measurement error or common method variance in our data (Harmans, [1976](#)).

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics, Correlations and Reliability

	Descriptive Statistics				Correlations			Reliability
	Mean	Std. Dev	Skewness	Kurtosis	POS	WS	OV	Chronbach's Alpha
POS	3.2019	.56401	.065	.629	1		8	0.709
Std. Error			.172	.342				
WS	3.7856	.64111	-1.058	1.425	.360	1	8	0.836
Std. Error			.172	.342				
OV	3.6998	.60022	-.857	.435	.292	.65	1	0.820
Std. Error			.172	.343				

Table 4. Harman's Single Factor

	POS	WS	OV
Mean	3.2019	3.7856	3.6998
SD	.56401	.64111	.60022
Harman's Single Factor	38.2%		

Regression analysis (Hayes' Process) was used to investigate the hypothesis that perceived organizational support mediates the relationship between organizational virtuousness and workplace spirituality (Hayes, [2017a](#); Hayes, [2012](#)). Table 5 shows the regression analysis.

In Step 1 of the mediation model, the regression of organizational virtuousness on workplace spirituality, while ignoring the mediator, was found significant, $B = 0.7289$ ($p < 0.001$), $R\text{-sq} = 0.5090$ (path c). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was accepted which states that there is a direct impact of organizational virtuousness on workplace spirituality (direct effect of X on Y). In a simple mediation method, indirect effects can be generated from the results of two regressions. It is based on two single impacts (path a, path b). Step 2 showed that the regression of organizational virtuousness on the mediator, that is, perceived organizational support, was significant, $B = 0.2053$ ($p < 0.001$), $R\text{-Sq} = 0.0559$ (path a). The effect of X on M. Step 3 of the mediation process showed that the regression of the mediator, that is, perceived organizational support on workplace spirituality was also significant, $B = 0.1704$, $t(176) =$; $p < 0.001$ (path b). The effect of M on Y (Demming, Jahn, & Boztug, [2017](#)).

Step 4 of the analysis revealed the total effect (path c), that is, organizational virtuousness was a significant predictor of workplace spirituality through perceived organizational support, $B = 0.6948$, $t = 12.75$, $p < 0.001$. It exhibits the positive significant influence of perceived organizational support on workplace spirituality through a mediator. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was also accepted. Following the results of the mediation model, organizational virtuousness was found to have both a direct and indirect impact on workplace spirituality. which exhibits the case of partial mediation (Demming et al., [2017](#)). So, with the

introduction of the mediator, the impact of organizational virtuousness on workplace spirituality was reduced as the value changed from 0.729 to 0.698. The value of R-squared also increased with perceived organizational support as a mediator from 0.5090 to 0.5287. The indirect effect was tested using a bootstrap estimation approach with 1000 samples (Shrout & Bolger, [2002](#)).

Table 5. Regression Analysis (Hayes' Process) – Mediation

1. OV predicts WS=>Path C		
B=0.7298	F=(1,177)=183.45	R-Sq=0.5090
T(180)=13.54 ; P<0.001	P<0.001	
	N=180	
2. OV predicts POS=>Path A		
B=0.2053	F(1,177)=10.4808	R-sq=0.0559
T(180)=3.2374	P<0.001	
P<0.001	N=180	
3. OV and POS together predict WS=> Path C		
1. POS predicts WS-> Path b	F(2,176)=98.72	R-sq=0.6948
B=0.1704,	P<0.001	
t(176)= ; p<0.001	N=18-	
2. OV is lessened predicting WS-> path c		
B=0.6948,		
t(176)=12.7535;		
p<0.001		

5. Discussion

Workplace spirituality is very fruitful for the organization; the businesses that promote a spiritual culture induce their employees to put their heart and soul in their work (Jehan, Gull, Khan, & Hussain, [2020](#)). Employees develop a substantial work identity and they add meaning and purpose to their assigned tasks (Zhang,

[2020](#); Mousa, [2020](#)). According to the results of the study, organizational virtuousness strongly influences workplace spirituality as employees develop positive perceptions about their respective organization's ethics and they return it by working with full spirit for their respective organization (Delam et al., [2019](#)). Studies suggest that spirituality motivates employees to work beyond their capacities (Haldorai, Kim, Chang, & Li, [2020](#); Singh, [2019](#); Moran, [2017](#)). So, the results suggest that when an organization possesses virtuousness then its employees experience workplace spirituality. This stance is supported by Fredrickson's ([2001](#)) "broaden and build theory" which proposes that virtuousness generates positivity among employees.

The results also revealed the evidence regarding the positive relationship between organizational virtuousness and perceived organizational support. When employees feel that they work in a highly virtuous organization, their perception builds about the organization as supportive of them (Malik & Naeem, [2016](#)). These feelings cast a positive impact on their thoughts which improves their efficiency as they consider that their organizational environment is best for them and their growth (Tsachouridi & Nikandrou, [2020](#); Cameron et al., [2003](#)). Studies revealed that organizational virtuousness builds human and social capital for the businesses; when employees perceive that organizational support is high they work harder for their respective organization's benefit (Yücel, Ribeiro, & Gomes, [2020](#); Leana & Van Buren, [1999](#); Watson & Papamarcos, [2002](#)).

The results also manifested a positive relationship between perceived organizational support and workplace spirituality. When employees perceive that their organization is supportive towards them and managers support them in the completion of their tasks, then there develops trust, compassion, and unity among employees, their workplace spirituality is enhanced and they relate to their work with their heart and soul (Margaretha, Saragih, Mariana, & Frederick, [2020](#)). If employees perceive organizational support to be high, they align their personal goals with organizational goals and work harder to achieve those goals (Islam et al., [2019](#); Sepahvand, [2019](#); Wright & Goodstein, [2007](#)).

Lastly, based on the results regarding Hypothesis 2, the article contributes to the existing literature by exhibiting the indirect

relationship between organizational virtuousness, perceived organizational support, and workplace spirituality. The results revealed that perceived organizational support partially mediated the relationship between organizational virtuousness and workplace spirituality. The current study proposes that when employees' experience working in a virtuous organization, they generate the emotions of positivity, compassion, unity, and trust, which further solidifies their perceived organizational support (Park, Newman, Zhang, Wu, & Hooke, [2016](#); Gadi & Kee, [2018](#)). They find their organization as supportive towards them and these feelings further trigger the enhancement of workplace spirituality among employees, who tend to relate with the organization not only physically but also spiritually (Susilo, [2019](#); Akhtar, Syed, Husnain, & Naseer, [2019](#); Abedi, Eslami, & Amrolahi, [2014](#)).

6. Theoretical and Practical Implications

There is a dearth of studies pertaining to positive organizational psychology in the Pakistani context. This study explored the relationship between organizational virtuousness and workplace spirituality in the underresearched context of Pakistan. To the best of our knowledge, this could be the first study in Pakistan to examine the relationship between organizational virtuousness and workplace spirituality, both directly and through the mediating effect of perceived organizational support. This study certainly adds knowledge to the existing body of positive psychology / organizational behavior by exploring the relationships mentioned above in the Pakistani context.

This study recommends that practicing and creating a positive psychological condition such as organizational virtuousness within the organization by the managers increases the workplace spirituality of the employees (Susilo, [2019](#)). Specifically, organizational support can motivate the individuals to behave and involve themselves in virtuous activities in a certain manner that can prove productive and beneficial both for the organization and their employees in the contemporary business conditions (Gadi & Kee, [2018](#); Akhtar et al., [2019](#)). The core purpose of positive psychological and behavioral movement was to catalyze the studies focused on positive characteristics and to reduce the dominance of negativity and pessimism in this regard (Seligman &

Csiksentmihalyi, [2000](#); Tingstrom, Turner, & Wilczynski, [2006](#); Akgunduz, Alkan, & Gök, [2018](#); Meyer, [2018](#)). In view of this backdrop, this study was not only needed but also remains vital. Managers are obliged to do continuous efforts to inculcate virtuousness in employees at the workplace and make regular assessments in this regard because virtuousness generates positive emotions, perceptions, and behaviors which ultimately generate workplace spirituality (Jehan et al., [2020](#); Ruiz-palomino Amaya, & Knorr, [2011](#)). For example, if employees experience positive emotions at the workplace, they perceive their organization as supportive and in return, they reciprocate it by working harder (Yücel et al., [2020](#); Fineman, [1996](#); Barsade, [2002](#); Haller & Hadler, [2006](#); Asad, Naseem, & Faiz, [2017](#)).

Within the organization, virtuousness is the power to deal with negative emotions. It is human nature that people contradict each other on different issues. So, if an organization possesses virtuousness, then positive emotions nullify the negative ones (Fredrickson, Mancuso, Branigan, & Tugade, [2000](#); Delam et al., [2019](#)). Studies suggest that virtuousness generates human and social capital for organizations and firms who possess such capital have a competitive advantage over their competitors and ultimately enjoy high work efficiency and performance (Tsachouridi & Nikandrou, [2016](#); Nahapiet & Ghoshal, [1998](#); Haller & Hadler, [2006](#)).

7. Limitations and Future Research

The current study has certain limitations which further act as guidelines to conduct future research. Our research investigated the statistical association between the independent and dependent variables without any hint of a causal relationship that may exist between them. So, there are chances of reverse causality to exist between the selected variables. It is tough to determine whether organizational virtuousness causes workplace spirituality or vice versa. In the same vein, perceived organizational support may also impact organizational virtuousness (Bolino, Turnley, & Bloodgood, [2002](#)). The current research is cross-sectional as the data for all variables in this study was gathered through a questionnaire at one point in time. The study also did not consider the influence of positive attitudes that may develop with time

through the multiplying effects of virtuousness (Podsakoff & Organ, [1986](#)). These effects can be mitigated by conducting a longitudinal study to generate more accurate analysis and conclusions. Indeed, future study can be conducted to investigate reverse causality between variables.

The current research did not consider the impact of organizational virtuousness and perceived organizational support with workplace spirituality's dimension. It suggests that different dimensions of organizational virtuousness and perceived organizational support are linked differently with workplace spirituality, so it is highly recommended to check the association of organizational virtuousness and perceived organizational support with each related dimension of workplace spirituality.

According to the results of this study, there is a positive relationship between organizational virtuousness and workplace spirituality, both directly and with the mediating impact of perceived organizational support. So, future studies should work on discovering the management practices that trigger organizational virtuousness among employees. The relationship between organizational virtuousness and workplace spirituality can be tested with any other significant mediator as well (Quinn & Rohrbaugh, [1983](#)). Questions about workplace spirituality were asked from the employees themselves. So, self-assessment bias can be present in the responses of the respondents.

Further research can also be carried out with a bigger sample size, including different industries. Moreover, this model can be tested for the difference in public and private sector organizations to see whether there exists a difference between workplace spirituality of public and private sector employees. Furthermore, an exploratory study can be conducted to see if there are any other constructs that can be included in the model to make it more complete and extensive (Beadle, [2017](#)).

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