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Chapter 25

Faith at Work Scale

Monty L. Lynn, Michael J. Naughton, and Steve VanderVeen

Abstract The Faith at Work Scale (FWS) is a 15-item measure of faith and work integration, inspired by Judaeo-Christian thought. The valid and reliable single-factor scale draws on five dimensions of work and faith—relationship, meaning, community, holiness, and giving. Recently released, the FWS is being employed in multiple studies exploring the intersection of work and faith. The scale, its development, and its approach to workplace spirituality are described in this chapter, along with the findings of research employing the scale and potential directions for future research in workplace faith.

Abbreviation

FWS Faith at Work Scale

The Faith at Work Scale (FWS) was developed on the belief that religiosity is a meaningful and missing component of workplace spirituality research (Lynn et al. 2009). The majority of the world claim a religious affiliation (World Christian

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Database (2012); cf. Hsu et al.), and for many, religiosity is an important aspect of their daily lives (Crabtree 2008, 2009). While a functional approach to religion and spirituality allows a general assessment of outcomes (e.g., Giacalone and Jurkiewicz 2003), the study of religiosity allows for nuanced and comparative exploration of commonalities and differences across the religious and spiritual spectrum. Hill and his colleagues (2000) conclude that although spirituality and religion may be parsed conceptually, "attempts to measure spirituality as a separate construct from religion are difficult... In the absence of information about why an individual engages in a particular religious or spiritual behavior, it can be difficult to infer whether that particular behavior is reflecting religiousness, spirituality, or both" (p. 71).

Although the inclusion of religiosity (religious belief and practice) increases the complexity of empirical and theoretical research, it allows for deeper insight into workplace spirituality processes and dynamics. Lynn et al. (2009, 2011) argue that religiosity provides insights into specific motivating and framing perspectives and offers an avenue for exploring workplace pluralism. Although over 150 general religiosity and spirituality scales exist (Hill and Hood 1999) and several workplace spirituality scales have been introduced (Miller and Ewert 2011), only a small number reflect specific religious content. The FWS was created to fill this lacuna.

Scale Development

In constructing the Faith at Work Scale (Lynn et al. 2009), we followed Hill's (2005) criteria for measures and Rossiter's (2002) conceptually focused scale development model. We surveyed scholarly and popular writing about the integration of religiosity and work, read a broad range of Judaeo-Christian theology on wealth, work, and other topics related to workplace spirituality, and we reviewed spiritual formation and religiosity and aging literatures. From this writing we generated 22 indicators of workplace faith and over 250 items which potentially could serve as measures of these indicators. After independently rating these items, we decreased the pool to 150 items which met criteria of clarity, accuracy, and parsimony. A panel of eight individuals from a variety of occupations, demographics, and religious affiliations assisted in further filtering the items by evaluating each of the 150 items and offering general feedback on workplace faith. Their evaluations resulted in 59 items for survey testing.

An invitation and link to an electronic survey containing the 59 items plus demographic and validation items was emailed to 1,284 alumni from business programs in four religiously related higher education institutions in the United States. Sampling was stratified by graduation decade and was limited to individuals ending their studies at the institution between 1958 and 2005. It was assumed that many older alumni may have exited the workforce and younger alumni may have insufficient experience to reflect upon workplace faith. The survey asked respondents to indicate the degree to which they agreed with each item via a 5-point Likert Scale.

Demographic and employment information collected included age, occupation, and religious affiliation. To validate the FWS, we included Donahue's 12-item short form of the Faith Maturity Scale (FMS) (Benson et al. 1993) in the survey. Responses were received from 272 of the invitees yielding a 21% response rate. Surveys from individuals who did not identify a religion or with a religion other than Christianity (including Judaism) were culled due to their small (and statistically non-analyzable) sample size, as were surveys from retirees and those with substantially missing data. This resulted in a final sample of 234 responses for psychometric scale testing.

Most respondents to the survey served in paid, full-time managerial and professional roles in financial, manufacturing, retail, education, health care, and over a dozen other industry sectors. Nearly two-thirds of the sample was male. The majority of the validating sample was Caucasian (95%), and three-quarters lived in Midwestern and Southwestern states. Respondents ranged in age from 22 to 71 with a median age of 37 years old. Respondents worked in small and large organizations, and two-thirds of the sample attended religious services at least once a week. The FWS exhibited a single-factor structure (eigenvalue=8.88; variance accounted for=59.2%) that was internally consistent (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.77$). Initial tests showed convergent validity ($r=0.81$, $p>0.0001$) between the FWS and the Faith Maturity Scale (Benson et al. 1993). Walker (2012) subsequently found a high correlation ($r=0.94$, $p>0.0001$) between the FWS and the Manifestation of God Scale (Pargament and Mahoney 1999). In initial testing, the FWS showed lower skew and kurtosis with Mainline and Catholic adherents than with Mormons and Evangelicals who exhibited distributions that were skewed to the high end of faith and work integration. The resulting Faith at Work Scale resulted in 15 items measuring five indicators of faith and work—relationship, meaning, community, holiness, and giving (Table 25.1) (Lynn et al. 2009). Scored on a 5-point Likert scale, FWS scores can range from a low of 15 to a high of 75.

Findings

Several studies are ongoing with the FWS and results are beginning to be published. Using the FWS, Lynn et al. (2011) found that work and faith are integrated to a moderate degree for religious workers ($n=412$) in the United States (Table 25.2). Religiosity indicators associated with intent—specifically, church attendance, faith maturity, and denominational strictness—were strongly and positively related to FWS scores. Age was positively related to FWS scores as well, and organizational size was negatively related to work-faith integration. These researchers did not find significant relationships between FWS scores and gender, hours worked, professional work status, and the geographical salience of religion. Spiritual disciplines and workplace mentors positively contributed to the development of faith and work integration. One surprising finding has been that Mormons, Evangelicals (e.g., Southern Baptist of Christ, Nazarenes, and Mennonites), Mainlines (e.g., Presbyterian Church USA and United Methodist Church), and Catholics do not exhibit unique patterns in

Table 25.1 Faith at Work Scale core dimensions and items

Dimension	Item	
	Abbreviation	Complete wording
Relationship	Aware	I sense God's presence while I work
	Partnering	I view my work as a partnership with God
	Meaningful	I think of my work as having eternal significance
Meaning	Integrated	I see connections between my worship and my work
	Coping	My faith helps me deal with difficult work relationships
	Called	I view my work as a mission from God
	Equipped	I sense that God empowers me to do good things at work
	Diligent	I pursue excellence in my work because of my faith
Community	Growing	I believe God wants me to develop my abilities and talents at work
	Accepting	I view my coworkers as being made in the image of God
	Witnessing	My coworkers know I am a person of faith
Holiness	Caring	I sacrificially love the people I work with
	Moral	When I am with others and alone, I practice purity in my work habits
Giving	Just	I view my work as part of God's plan to care for the needs of people
	Stewarding	I view myself as a caretaker, not an owner of my money, time, and resources

Source: Lynn et al. (2009)

work-faith integration (Fig. 25.1). They vary in their degree of integration (from relatively higher to lower in the order listed), but one group does not tend to elevate particular scale items above the relative position of other groups. Work-faith integration is highest across all denominational cohorts in areas dealing with the self. Relationships with others showed somewhat less work-faith integration. Transcendent aspects of work were impacted least.

Initial FWS findings are consistent with most related research in workplace faith, but some differences are emerging. Although the relationship is complex, a positive relationship between age and religiosity has been shown in multiple studies (McCullough et al. 2005; Moberg 2005; cf. Jackson and Bergeman 2011) and this is consistent with research utilizing the FWS. In a study at Baylor University, Dougherty et al. (2011) included 5 of the 15 FWS items in a national survey to explore work and faith ($n=1,714$). Dougherty and his colleagues found a strong association between the frequency of religious service attendance and seeing work as having religious significance. Half of working adults who attend religious services weekly or more (51%) viewed their work as a mission from God, and nearly three-fourths (72%) pursued excellence in their work because of faith. These survey findings are consistent with initial research on the FWS (Lynn et al. 2011). The Baylor study found that African Americans, women, and older workers exhibited stronger work-faith connections than did other respondents. Responses by older workers and African Americans are consistent with a large body of research on religiosity and with initial FWS testing (insufficient ethnic diversity existed for

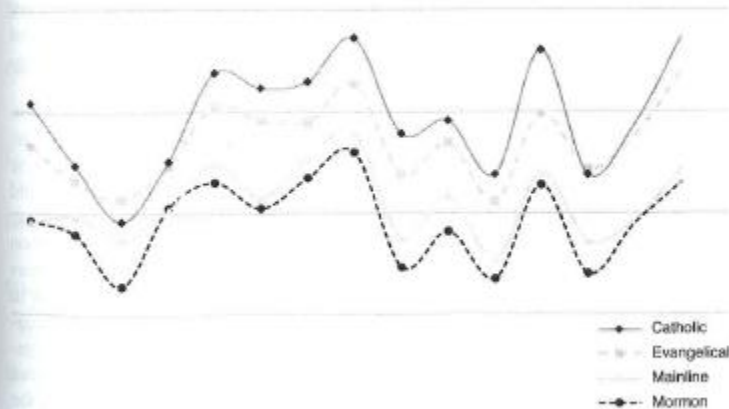
Table 25.2 Faith at Work Scale correlates and effects

Source	Measure	<i>n</i>	<i>r</i>		
Lynn et al. (2009)	Faith Maturity Scale	234	0.810*		
Walker (2012)	Manifestation of God Scale	239	0.936*		
Source	Variable	<i>n</i>	β	s.e.	<i>z</i>
Lynn et al. (2011)	Age	374	0.026	0.008	3.23*
	Gender	374	0.147	0.200	0.74
	Church attendance	374	2.462	0.278	8.87*
	Denominational strictness	374	0.490	0.229	2.14**
	Faith maturity	374	0.357	0.030	11.85*
	Hours worked	374	0.203	0.217	0.94
	Pay	374	-1.317	0.338	-3.90*
	Professional status	374	-0.011	0.331	-0.03
	Geographical salience	374	0.034	0.018	1.85
	Organizational size	374	-0.860	0.208	-4.13*
Source	Variable	<i>N</i>	<i>r</i>		
Walker (in press)	Life satisfaction	216	0.15**		
	Intent to leave	216	0.20***		
	Job performance	216	-0.34***		
	Job satisfaction	216	-0.05		
	Affective commitment	216	0.13		
	Normative commitment	216	0.27***		
	Continuance commitment	216	0.12		

* $p \leq 0.001$

** $p \leq 0.05$

*** $p \leq 0.01$

**Fig. 25.1** Faith at Work Scale by denominational cohort. Source: Lynn et al. (2011)

testing in the initial studies). The finding of greater work–faith integration by women, while only a comparison of single-item percentages for men and women, differs from the Lynn et al. (2011) study which found no significant differences in FWS scores by gender.

In a series of hierarchical regression analyses on a national sample ($n=216$), Walker (in press) found that the FWS related to three forms of organizational commitment—“affective” or emotional attachment, “normative” or feelings of obligation, and “continuance” or costs associated with exiting. He also found FWS scores positively but insignificantly related to life satisfaction. In contrast to the direction of findings in an earlier study with work sanctification, Walker et al. (2008) found FWS scores positively related to intent to leave and negatively related to perceived job performance and job satisfaction. It is yet unclear why these patterns exist. Walker’s research suggests that workplace faith and life and work outcomes are linked but that the relationships are complex.

Future Research

In recent years, several workplace spirituality scales have been produced, some of which incorporate or are informed by religious concepts (cf. Dik et al. in press; Liu and Robertson 2011; Miller and Ewert 2011; Steger et al. in press; Tombaugh et al. 2011). As mentioned earlier, one of the challenges of incorporating religiosity into workplace spirituality research is the introduction of diversity in religious perspectives, history, practice, and terminology. Certainly the social scientific study of workplace spirituality should deal with social, psychological, and organizational processes appropriately. But social science research demonstrates that it is possible to explore workplace spiritualities with appropriate theory and methods and explore the colorful spiritualities which lay beyond the functional outcomes of religion and spirituality. Subdisciplines in psychology, sociology, and anthropology have provided decades of similar research.

Several potential lines of research on religiosity in the workplace are evident. Studies of comparative spirituality and religions in the workplace, for example, could enlighten understanding in faith–work integration within and across these meaning systems. Further explorations into the gradations in religiosity could inform a better understanding of spirituality’s development and dynamics over time. Lanfer (2006) argues that religious faith moves workers from being focused on personal happiness to being increasingly concerned with the well-being of others and society—a mental model shift from being concerned with personal gain to social responsibility. Exline and Bright (2011), for example, attempt to map struggles individuals have in integrating their faith and work, extending previous qualitative studies on workplace faith challenges and disconnects (Grant et al. 2004; Nakata 1998; Sullivan 2006). Differences across ethnicity, tradition, and gender in the workplace present opportunities for further inquiry as well. Where one belief

system is dominant, research into religious pluralism raises questions about privilege and marginalization (Hicks 2003; King et al. 2009).

Employing various methods—including ethnographic or interview-based investigation—could provide deep insights into some of these lines of research (e.g., Grant et al. 2004; Sullivan 2006). Additional research into moderating, mediating, and outcome variables is promising as well (Duffy et al. 2010; Miller and Ewert 2011). Studies including behavior and environment in addition to belief offer robust variables for exploration (Graham and Haidt 2010; Koole et al. 2010; Mochon et al. 2008). Critical perspectives are worthy of voicing as well (e.g., Groß 2010). In sum, numerous lines of research lay open for exploration.

A final link of workplace faith to mention is to explore the impact of work–faith integration on individual, interpersonal, and organizational outcomes, just as functional workplace spirituality research has emphasized (Karakas 2009; Kolodinsky et al. 2008; Walker in press). Although hazards exist (cf. Lynn et al. 2009), rewards exist as well. Particularly promising on the individual level of analysis may be links to the large body of research on identity offered by organizational studies and the psychology of religion (e.g., Gutierrez et al. 2010; Hogg et al. 2010; Ysseldyk et al. 2010).

Workplace spirituality research has matured to the place where measures, theoretical constructs, and learning about religiosity from multiple social sciences are available. Insights provided by research employing the Faith at Work Scale and many other tools and methods suggest that we are just beginning to understand the terrain and dynamics of workplace faith and spirituality and their influence on work and workers. With the recent extensions of workplace spirituality into religiosity, new territory is opening to research. It is a promising time to be exploring.

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