

LEAVING FOR-PROFIT CAREERS TO BECOME SPIRITUAL LEADERS
SERVING IN THE CONTEXT OF HRD: USING CASE STUDIES TO INQUIRE
INTO THE TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCES OF PROFESSIONALS

A Dissertation

by

TRUPTI JAYANT PALKAR

Submitted to the Graduate and Professional School of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Chair of Committee,	Larry Dooley
Committee Members,	Michael Beyerlein
	Lori Moore
	Barry Boyd
Head of Department,	Mario Torres

August 2021

Major Subject: Educational Human Resource Development

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ABSTRACT

The human resource development (HRD) goals and objectives are not confined to individuals and organizations driven by profit, preparation for employment, workforce planning, employee, and organization performance. But it extends its scope and boundaries to volunteers of not-for-profit organizations (NPO) that play a critical role in holistic development at various levels- individual, group, nations, and cross-nations and involves a gamut of activities that impact our existence. This study is about one such populace whose voices, stories, and contributions to HRD have gone untold and unnoticed. This study is about highly educated monks/spiritual leaders (SL) experiences related to spiritual transformation and their role in HRD.

A preliminary literature review showed many young, highly educated individuals are becoming monks/SL, and very little is known about why these individuals decide to become monks/SL and how they contribute to society in the HRD context. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to identify the triggering factors that led them to become monks/SL and identify their HRD related activities and their impact. Transformational learning theory, leadership theories and models, literature related to spirituality, HRD and social entrepreneurship concepts provided a theoretical and conceptual framework to this study.

The researcher employed a qualitative, multi-case study approach to conducting this study. The approach included in-depth interviews with eight monks/SL, observing their activities, and collecting data from NPO documents and websites. Eight themes

emerged identifying triggering factors that led individuals to become monks/SL, and six themes emerged identifying the monks/SL HRD related activities. Based on the findings, the researcher concluded that monks/SL are potential HRD partners. They are servant leaders, transformational leaders, and social entrepreneurs. Several implications and future research suggestions have been discussed that would help inform the organizational practices of HRD, multidisciplinary fields, and NPO working with this populace.

Additionally, the researcher presented the eastern Vedic perspective of spirituality, spiritual leaders', and spiritual leaders' characteristics based on Vedic texts on spirituality and her interaction and observation with spiritual leaders with a view that this lens may add new knowledge and values to the academic literature on spirituality and emerging spiritual leadership theories.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation as my offering to my late mother, Vimal Sangvikar (Her Grace VrajaJana Devi). Her sudden passing in 2020 left a big void in my life. She was an educator and teacher herself. She was passionate about learning, teaching, inspiring, and motivating others towards education. She was my guide, philosopher, teacher, mentor, and a source of inspiration all my life. Her teachings and benevolent qualities will always continue to inspire me. Mumma, thank you for everything. How I wish you were here to see me accomplish this milestone and read my dissertation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank all my committee members, who were more than generous with their expertise and precious time. Also, I offer a special thanks to Dr. Larry Dooley, my committee chair, for his continued support, guidance, and patience throughout the entire process. I am especially grateful to Dr. Dooley and Dr. Michael Beyerlein for their compassionate understanding extended to me during the most challenging times of my life, dealing with the sudden loss of my mother and dealing with a life-threatening condition. Their good-natured support and kind words of understanding meant a lot to me during those difficult times.

Thank you, Dr. Lori More and Dr. Barry Boyd, for agreeing to serve on my committee. Dr. Moore, the leadership classes you taught helped me understand the leadership theories and concepts and made me interested in leadership topics, especially spiritual leadership. Dr. Boyd, your leadership of volunteers class, inspired me to research spiritual leaders who are full-time volunteers in their monasteries using transformational learning theory.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to Dr. Kim Dooley, who went out of her way to meet me during the holiday season and provide her valuable guidance and insights on case study methodology.

I remain incredibly grateful to my loving family members, especially my brother Sachin Sangvikar and my husband, Jayant Palkar. They are my pillars of strength. Their unconditional love, support, and care keep me going no matter what. Aadit and Riva

acted as my stress busters. I thank you both for playing such an important role during this journey. And thanks to my father, in-laws, relatives, and friends for their encouragement, support, and love.

A big thank you to Gauranga Das for allowing me to conduct this research at their Mumbai center with fellow monks/SL. And Rasika Raman Das for playing the perfect role of coordinator and administrator. I also extend my gratitude to all the monks/SL who participated in this research. Without your help, support and cooperation, this research would not have been possible. Also, a big thank you to my spiritual teachers, mentors, and spiritual family and friends who continue to guide and help me achieve spiritual goals.

Finally, a big thank you go to my friends and colleagues and the department faculty and staff for making my time at Texas A&M University a great experience.

I remain incredibly grateful to you all for your cordial and positive relationships, for all your guidance, contribution, understanding, and good-natured support to make my learning experience a joyful and memorable one!

CONTRIBUTORS AND FUNDING SOURCES

The dissertation committee that supervised my work consisted of Dr. Larry Dooley and Dr. Michael Beyerlein from the Department of Human Resource Development and Education. Dr. Lori Moore and Dr. Barry Boyd from the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications (ALEC).

All the work conducted for the dissertation was completed by the student independently. There are no outside funding contributions to acknowledge related to the research and compilation of this document.

NOMENCLATURE

HRD	Human Resource Development
IHRD	International Human Resource Development
NHRD	National Human Resource Development
NPO	Non-Profit Organization
SL	Spiritual Leader/Spiritual leaders
SD	Spiritual Development
TLT	Transformative Learning Theory
TL	Transformative Learning
OD	Organization Development
TD	Training and Development
CD	Career Development
SE	Social Entrepreneurship
SRW	Spirituality and Religion at the Workplace

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The story of Siddharth, a prince who renounced the worldly comforts of life and set out on a spiritual odyssey to find answers and solutions to his questions related to pain and suffering, is well-known and documented. It is well-known how he became Gautam Buddha, from a prince to a renowned spiritual leader. As a spiritual teacher, he transformed many lives, and his teachings still continue to transform the lives of millions. In today's day and age, too, many such individuals renounce the materialistic comforts of life, lucrative jobs, and professional careers and take on a spiritual odyssey, which leads them to become monks/spiritual leaders (SL). However, their spiritual transformation stories and contribution to society remain untold and undocumented.

So, why do engineers, medical doctors, Ph.D. scientists, professionals with well-paying jobs, and promising careers take on a spiritual odyssey or deal with their spiritual quest? In simple words, how do people with impressive educational backgrounds or highly skilled professionals respond to their spiritual quest? What exactly does the spiritual quest or search mean to them? Why and how do these individuals embark on a spiritual odyssey? What does their spiritual transformation look like, and where does it lead? Why do they decide to become monks/SL? Moreover, after becoming monks/SL, what do they do? What are their activities? How do they contribute and impact society? What happens to their education and professional skills for which they work so hard? These questions form the crux and context of this study.

Growing Interest in Spirituality

In recent years, there has been a burgeoning interest in topics of spirituality (Kuchinke, 2016). Interest and research in spirituality have grown sharply in every field, including management (e.g., Chakraborty & Chakraborty, 2008; Kernochan et al., 2007; Steingard, 2005), business (e.g., Melé & Fontrodona, 2017; Zsolnai, 2010; Nandram, 2010), leadership (e.g., Bugenhagen, 2009; Dent et al., 2005; Phipps, 2012), higher education (e.g., Astin et al., 2011; Chickering et al., 2015), and the health and nursing sector (e.g., O'Brien, 2017; Reinert & Koenig, 2013). In addition, there is growing literature on spirituality and religion at workplaces (Benefiel et al., 2014).

In the context of the growing popularity of spirituality, many leading web journals, magazines, and news channels have reported how some highly qualified professionals or millennials have left their lucrative corporate jobs to become monks/SL. Liang (2015) of CNN reported that China is stressed because several of their well-qualified millennials are considering leaving their jobs to become Buddhist monks. Williams (2018) from Evening Standard, a UK magazine, reported several millennials from the UK have left behind their friends, families, and jobs to live as monks. The Telegraph (2018) reported millennial Buddhist monks are running the Mongolian Buddhist monasteries. Yagnik (2018) from the Times of India reported how a 24 year old chartered accountant gave up his profession to become a Jain monk. Bordia (2018), from another leading Indian news channel, covered the story of a trained pharmacist from Canada who decided to renounce wealth and comfort for austere monastic life. Green (2013) from The Atlantic, an American magazine, titled her article, "Why would

a millennial become a priest or a Nun?” In 2018, a popular Indian TV channel broadcasted a nationwide program on television. The channel invited several millennial monks with exceptional educational and professional backgrounds who had renounced their lucrative careers to become monks. This TV program created quite a controversy and debate in Indian society. This TV debate focused on the plight of parents who were unhappy about their well-educated kids becoming monks and had shown the monastery, nonprofit organization in a negative light for attracting bright young scientific minds to spirituality and their monastery.

Most of these magazine articles and TV channels have identified the growing interest in spirituality among youth and millennials. However, they failed to investigate the factors that led these bright young individuals to become monks/SL. Also, there was no mention of how these individuals, in their new roles as monks/SL, contribute to and impact society. They even showed such individuals as a liability to society. These articles and TV programs lead to many questions Are monks/SL not needed in our society? What happens to an educated and highly skilled professional who encounters a spiritual quest which eventually leads them to become a monks/SL, a pastor, a nun, or a rabbi? It certainly must be a courageous and life-turning decision to travel a path less traveled.

This study is about eight such individuals with an impressive education and professional skills who, at the onset of their lucrative professional careers, took a courageous, life-changing, life-transforming decision to become a monk/SL and traversed the path less traveled. This study aimed to investigate and identify what factors

lead these individuals to become monks/SL, and by becoming monks/SL, how do they contribute and impact society, especially in the HRD context.

Existing Gaps

Wang (2012) introduced the concept of social entrepreneurship into Human Resource Development (HRD) and evaluated four social entrepreneurial case studies to demonstrate the value of social entrepreneurship in HRD. Her findings indicate social entrepreneurs and social enterprises share a common vision of positively addressing social problems and promoting community and national development. She also found the application of several HRD/Organization development (OD) approaches in the practice of social entrepreneurship. She urged HRD practitioners to think out-of-the-box, become more knowledgeable of social entrepreneurship practices, and identify areas for collaboration to create social and economic value to society. She introduced social entrepreneurship in HRD in 2012 and identified social entrepreneurship as an emerging area of research. However, research on this topic has not gained enough momentum despite its vast scope and potential for HRD. Wang (2012) recommended HRD practitioners to explore answers to the following questions:

1. What additional examples of social enterprises can we identify which incorporate HRD/OD practices in their attempt to address societal problems in the developed/developing world? What lessons can we learn from their experiences?
2. How have HRD/OD concepts and approaches been applied by social enterprises in the developed/developing countries? And for what purposes?

3. How can HRD practitioners and social entrepreneurs partner to address social problems facing the developed/developing countries? (Wang, 2012, p.316)

In the present study, based on the pilot study findings and monks/SL activities, it is assumed that the monks/SL perform the role of social entrepreneurs, and their monasteries/Non-Profit Organization (NPO) perform the role of the social enterprises. However, these assertions would be eventually confirmed in Chapter IV based on the actual findings that emerge in this study and then address Wang (2012) questions.

HRD scholars have defined Human Resource Development (HRD) in many different ways, and there is no consensus on a single definition of HRD (McLean & McLean, 2001). However, some HRD definitions are applicable and resonate with this study's context and provide a foundation and rationale for undertaking this study.

McLean and McLean (2001) defined HRD as:

Any process or activity that, either initially or over the long term, has the potential to develop adults' work-based knowledge, expertise, productivity, and satisfaction, whether for personal or group/team gain, or for the benefit of an organization, community, nation or, ultimately, the whole of humanity. (p. 10)

This definition has application to both for-profit and NPO, and it brings our attention to the importance of holistic development of individuals, communities, nations, and the whole of humanity. It does not focus merely on the economic and profit-driven objectives. Based on this definition, several questions arise: what measures can HRD professionals undertake to bring holistic satisfaction and development to individuals, communities, nations, and humanity? What are the different resources, tools, methods,

strategies, value systems available to HRD professionals to work on these varied HRD domains? Who could be potential partners to HRD professionals who share the same purpose and objectives to bring about holistic development on multiple levels? Do monks/SL and spiritual organizations share the same HRD vision, and can they be potential collaborative partners for HRD? These questions have not received much attention in HRD, and hence a gap exists. This study addresses some of the above-listed questions based on the study's findings in Chapter Five.

Marquardt and Berger (2003) cited McLean (2001) and Bates (2003) to state that:

HRD profession must include not only economic development and workplace learning, but it must also be committed to the political, social, environmental, cultural, and spiritual development of people around the world. Global success depends on utilizing the resources and diverse talents and capabilities of the broadest possible spectrum of humanity (p. 285).

Marquardt and Berger (2003) have introduced and highlighted the importance of spiritual development in HRD. They state spiritual development is equally important, along with political, social, environmental, and cultural development. However, though essential to human development, spirituality and spiritual development remain under-researched topics in HRD. Marquardt and Berger (2003) also stated global success depends on utilizing the resources and diverse talents and capabilities of the broadest possible spectrum of humanity. In that context, monks/SL and spiritual organizations' prime focus and objective is to work on such an important and integral human

developmental dimension: spiritual development; still, this pool of resources is yet to make inroads in HRD research and literature. HRD scholars have yet to investigate the role of such a vital resource and their diverse talents and capabilities in HRD. Besides, do monks/SL and spiritual organizations act as potential social change agents, social entrepreneurs, social innovators, spiritual scientists, social enterprises in HRD? These questions require attention and systematic investigation.

In light of these existing research gaps in HRD, this study focuses on closing some of the gaps. However, to decide if it was worth undertaking a research project of dissertation caliber, an exploratory pilot study was conducted. The pilot study aimed to locate and identify the required sample population of educated monks/SL and determine if they fit social entrepreneurs or social innovators' roles and if their activities aligned with HRD values and practices. Additionally, it was essential to get access to monks/SL and their monasteries for research purposes.

Exploratory Pilot Study

The exploratory pilot study took place at a monastery in Mumbai, India, where several young monks/SL with impressive educational and professional backgrounds resided. The researcher conducted an exploratory observation and informal interviews with some monks of this monastery. The pilot study's objective was to identify the availability of the required number of monks/SL meeting the selection criteria of impressive educational and professional background and within a certain age limit. Besides availability, the spiritual organization's willingness to allow access to their monks/SL, organization, and organizational documents was also necessary for the

research purpose. After informal interactions with the monastery leaders, explaining the research purpose and participants' criteria, the researcher received a positive response and permission from the monastery management. After that, she conducted informal interviews and observations at the monastery and observed monks/SL activities, and referred to websites and documents available in the public domain.

In the preliminary investigation, the researcher observed most monks/SL at this monastery were very young, in their thirties to early forties. Most of them possessed professional degrees and work experience. They were not the conventional types of monks/SL who just sat in their monasteries doing meditation and focused on their spiritual development but were also engaged in contributing their time, energy, monastery resources, and services for people and society's welfare. The monks/SL were involved in several activities such as education, training, and development, organization development, leadership development, skill development, rural development, organic farming, farmer development, building self-sustainable and eco-friendly village models, mentoring and counseling people of all ages, helping people with addiction problems, and providing poor people with free health and medical facilities. Some of those monks/SL even served as lifestyle coaches to influential corporate and political leaders.

The monks/SL from this monastery were involved in solving some of the most complex problems plaguing our society, such as poverty, mental health issues like stress, depression, and suicidal ideation on a spiritual platform. Some of these monks/SL were invited by top colleges, business schools, universities, and corporations as motivational speakers to cater to their student's and employee's spiritual development needs. They

conducted seminars and workshops on various spiritual topics and conducted workshops on yoga, meditation, stress, and health-related issues. Some monks/SL held training programs and workshops on diverse topics like ethical and moral leadership, stress management, and holistic wellbeing. They were teaching spiritual practices such as Bhakti-yoga and mantra meditation to people from all walks of life and people of all ages. The benevolent and altruistic contributions of these monks/SL seemed endless. The monks/SL of this monastery had won several awards and recognition from the government and the United Nations for their work.

The pilot study's findings were promising and impressive because the monks/SL activities aligned with the HRD activities and values. The spiritual organization and monks/SL positively contributed their selfless services and expertise to society and worked to make this world a better place to live. However, their contribution to the HRD discipline has gone unnoticed and under-researched to date. Therefore, these individuals' transformational stories and their contribution to the HRD field called for a systematic research investigation. Thus, feeling convinced and inspired by the pilot study's findings and receiving the monastery management's required permission to conduct a full-fledged research study, the researcher decided to proceed and undertake this study.

Statement of the Problem

The news articles, stories, and debates from leading publishing houses indicate spirituality is gaining popularity amongst youth of different nationalities, cultures, and faiths. More and more, youth are renouncing their well-paying jobs and opting to become monks/SL. This trend leads to intriguing questions such as why are individuals

with an impressive education and professional background becoming monks/SL in a monastery/NPO? What factors triggered such a drastic spiritual transformation in them? Why, when, and how do such individuals make such life-transforming decisions? How are these highly qualified individuals in their new roles as monks/SL contributing or impacting our society? Moreover, where do monks/SL and spiritual organizations fit in the HRD context? In HRD, the transformational stories and contributions of monks/SL and spiritual organizations have remained uninvestigated and undocumented to date.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was twofold. First, to investigate why individuals with exceptional educational and professional backgrounds become monks/SL and join the monastery/NPO. In other words, what are the triggering factors then led them to alter their career trajectories and experience spiritual transformation phenomena? Second, to investigate how these individuals, in their role as monks/SL leaders, contribute to society and perceive the impact of their work in society, especially in the HRD context.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. Why do individuals with an impressive educational and professional background decide to become monks/SL and join a monastery/NPO? In other words, what factors triggered a change in their career trajectories that led them to become monks/SL in monastery/NPO?

2. How do these individuals in their role as monks/SL contribute and perceive the impact of their work in the HRD context? In simple words, what are the monks/SL HRD related activities and their impact on society?

Definition of Key Terms

This section enlists various definitions of key terms employed in this study.

Human Resource Development (HRD), defined by McLean and McLean (2001), is:

“any process or activity that, either initially or over the long term, has the potential to develop adults’ work-based knowledge, expertise, productivity, and satisfaction, whether for personal or group/team gain, or for the benefit of an organization, community, nation or, ultimately, the whole of humanity?” (p. 10).

This definition is particularly useful to this study because it does not restrict HRD to benefit one or two entities such as individual or organizational outcomes, but it broadens HRD’s horizon to an organization, community, nation, or, ultimately, the whole of humanity. This study revolved around stories of individuals who gave up a lucrative professional career to transform themselves to become monks/SL and thereby contribute their services to our society. This HRD definition lays down the foundation for various HRD contexts to evaluate the contribution and the impact of monks/SL activities at different levels; organization, community, nation, or, ultimately, the whole of humanity.

HRD Practitioners are those who “spend much of their time conducting workshops, seminars, meetings, and conferences and designing classroom-based training events” (Gilley, 2006, p. 235).

Spirituality, according to Lindholm and Astin (2006), is defined as:

“ an internal process of seeking authenticity, genuineness, and wholeness; transcending one’s locus of centrality; developing a greater sense of connectedness to self and others through relationships and community; deriving meaning, purpose, and direction in life; being open to exploring a relationship with a higher power that transcends human existence and human knowing, and valuing the sacred” (p. 65).

This definition of spirituality encompasses many aspects of spirituality. One can relate to any of this definition irrespective of their spiritual philosophies, religious beliefs, or spiritual practices.

Spiritual Development (SD) is:

“the process of growing the intrinsic human capacity for self-transcendence, in which the self is embedded in something greater than the self, including the sacred. It is the developmental ‘engine’ that propels the search for connectedness, meaning, purpose, and contribution. It is shaped both within and outside of religious tradition, beliefs, and practices” (Benson et al., p. 205).

This definition of SD includes many keywords associated with spiritual development, such as self-transcendence, searches for connectedness, meaning, purpose,

and contribution. Perhaps these elements propel many individuals towards their spiritual development quest and influence some individuals to become monks/SL.

Monks/SL from a Vedic eastern philosophical text is a person who voluntarily chooses to renounce the pleasures of a mainstream material lifestyle, lives a life of celibacy and simplicity, and is engaged in the process of self-realization/enlightenment/spiritual development. Such a person compassionately and selflessly leads others on the path of spirituality and spiritual development.

Depending upon the monastic path, monks/SL take vows depending upon the monastery's traditions (e.g., celibacy, nonviolence, and abstaining from intoxicants). Monks/SL are engaged in spiritual practices (e.g., prayers, meditation, yoga, and reading scriptures) for spiritual development and pass on the teachings, practices, realizations, and wisdom received in disciplic succession to their students, followers, and people in general.

A Spiritual Guru/Spiritual Teacher, according to Vedic text, Bhagavad-Gita is a teacher, guide, or expert who has mastered the science and process of self-realization or enlightenment and can systematically teach that process to others and help achieve spiritual development objectives.

Leadership is “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (Northouse, 2017, p. 7).

Northouse defined leadership in a straightforward and easy-to-understand language. From this definition, one can comprehend that leadership entails a leader, followers, goals, and leaders' influence on their followers.

Servant leader, according to Greenleaf, is:

The servant-leader is a servant first...It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. Such a person is sharply different from one who is a leader first. Perhaps because of a need to assuage an unusual power to drive or to acquire material possessions...The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature...The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit or at least not be further deprived? (Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, nd)

This definition is the most cited definition of servant leadership. In this definition, Greenleaf distinctly underlined that a servant-leader's fundamental characteristic is the desire to serve others. It is not about being servile, but it is about wanting to help others. In the eastern spiritual traditions, monks/SL perceive themselves as servants to others and wanting to help others in their spiritual development process. Thus, this definition is relevant and aligns within the context of the study.

Spiritual Leadership, according to Fry (2003), is :

“creating a vision wherein organization members experience a sense of calling in that their life had meaning and makes a difference; establishing a social/organizational culture based on altruistic love whereby leader and followers have genuine care, concern, and appreciation for both self and others, thereby producing a sense of membership and feel understood and appreciated” (p. 695).

This definition encapsulates who spiritual leaders are, what they do, and what is their vision or goals. This definition of spiritual leaders is widely used and applicable in spirituality and religion at workplace (SRW) context.

Transformational leadership is leaders “Moving the follower beyond immediate self-interests through idealized influence (charisma), inspiration, intellectual stimulation or individualized consideration. It elevates the follower’s level of maturity and ideals as well as concerns for achievement, self-actualization, and the wellbeing of others, the organization, and society” (Bass, 1999, p.11).

This study deals with individuals experiencing transformation phenomena. It would be interesting to see if any transformational leaders played a role in their transformation.

Transformative learning (TL) is:

“the process by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of reference (meaning perspectives, habits of mind, mindsets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they

may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action” (Mezirow, 2000, p. 8).

Professional or Highly Skilled Professional for the purpose of this study is defined as someone who has professional degrees in any professional disciplines like medicine, engineering, business, or management and some professional work experience.

A monastery is a residential quarter and workplace of monastics, or monks/SL, living in communities or alone (hermits). A monastery also includes a place reserved for prayer, which may be a chapel, church, or temple.

Significance of The Study

HRD is a holistic process that involves theories and practices to better individuals, groups, organizations, and nations for the betterment of humankind. The findings from this study have both theoretical and practical significance to the field of HRD. From a practical standpoint, this study offers implications on various HRD fronts; Organization Development (OD), Training and Development (T&D), Career Development (CD), and International HRD (IHRD) and National HRD (NHRD) context. This study is significant for HRD scholars and practitioners interested in spirituality and spiritual development because it provides an opportunity for HRD professionals to collaborate with monks/SL and spiritual organizations to design spiritual development interventions for their clients on various levels (individuals, groups, organizations, community, and national). The findings from this study may help HRD

achieve a strategic advantage as compared to other interdisciplinary fields in the topics of spirituality and spiritual development, an integral aspect of human development.

By bringing in the new dimension of spirituality, monks/SL, spiritual organizations who work as social entrepreneurs, change agents, the study may add new knowledge and value to the existing and emerging theories used in HRD. This study may enrich the application and integration of spirituality and spiritual development topics to different learning theories, leadership theories, and spiritual development theories. This study may also add new knowledge to emerging spiritual leadership theory and spirituality and religion at the workplace (SRW) theories and models. In addition, the possibility of new grounded theories or models emerging from the data cannot be ruled out.

The Audience-Stakeholders

The audience or the stakeholders for this study include HRD professionals, leaders and employers, social or NPO, governmental agencies, philanthropists, and all interested in working in the context of spirituality, spiritual development, social innovation, and social entrepreneurship. This study will also be of interest to individuals who want to become monks/SL and join a monastery/NPO but have no idea how to traverse the path and what activities, contributions, and impact the monks/SL could have on society.

Limitations

This research is limited in its scope and breadth. All the study participants were of Indian origin and belonged to one specific monastery/NPO. This NPO did not house

any female monks, and thus all the participants are male monks/SL. Besides this, NPO is a global organization with several international monks based in different parts of the world. However, while this research was being conducted, no international monks were present at the monastery/NPO in the Mumbai center. Thus this study lacked gender and cultural diversity amongst the participants.

All the monks practiced eastern spiritual culture, namely, Vedic culture and philosophy based on bhakti-yoga and mantra meditation practices. Thus, it is a very organization and culture-specific group of monks/SL. There are many other spiritual organizations in Mumbai and India with monks/SL with impressive educational backgrounds. However, because of accessibility and time constraints, participants from only one NPO were selected.

Delimitations

To maintain the study's manageability and because of the qualitative case study methodology used in this study, it was necessary to constrain this study's population to a small sample size and the context to HRD related activities. The researcher selected only eight monks/SL from a specific monastery, and several boundaries or criteria based on participants' age, education, availability, site selection, and time were predefined. The boundaries and scope of the context were limited to investigate monks/SL activities in the HRD context only.

Assumptions

Several assumptions characterize the research approach. The first assumption was that some triggering factors must have led some highly skilled professionals to give

up their professional careers to become monks/SL and join a monastery. Hence, a research investigation was needed to identify those factors. Second, these monks/SL are potential social entrepreneurs and share common HRD values and goals, such as the holistic development of individuals, organizations, groups, communities, nations, and humanity. Third, the monks/SL use HRD approaches and strategies in their activities. Fourth, it was assumed monk/s SL are servant leaders, transformational leaders, or both. Fifth, the participants must have experienced transformational learning because of their transformation experience. Finally, it was assumed participants would be candid and open when responding to the interview questions.

Content of the Study

The entire study is presented in five chapters. Chapter One provides an introduction and overview of the problem. Chapter Two includes a literature review that took into account several theoretical constructs and embedded concepts and contexts related to the study. Chapter Three covers methodology, explaining the research design, selection criteria of participants, data collection, and data analysis techniques. Chapter Four provides the results and report of the data analysis from the monks/SL interviews and, likewise, from observations, organizational documents, and websites in the form of narrative stories and the researcher's interpretation of the results. The last Chapter Five provides a summary of the findings, conclusion, implications, and future research recommendations.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter aimed to provide the necessary background information for this dissertation study by examining the published literature related to the study's multilinked context. This study revolved around participants experiencing transformation and their HRD related activities, linked to contexts and constructs of spirituality, spiritual development, spiritual leadership, servant leadership, transformative learning, transformational leadership, social entrepreneurs, and HRD. Overall, the purpose and the objectives for this chapter and literature review were threefold. (a) to systematically show the reader what is already known and what is unknown about several embedded contexts in this research study, (b) to provide a logical description, critical evaluation, and summaries of the existing works related to the study, and (c) to provide a theoretical and conceptual framework for the research. This chapter begins with a section that describes the process and procedure followed in conducting and organizing the literature review, followed by relevant sections and subsections. Each of the topics covered in this chapter is integral to the context of this dissertation study

The Literature Search Process

This section provides a brief overview of the approach and process adopted to extract relevant literature for this study.

For this study, the researcher used ERIC (EBSCO), Google Scholar, Education Source, Academic Search Ultimate, Business Source Ultimate, and ProQuest

Dissertations as primary database sources, accessed via the Texas A&M University library portal. In addition to these academic databases, the Google search engine was used as a secondary source to find relevant web articles and documents available on the internet in the public domain. These databases and search engines extracted academic and non-academic publications pertinent to the research study.

To extract relevant articles for the study, the researcher selected the inbuilt advanced search feature of the databases and inserted keywords pertinent to the study. Databases offered a filter option to choose date range, language, and other publication options, which were used to filter unwanted literature. For example, to extract literature on transformative learning theory (TLT), the transformative learning theory word was used with several other keywords in combination such as transformative learning (TL), Mezirow TLT, History and background of TLT, criticism of TLT, application of TLT, spirituality, spiritual development, HRD, leadership, adult education, and transformation. The date range was set to 1970 to 2020 to include the early work on the TLT topic. Similarly, scholarly journal articles, dissertations, and other published empirically based evidence were extracted from the primary databases. Google scholar and google search engines were used to extract web articles and eBooks on specific topics and specific contexts.

Sorting and organizing was the last step in the search process, which involved sorting and sifting literature by reading the abstracts and briefly scanning the content to narrow the literature relevant to this study. The researcher excluded the articles and books not relevant to the study. The related articles were downloaded and saved to

Mendeley software and personal computer by creating various folders for easy access to files. Similar literature search strategy to extract literature for various topics relevant to the study.

Spirituality, a Growing Trend

In recent years spirituality has become a buzzword. Interest and research in spirituality has grown sharply in every field such as management (e.g., Chakraborty & Chakraborty, 2008), business (e.g., Melé & Fontrodona, 2017), leadership (e.g., Bugenhagen, 2009), higher education (e.g., Astin et al., 2011; Chickering et al., 2015), and health and nursing (e.g., O'Brien, 2017). In academia, several journals have devoted special issues to spirituality and called for papers on spirituality topics. Several organizations around the globe facilitate conferences on spirituality. For example, “Spirituality and Medical Practice Conference” is an annual conference organized by The World Academy of Science Engineering and Technology [WASET]. The Tomorrow People, organization conducted its 2021 “International Conference on Spirituality and Psychology” virtually. The Women & Spirituality organization organizes their annual conferences on topics related to women and spirituality, In 2018, The Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee conducted its “International Conference on Science, Spirituality, and Civilization” on its campus. These are just the few to name, and there are many more conferences based on topics of spirituality are being held globally.

Research by several private and online web organizations reported an increasing interest in spirituality amongst millennials. Millennials who now identify themselves as spiritual but not religious are on the rise (McMullan, 2019; Newman, 2015; Watts,

2018). In their Pew Research survey, Lipka and Gecewicz (2017) reported about a quarter of US adults (27%) say they think of themselves as spiritual but not religious. An Angus Reid Institute (2015) poll found 39 % of Canadians identify as spiritual but not religious and 24 percent identify as both.

Indicators such as the ones listed above indicate spirituality is gaining popularity with millennials. As a result of burgeoning interest in spirituality topics, perhaps several highly skilled professionals from diverse backgrounds choose to become monks/SL. Several scholars, journalists, and publishers (Bordia, 2018; Green, 2013; Liang, 2015; Williams, 2018; Yagnik, 2018) have published articles showing how several highly skilled professionals, especially the millennials, are turning to spirituality and choosing to become monks/SL in a monastery setting.

In this study, the overarching purpose was to investigate why individuals with an impressive education and professional background decided to become monks/SL giving up their professional careers. Furthermore, by becoming monks/SL, how do they contribute to society and perceive the impact of their activities. Because HRD deals with human development and HRD is a multidisciplinary field, it becomes relevant to know what is happening in the HRD and other closely related disciplines of HRD with topics related to spirituality and spiritual development context. The next section first focuses on the definition dilemma of spirituality.

Spirituality-Religion Definition Debate

There are many definitions of spirituality; however, no one fixed definition exists. One reason for such diversity could be because spirituality could mean different

things to different people based on their upbringing, culture, religion, beliefs, and institutional affiliations. Thus, there is no agreed-upon definition of spirituality. Many scholars (Greenstreet, 1999; Speck & Hoppe, 2007) confirm the lack of consensus in defining spirituality. Since there is no agreement on the single definition of spirituality, many scholars and practitioners from multidisciplinary fields have defined spirituality and spiritual development in their respective disciplines. For Tisdell (2003), a scholar from adult and higher education, spirituality rest on seven assumptions:

- (a) Spirituality and religion are not the same, but for many people, they are interrelated.
- (b) Spirituality is about awareness and honoring of wholeness and the interconnectedness of all things through the mystery of ...the Life-force, God, higher power, higher self, cosmic energy, Buddha-nature, or Great Spirit.
- (c) Spirituality is fundamentally about meaning-making.
- (d) Spirituality is always present (and often unacknowledged) in the learning environment.
- (e) Spiritual development constitutes moving toward greater authenticity or to a more authentic self.
- (f) Spirituality is about how people construct knowledge through largely unconscious and symbolic processes, often made more concrete in art forms such as music, art, image, symbol, and ritual, which is manifested culturally.
- (g) A spiritual experience most often happens by surprise. (pp. 28-29).

Most of Tisdell's (2003) assumptions are something many people can relate to because it represents a neutral tone. These assumptions could provide an impetus to many interdisciplinary scholars to test these assumptions. This study's research findings

would undoubtedly test some of these assumptions and present the results in Chapter four.

Another issue about the definition of spirituality is that in western academic literature, most measures for religion and spirituality are derived from Christian concepts of religion and spirituality, and research across the globe is needed (Hyman & Handal, 2006; Paloutzian & Park, 2013). While searching for spirituality definitions from the eastern Vedic philosophical perspective, the researcher noted that not many definitions of spirituality from eastern perspectives exist in academic journals. Thus, a potential gap exists in terms of the inclusion of spiritual definitions from the different philosophical traditions and backgrounds. To address this gap, Frisdiantara and Sahertian (2012) have challenged academicians from various disciplines to create a definition of spirituality applicable in daily life.

Another ongoing debate is whether the concepts of religion and spirituality are different, the same, or overlapping (Hyman & Handal, 2006). To harmonize the commonalities in various definitions related to spirituality and how it differs from religion is beyond this study's scope. However, because the participants in the study follow a spiritual and monastic path based on eastern Vedic philosophy and adhere to spiritual practices like yoga and meditation, it is imperative to understand the Vedic perspectives on spirituality and religion.

According to Vedic yoga texts such as the Bhagavad Gita, spirituality imparts the vision to an individual to see the cosmos in the proper perspective and live in harmony with it. The Vedic spiritual philosophy states the cosmos is not just a matter, but it has a

spiritual dimension, and so does every living entity in this cosmos. Our real “self” or the true identity of the human being is not our material body, but it is a spiritual particle called the “atma, the soul,” which animates our material body. The supreme spiritual being which animates the entire cosmos is called the “param-atma” or the supersoul or god, divinity, or higher power. And the union between the two, the soul and the supersoul, is called “yoga.” A person who has achieved such a union is called a self-realized, enlightened person or a yogi. And to help achieve a self-realization/enlightenment state, Vedic texts prescribe several spiritual practices like meditation, chanting mantras, austerities, and sense control. Moreover, a self-realized person who can systematically teach and lead others towards the path of self-realization is called a Guru, a spiritual teacher.” Thus, in an eastern spiritual context, a Guru, a spiritual teacher, is given much importance, and sincere spiritual seekers approach Gurus and learn the science of spirituality from them.

Regarding the discussion or debate on spirituality and religion, the Vedic texts further explain spirituality as a process meant to make one realize or awaken the dormant or original spiritual identity through a harmony of philosophy and religion. According to ChaitanyaCharan (2013), spirituality runs on two parallel rails, philosophy and religion. “The philosophical aspect of spirituality involves the study and understanding of matter, spirit, and the controller of both. And the religious aspect involves following rules and regulations that bring about realization and experience of the spiritual realm” (The Vedic Definition of Religion section, para, 4).

ChaitanyaCharan (2013) distinguished between spirituality and religion by stating “spiritual” usually refers to the experience of the higher, deeper aspects of life, whereas “religion” refers to the adherence to certain beliefs and rituals given in a specific culture and tradition. Furthermore, he added that sincere spiritual seekers or spiritualists are open-minded to experience higher transcendental experiences, whatever be the way they get that experience. In contrast, some religionists, those who identify themselves only with their religion, may be rigid and close-minded because they want to stick only to the ways given in their religion and deride or dismiss other religions' ways and practices.

The eastern Vedic perspective on spirituality and religion may help readers understand the monks/SL participants in this study and their monastery spiritual, philosophical background, views on spirituality and religion, and their spiritual practices. This brief discussion on the eastern Vedic perspective on spirituality and religion may add new knowledge and dimension to the ongoing debate and discussion on religion and spirituality and provide a different lens on this topic.

Spirituality in HRD

There is no consensus in the HRD discipline regarding the definition of HRD nor the conceptual and theoretical purpose and functions of HRD. The concepts and purposes of HRD in different countries vary depending on the individual country's requirements and structure (Abdullah, 2009). Nevertheless, HRD scholars have suggested, HRD's general purposes and function revolve around individual development, organizational development, career development, and performance

improvement. Moreover, it extends to cultural, economic, community, social, political, and cross-national dimensions in a broader context (McLean & McLean, 2001). The literature was reviewed from various HRD contexts with two objectives. First, provide a conceptual framework to this study and, second, identify potential problems and gaps pertaining to this study's topic within the HRD context.

Spirituality in HRD Journals

The core topic or the essence of this study revolves around monks/SL leaders, spirituality, and spiritual transformation as experienced by some individuals. Additionally, it also revolves around identifying how monks/SL are contributing to HRD by their activities. Are they potential HRD change agents or social entrepreneurs? What social development activities the monks/SL and their NPO undertake? With this context in mind, to identify the existing publication on the interlinked topics in this study in the HRD field, the researcher identified the following keywords relevant to this study: spirituality, spiritual leader OR spiritual leadership, social entrepreneurship, social enterprise, social development, social innovation, and change agent. With these keywords, the researcher searched for author-supplied keywords for their articles and keywords in their abstract in the top four HRD journals, *Advances in Developing Human Resources (ADHR)*, *Human Resource Development Review (HRDR)*, *Human Resource Development International (HRDI)*, and *Human Resource Development Quarterly (HRDQ)*. The search results of this literature review are presented in Table 1.

Surprisingly, only 16 times the words “Spirituality” gained importance or was considered worthy enough to find a place in the author-supplied keywords in their

articles or abstracts. “Social Development” appeared 11 times, “Social Entrepreneurship” words appeared three times, and “Spiritual Leader or Spiritual Leadership, Social Enterprise, and Change Agent” words appeared only once. These search results indicate spirituality, spiritual development, spiritual leadership, and social entrepreneurship topics have not gained enough importance in HRD and have remained under-researched. Had these topics been of importance, these keywords would have appeared within the authors' abstracts or their supplied keywords for publication purposes in these HRD journals.

This literature search process did not extract articles relevant to this study, especially related to spiritual leaders and their role in HRD. Thus a significant gap exists in HRD related to this study's topic and interlinked topics presented by keywords listed in Table 1.

Table 1

Spirituality in HRD's Four Journals

My Keyword Search	Journal	Number of Articles Retrieved with My Keywords and Author Supplied Keywords	Number of Articles Retrieved with My Keywords in Author Supplied Abstract	Total Number of Articles After Removing Duplicates in Respective Journals
Spirituality	ADHR	5	6	6
	HRDR	2	3	3
	HRDI	3	5	5
	HRDQ	0	2	2

Table 1 Continued

My Keyword Search	Journal	Number of Articles Retrieved with My Keywords and Author Supplied Keywords	Number of Articles Retrieved with My Keywords in Author Supplied Abstract	Total Number of Articles After Removing Duplicates in Respective Journals
Spiritual Leader OR Spiritual Leadership	ADHR	0	0	0
	HRDR	0	0	0
	HRDI	0	1	1
	HRDQ	0	0	0
Social Entrepreneurship	ADHR	3	3	3
	HRDR	0	0	0
	HRDI	0	0	0
	HRDQ	0	0	0
Social Enterprise	ADHR	0	0	0
	HRDR	0	0	0
	HRDI	1	1	1
	HRDQ	0	0	0
Social Development	ADHR	1	3	3
	HRDR	0	0	0
	HRDI	3	2	3
	HRDQ	0	5	5
Social Innovation	ADHR	1	1	1
	HRDR	0	1	1
	HRDI	0	0	0
	HRDQ	0	0	0
Change Agent	ADHR	0	0	0
	HRDR	0	0	0
	HRDI	0	1	1
	HRDQ	0	0	0
Total				35

Note. Advances in Developing Human Resources (ADHR), Human Resource Development Review (HRDR), Human Resource Development International (HRDI), and Human Resource Development Quarterly (HRDQ)

Organization Development Context

Organizational development (OD) is an interdisciplinary field with contributions from diverse disciplines such as business, behavioral sciences, organizational psychology, human resources management, sociology, and many other disciplines. Hence, scholars from different disciplines have defined OD in numerous ways depending upon the area of practice, experiences, or beliefs (Schifo, 2004). Egan (2002) investigated OD definitions from 1969 to 2001 and found as many as 60 different variables listed in 27 definitions. He identified 10 dependent variables or OD intended outcomes. The 10 intended outcomes of OD are:

- Advance Organizational Renewal
- Engage Organizational Culture Change
- Enhance Profitability and Competitiveness
- Ensure Health and Well-being of Organizations and Employees
- Facilitate Learning and Development
- Improve Problem Solving
- Increase Effectiveness
- Initiate and/or Manage Change
- Strengthen System and Process Improvement
- Support Adaptation to Change Methodology. (Egan, 2002, p. 67)

These 10 OD outcomes provide a conceptual framework to situate the study in the OD context and an opportunity to discuss the study's findings and implications within these OD outcomes.

As noted earlier, there has been a burgeoning interest in spirituality topics in various disciplines and, more specifically, about various aspects of spirituality at the workplace. Most of the research has focused on a wide range of tangible organizational benefits such as employee performance, organization change, and employee engagement. For example, how spirituality at workplace affects organizational outcomes and more specific aspects such as leadership (Phipps, 2012), organizational change (Dehler & Welsh, 1994), organizational and employee performance (Garcia-Zamor, 2003; Giacalone et al., 2005), and employee engagement (Devi, 2016; Roof, 2015). Unfortunately, there is a lack of evidence that shows what work-related factors or organizational factors impact employees' self-spirituality and spiritual development. Or what factors could trigger spiritual development or spiritual transformation in an individual to the extent that could lead them to give up their professional careers and become spiritual leaders in the nonprofit organization (NPO)?

The researcher aimed to investigate if any work or related organizational factors played any role in individuals' decisions to become spiritual leaders. It is important to uncover these factors because it may help OD professionals understand what organizational factors could trigger the spiritual development process or spiritual quest in employees. It may also help uncover what OD activities do the spiritual leader or their NPO's perform.

Learning, Training and Development Context

In this research study, the research site, the study participants, monks/SL, and the researcher are from India. Thus, it is essential to understand certain aspects integral to spirituality and spiritual development. From the ancient and traditional eastern perspectives, yoga, meditation, mindfulness practices, which find their historical roots and origins in India, are considered integral aspects of spirituality, spiritual development, and spiritual wellbeing.

There are many types of yoga and meditation systems and practices listed in different yoga texts, such as Bhagavad Gita. However, in the western world, yoga is typically associated with physical workouts leading to flexibility and muscle tone and meditation to reduce stress and anxiety. However, in India, many people practice yoga and meditation as part of their spiritual development process. For many monks or spiritual leaders, different yoga and meditation practices form the core of their spiritual development and activities. Monks/SL are engaged in learning, teaching, and developing training programs, workshops, and seminars based on these practices. They train people interested in spirituality and spiritual development, or people approach monks/SL to systematically learn these practices under their guidance for their spiritual growth.

In recent years, several organizations have embraced varied forms of wellbeing training programs and workshops such as mindfulness, yoga, and meditation within their organizations. Some of the American businesses that have included mindfulness training within their organizations are Target, Google, Sun Life Financial, Aetna International, Hearst Publications, eBay, General Mills, Twitter, Ford Motor Company, Cargill, Inc.,

Genentech, Facebook, Kaiser Permanente, Compusense, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, and Plantronics (Hunter, 2013). Research has shown mindfulness training improves specific cognitive skills required for academic performance (Mrazek et al., 2013; Zeidan et al., 2010). It helped reduce stress (Shapiro et al., 1998); it has increased levels of psychological (Van Gordon et al., 2013) and physiological wellbeing (Hassed et al., 2009).

Similarly, empirical research has shown evidence of the positive impact of yoga and meditation on overall wellbeing. Six weeks of yoga intervention at the workplace showed increased life purpose, satisfaction, and feelings of greater self-confidence during stressful situations (Hartfiel et al., 2011). Yoga intervention improved cognition and quality of life for healthy individuals (Rocha et al., 2012). Cyclic meditation practice has proved it reduced stress and improved psychosomatic health indices in managers (Kushwah et al., 2016). Perhaps, because of this empirical evidence, many organizations embrace the practice of yoga and meditation as a training and development intervention for their employee's wellbeing.

As indicated above, considerable research has shown yoga, and meditation training and workshops offer several advantages to organizations and their employees' wellbeing. However, surprisingly there is an absence of research on how and who conducts these training programs. Are monks/SL involved in needs assessment of these training? Are they involved in designing, developing, and delivery of spiritual development training? What topics and objectives do the spiritual development training or workshop cover?

And most importantly, what is the impact of spiritual development training at different levels? Does spiritual development training trigger any spiritual quest or spiritual transformation in individuals to the extent it could trigger a change in their careers? Many such intriguing questions remain unanswered. Therefore, through this study, the researcher planned to investigate if any spiritual training-related factors conducted by monks/SL played any role in individuals experiencing spiritual transformation phenomena, leading them to become spiritual leaders themselves. Furthermore, how do spiritual leaders perceive the impact of their spiritual development training on society? The findings may help close some of the existing gaps and add value to the T&D field.

Career Development Context

Surprisingly in the HRD discipline, there are not many documented research studies related to career development and spirituality as compared to literature in psychology. According to Wiersma (2002), there is limited empirical data in career literature that has measured the influence of how spirituality influences work behavior. She pointed out that although the traditional career development theories (Holland, 1997; Super, 1980; Krumboltz & Nichols, 1990) have been valuable in explaining various aspects of career choices, job satisfaction, and work motivation, these theories do not address the deeper meaning of life in relation to a career decision. Wiersma (2002) argued that values and deeper motives are the most important determinant of career choices within the field of career development. However, these values and deeper motives of life questions and choices remain hidden to the external observer of high

functioning people. The hidden values and attributes of high functioning people may hinder the career practitioner, counselor, and human resource manager from assisting the individual in articulating and enacting deeper meanings. Wiersma (2002), to fill in some gaps, recommended researchers undertake further research to discover and articulate their spiritual work meanings and spiritual meaning-making.

To explain what spiritual work meanings and spiritual meaning-making means, Wiersma (2002) evaluated many definitions of spirituality. In those definitions, she found authors had treated spirituality as a meaning-making construct. To help understand the meaning-making construct, Yalom (1980, as cited in Wiersma, 2002) stated that meaning-making could take many forms leading to individuals asking questions, "What is the meaning of life? What is the meaning of my life? What do we live for? What shall we live by? If we must die, if nothing endures, then what sense does anything make?" (p. 500). According to Wiersma (2002), the concern for these type of questions perhaps directs an individual to link spirituality and their spiritual beliefs to the meaning of work and their career. In simple language, work-meanings mean sense-making, which is:

a process in which individuals form cognitive maps of their environment, including standards and rules for perceiving, interpreting, believing, and acting. Sense-making, therefore, concentrates on the process of meaning-making. It is a more retrospective construct that serves to evaluate past behavior but also influences future behavior. (Wiersma, 2002, pp. 500-501)

Through these definitions, Wiersma (2002) shows a connection between spirituality, work, and career choices. Few studies have shown a connection between spirituality, work, and organization (e.g., Karakas, 2010; Mitroff & Denton, 1999; Roof, 2015; Tischler, Biberman, & Altman, 2007) and the influence of spirituality on career behavior (Wiersma, 2002). However, no study has investigated the role of spirituality on individuals with impressive educational and professional background and their decision to become monks/SL. No research has examined what values and deeper motives influenced high-performing individuals to change their career trajectories and become spiritual leaders. Besides, no study has explored how high-performing individuals or professionals, after becoming spiritual leaders contribute their services and expertise to their followers' career development or career guidance. Hopefully, this research study's findings may fill in some of those gaps and add to the literature in career development in HRD.

International Human Resource Development (IHRD) Context

No single definition exists for International Human Resource Development (IHRD) or National HRD because each country defines HRD differently. Nevertheless, Wang and Mclean (2007) defined IHRD as follows:

International HRD (also known, perhaps more appropriately, as cross-national HRD, transnational HRD, and global HRD) is a field of study and practice that focuses on for-profit, not-for-profit, and/or governmental entities and individuals cooperating in some form across national borders. The purpose of this interaction is systematically to tap existing human potential and intentionally shape work-

based, community-based, society-based, culture-based, and politically based expertise through multiple means for the purpose of improving cross-national relationships collaboratively across all involved entities through greater mutual understanding improved individual and organizational performance, improved standards of living and quality of life, reduced conflict between entities and individuals, and any other criteria that would be deemed useful by the involved entities. International HRD is aspirational rather than realized and serves as a challenge for continuous efforts at improvement. (p. 105)

This comprehensive IHRD definition encompasses individual, organizations of all sorts, profit, nonprofit, cultural, economic, community, social, political, and cross-national dimensions. According to Mclean (2004), National HRD (NHRD) “goes beyond employment and preparation for employment issues to include health, culture, safety, community, and a host of other considerations that have not typically been perceived as manpower planning or human capital investment” (p. 269). In the context of IHRD and NHRD, it seems valid to ask, what are some of the complex problems plaguing the world today? According to millennials who participated in the World Economic Forum Global Shapers Survey (2017), the top-10 most concerning world issues are:

1. Climate change/destruction of nature
2. large-scale conflicts/wars
3. Inequality (income, discrimination)
4. Poverty

5. Religious conflicts
6. Government accountability and transparency/corruption
7. Food and water security
8. Lack of education
9. Safety/security/wellbeing
10. Lack of economic opportunity and employment.

With these global issues on millennials' minds and, as identified in Chapter One, the increasing trend amongst millennials becoming monks/SL leads one to wonder if millennials are attempting to solve some of these complex issues on the spiritual platform by becoming spiritual leaders? And if so, what spiritual methods, spiritual practices, and spiritual technology are they using to find solutions to some of these global issues? These are some of the questions that need exploration by undertaking systematic research.

Besides, it is not hidden that many researchers, scientists, and social workers worldwide are trying to solve some of these complex problems based on their expertise. Similarly, some sincere spiritual leaders worldwide are also engaged in addressing some of these complex problems on the spiritual platform. The proof of that is evident when The United Nations (UN) took the initiative to form the World Council of Religious and Spiritual Leaders. The UN hosted a UN Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual World Council in August 2000. This World Peace Summit is now an annual event for the religious and spiritual leaders worldwide to come together and work in close coordination with the UN with an objective to bring the spiritual repository of

the human community to the solving of critical world problems (The World Council of Religious Leaders, n.d.). However, one may ask, could spiritual leaders solve some of these complex problems on the spiritual platform, and if so, how are they attempting to address them, and whether their efforts are creating a positive impact in our society? Through this research study, the researcher investigates if monks/SL contribute to IHRD/NHRD and what is the impact of their activities.

Spirituality in Higher Education

In higher education, adult education, and student affairs, several scholars have focused on spirituality and spiritual development. In higher education and student affairs and administration, researchers (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011; Bowman & Small, 2010; Braskamp, 2007; Bryant, 2007; Cady, 2007; Love & Talbot, 2009; Lovik, 2011; Weddle-West, Hagan, & Norwood, 2013) have extensively studied topics of spirituality and spiritual development of students. In adult education (Dirkx, 1997; English, Fenwick, & Parsons, 2003; Fenwick & English, 2004; and Tisdell, 2008), researchers have highlighted the importance of spirituality and spiritual development and how it impacts adult learning. These scholars have examined the spirituality and spiritual development of college students in various educational contexts. They have contended spirituality and spiritual development is an essential and integral part of students and adult development. These authors have substantiated the importance of the spiritual development of college students, and in the last decade published several articles and books on this topic.

Astin et al. (2011) conducted a multi-institutional and longitudinal design to identify trends, patterns, and principles of spirituality and religiousness among college students. Through their research, they found of those undergraduates entering college, 83% believed in the sacredness of life; 80% were interested in spirituality; 76% were searching for the meaning/purpose of life; 74% discussed life philosophies with friends; 69% looked to their religious beliefs for guidance; 64% viewed spirituality as a source of joy; 79% said they believed in god; 81% attended religious services; 69% prayed on a regular basis; 69% wanted their school to help them develop personal values, and 48% explicitly said they wanted their college experience to encourage their expressions of spirituality.

According to Astin and Astin (2010), spirituality is:

A multifaceted quality that involves an active quest for answers to life's "big questions" (Spiritual Quest), a global worldview that transcends egocentrism and ethnocentrism (Ecumenical Worldview), a sense of caring and compassion for others (Ethic of Caring), coupled with a lifestyle that includes service to others (Charitable Involvement), and a capacity to maintain one's sense of calm and centeredness, especially in times of stress (Equanimity). (p. 4)

Astin et al. revealed students' spiritual growth affected traditional college outcomes such as their academic performance, leadership development, satisfaction with college, interest in pursuing graduate study, psychological well-being, ability to get along with other races and cultures, and intellectual self-esteem. Moreover, they concluded spiritual development helps students develop spiritual qualities like

equanimity, care, ethics, and worldview change. They also opine these qualities increased the possibility of students' active engagement in social activism, a higher degree of charitable involvement, becoming a community leader, reflecting on reducing pain and suffering in the world. Moreover, researchers also found the students were becoming more loving, improving the human condition, displaying high levels of self-esteem and relatively low levels of psychological distress.

Wood and Hebert (2005) examined the relationship between spiritual meaning and purpose and health-related behaviors in college students by exploring relationships between spiritual meaning and purpose and the use of alcohol and drugs amongst undergraduate students. The results showed "students with a higher Spiritual Meaning score were significantly less likely to use marijuana, drink alcohol, and participate in binge drinking. An individual's spiritual beliefs appear to have a buffering effect on alcohol and drug use" (p. 72). The researchers recommended health education programs that provide students opportunities for spiritual growth and exploration based on the results. They opined such a strategy might be useful in preventing drug and alcohol use by college students.

Astin et al. (2011) and Tisdell (2003) respective definitions of spirituality, their research and findings, and other scholars' work such as Wood and Hebert (2005), all from adult and higher education disciplines, provide a conceptual framework to this study. Their work and inputs provide an impetus to investigate if any college-related factors played any influential role in the spiritual transformation in individuals leading them to become spiritual leaders

Transformative Learning Theory

Transformative learning theory (TLT) provides a theoretical framework for this study. The process of transformative learning is based on the TLT, which was developed by Mezirow in 1970. TLT has evolved over the decades “into a comprehensive and complex description of how learners construe, validate, and reformulate the meaning of their experience” (Cranton, 1994, p. 22).

Mezirow (2000) defined transformative learning (TL) as:

The process by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of reference (meaning perspectives, habits of mind, mindsets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action. (p. 8)

In simple words, in the TL process, an individual’s three developmental dimensions; psychological changes (changes in the understanding of own self), convictional changes (revision of belief systems), and behavioral changes (changes in lifestyle), are at the center (Khabanyane et al., 2014). So, TL occurs when there is a shift in an individual’s consciousness, which brings about the changes in individual perception about themselves and the world around them. In TL, an individual or a learner's experience is considered the starting point for critical reflection, leading to an individual questioning their assumptions, beliefs, and notions based on their prior experiences.

Mezirow first applied the concept of TL when he studied the change in perspectives of American women who were resuming their education after an extended period of time out of university or the workforce. His qualitative study's objective was to identify these women's needs and describe how their self-concepts and worldviews reshaped post returning to school. Mezirow interviewed 83 women from 12 programs enrolled in different states California, Washington, New York, and New Jersey. From the collected data, he discovered 10 distinct phases which those women appeared to go through when they experienced a transformation in their perspective. Those 10 distinct phases are:

1. A disorienting dilemma
2. Self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt, or shame
3. A critical assessment of assumptions
4. Recognition that others have gone through a similar process
5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and action
6. Planning of a course of action
7. Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans
8. Provisional trying of new roles
9. Building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
10. A reintegration into one's life based on conditions dictated by a new perspective (Mezirow, 2000, p. 22)

Mezirow used TLT to study people's transformation and to describe their experiences regarding how people used their critical reflection of self to consider their beliefs, experiences, and worldview over time.

Applicability of Transformation Learning Theory to this Study

TLT provides a theoretical foundation and framework to this study and seems very relevant and applicable to this study for the following reasons:

First, this study is about individuals with an impressive educational and professional background who chose to become monks/SL. The individuals experienced a significant transformation from their careers, professions, lifestyle changes, role and responsibilities, and social activities. Based on TLT's premise, these individuals may have experienced some or all ten phases of TLT in their transformation. The TL process involves a critical reflection of self, beliefs, perceptions, values, and assumptions. So, it would be interesting to see if the study participants experienced the phases of critical reflection of self, belief, perceptions, values, and assumptions before and after becoming spiritual leaders. Furthermore, did TL change or reshape their beliefs and worldviews?

Second, several scholars (e.g., Mountjoy, 2003; Sawyer, 2004; Weinski, 2006) have studied some aspects of spirituality in TL. However, most of the existing studies exploring the spiritual dimension of TL had Christian, biblical, and western philosophical contexts (Hyman & Handal, 2006). The eastern perspective and measures of spirituality or religion and contexts are deficient in the existing literature. No research has investigated how educated professionals from diverse backgrounds, from different cultural backgrounds, from different religious backgrounds or religious faiths such as

Buddhism, Islam, Judaism or Hinduism decide to become spiritual leaders or how their transformation and TL takes place. Moreover, how spiritual leaders bring about TL through their activities in others and society. Thus, TLT could help understand participants' TL process from different spiritual cultures and traditions and add new knowledge and dimension to TLT and spirituality research and literature.

Third, TLT is a study of adult learners used to describe and analyze how adults learn to make meaning of their experiences. In TLT, the experience of the adult learner is at the center. It is considered a primary medium of learner's change in their frame of reference, attitude, and perspectives about themselves and the world around them. This study is about individuals with exceptional educational and professional backgrounds who decided to become monks/SL and join the monastery. Therefore, based on the TLT premise, did experience played a central role in their transformation? If so, what were those triggering experiences responsible for the transformation that triggered a change in their frame of reference, attitude, and perspectives about themselves and the world around them. The findings of the study may throw light on this TLT tenet.

Fourth, according to TLT, as a result of transformational learning, the individual experiences three developmental dimensions psychological changes (interpreted as changes in the understanding of one's self), convictional changes (referred to as a revision of an individual's value or belief systems), and behavioral changes (i.e., changes leading to one's lifestyle and habits). What changes did the participants of this study undergo due to their transformation would throw light on these TL dimensions?

Thus, TLT seemed applicable to this study and provided a theoretical foundation and framework for this study.

Leadership Theories and Models

Since this research primarily revolves around spiritual leaders, their transformation from working professionals to monks/SL, their social welfare activities, in that context, leadership theories and models are relevant to this study, and they provide a theoretical and conceptual framework to this study. Therefore, the literature on servant leadership, transformational leadership, and spiritual leadership and their applicability to this study was reviewed.

Servant Leadership

Greenleaf presented the philosophy of servant leadership in the 1970 essay, ‘The Servant as Leader.’ According to Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, the servant-leader is:

The servant-leader is a servant first...It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. Such a person is sharply different from one who is a leader first. Perhaps because of a need to assuage an unusual power to drive or to acquire material possessions...The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature...The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do

they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit or at least not be further deprived? (Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, nd)

Greenleaf contended servant leaders get results for their organization through whole-hearted attention to their followers and followers' needs. Lynch and Friedman (2013) cite Spears (2010), who outlined ten characteristics of servant leaders by analyzing the writings of Greenleaf, which are as follows:

1. Listening- Listening intently and receptively to what others say. This attribute means that one must be accessible.
2. Empathy - Having empathy for others and trying to understand them.
3. Healing- Possessing the ability to heal the emotional hurts of others.
4. Awareness Possessing awareness and self-awareness.
5. Persuasion- Having the power of persuasion; influencing others by convincing them, not coercing them.
6. Conceptualization -Possessing the knack of being able to conceptualize and communicate ideas.
7. Foresight -Having foresight, which also includes the ability to learn from the past and to have a vision of the future.
8. Stewardship - Seeing themselves as stewards (i.e., as individuals whose primary job is to serve others)

9. Commitment to the Growth of People- Being firmly dedicated to the growth of every single employee.
10. Building Community -A commitment to building community in the institutions where people work. (Lynch & Friedman, 2013, p. 88)

In addition to these attributes, Smith, Montagno, and Kuzmenko (2004) have cited Laub (1999) to list six distinct components and characteristics of servant leadership; respecting people, raising people, building a society, displaying legitimacy, offering leadership, and shared leadership. In short, the core idea of servant leadership is that servant leaders are not concerned with personal aggrandizement and self-interest. The leaders have a natural feeling of wanting to serve others first. They genuinely care about others; they want to empower others and are facilitators, and they want all of their subordinates to be successful.

Servant leadership is relevant and applicable to this study because it would help identify if a desire to serve others was one of the triggering factors that motivated the highly educated and skilled professional to become spiritual leaders. Moreover, since monks/SL are not concerned with personal aggrandizement and self-interest because of the simplistic and austere lifestyle they lead, the servant leaders' characteristics would help analyze if the spiritual leaders display or imbibe any of the servant leaders characteristics. Furthermore, how do spiritual leaders perceive and identify themselves and their social work? Do they perceive themselves as servant leaders selflessly serving their followers and society or transformational leaders bringing out transformation within their followers and society?

Transformational Leadership

Burns (1978) was the first to introduce the concepts of transformational leadership and defined transforming leadership as “a process where leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation” (p. 20). Bass (1999) later added to the work of Burns and specified:

Transformational leadership refers to the leader moving the follower beyond immediate self-interests through idealized influence (charisma), inspiration, intellectual stimulation, or individualized consideration. It elevates the follower’s level of maturity and ideals as well as concerns for achievement, self-actualization, and the well-being of others, the organization, and society. (p. 11)

Bass (1999) established that transformational leaders demonstrate four characteristics (i.e., individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation or charismatic leadership, and idealized influence). He suggests idealized influence and inspirational leadership occur when the leader acts as a strong role model for their organization and leads by example. These traits are displayed when a leader envisions desirable future goals for the organization and articulates how to achieve them. As a role model, the leader sets examples of high-performance standards and shows determination and confidence, which the followers would like to identify and imbibe from their leader. Intellectual stimulation is displayed when the leader encourages their followers to think for themselves and be creative and innovative. Individualized consideration is displayed when leaders pay attention to the developmental needs of followers. The leader establishes a strong relationship with their followers and becomes

a caring and supportive resource to the followers, supports, mentors, and coaches them to reach their potential.

In their classic text, “Transformational Leadership,” authors Bass and Riggio (2006) sum up the role of transformational leaders as follows:

Who stimulate and inspire followers to both achieve extraordinary outcomes and, in the process, develop their own leadership capacity. Transformational leaders help followers grow and develop into leaders by responding to individual followers' needs by empowering them and by aligning the objectives and goals of the individual followers, the leader, the group, and the larger organization (p.13)

Thus, from these transformational leadership constructs and definitions, it is evident that their followers' needs alignment with organizations' goals and objectives are the foci for transformational leaders. The follower's needs and organizational needs come first for them than their own needs. Transformational leadership theory would help this study in many ways: (a) to identify if any transformational leader played an influential role in the transformation process of highly educated individuals to become monks/SL and join the monastery, (b) identify how monasteries spiritual leaders (Gurus or spiritual teacher) stimulate, inspire, and motivate such highly educated and skilled monks/SL followers, (c) identify how do spiritual leaders help their followers grow and develop into leaders by responding to their individual needs, (d) how are they aligning the monasteries objectives and goals with their follower's spiritual development goals, and (e) how spiritual leaders empower their followers to achieve self-actualization, and the well-being of others, the organization, and society?

At the onset, the transformational leadership style seems somewhat like servant leadership, but both differ because each style of leader has a different focus. The next section throws light on that comparison.

Servant Leadership versus Transformational Leadership

Stone, Russell, and Patterson (2004) examined the similarities and differences between the two leadership concepts and contended that the main difference between the two leaders is that both leaders have different foci. They concluded that for transformational leaders, their focus is towards the organization and organizational objectives than the followers. It is the leader's behavior that builds follower commitment toward organizational objectives. Whereas for the servant leader, the focus is more on their followers, and organizational objectives are secondary. They contend that the extent to which the leader can shift the primary focus of leadership from the organization to the follower is the distinguishing factor in classifying leaders as either transformational or servant leaders.

Parolini, Patterson, and Winston (2009) conducted an empirical investigation to distinguish between the two leadership theories. They used Parolini's semantic differential scales or discriminant items. They found empirical evidence to support five key discriminant items to differentiate between the two leadership styles, transformational and servant leadership. The five items were; the leader's morals, focus, motive and mission, development, and influence distinction. The researchers tested these five items using online surveys and statistical data analysis. They found that transformational leaders focus on the organization's needs, are inclined to lead first,

have allegiance toward the organization, and influence through conventional charismatic approaches and control. Whereas servant leaders are those who focus on the needs of the individual, have an inclination to serve first, have allegiance toward the individual, influence through unconventional service, and offer freedom or autonomy.

Schneider and George (2011) researched to test the application of servant leadership and transformational leadership to a voluntary service club. They found that although transformational leadership and servant leadership shared many related constructs, servant leadership was more suited to volunteer organizations than the business organization. Their findings indicate that volunteers who worked with servant leaders felt more empowered and valued within the NPO setting. Their members' attitudes and commitment were more predictable than transformational leadership.

Smith et al. (2004) examined the conceptual similarities of transformational and servant leadership theories. They analyzed the contribution of both theories to the understanding of leadership. They presented a comparison mapping the characteristic of transformation and servant leadership, which helps identify the differences and commonalities between the behavioral attributes of both types of leaders. Their findings suggested that servant leadership leads to a spiritual generative culture within an organization, whereas transformational leadership leads to a more empowered and dynamic culture. They also concluded that transformational leadership is more suited for high change environments, whereas the servant leadership culture better serves more static environments.

Similarities Between Servant Leadership and Transformational Leadership

According to Stone et al. (2004), both transformational leaders and servant leaders shared the following six common traits: (a) both are visionaries, (b) both generate high levels of trust among their followers and serve as role models, (c) both show consideration for others, (d) both delegate responsibilities regularly (e) both empower followers, and (f) both are commonly known to teach, communicate, listen, and influence their followers.

Lowder (2009) presented a comparative analysis of transformational and servant leadership from organizational change management framework and compared both leadership styles through individualized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration perspectives and concluded:

- *Individualized influence perspective.* Both leaders serve their followers' needs, model appropriate behavior, develop strong interpersonal relationships, are open and accountable to followers, and maintain personal integrity and trust.
- *Inspirational motivation perspective.* Both leaders possess a belief in followers, model appropriate behavior, develop strong interpersonal relationships, maintain personal integrity and trust, envision the future, clarify goals, and facilitate a shared vision.
- *Intellectual stimulation perspective.* Both leaders encourage and affirm followers and take the initiative.
- *Individualized consideration perspective.* Both leaders provide their followers learning and growth opportunities, collaborate with followers, value followers'

differences, and share power with followers and release control to followers.

(Lowder, 2009, pp. 15-16)

Thus, it is evident that both leadership theories complement each other; however, there are significant points of variation in the concepts. The main point of distinction between the two leadership approaches is that the servant leader's prime objective is to serve their followers' needs. In contrast, transformational leaders aim to align their own and others' interests with the group, organization, or society. At the onset, it looks like both leadership styles are required in the spiritual NPO organizations, one to selflessly serve others and simultaneously to achieve monasteries vision and objectives. Thus, it would be interesting to see how spiritual leaders perceive their leadership roles. Do they identify with servant leadership style, transformational leadership style, or juggle between leadership styles?

All these leadership theories provide a conceptual framework to identify commonality, differences, or overlap in this study's spiritual leaders' participants.

Spiritual Leadership Theory

Several authors (e. g. Biberman, Whitty, & Robbins, 1999; Mitroff & Denton, 1999) have initiated the dialogue and conducted pioneer studies on spiritual leadership and spirituality religion in the workplace (SRW). However, Fry is the most recognized and cited author when it comes to topics of spiritual leadership. Initially, Fry (2003) defined spiritual leadership as understanding values, attitudes, and behaviors needed not only for self-motivation but also to motivate others through the commitment and membership related to the organization. Fry (2003) argued the ultimate purpose of

spiritual leadership was to foster individual and organizational outcomes such as organizational commitment and productivity, financial performance, employee life satisfaction, and corporate social responsibility. He asserted spiritual leadership is necessary to create a vision, achieve congruent values among the employees and employer, and empower the whole organization's teams, fostering higher organizational commitment levels and productivity.

Fry (2008) further revised the spiritual leadership model to include inner life and life satisfaction. Fry recognized that one's inner life (e.g., perceptions about who they are, what they are doing, and what they are contributing), individual spiritual practices (e.g., meditation, prayer, religious practices, yoga, journaling, walking in nature), and organizational contexts (e.g., rooms for inner silence and reflection, the inclusion of higher power, god, or philosophical teachings) are the fundamental source of inspirations. He opines these elements positively influence individuals in developing hope/faith, values of altruistic love, and a vision of service (Benefiel et al., 2014). According to Fry's spiritual leadership model, spiritual leaders are more focused and oriented to support employees' necessities related to transcendence, connection, self-motivation, satisfaction, spiritual well-being, membership, personal calling, achieving company goals, and overall social growth.

Along the same lines, Ashmos and Duchon (2000) opine that spiritual leadership includes "the recognition that employees have an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of community" (p. 137). Spiritual leadership is acknowledged to play an important role in establishing a culture

and environment for spirituality in individuals, teams (Cacioppe, 2000), and organizations (Duchon & Plowman, 2005).

Although the spiritual leadership model considers the spiritual survival/well-being of leaders and followers and focuses on fostering better organizational commitment, productivity, and performance, some scholars have criticized the spiritual leadership theory and model. Researchers have criticized it for being potentially outdated and having a shallow conceptualization of spirituality and leadership. Benefiel (2005) has criticized it for not providing a sufficient understanding of what constitutes spirituality and how it ties to the leadership. Benefiel (2005) criticized the work on spiritual leadership theory and model, stating that they:

inadvertently draws upon outdated, discredited, or shallow approaches to spirituality; they reinvent the wheel; they dip into credible theories of spirituality but then don't fully develop them or resolve the conflicts among them. While these theories are comprehensive and creative in the context of leadership studies, a more robust, up-to-date, and sophisticated understanding of spirituality is needed if theories of spiritual leadership are to stand up under scrutiny and be taken seriously in the wider academy. (p. 727)

Benefiel et al. (2014) caution that spiritual leadership is an emerging paradigm within the broader context of spirituality and religion at the workplace (SRW). They suggest further research to establish its validity before accepting and applying these theories and models of SRW for "organizational transformation to foster systemic change and development" (p. 184). These scholars have called for more in-depth

exploration and testing of SRW theories and models in different cultural and country settings. In addition, they call for refining the conceptual distinction between spiritual leadership theory and other values-based leadership theories, such as transformational leadership, ethical leadership, and servant leadership.

Avolio, Walumbwa, and Weber (2009) have recognized that defining what spirituality means without tying it to one religion or philosophical base is the challenging part of spiritual leadership theory and model. They state that “Until a definition of what constitutes spirituality and leadership is agreed upon, it will be difficult to conceptualize and measure these constructs.” (p. 438).

According to Contreras (2016), the common feature of spiritual leadership and servant leadership models is that they belong to the same thematic category; Ethical/Moral Leadership Theories. The author opines that leaders with either style are more oriented to showing concerns to their followers' needs to achieve social purposes and organizational goals. Contreras (2016) found these two leadership theories so similar that they argue why these models are different. She suggests researchers provide new empirical evidence to indicate whether servant and spiritual leadership should be considered entirely independent models.

When Fry (2003) opines that:

The ultimate effect of spiritual leadership is to bring together or create a sense of fusion among the four fundamental forces of human existence (body, mind, heart, and spirit) so that people are motivated for high performance, have

increased organizational commitment, and personally experience joy, peace, and serenity. (p. 718)

Indeed, most organizations and their leaders would like to achieve these positive outcomes in their organization and for their employees by applying spiritual leadership or religion at the workplace (SRW) models. However, the main point of contention is how profit-driven organizations and their leaders apply the spiritual leadership theory or SRW models to achieve a sense of fusion among the four fundamental forces of human existence (body, mind, heart, and spirit) that Fry talks about? At workplaces, are organizational leaders, managers, or supervisors trained to help employees achieve this fusion. Are they trained or have skills to support employees from diverse spiritual backgrounds, cultures, faith s' needs and necessities related to spiritual development, transcendence, connection, self-motivation, satisfaction, spiritual well-being, membership, personal calling, achieving company goals, and overall social growth, the intended outcomes of spiritual leadership or SRW models at workplaces?

Moreover, how are these models applied in countries with different spiritual, philosophical cultures and lens? For example, from an eastern ancient Indian Vedic spiritual, philosophical lens, spirituality is not a momentary thing, but it is a lifestyle. For spiritual leaders, spirituality is a process of self-discovery or self-realization, or enlightenment. Spiritual leaders are spiritual seekers who spend years systematically learning and practicing spiritual techniques, practices, and processes under the guidance and wisdom of advanced spiritual teachers/Gurus passed down in disciple successions. Perhaps, for most spiritual leaders, their spiritual leadership values and spiritual

development vision for themselves, their followers, or society are not grounded upon helping organizations achieve their profit-driven objectives. For them, it could involve more to do with the inner transformation of oneself or helps individuals achieve personal and individualized transcendental experiences with the help of spiritual development and spiritual practices rather than motivate them to achieve organizational profit-driven objectives. Some spiritual leaders from different spiritual cultures and traditions may even motivate individuals to renounce materialistic lifestyles and lead a monastic lifestyle.

Overall, after reviewing and reflecting on the spiritual leadership theory and SRW models, several questions and arguments could be raised, such as:

- What interventions do organizational leaders wanting to implement the theory/model of spiritual leadership within their organization design to achieve the stated outcomes of spiritual leadership?
- What spiritual tools, techniques, or practices do the organizations, and their leaders use to achieve the intended outcome of spiritual leadership within their organization and for their employees?
- What instruments or measures do the organization and their spiritual leaders use to evaluate and measure employees' joy, peace, and serenity feelings and experiences as a direct result of applying spiritual leadership theory principles?
- Why are spiritual leaders' voices missing in spiritual leadership theories and SRW models?

- Should the spiritual leadership theories not consider how spiritual leaders from different religions, spiritual faiths, traditions, and cultures define and perceive spirituality and spiritual leaders' qualities or traits?
- Since the spiritual leadership theory and SRW models are derived and situated from western ideologies of spirituality and philosophy, how can this theory or SRW models be applied in different cultural and traditional contexts? Should not different spiritual, philosophical perspectives from different cultures and traditions be considered and included in them?

These are some questions for discussion and contemplations, especially for profit-driven organizations, organizational leaders, or spiritual leaders intending to apply spiritual leadership theory or SRW models within their organizations and perhaps to those working on developing these theories and models based on spirituality and leadership constructs.

Since spiritual leaders' voices are missing in spiritual leadership theory, this study provides an opportunity to add their voices in the form of definitions of spirituality, spiritual leaders, and spiritual leadership characteristics perceived by spiritual leaders themselves. Their voices may add new perspectives and knowledge to the emerging spiritual leadership theory and existing SRW models.

Social Entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneur is an emerging research area (Wang, 2012), and no one definition exists for this term. Gotchall (2010) argues that it is difficult to establish one unique definition for a social entrepreneur. However, scholars who write on social

entrepreneurship agree that social entrepreneurs are change agents who passionately work to bring about social change in society. Braun (2010) opines that:

Social entrepreneurs are considered pathbreakers, pioneers, activists, and innovators. The driving purpose of social entrepreneurship is to improve and transform the quality of life on a local, national, or global level. Social entrepreneurs seek to contribute sustainable alternatives to their own and others' communities. (p. 8-9)

Social enterprise is defined by Saebi et al. (2019) as :

a hybrid organization built on an explicit social objective (e.g., improving education, health, nutrition, and safety for segments of the population that are excluded, marginalized, or suffering) that strives to create social value while securing profits and doing so in an entrepreneurial/innovative way. (p. 73)

Basically, social enterprises are formed with an awareness that some of the social problems the society faces cannot be solved by the traditional nonprofit approach. For a nonprofit organization to qualify as a social enterprise, income-generating activities must have a long-term strategic orientation with measurable growth and revenue targets. Therefore some NPO's undertake social activities that generate incomes, and the generated income is then used to achieve social change. The objective of social enterprises is to achieve sustainable social solutions through a self-sustaining organization.

Characteristics of Social Entrepreneurs

Braun (2010), in her dissertation, presented many inspiring examples of historical and contemporary social entrepreneurs from all walks of life, such as William Lloyd Garrison, Florence Nightingale, Susan B. Anthony, Maria Montessori, John Muir, Frederick Law Olmstead, Jane Addams, Jean Monnet, Margaret Sanger, Vinoba Bhave. Furthermore, contemporary examples of social entrepreneurs include Muhammad Yunus, Veronica Khosa, Bill Drayton, and Teddy Blecher. These are individuals who received recognition and are known as social entrepreneurs and are sources of inspiration to many. However, there must be many more not-so-famous and unknown individuals who are yet to get recognition as social entrepreneurs. Perhaps one reason is their contribution to society, and their stories have not yet made inroads in the academic world and the HRD field.

Braun (2010) reviewed an extensive literature on social entrepreneurship and, citing several scholars, has listed several characteristics of social entrepreneurs, which are as follows:

- Social entrepreneurs share common visions for positive, transformative change and then proactively work towards achieving those goals
- Social entrepreneurs are motivated by a social mission and see wealth as only a means to an end and not the ultimate goal
- They generally have strong philosophical or faith-based values as well as the resilience to swim against the social tide
- Social entrepreneurs often act boldly with limited resources and must be relentless in their mission for change if they are to succeed

- Social entrepreneurs are energetic, persistent individuals who have the ability to inspire others to support their cause
- They are exceptional in their ability to incorporate their beliefs with the appropriate action
- They are individuals who are connected to multiple levels of reality and feel a connection to a higher power. This, in turn, inspires their creativity, which establishes a necessary connection between disparate systems and the creation of new creative solutions
- A social entrepreneur is someone who feels passionate about an issue and feels that they are obligated to act; for them, challenges are seen as opportunities, and negative feedback from peers does not drain their energy to move forward.

(Braun, 2010, p. 31-32)

Dees(2001) opines that social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector and define social entrepreneurs as individuals who are:

- Adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value),
- Recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission,
- Engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning,
- Acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand, and
- Exhibiting heightened accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created (Dees, 2001, p. 4)

At the onset, and based on the pilot study, it seems, most of these criteria and characteristics fit the spiritual leaders. However, in reality, are spiritual leaders' social

entrepreneurs? Based on this study's findings, the researcher will evaluate spiritual leaders' roles and their activities from a social entrepreneur lens and see if spiritual leaders exhibit any social entrepreneur's qualities and discuss it in Chapter Five.

Social Entrepreneurship within HRD

Wang (2012) introduced the concept of social entrepreneurship into HRD in 2012 and identified social entrepreneurship as an emerging research area. However, research on this topic has not gained enough momentum despite its vast scope and potential for HRD. Wang (2012) had recommended HRD practitioners to explore answers to the following questions:

1. What additional examples of social enterprises can we identify which incorporate HRD/OD practices in their attempt to address societal problems in the developed/developing world? What lessons can we learn from their experiences?
2. How have HRD/OD concepts and approaches been applied by social enterprises in developed/developing countries? And for what purposes?
3. How can HRD practitioners and social entrepreneurs partner to address social problems facing the developed/developing countries? (Wang, 2012, p. 316)

Based on the pilot study findings, spiritual leaders and some of their NPO's projects fit social entrepreneurs and social enterprises' descriptions. However, this study's findings would add more light to these questions. The findings may also contribute new knowledge to social entrepreneurs' literature and social entrepreneurs' role in HRD.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a review of the literature related to various embedded topics and contexts associated with this study. The chapter included many sections and subsections. The first section showed the growing phenomena of spirituality in every discipline and sphere. The definition of spirituality section presented some spirituality definitions and drew attention to the ongoing debate between spirituality and religion, and offered an eastern Vedic perspective on spirituality and religion. The sections on spirituality in HRD, higher education, and social entrepreneurship highlighted the existing gaps and presented some empirical evidence indicating the importance of spirituality in HRD and higher education. The topics discussed in these sections provided a conceptual framework for this study. Transformational learning theory, leadership theories and models, and social entrepreneurship provided the theoretical and conceptual framework for this study.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a detailed overview of the research design and methods used in this study. The chapter begins with a restatement of the research purpose and research questions. Various sections and subsections discuss the rationale for using a qualitative multi-case study, epistemological underpinnings, sampling procedure, data collection, data analysis techniques, and strategies adopted for enhancing the trustworthiness of findings.

Restating Research Purpose and Questions

The purpose of this study was to investigate why individuals with exceptional educational and professional backgrounds become monks/SL. Moreover, how these individuals, in their role as spiritual leaders, perceive their contribution and impact on society in the HRD context.

The research questions that guide this study are:

1. Why do individuals with an impressive educational and professional background decide to become monks/SL and join a monastery/NPO? In other words, what factors triggered a change in their career trajectories that led them to become monks/SL in monastery/NPO?
2. How do these individuals in their role as monks/SL contribute and perceive the impact of their work in the HRD context? In simple words, what are the spiritual leaders HRD related activities and their impact on society?

Epistemology

According to Merriam and Tisdell (2015), the researcher can approach the research investigation from many philosophical paradigms. The researcher's theoretical paradigm or lens determines the specific research design employed for conducting the research. For this study, I used a qualitative research framework and the epistemological view associated with qualitative study, which is a social constructivist paradigm. Social constructivism is based on the principles of constructivism and differs from positivism. Positivism is a philosophical stance that emphasizes that knowledge should be gained through observable and measurable facts. Positivists develop and test hypotheses to reach one objective truth in quantitative studies. In contrast, constructivism implies that reality is a social construct, and knowledge is constructed through social interactions. Constructivism means that human beings do not find or discover knowledge but construct it. Constructivists or interpretivists perform observations recognizing multiple truths and accepting only one true conclusion is not accepted (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Throwing light on social constructivism, Gray (2013) states:

Truth and meaning do not exist in some external world but are created by the subject's interactions with the world. Meaning is constructed, not discovered, so subjects construct their own meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon. Hence, multiple, contradictory, but equally valid accounts of the world can exist. A theoretical perspective linked to constructivism is interpretivism (p. 20).

The researcher approached this study with a constructivist epistemological paradigm, also known as the interpretivism paradigm, for the following reasons: First, the constructivist paradigm aligns with the researcher's personal world view that reality is a social construct and constructed through social interaction, unlike the positivistic paradigm worldview or the one truth, which fails to capture the multiple realities that influence experiences and behaviors. Second, the constructivist paradigm recognizes that each individual has their own version of the truth based on life experiences and position in the world (Guba & Lincoln, 1984), which the researchers concur with. From the constructivist paradigm stance, this study aimed to understand how participants' experiences and their interaction within their social world influenced or triggered their decision to give up their professional careers and become spiritual leaders. In addition, to understand their role, responsibilities, and activities as spiritual leaders and their perceived impact in the social world and society in where they operate.

Third, the constructivist paradigm involves both the researcher and the participant in the research process to construct knowledge and create a multi-faceted depiction of an individual's experience. The nature of the research problem and research questions in this study was such that it would require the researcher to delve into the lived experiences of individuals who had experienced a spiritual transformation. It would require the researcher to unravel the complexities and intricacies of the participant's natural world to make sense of the meanings they projected to their transformational experiences and perceptions. Fourth, this constructivist epistemological view would make the researcher and the participants' interaction in their natural setting

possible without manipulating any conditions or phenomena. Fifth, this paradigm would offer the participants an opportunity to recall and tell their transformation stories, describe their views of reality and experiences in their own words. Several participants could construct their own realities and meaning related to the same spiritual transformation phenomenon they had experienced, producing multiple valid accounts. By exploring the participant's experiences, the essence and meaning of their lived world would emerge. Thus, based on the researcher's alignment with the constructivist epistemological lens, the nature of the research problem, and the questions guiding this study, a qualitative approach with a constructivist paradigm was deemed the most appropriate choice.

Rationale for Qualitative Research

Goodson (2009) highlights the difference between qualitative and quantitative research by stating:

Qualitative research aims at understanding phenomena in its natural settings (hence, the label "naturalistic"), at telling in-depth stories of a phenomenon with 'thick descriptions,' vivid details, and enticing depictions. Quantitative research, on the other hand, seeks to generalize across settings, to uncover cause-and-effect relationships, and to predict (therefore, control) the phenomenon of interest. (p. 164)

Merriam and Tisdell (2015), along the same lines, state that a researcher is interested in qualitative study because they are interested in knowing "(1) how people interpret their experiences, (2) how they construct their worlds, and (3) what meaning

they attribute to their experiences. The overall purpose is to understand how people make sense of their lives and their experiences” (p. 24). This study aimed to answer the research question by understanding the participants' experiences that led them to become monks/SL and what HRD related activities they performed and the perceived impact of their activities in society. Understanding their transformation process, activities, and perceptions would involve the researcher determining how they interpret and attribute meaning to their spiritual transformation experiences. How do the participants perceive their spiritual leadership role and impact in society? What meaning they attribute to their transformational experiences and their current lifestyles of spiritual leaders. This study required the researcher to inquire from the participants to tell in-depth stories of their transformational phenomenon, their activities, and their perception with ‘thick descriptions,’ vivid details, and enticing depictions. Thus, the qualitative approach seemed ideal for this study rather than a quantitative study.

The qualitative framework allowed the researcher to use qualitative tools to collect data from interviews, observations, documents, artifacts, and other sources. It allowed the researcher to ask the participants open-ended questions about their lived experiences, motives, feelings, and emotions in their own words in a natural setting. This framework allowed the researcher to construct the participant's world views, attribute meaning to their experience in a subjective and unbiased way and generate a clear, accurate portrayal of participants' lived experiences and perceptions in a particular context without looking for generalizable conclusions.

Under a qualitative framework, a multi-case study approach was selected for this study. The next section discusses the rationale behind the same by comparing the five commonly used qualitative approaches.

Choosing Among the Five Qualitative Approaches

In their book, Creswell and Poth (2018) discussed five qualitative approaches at length (narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study). They have identified each approach's foci and listed conditions and criteria to help the researcher understand each approach's nuances and make informed decisions about which research approach best suits their study. According to Creswell and Poth (2018):

The focus of a narrative is on the life of an individual, and the focus of a phenomenology is on a concept or phenomenon and the essence of the lived experiences of persons about that phenomenon. In grounded theory, the aim is to develop a theory, whereas in ethnography, it is to describe a culture-sharing group. In a case study, a specific case is examined, often with the intent of examining an issue with the case illustrating the complexity of the issue. (p. 210)

After understanding the foci of each approach and comparing it with the research purpose and research questions of this study, a case study approach was identified as the most suitable one for this study. Creswell and Poth (2018) state the procedures for implementing a narrative approach consist of “focusing on studying one or two individuals, gathering data through the collection of their stories, reporting individual experiences, and chronologically ordering the meaning of those experiences” (p. 128). In this study, the focus was not on studying the life or a biography of one or two

individuals, as is the case with a narrative approach. Thus, the narrative approach was ruled out. However, some elements of the narrative approach seemed applicable to this study, such as gathering data through the collection of participants' stories, reporting individual experiences, and chronologically ordering the meaning of those experiences. The possibility of an overlap of some of the narrative approach elements with the case study approach was identified. However, Merriam and Tisdell (2015) recognize the overlap of different approaches and argue that since it is the unit of analysis — a bounded system — that defines the case, other types of studies can be combined with the case study... or present a person's story," (p. 40).

Explaining what a case study is, Merriam and Tisdell (2015) state that "If the unit of analysis is a bounded system — a case, such as a person, a program, or an event — one would label such a study a qualitative case study" (p.24). In this study, a unit of analysis is a person (multiple people) bounded by several criteria (organization, phenomena, time, location, and context). Thus, this study falls under a qualitative case study approach with some overlap of the narrative approach.

Again, the purpose of this study was not to develop a theory using the grounded theory approach, nor was it to study and describe a specific culture or a cultural group of the participants. Therefore grounded theory and ethnography approaches were ruled out. Phenomenology would have been an alternative approach to address research question number one of this study to understand the participants' spiritual transformation phenomena. However, this study's focus was not to understand and explain the phenomena per se but to identify what factors led the participants to become monks/SL.

Moreover, the phenomenology approach would not have been a suitable approach for research question number two to identify spiritual leaders' activities in the HRD context. Thus, after analyzing the five qualitative approaches, a case study approach was identified as the suitable approach for this study to answer the research questions.

Rationale for Case Study Approach

Yin (2018) defined a case study as “an empirical method that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the ‘case’) in the depth within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident” (p. 56). Yin (2018) states that the distinctive need for case study research arises out of the researcher's desire to (a) understand complex social phenomena; (b) to answer *how* and *why* types of questions; (c) when participants behaviors cannot be manipulated; (d) when researcher wants to study some contemporary event or set of events. Yin clarifies that contemporary means the recent past and the present, not just the present events); (e) the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clear; (f) when not much is known about an issue.

In this study, the core focus was to identify factors related to why some highly educated professionals decide to become spiritual leaders and how spiritual leaders contribute to society in the HRD context. Thus, the focus was on “How” and “Why” types of research questions. The study focused on participants' recent past events related to their transformation journey and contemporary events, their current activities within their monastery and in society. Additionally, there was no way, nor an intention and/or attempt, to manipulate participants' behavior or manipulate their social activities,

environment, circumstance, and natural setting. Also, not much is known about factors that trigger a spiritual transformation phenomenon leading some individuals to change their career trajectories. Thus, applying Yin's criteria and rationale, the case study method seemed the most suitable method for this study.

Creswell and Poth (2018) defined case study research as follows:

Case study research is defined as a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a case description and case themes. The unit of analysis in the case study might be multiple cases (a multisite study) or a single case (a within-site study). (pp. 173-174)

Along the lines of Creswell and Poth (2018) reasoning, this study involved multiple individuals identified as multiple bounded systems (cases). The multiple participants were bounded by various criteria such as their experience with the spiritual transformation, their educational and professional background, affiliation to a specific monastery, their activities, and their geographical location. Moreover, to understand the participants' experiences and current real-life activities, it was imperative to collect detailed and in-depth data involving multiple sources of information: interviews, observations, documents, NPO reports, and websites. The unit of analysis in this study was "individual participant," and multiple individuals were studied, which made this study qualify as a multiple case study.

Rationale for Multiple Case Study

According to Stake (2013), multiple case studies' main goal is to understand the whole, also known as the quintain, by focusing on each case. Stakes (2013) opine that multicase methods will not make sense unless a single-case study makes sense, both conceptually and experientially, and state:

In multicase study research, the single case is of interest because it belongs to a particular collection of cases. The individual cases share a common characteristic or condition. The cases in the collection are somehow categorically bound together. They may be members of a group or examples of a phenomenon. (Ch. 1)

Based on Stake's (2013) reasoning, the study's overarching goal was to unravel various factors that led individuals to become monks/SL and their HRD related activities. The aim was to identify the "Whole Factors" and "Whole activities" by analyzing each case (individual participants) stories in-depth and extracting each participant's triggering factors that influenced them to become monks/SL and each participant's activities in society and at their monastery. To understand the "Whole," it was essential to treat each participant as a unit of analysis and a single case. In this study, every single case (participant) was of interest because each participant had unique experiences and unique stories. Moreover, they shared various common characteristics and conditions, such as their affiliation to specific NPO, their spiritual practices, and demographics. These common characteristics categorically bind these single cases together and are treated as members of a group or examples of a spiritual transformation

phenomenon. Thus, the use of a multiple case study approach was an appropriate choice for this study.

Additionally, according to Baxter and Jack (2008), the researcher studies multiple cases to understand the differences and similarities between them. They argue that if a study contains more than a single case and the context is different for each case, then a multiple case study approach is suitable. They argue that multiple case studies would allow the researcher to analyze cases within each setting and across settings, enabling the researcher to explore differences and similarities within and between the cases. Creswell and Poth (2018) argue that the researcher selects a multiple case study because they want to focus on one issue or concern by studying multiple cases to identify pattern themes to draw valid conclusions or explain lessons learned about the issue. Also, Yin (2018) suggests a multiple case study approach over a single case study adds robustness to the study.

This study matched the criteria required for the case study to be qualified as a multiple case study design based on these scholarly inputs and reasoning. As aforesaid, the primary purpose of this study was to understand triggering factors that influenced individuals to become monks/SL and their activities in the HRD context. To identify the list of diverse triggering factors and a list of diverse HRD activities, selecting and studying multiple participants was deemed essential. The selection of multiple cases would help identify the gamut of factors and activities which would not have been possible by studying a single case (participant). Using a multiple case study approach

provided an opportunity to identify common or contrasting patterns and themes and lead to a valid conclusion to the research questions under focus.

Additionally, the cross-case analysis feature of multiple case studies provided the opportunity to compare and contrast each case with the others and develop a comprehensive list of triggering factors (similar or contrasting) and a list of spiritual leaders' activities (similar or contrasting). This list helped answer the research questions comprehensively. Finally, using a multiple case study approach over a single case study provided robustness to the study, which Yin (2018) recommends.

Design and Methods

The next section is about the procedure and strategies adopted and implemented to conduct multiple case study research.

Procedures Used for Conducting Case Study Research

Several prominent authors (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Runeson & Höst, 2009; Stake, 2013; Yin, 2018) have provided strategies and procedures for conducting case study research. This section focused on various case study elements, strategies, methods, and procedures adopted and implemented in this multiple case study.

Defining a Case

According to Yin (2012), a case is generally a bounded entity (a person, organization, behavioral condition, event, or other social phenomena), but the boundary between the case and its contextual conditions—in both spatial and temporal dimensions—may be blurred, as previously noted (p.6). Yin (2018) opines, “Usually, the

main focus of inquiry in a case study—a concrete entity (e.g., a person or group, organization, community, program, process, policy, practice, or institution, or events such as decisions)” (p. 414).

In this study, a case is a person, an individual participant, and multiple cases; that is, multiple participants are selected to investigate and identify triggering factors related to their decision to become monks/SL and their HRD related activities.

Selecting the Cases

Yin (2018) suggests that case(s) most likely to illuminate the research questions should be selected. To select cases, Stake (2006) lists three questions that the researcher should inquire, “Is the case relevant to the quintain?; do the cases provide diversity across contexts?; do the cases provide good opportunities to learn about complexity and contexts?” (p.50).

In this study, based on Yin’s and Stakes’s guidelines, only those participants (cases) were selected that would illuminate or were relevant to the quintain, the research questions. The selected cases provide diversity across contexts because each participant had varied educational and professional backgrounds. Some participants were engineers, medical doctors; some had a Ph.D. and research background. Moreover, each participant had different roles and responsibilities at their monastery/NPO. A detailed description of the criteria for selecting participants (cases) is discussed in a separate section, “The Participants (Case) Selection.”

Number of Cases

In the case study design, there is no agreement about how many cases a researcher should select. Eisenhardt (1989) opines that four to 10 cases usually work well. Yin (2018) suggests that six to 10 cases are sufficient to provide adequate support for the initial set of propositions. Creswell and Poth (2018) opine that the sample size should not exceed four to five participants in case studies. With all these scholarly viewpoints and as advised by the dissertation committee, eight participants (cases) were selected. Selecting eight participants provided an opportunity to go deeper into each participant's personal stories and generate rich narratives to identify patterns and themes to answer the research questions.

Bounding the Case

Another distinct feature of the case study compared to other qualitative methods is that case study research is the bounded system or boundaries attached to the case (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Yin, 2018). The bounded system or the boundaries indicate what the researcher will and will not study in the research project's scope (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Bounding a case in simple words means they are defined or described within specific parameters. Once the case is determined, Yin (2018) suggested placing boundaries on a case, as bounding the case helps the researcher stay focused and within the study's scope. This step involves being selective and specific in identifying the case's parameters, including the participant's location and process to be explored, and establishing the timeframe for investigating the case. Suggestions on how to bound a case include (a) by time and place (Creswell & Poth, 2018); (b) time and activity (Stake, 1995); (c) definition and context (Huberman & Miles, 1994). So, there

are multiple ways a researcher can set boundaries on their cases. In this study, how the case(s) were bounded is detailed in table 2.

Table 2

Bounding the Case

Elements Used to Bound the Case	Boundaries Applied to Case in This Study
Case (participants)	To select a case, selection criteria were predefined. Selection criteria included various elements such as participants' age, education, professional background, experience with the phenomena, location, and affiliation to a specific organization, mentioned in the “Participation Selection Criteria” section. Only those participants who met the selection criteria were selected to participate in this study. Thus, the predefined selection criteria created the boundaries on each case.
Time	The researcher made a conscious decision to select Millennials and X Generation participants to avoid Baby boomers' distant past spiritual transformation experiences. Participants of a specific age group and those who had decided to become monks/SL leaders between 2000 to 2018 were selected. Thus, this case was bounded by time criteria.
Activity	Each case was bound by research activity in a sense; the researcher expected the participants to narrate only experiences related to their decisions to become monks/SL and their current activities related to the HRD context. It was not expected of the participant to narrate all their life events and activities.
Place	Each case was bounded by place, geographical location, and affiliation to a specific monastery and NPO. All the participants belonged to a specific monastery/NPO in Mumbai, India; site selection criteria were predefined.

Propositions

Yin (2018) opines that researchers should make some propositions because they help the researchers stay within the study's scope and help them move in the right

direction. He even goes on to state that the researchers may fine-tune or alter the propositions after the analysis. According to Baxter and Jack (2008), "propositions can be equated with hypotheses in that they both make an educated guess to the possible outcomes of the experiment/research study" (p. 552). According to Miles et al. (2020), the researcher can have several propositions to guide the study but suggests that each has a distinct focus and purpose. They recommend that each proposition help in data collection, determine the study's direction and scope, and form a conceptual framework for the study. Following the scholarly recommendations, and based on the pilot study's findings, the following propositions are enlisted for this study:

- Spiritual quests or existential questions lead one to become monks/SL.
- Most spiritual leaders engage in HRD related activities such as training and development, leadership development, community development, nation development, and humanity's welfare activities and are potential HRD partners
- Spiritual leaders are servant leaders
- Some spiritual leaders are transformational leaders
- Spiritual leaders are social entrepreneurs

These are some of the propositions that provide a conceptual base for this study.

Data Collection

This section focused on various strategies used and implemented to collect and manage this study's data.

Preparation for Data Collection

Before commencing the actual data collection, permission was sought from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for this study by adhering to their application process and completing the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI), a web-based ethics training program required for conducting or reviewing research with human subjects. Site authorization approval and consent from the monastery, nonprofit organization management in Mumbai, India, was sought to visit their monastery to conduct interviews and observations, collect relevant historical documents, annual reports, audio-visual content, and information from their website. The IRB-approved consent form is presented in the appendix section.

Participants (Case) Selection Criteria

In this study, the participants were selected based on purposive sampling. Purposeful sampling aims to seek information-rich cases that allow the researcher to study each case in depth (Patton, 2015). In purposive sampling, the researcher selects participants with specific intentions based on what needs to be known and chooses people who are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience (Tongco, 2007). The participant selection criteria were prepared in advance and shared with the NPO management to identify the participants who fit the selection criteria. The participant selection criteria helped in bounding the case. The participant selection criteria and reasoning for each decision were as follows:

Gender

All the participants selected in this study are male monks/SL. The monastery housed only male monks, and there was no option for female monks' selection.

Age

The participants needed to be in the age range between 30 to 50 years, qualifying them to be from either the X generation and millennials. This age range was selected to capture the participant's spiritual transformational experiences, events, activities that were not too distant in the past so the researcher and readers could relate to the participants triggering factors for their career decisions and their current HRD related activities.

Educational and Professional Background

The selected participants needed to have graduate or postgraduate degrees in diverse disciplines such as engineering, medicine, research, and law. Individuals from different educational and professional backgrounds were selected to identify a gamut of factors and activities and for cross-case analysis purposes.

Work Experience

Selected participants had to have some work experience before they become full-time monks/SL. This criterion would allow the participant to reflect and identify work and corporate organization-related factors responsible for their decisions in becoming spiritual leaders.

The Language of Communication

In India, people speak many different languages; thus, to avoid the communication barrier and translation hassle, the English language was selected as the preferred language of communication. Therefore, participants who were willing and able

to reflect and communicate their experience in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner in English were predetermined and selected.

Required Number of Participants

For this research study, eight participants as a sample size which allowed me to go deeper into each participant's personal experiences, their stories and generate rich narratives. This sample size was also selected to produce a voluminous but manageable amount of data for data management and analysis.

Site Selection Criteria

The site selection was grounded in Marshall and Rossman's (2006) definition of what constitutes a realistic site to conduct research:

- (a) entry is possible, (b) there is a high probability that a rich mix of the process, people, programs, interactions, and structures of interest is present, (c) the researcher is likely to be able to build trusting relations with the participants in the study, (d) the study can be conducted and reported ethically, and (e) data quality and credibility of the study are reasonably assured. (p. 62)

For this study, a specific spiritual monastery, NPO setting in Mumbai, India, was selected for the following reasons. The first and foremost reason was researcher was confident of getting entry and access to the monastery and sample population. Second, the chosen monastery, NPO, housed many monks/SL with an impressive education and professional background, meeting the selection criteria needed for the study. Third, the researcher felt confident about building a trusting relationship with the study participants for several reasons; (a) during the pilot study, the researcher had interacted with some

spiritual leaders from this NPO and had built a trusting relationship with the NPO management, (b) the NPO had agreed to provide the necessary support required for the research, (c) based on trust shared between the NPO's administration and the researcher, the participants also felt confident to trust the researcher, and (d) among several spiritual organizations in India, this organization was selected because of its secular and non-sectarian vision and mission of propagating spiritual knowledge and spiritual development irrespective of nationality, religion, race, age, or sex. The NPO does not believe in nor engages in any kind of religious conversion practices. No individual who joins or visits their organization as a monk for spiritual development purposes is expected to change their religion or convert themselves to any particular religion. NPO's core spiritual practices involved experiential learning spiritual practices based on different yoga systems, meditation, and Vedic spiritual philosophy.

Fourth, NPO management and researcher agreed to take all measures to ensure the study was conducted and reported ethically.

Data Collection Procedures

Several scholars (e.g., Creswell & Poth, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Dooley, 2002; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Yin, 2018) agree that to build and present an in-depth understanding of the case; the researcher does not rely on one source of data but collects and integrates many forms of qualitative data, ranging from interviews to observations, to documents, to audio-visual materials. These scholars opine using multiple data collection methods fundamentally improves the research's quality and rigor. It allows triangulation, reduces the respondent bias, provides

additional information, increases support for the researcher's conclusions, and may lead to new questions that could be answered in later research. Yin (2018) states, “Case study evidence can come from at least six sources: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant-observation, and physical artifacts” (p. 180).

In this study, data were collected through multiple sources such as interviews, observations, organizations documents, reports, and NPO websites and web content available in the public domain. How the data was gathered using multiple sources is described in the following subsections.

Interviews

According to Merriam and Tisdell (2015), interviewing becomes necessary when a researcher cannot observe participants' feelings, their behavior, or how they interpret the world around them. Moreover, interviews allow the researcher to study past events that are impossible to replicate. In this study, face-to-face interviews were conducted with all eight participants. The interviews allowed to have a conversation with the participants, and gain access to their feelings, thought processes, uncover specific past and present events of participants' lives. The interview guide/protocol was prepared in advance to gather interview data.

Interview Guide

Interviews can be structured, semi-structured, or unstructured (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). In a structured interview, the investigator asks predefined questions. In a semi-structured interview, the investigator has the flexibility to reframe the questions

based on the participant's response. In unstructured interviews, the investigator uses open-ended questions allowing more flexibility to generate rich data (Baškarada, 2014).

For this study, the interview guide included different interview questions, structured questions to elicit socio-demographic information, including participants' age, ethnicity, occupation, and religious background. Semi-structured questions allowed the flexibility to reframe the questions to explore participants' conceptualizations of their life-transforming stories, experiences, behaviors, feelings, and emotions, which eventually led to address this study's main research questions. The unstructured questions enabled the researcher to probe the participants to narrate relevant experiences without any directional suggestions.

To formally validate the interview guide, the researcher consulted the dissertation advisor, specializing in qualitative and case study research design. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) also approved the interview question guide before the data collection commenced. However, some interview questions evolved in a natural, organic way that case studies tend to evolve through interaction and experience. As the investigation progressed, the addition or modification of some interview questions was deemed necessary. When such changes occurred, they were documented systematically in the researcher's journal. The appendix section contains the sample interview guide.

Interview Administration

Seven interviews took place at the Mumbai NPO office and one at the eco-village on the outskirts of Mumbai. The interviews took place in a natural setting, and care was taken to ensure confidentiality, no noise, and other safety environmental norms.

Interviewing the participants in their natural environment was of paramount importance because it allowed them to feel safe, share the information without distraction and hesitation. All the interviews were audio-recorded on a cellular phone. The interview duration varied from one hour to two hours.

Before the interview began, each participant was provided with the IRB-approved consent form, explaining the research purpose, their rights as human subjects, and solicited their consent and signature on the consent form. The appendix section contains the IRB-approved consent form.

Observations

According to Yin (2018), conducting observation in the field is one of the most distinctive features of doing case studies, and observational evidence can be reported both as narrative and in the form of numeric tables. To collect this form of data, the researcher closely observed the participants, their demeanor, lifestyle in the monastery, nonverbal attributes, their monastery activities, activities in the eco-village, the monastery culture, activities, different departments at the monastery, their artifacts, and visitors at the monastery to name the few. The observation and field notes were recorded and typed after each interview, converted to a textual format, and used in the analysis along with and interview data.

Documents

The collection and analysis of documents is often an essential source of data in qualitative research. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2015), documents refer to “printed and other materials relevant to a study, including public records, personal

documents, popular culture and popular media, visual documents, and physical artifacts”(p. 106). NPO provided their annual reports, information on their website, popular media links of their spiritual leaders, social media links, and visual PowerPoint presentations of their training content. These varied sources provided information about various activities and projects that the monks/SL had undertaken and their impact on people's lives and society. These sources were used to supplement, corroborate, and support the interviews and observation data.

NPO Websites

Yin (2018) recommends researchers collect data and information from the internet, such as local news articles or organizations' files, to corroborate the events. For this study, documentary, audio, and visual material available in the public domain from NPO websites were obtained to supplement and corroborate interviews and observation data.

Data Analysis

According to Creswell and Poth (2018):

Data analysis in qualitative research consists of preparing and organizing the data (i.e., text data as in transcripts, or image data as in photographs) for analysis; then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes; and finally representing the data in figures, tables, or a discussion.

Across many books on qualitative research, this is the general process that researchers use. (p. 307)

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), there are five stages between data collection and final interpretation of data, and these stages are interconnected and form a spiral of activities. These in-between data analysis stages include:

- managing and organizing the data
- reading and memoing emergent ideas
- describing and classifying codes into themes
- developing and assessing the interpretations
- representing and visualizing the data. (Creswell and Poth, 2018, p. 312)

Creswell and Poth (2018) have provided several analytic strategies and analytic outcomes for each stage. The researcher adopted and applied these scholarly inputs to conduct the data analysis for this study, as described in the next section.

Phase 1- Managing and Organizing the Data

In preparation for the actual data analysis process, I organized the collected data systematically in a personal computer by creating separate folders and files with unique names for different data types (interviews, observation, documents, NPO website, and internet). Furthermore, I avoided data loss and theft and prevented data from getting corrupted by online malware bugs. Several backup copies of data files and folders were created on the personal computer and on the secured web cloud to avoid losing the data.

All the interviews with the eight spiritual leaders were recorded on a cellular phone in Mp3 format. The recorded interview responses in an Mp3 format file were converted into text data through a process known as transcription. More specifically, the recorded conversation data were transcribed verbatim. Similarly, the observation and

field notes were included with the interview transcriptions. Upon completion of the interview and field visits, the transcription process was conducted with immediacy to preserve the richness of the data. For data analysis purposes, I used Quirkos and excel software applications. During the analysis phase, data went through multiple levels of the coding process. Different versions were stored in the Quirkos data analysis application to retain the changes and for retrieval purposes. All these steps allowed for data comparison between similar types of data or files.

Phase 2 - Reading and Memoing Emergent Ideas

According to Miles et al. (2020), “Memos are typically a rapid way of capturing thoughts that occur throughout data collection, data condensation, data display, conclusion drawing, conclusion verification, and final reporting” (p. 108). During the analysis process, to immerse in data, I read each participant’s transcribed responses in their entirety several times to build a sense of the interview before starting the coding process. While reading the raw data from interviews, observation notes, and documents, I started writing memos wherever necessary in the journal. Periodically, I would put the transcribed and raw data aside and ponder and return to the data trying to make meaning.

Most thoughts were recorded as memos in a personal journal/diary throughout various research activities, starting from research idea conceptualization to data collection, data condensation, data display, conclusion drawing, conclusion verification, and final reporting process. The reflection and memoing process allowed for the opportunity to make meaning or draw impressions from the participant's responses at a more fundamental level. The memoing process allowed me to make sense of the data,

draw analytical meaning to impressions, words, phrases, and concepts that emerged from each data source, which contributed to the construction of the participants' personal narratives.

Phase 3- Describing and Classifying Codes into Themes

The heart of any qualitative research is the data analysis process, which involves subjecting the data to the coding process to make sense of the data collected from interviews, observations, and documents. Merriam and Tisdell (2015) define coding as the “process of making notations next to bits of data that strike you as potentially relevant for answering your research questions is also called coding” (p. 205). Miles et al. (2020) define codes as follows:

Codes are labels that assign symbolic meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study. Codes usually are attached to data “chunks” or units of varying size and can take the form of a straightforward, descriptive label or a more evocative and complex one. (p. 86)

For the coding process, I used Quirkos software application because it offered several qualitative data coding features such as the ability to unitize the data, color code the unitized data, develop and define codes and categories, ease of labeling the codes and categories, features to create and write memos, group and regroup or merge the codes and categories, and create a codebook.

For systematic data analysis, the researcher adopted the steps and strategies suggested by several qualitative scholars. Lincoln and Guba (1985), Braun and Clarke

(2006), Boyatzis (1998), Creswell and Poth (2018), which is described in detail in respective section as follows:

Stage 1: Familiarizing Yourself with Your Data

To become familiar with the data, Braun and Clarke (2006) recommend repeated reading to become immersed in the data, trying to search for meaning and patterns. For this step, during the interview transcription process and after the transcription process, I read the transcript thoroughly several times. This step helped unitize the data, develop codes, assign text data to each code, identify patterns in the data to regroup, and merge the codes to develop categories and regroup categories to develop themes.

Stage 2: Developing a Code list

Boyatzis (1998) opines that a list of predefined codes is an essential step in the data analysis process to determine the code's applicability to the raw data. For this step, while reading and unitizing the text data transcripts, I started developing and labeling the codes and developed a codebook. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), the codebook should contain the following information (a) Name for the code and, if necessary, a shortened label suitable to apply in a margin, (b) Description of the code defining boundaries through the use of inclusion and exclusion criteria (c) Example(s) of the code using data from the study to illustrate.

I developed a codebook giving an appropriate name to each code. Each code was assigned the label and was well defined and boundaries predetermined through inclusion and exclusion criteria. For example, a code was developed and defined for age,

nationality, spiritual practices, and college life events. A sample of the codebook developed is presented in Figure.

Figure 1

Code Book Sample

Code Name	Code Definition/Inclusion Criteria
Code: Age, Nationality, Religion (demographic information)	This code stores the participants' responses about their basic demographic questions such as their name, age, cultural background, nationality, and religious affiliation.
Code: Spiritual Practitioners positive Impact	This code stores the participants' responses narrating their experiences of positive influence/impact because of other people practicing spirituality.
Code: Spiritual Practices	This code stores the participants' responses narrating how their exposure to certain spiritual practices like mantra meditation, bhakti yoga, kirtan yoga, etc., invoked their interest in spirituality.
Code: Pilgrimage Visits	This code stores the participants' responses narrating how visiting certain places of pilgrimage were influencing factors towards their interest in spirituality.
Code: College life Events Influence	This code stores response of the participants talking about how certain college life events or experiences influenced or invoked their interest in spirituality

Stage 3: Unitizing the Information

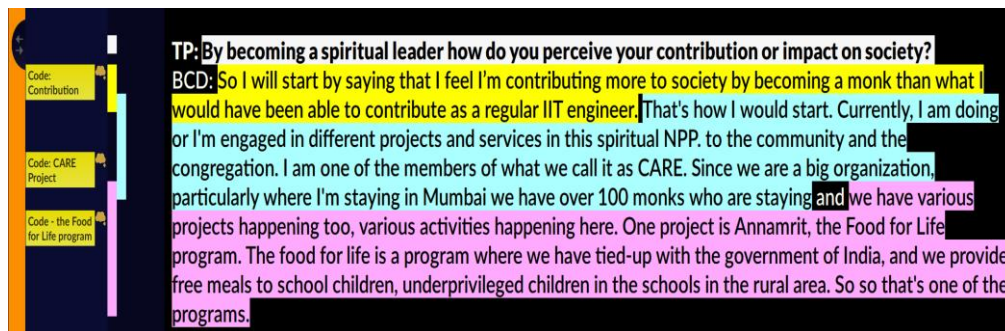
Unitizing means transforming the data “into the smallest pieces of information that may stand alone as independent thoughts in the absence of additional information other than a broad understanding of the context” (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993, p. 117). This step involved examining the interview and observation transcript line-by-line and unitizing it. During the unitization, several codes were developed,

labeled, and defined. For unitizing the data and assigning the code, specific keywords, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs central to each research question was considered. Some lengthy interview excerpts were kept intact and considered a whole unit to retain the meaning of the experience the participant conveyed, rather than breaking it into smaller chunks. Each code was color-coded for identification purposes. Each unitized segment of data was then assigned to the respective predefined code. This process is called open coding (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Figure 2 depicted these steps.

While assigning code to the unitized data during the coding process, most codes emerged from the first four to five interviews.

Figure 2

Uniting the Text Data and Assigning the Code Sample



Stage 4: Categorizing the Information

According to Vaismoradi et al. (2016), a category is the analytical process product, and it refers to the description assigned to text that emerged from participants' accounts. It has a descriptive identity and may consist of subcategories that identify the meaning of the text.

In the open coding process, several codes had emerged. This step involved sorting and sifting through the coded materials to identifying similar phrases,

relationships between variables, and patterns, combining or regrouping similar codes to form categories giving it appropriate heading/label. This process of grouping similar codes to form categories is depicted in Figure 3. This process of grouping the open codes into categories is called axial coding or analytical coding (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). For example, codes related to age, nationality, and ethnicity were regrouped to form a demographic information category. Codes related to education, university attended, professional experience, skills were grouped to create a category called Background. Several categories and subcategories had emerged in this process, which required further regrouping to form themes.

Figure 3

Developing Categories Sample

Research Question #1_Factors ... Research Question #1_Factors for becoming...	Research # 2 - Current services ... This code will store responses when participa...
2. Category - Corporate organ... This category stores the responses of the ...	11. Category - Training and D... This category stores the responses of the ...
2. Code: Boss Issues 4 This code stores responses of particip...	11. Code: T&D Internatio... This code stores the responses of the ...
2. Code : Dissatisfaction a... This code stores responses of particip...	11. Code: T&D for College ... This code stores responses of particip...
2. Code: Career Questioni... This code stores responses of particip...	11. Code: feedback/Evalu... How well is SL's training received by th...
2. Code: Work-related fact... This category stores responses of parti...	11. Code: T&D Spiritual C... This code records statements of partic...
6. Category :T&D Spiritual De... Individuals attend the Spiritual Developm...	11. Code: T&D for comm... This code will store responses when pa...
6. Code: T&D Workshop o... Captures participants response who a...	11. Code: T&D Corporate t... This category will store responses whe...
6. Code: T&D workshop To... This code will cover Reponses from th...	11. Code: T&D of monks ... This code will store responses when pa...
5. Category -College Experien... This code store responses of participants ...	11. Code: T&D workshop ... This code stores responses of particip...
5. Code: Before College Ev... Before College factors	11. Code: T&D fees 2 This code stores responses of particip...
5. Code: College life events... Certain college life events or experienc...	14. Category: Rural and Tribal... This category will store responses about h...
5. Code: College Peers spiri... This code stores responses of particip...	14. Code: Agricultural/far... This code will store responses when pa...
5. Code: Spiritual club on c... This code stores responses of particip...	14. Code: Vocational /edu... This code will store responses when pa...
3. Category : Family Factors ... This category store responses of participa...	14. Code: women empowe... This code stores responses of particip...
3. Code :Spiritual and Reli... This category store responses of parti...	14. Code: Deaddiction pro... This code stores responses of particip...
3. Code : Childhood events... This category store responses of parti...	14. Code: Education for Ki... This code stores responses of particip...
	14. Code: Health care for t... This code stores responses of particip...

Stage 5: Identifying Themes

Vaismoradi et al. (2016) state that themes are the main product of data analysis enabling researchers to answer the study questions. Theme (s) are used as an “attribute, descriptor, element, and concept” (p. 101) to organize a group of repeating ideas that have a common point of reference and a high degree of generality regarding the subject of inquiry. To identify themes that would help answer the research questions, categories and subcategories that emerged were sorted and sifted to identify similar ideas and common reference points. Based on similar relationships between categories, the categories were assigned to themes by giving them more generalizable heading or descriptors based on the research questions. For example, environment protection

activities categories and environmental awareness activities categories were grouped under the theme “Environmental Protection and Awareness Activities,” as depicted in Figure 4.

Figure 4

Identifying and Forming Themes Sample

Themes	Categories
Mass Food Cooking and Distribution Activities	Category: Mega Kitchen (merged)
	Category - the Food for Life program (MID DAY MEAL)
	Category: designed an automatic food machine
	Category: cooking for resident monks
	Category: Food Distribution
Rural Development Activities	Category: Vocational /educational training for tribal youth
	Category: women empowerment projects
	Category: Agricultural/farming activities
	Category: Deaddiction program
	Category: Health care for tribal
	Category: Education for Kids
Environment Protection and Awareness Activities	Category: Green Technologies Project (merged)
	Category: Animal husbandry
	Category: Awards Received
	Category: Teaching Environment awareness
	Category: Water conservation

Stage 6: Legitimizing Identified Themes

This step involved comparing and synthesizing multiple cases referred to as cross-case analysis (Miles et al., 2020) or cross-case synthesis (Yin, 2018). Miles et al. (2020) define cross-case analysis as searching for patterns, similarities, and differences across cases. After cross-case analysis, several patterns of similarities and differences emerged between each case. Naturally so because each participant had unique experiences or factors that contributed to their spiritual transformation, each participant also had a unique set of activities and perceptions of their impact on society. The

categories and themes developed for each case were interwoven, compared, and contrasted among cases and more appropriate heading names or descriptor were assigned to themes to answer the research questions.

The final stage also involved revisiting the previous stages and examining the data, codes, categories, and themes formed during the coding process to ensure nothing was overlooked or left out (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

In summary, all the raw data underwent a transformational process. The large amounts of text data were transformed into more meaningful words. The data were segmented, coded, categorized, given thematic identification, and interpreted to answer the research questions.

Phase 4 - Developing and Assessing the Interpretations

In simple terms, interpretation involves making sense of the data or interpret the lessons learned. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), interpretation in qualitative research involves:

Abstracting out beyond the codes and themes to the larger meaning of the data. It is a process that begins with the development of the codes, the formation of themes from the codes, and then the organization of themes into larger units of abstraction to make sense of the data. Several forms exist, such as interpretation based on hunches, insights, and intuition. (p. 325)

At this phase 4, I used identified categories and themes as a foundation upon which to build a thick description of each case. The themes are connected and interwoven with narrative to communicate and interpret the findings of the study. The

results from this stage make up the bulk of Chapter IV. For example, each case or the participant's story begins with the participants' background giving details of their age, educational and professional background. Most of the participants' interview data were paraphrased to narrate their experiences in a narrative format.

Furthermore, to provide an excellent flow to the narrative, lengthy interview excerpts or quotes were incorporated wherever possible for two reasons. First, to convey and present the meaning of the participant's experience in their own words, especially any of their “aha, triggering turning points, or significant moments” in their lives. Had some of the interview excerpts been paraphrased, it would have lost its meaning, impact, and good flow of the participant's stories. Second, it helped develop the thick narrative description and bring out the richness and meaning to data, theme, or category.

Phase 5 - Representing and Visualizing the Data

To represent and visualize the data, Yin (2018) and Creswell and Poth (2018) suggest the researcher create a table to display the data from individual cases based on some uniform framework and look for similarities and differences among the cases. Based on the analysis, develop naturalistic generalizations for the cases that readers can relate, learn, apply learnings to a population of cases, or transfer them to another similar context. Based on this advice, I created several tables to display the data visually. For example, to provide a snapshot of participants' age, educational background, professional work experience, and skills, a table called “Participants Profile” was created. Also, two tables were created for each participant to display the findings of their responses to each research question. The summary table from each participant's response helped compare

and contrast the findings across multiple cases and eventually display the analysis findings to two research questions of this study more comprehensively.

Trustworthiness

Reliability and validity are the terms used in quantitative research to explain and measure the research's quality and rigor. However, in qualitative research, Lincoln and Guba (1985), through their seminal work in 1980, substituted reliability and validity with the concept of trustworthiness, containing four aspects (credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability) as the naturalist's equivalents for internal validation, external validation, reliability, and objectivity. Trustworthiness covers all areas that ultimately determine the study's integrity: its truth value, plausibility, rigorousness of design and method, and the credibility of both data and researcher Lincoln and Guba (1985). The following section will discuss how trustworthiness was addressed and established in this study.

Credibility

Lincoln and Guba (1985) put forth the following concept of credibility, stating that a study is credible when the findings match the data used to develop the findings. I implemented four strategies to address credibility.

Triangulation

Triangulation is one technique that dictates that researchers use multiple data sources, methods, investigators, and theories to collect and analyze the information so that all sources converge to provide corroborating evidence on generated themes and overall findings (Bazeley, 2013; Yin, 2018). In short, triangulation means researchers

adopt different angles to look at the same phenomenon using different data collection strategies and different data sources (Gibbert & Ruigrok, 2010).

In this study, multiple methods, including interviews, observations, documents, NPO websites, and internet data, were used to collect data and compared to one another as one form of triangulation. Also, TLT and leadership theories were used for triangulation purposes. Thus, using multiple data sources, methods, and various theories, the study's credibility was strengthened.

Member Checks

The second strategy used to address and strengthen the study's credibility was member checks. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), member checks could prove to be the most vital technique for establishing credibility. The member checking process involves the researcher giving the collected and interpreted data back to the participants to provide an opportunity to review and confirm that the information provided and the researcher's narrative is credible (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

I implemented the “Member check” strategy throughout this study. After completing the interview transcription, the interview transcription copy was emailed to the participants to review. Participants were requested to thoroughly review the interview transcripts and provided them an opportunity to add or delete any information from the transcript they deemed necessary. Additionally, each participant received a copy of the preliminary findings consisting of a narrative description of their stories, the themes, and categories generated during the data analysis for them to review, reflect and confirm the accuracy of their experiences narrated during the interview and interpreted

by the researcher. Participants were provided with an opportunity to incorporate the necessary changes or to correct the researcher's interpretation. Some participants responded with minor changes, such as their age or work experience, or activities. Those changes were corrected and incorporated.

Prolonged Engagement

The third strategy used to address credibility was an adequate and prolonged engagement in data collection. Qualitative research could be of long duration, and thus several scholars (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015) recommend that researchers establish prolonged engagement with their participants. According to them, this strategy would help the researcher develop rapport and a relationship of mutual trust with their participants. It could also lead to participants feeling comfortable disclosing information needed to understand the phenomenon.

During the entire course of the study, a prolonged engagement with the participants and the NPO management existed. I relied on several communication channels to establish rapport and stay in touch with the participants and NPO, such as emails, telephone calls, and text messages. The researcher stayed in touch with the NPO management for an approximate duration of four years (2017 to 2021) since the research idea was conceptualized to conducting the exploratory pilot study and with the participants for two years (2019 to 2021). The researcher made three trips to India from 2017 to 2020 to seek permission, conduct the exploratory pilot study, collect data from interviews, observation, field visits, NPO documents, and reports. These steps taken

indicate the researcher established a prolonged engagement to strengthen the credibility of the research study.

Researcher Position or Reflexivity

The fourth and final strategy utilized to strengthen the study's overall credibility was clarifying the researcher's position and engaging in reflexivity. Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested researchers disclose their biases, values, and experiences from the outset of the study so that the reader understands the position from which the researcher undertakes the inquiry. However, Maxwell (2012) points out that researchers and consumers of research assume that the total elimination of researcher influence is impossible in qualitative studies. Therefore, the researcher's goal is not to eliminate researcher influence but rather to understand it and use it appropriately. To foster reflexivity in this study, I have described in detail the background and motivation to undertake this study, various biases, prejudices, and orientations that shaped the approach and interpretation of this study. Readers can refer “Clarifying Researcher Position, Background, Motivation, and Biases” in the appendix section.

Dependability and Confirmability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) used the words dependability and confirmability in qualitative research, which closely corresponds to the notion of reliability in quantitative analysis. To establish confirmability and dependability somewhat involves similar processes. Several scholars (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Miles et al., 2020) recommend that researchers demonstrate dependability and confirmability by maintaining their audit records trail in the field notes, archives,

and reports. These audit trail may outline chronological entries of their research process, the evolution of codes, any changes that would occur during their research process such as changing conditions in the design, change in participants, data collection process, change in the rationale for selecting participants, and events to observe.

In this study, I maintained a field and reflexive journal to establish Dependability and Confirmability throughout the project and created an audit trail. The journal included all the entries starting from conceptualization of research data to pilot study, data collection methods, how codes and categories were defined and developed during analysis, personal reflections, questions, decisions made regarding problems, issues, or new ideas that were encountered while collecting data.

Transferability

Transferability refers to whether the findings and interpretations of research are transferable to other similar contexts, settings or situations because of “shared characteristics” (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993, p. 32), keeping the meaning of the original study intact. Readers of the research usually apply transferability. Creswell and Poth (2018) suggest that the researcher provides detailed and thick descriptions describing a case, themes, and any new ideas from big to small, interconnecting the details using strong action verbs and quotes.

For the study's transferability, considerable time was devoted to revisiting the raw data, identified patterns, generated code, categories, themes, and provided detailed descriptions of codes, categories, and themes from the raw data that emerged. The researcher also provided a thick description of participant profiles, provided some

interview excerpts and quotes, along with excerpts from the NPO website and observation notes. Where required, the researcher also provided the rationale for every critical decision taken during the study. Because of such a rich, thick description, readers should be able to relate to the original study's findings and decide its applicability and transferability to other similar contexts.

Chapter Summary

This chapter began with a restatement of the research purpose and research questions, followed by a rationale for using a qualitative multiple case study. The chapter also included details of the sampling technique and selection criteria used for selecting the participants, site, data collection methods, and strategies adopted for data management. Finally, the chapter concluded with a description of the data analysis procedures and steps taken to establish the trustworthiness of the study.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results that emerged from analyzing the qualitative data. This study's overarching research purpose was to investigate why individuals with exceptional educational and professional backgrounds become monks/SL. Moreover, how these individuals, in their role as spiritual leaders at their monastery/NPO, perceive their contribution and impact on society in the HRD context. Therefore, the data was also collected and analyzed to identify these individuals' activities and contributions as monks/SL in society in the HRD context and how they perceived the impact of their activities in society. In simple words, the researcher aimed to find what factors led these individuals to become monks/SL, and by becoming SL, how are they contributing to society in the HRD context. The data collected and analyzed from the NPO document and websites provided factual/empirical evidence to SL's perceived impact.

This chapter opens with a broad overview and background information of the NPO monastery, followed by research setting and participant profiles. Each participant's response to research questions begins with a brief description of their background, followed by their response to interview questions in a narrative format. Participants' interview excerpts/quotes are inserted wherever required to retain the meaning of their experiences which otherwise would have been lost in paraphrasing. The categories and themes that emerged from the data analysis are used as topic/section headings to narrate the participants' stories or responses to give a good structure, consistency, and flow to

their stories. The results for each participant's response to research questions are displayed in visual tabular format to summarize findings. Finally, the chapter concludes with a comprehensive result from the cross-case analysis for respective research questions.

Overview of Selected Monastery/Nonprofit Organization

The NPO selected for this study is an international spiritual, faith-based organization founded in 1966 in New York City with a humble beginning by a 70-year-old visionary monk/SL. He started the nonsectarian spiritual organization to promote spiritual development and well-being by teaching the science of spirituality based on the ancient eastern Vedic philosophy, wisdom, and practices. The founder of this international organization has authored more than 70 books, mostly translations with commentary of Sanskrit Vedic texts rendered into English. His books are the reference point for spiritual philosophy, spiritual development, and spiritual practices for millions of spiritual practitioners worldwide. His books advocate the Vedic philosophy of spirituality imparts knowledge and practical application for the holistic development of health, social, economic, and ecology based on spirituality and spiritual well-being.

Since its inception in 1966, this NPO has developed into a worldwide confederation. According to the NPO's website, in the last fifty years, the NPO enlisted many milestones achieved such as:

- 650 centers, temples, and schools worldwide
- 520 million books and magazines published and distributed worldwide
- 3 billion free plates of vegetarian meals distributed worldwide since 1966

- 12 million people worship in temples/centers around the world every year
- 2 million meals distributed every day to needy school children in India by the Food Relief Foundation, also known as Annamrita, as part of the government's mid-day meal program.
- 340,000 patients treated by NPO hospitals, hospice, mobile clinics, and eye camps
- 100,000 advanced spiritual practitioners worldwide since 1966 have taken spiritual initiations
- 6000 festivals and spiritual gatherings held every year around the world
- 3600 home study spiritual groups formed around the world
- 110 restaurants around the world
- 65 eco-friendly farms established to help spiritual practitioners practice self-sustainable simple living and high thinking lifestyle. (R. Das, 2016)

Research Site and Participants

All eight interviews took place at the monastery, Mumbai center, in their office. Six interviews were conducted in August 2019 and two interviews in January 2020. The researcher made three trips to India from the year 2018 to 2020 for research purposes.

Because the interview took place at the NPO, all the participants seemed very comfortable with the interview location. All the participants exhibited a simple demeanor, were very approachable, and had an encouraging attitude. All the participants showed willingness and enthusiasm to share their experiences without any hesitation. The participants are referred to as monks or spiritual leaders (SL)

interchangeably. Readers should also note that these monks/SL are known as “Brahmacharis or celibate monks” and not Guru’s or spiritual masters. If they wish to renounce their monkhood lifestyle and join the mainstream population or wish to get married, they are free to do so at their will and not be looked down upon in society. If these monks/SL desire to progress to a more serious, stringent, and renounced order of monkhood lifestyle, they undergo a process called “Sannyasa.” They are then called “Sanyasis or Swami,” or other titles conferred on them by their Guru.

Talking about Guru or spiritual teacher/Master, all the eight participants interviewed are disciples/students of an American Chicago born Guru, a spiritual teacher who heads the Mumbai monastery. He is the founder and inspiration behind several projects, such as developing a Mumbai monastery, eco-village, mid-day meal for school kids across India, instrumental in founding the Bhaktivedanta Hospital and hospice. He travels extensively throughout Europe and America, conducting spiritual development training workshops. He has been globally honored for his humanitarian deeds, and all the eight participants I interviewed work under his guidance and inspiration.

Participant Profiles

Table 3 provides a summary of the eight participants in this study at a glance presented in no particular order. The profile components include a pseudonym, age, education, university, years of experience, and employment. I have included a more detailed description of the participants in their case descriptions.

Table 3*Participants Profile*

Name	Age	Education	University	Education Degrees or Discipline	Work Experience	Years at NPO
Bansi	45	Ph.D.	Japan Hiroshima University	Material Science	≥ 2	≥ 15
		Master's in Technology (MTech)	Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)	Mechanical and Biomedical Engineering		
Baldev	38	Ph.D.	Pennsylvania State University, USA	Material Science	≥ 1	≥ 10
Raghu	37	Master's in Technology (MTech)	Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)	Agriculture and Food Engineering	≥ 5	≥ 9
Chandra	40	BTech	Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)	Chemical Engineering	≥ 1	≥ 16
Daya	41	Master's in Technology	Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)	Mechanical Engineering	≥ 2	≥ 16
Ram	35	Master's in Technology (MTech)	Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)	Industrial engineering and Operations Research	≥ 1	≥ 10
Gopal	32	Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS)	Maharashtra University of Health Sciences	Medical Doctor	≥ 2	≥ 5
Arjun	38	Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery. (BAMS)	Maharashtra University of Health Sciences	Medical Doctor	≥ 1	≥ 16

Participants Stories

The purpose of this section was to narrate the stories and experiences shared by the participants during the interview process. Each participant's story begins with a brief biography of the participant, followed by a detailed narration of factors that led them to become spiritual leaders and their perceived contribution to society in the HRD context. The case stories are presented in no particular order. No preference was given to any case over the others while presenting them.

Daya's Story

This section focused on Daya's story, starting with his background and findings to research questions in subsequent sections.

Background

Daya is a 41-year-old monk residing in the Mumbai monastery. He graduated with a masters' in technology and mechanical engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Mumbai. Before becoming a monk, he worked in an information technology company for two years. His professional expertise and skills are in designing and automation using AutoCAD and other design software. In the information industry, he had worked on Oracle apps and Oracle databases. Like most students, Daya said he did not undergo any career planning or counseling nor had planned for an engineering career by himself. One of his school teachers recognized that he was good at mathematics and suggested he pursue engineering at the Indian Institute of Technology. Based on his teacher's recommendation, he managed to get admission at IIT, Mumbai and completed his undergrad and master's combined engineering program.

Findings for RQ 1: Triggering Factors

Interview question: Please describe your journey of becoming a monk; describe the reasons/triggering factors/influences that led you to decide to give up your professional career and become a spiritual leader?

An intrinsic Desire for Social Service

Daya said he had never aspired to become a monk or a spiritual leader while growing up. However, he did grow up with a strong desire not to lead a selfish life but to do some social service for his country, people, and society. He said he always had that missionary and social service zeal and spirit.

Family and Childhood Growing-up Factors

Then talking about his growing up years, Daya said he visited some temples with his parents for festivals and special occasions. Hence, he had some spiritual knowledge and background but not to the extent of wanting to become a monk/SL and dedicate his life to spirituality. However, Daya said his grandfather would tell him inspiring stories from scriptures during his childhood, teach him to pray, and leave things to god. From his childhood, he believed in god and the power of prayers. Thus, growing up in a family with spiritual culture and teachings had instilled a spiritual foundation in him from his early childhood days.

College Campus Event Factor

While Daya was studying at IIT Mumbai, a spiritual NPO had organized a big festival on their campus. Daya and his friends attended that festival and got introduced to spiritual leaders from a monastery. That was his first introduction to the spiritual leaders

in his life. Daya said he always wanted to read ancient Vedic literature and learn about the wisdom of spirituality. However, he had never done so until he met the spiritual leaders on his campus, who gave him some spiritual books to read.

Spiritual Student Organization on Campus Factor

Daya said his college had a student organization, namely the bhakti-yoga club, run by spiritual practitioners. Some student leaders and peers who practiced spirituality and spiritual practices recognized Daya's interest and desire to read spiritual literature. A student leader gave him Bhagavad Gita and some spiritual books to read. Daya said after reading Bhagavad Gita, his interest and inclination toward spirituality grew. He regularly started attending the club's weekly meetings and the spiritual workshop, training, and discourses conducted by the monastery's spiritual leaders on his campus. After attending the spiritual training, Daya realized that there was more to life beyond earning good money, having a settled life, or merely taking care of bodily needs. He realized that life was also about a spiritual quest. Daya mentioned that his spiritual quest grew gradually from thereon.

Spiritual Philosophy Literature Factor

Daya said the spiritual books and scriptures also played a vital role that triggered his interest in spirituality to such an extent that he started thinking about the monkhood lifestyle and contributing to society. Reflecting on that experience, he said:

I started reading Gita and Srimad Bhagavatam. It's the cream of all the Vedic spiritual literature and a book of great wisdom. I was very much impressed by the great kings, who were very successful rulers yet had renounced everything for

society. Although they served society, eventually, at some point in time, they renounced everything for the sake of society for the final spiritual goal of their life or the final spiritual journey. The great king's character, the great souls, described in the scriptures, and their spiritual journey was very revealing to me, very inspiring to me. So, I felt inspired by their life stories, and I continued to read further, and my spiritual quest grew. I then decided that I don't want to live like another person in the corporate world, in a race to earn money for selfish interests. I wanted to do something for society.

Besides the spiritual literature and scriptures, Daya also talked about his college seniors' spiritual practitioner's positive impact and influence on him that kept him motivated in spirituality.

College Peers as spiritual practitioners. Daya mentioned some of his senior students on campus who practiced spirituality excelled in their academics. That also impressed and impacted him positively. He felt he could only gain and not lose if he also took to spirituality and spiritual practices, just like his seniors did and do well in academics and careers. So Daya acknowledged that this had a significant and positive impact on his life.

When asked if he had already made up his mind to become a monk while still in college, Daya answered negatively. He said he never wanted to be a full-time monk. He wanted to work in the corporate world and, at the same time, wanted to continue his spiritual practices. However, Daya mentioned his stay at the monastery was the turning point and most influential factor in his decision to become a monk.

Monastery Factors

Daya said when his spiritual quest and interest in spirituality grew, he could not foresee himself living a materialistic and selfish life. He looked for an alternative way of life because he felt convinced that spiritual development could lead to holistic development and the welfare of self and society. Based on that conviction, while searching for an alternative way of life, some of his senior alumni monks/SL at the monastery suggested he try a monastery lifestyle. However, Daya said he was not looking for a full-time alternative and was looking for a part-time job and a part-time spiritual life. The monastery's spiritual leaders gave him the option to stay at their student spiritual center, Bhakti Vedanta Academy for Culture and Education. This academy was like an extension of the monastery where students and working professionals inclined toward monkhood life could live and work simultaneously. The academy allowed students like him to explore, experience, and compare the corporate world and monkhood lifestyles. The senior Spiritual leaders had told Daya that he could continue leading a normal life outside the monastery and pursue his professional career if he did not like the monkhood lifestyle. It was not necessary to become a monk to continue his spiritual practices. Daya took that offer, which turned out to be the turning and decisive point in his life. Describing the turning point in his life, Daya described that experience as follows:

So, I said, let me try it out for six months, staying full-time in the monastery. So, when I tried that out, I liked it. It was very fulfilling staying in the monastery. And that was the main turning point when I got the association of other senior

monks. The love I experienced, the care they gave, and the wisdom and the intense spiritual practices of the monastery were very nourishing to the soul.

After that, there was no looking back.

Therefore, for Daya, to get to stay in the monastery, observe the monk's lifestyle, interact with the spiritual leaders from close quarters, and compare the monastery lifestyle with the professional corporate world made him take his monkhood decision with clarity and confidence.

Spiritual Leaders Influence Factor

During his stay at the monastery, Daya said the monastery's senior and advanced spiritual leaders, their altruistic qualities, stability in leadership, an opportunity to travel with them on annual pilgrimages, and their association played an influential part in his monkhood decision. Daya said he was incredibly impressed with a senior-most leader, a Guru at the monastery under whose leadership and guidance the monastery and monks function to date. Talking about the spiritual leader and his leadership impact on his decision, Daya said:

The example of our spiritual leader, spiritual teacher, his life of selfless devotion, his purity of thoughts, purity of his lifestyle, and the way he cared and interacted with everyone also had a very deep impact on me. Even now, I am able to continue as a monk in this monastery because the same spiritual leader continues with the same spirit to lead us, to guide us. So, the stability in the leadership and the same senior student who had asked me that I should try a monastery life are

still there as my well-wishers in the monastery after 14 to 15 years. So, the stability in the senior leadership has also helped me to stay back.

Faith in Prayers Factor

Daya said since he grew up with faith in god and prayers, he would rely on prayers when faced with tough decisions. So, when he had to decide on a life-transforming decision of becoming a monk, he relied on prayers. He would pray within his heart and visit the nearby temple to pray and request god to show him some signs to make the right decision. Daya soon encountered certain circumstances and situations in his life that led him to believe it was a divine signal indicating that he should become a monk. One such triggering event was related to a corporate job and work culture factor.

Corporate Work-Related Factors

When Daya worked in an information technology company as a software engineer, Daya said certain work-related events made him reflect on the corporate work culture and compare it with the monastery's spiritual culture and lifestyle. Daya narrated several small incidences from his workplace that triggered him to dislike the corporate work culture and other working conditions.

Daya said when he worked in the IT industry, the work culture and conditions were such that the organization and the project manager would inadvertently expect the employees to work beyond their regular office work hours. The organization would expect the employees to stay back late in the office or sometimes even not go home and work nonstop. Daya said he would work hard, stay focused and get his work done within the regular eight to nine work hours, and whenever needed or depending upon the

project urgency, he would extend himself to work late. However, his managers and organization expected him to work beyond regular office hours and stay in the office until midnight on a daily or more frequent basis. This expectation and work culture created a conflict of work-life balance for Daya. He had to balance his spiritual practices and priorities.

Moreover, even though his managers were aware of his spiritual priorities, they were not considerate about it or helping employees strike a work-life balance. All that mattered to his managers and the organization was the organizational priorities.

Reflecting on that work culture experience, Daya said:

I contributed significantly to the workplace. But somehow, my manager wanted a person who would have his priorities only for work exclusively, dedicated only to work. I had my spiritual priorities, and within stipulated office work hours, I would give my best in a focused way, which they respected. However, my managers still wanted somebody who would be full-time dedicated to the work and keep work as an exclusive priority.

Daya narrated a couple of other such incidents from his workplace that made him learn and realize the corporate world's real and true culture. Daya said he had worked very hard on one project, which received the best project award. Everyone in the office appreciated his work. However, suddenly, he was removed from that project without any explanation. That event left him perplexed. Despite receiving recognition and award for his performance, a small little bug in the software had got magnified, and his hard work and good performance diminished. Such incidents at his workplace made him think hard

about the corporate work culture and if he wanted to be a part of that culture. Reflecting on that experience and realization, Daya elucidated the triggering and turning point in his life as follows:

Whatever work I would do, I would do it with dedication, giving them good results. Whatever I did, I would put my heart into it. It was not that the hard work or the nature of the work. But the corporate culture that I experienced, I realized that it's going to be like this in corporate life. You give your best anyway, and if anyone makes a small mistake, that will be noticed very much and not the hard work. So, I decided I don't want to be part of this corporate life and corporate culture. I wanted to be part of a better culture. Yeah, so then that was the last point. So, after all those things, I thought it's god's indication to me. I was anyway praying to god to show me direction in my life.

Daya also mentioned there were no spiritual development or avenues for spiritual growth at his workplace, nor was a work-life- balance a priority. Growing the business was the only priority. Thus, after careful comparison, evaluation, and reflection of corporate work culture and spiritual culture, Daya preferred a spiritual culture and monkhood lifestyle over a professional corporate work culture. After working in the IT industry for more than two years, he decided to quit his professional job and career and joined the monastery as a full-time monk.

Summary

In summary, Daya experienced several triggering factors that led him to change his career trajectory from being an engineer to becoming a spiritual leader, which is presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Daya's Triggering Factors

Triggering Factors (Themes)	Triggering Factors (Categories)
Family and childhood Growing-up factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious and spiritual family background • instilled a spiritual foundation, faith in god, and prayers since childhood
An intrinsic desire for social service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Had the zeal and spirit to do some social service for his country, people, and society
College Campus Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met spiritual leaders on a college campus. • Attend a spiritual student club on a college campus • Senior students who engaged in spiritual practices excelled in academics, and that had a positive impact
Work-Related factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers' expectation of employees to work beyond their regular office work hours daily. • Work-life balance issues • No spiritual development avenues for spiritual growth at his workplace. • Experienced phases of professional dissatisfaction
Spiritual Philosophy Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Bhagavad Gita and spiritual literature further increased spiritual quest and interest
Monastery Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try a monkhood life experiential training. • Closely observing the monastery lifestyle, interacting with SL, their association, visiting pilgrimage • Leadership stability at the monastery

Table 4 Continued

Triggering Factors (Themes)	Triggering Factors (Categories)
Spiritual Leaders Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inspired by the qualities of the senior spiritual leader (Guru) at the monastery• Received regular support, guidance, training from spiritual leaders• Seeing monks/SL lifestyle, their activities/contribution/impact on society

Findings for RQ 2: Activities and Impact

I asked Daya, by becoming a spiritual leader, how he contributes to society and how he perceives the impact of his activities on society?

Daya described various activities and his contribution to multiple projects, and the perceived impact of those multiple projects at different levels.

Community Kitchen Activities

Daya said when he joined the monastery, he started with cooking service since he was fond of cooking. He would cook for all the monks in the monastery. Later, he learned the art of large-scale community cooking and cooked for around 2000 congregation members every Sunday. After spending ample time in the monastery kitchen, he realized the kitchen design was not efficient enough for the growing congregation. Since he had expertise in designing using software programs, he designed and proposed a new efficient kitchen design to the management. The monastery’s senior management approved his design plan, and he redesigned the entire community kitchen.

This project’s impact was that the kitchen today serves as the model community kitchen for their NPO’s worldwide centers. Many other NPO’s have visited their

community kitchen and remodeled their community kitchen based on Daya's design. Several NPO's have consulted Daya to seek his advice and suggestions to improve their community kitchens and convert them to mega kitchens.

ISO Quality Certification

Besides redesigning the community kitchen, Daya said he also worked towards getting their monastery and their kitchen ISO 2000 certified. Daya described the projects and perceived impact of that project as follows:

We set very high hygienic standards, and we also automated the kitchen a lot to efficiently meet our needs. So, we improved many many recipes. We improved the quality, the hygiene, the kitchen design, the practices, the equipment, and many other aspects of the kitchen. And because of that, our food quality increased like anything, and all the congregation members were very happy.

Then we got an invitation from many other monasteries and centers to help with their kitchens, have a better design, have better-operating practices, better cooking methods, recipes, cooking equipment, etc. So, over the last eight years, I have helped at least 30 to 40 monasteries/temples to redesign their kitchen.

Thus, Daya put his educational and professional expertise to use at his monastery, which also helped several other NPO's who sought free consultation from Daya to improve their community kitchen. The impact has been on several levels; improved food quality, improved hygiene standards, happy congregation members, and goodwill of NPO's. Another impact of their project has been their set up of a mega kitchen project during the Kumbh Mela, the largest spiritual gathering on this planet.

Mega Kitchen at Kumbh Mela Activities

Daya mentioned he and his fellow monks/SL are experts in setting up a mega kitchen for special events such as Kumbh Mela. Elaborating on Kumbh Mela and their mega kitchen project, he said Kumbh Mela is the largest spiritual gathering on this planet, where 50 to 60 million spiritual seekers gather in one place for around a month. Daya said he and his team erect a mega kitchen at the festival site and serve full-course meals to millions of spiritual seekers who attend the Kumbh Mela festival for free.

Because Daya and his NPO are involved in mega food cooking and mass distribution projects, Daya said he also designed and worked on automating large-scale kitchen and cooking equipment. In his words, Daya described the impact of his activity as follows:

I designed the chapati (Indian bread) making machine. There was a company that was doing it; I helped them to improvise. I found their quality was not good, so I improvised their design and received a lot of appreciation. We served hot chapatis throughout the day, and many other spiritual institutions came to see how nicely we were serving hot chapatis. Many spiritual organizations would also seek my consultancy and help. To have a good relationship with others, I would provide my consultancy services to them, all free of cost as a social service.

Because of Daya's free consultancy, several NPOs saved money, which they would have otherwise spent on private consultancy fees to automate and redesign their community kitchen. Daya's NPO also received goodwill from several other NPOs. The

most significant impact of this project had been that it was able to extend the project to the mid-day meal program for the school children

Midday Meal for School Children Activities

Daya said their NPO, supported by the government, has been serving one nutritious meal to millions of school children across India through their Annamrita mid-day meal project. Daya was involved in designing large-scale community kitchens across India to meet various schools' food distribution needs. The project's impact is that daily, 1.5 million underprivileged kids get served a nutritious meal served by Daya's NPO.

Spiritual Development Training Activities

Daya said their monastery has a college dedicated to spiritual development training, and Daya has been affiliated with the college and involved in training and teaching. Their college offers a two-year, well-designed, and structured spiritual development course catering to a different audience. They have a training program for any individuals, professionals who wish to take a sabbatical or break from their professional life and are interested in spirituality and spiritual growth.

They also have a training program for individuals who want to become monks and an advanced training program for existing monks. Daya said he had been teaching the course to monks and their congregation since its inception in 2012. He also conducts a six-day journey of self-discovery course for the beginner spiritualist. The audience for this 6-day course varies from college students to professionals like psychologists, psychotherapists, stock investors, and doctors. Talking about the fees for this 6-day

course, Daya said the course is practically free, and they charge nominal fees of \$ 5 to \$ 7 for the entire six-day duration for participants to stay committed. The monastery also provides free meals to all the participants who attend their SD program.

Organization Development Activities

Daya said he serves his NPO by working on several management committees. He is on a committee that looks after the entire finance of their monastery. He is also a part of a CARE team responsible for taking good care of all the spiritual leaders and spiritual practitioners. Daya said he travels worldwide to conduct training at different centers and teach and train the local management team on the principles and how to care for their spiritual leaders and spiritual practitioners. Elaborating on his role on the CARE committee, Daya said:

I conduct the training, and we spread the ethos of caring for spiritual practitioners or spiritual leaders. Because spiritual leaders are supposed to extend themselves to society so caring for them, caring for their spiritual needs, emotional needs, and physical needs are important. It is holistic care for spiritual practitioners. The countries I have visited are Qatar, South Africa, Johannesburg, Durban, different cities in South Africa, Cape Town, Singapore. Australia. We conduct this training within India and many places around the world.

Happy or Regrets to be Monk/SL and Benefits of Becoming a Monk/SL

Finally, I asked Daya if he was happy about becoming a full-time monk or regrets his decision. Daya replied as follows:

The life of a monk has been very fulfilling, very satisfying to me as a person. I have been very happy for the last 14 to 15 years. I had a very nice opportunity to practice my own spiritual life in this monastery. It has given me great satisfaction, great fulfillment as well as spiritual nourishment. Then there have been many opportunities to contribute.

Daya defined spirituality as follows:

Spirituality is defined first by understanding who we are, i.e., distinguishing between matter and spirit. Then spirituality is about understanding the relationship of the soul with the super-soul. After understanding that relationship, how can we revive that relationship? The relationship between the soul and the super-soul means god within the heart, so we call him the Super Soul who is there in everyone's heart. The soul of all souls is god. Spirituality is about understanding that relationship, reviving that relationship, and then relishing that relationship of the soul with the super-soul or with god, our eternal father.

Daya defined spiritual leadership as follows:

Spiritual leadership is all about sacrifice. It is all about putting others' priorities before yours and thinking of others' happiness before yours. Spiritual leaders should genuinely desire to inspire everyone in their spiritual life and be ready to do anything needed to inspire others, nourish others, and help them grow in their spiritual lives.

Summary

In summary, Daya contributes to society and his NPO on many levels and positively impacts people's lives of all sections and society's strata. The list of Daya's activities as a spiritual servant leader and its perceived impact is listed in Table 5.

Table 5

Daya's Activities

HRD Activities	Spiritual Leaders Activities	Perceived Impact
Training and Development Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&D for individuals interested in spirituality or interested in becoming monks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing spiritual development needs of people.
NPO Organization Development Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CARE team for resident monks and monks worldwide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caring for their spiritual, emotional, and physical needs
Mass Food Cooking and Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISO Quality Certification for Monastery and kitchen • Designing and automating community kitchen for mass food cooking and distribution • Setting up mega Kitchen at Kumbh mela and other large spiritual gatherings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The kitchen serves as the model community and mega kitchens for their NPO's worldwide centers • Improved efficiency, quality, and hygiene standards • NPOs saved money • Generated goodwill from other NPOs • Project got extended to mid-day meal for school children
Mid-day Meal for School Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of mega kitchen for a mid-day meal project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPO has set up state-of-the-art kitchens in 20 locations all over India and provides free meals to over a million children in over 6,500 schools across the country daily)

Raghu's Story

This section focused on Raghu's story, starting with his background and findings to research questions in subsequent sections.

Background

Raghu is an engineer by education. He completed his bachelor's in technology (BTech) in Agricultural engineering and then pursued a master's degree in Food Engineering with a dairy specialization. He completed his master's degree from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), a premier and prestigious autonomous public technical and research university with campuses located across India. While talking about his academic background and career aspiration, Raghu said the word research fascinated him from his childhood, and he always wanted to pursue research in the agriculture discipline. However, Raghu mentioned that the University's Bachelors and Masters' program curriculum did not offer many research opportunities, and the curriculum was more technical, agriculture instrumentation, and process-driven with limited research opportunities.

After completing the master's degree from IIT, Raghu's career aspiration took a drastic turn. Through his campus placements, a leading information technology company hired Raghu to work as a software engineer despite not having a computer background. Raghu felt the IT company hired him because of his excellent academic record and intellectual aptitude. After working with an Indian IT company for two and a half years, IBM hired Raghu. At IBM, Raghu was leading a team and was responsible for supervising and mentoring junior team members. He worked with IBM for around two

and a half years. So, while Raghu was working with one of the best IT firms, he had a well-paying job, a respectable position, a successful career in the IT industry; what factors triggered him to become a monk/SL? To answer that question, Raghu went back and reflected on his family and childhood memories

Findings for RQ 1: Triggering Factors

Interview question: Please describe your journey of becoming a monk; describe the reasons/triggering factors/influences that led you to decide to give up your professional career and become a spiritual leader?

Family and Childhood Growing-up Factors

Raghu said he was born and raised in a very religious and spiritual family. Since his childhood, Raghu and his family have practiced meditation, read scriptures, and performed religious rituals. He said he had developed a spiritual inclination since childhood because of his family and upbringing, which inspired him to go deeper into spiritual topics and practices.

Intrinsic Desire to Serve Society

Besides his family and spiritual upbringing, Raghu said he had always harbored an intrinsic desire to serve society. However, Raghu was not clear about what kind of social service he wanted to do. Raghu mentioned that he often felt that if someone took care of his basic necessities like food and lodging, he would dedicate his life to some social cause. However, Raghu said he had never envisioned he would become a monk/SL and dedicate his life to work in the spirituality domain. To describe the most influential and triggering factors, Raghu then explained his undergrad college events.

College Events Factors

Raghu said while he was in college for undergraduate studies, he had once visited a local temple near his college, and in that temple, he heard a very melodious tune of some mantras. That melodic tune captivated his attention and heart.

Mysteriously, the very next day, he met some spiritual practitioner students in his college who were associated with the same temple. During their conversation, one of the students gave Raghu a spiritual book titled *Discover Yourself*. Raghu said he was surprised to see the author had a master's, MTech degree from IIT, yet he was a monk/SL. That well-qualified engineer monk/SL and his book impacted Raghu tremendously. Reflecting on that incident, Raghu, in his own words, described that first “aha or wow” experience as follows:

It was a wow moment for me to get to know about this author, spiritual leader, and his lifestyle. Although it was a wow factor for me, I never thought that I would also become like him. So that particular picture, that particular person, that particular book, that particular moment was very special for me because for the first time, I thought that an educated person having such a career opportunity was utilizing his entire education to uplift others spiritually. So, I felt that was very good. Then I started to get a little more interested in spirituality.

After experiencing the “aha” moment at his college and realizing that a well-educated person with a similar background as his had become a monk and was engaged in spiritual development activities, Raghu became more interested in spirituality. He started reading spiritual literature, visiting the monastery, attending spiritual

development workshops, and listening to spiritual lectures. He soon realized that spirituality and spiritual development would aid in self-development and would be the best form of social service to impart human values and uplift others in society. The below quote encapsulates the triggering factor or the turning point that led Raghu on the path of spirituality and monkhood:

So, I was always a little soft kind of person in my heart of hearts, wanting to help others. My research goals were to explore opportunities to create a better living situation to uplift those who do not have good facilities. I used to wonder how we can uplift them. So, when I heard and read this spiritual philosophy, and when I met the spiritual leader, I started attending the spiritual lectures, the workshops of this particular leader and his followers. I then thought this was one of the best ways to contribute my energy and time to this cause. So, it was one of the key focuses, and I started to develop myself. After 2-3 years of practice and seeing the monks' example, I decided to give my life for this cause, gaining and giving spiritual knowledge to others. Because I felt this is the best way by which I can uplift society. Yes, this was a hundred percent the first trigger towards spirituality.

Spiritual Leaders and Spiritual Development Training Factor

Although Raghu's encounter with well-qualified spiritual leaders and the spiritual, philosophical literature made him a serious spiritual seeker, Raghu then described other influencing factors that cemented his resolve and decision to become a monk. He talked about the spiritual development training he received from the spiritual

leaders on his campus. According to Raghu, he received a very high quality, well-structured, well-designed, and well-presented spiritual development training. The SL who conducted the spiritual development training program explained spirituality in a very scientific and lucid way, which positively impacted Raghu's scientific mind.

Spiritual Leaders' lifestyle, Activities, and Impact on Society

Raghu mentioned another influencing factor was getting to observe the social welfare activities of the monks/SL in society. Raghu said it was not just the spiritual development of oneself in seclusion but contributing to society's welfare was equally important. Since Raghu had a strong inclination towards social service, he thought the spiritual growth of self and others would be a social cause worth dedicating his life.

Upon inquiring, if Raghu had decided to become a monk in his college days, he replied in the affirmative. So, the next question was, why did he take up a corporate job after completing his master's degree and not join the monastery? Raghu gave two reasons for that. First, he said he was the eldest son in his family and felt responsible for getting his younger sister married and contributing to the marriage expenses. He never wanted to shun away from his brotherly responsibilities. Second, the monastery's policy and mandatory requirement of a minimum of two years of corporate work experience for individuals who aspired to become monks/SL. Monastery management wanted individuals to have real-world work experience to get a comprehensive understanding of how the real corporate world functions. The monastery would allow individuals to explore and experience their career interests in the corporate world before taking the plunge into monkhood life.

Monastery Factor

Raghu said the monastery had a one-year training program where individuals interested in becoming monks were allowed to work in the corporate organizations and simultaneously stay at the monastery facility as volunteers to experience and compare both the lifestyle and then make an informed decision. Raghu made use of that program. He lived in the monastery for one year and simultaneously worked in a corporate job. Raghu felt getting to experience both sides helped him explore and weigh both the options before embarking and finalizing the option of leaving a corporate job and deciding to become a full-time monk. That led to inquire if he had experienced any organizational or work-related factors contributing to his monkhood life selection over corporate life.

Corporate Work and Organization-related Factors

Talking about his professional IT industry work experience, Raghu mentioned he was always a high performer employee at work and received a promotion and performance appreciation from his manager. However, as cost-saving measures, one fine day, he was laid off from his job. Raghu said the layoff experience was an eye-opener for him. He realized that how hard one works, how good one performs, there was no job security in the corporate world. He also experienced phases of dissatisfaction at his workplace. Raghu said he observed his colleagues and friends in a very disturbed and anxious state during the layoff. However, for him, his spiritual practice, guidance, and the support of his spiritual leaders kept him calm and balanced, which made his faith in spirituality stronger. Although he had managed to secure another well-paying job, Raghu

said he had realized there would be no job security nor satisfaction in whichever company he worked for or the hefty salary he received. Thus, for Raghu, the layoff incident had acted as a catalyst. It has allowed him to explore both lifestyles and, based on his own experience and realization, decide the path he wanted to follow. Raghu said he could take his life-transforming decisions with clarity and conviction because of his corporate work experiences. After the layoff incident, Raghu joined the Monastery in Mumbai and received systematic training to become a monk. Raghu's quote reflects how spirituality helped him face the work crisis:

I could see how my other friends who were not practicing spirituality and had no spiritual leaders' guidance, how badly they were affected by the layoff incident, and they were not finding a job. But in comparison to them, this layoff incident did not become an obstacle in my life. In fact, it became a steppingstone. For this, I would completely give credit to the spiritual leader's association, their workshops, their training, their influence on me, and spiritual practices like meditation. Because of all this, I could easily navigate the difficult phase.

Summary

In summary, Table 6 lists all those factors that triggered Raghu to change his career trajectory from engineering professional to becoming a monk/SL

Table 6*Raghu's Triggering Factors*

Triggering Factors (Themes)	Triggering Factors (Categories)
Growing up and Family factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual and religious family background • Practiced spiritual practices since childhood
Intrinsic desire to Serve Society College events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire to serve society • Met spiritual practitioners on campus • Spiritual leader's books and his background. • Spiritual philosophy literature • Peers, spiritual practitioners on campus • Spiritual development T&D on campus
Spiritual Philosophy Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading spiritual philosophy and literature made his interest grow in spirituality
Corporate Work and Organization related Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Layoff • Dissatisfaction and feeling • Career questioning
Monastery Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and guidance from the monastery • NPO policies, getting to try monk lifestyle while working in the corporate world • Spiritual practices • Spiritual practitioners positive impact
Spiritual Leaders Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual leaders educational background • Spiritual leaders' lifestyle, their activities/contribution/impact on society. • Continued interaction, support, and guidance from the spiritual leaders
Spiritual Training and Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&D spiritual development • T&D workshop topic

Findings for RQ 2: Activities and Impact

Interview Question: If you are engaged in any training and development, origination development, educational, leadership development, management, or any

social welfare-related activities, please describe them in detail, and how do you perceive the impact of your activities at various levels?

Raghu narrated a gamut of activities, briefly described as follows:

Training and Development Activities

Raghu said he is involved in many training and development activities at various levels such as:

T&D for College Students. Raghu said he visits various colleges and Universities in and around his monastery in Mumbai to conduct spiritual training and development workshops for the college students. Because of his personal experiences as a student, he connects well with the students he visits and provides spiritual guidance and support to his student followers. Raghu opined that because of the spiritual development training, counseling, and mentoring activities, the students are able to navigate through a difficult time and handle stressful situations positively during their college phase.

T&D For community and congregation. Raghu said he is also involved in conducting and delivering spiritual development (SD) training programs for the community and congregation members. He designs and provides the training to different audiences and different age groups, children, youth, elders, and families. Raghu said the topics for his training include character development, leadership development, and work-life balance. Several people attend his training, and based on post-training feedback, he believes his training positively impacts the audience, and people lead a better life.

T&D for Corporate Organizations. Raghu said corporate organizations often invite him to conduct training and development for their employees and leaders. He has conducted corporate training on various topics such as leadership development, time management, how to inspire and motivate self and others, and work-life balance. Raghu mentioned that there is a considerable demand for SD training in corporate organizations. Corporates are interested in the training workshops the monks conduct. Because of the enormous demand, the monastery has a separate team that handles corporate training.

According to Raghu, his training at corporations has positively impacted the organizations and employees. He has received positive feedback and good reviews for his training programs. He feels the spiritual tips and solutions provided have helped employees work on their work-life balance effectively. The training has also inspired and motivated the employees to perform and work efficiently for their organizations. The below response indicates the demand for SD training in the corporates and the reason for that demand.

Many of our spiritual leaders are invited by so many corporates. There is a huge demand, not just for my workshops, but other monks too. We have a specific team that does all corporate training and development stuff. The corporate leaders have found the work-life training module which we conducted for their employees helpful. Our solutions have helped so many employees to bring out their best in themselves.

Organization Development Activities

The Organization Development (OD) activities listed are the NPO related where the spiritual leaders work for the smooth functioning of their monastery/NPO.

ISO Quality Assurance Certification. Raghu mentioned that when he joined the monastery as a full-time monk, the first service or task he received was to get the ISO certification for his monastery. He explained that ISO certification meant streamlining the various processes, systems, services, or documentation procedures standardized to meet the quality assurance requirements. To get his monastery ISO certified, he self-trained himself by reading several quality assurance books and eventually got his monastery ISO certified. Because of that experience, making an NPO ISO certified, how any NPO could work towards applying the quality standards principles typically implemented in corporate organizations has become one of his core competencies. Raghu said he helps other monasteries and NPO's with ISO certification processes. Since their NPO has a global presence with hundreds of centers worldwide, Raghu said he works as an internal organization development consultant and external OD consultant. He helps their NPO's worldwide centers and other NPO's who approach him to standardize their operations and make their department and processes efficient and ISO quality compliant.

Raghu said because of this ISO certification, their NPO system and processes work effectively and efficiently.

CARE Caring for Monks and Spiritual Leaders Activities. Raghu said he is involved in the CARE committee at his monastery. As the name suggests, this committee is in charge of taking care of the resident monk's needs. Raghu said the

monastery has 125 resident monks, and the CARE committee is responsible for looking after and taking care of monks' basic needs. The committee ensures that all the resident monks feel happy, feel nourished, and meet their spiritual aspirations and goals.

Environment Protection and Awareness Activities

Raghu also talked about his involvement and advocacy with environmental protection and preservation. He said their monastery and the resident monks have designed and developed a self-sustainable, eco-friendly village on Mumbai's outskirts. He often takes his students to the eco-village to teach and demonstrate the importance of environmental protection. He teaches and provides practical solutions of how one could live in harmony with nature. Their eco-friendly village has implemented several environmental protection initiatives. Raghu said he preferred showcasing and demonstrating the environmental protection initiatives in person rather than giving a verbal talk. He believed this activity positively impacted his students. Many of his students have stopped using plastic polyethylene bags and had made conscious efforts to protect and preserve the environment and live in harmony with nature.

Happy or Regrets to be Monk/SL and Benefits of Becoming a Monk/SL

When asked if he was happy about becoming a monk/SL or regret his decision, Raghu's response was as follows:

The joy that I feel, I had never experienced this in my student life and my professional life. I feel joy in sharing this spiritual knowledge with others. The satisfaction of living a life, which I always wanted, where I could share something with others, not just for an hour or two hours but 24 hours, gives me

immense joy. Also, there is a congenial environment at the monastery where all the monks have similar goals and spiritual development objectives and uplifting humanity. The monastery takes care of our basic needs; the monks are well cared for by senior spiritual leaders, so we all can focus on our spiritual development goals. Another benefit is an opportunity to live with monks from diverse backgrounds adds to our monastery's flavor. In giving spiritual knowledge to people, we see people's lives transform. It is a wonderful blessing to transform others' lives and become an instrument of that transformation.

Definition of Spirituality and Spiritual Leaders

Raghu's definition of spirituality is as follows:

For me, spirituality means how we, as a spirit, are in harmony with the supreme spirit. So, connecting oneself with the supreme spirit and connecting ourselves with other human beings. In other words, it is called yoga. Yoga is to connect to the super soul and connect to all other living entities.

Raghu opined that spiritual leaders should have the following qualities or traits:

Humility, a desire to serve others selflessly, a compassionate heart, practice what he preaches, stay humble and grounded, especially when they have thousands of followers. Also, despite being a leader and a teacher, the spiritual leader should remain a lifelong student/learner to learn more, apply, and share spiritual knowledge with others.

Summary

In summary, Raghu is involved in many HRD related activities such as T&D, OD, and environmental protection and preservation awareness. His spiritual development training and development activities at various levels have positively contributed to society and helped people live better lives in harmony with themselves and the environment.

Table 7

Raghu's Activities

HRD Activities	Raghu's Activities	Perceived Impact
Training and Development Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&D for community and congregation members. • T&D for corporate organizations • T&D for College students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People live a meaningful life. • Employees and organization benefit at many levels- improvements
Organization Development Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISO Quality Assurance Certification for NPO • CARE Committee caring for 125 plus resident monks in their monastery. • Internal and external OD consultant for NPO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPO systems, processes, and various departments run and operate efficiently • Saved NPO money. • Knowledge sharing with other NPO's
Environment Protection and Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He takes his students to Eco-village to teach and demonstrate the importance of environmental protection and awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less use of plastic. • People are conscious of their environment and its protection.

Ram's Story

This section focused on Ram's story, starting with his background and findings to research questions in subsequent sections.

Background

Ram is a 35-year-old millennial monk who resides in Mumbai's Monastery. Before becoming a monk/SL, Ram was a well-qualified engineer and working professional. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in production and industrial engineering and then pursued a Master's degree (MTech) in industrial engineering and operations research from IIT Mumbai. Ram jokingly said there are only two career choices in India, doctor or an engineer. Since his brother was a doctor, he chose to be an engineer. Talking about his work experience, Ram said he worked as a teaching assistant for two years while pursuing his master's degree at IIT and then worked as Risk Operations Manager at the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange in India. His professional skills and expertise are in math, statistics, and creating mathematical modeling out of real-life situations.

Findings for RQ 1: Triggering Factors

Interview question: Please describe your journey of becoming a monk; describe the reasons/triggering factors/influences that led you to decide to give up your professional career and become a spiritual leader?

Family and Childhood Growing-up Factors

Going down memory lane, Ram said certain family circumstances and personal factors made him curious and inclined towards spirituality. Ram mentioned that he always aspired to go to IIT University to pursue his engineering studies. To prepare for a very competitive University entrance exam, against his wishes, his family sent him to Kota (a place in northern India famous for coaching and tutoring students for IIT

entrance exams). Despite Ram coming from a very protective and religious family background, he suddenly found himself in a very volatile environment in Kota. The students around him had bad habits with addiction problems. Ram mentioned that although he stayed away from such issues, he somehow lost focus on his studies and became very confused. As a result, he could not clear his IIT entrance exam. That event led him to introspect, reflect, and question life in general. Some questions Ram faced are expressed in his own words below:

Is this what my life is all about? That is clear an exam, and that's it. Is that the end of it all? Will my life have no meaning beyond just clearing some exam.

However, anyhow I got into another engineering college, which was also a very good college. But these questions kept lingering within my mind, i.e., What is the deeper meaning of life? Is it just the success or failure of making it into a particular competitive exam?

To help find answers to those more in-depth questions, Ram started reading and studying philosophical and spiritual literature. Seeing Ram's increasing interest in spirituality, his mother felt distraught and tore apart his collection of spiritual books and articles. Seeing this reaction from his mom, Ram wondered that students his age kept photos of models and other unwanted things, whereas he kept spiritual books and articles, so what was wrong with that? With that family incident, Ram said he had a new set of questions to explore.

Ram then went on to narrate another family incident. His father developed some health issues, which led to some people in his office disrespecting him. His office asked

his dad to take voluntary retirement. That incident discouraged his father very much because he had worked in that office for three decades. And quite abruptly, and suddenly his dad lost his job, and in some sense, his identity, which he held very dear. That incident led Ram to reflect and add a few more questions to his repository, which is as follows:

At a certain point in their lives, people are not going to perform; they will not contribute to the GDP, so then does life become meaningless?

Thus, some family incidents had led Ram to reflect on the deeper meaning of life and made him inquisitive and curious about life and its meaning in general. Ram said such questions always kept lingering on his mind, and he was keen on finding answers to those questions. That curiosity led him to search for answers in spirituality.

College Events Factors

Ram mentioned that although he was interested in spirituality, the college environment and materialistic society around him did not provide a conducive environment for him to take spirituality seriously. With those questions in mind, days passed by, and one day Ram said he saw a full-page festival advertisement in the newspaper which said, “if you are looking for spirituality, you need a Guru, a spiritual teacher.” Ram said there was a tech-fest at his engineering college, and there was a session called spiritual technology. Because of his interest in spirituality, Ram attended that spiritual session, and in one sense, that event turned to be the turning point in his life. Ram, in his own words, narrated that incident as follows:

The full-page article mentioned that if you are looking for spirituality, you need a Guru (spiritual teacher). That clicked with me. And somehow, in a few days, we had the Tech Fest of our college, and there was a particular session on spiritual technology, which with keen interest, I attended. Then a very nice talk was given by one spiritual leader from IIT Kanpur. He challenged assumptions, reductionist science, and brought forth the aspect of consciousness in the whole paradigm of our way, how we look at things. So that interested me, and then later, I met him (the spiritual teacher). He invited me to attend Bhagavad Gita discourses every week, which I started attending.

Spiritual Leader on College Campus Factor

Ram said before meeting the spiritual leader on his campus; he read spiritual articles and books to seek answers to his questions. However, after meeting a spiritual leader on his campus, for the very first time, he received a personal touch and personal guidance on spiritual topics. In his own words, Ram described how his spiritual journey started, his early inhibitions, the impact of spiritual seminars, the Influence of NPO, and what helped him find answers to his questions in the below excerpt.

Many of my class friends who were going to spiritual discourses had invited me to go with them. Still, I thought I am very scientifically minded and not sentimentalist like these religious people, so I didn't go. But when I attended that seminar, I felt that this was scientific. Then I started attending those discourses, and then it took me three-four months to absorb and understand the spiritual philosophy. Like in three to four months, it made a lot of sense to me. And then I

thought this is what my philosophy of life is, and it provides answers to questions to which I was seeking answers. I found all my questions answered in the Bhagavad-Gita. And I could see that there was no dogma involved here, there was no superstition involved here, there's no greed here, there was no recruitment taking place by an organization for some benefit by some organization. It was just the sharing of knowledge that was happening. And then, I started regularly attending their spiritual discourses and also owned the whole philosophy and the practice in my own life., All this introduction to spirituality happened during my undergraduate engineering program on campus, and, on campus, I had made up my mind to become a monk.

From the above statements, it is evident that Ram experienced certain events on his college campus, which made him a serious spiritual seeker. He decided to become a monk while he was still completing his engineering degree. That led to inquire from Ram about his reasons for attraction to spirituality and why he took such a life-transforming decision to become a monk during his college days? Ram said he had observed and experienced many contradictions in people's lives around him. According to Ram, many successful people were unhappy. Rich people were becoming hard-hearted; many people were losing their character and virtues. Society was becoming very impersonal, very self-centered, and people were living unfulfilled lives.

Spiritual Leaders Influence Factor

Ram said many spiritual leaders' educational background, intelligence, ability to balance self-development, and simultaneously work for society's welfare for decades

together also played a critical role in his decision. Besides their attributes and qualities, the community members also recognized, respected, and valued their contribution and the impact they created on them and society. Thus, getting to interact, see such examples of spiritual leaders, their lifestyle, qualities, and activities from close quarters reinforced Ram's decision to become a monk and join the monastery.

Spiritual Philosophical Influence Factor

On the other hand, the spiritual knowledge from reading books like Bhagavad Gita and the science of self-realization had brought forward deeper meaning to Ram's life. According to Ram, the spiritual, philosophical books and literature gave him a new dimension to think and move beyond temporary bodily designations and identities. Spirituality and spiritual philosophy provided him with a deeper identity, meaning, and purpose in his life.

Spiritual Practitioner, Spiritual Practices, and Pilgrimages Factor

Besides spiritual philosophy making sense to Ram, he said he was also impressed with people practicing spiritual philosophy, spiritual practices, and spiritual lifestyles. Ram saw a stark contrast between his college batch mates who were practicing spirituality and those who were not. He said he observed that those who practiced spirituality were much more sensitive, helping, caring, selfless, honest, had integrity, and were not frivolous. Furthermore, students who did not practice spirituality had shallowness, incongruity, and selfishness. So, Ram felt comfortable with students who practiced spirituality and decided to spend his time with them and do something constructive for society. Besides, spiritual practices like mantra meditation, kirtan yoga,

visiting some holy places, and going on a pilgrimage with spiritual leaders and practitioners made Ram very serious about his spiritual practices. Ram mentioned that based on his positive experiences and the benefits he experienced because of spirituality and spiritual practices, his resolve to become a monk grew more severe while still in college.

When asked, since he had already decided to become a monk during his college days, why did he take a corporate job after graduation? Ram replied that it was the monastery's mandatory policy for individuals to have a minimum of one year of corporate work experience before joining the monastery as a monk. He said the monastery did not want people to join their monastery, taking things lightly because monkhood life meant serious responsibilities and serious commitment.

Corporate Work and Organization-related Factors

When inquired if any work-related or organizational factors triggered him to leave his corporate job? Ram said he had made up his mind to become a monk before taking up the corporate job. Hence, organizational factors did not influence his decision, nor did it make him deviate from his decision to become a monk. However, based on his observation and experience working in a corporate job, Ram said he never found any avenues for spiritual growth at his organization. Ram opined that most corporate organizations are very profit-driven and do not encourage their employees' spiritual development at workplaces. Employees interested in spirituality may not find freedom of expression, freedom of speech, and freedom to practice workplace spirituality. Ram also highlighted the paradoxical situation in most organizations. He observed that some

individuals engaged in sinful, illicit, or unethical activities become managers and leaders and receive glorification. As a result, employees interested in spirituality and spiritual development trying to live an ethical life feel suffocated to work in such organizations with such leaders and managers. Ram recognized that some organizations have started to acknowledge the importance of spirituality and SD of their employees. There are organizations like Google, which have included meditation courses for their employees.

Monastery, NPO Factor

Ram said the monastery setup and facilities provided to the monks also helped him decide to become a monk. He mentioned the monastery took care of monks' basic needs of food, shelter, clothing, medical and health issues. Monastery provided a safe and protective environment for the monks to stay and function, which has helped many individuals like him take that leap of faith to become monks and join the monastery. Ram said monks/SL at their monasteries are allowed to focus on their own spiritual development goals and simultaneously work for society's welfare without worrying about their basic needs.

Summary

In summary, several factors triggered Ram to give up his engineering professional and career to become a monks/SL, listed in Table 8.

Table 8*Ram's Triggering Factors*

Triggering Factors (Themes)	Triggering Factors (Categories)
Family and Persona factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost focus on studies, could not clear the IIT entrance exam left him with many unanswered questions • Family events led to many unanswered questions
Spiritual Quest/Search for Meaning and Purpose in life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation and reflection on life, society, and paradoxes in society made him a spiritual seeker
College Campus Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met spiritual leaders on a college campus • College peers' spiritual practitioners had a positive influence • Attended spirituality training workshop on campus
Spiritual Philosophy Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading spiritual, philosophical literature, Bhagavad Gita, and science of self-realization
Corporate Work and Organization related Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissatisfaction and feeling of don't belong here • No spiritual development avenues at the workplace • Conflict of personal values with corporate profit-driven culture • Working under people with mismatched values and ethics
Monastery Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monastery set up and facilities for the monks • Spiritual Practices (meditation, kirtan, bhakti yoga) • Visiting pilgrimages • Spiritual practitioners' positive impact
Spiritual Leaders Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual development training conducted by monks/SL • Felt SL and NPO were genuine with no hidden agenda • Regular support, guidance, training from a spiritual leader • Seeing monasteries monks/SL lifestyle, their activities/contribution/impact on society
Spiritual Training and Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular attendance of spirituality workshop on his campus and monastery

Findings for RQ 2: Activities and Impact

Interview Question: If you are engaged in any training and development, origination development, educational, leadership development, social welfare activities, please describe them in detail, and how do you perceive the impact of your activities at various levels?

Ram said he handles three primary functions/operations for his NPO. First, training and development; second, research and development; and third, website development.

Leadership Development Training Curriculum Designing Activities

Starting with T&D activities, Ram mentioned that he has worked as a core team member of his NPO's leadership team, responsible for starting up the leadership college. He has handled the secretary's role. His tasks and duties included managing the operations of starting the leadership college, developing the curriculum, scheduling, and organizing the whole leadership development program. In his own words, Ram described his role and responsibilities as follows:

I've been part of the Governing Body Commission (GBC) college for the leadership development team in training and development. Generally, in the Christian tradition, they have a proper training program for their pastors; however, in the Hindu tradition, you find such systematic training is lacking. Our NPO's founder teacher had personally trained his disciples. However, in the third generation, the need was felt that there is no systematic training because there was no one single leader teaching everyone. There are different leaders in

different parts of the world, and to have uniformity and continuity, a need was felt for starting a leadership college to train future leaders, the third-generation leaders. So, I was the secretary of this entire team. I was also a part of the curriculum development team and played a major role in developing the curriculum and scheduling and organizing the whole leadership development program.

Elaborating on his leadership training curriculum development for their leadership college, Ram said for the leadership college, he and his team developed a curriculum for 20 courses spanning over four major categories. (a) Personal Effectiveness, (b) People Effectiveness, (c) Organizational Effectiveness, and (d) Spiritual Excellence.

Under Personal Excellence, he and his team developed a training program that included topics on time management, work-life balance, and avoiding burnout. Under the People Excellence program, they have designed and developed a training program covering topics like building communication and conflict resolution. The organizational Excellence program covers training topics on strategic planning, project management, and meeting facilitation. For Spiritual Excellence, they have designed training programs for leaders to improve their spiritual practices and how leaders can go deeper into their spiritual practices.

When asked who conducts those training programs, the number of people who attend their leadership program, and the training location? Ram mentioned that their leadership training first started in India. The NPO's spiritual leaders from their

worldwide centers would come to India, get trained, and go back to their countries and train other leaders. Just like a train the trainer program. Currently, the training is taking place in different parts of the world, such as India, Russia, South America, and China. The leadership college conducts these training programs once a year and around 15 to 20 leaders from all over the world attend the leadership training program developed by their leadership college.

T&D of College Students

Ram mentioned he also visits different colleges in Mumbai and conducts spiritual discourses for the students. Some 15 to 20 boys attend his program regularly. Describing his T&D program for the college students, Ram said:

I have also been visiting some colleges in Mumbai because I benefited from spirituality as a college student. So, I visit a couple of colleges and conduct some life skills and spirituality-related programs for college students. The spiritual training development workshops are very well received by college students.

Some 15 to 20 boys attend the program.

Website Portal and Research Activities

Ram said he and his R&D team developed a knowledge exchange portal for their NPO. Elaborating on that activity, Ram mentioned that their NPO is a global organization with hundreds of centers worldwide. They have a decentralized system. The spiritual leaders and volunteers at each center have different expertise. Different leaders at various centers worked in silos. To knit the leadership knowledge into one, his team developed a knowledge exchange portal within each center, created a world map of all

the centers, and categorized them for different functions and expertise. With his research initiative, they can now locate which leader is leading a particular center and gives them a bird's eye view of the top leadership and their functional expertise at each center.

Environment Protection

Ram also talked about his research and development initiatives for the environment protection and preservation program. In his own words, Ram explained his role in this project as follows:

I have been involved with this Govardhan eco-village project. So, I was part of the research team that researched green technologies deployed in that village. I'm also into documentation; that is also one other service I do. So, I documented the various green technologies we had researched and developed in the eco-village and came up with 10 case studies of 10 different green technologies we had deployed in our eco-village. For that project, we received several awards on the National and International levels. We received the UN WTO award from the United Nations, and now we are also a member of the United Nations energy commission on an advisory panel.

Mid-Day Meal for School Kids Activities

In collaboration with NPOs, the Indian government runs a mid-day meal program for children attending a government school. Because of poverty, parents in very low socioeconomic brackets would instead send their children to earn rather than learn—leaving them with no education and a bleak future. The government launched this mid-day meal program to provide needy children at least one nutritious square meal and

improve school attendance and reduce the drop-out rate. Ram said under this mid-day scheme, his NPO cooks and distributes 12 million meals a day to poor schoolchildren across India. Ram used his engineering skills and expertise to optimize vehicle routing carrying food to different schools and locations all over Mumbai for this project. Ram mentioned, their NPO had three kitchens, 1200 schools all over Mumbai, and a million children to feed in Mumbai. He used his statistical modeling and operations management expertise to bring down the number of vehicles delivering the food from 13 to nine. Because of Ram's effort, the NPO saved money and made the mid-day meal food distribution operation more efficient.

When asked if he was happy with his decision to be a monk or he had ever regretted his decision. Rams' response was as follows:

Yes, I'm as happy as I can be. I'm using and applying my engineering skill sets as a monk, and now I have a reason and a purpose to do so. If I were outside in a company, it would just be the money that would have been the motivator in the corporate world, but in the monastery, I am motivated to impact society, helping people. So that motivation is there behind a skill set that helps me keep going on without any monotony.

From this response, it was evident that monks/SL like Ram are not just sitting in their monasteries meditating, chanting, and merely focusing on their own spiritual development, but are also using their professional engineering skills, knowledge, and expertise for various social causes creating an impact in this society.

NPO's Annamrita food for life, a mid-day meal program website, listed how this program for underprivileged school children has impacted their lives and school attendance. This Annamrita project has transformed the lives of more than a million children in over 6,500 schools across the country by providing nutritious, wholesome, and hygienic food for underprivileged school children.

Definition of Spirituality and Spiritual Leader

Ram defined spirituality as follows:

Spirituality is bringing out the intrinsic nature of the spirit soul, which is hidden by different coverings of different conditionings, which we have been carrying through various experiences, whether it's this life or previous lives. We have been carrying various conditionings, different misgivings, different vices. So basically, spirituality is about uncovering all of those conditionings and coverings so that the real nature of the spirit soul of love for god, of compassion towards all living entities, of friendliness towards all living entities, generosity, truthfulness, all of these qualities which are there of the spirit they are manifested. So that cleansing process is a process of spirituality.

Ram defined a spiritual leader as follows:

The spiritual leader is one who compassionately helps others to uncover their true spiritual potential, and for doing that, he is very deeply connected to the supreme (god) and their own spiritual practices.

Summary

As a spiritual leader, Ram has been involved in many activities such as training and development, research and development, leadership development, community development, and environmental-related projects. All of these activities fall under the HRD context. Ram has used his engineering skills, statistical modeling skills in operations management in various projects to make a valuable contribution to his NPO and the community. His activities are listed in Table 9.

Table 9

Ram's Activities

HRD Activities	Spiritual Leaders Activities	Perceived Impact
Training and Development Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership Training for worldwide leaders • T&D for College students • Design and development of SD courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training helps NPO develop spiritual leaders for the efficient functioning of their worldwide centers and practitioners. • Character and value development of college students. • A well-developed leadership curriculum facilitates achieving the training objectives.
NPO Organization Development Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helped NPO build and set up Leadership College • Website and research Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several worldwide leaders get trained in leadership college. • NPO's worldwide leaders share knowledge. • Worldwide leaders do not work in silos anymore.
Mid-day Meal for Schoolchildren	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle Optimization project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saved NPO money • School kids' meal on time

Table 9 Continued

HRD Activities	Spiritual Leaders Activities	Perceived Impact
Environment Protection and Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Researched Green Technologies and helped NPO develop model eco-village	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developed and implemented green technology to build an eco-village• Recognition by United Nations• Awards received

Baldev's Story

This section is about Baldev and his inspiring transformational experiences and HRD related activities.

Background

Baldev is a 38-year-old monk based in a Mumbai monastery. Baldev has a science and engineering background. He holds a Ph.D. degree in Material Science from Pennsylvania State University, USA, and an engineering bachelor's degree from India. Since his undergraduate engineering days, Baldev said he had a passion for teaching and research. He had envisioned himself becoming a professor and researcher in his field. His Ph.D. research consisted of developing probes used for remote sensing the health of nuclear waste storage containers, especially in critical zones where they are more prone to cracking. From his research and educational background, it is evident that Baldev comes from a scientific and research background. Today, Baldev is not a materials science scientist but a spiritual scientist, residing in a monastery and dedicating his time, energy, and knowledge to spiritual sciences and contributing to society by teaching spirituality scientifically.

Findings for RQ 1: Triggering Factors

Interview question: Please describe your journey of becoming a monk; describe the reasons/triggering factors/influences that led you to decide to give up your professional career and become a spiritual leader?

Baldev said his career aspiration was always to become a researcher and teacher in his field. He had never aspired nor ever harbored a desire to be a monk. He said from his sophomore year, he had a well-thought-out career plan. During his sophomore year, he had cleared his GRE exams and had started exploring the areas to do research, exploring various universities in the USA, and interacting with the professors. So, the obvious question was, why would a person like Baldev, who had a clear career plan with a scientific background, decide to become a monk? What factors triggered Baldev to become a monk/SL?

Family and Childhood Growing-up Factors

To answer that question, Baldev walked down memory lane to his childhood growing up days to narrate his transformational journey from a budding scientist to monkhood. Baldev mentioned that he stayed with his parents only till the 5th grade, and immediately after that, his parents sent him to a boarding school. After completing high school, he pursued engineering studies and again lived in a boarding college (dormitory), away from his parents. However, during his engineering undergrad days, near his college campus, he came across a couple who used to conduct a spiritual development program for college students and provide free homecooked food. Baldev started interacting with that couple and attending their weekly spiritual development program. Baldev reasoned

out his visits and interaction with the couple to his being away from his parents for most of his life, he yearned for parental touch in his life, and hence he liked visiting and interacting with that couple. He attended their weekly program for a few months and later got busy with his studies and preparing to come to the USA for his doctoral studies.

While Baldev was preparing to come to the United States to pursue a doctoral degree, just when he was about to finish his undergraduate studies, he got introduced to another spiritual practitioner group. He interacted with the spiritual practitioners and learned about their spiritual philosophy and practices. Although Baldev found the spiritual philosophy and practices exciting and convincing, he felt the lifestyle and rules were too strict and rigid for him to practice. He said he was not ready to commit himself to such a rigorous and stringent spiritual lifestyle and practices. Besides, his career ambition was to become a researcher and professor and not devote his life to spirituality. So, in the year 2002, after completing his engineering degree, he went to the USA to pursue his doctoral studies to fulfill his career goals.

Thus far, from Baldev's experience, it seems that certain family factors of staying away from the family during his childhood created a void and yearning for parental affection. The void led him to attend a spiritual development program conducted by a couple near his college. Besides, Baldev's encounter and interaction with spiritual practitioners during his undergraduate college days paved the way for spiritual interest in Baldev's life.

College Events Factors

After coming to the USA at Pennsylvania State University for his doctorateal studies, Baldev narrated how, on his first day of college orientation, he encountered a spiritual club and spiritual practitioners who practiced the same strict and rigid spiritual lifestyle that Baldev was trying to avoid back in his undergraduate days. Knowing their rigid and disciplined lifestyle, he decided to stay away from that spiritual club and those student practitioners. However, the fascinating thing was, the spiritual club's president was Baldev's senior colleague in his department. Baldev had successfully avoided interacting with him for almost two and a half years but could not avoid him for long. So Baldev befriended his senior and other student practitioners of the club and started attending their spiritual development programs and workshops. Baldev narrated how he developed an interest in spirituality and spiritual practices on the Penn State University campus in his words as follows:

I gradually started attending their spiritual programs, which involved reading their books, scriptures and experiencing the warmth of their association, which was very congenial and affectionate. So slowly, I started developing an interest in spirituality and spiritual practices. I had also started spending time with these spiritual practitioners. So, I sort of got convinced that not all spiritual practitioners of the same faith need to have the same mode of practice. So, I was pretty much impressed with their practice, and it very much suited my temperament and type. Slowly over a period of time, some of the stalwart spiritual leaders of this spiritual NPO started visiting us. They were visiting us because ours was one of the best student club programs in US universities. One

of the well-attended programs and ours was a college campus, and so many spiritual leaders from a particular spiritual NPO used to visit us. They used to come and give their time and association, and they used to conduct spiritual training and workshops. So slowly, I started becoming more conversant with my philosophical understanding. When I started hearing the philosophy, it was quite attractive. And because I grew in a family that believed in pretty much the same philosophy, it was sort of easy for me to accept it.

From Baldev's story, it is evident certain college events triggered Baldev's interest in spirituality. Some of those college-related factors were: Encountering spiritual practitioners during his undergraduate college days, encountering spiritual clubs, spiritual practitioners, and spiritual leaders at Penn State University campus. Also, attending a spiritual development workshop conducted by student leaders and spiritual leaders, reading spiritual literature and spiritual philosophy. These were some of the factors that played a significant role in Baldev's inclination towards spiritual life.

Visits to Eco farms in Pennsylvania and West Virginia Factors

How did the interest in spirituality get so deep-rooted that Baldev eventually decided to give up his career aspirations for which he had worked so hard and become a monk? Baldev narrated his transformational journey in detail. He said after developing an interest in spirituality and engaging in spiritual practices, he wondered if the spiritual philosophy and spiritual principles that he read in the spiritual books and scriptures could be lived and applied in day-to-day life and if one could live by those principles 24 by 7. Although he had interacted and met some monks and spiritual leaders from a

particular spiritual NPO on his campus and had seen monks dedicating their life to spirituality, Baldev still had his doubts. However, his doubts were dissipated when he visited two farming communities. One is the GitaNagari eco-farm in Pennsylvania, another in West Virginia belonging to the same NPO.

At those farms, he saw some monks and spiritual practitioners applying and living by the spiritual principles mentioned in the eastern spiritual books, for example, living in harmony with nature. At GitaNagari eco-farm in Pennsylvania, Baldev said he saw the spiritual practitioners treated the earth as a benevolent provider, just like one's own mother. They used nonpolluting chemicals to grow the food and tilled the soil using equipment that would not cause excessive damage to mother earth. Such a simple farming activity of treating mother earth with compassion had left a positive impression on Baldev's mind. He said he had never seen such an application of the spiritual principle of compassion, even in India. Baldev was surprised that people so far away from the eastern culture, born in a different faith, different geographical location practicing and applying spiritual principles of compassion and non-violence with sincerity. Seeing these spiritual practitioners practice and use spiritual culture in their daily life, Baldev said he had a paradigm shift in his thinking. He realized that spiritual philosophy does not get confined to spiritual books and scriptures but could be lived and applied in everyday life.

After experiencing a practical application of spiritual principles at the GitaNagari eco-farm, Baldev had a similar experience at another eco-farm community in West

Virginia. At the West Virginia farm, Baldev experienced an epiphany moment. Baldev described that experience as follows:

I felt the same experience visiting the other bigger farm community in West Virginia, where we used to go not so often but for some festivals and bigger workshops. So, it was something that very much inspired me. During these visits, I heard the spiritual wisdom from some of the monks/SL from this spiritual NPO. I got to see them first hand, the way they were dealing, the way they were speaking, and the kind of genuine concern and compassion that they had for everyone, which touched my heart, and at that time, I felt the need for spiritual guidance. Because hearing the reflections and realizations that they were sharing, I understood that books/scriptures are very pivotal in one's spiritual development. But there are things that need to be decoded from the words of these books. After years and decades of solid, sincere spiritual practice, I understood that spiritual leaders would transform the scriptures' words into practical realizations. When such elevated spiritual personalities/leaders share their realizations of practicing, the spiritual philosophy is much more digestible. So that was quite inspiring for me. So, at that time, I understood that I need guidance. I can't just read the books and scriptures and hope to ace spirituality... By then, I had met many spiritual leaders, so I got specifically inspired by one of the leaders I wanted to go for spiritual guidance. We used to have weekly conference call meetings, where we used to have many spiritual discussions. So, this went on for a while, and whenever I used to get a long weekend, I used to

travel to West Virginia to spend more time with him. And slowly but imperceptibly, I started developing a taste for that kind of living, monkhood living.

Thus, at both places, Gita Nagari Eco Farm and West Virginia farms, Baldev met and interacted with many spiritual leaders. He saw and experienced spiritual leaders/monks' lifestyle, leadership qualities, behavior with their followers, and social welfare activities. Baldev also received spiritual guidance from them. Thus, spiritual leaders' influence was one significant influencing factor in Baldev's life that set him thinking and inclined towards monkhood life.

Spiritual Leaders Influence Factor

The spiritual leaders and monk's lifestyle had inspired Baldev to such an extent that gradually the thought of becoming a monk was building within him. Around that time, Baldev also started experiencing phases of dissatisfaction and lack of fulfillment in his life. However, he could not identify the reason for his discontent. According to Baldev, there were no stumbling blocks in his life, nor did he face any personal crisis to trigger the lack of fulfillment feeling within him. He said he was good with his studies, the research work was going well, and he had a very understanding and supportive boss as his Ph.D. advisor. Baldev said it was his boss who first noticed signs of discontent and advised him to seek medical help. However, Baldev noted that when he spent time with spiritual leaders and practitioners, it brought solace to him, and he could overcome his dissatisfaction and depression issues in their association. Reflecting on that experience, Baldev said perhaps it was the dilemma and his indecisiveness between two options that

distressed and confused him. On one side, he was weighing an option of becoming a monk, and on the other side was his long-cherished academic goal of becoming a researcher and professor for which he had worked so hard. During that dilemma phase, He went through a serious self-questioning phase. Baldev narrated that dilemma and indecisiveness phase, his questioning phase, and the transition phase as follows:

What is a worthy cause to dedicate my life to? Do I still want to pursue my career as a researcher and teacher, or am I convinced of a higher aspiration? Or is it that I want to learn spiritual science a little more deeply? Maybe act in some ways to reach the spiritual message to others? And considering the sort of unpredictability, I had seen a few monks, but in the long run, how exactly would the monkhood life pan out for me? Whether I will be able to live a life like that? Is it just a choice, or are there some qualifications involved? Whether I will suit the qualifications to become a monk or not? The kind of uncertainties that I was looking into created a very unstable situation in my life then...Because I was giving up an ambition that I had cherished for a very long time, and I had worked very hard for it. Perhaps it was an internally very hurting and emotionally wrenching phase for me. At some stage, from a little liking to some serious liking to some serious involvement, to considering it as a career choice, it happened gradually over two years, I would say. But it was imperceptibly happening. I can't pinpoint when it changed from here to there.

From the above-narrated experience, it is understandable that it was a tough decision for Baldev to make. To select between his long-cherished professional and

academic goals or become a monk. He had to choose between two opposite career and lifestyle choices. Most people in his position would perhaps experience the same dilemma and indecisiveness. So how did Baldev eventually overcome his indecision and decide to become a monk? What factors led Baldev to incline towards the decision to become a monk? To answer this question and decode the triggering factors, Baldev mentioned a documentary he watched showcasing the monk's lifestyle at a monastery in Mumbai that gave him clarity and strengthened his conviction of becoming a monk. He also talked about the spiritual lectures available on the monastery's website, thus aiding his decision. During the dilemma phase, what helped Baldev get the clarity? To answer that question, Baldev replied:

I started hearing some of the talks about spirituality regularly from a particular NPO's website. So that was very impressive for me. That gave me a lot of clarity and conviction. Slowly these lectures were the ones that gradually removed the roadblocks that would have probably stopped me from choosing to accept monkhood. The online spiritual lectures created a lot of curiosity and interest in exploring that particular NPO monastery center. There was a sort of documentary made about this particular monk community. So, when I started watching the documentary, it was like a lollipop land. I thought, my god if in reality there is a community like this living a life of benevolence and cooperation and kindness and concern for others and centered around serving the Lord, I thought I want to find out if it's all real. The documentary showed how the monks stayed together and how they related to the external world also. It was not like they were in their

own seclusion practicing, not in touch with the world, but how they were also contributing to the outside world for their development and how the outside world was responding to them. So that I would say was a major influence..... More or less, towards the end of my Ph.D. I had pretty much made up my mind to become a monk. And it was a gradual transition, but definitely, towards the end of my Ph.D. I had already made my career choice.

It is evident from the above statements the documentary showcasing the monks' lifestyle and activities in the monastery and online lectures by spiritual leaders acted as a final trigger for Baldev. These two factors eventually gave Baldev clarity to resolve the career choice dilemma and set him on the monkhood path.

When asked Baldev, why monkhood? Why could he not practice spirituality being a scientist or a professor? Baldev acknowledged that monkhood is not a prerequisite for practicing spirituality. However, it was just one way in which one could practice spirituality without many distractions. Baldev also believed that monkhood does not necessarily indicate advancement in spirituality, but becoming a monk is a personal choice based on individuals' spiritual inspiration. He said his experience of spending time with the monks, hearing spiritual wisdom from them, seeing the kind of work they do, their contribution to society's welfare profoundly impacted him. He decided to become a monk because it offered him a satisfying and meaningful life to live.

Summary

In summary, many embedded factors led Baldev to change his career trajectory from a material scientist to being a spiritual scientist listed in Table 10.

Table 10

Baldev's Triggering Factors

Triggering Factors (Themes)	Triggering Factors (Categories)
Family and childhood Growing-up Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staying away from family in boarding school and college dormitory.
Search for Meaning and Purpose in life	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experienced phases of dissatisfaction and lack of fulfillment in life lead him to search for a meaningful life.
College Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meeting spiritual leaders and practitioners on a college campus• Attending spiritual bhakti yoga club on campus• The positive influence of peers practicing spirituality.• Student-peers spiritual practitioners' positive impact
Spiritual Philosophy Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading spiritual, philosophical literature
Monastery Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A paradigm shift in thinking after meeting spiritual leaders and visits to eco farms• Observing practical application of the spiritual principle• Monastery documentary on monk's life at the monastery• Monastery set up and facilities for the monks
Spiritual Leaders Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guidance from SL on the college campus and eco farms.• Closely observing SL spiritual qualities and lifestyle.• Closely observing SL activities and impact on society
Spiritual Training and Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attending spiritual training and development workshops conducted by SL on campus and eco farms• Online lectures, conference calls conducted by SL

Findings for RQ 2: Activities and Impact

Interview Question: If you are engaged in any training and development, origination development, educational, leadership development, social welfare activities, please describe them in detail, and how do you perceive the impact of your activities at various levels?

Baldev said he contributes at different levels and is involved in various types of activities. He mentioned that in their monastery, many spiritual leaders are involved in various activities. Some SL are engaged in corporate training and development, where they conduct workshops on lifestyle management and other topics. Furthermore, monks/SL are involved in family counseling, some cater to the students' spiritual developmental needs, and some are engaged in writing. Some monks/SL visit rural areas and conduct spiritual development workshops under rural development initiatives. Baldev said after trying out various roles at the monastery, he somehow seamlessly gelled into guiding the insiders. He shared that he is involved in conducting training and development workshops for fellow monks in his monastery.

Training and Development for Fellow Monks/Spiritual Leadership Development

Baldev said many of his fellow monks/SL are involved in catering to many people's spiritual developmental needs at different levels. The monks/SL interact with diverse audiences, their followers, corporate leaders, corporate employees, community members, college students, tribal people, and others. The monks/SL main activity is explaining and presenting the spiritual philosophy and wisdom in an efficient and palatable way to their audience. To cater to their audience's spiritual development needs, the monks themselves need to have a strong understanding of their spiritual philosophy and practices. Before they teach their audience, the monks/SL need to have an in-depth knowledge of spiritual philosophy, nuances, and complexities. They need to equip themselves with spiritual technology and tools.

So Baldev's role is to equip the fellow monks/SL with spiritual technology and tools. Baldev is involved in studying various Vedic spiritual texts and scriptures and systematically educating fellow monks/SL to achieve that objective. He designs, develops, and conducts different kinds of courses for fellow monks/SL and helps them understand and build a solid foundation of their core spiritual philosophy. Baldev believes if monks/SL have a strong understanding of spiritual philosophy, only then could they take essential conclusions from the philosophy and simplify it in a way that would cater to their audience's spiritual development needs. Baldev said his prime responsibility is to provide spiritual nourishment and empowerment to the monks/SL, so they reach out to the people in the world and teach the general public spiritual science. Thus, Baldev is involved in the training and development of the fellow monks, spiritual leadership development, and organization development.

Spiritual Development Training Courses for monks/SL Activities

Elaborating on the spiritual training courses and the topic he designs for the monks, Baldev said:

We have one course, which is self-evaluation tools. Because people practice spirituality, they are clueless about whether they are progressing or not or to know if they have hit a roadblock. Our Vedic scriptures have given clues and milestones of progress for spiritual practitioners to know if they are progressing or regressing or stagnant in their spiritual development. So, there are very clear-cut self-evaluation tools. Evaluation tools in spirituality that's one of the courses that I

conduct. Another course is a lifestyle course, a spiritual lifestyle course, i.e., what are the components of a spiritual lifestyle? How do you develop it? How do you avoid certain aspects which are against the development of such a lifestyle? That's another course that I offer, and are a little more focused on developing the right kind of mood for spiritual growth. How do you study your spiritual practices? How do you identify the stumbling blocks, and how do you work on them? These kinds of internal development courses I design and teach the monks in our monastery.

Baldev has designed and facilitated many courses for the monks and spiritual leaders at his monastery, other centers, and Bhaktivedanta Vidyapeeth college. He has recorded many lectures that are available on the monastery's website. The NPO organization website data indicates Baldev has uploaded more than 1400 audio recorded talks and more than 200 video lectures and spiritual talks on YouTube and the monastery's website. His spiritual talks and classes are in the public domain and accessible to all. Baldev's YouTube lectures have received thousands of views.

Spiritual Development Courses for Community Members Activities

Besides conducting the monks' spiritual development training program, Baldev also mentioned he conducts training and development programs for the community members, families, and married people. About that activity, this is what Baldev had to say:

For the last two years, I have also reached out to the extended community of practicing spiritualists in householder life and family people. I have been offering similar courses with slight modifications to them also. Some courses I conduct in Mumbai and some in the place where I'm staying in the farm community...

People in the community are mostly married people who have been practicing spirituality for at least a few years sincerely. I conduct courses for those people or practitioners.

Happy or Regrets to be Monk/SL and Benefits of Becoming a Monk/SL

When asked if he was happy with his decision to be a monk, Baldev replied as follows:

If I had taken up any other job outside, yes, I would have probably been in the kind of profession that I was aspiring or looking for, i.e., teaching, a very fulfilling profession. I would have taught material science if I would have pursued it, but now I am teaching spiritual science and teaching spirituality.

When I see people's lives transform, that gives me much more satisfaction. I feel I am contributing something valuable, making a good impact, impacting people's lives, helping them get better quality, better goals, and better aspirations to help develop better qualities. It's like more internal satisfaction. It is very, very satisfying. On a personal front, this is what I feel, and this is what I have gained.

Definition of Spirituality and Spiritual Leader

For Baldev, spirituality is:

In my understanding, spirituality is something to do with your actual existence, apart from the external coverings. You know what we may be identifying with spirituality comes from spirit. So, in our understanding, we are spirit souls who are very much connected in the mood of a loving relationship with god but somehow, due to a lot of external influence, we have forgotten that original loving relationship with god. So those activities could help us re-establish that loving relationship and a life dedicated to that particular purpose. That's what I see as spiritual and spiritual activities.

Baldev defined spiritual leaders and described their qualities and traits as follows:

The spiritual leader, I would say he must have sincerely practiced and experienced the fruit of his practice and have genuine burning compassion to share that message with others and facilitating. So, three aspects one is a personal experience, the second is concerned for others. The third is that the concern must translate into a personal sacrifice for facilitating others' spiritual development. If these three aspects are there, you can consider that person as a spiritual leader. The spiritual leader's biggest trait is compassion. Everything has a root cause, and compassion is one of the root causes, but even if you go deeper, compassion is born out of one's genuine spiritual growth. So genuine spiritual growth gives rise to compassion, and compassion gives rise to all the other good qualities, like sensitivity, willingness to sacrifice one's time, energy, resources for others'

development, and practically selfless life—a selfless life but not with regret.

Joyful, selfless life, I would say.

Summary

Baldev’s activity in the monastery and community is very specific and focused. He is involved in the monks’ training and development, leadership development of spiritual leaders, and community members' spiritual development, as listed in Table 11. Since Baldev always wanted to become a teacher, a professor, currently, instead of teaching material science, he teaches spiritual science. He is happy being the instrument in transforming people’s lives.

Table 11

Baldev’s Activities

HRD Activities	Spiritual Leaders Activities	Perceived Impact
Training and Development Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing and conducting spiritual training for monastery monks/SL • Designing and conducting Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training helps provide spiritual nourishment and empowerment to the monks/SL. They can then reach out to the people in the world and teach the general public spiritual science. • Address spiritual development needs of the general populace. • Help people develop spiritual qualities and transform their lives. • A well-developed leadership curriculum facilitates achieving the training objectives.

Arjun's Story

This section focused on Arjun's story, starting with his background and findings to research questions in subsequent sections.

Background

Arjun is a millennial-generation monk/SL residing in a Mumbai monastery. Arjun is a medical doctor by education and qualification. He graduated in 2004 with a Bachelor of Ayurveda Medicine and Surgery (BAMS) from the Maharashtra University of Health Sciences. After his graduation, he practiced medicine for a year with his family.

When asked why he chose to become a doctor and what skills and expertise he possessed, Arjun replied that he came from a family of doctors. His entire family, parents, uncles, and cousins, are all doctors. Therefore, he did not think of any other career option but to become a doctor. He said most of his family members practiced Ayurveda medicine and dealt with many chronic cases. His family had cured chronic illnesses, and he had assisted his family in treating the patients with ayurvedic medicines. So, his expertise and skill are in Ayurvedic medicine and treatment. Talking about his work experience, Arjun said he worked for a very brief period after graduation and joined the monastery to become a monk.

Findings for RQ 1: Triggering Factors

Interview question: Please describe your journey of becoming a monk; describe the reasons/triggering factors/influences that led you to decide to give up your professional career and become a spiritual leader?

Family and Childhood Growing-up Factors

Arjun said the primary factor for his interest in spirituality was his family background. He said his family practiced spirituality, Bhakti Yoga philosophy, and performed spiritual practices and rituals at home. The profundity of bhakti-yoga spiritual philosophy and the practitioners who practiced it had positively impacted Arjun since his childhood. He mentioned that though spirituality was an integral part of his growing up, he had no ambition nor a desire to become a monk ever.

College Events Factors

Arjun said when he was in medical college and was on the verge of completing his medical degree, he came in touch with a spiritual leader from a particular spiritual monastery. The influence of the spiritual leader he met was so strong that Arjun got in touch with the monastery where the spiritual teacher lived. Slowly, he got introduced to the monastery's spiritual teachings, philosophy, and practices and felt inspired. He read the spiritual literature, learned about spiritual philosophy, and got introduced to spiritual practices and practitioners at the monastery. According to Arjun, getting introduced to the spiritual leader and monastery during his college days was a turning point in his life. It opened up new avenues to practice spirituality, lit the spark and the desire to become a monk in him. When asked what qualities of the spiritual leader inspired him that he decided to become a monk?

Spiritual Leader Influence Factors

Talking about the influence of one senior spiritual leader, a Guru at the monastery, Arjun narrated the impact and experience as follows:

I was very much inspired by his teachings, his personality per se, although being at such a high stature, high pedestal, by demonstrating an ideal humble life of a monk and a leader. And one thing that interestingly touched me was although he was not a scholar in terms of his educational background. Yet, he could impact, he could create transformation in the life of highly educated people. So, what I saw was although he was not so educated still, the people he influenced, people who joined the monastery, came from a very high-class educated background. So that intrigued me. That made me wonder how that is possible? But this is what I saw here at this monastery: this spiritual leader of a monastery was very much influencing many people coming from IIT background, engineers, lawyers, doctors who would otherwise never take to spirituality. So that intrigued me, that opened my entire outlook, and that inspired me further.

When asked if it was just the influence of a spiritual leader, his personality, and his lifestyle that drove Arjun towards monkhood, or were other factors responsible for his decision to become a monk? Arjun reflected on his quest for the search and finding meaning and purpose phase in his life.

Search for Meaning and Purpose in Life Factors

Arjun acknowledged that when he was on the verge of completing his medical studies, besides meeting the spiritual leader on his campus and his influence on him, many intertwined factors led him to the introspecting and questioning phase. He started reflecting and questioning his medical career pursuit, its meaning, and purpose. Since Arjun was studying to become an Ayurvedic Doctor, he reflected on the Ayurveda

definition of health, its principles, purpose, and how he could stay true to the Ayurveda's principles. Throwing some light on what Ayurveda medicine is, Arjun said Ayurveda is more of a theistic science and philosophy. Ayurveda's definition of true health is comprehensive compared to the World Health Organization (WHO) definition.

Ayurveda does not just focus on bodily or physical health aspects but also focuses on the other two aspects inseparable from the body: the mind and the soul. Arjun described his introspection phase for a search for meaning and purpose in his life as follows:

Until the year 2003, when I was graduating, I had come across doctors who were treating the bodily part and doing their best. But I searched for someone who was also trying to heal and treat people suffering at the mental level and what to speak of spiritual; they were completely ignorant. So, when I came in contact with the spiritual leaders and practitioners at this monastery, I got a different outlook. I thought, okay, I am a doctor in one sense, but let me broaden my domain where I can not only treat people who are physically ill but treat someone at the mental and spiritual level too. So, I would say I did not change my profession or turn away from my profession, but I broaden or widen my profession's domain. So that's how I just thought that if I can serve society by helping people by curing their mental or spiritual illness, that would also create an impact. Because when Ayurveda speaks about complete health, we cannot just focus on the physical and neglect the other two. So, I wanted to become a complete doctor, i.e., treat patients physically, mentally, and spiritually.

Influence of Historical Spiritual Leaders' Biographies Factors

Along with searching for meaning and purpose in the life phase, Arjun also talked about how two historical, spiritual teachers and their biographies influenced his decision to become a monk. Arjun described the impact on him as follows:

Srila Prabhupada's life very much enamored me. His entire life sketch is something worth reading and worth taking inspiration from. So right from the beginning, I got very much inspired by this personality. When I heard the entire life sketch of Raghunath Dasa Goswami, that impacted me a lot, of how he came from an affluent family and eventually became a monk; despite all the obstacles in his life, he was determined to be on this spiritual path. So, his entire life sketch kept ringing in my mind, kept hitting my heart hard. So that was also one of the turning points in my life where historical characters and their life sketch influenced me more than just a story. So, when you have a live example or have a lineage of spiritual teachers who have lived by the spiritual principles, then that makes all the difference. That was one of the turning points in my life.

Professional Dissatisfaction Factors

After completing the medical studies, Arjun started practicing medicine. Arjun mentioned he experienced levels of dissatisfaction and frustration while practicing as a doctor. Arjun believed the main reason for his distressed state of mind was the stressful lifestyle his profession demanded. While working as a practicing doctor, he experienced a paradoxical professional situation. As a doctor, he was supposed to make his patients lead a stress-free, healthy, and happy life, but he found himself leading a stressful and unhappy life because of hectic professional work demands and lifestyle. Arjun felt it

would not be possible for him to continue living such a stressful, hectic, and unhappy life his entire life. Experiencing the professional paradox and dilemma, he sought guidance from the monastery's spiritual leader and started practicing mantra meditation. By engaging in spiritual practices, he experienced satisfaction and a sense of meaning in his life. His spiritual practice and interaction with the monks in the monastery further fanned his desire to become a monk.

Family Support Factors

Clarifying his stance, Arjun said some people turn to spirituality when they have no other career options or experience family problems. However, that was not the case with him. He came from a very affluent, educated, and spiritual family background. There were no financial problems in his family. He received parental love and affection in abundance, and his family always supported him and his spiritual practice. They never created obstacles or put any pressure on his decisions to become a monk. Arjun felt that he could become a monk with clarity and transition into the monkhood lifestyle with ease because of his family support. Therefore, after completing his medical degree and working for some duration, Arjun eventually found happiness and solace in spirituality and at a monastery.

Monastery Factors

Another factor that played a central role in Arjun's decision to become a monk was the monastery's one-year monkhood training. Arjun mentioned that for individuals interested in becoming a monk, the monastery offered a one-year residential training program where individuals could stay in the monastery and simultaneously work in the

real world as a working professional. This one-year residential training's main objective was to provide highly educated and skilled professionals with an opportunity to explore and experience both lifestyles.

By working in the corporate world, an individual would weigh both the lifestyles' pros and cons. Corporate jobs would provide them with an opportunity to earn and perhaps live a comfortable life. In comparison, a monkhood lifestyle would not offer an individual to make any money, nor any lavish amenities. As a monk, they would live a very simple life with minimalistic needs. The monkhood life meant the individual would focus 24/7 on their spiritual development and teach the spiritual science to others. Arjun undertook the monk's training, experienced both lifestyles, and decided to become a monk with clarity and confidence after evaluating his choices. Arjun talks about that training factor in his life as follows:

Becoming a monk is not as easy as it appears from the outside, and I was aware of this fact, so I thought, okay, let me give it a try. So for one year from 2004 September till 2005 September, I got enrolled in this training program where I used to practice my medicine, and at the same time, I used to come and stay in the monastery and have a very close view or have a very close experience of what the world outside is and what the world here in a monastery is, and what the lifestyle of a monk is. In 2005 December, I eventually decided to become a full-time monk after undergoing a year of proper monkhood training.

An Intrinsic Desire for Social Service Factors

Arjun also said another critical factor in his decision to become a monk was his desire to teach spiritual science to others and make them experience the benefits of practicing spirituality.

Summary

In summary, many triggering factors were responsible for Arjun’s decision to become a monk/SL, as listed in Table 12.

Table 12

Arjun’s Triggering Factors

Triggering Factors (Themes)	Triggering Factors (Categories)
Family and childhood Growing-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing up in a religious and spiritual family • Attracted to spirituality since childhood • Family supported his spiritual pursuits
An intrinsic desire for social service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wanted to teach Spiritual Science to others
Spiritual Quest/Search for Meaning and Purpose in life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experienced professional paradox leading to reflect on the definition, meaning, and purpose of being a doctor and life in general
College Campus Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met spiritual leaders during his college phase • Visited monastery during his college days
Work-Related factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experienced phases of professional dissatisfaction • Experienced professional paradoxical situation
Spiritual Philosophy Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Found spiritual philosophy and literature convincing
Monastery Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try a monkhood life experiential training • Closely observing the monastery lifestyle • SD training conducted by SL at the monastery • Monastery set up and facilities for the monks • Experiential spiritual practices

Table 12 Continued

Triggering Factors (Themes)	Triggering Factors (Categories)
Spiritual Leaders Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inspired by the qualities of the senior spiritual leader (Guru) at the monastery• Inspired by historical, spiritual leaders' biographies• Received regular support, guidance, training from Spiritual leaders• Seeing monks/SL lifestyle, their activities/contribution/impact on Society
Spiritual Training and Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular attendance of Spirituality workshop at the monastery

Findings for RQ 2: Activities and Impact

Arjuna said he is involved in various projects undertaken by the monastery, as described in subsequent sections.

NPO Management and Organization Development Activities

Arjun said he is part of the core management team in his monastery and handles various departments, functions, and operations. Some of the activities and responsibilities he handles are as follows:

Mass Food Cooking and Distribution. Arjun said there are many responsibilities and activities at the monastery. Depending on monks/SL interests and inclination, they have the freedom to select the activities and services they find themselves eligible to perform in whatever capacity they can. Arjun said when he joined the monastery, he was fond of cooking. So, he started assisting in the kitchen and cooked meals for all the monks/SL in the monastery. To date, Arjun loves cooking for fellow

monks and helps in the kitchen for community cooking and food distribution as and when required.

Deity Worship. There are many beautiful deities at the temple monastery. As part of Indian temple culture, dressing the temple deities in gorgeous outfits and ornaments is part of monks/SL daily deity worship, spiritual practice, and ritual. On special occasions and festivals, the deities are dressed and adorned with special festive outfits. Arjun is involved in interacting with the designers to design different deity outfits for various events and festivals and manages the team in charge of deity worship. The impact he mentioned was that beautifully decorated deities attract many visitors and tourists to the temple and, in the process, learn about Indian spiritual culture and tradition.

Festival decorations. Arjun said for special events and festivals; they decorate their temple and monastery with flowers and other decorating items. He is responsible for managing and leading the decoration team, which includes many volunteers and fellow monks.

Fundraising Activity. Arjun said he is also involved in fundraising for the monastery. As in when the need arises, he goes out and collects funds.

Mentor/Guide/Philosopher. As a management leader, he handles the role and responsibility of guiding and mentoring people. He acts as the mentor and guide for many people, within the monastery and outside the monastery

Serving and Assisting Senior Spiritual Leaders. Arjun is also involved in

serving and assisting senior spiritual leaders at the monastery. For Arjun serving his senior leaders brings a lot of satisfaction and joy. Talking about serving his seniors, Arjun said:

Above all, the best is that I get the privilege of serving some senior monks and senior spiritual leaders very closely. That gives me a lot of nourishment and inspiration in life. So, service to our senior spiritual leader is the key to success in spiritual life. This is what I strongly feel. So that is one area where I offer my service.

Training and Development Activities

Arjun said he is also involved in conducting spiritual training and development workshops for community and congregation members, medical college students, and medical faculty. Describing his training and development activities for varied audience, Arjun said:

The audience is mainly doctors because I come from a medical background, So I do have a training program in the medical colleges. Every week I go to JJ Medical College, and I try to share this spiritual wisdom with the students and the faculty members. So, there are a lot of faculty members who are interested in learning what spirituality is. Spiritual care is one of the inbuilt inseparable aspects, so the medical students and medical faculty are my main audience. I also conduct some congregation programs where the congregation members who are already practicing spirituality, giving them inspiration on how to continue and sustain their spiritual practice.

Arjun said he also uses his Ayurvedic medical background and professional skills to conduct workshops on Ayurveda for the congregation and the community members. He does not consult and treat patients but conducts seminars and training sessions for medical students and medical doctors. He trains and advises medical students and doctors on how they can be good doctors and practice with authenticity.

Leadership Development Activities

Arjuna said he takes inspiration from the Bhagavad Gita for leadership development. In Bhagavad Gita, Krishna states that whatever the leaders do, the common person follows. Based on that instruction, Arjun said, if the leaders in society create and set the right example, the right spirit, the mood, and the operation for the people, the common person will undoubtedly follow. In his opinion, people look for inspiration from their leader, and if they get that inspiration, they will follow their leader. Arjun said he tries to follow that leadership instruction and principle and attempts to become a good leader himself. To become a good leader, he focuses on improving his leadership skills, attitude, behavior, thoughts, activities, and lifestyle. He believes if he sets a good example, he will not have to make a separate endeavor to impress or impact people. People will automatically feel inspired, and in that way, he could impact their lives directly or indirectly.

Arjun said all the monks/SL at the monastery undergo a teacher training course to learn how to be an authentic teacher, leader, mentor, and guide to other people. Monks/SL get trained on the principles of servant leadership. As a part of their servant leadership training, the monks are taught not to expect anything in return but to serve the

society in whatever form, shape, and capacity they can serve. Arjun said servant leadership principles form the core foundation for their leadership development, and he uses these principles to train future leaders.

Benefits of Becoming a Monk/SL

When asked if he was happy about becoming a full-time monk or regretted his decision? Arjun replied as follows:

Of course, of course, I'm happy because I know I'm doing full justice to society and myself. Because more than serving society, it's a personal level of satisfaction, personal development, and personal advancement on this spiritual path. I get to see and experience the spiritual progress and development that is happening for sure. This process works for sure. And if I can endeavor to be an ideal person or leader whom people are eventually going to look up to, they will get inspired to follow this trend.

Definition of Spirituality and Spiritual Leaders

Arjun defined spirituality as follows:

Spirituality is very much a part of our life. It's not that it's an imposition or something that we need to add from outside. It is wholesome. Something that will bring about harmony in the world, outside, and the world within us: spirituality brings about true peace and happiness everywhere. Spirituality is all about creating bonding, peace, and love.

Arjun defined or described the spiritual leader's qualities as follows:

A true spiritual leader is a true servant, someone who is not just living a life for himself or herself but living his life for society. That means not having any selfish motives or selfish aggrandizement but living a life for the people. It's like a life of the people, for the people, and by the people. That's how I feel, the first and foremost quality that a spiritual leader has. The leader is willing to play any role, not just dictates, but he assists, serves, and inspires.

Summary

In summary, Arjun is engaged in serving the NPO at many levels, including training and development, organization development, and social welfare activities. Table 13 provides a snapshot of his activities and the perceived impact of his activities and contribution.

Table 13

Arjun's Activities

HRD Activities	Spiritual Leaders Activities	Perceived Impact
Leadership Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to be a good leader himself and set an example to others • Acts as a mentor/Guide/Philosopher to people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good leaders and their leadership inspires people • People follow in the footsteps of good leaders
Training and Development Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&D for Medical students and faculty on a college campus • T&D for community Members on Ayurveda medicines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical students and medical faculty learn the spiritual care aspect while treating patients • Trains and inspires others to become good servant leaders. • People learn ayurvedic lifestyle

Table 13 Continued

HRD Activities	Spiritual Leaders Activities	Perceived Impact
NPO Management and Organization Development Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cooking for resident monks• Festival decorations• Fundraising• Serving senior spiritual leaders• Deity Worship• Lead and manage Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NPO functions efficiently.• NPO and the community benefits from his professional expertise• Well maintained and decorated temple attracts visitors and tourists to their center and learn about India's spiritual culture and tradition

Chandra's Story

This section focused on Chandra's story, starting with his background and findings to research questions in subsequent sections.

Background

Chandra is a 40 years old monk residing in the Mumbai monastery. Before becoming a monk in 2002, he completed his Bachelor of Engineering in chemical technology from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Mumbai. He specialized in chemical technology dealing with different chemical and thermodynamic processes in petrochemicals and refineries. He was outstanding in his studies, especially math, and even represented his state for the National Mathematics Olympiad competition and remained class and college topper throughout his academic career. As an engineering student, he had worked on a nanoparticles project. After graduation, he worked for one year in the corporate sector. He described himself as a very scientific-minded person wanting to understand everything scientifically and rationally, including the topics of spirituality and religion.

Findings for RQ 1: Triggering Factors

Interview question: Please describe your journey of becoming a monk; describe the reasons/triggering factors/influences that led you to decide to give up your professional career and become a spiritual leader.

Chandra said he had always been good at mathematics. He was interested in research and innovation and wanted to use his education for social welfare, and hence he enrolled in IIT to become an engineer. Chandra never aspired to become a monk, and the thought of monkhood had never crossed his mind while growing up. On the contrary, he said, he would doubt and question his family and people practicing religion and spirituality.

Family and Childhood Growing-up Factor

Chandra said he grew up in a family with a staunch religious and spiritual environment. He would often question his parents and grandparents about certain religious and spiritual practices. He would ask them the following questions: why we do certain rituals? Why we offer prayers to god? Why are we doing this worship? What is the significance of different practices? Chandra said his parents and grandparents could never give him scientific and convincing answers, and hence he never developed any interest in religion and spirituality during his childhood. Religion and spirituality had left him with many unanswered questions related to these topics. Chandra said since he was very scientific-minded, he looked for scientific answers to these topics.

So, what led Chandra to go from no interest in spirituality to develop an interest in spirituality to such an extent that he changed his career trajectory and eventually

decided to become a monk/SL? What factors led him toward the monkhood/SL path? Chandra reflected on his undergraduate engineering college days in IIT, Mumbai, to answer these questions.

College Events Factors

Chandra said the spiritual transformation happened gradually, and certain events during his college days played a crucial role in his transformation. During his undergraduate days at IIT, he said many student spiritual organizations conducted spiritual development programs. Since Chandra had many unanswered questions on spirituality, he would explore some organizations and attend their discourses to seek answers on religion, spirituality, and faith. After attending many such spiritual talks by different spiritual organizations, he eventually met some monks/SL from a particular NPO monastery who provided scientific and convincing answers to his questions.

Existential Questions Factor

When probed what was so interesting about the spiritual leaders from a particular NPO, their talks which suddenly sparked his interest in spirituality, Chandra described the existential questions he faced while growing up and how monks/SL from NPO could provide a scientific explanation. He narrated that triggering experience as follows:

Because even in my childhood, I was confused about the purpose behind this whole existence. I was trying to explore through science and looking for reasons and reading books to figure out the purpose of this world, the whole universe, and why this whole design exists. I was also a very scientific-minded person. I was very good at mathematics. I even participated, represented my state for the

National Mathematics Olympiad. I was one of the toppers in my school, high school, and in my college. I had a very scientific mind, and I wanted to understand everything rationally, which was missing with my family. Of course, my family gave me a wonderful culture and everything but somehow, that scientific explanation was missing while I was growing. So, when I heard this talk by a spiritual leader, a monk, that made sense to me. That there is a purpose behind this design, there is a designer to this whole design. It's not just come up on its own. So, when I heard these thoughts, that provoked like that there is some substance in these spiritual people. They have some answers to questions, which I was looking for since childhood. I could understand the whole approach to spirituality was scientific.

Chandra said he gradually started interacting with the spiritual leader from a particular monastery and attending their weekly meetings and spiritual discourse on his campus. And in the subsequent meetings, he received scientific and convincing answers to all his existential questions. Besides getting his questions answered, Chandra said the spiritual leaders' qualities and selfless work for society also contributed to his interest in spirituality and spiritual leaders.

Spiritual Leaders and Peers Influence Factors

When probed to describe the spiritual leader's impact, what qualities and activities impressed Chandra, which triggered his interest in spirituality? Chandra said he found the spiritual leaders who would visit their campus every week, very humble, down-to-earth, happy, and satisfied in their demeanor. They would come to his college

and did not charge any fees for the spiritual development workshops. They were helpful and available to answer his and other student's queries. The monastery monks/SL also brought delicious vegetarian meals prepared in their monastery for the students for free. The SL selflessly served the student community to help them grow spiritually without any ulterior motive or any fees.

Besides spiritual leaders and their altruistic qualities, Chandra said some senior student practitioners on his campus also positively impacted him. Chandra said one of his senior Ph.D. students would help the junior students with their academics and spiritual practices. He would provide spiritual knowledge and guidance whenever he and other students needed it and acted as their spiritual mentor and guide on campus. His selfless and helpful attitude impressed Chandra. Thus, for Chandra, the spiritual leaders' and senior student spiritual practitioners' selfless and altruistic qualities, their spiritual guidance had triggered Chandra's interest in spirituality.

Monastery Factors

Besides spiritual leaders' influence, what other factors triggered him to monkhood path? At what point in his life did he think of becoming a monk? Recollecting his experience, Chandra said it was not just one incident or one experience that led him to the monkhood path. It was a gradual progression as he interacted more and more with the spiritual leaders of the monastery. On weekends, he would visit the monastery and spend time with the spiritual leaders. He would closely interact with the monks/SL and observe their monastery lifestyle in the monastery and their activities. Their lifestyle and selfless contribution to society's development and welfare had

increased Chandra's interest in spirituality many folds. The interest grew to such an extent that Chandra started to think if he could be a part of the monastery and live a monk's life. So, Chandra acknowledged that it was not a sudden decision but a very gradual progression towards monkhood. Thus, his monastery visits also played a triggering factor that set him seriously thinking about the monkhood path.

Training and Development by Spiritual Leaders

I requested Chandra to describe the nature and topics of the spiritual development training conducted by the spiritual leaders and how it influenced him. Chandra said Bhagavad Gita and Srimad Bhagavatam were the primary textbooks the spiritual leaders used to design and develop various spiritual development training. The spiritual leaders would cover topics related to the journey of self-discovery; what is real happiness? What is the concept of gods and demigods? Why do bad things happen to good people and good things happen to bad people? The spiritual leaders could conduct seminars and discussions on topics related to the soul. What is the real self? Chandra found these topics very interesting and intriguing, and therefore, the systematic spiritual training and development he received from the SL became an influencing factor in his spiritual transformation.

Corporate Work and Organization-related Factors

Chandra said he had more or less decided to become a monk during the last year of his college and dedicate his life to personal spiritual growth and others. However, after graduation, he joined the corporate world to explore and experience corporate work life. Chandra wanted to experiment if he could manage and balance his professional

career, spiritual practices, and social service activities. When he joined the corporate sector, Chandra mentioned that he did meet some good people. However, he also met many people who were selfish and self-centered. He found the work culture and work environment revolved around selfish motives. Whereas at the monastery, he had experienced monks living a selfless life. At the monastery, he had met highly educated and professionally skilled monks who had sacrificed their illustrious professional careers to serve society. Chandra had observed and experienced the monks were much happier than people who worked in corporate organizations. While working in the corporate world, he experienced the contradiction in the monk's and corporate professionals' lifestyle, work culture, attitudes, and behavior. Chandra realized he could be a misfit in the corporate world because of the selfish and self-centered work environment and culture. Chandra mentioned that he was very good at his work, he had a promising career prospect, and his company wanted to retain him. However, after working for one year, he decided to quit his job and join the monastery as a monk.

Thus, getting to experience the work culture from close quarters and comparing it with the monk's lifestyle and the quality of life, Chandra took his decision with clarity and confidence

Summary

In Summary, the factors that influenced Chandra to change his professional career trajectories to become a monk/SL, as listed in Table 14.

Table 14*Chandra's Triggering Factors*

Triggering Factors (Themes)	Triggering Factors (Categories)
Family and childhood growing up factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious and spiritual family background made Chandra curious and questioned religious and spiritual practices from early childhood • He never received scientific and convincing answers on spirituality from family, and those questions lingered on in his mind since childhood
Spiritual Quest/Search for Meaning and Purpose in life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Had questions like why we do certain rituals? Why we offer prayers to god? Why are we doing this worship? What is the significance of different practices? • Had questions about this world's purpose, the whole universe, and why this whole design exists?
College Campus Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explored spiritually related student clubs on campus to find scientific answers on spirituality. • Met spiritual leaders on a college campus, which provided scientific and convincing answers to Chandra's questions. • Spiritual practitioner's peers had a positive influence • More or less had decided to become a monk during his last year in college
Corporate Work and Organization related Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experienced contradiction with monks and working professionals' lifestyles, behavior, attitude, happiness levels • Found Monks life and the impact of their activities on society more inspiring than corporate work life • Found himself, misfit, to work in the corporate world because of the selfish and self-centered work environment (personal values conflict)
Monastery Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent visits to the monastery and interacting with the SL regularly • Getting to observe the SL monastery lifestyle

Table 14 Continued

Triggering Factors (Themes)	Triggering Factors (Categories)
Spiritual Leaders Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seeing monks/SL lifestyle, their activities/contribution/impact on Society invoked interest in spirituality• Regular support, guidance, training from Spiritual leaders
Spiritual Training and Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular attendance of Spirituality workshop on his campus and monastery

Findings for RQ 2: Activities and Impact

Interview Question: If you are engaged in any training and development, origination development, educational, leadership development, social welfare, please describe them in detail, and how do you perceive the impact of your activities at various levels?

Chandra responded as follows:

I feel I'm contributing more to society by becoming a monk than what I would have contributed as a regular IIT engineer. In the monastery, I started serving in the sick department. Then I was serving in the guest hospitality department. Currently, I'm engaged in different projects and services. I am one of the members of what we call the CARE committee. Since we are a big organization, particularly where I'm staying in Mumbai, we have over 100 monks, and we have various projects, various activities happening here. One project is Annamrita, the *food for life* program. Also, I am assisting one of our most senior

spiritual leaders in the organization. Whenever he is in this temple or when he is visiting India, I assist and serve him. So that is also one of my roles.

Subsequent sections describe Chandra's activities in detail.

Organization Development (CARE) Team Activities

Chandra said CARE does not stand for any acronym, but it was their team's name in the monastery responsible for taking care of the resident monk's needs. Chandra said the monastery is a house and for more than 100 monks, and the CARE team is responsible for taking care of the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the monks. Chandra said many individuals at their monastery come from very prestigious educational institutes with impressive professional backgrounds. Some of them come from very affluent families. Before becoming monks, most individuals had a comfortable life and had promising careers. For some, renouncing all the comforts and living in a minimalistic monastery setting is challenging. It is challenging for the monastery management to keep such individuals inspired and motivated. Thus, the monastery has a CARE team caring for monks, meeting their basic needs, and transitioning them into their new lifestyle.

According to Chandra, one of the CARE team's core responsibilities is to create a home-like environment in the monastery so that the resident monks feel comfortable and do not miss their home. The CARE team takes care of the resident monks' basic physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. The CARE team is responsible for making the monk's life more enriching and meaningful so they, in turn, could contribute their services to the welfare of society. The impact of this activity is monks feel cared for and

secured. They do not have to worry about their basic needs like food, shelter, and clothing. The monastery takes care of these basic needs. The monks can dedicate their time to the spiritual growth of self and others. Chandra said the CARE team's vision is to see every monk feel confident and satisfied with the spiritual growth of self, others, and their contribution to society.

Mid-day Meal for School Children Activities

Chandra said he is also involved in mid-day meals for school children, also known as Annamitra, a food for life project. The Indian government has worked with Chandra's NPO to provide free meals to school children, mostly underprivileged children. The impact is enormous. The poor children get one nutritious meal of the day and attend school.

Training and Development Activities

Chandra said he and other monks conduct spiritual training and workshops catering to a wide variety of audiences. His audiences range from people living in slums to the richest and wealthiest people living in Mumbai. Describing his T&D activity, he said:

We conduct Spiritual Development workshops for all parts and sections of society. For example, I conduct one program which is in the slums of Dharavi. It is a very famous slum, one of the poorest people in the slums of Mumbai, and we also conduct the same program in South Bombay, where we have some of the richest people in the whole country. So, we have a wide range of people who we are catering to their spiritual development needs. We conduct seminars,

workshops on life management and stress management based on the teachings of Bhagavad-Gita. So, I visit them and speak to the people there, help them, guide them. That's one of my roles.

Chandra said he has always received positive feedback from his audience. His training is well received and appreciated by various society sections as the SD training adds value to people's lives. People feel happy and enriched with spiritual knowledge. People welcome monks and spiritual leaders to conduct T&D programs at their homes and community and receive personal guidance in their spiritual development. Because the monks/SL do not charge any fees for their training programs, people in the community get impressed by the monk's selfless service. Monks/SL lifestyle and their selfless service attitude set an excellent example for people to follow.

Leadership Development Activities

Chandra said he is actively engaged in the leadership development of individuals who join their monastery to become monks/SL. Chandra said he is a part of the internal organization development committee within his monastery, and he organizes and facilitates different training workshops for the monks/SL. The monks get trained to become future spiritual servant leaders. Chandra also mentioned that the monastery sometimes invites outside trainers to train the monks for specific skills development, such as improving communication skills.

Rural Development Activities

Chandra said the monks/SL from their monastery have built and developed a self-sustainable village two hours away from their monastery. Around 100 plus monks

live in that eco-village. Many tribal villages surround their eco-village, and many monks/SL are involved in several rural development projects. Chandra mentioned the Indian government had initiated many tribal and rural development initiatives. However, most of the time, government schemes do not reach the tribal people. Therefore, the monks/SL at the monastery are involved in educating the local tribal people about various government schemes to help the local villagers take advantage of rural development schemes. Under rural development initiatives, the monks/SL conduct training workshops for farmers in organic farming, train women to become financially self-sustainable, and conduct vocational training for the youth.

Self-Development Activities

Besides handling many monastery activities, Chandra said he and all the fellow monks follow very disciplined, committed, and focused spiritual self-development activities. Chandra explained their day starts at 4 am. From 4 am to 9: 30 am, all the monks/SL are engaged in their daily spiritual practices, including meditation, reading spiritual literature and scriptures, textbooks, chanting, offering prayers to the spiritual masters and the temple deities. After breakfast, the monks/SL do their assigned monastery services, and it could be as menial as cleaning the monastery. In the afternoon, the monks gather for spiritual talks or lectures given by senior spiritual leaders. In the evenings, he visits universities to conduct spiritual development training workshops for the students. If he has invitations from any family, he visits them for counseling or to give a spiritual talk or lecture. Chandra said he usually spends two to three days of a week at their eco-village and oversees rural development projects.

Complex Problems and Spiritual Solution

Based on his experience, observations, and interaction with people from society, Chandra highlighted two predominant complex problems gripping our world. One is the dissatisfaction and shallowness people experience in different relationships. Chandra thinks the probable reason for this problem could be the many distractions in people's lives, such as social media. Another problem is the environmental crisis. Chandra opines that selfish desires drive both these problems, and cleanings one's heart by spiritual development and practices could be the possible solution to these problems. He explains the spiritual solution as follows:

Environmental crisis or environmental pollution we are seeing is also primarily leading from the selfish desires which one is having within oneself. I see this ecological issue also from a deeper perspective. At our Govardhan eco-village, we have these water conservation programs. We were awarded many awards for water conservation, and then we have a zero-waste model. So, all those things we are taking the initiative, but on a deeper level, if we clean the heart through a spiritual message through the spiritual practices, we will see a cleaner world. Cleansing the heart means becoming more conscious about oneself and the surrounding, the environment. So, when you are conscious, you will care; you are conscious of how you deal with mother earth, how you deal with yourself, how you deal with your neighbor, etc.

Definition of Spirituality and Spiritual Leaders

Chandra defined spirituality as follows:

Re-establishing our connection with the divine and the natural outcome of that would be service to humanity. When you see everything in relationship to Divine or god, you see every living entity as part of god, and then you see everyone as your brother or sister and then the natural desire to serve them.

Chandra defined Spiritual Leaders as follows:

A spiritual leader is one who is ready to sacrifice. One who connects with spiritual practices sincerely and who teaches the universal message of god to all.

Summary

In summary, Chandra is contributing to society on many levels and positively impacting people's lives of all sections and strata of society. The list of Chandra's activities as a spiritual servant leader and its perceived impact is listed in Table 15.

Table 15

Chandra's Activities

HRD Activities	Spiritual Leaders Activities	Perceived Impact
Training and Development Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&D for community people living in slums to the richest of the rich. • T&D for monks/SL • T&D of College students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SD training adds value to people's lives • People feel happy and enriched with spiritual knowledge • Since monks/SL do not charge any SD training fees, their selfless service attitude sets an excellent example for people and corporate for CSR? • The monks/SL get trained to become future spiritual leaders. • Students' spiritual developmental needs are addressed

Table 16 Continued

HRD Activities	Spiritual Leaders Activities	Perceived Impact
Rural Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees many Rural development projects at their eco-village. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many government schemes do not reach the tribal people. Therefore, the monks/SL at the monastery educate the local tribal people about various government schemes to help them take advantage of rural development schemes. Empower tribal and rural villages to become self-sustainable
NPO Organization Development Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CARE team for residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By taking care of the monks/SL basic needs, they don't have to worry about their food, shelter, and clothing needs. The monks can dedicate their time to the spiritual growth of self and other
Mid-day Meal for Schoolchildren	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee mid-day meal food for life Annamrita project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPO has set up state-of-the-art kitchens in 20 locations all over India and provides free meals to over a million children in over 6,500 schools across the country daily (Website data) Attendance increased in public schools because poor kids get at least one nutritious meal for free through this project

Gopal's Story

This section focused on Gopal's story, starting with his background and findings to research questions in subsequent sections.

Background

Gopal is a 32-year-old millennial monk/SL. He was the youngest millennial monk that I interviewed in the eco-village. By education and profession, Gopal is a medical doctor. He graduated from Maharashtra University of Health Sciences, affiliated with Mumbai University. After graduation, Gopal worked for a government hospital for a year. He also worked in a private petroleum and oil company taking care of employees' medical and health needs. As a doctor, he has expertise in diagnosing and treating some diseases and assisting surgeons in performing surgeries. So, after working so hard to get a medical degree, a well-paying job, a respectable position in society, what triggered Gopal's interest in spirituality, and what led Gopal to become a monk/SL? And by becoming a monk, how is he contributing to society? Is he able to use his education and medicine skills for the welfare of society? Subsequent sections will decode answers to these questions.

Findings for RQ 1: Triggering Factors

I asked Gopal if he had ever foreseen becoming a monk while aspiring and pursuing a medical career. Gopal said he had never envisioned becoming a monk or dedicating his life to personal and others' spiritual development. He said he always wanted to become a medical doctor primarily because he wanted to help poor people get medical facilities. Besides, he said the doctors get paid well, and they receive respect in

society for their noble profession and service to humanity. This response led me to ask Gopal what triggered him to become a monk and give up his professional career as a medical doctor. He was requested to narrate his transformational experiences in detail.

Search for Meaning and Purpose in Life Factors

Gopal said he experienced too much stress and competition around him during his college days while he was studying medicine. These college experiences invoked specific existential questions in him. He faced questions like; what is the aim of all this is? Why am I struggling like others? Why am I pursuing this education? Am I pursuing this education for some benefit, or because everybody is doing so, I am doing it?

Gopal said he had seen many of his senior doctors, who are were very well qualified and expert in their profession; however, their behavior and dealings with patients were questionable. His seniors and doctors around him did not make a good impression nor an excellent example for him to follow. He felt something was lacking in life but was unclear what it was, and he was looking for an alternative way of life. So one day he accidentally met some spiritual leaders on his college campus and got introduced to spirituality. Gopal recounted his experience of search for alternative life and getting introduced to spirituality and spiritual leaders as follows:

I could see the seniors in my field; they had so much knowledge and skills, but their behavior and dealings made me feel that only this medical knowledge does not make them good examples. So, there is something alternative that everybody lacks, but I did not know what that is. But when I heard these people, spiritual

leaders, then I was introduced to a whole new way of thinking, a whole new perspective of life, and then I felt that yes, spirituality is the solution.

College Campus Events Factors

Gopal said he had many questions during his college days, and he sought answers to those questions. He was looking for an alternative way of living life. One day one of his batchmates invited him to a spiritual development program conducted by spiritual leaders in their college hostel/dormitory. Gopal attended that program and accidentally got introduced to spirituality and spiritual leaders. Gopal said the spiritual leader who ran the spiritual development program on their campus was a medical doctor and a monk/SL. Because of the spiritual leaders' medical background and leadership qualities, seeing his genuine concern and compassion for college students' wellbeing, Gopal instantly felt connected with the spiritual leader. The below quote indicated how Gopal felt inspired by the insights given by the spiritual leader:

The spiritual leader said you need not compete. If you want to pursue your education, you can pursue it but for some higher goal, not just because everyone else is doing. A higher purpose is to use your skills to benefit others, not only for the money or prestige. So that was an alternative thought.

According to Gopal, his meeting with the spiritual leaders played a vital role in becoming a monk. After meeting the spiritual leaders, he found answers to his questions and got introduced to spirituality and an alternative way of thinking and living life.

Family Factors

Gopal mentioned some factors like his experiences related to his family and observing other people's life in general also played a significant role in his interest in spirituality and becoming a monk/SL. He said he had seen that there are many challenges in the family or married life. One had to struggle hard to maintain a family, develop and sustain good relations with family members, and maintain a peaceful environment. However, in monkhood life, all those barriers are minimized. So, when he came in contact with the spiritual leaders, he got introduced to spirituality, and an alternative way of living a life, a monkhood life.

After attending spiritual discourses, receiving personal guidance from the spiritual leader, and observing the monk's lifestyle, he questioned himself- what would be a better way to live his life? Should he become a full-time practicing doctor or lead a life of a monk? Gopal contemplated both options and felt that if he decided to practice as a full-time doctor, his professional responsibilities could take up all his time and not get sufficient time to focus on his spiritual development. Whereas if he became a monk, it would allow him to work on both options. He could focus on his spiritual growth, engage in spiritual practices with seriousness, and use his medical skills for society's welfare. Gopal said he decided to become a monk/SL and join the monastery after weighing these options. He took this decision while he was still a student at his medical college.

Corporate Work-Related Factors

After gaining the medical degree, Gopal worked as a full-time doctor in a government hospital and the petroleum industry. Since he had decided to become a

monk during his college days, I asked Gopal why he worked as a full-time doctor in a government hospital and oil petroleum industry? He said he took up a job first to secure his parents economically. Second, the monastery's policy mandated that people interested in joining their monastery had at least one year of professional work experience. Third, he needed to work for the government to serve the government bond he had signed because he completed his medical studies at a government institution.

When I inquired if any organizational or work-related factors reinforced his decision to become a monk, he narrated his work experience and realization as follows:

When I was working in a government hospital, the work was very heavy. I was conducting one post-mortem in a day, three deliveries in a day, and seeing a hundred OPD patients. In the evening, I used to see poisoning cases, some medical-legal cases. After handling all these cases and seeing these things, I felt there was no shortage of the medical facility where I was working. Many doctors could do this job. However, there was a lack of people's education and awareness of their health. I felt, if I can contribute to society through spiritual knowledge and practices, I can help many people, different types of people.

After the government job, Gopal went to work in the oil and petroleum industry.

Narrating his work experience on an oil rig in the sea, Gopal said:

The petroleum industry pays such a huge salary to everyone from the lowermost person to the topmost. But I felt; still, people were not happy. I could feel that there is something beyond this money and that money was not everything. There was pressure to enjoy sense gratification, watching wrong movies, drinking, and

smoking. Anyone who did those activities was accepted as a part of the organization's culture; otherwise, those who did not were seen as an inferior or orthodox person. I was never part of them, and they could also feel that. Their eating and my eating habits, my spiritual practices were different. I just continued working there because of some economic needs; otherwise, I never felt I should be here.

From the above quotes, it was evident that certain organizational work-related factors too played an influential role in Gopal's resolve and decision to become a monk/Sl. After quitting his job in the petroleum and oil industry, Gopal joined the Mumbai monastery to become a monk.

Summary

Factors that triggered Gopal to give up his engineering professional and career to become a monks/SL as listed in Table 16.

Table 17

Gopal's Triggering Factors

Triggering Factors (Themes)	Triggering Factors (Categories)
Family and childhood Growing-up factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observing challenges within his own family and others made Gopal search for an alternative way of living life
An intrinsic desire for social service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wanted to become a doctor to serve people and see the poor get medical facilities
Spiritual Quest/Search for Meaning and Purpose in life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faced questions like- What is the aim of life? Why am I struggling like others? Why am I pursuing this education? Am I pursuing this education for some benefit, or because everybody is doing so, I'm doing it?

Table 16 Continued

Triggering Factors (Themes)	Triggering Factors (Categories)
College Campus Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competitive and stressful experiences at college made him look for an alternative way of life• Met spiritual leaders on his campus who introduced an alternative way of thinking and life• Attended spiritual development courses on college campuses conducted by spiritual leaders• Felt the need to educate people on health awareness than just providing medical facilities
Corporate Work-Related Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conflict of personal values versus organizational culture• Felt misfit in the organizational culture• Experienced phases of professional dissatisfaction
Monastery factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monastery policy of allowing the individual to use their professional skills and contribute to the welfare of society
Spiritual Leaders Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observing doctor monks/SL lifestyle, their activities/contribution/impact on society• Received regular support, guidance, training from senior spiritual leaders from the monastery• Well, structured spiritual development training. workshops/seminars (face to face and online)
Spiritual Philosophy and Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spiritual Philosophy and Literature from Bhagavad Gita, Srimad Bhagavatam, and scriptures

Findings for RQ 2: Activities and Impact

Interview Question: If you are engaged in any training and development, origination development, educational, leadership development, social welfare, please describe them in detail and how do you perceive the impact of your activities at various levels?

Spiritual Training and Development Activities

Gopal said he completed his monkhood training at the monastery and, under the community development initiatives, has been instrumental in conducting spiritual training and development programs for community people. Gopal said their eco-village gets many visitors, and he gets the opportunity to interact with them. Because people see him as a monk/SL, they share their problems with him. Based on his interactions with the people, he realized that many people search for meaning and purpose in their lives. For their problems, people seek spiritual solutions from him and other monks/SL. Gopal said he provides such people with a spiritual solution, introduces them to and teaches them spiritual practices like meditation, distributes spiritual books and literature, and inspires them to read spiritual books. Besides visitors, Gopal also visits nearby villages and conducts spiritual development programs for villagers. He teaches the villagers meditation, which is one of their core spiritual practices. He also uses his medical skills, knowledge, and expertise to educate and create awareness of health and hygiene amongst poor villagers. Gopal went on to describe his activities and their perceived impacts in detail.

People Overcome Addiction Problem

Gopal said he visits nearby villages to conduct the weekly spiritual development program for villagers. During his visits and interaction with the villagers, he observed that many villagers had alcohol and tobacco addiction problems. Gopal says that many villagers have overcome their addiction problem because of his spiritual development program and spiritual guidance. The villager's standard of living has improved, and villagers feel a sense of satisfaction and happiness in their lives

When asked Gopal how he evaluates whether the spiritual development program helps the villagers overcome their addiction program, Gopal replied as follows:

Initially, when some of these villagers came, they had an addiction problem. Some people use to drink and come to our program, but after attending our spiritual development program, I could see the change in their behavior. They come well combed, well dressed, and looking fresh. So, I feel that these programs are affecting them; otherwise, why should they change. They tell me that "now I'm not drinking." Also, we directly ask them, "Do you feel any change, or do you feel bored? Do you like this program or you don't like it? Do you want us to come again?" and they tell us, "We are feeling happy" and sometimes when I don't go to their village, they call and inquire "why didn't you come"? So, it is evident that our spiritual development program makes sense to them...Our focus is not deaddiction but the spiritual development of people. But as a side effect of our spiritual development programs, villagers feel addiction is not good and overcome addiction problems.

It was evident that Gopal is actively involved in community development initiatives. He has been instrumental in providing spiritual guidance, mentoring, and support to distressed people. His informal interaction with visitors at their eco-village has helped him introduce spirituality, spiritual practices like meditation, and spiritual literature to many community people. Gopal has also been instrumental in bringing about change in villagers' lifestyles and improve their quality of life. Because he conducts spiritual development programs in villages, many villagers have overcome their addiction problem.

Community Development Through Free Medical Help Activities

When asked as a monk/SL, does he get to use his medical professional skills? Gopal said he does not practice full-time medicine. However, as a monk/SL, he still uses his medical knowledge and skills to provide medical assistance to other monks/SL in the monastery. Besides, when he visits nearby villages to conduct spiritual development programs, many poor villagers approach him for their basic health issues and ailments. Gopal helps poor villagers to diagnose and treat uncomplicated and curable diseases free of charge. He also prescribes medicines, and with the help of his NPO, provides free medication to poor people. Gopal narrated one such village incident as follows:

There are three boys in the village whose father is addicted to alcohol, and the mother is not there. These boys had scabies all over the body. I saw they were continuously itching, and I understood that they had scabies. I asked the other person in the village to take them to the government hospital, and I told them what medicine the nurse should give. One week after that incident, those boys

were cured. They are very happy now, and other villagers also appreciate my services. The boy's father also appreciates. So, after my spiritual talk, many people just consult me for their health issues and medication. Similarly, many people will have chronic vitamin deficiencies, so by simple help, villagers are developing trust in me.

From the above response, it is evident that Gopal may not practice medicine full-time after becoming a monk. However, he still uses his medical knowledge and skills to treat fellow monks at the monastery and poor people from the nearby villages free of cost. Without sacrificing his personal spiritual development goals, Gopal, as a monk/SL, gets to work on his spiritual pursuits and use his medical knowledge to benefit the community without any hospital work pressures or the objective of earning money for his services. Therefore, by becoming a monk, this alternative lifestyle and social service opportunities have provided Gopal and the community with a win-win situation.

Organization Development Activities

Regarding his NPO organizational development activities, Gopal said he assists senior monks in planning, coordinating, and arranging senior monks' meetings at the monastery. He is also responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of the eco-village. Gopal said he has just completed his monkhood training at the monastery and will get many more responsibilities and leadership tasks in the future.

Environmental Protection and Awareness Activities

Gopal said he is part of environmental protection projects at his monastery. As a collective team effort, all the monks make conscious efforts to keep things simple and

live a very simple and holistic life. A monk avoids using any chemical products, plastic products, teaches others how to segregate the plastic, and promotes natural and organic things. This way, Gopal and other monks practice, teach and advocate the importance of the environment and live in harmony with the environment without abusing it.

Happy or Regrets Becoming a Monk/SL

I asked Gopal if he was happy with his decision to become a monk/SL or regrets his decision. Gopal's responded as follows:

I'm very happy with my decision. No regrets. In this NPO, I can dovetail my medical knowledge and skills. Plus, there is no limitation to what extent I can contribute to society. There is so much scope. I can meet different people and conduct so many programs, and there are so many projects at this monastery. So, there is so much scope to contribute.

Definition of Spirituality and Spiritual Leader

Gopal defined spirituality as follows:

For me, spirituality is knowing who you are and what your connection with the absolute, and who is absolute.

Gopal defined spiritual leaders a follow:

For a spiritual leader, the most important quality is compassion. Unless he is compassionate, he will not be able to come out of his comfort zone or extend to the people. Because serving in this area (village), most of the population is illiterate and addicted, and only when you have compassion will you associate with them. Unless the leader genuinely feels for them, their pain, and their needs,

then only a spiritual leader can contribute. So, I think compassion is the main thing.

Summary

In summary, Gopal contributes to society and his NPO on many levels and positively impacts people's lives, especially the rural and tribal villagers. He uses his spiritual knowledge to provide spiritual solutions to problems, help them overcome their de-addiction problems. He also uses his medical knowledge, skills, and expertise to provide free treatment to poor villagers and educate them on health and hygiene. Gopal's activities as a spiritual servant leader and its perceived impact are listed in Table 17.

Table 18

Gopal's Activities

HRD Activities	Spiritual Leaders Activities	Perceived Impact
Training and Development Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&D for community members • Teaches meditation, distributes spiritual books and literature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People seek spiritual solutions to their problems. • Improve quality and standard of living of poor villagers • Villagers feel a sense of satisfaction and happiness in their lives
Rural Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses medical skills and expertise to benefit poor villagers • Provide free of cost medical treatment to a local villager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the quality of life of poor villagers • People overcome addiction problems
NPO Organization Development Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist senior monks/SL at the monastery • Oversees cleanliness and maintenances of an eco-village 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps NPO function efficiently and effectively.

Table 17 Continued

HRD Activities	Spiritual Leaders Activities	Perceived Impact
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid using any chemical products, plastic products, teach others how to segregate the plastic, and promote natural and organic things	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice, teach and advocate the importance of the environment and live in harmony with the environment without abusing it

Bansi's Story

This section focused on Bansi's story, starting with his background and findings to research questions in subsequent sections.

Background

Bansi is a 45-year-old monk based in a Mumbai monastery. On an educational front, he holds a master's in technology from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) and a Ph.D. degree in material science from Japan Hiroshima University. After completing his Ph.D., he received a doctorate fellowship at Ohio State University (OSU), Columbus, USA and worked as a post-doctorate for around one and a half years. He specializes in mechanical and biomedical engineering. Before becoming a monk/SL, Bansi said he aspired to become a professor since he was interested in teaching. He said he always had ambitious and clear career goals from the beginning of his career and worked hard to achieve them. While working at OSU as a post-doctoral researcher, Bansi said he had set an ambitious goal of owning two to three patents.

Findings for RQ 1: Triggering Factors

With such educational qualifications and ambitious career goals, what made Bansi change his career trajectory and become a monk/SL? I requested Bansi to narrate his spiritual transformation journey explaining the various influencing and triggering factors that led him to become a monk. Bansi started his story by reflecting on his family and childhood growing-up events.

Family and Childhood Growing-up Factors

Bansi said he grew up in spiritual culture and environment at his home. He developed some interest and inclination toward spirituality since his childhood days and regularly practiced meditation. While growing up, he wanted to do some social service but had no idea what social work it would be. Thus, growing up in a family with spiritual culture played an informant role in Bansi's life to spark an interest in spirituality and spiritual practices like meditation.

Talking about his career path, Bansi said he was never confused about his career. From his early childhood, he had set very clear and ambitious career and professional goals for himself. The thought of becoming a monk or spiritual leader and working in the spirituality domain had never crossed his mind. Bansi reflecting on his career aspirations, his personality, transformational events in his life, summed it up in the following words:

My basic nature was to study or meditate. That was my regular lifestyle. I used to count how many days I didn't speak. So I was that kind of introverted person. So, when I was going to Japan, I had already thought that I don't know anyone, and I don't want to make any friends. I will do more meditation there. But I don't know

what happened, and suddenly I stopped meditation and started socializing. You can go to Hiroshima University and ask my name; any Japanese student or anyone at the university would know me. To that extent, I socialized. So, with the same enthusiasm, I went to the US for my post-doctorate job. That was in the year 2004. Ultimately, I always wanted to come back to India and become a professor at IIT for one or two years and then go back to a village somewhere and take up some principal post and do some social work using my background skills. That was my initial idea. That is what I wanted to do.

From Bansi's interview excerpt, it is clear that in Japan, when he went to pursue his Ph.D. studies, he underwent a sudden personality transformation. From an extremely introverted person, he became an extrovert. Although the transformation brought about some positive changes within him, as a consequence, it also led to Bansi stopping his regular spiritual practice of meditation, which he had been doing since his childhood. I asked Bansi what happened in the USA that led to his spiritual transformation to the extent that he decided to become a monk/SL. Bansi narrated a significant triggering event at OSU, where he joined to work as a post-doctoral researcher.

Work and Organization Related Factors

Bansi said it was primarily his boss attitude and behavior towards him that impacted him negatively. Bansi said when he came to the USA at OSU for post-doctoral work, he experienced an insulting attitude and behavior from his boss. On the first day of work, Bansi said his boss asked him to call some vendors to buy some lab equipment. Since Bansi did not own a cell phone, nor was he aware of the toll-free number concept,

he could not complete the given task, and as a result, his boss yelled and screamed at him for such a small thing. That event left Bansi perplexed and disturbed. He had never experienced anyone yelling and screaming at him that way. Over the months, his boss's constant rude attitude, behavior, and negative criticism continued, leading Bansi to suicidal ideation. Reflecting on that experience, Bansi said:

So, my boss was the first person who yelled at me. For me, it was a very shattering experience. It was very depressing for me. Depression in the sense when I use to see him, I use to shiver or could not talk to him. I could not forget his yelling, and it was a nightmare for me. I was not able to take it. I thought of quitting or change the university or otherwise go back to India. I was also thinking of committing suicide. You know, so many things were going in my mind. So those three months were like hell. I could not eat nor sleep. I would often pray that no one should suffer like this. So, in that situation, I was thinking of what to do.

After going through those negative experiences and emotions at his workplace, Bansi contemplated why he got so disturbed that he could not handle such negative criticism and emotions. After contemplation, Bansi realized that he had stopped his meditation practice after going to Japan, which had perhaps led him to get affected by such disturbing situations. He thought perhaps he was not spiritually strong and needed to strengthen his spiritual practice. With those thoughts and disturbed frame of mind, he had a strong urge to visit a temple or some spiritual place near him where he could seek spiritual shelter and refuge and get back to his spiritual meditation practice.

Visiting a Monastery/Spiritual Center in the USA Factors

Bansi started searching for a temple/spiritual organization, and he visited a local monastery/spiritual center near him. He visited the spiritual NPO to seek solace and spiritual strength. Gradually he started attending the spiritual discourses conducted at a spiritual center. He also met other Indian students at the same spiritual center, and they all discussed life in general. After interacting with the other students, Bansi realized he was not suffering alone. Other students were also disturbed and distressed and suffered like him.

Nevertheless, he continued visiting the spiritual center and volunteered to do services. He took up services that no one wanted to do, such as cleaning and mopping the floor, cleaning the restrooms, seeking permission from local people, and overseeing parking arrangements during big events and festivals. During one such big festival, Bansi said he had a mystical experience, which made him more serious towards spirituality. Bansi described that mystical experience as follows:

So, after midnight, something strange and mystical happened that made me serious about my spiritual practice. I started reading the Bhagavad Gita. Initially, I was not accepting the philosophy that god has a form. I thought maybe I want to inquire about this philosophy where it says god has a form. I wanted to go deep into that philosophy. So, I started reading Bhagavad-Gita, which was very, very transformative. It helped me a lot as I forgot all my depression, and I worked with the same professor for the next one and half years. I was the best researcher. My research was on national TV and newspapers. Even after

returning to India, my boss kept calling me for six months, saying if I wanted to come to the US, he would process my visa anytime.

It seems Bansi, in his distressed state of mind, felt a desire to become spiritually strong, which in turn led him to visit a spiritual center, NPO, near him in OSU. At the NPO center, he experienced a mystical phenomenon that led him to dive deeper into spiritual philosophy. He started reading spiritual literature and philosophy, and Bhagavad Gita helped him overcome his depression and suicidal ideation. It also made him excel at his workplace. All these factors gradually increased Bansi's faith and interest in spirituality and made him spiritually stronger. He started visiting the spiritual NPO, attending the spiritual development workshops, joined study groups to clarify his philosophical doubts, and engaged in spiritual practices like mantra meditation.

Meeting a Spiritual Leader at NPO Factors

After visiting the spiritual center for a month, Bansi met a monk/SL at the center. He got an opportunity to interact and observe him closely. That encounter with the spiritual leader impressed him so much that it set Bansi contemplating and thinking about becoming a monk. Bansi expounded that experience and a first triggering factor that set him to think of becoming a monk as follows:

So, after a month of visiting the temple, I saw a monk. I saw how everyone was inquiring from him, asking him different questions, and he was answering their questions. And seeing him, I was like, wow! It's a cool life. Based on my experience, I had already developed a strong faith that spirituality will help people who suffer from depression. Because I witnessed that and thought people

like me in their professional career might be looking for help. People who are married may not be able to spend that much time helping others, but this monk is sitting here, and so many people are coming and inquiring from him, and he was available to them to solve their problems—so that impression I had on my mind. So, when I saw this monk, I thought this is a cool life. So again, I was in a dilemma as to what I should do? To get married or to become a monk.

I asked Bansi if it was just one meeting with a monk/SL that led him to contemplate becoming a monk. Bansi's responded as follows:

Yes, in just one meeting with a spiritual leader, I had developed this desire to be a monk myself. Until then, I never thought of becoming a monk. Again, I had this confusion of what to do, i.e., should I get married or become a monk. So again, I went to god and prayed to show me direction. I kept praying. Then after some time, I went to another very big monastery in West Virginia. There was a big festival taking place there. So, this monk I met in Ohio invited me to West Virginia to attend the festival.

Monastery Factor (Visiting a Monastery in West Virginia)

Bansi said his visit to the West Virginia monastery turned out to be another influencing factor in his decision to become a monk. Bansi said while he was rendering some voluntary services in the community kitchen at the West Virginia center, around 30 to 40 volunteers, despite knowing his research and scientific background, unanimously told him that he should become a monk. Bansi said he did not take their words seriously at that time. However, after returning to Ohio, Bansi gave serious

thought to their words. Being confused, Bansi intensely prayed and requested god to guide him and show him some directions. Strangely, for some reason, Bansi felt that god had already sent his message and signal through those 30 to 40 unknown volunteers from the West Virginia temple who had unanimously encouraged him to become a monk. Thus, for Bansi, his visit to the West Virginia monastery had turned out to be one of the triggering factors that set him seriously on the path of monkhood.

Spiritual Leader Factors

During the contemplation phase of choosing between a monastic life, or married life, Bansi approached some senior spiritual leaders and mentors at the Ohio temple to seek their guidance. Bansi said many senior spiritual leaders cautioned him to rethink his decision because he was a new practitioner and monastic life was a serious decision. Bansi said, usually, people would make such decisions after years of practice and serious contemplations. However, just visiting the Ohio center for 2-3 months and meeting the monks/SL at Ohio and West Virginia center, he was inspired to lead a monastic life. Bansi said one of his senior spiritual lady leaders at the Ohio center supported and encouraged his decision. However, before making his final decision, He started interacting with many other monks/SL.

He also started a yoga and meditation club at OSU and invited several monks/SL to conduct spiritual development workshops for the OSU students. Bansi interacted and inquired from the visiting monks/SL about the process of becoming a monk. Most spiritual leaders advised him to write to a monastery in Mumbai and enroll in their monkhood training.

Bansi said around Nov 2004, he wrote a letter to the Mumbai monastery giving his educational and work experience details and expressing his interest in joining the monastery to become a monk. However, to his disappointment, the Mumbai Monastery replied that he had exceptionally bright career prospects, and the monkhood lifestyle may not suit him. The monastery advised him not to quit his job nor take such an important decision in haste. They advised him if he was serious enough, he could take a six-month leave from his job, enroll in a monkhood training program at their Mumbai monastery, and only after experiencing the monastic lifestyle take such a big decision.

Though disappointed, Bansi kept his communication and correspondence going with the Mumbai monastery. In January 2005, the Mumbai monastery wrote to him that some Mumbai monastery monk/SL would visit the US during summer, and if wanted, he could meet with them, spend time with them, interact with them, get to know their lifestyle and activities. Seeking that opportunity, Bansi took a month's leave from his job and traveled with the Mumbai monks/SL to different places all over the US. The monks/SL also interacted and observed Bansi closely. After a mutual evaluation from both sides, Mumbai monastery's spiritual leaders gave their consent to Bansi to join the Mumbai monastery. Bansi, too, was able to take his decision to become a monk with clarity and confidence after spending serious time with the spiritual leaders and observing their activities.

When asked if meeting the Mumbai monastery's spiritual leaders was the most significant turning point in his life. Bansi replied affirmatively. He said he compared the

lifestyle of married people and that of monks and reached a conclusion which he elucidated as follows:

I was looking at other married people, but they were busy in their own life. I felt that they could extend themselves to society up to a certain extent. But when I saw these monks, they were sitting there, and many people were coming and going. The monks were not in a hurry to go, but the people who came to meet the monks were in a hurry. So, I felt that if I get married, I won't be able to give full time to society. And then there was an internal calling where I wanted to do social work, So I felt this was the best way to help society by spiritually uplifting self and others.

When asked Bansi if he wanted to do social work, why only monkhood? Why could he not do social service being a scientist or a researcher? Bansi replied as follow:

When I was in the USA, I had enough money. I had a good apartment. I had a car, everything, but I was still miserable. I felt that even if I provide employment to people, they can still be miserable because of the work environment and other things. So, I thought that addressing their spiritual needs would be the best solution.

Bansi said around May 2005, he finally decided to become a monk and dedicate his life to spirituality, spiritual development of self, and others. After completing his post-doctoral research, he went back to India and joined the Mumbai monastery. After 15 years of residing and serving in the Mumbai monastery, today, Bansi is part of the

core management and leadership team handling various monastery development projects and community development projects.

Summary

In summary, Bansi's Spiritual transformation journey had been unique and exciting. He aspired to become a professor and researcher and received his education from the best universities to reach his desired goal. His research in material sciences received global accolades and awards, yet life took a surprising turn. Today instead of a material scientist, he is a spiritual scientist. He is leading the life of a monk/SL in an NPO monastery in India. From this case, several factors leading to the spiritual transformation emerged. Table 18 lists all those influential factors in Bansi's life.

Table 19

Bansi's Triggering Factors

Triggering Factors (Themes)	Triggering Factors (Categories)
Family and Childhood growing up factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing in spiritual and religious family background • Practiced meditation since childhood
Intrinsic Desire to Serve Society/Social work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Had intrinsic desire and motivation to serve society, engage in some form of social service
Corporate work and Organization related Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bosses behavior leading to suicidal ideation
Spiritual leader Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting a spiritual leader at Ohio monastery • Observing the lifestyle of monks/SL and their contribution to society • Interacting and traveling with a spiritual leader
Monastery Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit to Ohio and West Virginia center • Support and guidance from the monastery

Table 18 Continued

Triggering Factors (Themes)	Triggering Factors (Categories)
Spiritual Philosophy Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading spiritual Philosophy and Literature made his interest grow in spirituality and overcame depression
Spiritual Training and Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend Spiritual Development training at the spiritual center

Findings for RQ 2: Activities and Impact

Interview Question: If you are engaged in any training and development, origination development, educational, leadership development, social welfare activities, please describe them in detail, and how do you perceive the impact of your activities at various levels?

Organization Development Activities

Bansi said he is a core team member of the management, decision-making, and policymaking team at his monastery. He said their monastery is involved in several projects. He and his fellow monks/SL in the leadership role oversee the management, functioning, and execution of organization development, community development, and rural development projects. Under rural development, they have several projects such as women’s empowerment, health-related projects, education, skill development, environmental protection, agriculture projects. Bansi described each project in detail.

Women’s Education and Empowerment

Bansi mentioned under the women's empowerment project, their NPO works towards empowering rural women through employment and improve their socio-

economic status through education and skill development. The rural women get trained in employable skills such as kindergarten teacher training called Anganwadi. The NPO also employs some of these women to help the government teachers in the schools.

Bansi explained the importance and impact of this project as follows:

There is one govt teacher in rural schools, and other teachers are provided or placed by us. So right now, we have employed teachers for 30 schools in a tribal village. We have regular schools from the first standard to the 10th standard, but there is a scarcity of teachers in many schools. So, our NPO is providing teachers to these schools too. If teachers are not available from our pool, we hire very good teachers from outside and employ them.

Bansi said they also have a skill development program for uneducated rural women. Their NPO volunteers train the rural women to stitch cloth bags, paper bags, sew clothes, and equip them with other skills to earn their livelihood. If the volunteers are not available to train these women, the NPO hires highly skilled professionals from outside to teach new skills to rural women. The rural women sell their products in the outside market, or the NPO volunteers procure their products and sell them. Besides these skills, the NPO also employs these women in cooking-related projects. When the NPO hosts a big retreat, workshop, or conference at their eco-village, they hire the local village women to cook meals for the participants. Bansi enumerated some significant problems in the rural areas and the need for their NPO to undertake such projects as follows:

Basically, the problem in the tribal area is that although the men work, they drink, and they don't bother about their families. So, women and families suffer.

So, we are trying to empower women to become self-sustainable and self-reliable. Also, for tribal men, we are doing alcohol deaddiction programs through spiritual development and training. It has helped a lot of men. Many people have transformed because of the spiritual development workshop we conduct. And for the youth, we have a skill development course, technical skill development.

I asked Bansi to describe the youth skills development project.

Youth Skill Development Activities

Bansi said the youth skills development project is called Bhaktivedanta Kaushal Vikas Kendra. This project aims to equip the rural youth with skills to earn their livelihood in their villages and nearby local industries rather than migrate to the cities searching for employment. The skills development training is a two-year program. This program is open to all the youth for a nominal fee. However, if students are not able to afford the fees, their NPO bears the cost. The NPO hires professional experts and faculty to train the youth. In the two-year course, the students get trained in 25 different technical and vocational skills such as electrical, plumbing, welding fitting, agriculture, health, food processing, and energy and environment. Bansi said several village youths benefitted from this program, and most of them found employment. The local industries are pleased to employ the youth who graduate from this NPO's skill development program.

Farmer Development and Agriculture Activities

Bansi then went on to describe their agriculture and organic farming project. He said their NPO works in partnership with the state government for training farmers in

organic farming. Every year the monastery monks/SL organize training and seminars for the farmers. Around 250 to 300 farmers attend the three-day workshop and learn the theoretical and practical aspects of organic farming. The NPO also helps the farmers to sell their produce. Bansi said because of this program, farmers income increased four to five times. Two to three monks/SL dedicatedly handle the entire farmer's empowerment and farming projects. Describing this project, Bansi said:

The government provides us some funds, and the balance amount comes from our NPO. The government selected our NPO because we are doing it very effectively and successfully. We are rated as one of India's best innovative farmers because we use innovative techniques in organic farming. We are also in the Limca book of world records for farming in a rural or difficult area. Because in such areas retaining the water is difficult, but we retained it successfully.

Bansi said the monks/SL feel committed to serving society using their education and professional expertise. He said:

As monks, most of us have a very good educational background, so we use our education in many different projects. It is not that we are not using our education. We are using our education in different ways. So, we monks are always thinking about how to develop, how to improve, and impact society.

Children Education Mobile Science Lab Activities

Explaining their mobile science lab project, Bansi said their NPO purchased a van that they turned into a mobile science lab for 5th to 10th-grade rural school children. They equipped the van with all the science-related models and laboratory for the benefit

of rural underprivileged kids. Once a month, the monks/SL drive this mobile van to different schools and showcase the science lab and models to the school children. The schoolteachers and principal appreciate the monks/SL efforts because their schools lack such equipment and models in their remote rural villages.

Bansi also said the monks/SL conduct mathematic workshops for tribal and local village kids and teach them math and increase their calculating speeds and logical reasoning skills when time permits. The monks also organize summer camps for city children: the monks/SL conduct spiritual development and moral, character development, and cultural enrichment workshop. The kids participate in dramas, quizzes, and trekking activities. The monks/SL also teach the children musical instruments. Bansi said their summer camps are so popular amongst the city kids that they hesitate to go back to city life after spending a couple of days at the eco-village.

Mobile Health Van Activities

Expounding on the mobile health van project, Bansi said:

We also have a mobile health van. So, we go to different villages and provide free health check-ups and medicines. So, our NPO will invite some doctors from cities and provide free health check-ups in three areas. One is general medicines, the second is cardiac, and the third is eyesight. So, we go to different places and check people's health. If some urgent care is required, our monastery has a hospital we send them to that hospital. So, there they are treated free of cost, especially the cataract operations.

Environment Protection and Awareness Activities

Bansi said their eco-village was built using greenhouse technologies and has received several awards and recognition. Explaining the impact of their environment-related projects, Bansi said:

The houses we have built at our ashram, monastery are greenhouses. They are environmentally friendly. So many different colleges from cities come and learn this technology of how to build greenhouses from us. Our project is the Indian government five stars rated green building technology. This eco-village project got 105 out of 100 points. We also have solar projects, biogas, basically self-sustainable and eco-friendly. Eventually, our goal is to head towards self-sustainable living. We want to make this village a model so that people can duplicate this model.

Leadership Development Activities

Bansi said he also oversees the leadership development program at their monastery.

Describing that activity, Bansi said:

We have leadership training programs. We have Bhaktivedanta Vidyapeeth for new monks, and we also have the Bhaktivedanta Research Center (BRC), In collaboration with Mumbai University. So, the monks do Ph.D. and research on different areas connected to spirituality. For example, is science and spirituality related or not, how are lifestyle and spirituality connected, how it impacts lives. These institutes we just started last year. So, we have six to eight people who have registered. Some outside students and some of our monks/SL are studying in these institutes.

Corporate Training Activities

Talking about corporate training, Bansi said several corporate organizations invite their spiritual leaders to conduct training and development workshops for their employees. About the training fees, this is what Bansi said:

When corporates invite us for training, we ask them to take care of our travel and stay, and besides, if they want to give any donations, they are welcome, but we don't expect any training fees. We don't charge any technology transfer fees because we want to give this knowledge as much as possible.

Summary

Bansi listed and spoke about several projects and social activities that he and other spiritual leaders from his monastery work upon for society's welfare and development. Table 19 lists the activities listed and described by Bansi.

Table 20

Bansi's Activities

Activities	Spiritual Leaders Activities	Perceived Impact
Rural Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oversees several rural development projects at their eco-village:• Rural women empowerment project• Youth skill development• Agriculture and farming projects• Children education• Mobile science lab• Mobile health van	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve rural women's socio-economic status by education and skill development.• 180 self-help groups• Rural youths trained to find local employment• The farmer's income increases many folds.• Character and moral value education, spiritual development• Rural people received free treatment and health facilities.

Table 19 Continued

Activities	Spiritual Leaders Activities	Perceived Impact
Leadership Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPO has a leadership and research college, namely Bhaktivedanta Research Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monks get trained to become good leaders Monks/SL conduct research on topics of spirituality
Environment Protection and awareness projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use and promote green technologies, solar projects, biogas to achieve self-sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many students from cities visit the eco-village to learn green technologies and how to build greenhouses from monks/SL

Cross Case Analysis and Combined Results

This section's purpose was to present the overall findings and cross-case analysis results for each research question.

Research Question One: All Triggering Factors (Combined)

During the analysis and cross-case analysis process, for research question one, eight themes (factors) emerged, listed without any hierarchical order, such as:

- Family and childhood growing events
- Intrinsic desire to serve society
- Search for meaning and purpose/existential questions/spiritual quest
- College campus events
- Spiritual leaders (historical and current) influence
- Monastery, NPO factors
- Spiritual philosophy and literature
- Corporate work and organization factors

These eight themes indicate the influencing or triggering factors that led the individuals with impressive educational and professional backgrounds to experience spiritual transformation and change their career tracks to become monks/SL. Table 20 lists all the eight factors in themes and specific contributing factors under each theme as categories in no hierarchical order.

Table 21

All Spiritual Transformation Triggering Factors (Combined After Cross Case Analysis)

Triggering Factors (Themes)	Specific Factors (Categories)
Family and Childhood Growing Factor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual and religious family culture helped developed faith in god/prayers/divinity/religion, spirituality, and spiritual practices • Led to question religion and spiritual ritual and practices and seek logical, scientific, and convincing answers
Intrinsic desire to serve society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal aspiration to serve, contribute and positively impact society
Search for meaning and purpose/existential questions/spiritual quest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search for meaning and purpose in life • Inquisitive about religions and spirituality topics. • Faced existential, meaning-making, search for purpose-related questions • Experienced phases of dissatisfaction/lack of fulfillment in life • Personal observations, reflections, and paradoxes in society • Felt a need for spiritual guidance
College Campus Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting spiritual leaders on a college campus • Attended spiritual training/workshops conducted by spiritual leaders on campus and receiving personal guidance from SL • Presence of spiritual clubs/student organization like Bhakti Yoga club on campuses • Peers spiritual practitioners influence • Free vegetarian food served by monks

Table 20 Continued

Triggering Factors (Themes)	Specific Factors (Categories)
Spiritual Leaders (SL) Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual development training conducted by SL at monasteries, campus, and off-campus. • Spiritual leaders’ guidance, support, their lifestyle, the impact of their work on society • Spiritual leaders’ ability to answer questions related to spirituality and religion logically, scientifically, and convincingly • Historical, spiritual leaders’ biographies and impact of their work on society
Monastery, NPO Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monastery/temple/eco-farm communities’ visits • Monastery policies, opportunity to try monk lifestyle option • Monastery taking care of basic needs (food, shelter, clothing, health, emotional and spiritual needs) • Observing monasteries monks/SL lifestyle, activities, and the impacts of their work in society • Monastery providing opportunities for personal spiritual development and others • Monastery providing opportunities for engaging in several social welfare projects and serving the society fulltime • Pilgrimage visits organized by the monastery • Numerous online lectures and monastery documentary showcasing monk’s lifestyle
Spiritual Philosophy and Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual philosophy presented in scriptures, literature like Bhagavad Gita and Srimad Bhagavatam
Corporate Work and Organization Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work-related factors (boss issues, work-life balance, layoff, ethical and moral issues, organizational culture driven by selfishness, sense gratification created a conflict of personal and ethical values) • No avenues for spiritual development at the workplace • Phases of dissatisfaction and feeling of “I do not belong in the corporate world.”

The cross-case analysis revealed several commonalities amongst all the eight participants that led them to experience spiritual transformation and change their professional career trajectories to become monks/SL. This section briefly summarizes the commonalities and differences that emerged from the cross-case analysis of eight influencing factors in the participant's lives. The cross-case analysis also helped determine the comprehensive list of triggering factors that led the participants to become monks/SL.

Family and Childhood Growing-up Factor

Invariably all the participants talked about their family influences during their childhood. Most of them grew up in families that had strong religious and spiritual cultures. Their parents or grandparents practiced religious rituals or spiritual practices, which contributed to their belief in religion, god, higher power, divinity, spiritual and religious practices, and rituals. However, Chandra, being a scientific-minded person, the family's religious and spiritual practices lead him to several questions regarding religion and spirituality. He never received scientific and convincing answers from his family members, and his quest to seek scientific answers to his questions continued until he met spiritual leaders on his campus. Thus, growing up in a family with religious and spiritual culture led to two outcomes: developing faith and interest in religion and spirituality from early childhood and conversely to questioning it from a scientific perspective.

Search for Meaning/Purpose/Existential Questions/Spiritual Quest

Invariably all eight participants experienced phases of a search for meaning and purpose in their lives either during their college days or as working professionals. Some

participants (Ram, Gopal, Baldev, Raghu, Daya) faced existential questions due to their inquisitive nature, observing real-life situations, societal norms, observing and experiencing the paradoxical situations in society during childhood, college, or while working in corporate organizations. They faced questions like: What is the purpose of this world, the whole universe, and why this whole design exists? What is the aim of all this? Why am I struggling like others? Why am I pursuing this education? Am I pursuing this education for some benefit, or because everybody is doing so? Is this what my life is all about, clear an exam? Will my life not have a meaning beyond just clearing some exam? Invariably all the participants experienced dissatisfaction/lack of fulfillment in life which led them to explore an alternative way of living and lifestyle.

All eight participants invariably found answers to their existential quest, meaning-making, and finding purpose in life questions in aspects related to spirituality such as spiritual philosophy, spiritual development, and spiritual practices.

Intrinsic desire to serve society via social work

Six out of eight participants expressed they always had an intrinsic desire to serve society by engaging in social work. They aspired to use their education, research, or professional expertise to help others and positively contribute to and impact society. So, when they met and interacted with the monastery's spiritual leaders and closely observed their social welfare activities and the impact of their activities at various levels, it opened up avenues to fulfill their social work aspirations. Invariably, all the participants felt by becoming monks/SL, they would be able to use their education and skills to serve full-time, contribute, and positively impact society at various levels.

College Campus Events Factor

All eight participants said they got introduced to spirituality, spiritual philosophy, and spiritual literature via spiritual leaders on their college campuses or centers near their college campuses. Seven participants met spiritual leaders on their campus either through their peers or by attending some college event or festival organized by spiritual clubs/student organizations on their campuses. Except for Bansi, all the participants said after attending spiritual development training and workshops conducted by the SL on their campus and reading spiritual literature, their interest in spirituality grew. Bansi had also met a spiritual leader on his IIT college campus in India while studying for his master's degree; however, one particular negative incident had swayed him away from associating with the spiritual practitioner on his college campus. Nevertheless, he again got introduced to the same NPO and different spiritual leaders at the Ohio center while working at OSU as a research scientist and visiting a monastery in West Virginia. For Baldev, while pursuing his doctoral studies at Pennsylvania State University (PSU), his frequent visits to Gitanagari eco farms in Pennsylvania and monastery in West Virginia played a significant role in his spiritual transformation and decision to become monks/SL.

All the participants revealed that after interacting with the spiritual leaders on their campuses of monasteries near their colleges, attending the spiritual development workshop, receiving scientific and convincing answers to their questions about religion or spirituality increased their interest in spirituality. Besides spiritual leaders' guidance, all the participants (except Bansi) mentioned their college peers and friends who

practiced spirituality or those who were part of the spiritual student club excelled in academics, which created a positive impression of their peers. In addition to their peers' academic performance, their behavior, helpful nature, spiritual literature received from them, and their good association played an influential role in developing interest in spirituality and attending the spiritual development workshop on college campuses or joining a spiritual club on campuses.

Thus, college campus events and various specific factors associated with college life turned out to be the turning point events for all the participants, setting them on the monkhood and alternative lifestyle/career options.

Spiritual Leaders Influence Factor

Spiritual leaders (SL), contemporary and historical spiritual teachers from the selected NPO, played the most dominant role for all the participants. For all the participants, meeting the spiritual leaders, their impressive educational and professional background, attending their spiritual development (SD) workshop, receiving logical and convincing answers related to religion and spirituality, most participants took to spirituality more seriously. In addition to the spiritual leader's guidance and training, their social welfare activities, contributions to society, and their impact on society invariably led the participants to a paradigm shift in thinking. The spiritual leaders' influence on them was so stout that it set them thinking of an alternative career and lifestyle, a monkhood life.

Besides the contemporary spiritual leaders, the monastery's historical, spiritual leaders, their biographies, contributions, and impact of their work in society also played

a crucial role in participants' developing interests and affiliation towards a particular monastery. Several historical, spiritual teachers, especially A.C Bhaktivedanta Swami, who authored more than 70 books and documented the eastern Vedic spiritual philosophy, the teachings, spiritual wisdom, practices passed down through disciplic successions in his books and literature. His books and spiritual literature played a vital role in participants getting attracted to specific spiritual philosophies, spiritual practices, and affiliation to a specific monastery.

Spiritual Philosophy and Spiritual Literature Factor

All the participants mentioned reading spiritual, philosophical literature and scriptures was helpful and transformative and played an important role in developing an interest in spirituality. Table 21 mentions some of the quotes from participants' interview responses.

Table 22

Spiritual Philosophy and Spiritual Literature Factor

Participant	Participants Quote/Response
Bansi	“The scriptures, especially the Bhagavad-Gita, was very transformative. It helped me a lot as I forgot all my depression at work.”
Daya	“So, after going through Bhagavad-Gita for some time, my spiritual inclination grew”
Ram	“I thought this is what my philosophy of life is, and it answers questions to which I was seeking answers. I found all my questions answered in the Bhagavad-Gita. Moreover, I could see that there was no dogma involved here; there was no superstition involved here nor religious conversion taking place.”
Raghu	“Spiritual books like Bhagavad Gita, Srimad Bhagavatam, the nectar of devotion, and Isopanishad, these four books gave me a complete understanding of spirituality.”

Corporate Work and Organization Factors

Although most of the participants (seven of them) had decided to become a monk while they were in college, personal reasons and the monastery's policy propelled the participants to work in the corporate sector. Various work and organization-related factors made their resolve to become monks stronger. Work factors such as work-life balance, extended work hours, layoffs despite working hard and getting appreciated for their work, conflict of personal values with the organizational values, leadership or boss issues, conflict of ethical values, and finding themselves misfit with corporate culture contributed to participants feeling dissatisfied and seeing an alternative way of life and career options.

Bansi experienced suicidal ideations due to his boss's attitude and behavior at OSU while working as a post doctoral researcher. In contrast, Baldev had a very supportive and considerate boss as his Ph.D. and research advisor at Penn State University, who identified his depressive state of mind and suggested he take medical help.

Gopal and Arjun, both from the medical profession, experienced a conflict of personal values with professional ethics. At his workplace, Gopal observed people, despite earning good salaries, were not happy and indulged in too much sense gratification, alcohol consumption, and addicted to bad habits, and he found himself a misfit working in such organizations. For Arjun, the stressful professional work environment made him question if he was getting so stressed, how could he as a doctor tell his patients to remain stress-free. He realized that most doctors treat only bodily

diseases, and the emotional and spiritual aspects remained neglected in the medical field. Gopal and Arjun both mentioned they were not impressed with their senior doctor's medical practices and ethics, creating a conflict of professional and personal values.

Also, for all the eight participants, not having avenues for spiritual development at the workplace added to their overall discontent

Monastery, NPO Factors

For Baldev and Bansi, visiting the eco-village farming communities in Pennsylvania and West Virginia turned out to be the triggering and turning point in their lives. At these places, Baldev experienced practical application of spiritual philosophy in day-to-day lives. For Bansi, after visiting the West Virginia center, his resolve to become a monk become stronger. The other six participants visited the Mumbai Monastery because of its proximity to their University. After seeing SL lifestyle at these monasteries and how the monastery took care of the monk's/SL basic needs, their resolve to become monk/SL become stronger.

Six participants (except Bansi and Baldev) tried the Mumbai NPO program of trying a monk lifestyle. Under this program, the individuals could stay in the monastery and work in the corporate sector. That NPO policy provided the participants with an opportunity to experience both sides of the coin. They could simultaneously experience both lifestyles and weigh in their options before taking a life-transforming decision to become a monk. The monastery also provided opportunities for engaging in several social welfare projects and serving society, which helped all the participants fulfill their social work aspirations. The participants also traveled to pilgrimages with senior

monks/SL, which also contributed to their overall positive experience and determination to become a monk/SL.

For Baldev, a documentary on the Mumbai monastery also played an important role in his decision. He was amazed to see such a community of monks/SL exists. After watching the documentary, he aspired to become a part of that monk/SL community while pursuing his Ph.D. Eventually, both Bansi and Baldev met the visiting senior monks/SL from Mumbai monastery in Pennsylvania and Ohio, respectively. After their interaction with the visiting spiritual leaders and assessment from both sides, the senior spiritual leaders gave their consent to Baldev and Bansi to join their Mumbai Monastery.

Thus, for all the participant's several monastery factors turned out to be the most influential factor in their decision to become a monk/SL.

Research Question Two: All HRD Activities (Combined)

For research question two, six themes or their HRD related activities emerged, which are as follows:

- Training and Development (T&D) Activities
- Organization Development Activities
- Leadership Development
- Mass Food Cooking and Distribution (mid-day meal)
- Rural Development Activities
- Eco-village Environment Protection and Awareness

These six themes indicate the spiritual leaders' activities and contributions to their and society in the HRD context. The comprehensive list of monks/SL activities

arrived after the cross-case analysis is presented in Table 22. which answers the research question two in this study.

Table 23

All Activities of the Monks/SL (Combined After Cross Case Analysis)

Themes (Monks/Spiritual Leaders Activities)	Categories of Specific Monks/Spiritual Leaders Activities)
Training and Development (T&D) Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● T&D for community ● T&D for monks ● T&D for college students/Universities ● T&D for corporate organizations ● T&D for doctors and medical faculty ● T&D for an international audience/organization ● T&D workshop topics and T&D fees ● Course design, implementation, feedback, and evaluation
Organization Development Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CARE Committee ● ISO Quality assurance certification ● Website and knowledge sharing portal development ● Fundraising for NGO ● Operation and management tasks (finance, construction, cleanliness, maintenance, outreach activities, volunteer management, priestly tasks, writing, publishing, corporate social responsibilities)
Leadership Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leadership college for leadership development ● Developing curriculum and courses for leadership college
Mass Food Cooking and Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mega kitchen designed and automated. ● Mid-Day meal food for life program ● Cooking for the resident monk, congregation, festivals, and food distribution

Table 22 Continued

Themes (Monks/Spiritual Leaders Activities)	Categories of Specific Monks/Spiritual Leaders Activities)
Rural Development Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Women's empowerment• Skill development• Farmer empowerment• Health care• Education programs for youth and kids
Eco-village Environment Protection and Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Green technologies project• Water resource development• Plastic waste recycle• Creating environmental awareness

The cross-case analysis resulted in a list of several activities undertaken by the participants. This section discusses those cross-case analysis findings under respective themes and categories, supported by data and information gathered from monastery documents and websites.

Training and Development Activities

All the eight spiritual leaders interviewed were actively involved in training and development (T&D) activities. Spiritual development (SD) training forms the core of their T&D initiatives. Their T&D program is delivered and implemented at different levels, such as individual, group, community, national, and global levels. The audience or the beneficiaries of the SD T&D programs spans from college students, corporate leaders, medical doctors and faculty, rural and tribal communities, affluent urban people living in posh localities to people living in the slums and villages, women, children, and monks/SL. Several monks/SL from the Mumbai center also travel to different countries and conduct T&D programs for an international audience. Many corporates invite

monks/SL as motivational speakers or as keynote speakers in their conferences or conclaves.

The SD training is either delivered face-to-face or online. According to the Mumbai NPO website, they have nearly 200,000 audio lectures on their server. Around 9,000 spiritual practitioners visit their website daily, and an average of 11,000+ files get downloaded daily. All their courses and training lectures are available in the public domain and are free for download. (Audio Online Lectures, n.d.)

Ram and Baldev mentioned their courses and workshops are well structured and designed. They evaluate their training by soliciting audience feedback and, based on the input, redesign their courses or training material. The training topics and courses are diverse and are custom designed according to the audience and their needs. Since there are around 200,000 online audio lectures, and it is challenging to list all the topics. However, some of the training topics that the spiritual leaders deliver to their audience, incorporating spirituality are: (a) art of living, (b) overcoming anger, (c) principles of satisfaction, (d) crafting a happy life, (e) leadership mantras, (f) spirituality and science, (g) the journey of self-discovery, (h) science of self-realization, and (i) developing ecological intelligence, emotional and spiritual intelligence.

Chandra, Bansi, and Daya mentioned, the monks/SL offer their training for free or a nominal fee for the participants to stay committed. If any domestic or international host/organization were interested in inviting them to conduct SD training for their employees or communities, they would expect the host or the corporate organization to sponsor their travel expenses. Besides these expenses, they do not charge any fees for

their talks, workshops, seminars, and consultations. However, they accept donations if the host or audience wishes to give them, but not mandatory.

Talking about this corporate training and the interest of corporate organizations in spiritual development training, Raghu said:

I'm also invited to corporate organizations, and I have conducted training on leadership sutras and work-life balance for their employees. I have received some very good reviews. Some of the employees and employers keep calling me again and again to conduct this training. Many of our spiritual leaders are being invited by so many corporates to conduct these training programs.

This study's participants and many monks/SL from this Mumbai monastery have their social media presence. They conduct SD training via online, social media and are in touch with their followers and students to share spiritual wisdom. One of the senior monks/SL from this monastery, 46 years old, an engineer by education, his Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube channel describes his profiles as a personal coach, monk, lifestyle & motivational strategist. He has around 6.1 million followers on Facebook (Das, n.d.), 88.4 thousand followers on Twitter (Das, n.d.), 1.4 million on Instagram. His YouTube channel has 3.33 million subscribers and 4,290,881 views (Das YouTube, n.d.). His LinkedIn page lists numerous awards he has received. In 2020, the World HRD Congress recognized him as amongst the 101 most fabulous global coaching leaders. He received an award from American Eagle for being an Iconic Global Peace Leader. He is a recipient of the Mahatma Gandhi Leadership Award for extraordinary achievement in spreading awareness of value-based leadership around the world. The British Parliament

had invited him to talk in their Parliament, and he spoke in British Parliament three times and at the United Nations. His debut book, *Life's Amazing Secrets*, is an Indian national bestseller (Gaur Gopal Das | LinkedIn, n.d.)

Thus, this data indicates that spiritual leaders from the Mumbai monastery, NPO, use their education, knowledge, and leadership for humanity's welfare through spiritual training and development initiatives. Their leadership and activities' impact is noticeable in the number of followers and subscribers and the awards and recognition received from national and international organizations, including the United Nations.

Mass Food Cooking and Distribution Activities

All the participants interviewed have been trained in mass community cooking and food distribution. These monks/SL are trained to cook for hundreds of resident monks. Some monks/SL get trained to cook for thousands of people visiting their center or set up mega kitchens and cook and distribute foods to millions of people at Kumbha Mela, the largest gathering of spiritual seekers on this planet. The monks/SL engineering skills have come in handy to set up operations of this magnitude.

Daya used his software skills to design, automate and build a centralized hi-tech kitchen using the best cooking equipment in the most effective, efficient, and hygienic manner and compliance with all the set ISO regulations. Because of Daya's expertise and skills, he saved millions of dollars for his NPO. Today the NPO can handle mass cooking and distribution operations efficiently. Daya provides free consultations to other centers and NPO to set up their community or mega kitchen. National Geographic made a documentary on one of their mega kitchen projects (National Geographic Channel,

n.d.). These mega kitchens are used for a very noble and humanitarian cause. The NPO runs a program called Annamrita, food for life, mid-day meal to provide nutritious, wholesome, and hygienic food to underprivileged school kids.

According to the Annamrita website, the food for life project started with a vision to create a world where no one, especially kids, goes hungry. This project has positively impacted underprivileged and poverty-stricken kids, with their attendance increasing in public school because they get at least one nutritious meal for free. The food for life program has uplifted children's health status by liberating them from the vicious cycle of illiteracy and hunger by providing them nutritious food prepared in a hi-tech kitchen that nourishes the body and nurtures the soul. NPO has set up state-of-the-art kitchens in 20 locations all over India and has served a free meal to 1,000,000+ kids across 6,500 schools in 21 cities and has served 1,200,000+meals. Ram and Chandra have actively contributed to this project. Ram used his operation research skills to optimize the vehicle routing delivering the food to various schools (Annamrita, n.d.).

Organization Development Activities

For any organization, profit or NPO, to function efficiently, it needs to engage in OD activities to improve the present and future health of the organization and its stakeholders through planned change in processes and systems. As evident from the interviews, observations, and documents, all the monks/SL work as full-time dedicated volunteers and handle management and OD activities for their NPO. All the monks/SL manage various operations, processes, projects, volunteers, management, and administrative tasks required for an organization's smooth and efficient functioning to

achieve its vision and mission. These monks/SL efficiently manage change within their operations and processes. Most monks/SL work as internal OD consultants for their NPO and external OD consultant for other NPO's, as mentioned in individual cases. However, some of the notable OD projects the participants have handled at their NPO are:

CARE Committee. Raghu, Chandra, and Daya mentioned they are part of the CARE team, responsible for taking care of the resident monks/SL basic needs and their spiritual, emotional, and physical needs. The committee ensures that the monks/SL feel nourished so they can dedicate their time and energy for the spiritual growth of self, others, and other welfare activities.

ISO Quality Assurance Certification. Raghu and Daya worked extensively to get their NPO center ISO quality certified. They act as internal OD consultants to other NPO centers to implement the quality standard. They also act as external OD consultants to NPO seeking their advice and help get their organization ISO certified.

Website and Knowledge Sharing Portal Development. Ram and his team built a knowledge-sharing website and a knowledge exchange portal. This project mapped all the worldwide centers, leaders at different centers, and their functional expertise. Instead of working in silos, this portal allowed the management team to locate which leader leads which center and provides a bird's eye view of functional expertise at each center.

Fundraising. Most NPO's depend and survive on donations. Arjun said monks/SL at their monastery are not actively involved in fundraising. However, as and

when the need arises, he and other monks/SL reach out to philanthropists to raise money for their NPO.

Thus, the monks/SL effectively use their educational and professional skills for various organizational development-related activities.

Rural Development Activities

All the participants talked about their involvement in various rural development projects at their eco-village and their perceived impact, presented in individual cases. The NPO annual report document and documents from their website provide evidence of the project's impact. Under their rural development initiatives/projects, the monk/SL and their monastery handle various projects such as (a) women's empowerment, (b) farmer empowerment, (c) skill development, (d) health care, and (e) education for kids.

Women's Empowerment Activities. According to the NPO 2018-2019 annual report and NPO website, the NPO started this project to empower rural women to emerge as confident and self-sufficient individuals. The project focuses on:

- Empowering women members of rural India through employment
- Creating an ecosystem of self-help groups for sustained growth and development
- Improving their socio-economic status by educating and making the male population aware of their potential and capabilities.

Women from rural areas are made aware of the power that lies in their hands.

They help form women's self-help groups and educate them on the government's microcredit programs and small enterprises for income generation. They learn various skills, such as stitching, making paper bags, handicrafts, making incense, cooking to earn

a livelihood. Some women get trained to be Anganwadi workers (Anganwadi is a type of rural child care center in India). Because of this project, women formed more than 180 self-help groups with a membership base of 1,900+ women benefiting nearly 10,000 people. The case studies documented in NPO's 2019 annual report show pictures of women exhibiting self-confidence, self-esteem, and dignity and a rise in their income due to their empowerment project. The NPO engages its women volunteers to teach new skills to tribal women or hire outside professionals as needed (Women Empowerment |Govardhan Ecovillage, n.d.).

Farmer Empowerment. Under this initiative, this program aims to make a paradigm shift in farming perception by providing farmers the necessary support in terms of both knowledge and financial aid. Several monks/SL who specialize in agriculture are engaged in (a) Farmers Training, (b) Organic Farming, (c) Livestock Development, (d) Indigenous Seed Conservation, (f) Enhanced Wadi Agricultural Sewa, (g) Government Linkages.

As documented by the annual report and NPO website, this project's impact indicates the NPO adopted 1,100+ farmers, trained 6,000+ farmers, and achieved 131,000+ horti-floriculture plantings. The farmers' average income increased by 30-35%, and many of the farmers started to earn more income than they were earning by migrating to cities and working as laborers (Empowerment of Farmers, n.d.).

Skill Development of Rural and Tribal Youth. Under this project, the monks/SL started Bhakti Vedanta Kaushal Vikas Kendra (BKVK) to equip tribal youths with the skills to help them get employment and grow economically. They have

designed a skill development program that offers four specialized focus training areas under two-year vocational courses. Students learn 72 skills under engineering, agriculture, home and health, and energy and environment curriculum in the first year. In the second year, they specialize in skills that interest them. At the end of the course, successful students receive a certificate from the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) with a Diploma in Basic Rural Technology (DBRT).

Since its inception in 2016, BKVK has trained two batches totaling 50 plus students from 10 different villages. The NPO offered help to all the students to find a job in the nearby industrial belt and achieved an 80% placement record. The document shows that a few of their students inspired by their vocational training and learning in BKVK got self-motivated to pursue higher education (Bhakti Vedanta Kaushal Vikas Kendra, n.d.).

Health Care Projects. As documented in Arjun and Gopal's case, as medical doctors they are actively involved in health-related projects, whether caring for the resident monks, educating the community about health initiatives, or treating the needy, especially the rural poor people. Under their health care project, the monks/SL and their NPO provides easy access to primary health care and treatment of common health issues in the rural areas. Reaching the unreached with medical services is achieved through mobile medical units. The mobile medical units are equipped with a qualified doctor, pharmacist, community resource person, and driver. These mobile medical vans travel to several villages offering free or concessional medical treatment to society's underprivileged people. They educate rural people about basic hygiene and

self-care and highlight the importance of regular health checkups. The NPO reports the impact of this project since its inception as follows:

- 1,800+ General and specialist outreach health camps
- 3,4500+ Free cataract eye surgeries
- 1,800+ Surgeries for cancer patients
- 54,000+ Free/subsidized dialysis sessions (Rural Healthcare, n.d.).

Educational Activities for Kids and Youth. Under this educational program, the NPO is involved in imparting education through an innovative, non-traditional, and holistic experiential learning approach to education that nurtures a lifestyle instead of just providing a means of living. According to the NPO document and website, the impact of this project has been as follows:

- 5,000 students from 107 schools participated in 266 sessions and benefited
- eight science fairs (5,575 students, 205 teachers benefited)
- 350 students benefited from 10 science workshops
- 1,000 students from 26 schools participated in the science talent search exam
- 70 students for 10 days Residential Mathematics camp at GEV
- 1,100 students benefited from 17 sessions for four schools in value education
- 1,200 students from 12 schools visited GEV for Environmental studies
- 60 Yoga sessions for blind and mentally challenged school children
- six cultural programs in School for Blind conducted
- 1,600 students in 46 high schools for Gita Pradnya Shodh

- 140 Children (from eight centers) benefitted through Value Education for kids
- three youth camps conducted for 30 kids from the nearby community (Rural Education, n.d.)

Education to Orphan and Underprivileged Rural Kids. Under this initiative, the NPO runs an orphanage and provides education to underprivileged or orphan children in the nearby tribal villages. The education is imparted considerable scientific, creative, structural, and behavioral development through physical, emotional, mental, intellectual, and spiritual development. This program's impact is that in the year 2006-07, they had 39 boys, and in the year 2019-20, they had 59 boys and seven girls, and some of the kids were from single-parent families (Orphanage, n.d.).

Eco-village Environment Protection and Awareness

The monks/SL believe in taking responsibility for the environment and its people. According to the 2011 census of India, 68.84% of Indians (around 833.1 million people) live in 640,867 different villages, and the monks/SL envisioned a model village built using green technologies as a sustainable solution to the current ecological crisis. They wanted to build an eco-village based on simple living and higher thinking principles that bring spirituality to life. So, they built an eco-village, namely Govardhan Eco-village (GEV), integrating various systems comprising organic farming, cow-barn, biogas plants, composting units, and green constructions. Their eco-village model facilitates the recycling or reusing of waste from one system into another.

According to the NPO document, this project's impact was 16 tribal villages planted more than 100,000 fruit, forestry, and flower trees with over 400 families, thus mitigating at least 2,000 tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Today this eco-village is a part of eco-tourism. This eco-village community hosts multiple yoga, self-improvement, health, academic and spiritual events throughout the year within its tranquil and sustainable space, attracting domestic and international tourists. Several schools, college students, and professionals visit this eco-village to learn about green technologies, environment awareness, and self-sustainable living and take steps and measures to care for and protect our environment.

The Govardhan Eco-village (GEV) has won the prestigious United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Award for Innovation in Non-Governmental Organizations at the 13th UNWTO Awards. This NPO is the first Indian NPO to win a UNWTO award. It has received recognition for its ground-breaking work in using eco-tourism to reduce poverty and provide sustainable livelihoods in one of the most backward tribal regions of Mumbai, India. Their Govardhan Eco-Village (GEV) had also won several international and national awards, including the International Green World Award in South Korea, International Zero Waste Award in the UK, International Built Environment Award in the UK, Aqua Excellence Award for Sustainability initiatives in Social Sector, Skoch Renaissance and Platinum Award for Water Conservation (Singh, 2018; School of Sustainability, n.d.).

Under their eco-village, the monks/SL have implemented various projects described below.

Water Resource Development. In rural areas, people experienced water scarcity for drinking and irrigation purposes. To address this problem, the monks/SL have used their skills and expertise to tackle and eradicate water scarcity through their water resource development project. The impact of this project as documented by the NPO is as follows:

- 850+ Individuals benefitted through the Lift Irrigation facility
- 5,500+ Individuals benefitted through Drinking-Water facility
- 1,050+ Individuals benefitted through customized irrigation facilities (Water Resource Development, n.d.)

The monks/SL are recycling sewage, avoiding ground pollution and river water pollution. Besides, they have installed a Rainwater Harvesting pond, which has a capacity of 10 million liters.

Plastic Waste Recycle. The monk/SL at their eco-village have continuously worked towards eradicating plastic waste. They have used their engineering and research skills to convert plastic waste into useable oil by playing it into a pyrolysis plant. Their long-term vision is to eradicate plastic waste by collecting plastic waste from all the nearby villages and placing it into the pyrolysis plant, converting all that plastic into useable oil.

Leadership Development Activities

Ram, Baldev, Chandra, and Bansi are actively involved in the leadership development program. Ram and his team developed a leadership development curriculum for their leadership college. Their curriculum included 20 courses spanning

over four major categories. (a) Personal effectiveness, (b) People Effectiveness, (c) Organizational Effectiveness, and (d) Spiritual Excellence (GBC College for Leadership Development, n.d.).

The college of leadership development website shows since its inception in 2015, several spiritual leaders from different parts of the world, including India, Russia, America, Canada, and Latin America, participated in the leadership development training. These leaders receive training in the college and then impart the training to leaders from their respective centers or zone. Like training the trainer concept, the NPO also organizes an annual leadership conclave where 1,500 world-wide leaders meet and discuss global issues, important projects and share their experiences with the large international community of leaders.

At the Mumbai monastery, Baldev, Chandra, and Bansi overlook the leadership development of their existing monks/SL or new monks who join their monastery. They train the existing and new leaders in the servant leadership concepts.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the researcher presented the results derived from data analysis. Each participant's transformational stories extracted several triggering factors and HRD related activities performed by the monks/SL. The cross-case analysis helped identify several triggering factors that led individuals with an impressive education and professional background to become monks/SL. Additionally, it also helped to identify several HRD activities carried out by SL. The researcher presented these findings with detailed descriptions of each spiritual leader's background, detailed responses to the two

research questions in a narrative format illustrated with interview excerpts, and visual tabular format. The intention was to share the eight spiritual leaders' voices and journeys as they relayed their personal accounts of their spiritual journey and current activities. The researcher reported the findings through salient themes and categories that emerged through the analysis process. For research question one, eight salient themes (triggering factors) emerged, and for research question two, six themes (activities in HRD context) emerged.

The findings indicated these individuals in their new roles as SL acted as social entrepreneurs, change agents, and contributed to HRD at various levels through their social activities. Based on these findings, the following Chapter V will connect the themes and findings in this chapter, as related to the research questions and literature in Chapter II, along with the implications and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The previous chapters included the introduction, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the literature review, methodology and procedures used in the study, and the presentation of the data and findings answering each research question. This chapter opens with a summary of the study, conclusions drawn from the results, and a discussion of the results' implications. Recommendations for further studies close this chapter.

Summary

Using several concepts, definitions, assumptions related to spirituality, spiritual development (SD), social entrepreneurship, transformation learning theory, and leadership theories and model as a guiding conceptual and theoretical framework, the study focused on answering the following questions:

1. Why do individuals with an impressive educational and professional background decide to become monks/SL and join a monastery/NPO? In other words, what factors triggered a change in their career trajectories that led them to become monks/SL in monastery/NPO?
2. How do these individuals as monks/SL contribute and perceive the impact of their work in the HRD context? In simple words, what are the spiritual leaders HRD related activities and their impact on society?

The case study research design contributed to an in-depth study of each case and description to answer the research questions. The sample consisted of eight spiritual

leaders with impressive educational and professional background selected via purposive sampling procedures. The researcher selected participants and the monastery/NPO institution using several predefined criteria. The researcher visited Mumbai, India, to collect data over three trips between December 2018 and January 2020.

The researcher primarily used the human instrument for data collection purposes and used intensive interviews, observations, NPO documents, and websites to gather data. The researcher used structured and unstructured interview questions listed in the interview guide, which was expanded upon and revised as the research progressed. Observations of participants' activities and NPO during site visits, organization documents and website reviews and analyses, and broad consultation on the topic are all the research activities that assisted the researcher in exploring and assembling a contextual foundation sufficient for accurate interpretation.

The researcher used qualitative data analysis strategies to analyze the data. The results provided the reader with individual accounts of each case (participants) background, personal accounts of the spiritual transformation experienced by them, and their social activities as spiritual leaders. As a result of the analyses, the researcher identified themes and categories. The cross-case analysis allowed the identification of similarities and differences between the cases and provided comprehensive results.

Results provided answers to the research questions and prompted suggestions for further studies.

Conclusions

The conclusions reached for this study's research question are as follows:

Research Question One

Research question one inquired - Why do individuals with an impressive educational and professional background decide to become monks/SL and join a monastery/NPO? In other words, what factors triggered a change in their career trajectories that led them to become monks/SL in monastery/NPO?

Based on the findings, it is concluded that the following eight broad-level triggering factors contributed to individuals with impressive educational and professional backgrounds experiencing spiritual transformation phenomena and changing their career trajectories. These triggering factors listed in no particular order as follows:

- Family and childhood growing-up events
- Intrinsic desire to serve society
- Search for meaning and purpose/existential questions/spiritual quest
- College campus events
- Spiritual leaders influence
- Corporate work and organization-related factors
- Monastery, NPO factors
- Spiritual philosophy and literature

Triggering Factors that Changed Career Trajectories

In this section, the researcher draws conclusions and discusses all the triggering factors that changed all eight participants' career trajectories in detail.

Family and Childhood Growing-up Factors

Based on findings, it is concluded that growing up in religious/spiritual families plays an influential role in shaping individuals' beliefs and faith in their early childhood and adolescent age. Parents, grandparents, family's religious and spiritual traditions, practices, rituals, and reading scriptures contributes to the individuals developing faith in god/prayers/divinity/religion, spirituality, and spiritual practices.

Conversely, it could also lead to some individuals not blindly accepting family rituals and scriptures and make them reflect, contemplate and question religion/spirituality, traditions, rituals and seek a logical and scientific explanation. In scenarios where the family members are not able to provide a convincing, rational, and scientific explanation to their children's queries, it could trigger a quest or a curiosity within them to seek answers related to religion, spirituality, and faith from other sources such as spiritual leaders.

This study's findings are in accordance with other research, which states that families play a central role in children's faith development. Their religiosity and spirituality involvement, to a large extent, mirrors their parents. For example, National Study of Youth and Religion (NSYR) study, *Souls in Transition: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults*, Smith and Snell (2009) found that highly religious parents, frequent personal prayer, frequent scripture reading, religious service attendance during the teenage years had a tremendous influence on the religious/spiritual lives of teenagers. They make a case that the religious/spiritual lives of teenagers mirror that of their parents.

Intrinsic Desire to Serve Society Factors

The results show that spiritual leaders have an intrinsic desire, motivation, and drive to serve others selflessly. It is concluded that those individuals who have an intrinsic desire for social work or to serve society are potentially a good fit to become spiritual leaders. Conversely, spiritual leaders should have an intrinsic desire and motivation to serve society selflessly. This intrinsic desire to selflessly serve others qualifies monks/SL as servant leaders.

Search for Meaning and Purpose/Existential Questions/Spiritual Quest

This study's findings helped conclude that college students, because of their inquisitive nature, real-life experiences, observation in society, phases of dissatisfaction/lack of fulfillment in their lives, or specific events in their lives, trigger search for meaning, purpose, or existential questions. They inquire or seek answers to questions like- what is the purpose of this world, the whole universe, the cosmos, why this whole cosmic design exists? What is the aim of this life? Why am I struggling like others? Why am I pursuing this education? Am I pursuing this education for some benefit, or because everybody is doing so? Is this what my life is all about, clear an exam? Will my life not have a meaning beyond just clearing some exam?

As part of the search for sense-meaning or meaning-making, the questions the participants of this study faced before becoming spiritual leaders were consistent with the findings of Cady (2007) and Wiersma (2002). Cady (2007) stated that college students, to understand themselves, each other, and the world around them, face questions like:

Do I believe in the divine? Does it matter if there is a transcendent realm? How does my spirituality shape my view of the world? Should faith and society interact? Why would a divine power allow all this suffering in the world? Why do bad things happen in the world? Why is there inequality and suffering? Why are we at war? Why am I privileged, and what should I do with such privilege? (p. 104)

This study's findings also helped to conclude that college students search for avenues and resources on their college campuses to seek answers to their existential questions and spiritual development avenues. If they find the right kind of guidance and help from the right sources, such as spiritual leaders on their campuses, it would help them decide their career options and lifestyle choices with clarity.

The study's findings and conclusions are in alignment and confirm the findings of previous studies (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011; Bowman & Small, 2010; Braskamp, 2007; Bryant, 2007; Cady, 2007; Love & Talbot, 2009; Lovik, 2011; Weddle-West, Hagan, & Norwood, 2013). These scholars from the higher education discipline have extensively researched and written on students' spirituality and spiritual development. They have concluded that spirituality and spiritual development are essential and integral to students and adult development.

College Campus Events Factors

Seven out of eight participants in this study had decided to become monks while still in college. Based on this finding, the researcher concludes, for most students, a paradigm shift in their thinking or decisions related to their lives and career aspirations

happens during their college phase. This study's findings reveal that most college students are interested in spirituality and spiritual development avenues on their college campuses. There are several factors for students' interest in spirituality, and one such factor is students seeking answers to their existential or meaning-making questions. Certain college/campus events and college facilities play a significant role in shaping students' spiritual interests.

The results from this study showed the presence of a spiritual student club on campuses, and certain spirituality-related events organized by them provided avenues for spiritual development for college students. The spiritual student clubs that facilitate and organize spiritual development programs or training by inviting monks/SL who can cater to the students' spiritual needs helped many students develop an interest in spirituality and spiritual practices like yoga and meditation. Seven out of eight participants had met a spiritual leader on their college campus organized by the student club and experienced a paradigm shift in their thinking, and developed an interest in spirituality, spiritual philosophy, and spiritual practices like yoga and meditation.

Additionally, the results suggest that receiving a monks/SL guidance, support, and ability to answer students' questions about religion, spirituality, spiritual philosophy, and practices scientifically and logically helps students find answers to their existential questions or meaning-making questions.

Besides the influence of spiritual leaders, the findings also help conclude that for some college students, their peer's engagement in spiritual practices, their good conduct, behavior, helping attitude, and academic performance tacitly attract them to spirituality.

Thus, overall, based on this study's findings, it is concluded that college and campus-related factors play a significant role in shaping college students' lives. Some college campus events could trigger their interest in spirituality and spiritual development to such an extent that some students may experience spiritual transformation phenomena during their college days. The spiritual transformation phenomena could trigger a drastic change in their career aspirations and trajectories, eventually leading them to become monks/SL.

Spiritual Leaders Influence Factor

The study findings revealed that spiritual leaders played a crucial role in all the eight participants' lives who decided to become monks/SL. It is concluded that various spiritual leaders' factors such as their leadership, guidance, support, mentorship, genuine care, concern, compassion, simple lifestyle, selfless service to students, social welfare activities, and the impact of their activities in society influence which stood out prominently in study influences individuals to change their career trajectories and choose the monastic lifestyle.

Additionally, those spiritual leaders who regularly visited the college campus and conducted the spiritual training and development program without any hidden agenda or motives helped students develop trust with the SL and motivated them to attend their SD training. Other factors like the spiritual leader's impressive educational and professional background also helped create a positive impression on students' minds. They provided an impetus to students to attend their discourses and seek their guidance and support for spiritual growth. Also, getting to interact with SL and observing their simple lifestyle,

social welfare activities, and the impact of their work in society due to their continuous interaction with them made individuals see an alternative way of living a life or career option. For some students or individuals, these factors related to spiritual leaders were so influential that they choose a monastic lifestyle in NPO setting over their professional careers in corporate organizations.

Findings also revealed that besides the contemporary spiritual leaders, certain factors related to historical, spiritual leaders also influence people's interest in spirituality and spiritual practices. Some of the factors that could trigger spiritual transformation related to historical, spiritual leaders are their biographies, leadership qualities, teachings, spiritual practices, the impact of their work on people and society, and spiritual wisdom passed down through disciplic succession.

Thus, these findings help conclude that spiritual leaders play a dominant and central role in shaping their student's/followers interests and inclinations to spirituality. Furthermore, spiritual leaders exhibit the characteristics and traits of servant leaders and transformational leaders. They were able to selflessly serve and cater to their student's/followers' spiritual development needs, transform the lives and achieve the monastery vision and objectives.

Spiritual Philosophy and Literature Factors

This study's findings revealed that spiritual literature and scriptures play an influential role in molding an individual's interest and inclination towards spirituality. All the study participants mentioned their spiritual interest grew after they read and understood the spiritual philosophy presented in Bhagavad Gita and Srimad

Bhagavatam. All the participants said they found these two texts very helpful and transformative in their spiritual development because they explained the yoga system, spiritual philosophy, and spiritual practices quite lucidly.

Based on these findings, it is concluded that spiritual literature and scriptures help some individuals understand and gain knowledge of spiritual philosophy which could help develop their interest and inclination in spirituality. The spiritual knowledge gained by reading spiritual literature could also trigger some individuals to dedicate their lives to live by that philosophy and preach and teach the philosophy to others.

Corporate Work and Organization Factors

The study's findings help conclude that several work-related and organization-related factors such as work-life balance, layoff, conflict of personal values with organizational values, and leadership issues impact many individuals' career trajectories. These factors could potentially trigger individuals to ultimately sway away from working in profit-driven organizations and seek alternative careers and lifestyles in NPO settings.

Additionally, no avenues for spiritual development at the workplace lead to some employees experiencing dissatisfaction and searching for an alternative lifestyle or career options. Overall it can be concluded that work-related and organization-related factors could potentially trigger the spiritual quest within some individuals. This quest could lead some individuals to seek shelter in spirituality, approach a spiritual leader/teacher/Guru to seek guidance, adopt spiritual practices like yoga and meditation.

For some individuals, it could lead them to take drastic and life-transforming decisions of becoming a monk.

Monastery, NPO Factors

Findings from this study revealed several monastery/NPO factors positively influenced the individuals to take a giant leap of faith to become a monk/SL and join a monastery, NPO. Since monks/SL do not earn any money or get paid by monastery/NPO's, the NPO policy of taking care of monks/SL basic, physical, emotional, and spiritual needs is the most crucial factor that helped individuals decide to become monks and join the NPO. The second factor is the NPO policy of allowing the individuals to stay at their monastery and simultaneously allowing them to work in the corporate sector for a stipulated time. This policy allowed the individual to compare and evaluate both lifestyles before making any life-transforming career decisions. Third, an opportunity for an individual to focus on their spiritual development and opportunities to serve the society, social welfare activities also played an influential role in their decision. Fourth having a congenial environment in the monastery also enabled the individuals to become monks with confidence and clarity.

Additionally, factors such as the NPO website, a documentary showcasing the monastery, the monks/SL lifestyle, and their activities also helped individuals in different countries to assess and evaluate what the monastery and monastic life looked like before embarking on the monkhood life.

From these findings, it is concluded that the monastery's vision, mission, structure, support system, policies, administration, leadership, management skills play a central

role in attracting highly educated and skilled professionals to join their monastery as full-time dedicated volunteers.

Transformational Learning Theory (TLT)

TLT provided a theoretical lens to this study, especially for research question one. According to TLT, as a result of transformational learning, the individual experiences three developmental dimensions psychological changes (interpreted as changes in the understanding of oneself), convictional changes (referred to as a revision of an individual's value or belief systems), and behavioral changes (i.e., changes leading to one's lifestyle and habits). Based on these tenets, the researcher made assumptions that individuals who decided to become monks/SL would experience all three developmental dimensions due to their experiences with spiritual transformation resulting in transformational learning. Thus, evaluating the TLT tenets to this study's finding, the researcher found that all the eight participants in this study experienced all the three TLT developmental dimensions resulting from their experiencing spiritual transformation phenomena and transformational learning.

1. **Psychological changes** (interpreted as changes in the understanding of one's self) In TLT, the experience of the adult learner is at the center. It is considered a primary medium for change in frame of reference, attitude, and perspectives about themselves and the world around them. This study's findings reveal that each participant's experiences played a central role when they decided to become a spiritual leader. Each participant had their unique experience starting from family and childhood experiences to experiences from the college/campus days of meeting and interacting

with spiritual leaders and working in the corporate sector. For all the participant's their experiences were at the center that triggered a change in their frame of reference, attitude, and perspectives about themselves and their world. Individuals experienced phases of disorienting dilemma and self-examination stages when they were making a life-transforming decision of giving up their long-cherished career and professional aspirations for which they had worked so hard to become monks/SL.

2. **Convictional changes** (referred to as a revision of an individual's value or belief systems). This process involves a critical reflection of self, beliefs, perceptions, values, and assumptions. The findings reveal that participants critically reflected on their self, belief, perceptions, values, and assumptions when they decided to become spiritual leaders. Most of them experienced meaning-making and existential types of questions. There was a big shift or a revision in their values and beliefs when they decided to give up their lucrative, well-paying careers to lead a simplistic and minimalistic life of a celibate monk.

3. **Behavioral changes** (i.e., changes leading to one's lifestyle and habits). All the individuals who became spiritual leaders had to undergo significant lifestyle changes and habits. For example:

- wear monks' robes,
- wake up early morning to perform spiritual practice like meditation,
- adopt a vegetarian yoga diet,
- lead a simple monastic lifestyle with minimalistic needs,
- lead a life of celibacy, and

- lead a disciplined and regulated life.

In summary, the TLT tenets that adults learn or make meaning from their experiences by questioning their core values, beliefs, and feelings hold true. Moreover, the findings reveal that participants' learning was transformative because there was a revision or change in their point of view, worldview, and change of habits during their transformational process from students to working professionals to finally becoming monk/SL in a monastery setting.

Research Question Two

The purpose of the research question was to inquire how these individuals as monks/SL contribute and perceive the impact of their work in the HRD context? In simple words, what are the spiritual leaders HRD related activities and their impact on society?

Spiritual Leaders HRD Activities

Based on this study's findings, the researcher concludes that monks/SL and their NPO are actively involved in Human Resources Development (HRD), International HRD (IHRD), National HRD (NHRD), and social entrepreneurial (SE) activities. Some of those activities are as follows:

- Learning, Training, and Development (HRD)
- Organization Development Activities (HRD)
- Leadership Development (HRD and IHRD)
- Rural Development Activities (HRD, IHRD, and NHRD)
- Eco-village Environment Protection and Awareness (IHRD, NHRD, and SE)

- Mass Food Cooking and Distribution (IHRD, NHRD, SE)

Training and Development (T&D)

Armstrong and Taylor (2014) define learning, training, and development as follows:

Learning is the process by which a person acquires and develops knowledge, skills, capabilities, behaviors, and attitudes. It involves the modification of behavior through experience as well as more formal methods of helping people to learn within or outside the workplace. Development is the growth or realization of a person's ability and potential through the provision of learning and educational experiences. Training is the systematic application of formal processes to impart knowledge and help people to acquire the skills necessary for them to perform their jobs satisfactorily. (p. 285)

Based on the findings from this study, the researcher concluded that monks/SL are actively involved in learning and T&D activities. Training and teaching spiritual practices (yoga, mindfulness, and meditation) form the core of their T&D initiatives. The spiritual leaders first learn and acquire the spiritual knowledge, skills, and capabilities from their spiritual teachers and practice them. Furthermore, when they are ready to teach others, they pass on the spiritual knowledge and spiritual practices through facilitating formal, informal, and experiential training methods.

The spiritual leaders are engaged in training efforts at different levels, such as individual, group, community, national, and global levels. Their audience or the beneficiaries of their training programs spans from children, college students, corporate

leaders, affluent people in cities to people from slums and villages, and global and international audiences. Many businesses and corporates invite SL to conduct spiritual development training for their employees. They are invited as motivational speakers or as keynote speakers in their conferences or conclaves. Spiritual leaders also work as lifestyle coaches, mentors, and guides to their audience. Spiritual leaders also have their presence on social media with millions of subscribers and followers and facilitate online training via video and audio talks, lectures, and discussions.

The monks/SL conducts seminars on diverse topics like ethical and moral leadership, stress management, holistic well-being, personal development, and many more topics depending on their audience. They teach spiritual practices and techniques, which have helped people overcome stress, addiction problems, depression, and other health issues. The spiritual leaders mentioned the impact of their training on their audience is people experience transformation and change in their behavior, skills, attitudes, and lifestyles.

Therefore, monks/SL directly or indirectly are engaged in T&D activities and contributing to HRD. They are HRD practitioners working actively in the T&D domain.

Organization Development (OD) Activities

Egan (2002) identified ten intended outcomes of OD, which are:

- Advance Organizational Renewal
- Engage Organizational Culture Change
- Enhance Profitability and Competitiveness
- Ensure Health and Well-being of Organizations and Employees

- Facilitate Learning and Development
- Improve Problem Solving
- Increase Effectiveness
- Initiate and/or Manage Change
- Strengthen System and Process Improvement
- Support Adaptation to Change Methodology. (p. 67)

For any organization, profit or non-profit, to function efficiently, it needs to engage in organization development (OD) activities to improve the present and future health of the organization and its stakeholders through planned change in processes and systems. Based on Egan's suggested OD outcomes and results from Chapter IV, it is safe to conclude that spiritual leaders actively engage in organization development activities. They work selflessly to increase their monasteries/NPO's organizational effectiveness by undertaking various OD-related activities or tasks such as operations management, volunteer management, ensuring the health and well-being of their NPO, volunteers, and congregation members. They are engaged in strengthening the NPO system and process (for example, ISO certification processes, vehicle optimization for mid-day meal programs).

Given the nature of this monastery/NPO, the spiritual leaders are not involved in increasing profitability and competitiveness, potentially an OD outcome for the business and for-profit organizations. However, spiritual leaders are involved in fundraising and interacting with corporates and other organizations to manage their social responsibilities projects (for example, Annamrita mid-day meal for school children). The

spiritual leaders are also actively engaged in problem-solving and managing change within the NPO and continually aligning themselves to changes in the social, political, economic, or environment in which the NPO operates. The spiritual leaders are continuously engaged in improving organizational effectiveness on various levels. Moreover, as stated in the previous T&D section, spiritual leaders actively facilitate learning and development at various levels, engaging diverse audiences.

Thus, based on Egan's (2002) OD functions, it is found that monks/SL are actively engaged in OD activities and are active OD practitioners contributing at various levels and HRD discipline.

Rural Development Activities

According to Wang and Mclean (2007), the definition of International HRD encompasses individuals, organizations of all sorts, profit, non-profit, cultural, economic, community, social, political, and cross-national dimensions. Moreover, National HRD (NHRD), according to Mclean (2004), "goes beyond employment and preparation for employment issues to include health, culture, safety, community, and a host of other considerations that have not typically been perceived as manpower planning or human capital investment" (p. 269).

Within the IHRD and NHRD context, it is essential to note that India is a developing country, and according to the World Bank, around 66 % of its population resides in rural villages. Thus, it was not surprising to see that many monks/SL worked in rural areas enthusiastically. Under the rural development activities, the researcher found that monks/SL were involved in a gamut of HRD activities such as:

- Women empowerment (skill development, training, and making them self-reliant)
- Farmer empowerment (by training, education, skill development, and technology)
- Skill development of rural youth (vocational training and education)
- Health care (mobile vans, free healthcare, healthcare education)
- Education for kids (mobile labs, mid-day meals, education camps)

In Chapter IV, the researcher elaborately described how spiritual leaders work, use their skills and knowledge and contribute their services in the rural development in each category, and the impact of their rural development activities at various levels. In India, the Indian Government or Indian HRD ministries collaborate with the spiritual leaders and spiritual organizations for rural development projects, thereby actively contributing to IHRD/NHRD field. Therefore, based on their rural development activities and their impact, the researcher concluded that most of these monks/SL activities fall under the International HRD or National HRD domain, and monks/SL are IHRD or NHRD practitioners and partners.

Eco-village Environment Protection and Awareness Activities

According to World Economic Forum's "The Global Risk Perception" survey and 2021 report, the top global risks the world is likely to face in this decade are:

1. Extreme weather
2. Climate action failure
3. Human-led environmental damage

4. Infectious diseases
5. Biodiversity loss
6. Digital power concentration
7. Digital inequality
8. Interstate relation fracture
9. Cybersecurity failure
10. Livelihood crises (McLennan, 2021)

The environmental-related issues top the list. In that context, the question is, what are HRD practitioners and scholars doing to mitigate these risks? Since HRD deals with education, training, development, organization, global and national development, what efforts or interventions are being designed and implemented by HRD professionals to mitigate these risks? Or is HRD leaving these issues in the hands of few environmental activists to educate people and raise awareness of these issues and find solutions to these problems that impact humanity? With these thoughts, the researcher urges HRD professionals to initiate a dialogue and discussion on how HRD professionals can work on finding solutions to some of these existential risks. HRD professionals should explore and search for the right partners to work on these issues and, in that context, explore and identify if spiritual leaders could be potential HRD partners to work on these issues. Can HRD and spiritual leaders collaborate to come up with creative solutions to mitigate these risks? Based on the study's findings, it seems that spiritual leaders could be potential HRD partners. The findings revealed that monks/SL actively work on environmental protection projects, raise awareness about the

environment through training and development initiatives. They have successfully designed and implemented environmentally related projects (eco-villages, eco-farms, water conservation, plastic recycling, tree plantations, and reducing CO2 emissions). The researcher has elaborately explained spiritual leaders' activities under environment protection and awareness and their impact in Chapter IV.

Thus, based on the findings and integrating them with HRD's purpose, it is concluded that spiritual leaders are cognizant of the global risks that face the world and humanity. Moreover, to mitigate these risks, they take steps in their capacities using their education, skills, abilities, resources, and knowledge integrating spiritual philosophy and techniques. Those HRD professionals interested in mitigating the environmental risks could collaborate with SL and integrate HRD tools and strategies with spiritual tools and technologies and develop creative solutions to mitigate the risks. This study's findings have identified SL as potential partners; however, HRD professionals need to find other partners for collaboration to work on complex global issues.

Mass Food Cooking and Distribution Activities

Under the mass food cooking and distribution, the spiritual leaders have used their education, knowledge, and engineering skills to set up state-of-the-art kitchens in 20 locations all over India and serve free meals to 1,000,000+ kids across 6,500 schools in 21 cities in primary and upper primary classes in government-aided schools daily. The NPO website information states that the project has positively impacted the underprivileged and poverty-stricken kids' and attendance increased in public school because they get at least one nutritious meal for free (Annamrita, n.d.).

These projects ensure that no underprivileged kids go hungry, are deprived of education because of hunger or lack of nutritional deficiencies or drop out of school to earn their meals. Through these projects, the spiritual leaders collaborate with the Indian HRD ministry and contribute to National HRD and work as social entrepreneurs and their monasteries function as social enterprises.

Leadership and Leadership Development Activities

Spiritual leaders are not only executing leadership roles but are also engaged in leadership development. Baldev is engaged in training the monks/SL leaders and has recorded more than 1400 online lectures and 200 plus video lectures. Ram was involved in developing a curriculum for leadership college. The leadership training program provides training for worldwide leaders in five main areas:

- Spiritual Excellence: Learning; chanting; etiquette, practitioners care; outreach.
- Personal Effectiveness: time management; balancing work, service, and family life.
- Relationship Effectiveness: supportive communication; team building; conflict resolution; coaching and mentoring.
- Organizational Effectiveness: leadership; goal setting; building effective systems; team building; strategic planning; performance measurement; project management.
- Functional Effectiveness: legal and compliance; temple administration; accounting; budgeting; financial management; risk management; facility management (GBC College for Leadership Development, n.d.)

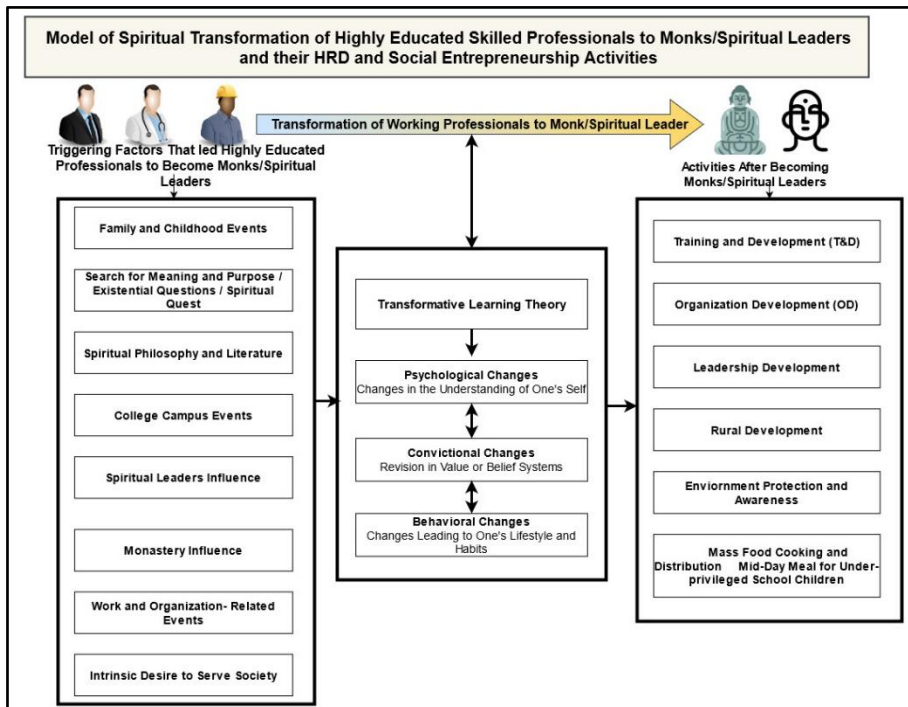
Thus, spiritual leaders play a critical and crucial role in developing future with high morals, authenticity, and ethical foundations.

Model of Spiritual Transformation of Highly Educated Skilled Professionals to Monks/Spiritual Leaders and their HRD and Social Entrepreneurship Activities

Figure 5 depicts the findings of both the research questions, eight factors that led the highly educated skilled professionals to become monks/SL, and how TLT played a role in their transformation. The figure also depicts six broad levels HRD and social entrepreneurship activities the monks/SL are engaged in after their transformation.

Figure 5

Model of Spiritual Transformation of Highly Educated Skilled Professionals to Monks/Spiritual Leaders and their HRD/Social Entrepreneurship Activities.



Additional Conclusions

In this section, the researcher has presented and discussed additional conclusions that emerged from this study. These conclusions are relevant because leadership and social entrepreneurship constructs and concepts provided the conceptual framework for this study. These conclusions may help understand the implications of this study from these multidisciplinary contexts.

Spiritual Leaders are Servant and Transformational Leaders

In this section, based on the study findings, the researcher has analyzed whether spiritual leaders are servant leaders, transformational leaders, or both.

Spiritual Leaders and Servant Leadership

As discussed in Chapter II and suggested by Greenleaf (1977) and Spears (2010) the core idea of Servant Leadership is that servant leaders are not concerned with personal aggrandizement and self-interest. The leaders have a natural feeling of wanting to serve others first. They genuinely care about others; they want to empower others and are facilitators, and they want all of their subordinates to be successful. The study's findings reveal that spiritual leader activities and their perceived definition of spiritual leader align with servant leadership core tenets and characteristics.

Monks/SL, despite their impressive educational qualifications, some coming from affluent families, have chosen to live a simple monastic life to serve others. Spiritual leaders' activities in rural and tribal areas, slums, show that they have reached the unreached population. They have successfully implemented projects for underprivileged people and have dedicated themselves to serve others. Their activities show that spiritual leaders genuinely care about others; they want to empower others and

want their followers and people from all sections of society to be successful. Through spiritual philosophy, spiritual practices, spiritual tools, they are engaged in providing healing solutions to people's problems and improve their followers' quality and standard of living. Thus, based on this study's findings, it is concluded that spiritual leaders are servant leaders.

Spiritual leaders as Transformational Leaders

According to Bass and Riggio (2006), transformational leaders are those who: stimulate and inspire followers to both achieve extraordinary outcomes and, in the process, develop their own leadership capacity. Transformational leaders help followers grow and develop into leaders by responding to individual followers' needs by empowering them and by aligning the objectives and goals of the individual followers, the leader, the group, and the larger organization (p.13)

Based on participants' stories and this study's findings, the spiritual leaders also exhibit transformational leadership qualities. Spiritual leaders performed activities aligned with their monastery/NPO vision and mission, and encourage, inspire, and motivate their followers to do the same. All the spiritual leader participants from this study worked under their spiritual teacher/leader/Guru's leadership and guidance. Their spiritual teacher/leader/Guru has ensured that his students'/followers' spiritual developmental needs and activities align with the NPO vision, mission, and goals. Inspiring and keeping individuals with such impressive education and scientific background motivated for years and running a global spiritual organization with millions of international members certainly requires the leader to be a transformational leader. In

most monasteries and faith-based spiritual organizations, leaders follow the Guru/spiritual teachers' disciplic succession. They do not deviate from the core organizational mission. The spiritual leaders (participants) work as servant leaders, keeping their followers' needs at the center and as transformational leaders by aligning the followers and organization goals. Thus, it is concluded that spiritual leaders are both transformational leaders as well as servant leaders.

Spiritual Leaders are Social Entrepreneurs

As discussed in Chapter II, Braun (2010) reviewed the literature on social entrepreneurship and, citing several scholars, listed several social entrepreneurs' characteristics. Based on Braun's characteristics and findings for this study, I evaluated if spiritual leaders are social entrepreneurs or not, and presented the evaluation results in Table 23.

Table 24

Spiritual Leaders as Social Entrepreneurs Comparison

Characteristics of a Social Entrepreneur (Braun, 2010)	Are Spiritual Leaders Social Entrepreneurs?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social entrepreneurs (SE) share common visions for positive, transformative change and then proactively work towards achieving those goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual leaders (SL) share a common vision of the spiritual development (SD) of self and others. With this vision, the SL attempts to bring about positive, transformative change in society and proactively achieve those goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SE are motivated by a social mission and see wealth as only a means to an end and not the ultimate goal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite having an impressive educational and professional background, spiritual leaders are driven by a social mission of holistic spiritual development at multiple levels. As monks, earning money is not on their plan. Holistic development goals drive them

Table 23 Continued

Characteristics of a Social Entrepreneur (Braun, 2010)	Are Spiritual Leaders Social Entrepreneurs?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They generally have strong philosophical or faith-based values as well as the resilience to swim against the social tide • SE often act boldly with limited resources and must be relentless in their mission for change if they are to succeed • SE are energetic, persistent individuals who have the ability to inspire others to support their cause • They are exceptional in their ability to incorporate their beliefs with the appropriate action • They are individuals who are connected to multiple levels of reality and feel a connection to a higher power. This, in turn, inspires their creativity, which establishes a necessary connection between disparate systems and the creation of new creative solutions • A SE is someone who feels passionate about an issue and feels that they are obligated to act; for them, challenges are seen as opportunities, and negative feedback from peers does not drain their energy to move forward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual leaders do have strong spiritual, philosophical values and spiritual practices, and these two things help them be resilient to swim against any social tide • Spiritual leaders and their NPO's certainly work with limited resources (money, volunteers) but are relentless in their mission of spiritual development of self and others • SL inspires volunteers, organizational leaders for Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) projects (e.g., mid-day meal project) • SL use spirituality and spiritual development tools for various actions (for example helped people over their addiction, stress, anxiety problems) • SL believes in a higher power (god, divinity, or prayers) and engages in spiritual practices to feel and develop the connection further. This connection also leads them to develop spiritual qualities like compassion and help them establish a necessary connection between disparate systems (underprivileged people) and create creative solutions for them • SL are passionate about the spiritual development of self and others

Characteristics and Qualities of Spiritual Leaders

Just as Greenleaf (1977) and Spears (2010) listed the characteristics/traits of the servant leaders, Bass and Riggio (2006) listed for transformational leaders, and Braun (2010) for social entrepreneurs, similarly I have identified characteristics and qualities of monks/SL. These characteristics and qualities are derived and grounded on this study's findings, researchers' prolonged interaction and observation with the spiritual leaders, and their activities. Thus, spiritual leaders are those who:

- exhibit equanimity (mental calmness, composure, evenness of temper, and control of senses),
- are indifferent to material acquisitions (not obsessed with material things, possessions, and prestige),
- believe in either god, higher power, super soul, higher self, a cosmic energy, or divinity and attempts to connect with it,
- are expert in teaching spiritual philosophy, spiritual science, and spiritual practices that bring about spiritual realizations and experiences of the transcendental realm,
- follow a regulated and disciplined life,
- have an intrinsic desire to serve and perform welfare work for everyone,
- are compassionate, merciful, peaceful, truthful, and respectful to everyone,
- consider the entire world as one family (treats everyone with equal vision and is equal to everyone),

- spiritual development and spiritual wellbeing of self and others are their primary goals, and
- do not believe nor engage in religious conversions of their followers.

Implications

This study had implications for several stakeholders in HRD and interdisciplinary fields.

Implications for HRD and IHRD

HRD is a holistic process that involves theories and practices to better individuals, groups, organizations, and nations for the betterment of humankind. The findings from this study have both theoretical and practical significance to the field of HRD. From a practical standpoint, this study offers implications on various HRD fronts: Organization Development (OD), Training and Development (T&D), Career Development (CD), and National HRD.

Implications for Learning, Training and Development Professionals

The findings of this study have implications for T&D professionals. This study's findings revealed that spiritual leaders and their organizations are engaged in training and development activities catering to a diverse audience's spiritual development needs ranging from kids, youth, college students, working professionals, and community members. These findings open avenues for T&D professionals to collaborate with the monks/SL to design, develop, and implement spiritual development training for employees or their clients.

Conversely, spiritual leaders could take help from T&D professionals to systematically apply the adult learning and training pedagogies and concepts to design their training and workshops to make them more effective. The spiritual leaders and their NPO's could collaborate with T&D professionals to design SD training interventions and help them evaluate the impact of their training at various levels. It would be a win-win situation for both parties.

Implications for Organizational Development Professionals

The study's findings revealed several work-related and organization-related factors that contributed to participants experiencing dissatisfaction at their workplaces and choosing monastic life over corporate professional life: Factors such as long work hours, work-life balance, layoffs, boss issues, ethical and moral dilemmas, leadership issues, corporate culture, conflict of moral values with organization culture, and no avenues of spiritual development at the workplace were some of the factors participants mentioned. Knowing these factors should help the OD professionals understand what factors trigger the spiritual quest within employees at workplaces and how important it is to address employees' spiritual quest and development needs.

This study's findings open up avenues for the OD consultant to collaborate with spiritual organizations and spiritual leaders to design spirituality-based interventions to manage change. For example, in scenarios where organizations need to take tough decisions of downsizing, employee layoffs, mergers, and acquisitions create job insecurities. Employees and organizational leaders experience a high level of stress and anxiety; in such scenarios, the OD consultant could collaborate with spiritual leaders to

design interventions for their employees' well-being. They could conduct workshops related to stress management, positive thinking, mindfulness, and meditation catering to their emotional needs.

Additionally, the spiritual leaders and spiritual organizations could collaborate with OD professionals and learn various OD theories and models to manage and make their NPO more efficient.

Implications for Career Development Professionals

As discussed in Chapter II, Wiersma (2002) pointed that traditional career development theories (Holland, 1997; Super, 1980; Krumboltz & Nichols, 1990) have been valuable in explaining various aspects of career choices, job satisfaction, and work motivation; however, these theories do not address the deeper meaning of life in relation to a career decision. Wiersma (2002) noted that values and deeper motives are the most important determinant of career choices within the career development field. These values and deeper motives of life questions and choices remain hidden to the external observer of high functioning people. The hidden values and attributes of high functioning people may hinder the career practitioner, counselor, and human resource manager from assisting the individual in articulating and enacting deeper meanings. Wiersma (2002), to fill in some gaps, recommended further research to discover and articulate their spiritual work meanings and spiritual meaning-making.

With that suggestion, this study has implications for career development practitioners, counselors, and human resource managers to understand what factors trigger spirituality quest or meaning-making kind of questions in individuals. How do

some individuals address their meaning-making and spiritual development needs, especially during college? Furthermore, the study findings also highlighted how students who had some avenues of spiritual development on their campuses but after joining the workforce and organizations with no avenues for spiritual development experienced dissatisfaction. The findings and participants' stories highlight factors that drastically changed the career trajectories for high-performing individuals, adding value to the career development field.

Also, since spiritual leaders visit college campuses to cater to students' needs and are in touch with students, the career development specialist could collaborate with SL to help students discover and articulate their spiritual work meanings and spiritual meaning-making. This collaboration could help the students make informed career choices and provide avenues for unconventional career choices and lifestyles.

Implications for International HRD Professionals

According to Wang & Mclean (2007), International HRD (also known, perhaps more appropriately, as cross-national HRD, transnational HRD, and global HRD) is:

A field of study and practice that focuses on for-profit, not-for-profit, and/or governmental entities and individuals cooperating in some form across national borders. The purpose of this interaction is systematically to tap existing human potential and intentionally shape work-based, community-based, society-based, culture-based, and politically based expertise through multiple means for the purpose of improving cross-national relationships collaboratively across all involved entities through greater mutual understanding improved individual and

organizational performance, improved standards of living and quality of life, reduced conflict between entities and individuals, and any other criteria that would be deemed useful by the involved entities. International HRD is aspirational rather than realized and serves as a challenge for continuous efforts at improvement. (Wang & Mclean, 2007, p105)

The study's findings add value to IHRD because it identified spiritual leaders and their global organizations as potential IHRD partners. The study findings reveal that spiritual leaders from a global spiritual NPO with more than 500 centers in different countries actively contribute to IHRD. They have integrated spirituality and spiritual practices to shape work-based, community-based, society-based, culture-based, and politically based expertise through T&D, OD, and leadership development. They are actively involved in improving living standards and quality of life for the community, the international community, and people living in urban and rural places. Thus, IHRD professionals could partner with spiritual leaders to improve cross-national relationships collaboratively across all involved entities.

Implications for Social Entrepreneurship in HRD

Wang (2012) recommended HRD practitioners explore answers to the following questions:

- What additional examples of social enterprises can we identify which incorporate HRD/OD practices in their attempt to address societal problems in the developed/developing world? What lessons can we learn from their experiences?

- How have HRD/OD concepts and approaches been applied by social enterprises in developed/developing countries? And for what purposes?
- How can HRD practitioners and social entrepreneurs partner to address social problems facing the developed/developing countries? (p.316)

Based on this study's findings, the researcher identified spiritual leaders and spiritual organizations as social entrepreneurs and social enterprises engaged in solving societal problems in the developed/developing world. From their spiritual leaders and their NPO activities, it is evident that they are applying several HRD/OD concepts at different levels, as discussed in previous sections.

The primary purpose of these entities seems to be the holistic development at different levels; individuals, groups, organizations, and nations for the betterment of humankind. HRD practitioners and social entrepreneurs like spiritual leaders could partner together to design and develop training programs/OD and interventions for employees' and clients' holistic development and well-being. They can work together to find creative solutions and interventions to address social problems facing the developed/developing countries (for example, refer to the rural development initiatives of spiritual leaders in this study).

Implications for Interdisciplinary Field

In this section, the researcher discusses the implications for the interdisciplinary field.

Higher Education

As discussed in Chapter II, several scholars have focused on spirituality and spiritual development in higher education, adult education, and student affairs (see the work of Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011; Bowman & Small, 2010; Braskamp, 2007; Bryant, 2007; Cady, 2007; Dirkx, 1997; English, Fenwick, & Parsons, 2003; Fenwick & English, 2004; Love & Talbot, 2009; Lovik, 2011; Tisdell, 2008; Weddle-West, Hagan, & Norwood, 2013). They have contended spirituality and spiritual development is an essential and integral part of students and adult development.

Astin, Astin, and Lindholm (2011) found that spiritual development helps students develop spiritual qualities like equanimity, care, ethics, and worldview change. According to them, these qualities increased the possibility of students' active engagement in social activism, a higher degree of charitable involvement, becoming a community leader, reflecting on reducing pain and suffering in the world

The results and conclusions of this study align and reconfirm these scholars' findings. Seven out of eight participants had decided to become monks/SL while they were in college and devote themselves to work towards the spiritual development of self, others and compassionately work towards reducing pain and suffering in the world. This study adds value to higher education, adult education, and student affairs because the list of factors that emerged in this study, especially college-related factors contributing to change in students' career trajectories, adds new knowledge to their field.

Additionally, this study may help higher education, adult education, and student affairs professionals become cognizant of how spiritual leaders actively address students' spiritual development needs on campuses. This study may provide scholars with an

impetus to conduct further research involving spiritual leaders' roles in their respective disciplines.

Implications of Leadership Theory and Practice

This study adds value to leadership theory and practice. As aforesaid, Fry's (2003) spiritual leadership theory is an emerging theory and its paradigm situated within the broader context of spirituality and religion at the workplace (SRW). In the spiritual leadership theory, the spiritual leader's voices are missing. How do spiritual leaders whose 24/7 primary focus is spirituality and addressing diverse audiences' spiritual development needs define spirituality and define spiritual leaders? Their voice, spiritual leadership traits, attributes, and characteristics may add value to spiritual leadership theory development or other leadership theories and models based on spirituality and spiritual development.

On a practical front, this study may provide impetus to people working in spirituality and religion at the workplace (SRW) to collaborate with spiritual leaders to design interventions at workplaces to address the organization's and its employee's spiritual needs. The researchers and spiritual leaders could collaborate and develop other leadership theories involving business and corporate organizations.

Implications for Spiritual Non-profit Organizations (NPO)

This study involves NPO and spiritual leaders; thus, this study has implications for NPO's and spiritual leaders. This study's findings showed that spiritual leaders and monastery/NPO factors played a significant role in developing students' interest in spirituality, spiritual philosophy, spiritual practices, and monastery. The NPO and

spiritual leaders could influence and attract bright young scientific minds to join their NPO as full-time dedicated monks/SL. This study may help the NPO and spiritual leaders take cognizance of various factors that attract students to spirituality. They can guide and mentor students who show interest in becoming a monk in their NPO or attract highly educated individuals to join their NPO. The NPO will certainly benefit if they can attract such well-educated individuals to join their NPO. The world would also benefit if the NPO's can develop these highly educated individuals into future leaders who can positively contribute and impact society on different levels through their authentic, altruistic, high moral leadership qualities and traits.

Also, NPO and SL should recognize that they contribute to HRD on many levels. Most of their activities align with the HRD activities, and knowingly or unknowingly, they work as HRD practitioners. Therefore, the NPO's, spiritual leaders, and HRD professionals should collaborate and create a symbiotic relationship and positively impact and contribute at different levels –individuals, groups, organizations, and nations.

Implications for Government, Philanthropic and CSR Agencies

This study's findings revealed that spiritual leaders are engaged in a gamut of social and human development activities that positively impact and transform millions of lives. Some projects like hunger eradication, Annamrita mid-day meal for underprivileged school kids, rural and tribal development projects and environmental projects function and depend on Government grants and donations from corporates under Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR). As listed in Chapter IV, these projects' impact is significant, evidenced by the recognition bestowed by United Nations. The

Govardhan Eco-village (GEV) developed using green technologies and a self-sustainable model by the spiritual leader won the prestigious United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) award for innovation in the Non-Governmental Organizations category.

Thus, this study may add value to Government, philanthropic, and CSR agencies because it brings to their attention the gamut of spiritual leaders' activities and their NPO. These agencies can take cognizance of spiritual leaders' capabilities, talent, and holistic approach they adopt to solve some of the complex problems plaguing society and the impact of their activities in society. This study has identified a potential new partner for these agencies. Hopefully, it motivates these entities to build a collaborative symbiotic partnership, shared goals, shared leadership, and undertake projects beneficial for humanity.

Implications for Practice and Theory

This research study's findings open up the avenues for HRD scholars and practitioners interested in spirituality and spiritual development. It paves a path for HRD professionals to collaborate with spiritual leaders and spiritual organizations to design spiritual development interventions for their clients on various levels (individuals, groups, organizations, community, and national). This research may help HRD achieve a strategic advantage in human development in spirituality and spiritual development topics. By bringing in the new dimension of spirituality, spiritual leaders, spiritual organizations who work as social workers, social entrepreneurs, change agents, the study adds new knowledge and value to the existing and emerging theories used in HRD.

The study may encourage applying different theories such as learning theories, leadership theories, and spiritual theories related to topics of spirituality, spiritual development, and spiritual leaders. The possibility of new grounded theories or models emerging from the data cannot be ruled out.

Recommendations for Future Research

The following is a list of future research recommendations and opportunities from different contexts.

For HRD Professionals

- T&D professionals could investigate the impact of SL spiritual development training on different audiences (e.g., students, employees, women, children, rural/urban youth) and measure different outcomes of their training (e.g., performance, well-being, productivity, and work-life balance).
- Additionally, T&D professionals could collaborate with spiritual leaders to design and implement spiritual development training, workshops, and interventions and study the impact and outcomes of those interventions at different levels; individual, team, organizations, and community.
- Organization Development (OD) professionals could undertake the research to identify how spiritual leaders implement OD projects in NPO settings and identify the commonalities and differences in the OD approach in NPO and for-profit organizations.
- Career Development (CD) professionals could collaborate with spiritual leaders and undertake research related to spirituality and career choices and identify the

deep hidden spiritual quests, values and beliefs in their clients and how spirituality impacts their career choices.

- HRD professionals working in the International HRD domain could study the impact of spiritual leaders' activities at national, international, and cross-national levels.
- Professionals working in corporate social responsibility (CSR) domains could study how corporates and spiritual leaders collaborate, operate, and execute CSR projects and study their projects' impact.
- Researchers should investigate how spiritual leaders from different NPO settings act as social entrepreneurs in different countries and contexts.

Within Non-Profit Spiritual Organizations and Sample

- This study's focus was limited to identifying the spiritual leaders' activities in the HRD context. Further research could be undertaken to identify spiritual leaders' activities in a different interdisciplinary field context such as higher education, psychology, business, management, leadership, or medicine.
- This study was limited to participants to a specific monastery and country; however, several other monasteries/NPO/spiritual organizations may house the monks/SL with impressive educational backgrounds. Thus, further research to identify factors that led the individuals to join a particular/specific NPO would be useful. It would help identify commonalities and differences in different monasteries/NPO settings that attract individuals to join their NPO.

- Another limitation of this study was the absence of female spiritual leaders. Researchers could undertake a similar study with a female monks/SL or a mix of both genders to identify their reasons for becoming monks/SL/nuns and their activities.
- The NPO selected in this study is a global organization having 650 centers worldwide. This global NPO has monks/SL from different nationalities, faith, cultures, and religious background. Thus, a similar study can be undertaken in different countries to identify factors that led the individuals from different countries to become monks/SL and join this global NPO and help identify HRD related activities of monks/SL in different countries. Such studies may help identify the commonalities and differences in factors that attract individuals to become monks/SL in this NPO.
- Another extension of this study may be a prolonged engagement, longitudinal approach, regarding how individuals experience spiritual transformation phenomena. This research may help identify the stages of spiritual transformation phenomena.
- As an extension to this study, a study from the follower's perspective investigating the impact and influence of SL on their followers or, in other words, how do followers perceive the role of SL in their lives and their leadership qualities would add another dimension.

- Exploring the definition of spirituality and spiritual leaders from monks/SL from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and faith could add value to the ongoing discussion/debate on this topic.

Leadership Development

- Another extension of this study may be developing a spiritual leadership theory/model using grounded theory methodology.
- Further research integrating different leadership theories, learning theories, and spiritual theories could enrich this research topic.

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/J.CONCOG.2010.03.014>

APPENDIX A

CLARIFYING RESEARCHERS POSITION, BACKGROUND, MOTIVATIONS,

AND BIASES

Background and Motivation

My interest in spirituality started in 2005 when I came across a student organization at the Pennsylvania State University (PSU). At this club, I had an opportunity to meet, interact, and observe several spiritual leaders who conducted training, seminars, workshops, and lectures on various spirituality and spiritual development topics. I started attending the club's meetings regularly and practiced mantra meditation and Kirtan yoga. I soon realized that it brought immense benefits to me in every aspect of my life: physical, emotional, intellectual, and social.

When I came to Texas A&M University in 2013, I started a spiritual student club called Bhakti Yoga Club. The purpose of starting the club was to provide the same opportunity to the students at Texas A&M, which I had received at Penn State University. As a chief student leader, I organized and facilitated spiritual development training and workshops. Over the last six years, I invited several spiritual leaders to conduct spiritual development workshops, training, and talk on various topics such as who am I? what is the purpose of life? Spirituality and Science, what is karma, mindfulness, how to overcome negative emotions? Mantra meditation and yoga.

The club gained popularity, and on average, 50 to 60 students attended the weekly sessions on campus. Several students provided positive feedback on how these sessions helped them. Some of the spiritual leaders I invited had impressive educational and professional backgrounds. The TAMU students attending the workshop would often ask them- Why did you become a monk, how to become a monk, and as a monk, what do you do? Several students were interested in knowing about their transformation. Thus, my personal experience and other students' experience at our club made me more curious to bring the stories of spiritual leaders and their impact on society. This curiosity has led me to my interest in this research topic.

Biases. According to Kanuha (2000), insider researcher perspectives comes into the picture when a researcher researches with populations that share an identity or an experiential base with the participants. In this study, I recognize that I may share a common culture, language, and spiritual norms with the participants. I may also be familiar with the spiritual practices that the participants follow because I also practice some of them, thus qualifying me as an insider researcher to some extent. Dwyer and Buckle (2009) opined that the insider role might prove beneficial to the researcher and participants because it may give the researcher easy access to the participants and the organization they intend to study. From participant's perspectives, it may lead to complete acceptance of the researcher and help them be more open and truthful in sharing their experiences with the researcher, resulting in data with more depth and truth. However, the authors also caution that "there might be caveats to being a member of the group studied, for many access to the group would not be possible if the researcher was

not a member of that group. The positive and negative elements of each must therefore be carefully assessed” (p. 59). With these perspectives in mind, I documented the insider biases or any other biases I realized during my research process.

In conclusion, I would like to quote Lincoln and Guba (1985), who state the purpose of the research inquiry is to “resolve the problem in the sense of accumulating sufficient knowledge to lead to understanding or explanation” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 226). Thus, my personal experience, interest, passion, and curiosity have led me to delve deeper into this topic and explore it further by conducting doctoral-level research with utmost sincerity, integrity, and adhering to all the required standards necessary for a researcher.

APPENDIX B

PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

Dear [Recipient Name]:

As a graduate student in the College of Education and Human Development at Texas A&M University, I am conducting research as part of a Doctor of Philosophy degree requirements. The research study is titled '*Why Highly Educated and Skilled Professionals Become Monks/SL and How They Contribute to HRD A Multi-Case Study.*'

This research is a qualitative research study that would involve the participation of spiritual Leaders. Your profile matches the required participant criteria, and hence I'm writing to you. If you are willing to participate in this research study, I will have to interview you for about an hour or two. Interview questions will primarily focus on why you decided to become a spiritual leader? What were the triggering factors that led you to change your career trajectories? And how are you contributing to society in the HRD context? Your interviews will be audio recorded for transcription purposes, and I will take all reasonable efforts to keep your personal information private and confidential.

I have attached a consent form with this email to provide you with the information on why I have undertaken this research. It will also explain what you will need to do to participate in this research and the known risks, inconveniences, or discomfort you may have while participating. If you decide to participate, I will ask you to sign the consent form, and it will be a record of your agreement to participate. I will give you a copy of this form to keep.

Once you are willing to participate, I will work with you to set up a time to conduct a one-on-one interview. If you have any questions in the consent form or otherwise, please do not hesitate to email me or call me.

Sincerely,
Trupti Palkar
Ph.D. Student
Texas A&M University

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Research Question	Questions
Demographic Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your age? • What is your ethnicity • What is your nationality? • What is your cultural background? • What is your religious background?
Educational background Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your educational background? • Which university did you graduate from? • When you enrolled in the university as a student, what were your professional career aspirations?
Professional and work-related Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before becoming a spiritual leader, how many years of professional work experience did you have? • What professional skills and expertise do you possess related to your educational and professional degree? • Had you ever foreseen yourself in the role of spiritual leader while in college or at your corporate workplace? • How many years have you been a monk?
<p>Research Question # 1: reasons/triggering factors/influences that led the participants to decide to become monks/SL.</p>	<p>Please describe your journey of becoming a monk. Describe the reasons/triggering factors/influences for your interest and inclination towards spirituality.</p> <p>Probing Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the reasons/triggering factors/influences that led you to decide to give up your professional career and become a spiritual leader? • When did the idea of becoming a monk/SL occur to you? • What made you think that you should or could become a spiritual leader? • When you decided to become a monk/spiritual leader, did you receive any monkhood training, guidance, mentoring? • Did any work or organization-related factors influence you to become a monk? • Of all the career options, why did you choose to become a spiritual leader? • Please describe any avenues that were available to you at your workplace to address your spiritual needs? • Did you attend any spiritual development training or workshops at your workplace?

<p>Research Question # 2: Spiritual leaders HRD related activities and the perceived impact of their activities.</p>	<p>If you are engaged in any training and development, origination development, educational, leadership development, social welfare, please describe them in detail and how do you perceive the impact of your activities at various levels?</p> <p>Probing Questions: Describe your role, responsibilities, and activities as a spiritual leader.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As monks/SL, how do you contribute to society? • Are you involved in any learning, training, and development activities? If so, please describe it in detail • Are you involved in any organization development (OD) activities? If so, please describe it in detail • Are you involved in leadership development activities? If so, please describe it in detail • Are you involved in any community development-related projects and activities? • Are you involved in environmental-related activities? • Any other activities you would like to talk about <p>As a spiritual leader, how do you perceive your impact on society at various levels?</p>
<p>Additional Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you define spirituality and spiritual leadership? • By becoming a spiritual leader, what benefits have you experienced? • Are you happy with your decision to become a spiritual leader?

APPENDIX D

IRB CONSENT FORM

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH PROTECTION PROGRAM

IRB NUMBER: IRB2018-1505D

IRB APPROVAL DATE: 02/06/2019

This consent form will give you the information you will need to understand why this research study is being done and why you are being invited to participate. It will also describe what you will need to do to participate as well as any known risks, inconveniences, or discomforts that you may have while participating. Please feel free to ask questions at any time. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form, and it will be a record of your agreement to participate. You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

Title of Research Study: Inquiry into why and how highly skilled professionals become spiritual leaders and their contribution to society in the HRD context

Why are you being invited to take part in a research study?

You are being asked to participate because you meet the criteria for this study, which is as follows:

- You are currently in the age group of 35 to 50 years.
- You have a professional graduate degree from a University in a discipline such as engineering, medicine, Ph.D., Law, or another discipline.
- You have a minimum of two years of professional work experience in any corporate, private, or government organization before you decided to become a spiritual/religious leader in a nonprofit organization.
- You are currently serving in the capacity of a full-time spiritual/religious leader in a nonprofit organization.
- You are contributing your services and expertise in human resource development (HRD) activities such as organization development, training, and development, leadership development, social and other welfare activities.
- You can fluently communicate (written and verbally) in the English language.

What should you know about this research study?

- The researcher will explain the research purpose of this study to you.
- Whether or not you take part in this research is up to you.
- You can agree to take part and later change your mind.
- You can ask all the questions you want before you decide.
- You can decide to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.
- Your decision to withdraw from the study will not be held against you.

Who can I talk to?

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or think the research has hurt you, you can talk to research chair, Dr. Dooley, Email l-dooley@tamu.edu and phone number (979) 845-5300

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Texas A&M Institutional Review Board (IRB). You may talk to them at 1-979-458-4067, toll-free at 1-855-795-8636, or by email at irb@tamu.edu. If:

- You cannot reach the researcher.
- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the researcher.
- You want to talk to someone besides the researcher.
- You have questions about your rights as a research participant.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

Why is this research being done?

The purpose of this study is to determine

- a) Why do some highly skilled professionals decide to become spiritual leaders, and how does that transformation/transition/take place?
- b) How are spiritual leaders contributing to society in the HRD context?

How long will the research last?

- Your participation will last between two hours and two days.

How many people will be studied?

The researcher expects to enroll up to ten people in this research study.

What happens if I say, “Yes, I want to be in this research”?

If you agree to be part of this research study, the researcher would ask you to adhere to research procedures and do the following things:

- **You will participate in an interview.** During the interviews, you will be asked several questions about why you decided to become spiritual leaders? How did that transition and transformation happen? How are you contributing to society, especially in the HRD context? Interview questions will continue to develop in the natural, organic ways that case studies tend to evolve through interaction and experience. The interview would be conducted face to face or over the phone, depending on your availability and convenience. The researcher would ask your permission for your response to be audio recorded to help with the accurate transcription of your answers. The researcher may take notes while conducting the interviews. Following the initial data collection, the researcher will determine if further interviews are necessary. If a follow-up interview is required, the researcher will schedule meetings and follow-up interviews with you. Depending on the format of the interview you select, the interview is expected to last about one hour.

- If required, you will participate in a focus group interview. The researcher may conduct focus group interviews in which you will be invited to participate with other participants. The researcher will audio recorded the discussion for transcription purposes. Focus group interviews would most likely happen on-site at the nonprofit organization you serve. However, in the event of unavailability of participants for face-to-face focus group interviews, the focus group interviews may also take place via online through technology. Online interviews would also be audio recorded. To protect the privacy of the focus group members, you will be requested not to discuss what is discussed in the focus group with anyone else. The focus group will last about one hour,
- You will allow observation of your activities. The researcher will be observing your HRD and social work-related activities such as the spiritual training and development workshops you conduct within your organization, corporates, and the community you serve. The researcher will also be observing your interaction with your followers, students, or the public in general. The researcher will make notes while observing your activities. The time for observation activities would depend on the activities that are being observed and is expected to vary from two hours to two days.
- If required, you will provide relevant documents and information. You may be asked to provide copies of your professional degree certificate, work experience certificate for verification purposes. You will also be asked to provide audiovisual and web materials related to the workshop you conduct (if it is readily available as it is not mandatory) that may be necessary for verification and analysis purposes. Reasonable efforts will be made to keep the personal information in your research record private and confidential. Any identifiable information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.
- You will participate in follow up interviews. If required, you will be asked for permission to be contacted and to participate in the follow-up interviews and focus group interviews. The follow-up interviews and focus group interviews are expected to last about one hour.

What happens if I do not want to be in this research?

Your participation and nonparticipation are voluntary.

What happens if I say "Yes," but I change my mind later?

Your participation is voluntary. You can leave the research at any time, and it will not be held against you. If you decide to leave the research, contact the investigator so that the investigator can delete and return you all your collected data, information, and documents.

Is there anyway being in this study that could be bad for me?

There may be psychological/emotional risks from the time constraint associated with this study. You will be given ample time to participate at your convenience. You do have an option not to participate and can withdraw at any time.

Will my participation in this study help me in any way?

Those participating may benefit from the self-reflexive nature of the case study interviews and focus group interviews. Society and academic disciplines may benefit from this case study research.

What happens to the information collected for the research?

- Reasonable efforts will be made to keep the personal information of the participants private and confidential within the limits of the law.
- Any personal documents and web content data collected will be used only for verification and data analysis purposes.
- No names nor any kind of information which reveals the identity of the participant will be published in the dissertation or any subsequent work resulting from the dissertation project.
- The case study will be reported using pseudonyms.
- During the entire research process, a researcher will code and encrypt the data file and store it safely and securely in a password-protected personal computer and locker
- After completion of research, PI will store the data for five years after the study is completed, and then it will be destroyed.

What else do I need to know?

The participant will be given their interview transcripts to verify their responses. The researcher will make available all study findings for the study participants and nonprofit organizations where the participants are recruited. Follow-up meetings will be scheduled for those persons interested in discussing the findings and the implications of said findings, as well as the proposed use of the information in the formal and final dissertation.

Optional Elements:

The following research activities are optional, meaning that you do not have to agree to them in order to participate in the research study. Please indicate your willingness to participate in these optional activities by placing your initials next to each activity.

I agree

I disagree

The researcher may audio record me to aid with data analysis. The researcher will not share these recordings with anyone outside of the immediate study team or TAMU Compliance.

Your signature documents your permission to take part in this research.

Signature of participants

Date

Printed name of participants

Signature of person obtaining consent

Date

Printed name of person obtaining consent
