

A CORRELATIONAL STUDY OF SPIRITUALITY & LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG ELDERS IN DIFFERENT LIVING CONDITIONS

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Abstract

Spirituality is proposed to be a component of successful aging and has been shown to predict life satisfaction in old age. Research in the area of Spirituality and Life Satisfaction are gaining greater interest in recent times and many studies have thrown light on this aspect. The current survey study examined the relationship between the role of spirituality on life satisfaction in older participants living in homes and old age homes. A sample of 398 elders was selected by using the stratified random sampling method from NCR. Scales of spirituality and life satisfaction were used to assess the variables. Correlation and CR between's of both the groups were computed for analysis. Results show that a significant difference was found between both the groups.

Keywords

Spirituality, Life-Satisfaction, Elders.

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Introduction

Spirituality plays an important role in the life of many elder people. Spirituality is a globally acknowledged concept. It involves belief and obedience to an all powerful force usually called God, who controls the universe and the destiny of man. For many people, spirituality is an important component of life. One aspect of being spiritual” is goal-directed, with aims such as simultaneously improve one’s wisdom and will power, achieve a closer connection to Deity/the universe, and remove illusions or false ideas at the sensory, feeling and thinking aspects of a person.

In recent years a growing body of literature has explored the implications of religion and spirituality for various mental and physical outcomes (Koeing1994, Levin1994). While the findings are not univocal, mounting evidence indicates that various dimensions of spirituality may enhance subjective states of well-being (Ellison1991), lower levels of depression and psychological distress (Idler1987) and reduce morbidity and mortality.

Spiritual beliefs and practices often play a central role in helping elders navigate life challenges (Barusch, 1999; Cabassa, 2007; Lawrence et al., 2006). It is important that an elder person wishing to explore issues around end of life or even share difficult questions, is offered honest and sympathetic discussion. There is overwhelming evidence, both anecdotal and researched, that high levels of spirituality are correlated positively with life satisfaction, health, healing, and well-being.

Life satisfaction or personal adjustment is something very important in everyone’s life. In the modern life, which is so full of stresses of various kinds, life satisfaction has acquired supreme significance. Therefore it is considered an important variable in younger adults as well as aged citizens. Life satisfaction is manifested through health, economic, marital, personal, social, family and job satisfaction. Lack of satisfaction may be reflected in a lack of adjustment in either of the areas identified earlier here in. The process of adjustment also by its inherent nature involves active coping with internal and external satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Positive relationship have consistently been obtained between life satisfaction and socio-economic status, perceived adequacy of income, and perceived health status (Kutneretal. Al. 1956; cutler 1973; Edwards and Klemmack 1973). It has also been found to be closely associated with high levels of activity and social interaction (Tobin & Neugarten 1961; Maddox 1965; Lippman & Smith 1968). Jamuna (1985)

investigated the life satisfaction of aged women in relation to internal and external locus of control whether aged people with higher life satisfaction would manifest greater satisfaction, would exhibit greater internality than those with lower life satisfaction, and obtained that internals had significant greater life satisfaction than externals.

There is mounting evidence linking spirituality with life satisfaction among older adults (Levin & Chatters, 1998; Fry, 2000; Fabricatore, Handal & Fenzal, 2000). It is a not able fact that religion is both now, and has always been, more common among the socioeconomically ill, the elderly, and minority groups. It is because these people are more likely to be suffering some persecution or hardship, and that is precisely where scripture predicts God will be with the under privileged and those in pain. Spirituality is as to be “discovered rather than created” that is, every individual has a unique, externally give purpose in life.

The importance of the religious and spiritual activities of the elderly has been widely reported in Western literature. The significance and benefits of participation in religious / spiritual activities towards the well-being of the elderly were well-quoted in ancient as well as modern Indian writings (Tilak, 1990).

In today's life circumstances, change considerably, both meaning in life and satisfaction should be stable over time. Although this work provides valuable insight, it deals exclusively with recent life events, by definition assessments of life satisfaction, which are based on the entire life course. Even a moment's reflection reveals that it would be virtually impossible to invent all the stressful life events that older have encountered over their lifetime. Other aspects of life could also influence life satisfaction and individual's positive aspects of life such as family life, social life, working life, joy, happiness, and excitement.

The Objective of the study is to compare the relationship between spirituality and life satisfaction among elders of homes and old age homes.

It was hypothesized that there is no significant (in Correlation) difference between the elder persons of different living conditions.

Method

It is a survey study to compare the relationship between spirituality and life satisfaction among elders of two different institutions – homes and old age homes.

Sample

In the present study, the universe of the study is the elders of homes and old age homes of NCR. A sample of 398 elder persons, within the age range of 60 to 75yrs, was selected for data collection from the NCR region. Among these 398 elder persons 237 were living in homes and 161 elders were selected from old age homes. Stratified random sampling method was used for sample selection in the present study. Out of the total sample, 199 were male and 199 were female. They were from the rural and urban areas of NCR. Their education level ranged from below 10th to PG and higher studies, they belonged from service class and business class.

Variables

Independent Variables:

1. Spirituality- (With its 10 dimensions-Commitment, Spiritual History, Private Religious Practice, Forgiveness, Spiritual Coping, Religious Support, Meaning, Beliefs, Daily Spiritual Experiences, Organisational Religiousness,).
2. Living Conditions— (Homes and Oldage Homes).

Dependent Variables:

1. LifeSatisfaction-(With its 6 dimensions-Health Satisfaction, Personal Satisfaction, Economic Satisfaction, Marital Satisfaction, Social Satisfaction, Job Satisfaction,)

Tools

The following tools were used—

1. Spirituality Scale : Constructed by Prof. S.N. Rai and Mrs Deepika Gupta (2007), is in the Hindi language based on 10 factors having 60 items. The reliability of the items was determined by the split-half and test-retest method and the content validity of the spirituality scale is .65. The items of the scale are directly related to the concept of spirituality. It includes Commitment, spiritual history, private religious practices, forgiveness, spiritual coping, religious support, meaning, belief, daily spiritual experiences and organizational religiousness.

2. Life Satisfaction Scale : Constructed by Dr. Q.G. Alam and Dr.Ramji Srivastava (2001), this scale comprises of 60 items related to six areas of life viz. health, personal, economic, marital, social, and job. Test-retest reliability was computed and obtained quotient was .84 and the validity of the scale is.74.

Prodedure

The sample consists of 398 elder people. The elders from residential areas were selected with the help of pin codes of the particular city or were contacted at temples or any other religious gathering. The institutionalized elders were contacted after the permission of the authority and consent of the elders. After establishing rapport, the tests were administered individually. All the participants participated willingly and were supportive. After the completion of their responses, the elders were duly thanked for their for their cooperation. The confidentiality of their responses was assured to them. When the data collection was over, the responses were coded, tabulate and put forth to statistical analysis

Statistical Analysis

The collected data were put to an analysis by using:

- 1 .Product Moment Correlaltion.
- 2 CR's between both r's for comparison

In the present study, informal and in-depth, open-ended interviews were also used. This interview was carried out in conversational style.

Result & Discussion

Table-1 Correlationcoe fficient & significance level of 10 dimensions of Spirituality & life satisfaction total score.

DV	Life Satisfaction			
	In Home		Old Age Home	
Dimensioned of Spirituality	(N-237)	Significance	(N-161)	Significance
Commitment	.19	.003	.09	.210
Spirituality History	.15	.017	.086	.270
Private Religious Practice	.246	.000	.212	.007
Forgiveness	.107	.100	.20	.010
Spiritual Coping	.03	.580	.12	.100
Religious Support	.16	.013	-.223	.005

Meaning	.119	.068	.357	.000
Beliefs	.314	.000	.053	.500
Daily Spiritual Experience	.113	.080	.34	.000
Organisational Religiousness	.243	.000	.248	.002
S. Total	.26	.000	.39	.000

CR= 1.4i.e.insignificant

Table-2 CR of r between both the groups

Life Satisfaction	Living Condition	r	t	Significance
Life Satisfaction Total	In Home	.26	1.4	Insignificant
	Old Age Home	.39		
Health	In Home	.26	2.4	Significant
	Old Age Home	.48		
Personal	In Home	.09	2.4	Significant
	Old Age Home	.33		
Economical	In Home	.15	2.0	Significant
	Old Age Home	.33		
Marital	In Home	.13	.4	Insignificant
	Old Age Home	.06		
Social	In Home	.24	1.8	Insignificant
	Old Age Home	.32		
Job	In Home	.13	.5	Insignificant
	Old Age Home	.08		

This study examined the correlation of spirituality with life satisfaction in geriatric population. According to Table-1 and Table-2, both the groups (Elders living in homes and Elders living in Old Age Home respectively) do not differ significantly in relation to their correlation because their CR is found to be insignificant.

Results in Table-2 reveal that 'r' between spirituality and health satisfaction is .26 in home conditions and .48 in old age home conditions. CR between 'r' is significant. Which indicates that elder person having high spirituality are health wise more satisfied with their life. Thus correlation analysis shows that in inmates of old age home elders spirituality is more positively correlated with health satisfaction.

Outcomes in Table-2 reveal that 'r' between spirituality and personal satisfaction is .09 in home conditions and .33 in old age home conditions. CR between 'r' is significant. This indicates those elder people having high spirituality are more personally satisfied with their life. Thus correlation analysis shows that in inmates of old age home elders, spirituality is more positively correlated with personal satisfaction.

Findings in Table-2 reveal that 'r' between spirituality and economic satisfaction is .15 in home conditions and .33 in old age home conditions. CR between 'r' is significant. This indicates that elder persons having high spirituality are more economically satisfied with their life. Thus correlation analysis shows that in inmates of old age home elders, spirituality is more positively correlated with economic satisfaction.

Spirituality plays an important role in the life of many elder peoples. Spirituality is a globally acknowledged concept. For many people, spirituality is an important component of life. One aspect of "being spiritual" is goal-directed, with aims such as simultaneously improve one's wisdom and will power, achieve a closer connection to Deity/the universe, and remove illusions or false ideas at the sensory, feeling and thinking aspects of a person.

Kelley & Miller, (2007) found in their studies that spirituality and religiousness have generally reported modest positive correlations between internal characteristics and subjective well-being including life satisfaction. A growing body of research suggests that spirituality is related to various outcomes, including physical health, mental health, and psychological well-being.

Satisfaction in several life domains may contribute to overall life satisfaction and then satisfaction with life in general influences individual satisfaction in various life domains. Research in this area has demonstrated a positive association between overall life satisfaction & satisfactions in several life domains (Headey et al., 1985)

Joseph Perniotti-Molinatti (20047) in his research found the outcomes which clearly identify the importance spirituality plays in the daily life of the well elderly and indicates the significance of spirituality throughout the lifespan. The elderly felt that they had knowledge of various modalities and how spirituality plays a principal role in a spectrum of real-life practices including prayer, helping others, or just staying in tune with the beauty of the world around them.

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