

The Relationship between Spirituality, Optimism and Psychological Wellbeing among Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to understand whether there is any relation between spirituality, optimism and psychological wellbeing among adolescents of 14-18 years of age. This is a quantitative research design study which used 3 questionnaires: The Spirituality Scale, Life orientation test – revised and Ryffs Psychological Wellbeing Scale. The total sample size was N = 252, with 125 males and 127 females. The study aimed at understanding the relationship between spirituality, optimism and psychological well-being among adolescents. The findings revealed a positive correlation between spirituality, optimism, and psychological well-being and significant gender difference for spirituality, it is interpreted that females showed more level of spirituality than males.

Keywords: *Spirituality, Optimism and Psychological Well-being*

Spirituality in more specific terms, a concern for God and a sensitivity to religious experiences, which is concerned with matters of the spirit or soul, especially as opposed to materialistic concerns. This might happen whether or not you follow a certain religion's rules. It is incorporeality in reality or condition (APA). Inherent to human nature and a global occurrence, spirituality emerges during adolescence when a person looks for transcendence, meaning, and purpose in life (Daniel T L Shek, 2012).

According to theoretical perspectives and empirical studies, spirituality aids in healthy adolescents' development, it improves coping skills, and has a good impact on one psychological well-being. According to Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, an adolescent's fundamental process is forming their identity, with the fundamental psychosocial crisis being ego identification vs role confusion. People with strong identities, according to Levesque (2011), "have the ability to experience their sense of who they are and also act on that sense, in a way that has continuity and sameness." At this period, adolescents are more capable of using abstract thought to analyze and question their beliefs, experience, and search for purpose in life. The majority of teenagers will examine various roles and concepts on their path to self. Adolescents strengthen their sense of self through internalizing their beliefs. When compared to someone who is unsure of who they are, the

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person with a strong sense of identity has better levels of self-esteem and life satisfaction (E. H. Erikson, Identity, Youth, 1968).

Optimism is defined as the attitude that positive things will happen and that people's aspirations or goals will finally be realized. Optimists are those who believe they will succeed in achieving their goals, whether by chance or by persistence and hard work [APA]. Scheier and Carver (1985) described optimism as a generalized tendency to expect positive outcomes even in the face of obstacles. Optimists are individuals who expect good things to happen to them; conversely, pessimists are those who expect bad things to happen to them (Carver, Scheier, & Segerstrom, 2010). The research suggests that optimism also serves as a safeguard for adolescents' mental health. Adolescents with high optimism, for instance, are less likely to experience depressive symptoms, anxious episodes, suicidal thoughts and conduct, as well as a decreased propensity for risky behaviors like the use or misuse of psychoactive substances (Mansor abu talib, 2017).

Psychological wellbeing has two important facets. The first of these refers to the extent to which people experience positive emotions and feelings of happiness. Sometimes this aspect of psychological wellbeing is referred to as subjective wellbeing (Diener, 2000). Diener defined subjective well-being (SWB) is based on hedonism and refers to a person's emotive and cognitive assessments of life. Despite the fact that the causes of pleasure and satisfaction may vary between countries and cultures, they claimed that the experience of happiness and life satisfaction is universal (Deci EL, Hedonia et al. 2008).

The term "well-being" is broad and often used in both the health and human development fields (Jie Gao, Ros McLellan, et al. 2018). Both the individual and the environment have a role in one's overall well-being, but throughout early infancy and adolescence, the environment can play a significant role. Peers, school, and family are all acknowledged as crucial environments for effective growth.

Need and significance of the study

The target population for this study includes adolescents between the ages of 14 and 18 years. According to James will, the spiritual development arises during adolescence were Stages 3 and 4. As in Stage 3, "synthetic-conventional" faith, which is characterized by conformity and minimal introspection, is how faith growth manifests itself. According to beliefs about child development, kids learn to think rationally, show better aptitude for problem-solving, and identify their life's objectives and goals. As we see in developmental theories of Piaget, Erikson, Kohlberg this phase and aspects can be seen during teenage. Stage 4 faith is characterized by "individuated-reflective" struggle and decision. This starts to take shape in your twenties and lasts until thirties. The purpose of this study is to comprehend how spirituality affects adolescents' psychological health and ability to be optimistic.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Data were gathered by means of a convenient sampling method. There were 252 adolescents who were between the ages of 14 and 18 years (125 boys and 127 girls). Adolescents 14 to 18 years of age who are studying in school. Participants with English language proficiency are included in the study. Atheist are excluded to take part in the study.

Hypothesis

- H1 - To determine there is a significant relationship between spirituality and optimism.
- H2 - To determine there is a significant relationship between spirituality and psychological wellbeing.
- H3 - To determine there is a significant relationship between optimism and psychological wellbeing.
- H4 - To determine there is a significant gender difference in spirituality, optimism and psychological wellbeing.

Instruments

Three measures were used in this study,

1. **The Spirituality Scale (SS)** (Delaney, 2003) is a comprehensive evaluation tool that concentrates on the beliefs, instincts, lifestyle decisions, practices, and rituals that define the spiritual aspect of human existence. Relationships, eco-awareness, and self-discovery are all measured on the scale. The questionnaire has 23 items and a 6-point Likert scale. Cronbach's alpha is .94. The coefficients of the three subscales varied from .81 to .94.
2. **Life Orientation Test- Revised (LOT-R)** was given by Scheuer, Carver and Bridges (1994). It serves as a measurement of optimism. It comprises 10 items with a Likert range of 1 to 5. Test-retest reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha (.76), and it was discovered to have an adequate level of internal consistency.
3. **Ryff's psychological well-being was developed in 2007.** It assesses six factors: self-acceptance, environmental mastery, personal growth, purpose in life, and positive relationships with others. RPWBS has a 0.82 test-retest reliability coefficient.

Procedure

At first Google forms were made as the data will be collected in online as well as offline mode. The participants were asked whether they wanted to participate in the study or not, and their consent was taken. As it was adolescent population consent was taken from both parents and participant. After that, a briefing about nature and purpose of the study was explained to the participant to develop the rapport. They were assured that all information taken from them will be kept confidential. The data was collected using self-report questionnaire. After collection of responses, data analysis and interpretation was done by using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics is used to analyze the population. The relationship between variables is determined using correlation design, and the distinction in gender is determined by an independent sample t-test. To further understand how the factors affected each other, regression analysis was also performed.

RESULTS

Table No. 1 showing socio demographic details of the population

Variable		N	Mean (SD)/Percentage%
Gender	Male	125	49.6%
	Female	127	50.4%
Age (14-18)		252	3.42 (1.643)
Religion	Christian	80	31.6%
	Hindu	162	64.0%
	Muslim	10	4.0%
Do you consider yourself spiritual	Not at all	21	8.3%
	Moderately	140	55.3%
	Very spiritual	84	33.2%
	Other	7	2.8%

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The above table indicated the demographic details of all the participants. This table showed the percentage and frequency of gender, age, religion and the level of spirituality among adolescents. The table also describes that frequency is high for moderately spiritual under spirituality.

Table 2: showing the descriptive statistics.

Variables	N	Mean	SD
Spirituality	252	107.96	17.141
Optimism	252	12.96	2.836
Psychological wellbeing	252	83.79	12.213

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics between Spirituality, Optimism and psychological wellbeing. The mean of spirituality, optimism and psychological wellbeing are 107.96, 12.96 and 83.79 respectively. The standard deviation scores of spirituality, optimism and psychological wellbeing are 17.141, 2.836 and 12.213 respectively. It indicates that the spread of scores away from the mean is more for spirituality among adolescents, suggesting that the variation is more for the spirituality.

Table 3: showing the difference in spirituality, optimism and psychological wellbeing based on gender.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	T value	Sig (2 tailed)
Spirituality	Male	125	105.85	18.934	-1.952	.052
	Female	127	110.05	14.956		
Optimism	Male	125	12.86	2.905	-.512	.609
	Female	127	13.05	2.774		
Psychological wellbeing	Male	125	83.24	11.595	-.713	.476
	Female	127	84.34	12.815		

Table 3 - shows the gender difference between spirituality, optimism and psychological wellbeing. The calculated "t" value between males and females for spirituality, optimism and psychological wellbeing are -1.952, -.512 and -.713 with corresponding p-value of .052, optimism .609 and .476. This indicates there is a significant difference between males and females regarding spirituality and no difference regarding optimism and psychological wellbeing. By comparing the mean values, it is interpreted that females showed more level of spirituality than males. Therefore, the alternate hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 4: Showing the relationship between Spirituality, Optimism and psychological wellbeing among adolescents.

Variable	1	2	3
Spirituality		.296**	
Optimism			.361**
Psychological wellbeing	.245**		

Table 4 shows the correlation, it reveals that there is a significant positive relationship between spirituality, optimism and psychological wellbeing among adolescents (14-18 years). From the above table it is interpreted that spirituality has positive relationship with optimism and spirituality influence the optimism. The Pearson's correlation is found to be .296** and the corresponding p value is .000 which is found to be significant at 0.01 level ($p > 0.01$). This implies that there is a significant relationship between Spirituality and Optimism among adolescents. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, the

hypothesis which states that “There is a significant relationship between Spirituality and Optimism” is accepted.

Table 5: showing influence of spirituality, optimism and psychological wellbeing.

Variable	B	SE	t	β	R	R ²	AR ²	Sig.
Constant	7.665	1.092	7.016					.000
Spirituality	.049	.010	4.904	.296	.296	.088	.084	.000
Constant	64.919	.044	13.595					.000
Spirituality	.175	4.775	4.002	.245	.245	.060	.056	.000

Dependent variable: psychological wellbeing, optimism

Table 5 shows the results in regression analysis of spirituality, optimism and psychological wellbeing among adolescents. The p value is .000 which is ($p < 0.05$), hence it shows significant influence. For the regression analysis of spirituality on optimism adjusted R squares revealed that the influence of spirituality on optimism is 8 percent. For the regression analysis of spirituality on psychological wellbeing adjusted R square revealed that the influence of spirituality on optimism is 5 percent. The regression analysis showed low influence, it can be due to the weak association between the variables.

DISCUSSION

The findings revealed that there is positive correlation between spirituality, optimism and psychological wellbeing and significant gender difference under spirituality. Most of the previous studies have revealed same findings as current study. In 2021, Laura Ciria-Suarez, Caterina Calderon, and others conducted a study titled "Optimism and Social Support as Contributing Factors to Spirituality in Cancer Patients." Results were interpreted to show a positive relation between spiritual coping and the beneficial impacts of optimism and social support during oncological treatment.

In order to determine how spirituality affects psychological well-being and subjective stress, Mahilapan undertook a study in 2019. The study also looks at how stress mediates the connection between spirituality and wellbeing. Using a systematic questionnaire, data from 322 secondary school teachers were gathered. Results indicated a positive relationship between spirituality and PWB. It is revealed that teachers can draw on their spirituality as a source of inner strength to manage their perceived stress levels, which will improve their overall wellbeing.

In 2016, Farzana Parveen, Prof. Shahina Maqbool, and Dr. Shah Mohd Khan did a study on optimism as a predictor of adolescents psychological well-being. They also looked at the differences between male and female, Hindu and Muslim adolescents. The findings indicate a strong positive association between optimism and psychological well-being and that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female adolescents in these areas.

The results also revealed that there is a significant difference between males and females under spirituality. By comparing the mean values, it is interpreted that females showed more level of spirituality than males. A similar study also same findings as current study, A study on the gender comparisons in males and females for LOT-R and SAS. It is clear that women correlate more highly (0.59) than men (0.36), especially in the areas of spirituality and optimism. Although religious variations between men and women have received more in-depth research over the course of a person's lifetime, studies on spiritual gender differences are less common. According to studies by (Smith et al, 2002 and Smith and Denton, 2005),

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girls are significantly more likely than boys among adolescents to belong to religious youth groups, attend religious services, believe that religion influences daily life, have made a commitment to live life for God, have prayed, and feel close to God.

The results also showed that optimism and psychological wellbeing did not show any significant difference in males and females. Some studies also showed same findings similar to the current study. A study on optimism as a predictor of psychological well-being among adolescents was undertaken in 2016 by Farzana Parveen, Prof. Shahina Maqbool, and Dr. Shah Mohd Khan. The study also looked at the differences between Hindu and Muslim, male and female. The findings indicate that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female teenagers in these areas.

Scope for future research

To gain insight into the relationship between spirituality, optimism, and psychological well-being, the current study used a quantitative approach. In the future, we can carry out a qualitative study or mixed study and analyze all of the components by discovering interpersonal, socioeconomic, family type, and religious factors etc., It would also be interesting to do longitudinal studies to investigate the function of spirituality, optimism and well-being as a cause or consequence of some of the most commonly utilized contextual factors. As spirituality, optimism, and well-being can improve adolescents' development, the educational systems can launch innovative components and integrate them into the educational system.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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