

## Spirituality and Multicultural Sensitivity among Young Adults in India

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### ABSTRACT

The present study aimed at exploring the relationship between religion and spirituality among Young adults in India. Additionally, the study explores whether there is any significant difference between spirituality and multicultural sensitivity based on gender and religion. A sample of 100 young adults was part of the study. The quantitative technique was used to procure data using the questionnaires, Multicultural Sensitivity Scale by Ford (1979) and The Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (2008) were used. The responses were scored and analyzed using Pearson's product-moment correlation. The result showed there was no significant relationship between religion and spirituality among young adults in India, also there is no significant difference between spirituality and multicultural sensitivity based on religion and gender. The study also provides theoretical and practical implications.

**Keywords:** *Spirituality, Multicultural sensitivity, Young Adults*

A modern form of transnational religion that emphasizes a particular definition of spirituality appears to have made use of the phrase "I'm spiritual - not religious" as one of its key motifs. (Paloutzian et al., 1999). It is evident in modern research, widely read articles and magazines, coaching programs, neo-spiritual therapies, blogs, and other forms of expression that use the idea of spirituality to represent a universal human essence retained within each person as a potential for contentment, empowerment, and personal transformation. (Massimini & Fave, 1991)

The Latin term spiritus, which means breath or vital energy, is where the word spirituality gets its initial meaning. The term "spirituality" typically refers to a person's existence, an effort to find wholeness, and a connection to a transcendent being. One might exhibit their spirituality through their religion or their involvement in religion, which is often defined as taking part in a structured system of rituals, beliefs, and shared traditions (Helminiak, 2001). But more and more individuals are seeking support for their spiritual lives from sources other than organized religion (Fukuyama & Sevig, 1999).

Spirituality is the acceptance of a feeling, sense, or conviction that transcends oneself, that there is more to being human than what is perceived with the senses, and that the broader sum of which we are a part is universal or supernatural. (Hisnanick, 2002).

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India is a country that is ethnically and racially diverse. A society or a civilization that has a variety of unique ethnic and cultural groups that are deemed politically significant is referred to as multicultural, as is a program or policy that supports such a society. (Bleszynska, 2008) There are numerous geographical interpretations of multiculturalism. It is conceptually defined as a technique of articulating the very condition of diversity that is seen through different spatial formations. (Guilherme & Dietz, 2015) Multiculturalism refers specifically to the presence of difference and unequal power relations among populations in terms of racial, ethnic, religious, geographical distinctions, and other cultural markers that diverge from dominant, frequently racialized, "norms." (Clayton, 2009). Multiculturalism is the acceptance of diversity as well as the formal recognition and inclusion of those who are defined by those differences through discourses and policies that respect the rights and needs of marginalized communities in the public sphere while also dictating the conditions of such integration. (Cooper, 1998)

### *Need for the study*

It is important to understand the relationship between spirituality and multicultural sensitivity among young adults. It will help people to understand, accept, and have the willingness to move beyond their differences. Professionals can give care that is culturally specific and considerate of the individual's beliefs by knowing the religion and spiritual beliefs of ethnic groups (Bibbins, 2000).

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

In the past, there has been an effort to define psychology and mental health as a dissent to spirituality (Freud, 1927; Watson, 1924/ 1983). Although some early psychological theorists (James, 1902 & Jung , 1936) valued the study of religion and psychology, psychology as a whole portrayed religious beliefs and practices negatively and was positioned within a 19th-century naturalistic science that emphasized deterministic, reductionistic, and positivistic assumptions (Richards & Bergin, 1997).

Many counselors may have fears related to talking about cultural and spiritual issues with an individual due to his or her lack of knowledge of other cultures and religions. Counselors raised in the Christian tradition, for example, may become intimidated when Hindu, Jewish, or Mormon clients bring up their faith during the counseling session (Bart, 1998). A study of the major religions of the world can be most helpful in broadening the worldview of those involved. Understanding the basic concepts and cultural traditions of the various world religions can increase the counselor's comfort in discussing these issues with clients. Knowledge of the religious and spiritual beliefs of ethnic groups can help healthcare professionals provide care that is culturally specific and sensitive to the beliefs of individuals (Bibbins, 2000). This movement's major contribution has been to offer a comprehensive understanding of personal culture as including the "totality of a person's identity comprised of historical moments, unchangeable human factors, and a range of developmental, sociocultural, political, and economic dimensions, including religion" (Arredondo et al., 1996). Multicultural competencies are also important.

According to literature, culturally experienced individuals should be aware of their own cultural and religious affiliations to better understand their individual religious and spiritual cultures and beliefs. (Hisnanick, 2002)

As many people consider religion and spirituality to be the same thing, it can be challenging to distinguish between the two. Few would contest the fact that a person's religion is, by

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definition, a component of their culture (Bart, 1998). A vivid hue in the mosaic of humankind is woven into the fabric of culture. It entails a collection of practices and beliefs, as well as a social structure, through which individuals aspire to be mentally and physically in tune with the forces of the universe and make an effort to control the mighty forces of nature, life, and death (Jordan & Rowntree, 1990). Most frequently, the term "religion" refers to institutionalized institutions that are based on specific values, customs, and practices (Bibbins, 2000). Without having a formal religion, it is still fairly feasible to be a profoundly spiritual being.

Up until a decade or so ago, secular organizations largely ignored the significant concept of spirituality (Van der Walt and De Klerk 2014b). Additionally, its significance as a diversity characteristic and its reciprocal relationships with other diversity characteristics have yet to receive sufficient attention.

Organizational studies are receiving substantial scholarly attention. Organizations need to consider spirituality as a construct, a diversity feature, and concerning other diversity-related traits (Vargas & Clark 2008; Paredes-Collins 2013; Schaeffer & Mattis 2012; Vogel et al. 2013). So, it is not surprising that many authors have urged the incorporation of spirituality into multicultural and diversity education to enhance the ability to deal with variety (Singh 2007; Tisdell 2007; Ljungberg 2005).

Clark (2003), for instance, contends that a spiritual emphasis on diversity training can result in more inclusive understandings of racial equality and justice, as well as gender and racial privileges. There is a lack of knowledge on the significant subject of spirituality in organizations, particularly regarding the varied ways in which employees in diverse and multicultural workplaces experience spirituality.

The goal of this research is to examine spiritual experiences concerning various multicultural and other various traits. The ability to investigate a variety of religious and spiritual beliefs will also help individuals become more sensitive to other cultures. Knowledge like this will also help individuals feel at ease and appreciative of any spiritual topics that could come up during their sessions. Additionally, students may learn novel approaches to well-known issues like depression, and anxiety, a help clients find purpose in life.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *Research Design*

In this research, we have used the quantitative research method. And we have used the correlation and t-test methods for the analysis of data. The samples were collected from young adults in the form of a questionnaire. 100 samples were collected for the research from which 67 were females and 33 were male. The multicultural Sensitivity Scale and The Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory were used to collect the data. This research helps in understanding the correlation between Multicultural sensitivity and spirituality. The paper also focuses on whether there is any difference in spirituality and multicultural sensitivity based on gender and religion. Data was only collected for the research purpose.

### *Objectives*

1. To find out the whether there is a significant relationship between spirituality and multicultural sensitivity
2. To find out whether there is any significant difference between spirituality and multicultural sensitivity based on gender.

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3. To find out whether there is any significant difference between spirituality and multicultural sensitivity based on religion

### *Hypothesis*

- H<sup>1</sup>: There is no significant relationship between spirituality and multicultural sensitivity among young adults
- H<sup>2</sup>: There is no significant difference in spirituality and multicultural sensitivity based on Gender.
- H<sup>3</sup>: There is no significant difference in spirituality and multicultural sensitivity based on Religion.

### *Operational Definition*

- **Spirituality**  
Spirituality is about seeking a meaningful connection with something bigger than yourself, which can result in positive emotions, such as peace, awe, contentment, gratitude, and acceptance (Saroglou et al., 2008)
- **Multicultural sensitivity**  
Multicultural sensitivity refers to effectively communicating with individuals of diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives in the modern multigenerational work environment. (Toomey et al., 2013)

### *Variables*

Spirituality, Multicultural sensitivity

### *Universe of the study*

The sample was collected from Young adults between the age of 18 to 25 in India. Data were collected from both males and females.

### *Geographical Area*

The data was collected from 11 states in India,

### *Sample Distribution*

100 young adults between the age of 18 to 25 were collected from various parts of India. Both males and females were collected.

### *Sample Technique*

Convenient sampling was used for the study.

### *Inclusion criteria*

Young adults between the age of 18 to 25

### *Exclusion Criteria*

Adults above the age of 25 were excluded

### *Procedure*

For this study, the Multicultural Sensitivity scale and The Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory were used to collect the data, in the form of a questionnaire and were shared with the participants in the form of a Google form. Participants were instructed on how to answer the questions and basic demographic details were collected. The participants will take 15

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minutes to answer the questions on both scales. After the data is collected the data will be analyzed with the help of a correlation test, t-test, and ANOVA outcome will be discussed.

### **Research Ethics Followed**

Ethical Considerations:

1. The consent of the participant and the clinical centers was taken before the study.
2. The participant's beliefs and sentiments were not questioned in any way.
3. The responses were kept confidential
4. Anonymity of individuals and organizations participating in the research was ensured.
5. The responses of the participant were not used for any other purpose, other than the agreed research study.

### **Tools for the study**

1. Multicultural Sensitivity scale
2. The Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory

### **Description of Tools**

#### **1. Multicultural Sensitivity Scale**

Multicultural Sensitivity Scale by Ford (1979, as cited in Jibaja-Rusth et al., 1994) was comprised of 21 statements with a 6-point Likert scale.

#### **2. The Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory**

The Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (SISRI 24) constructed by King David in 2008, was designed to measure a person's level of spiritual intelligence. This questionnaire has 4 dimensions, namely the existence of critical thinking, the creation of personal meaning, the passing of awareness, and the development of consciousness. Having 24 items using a 4 Likert scale which is not true at all with me, is not true with me, quite true to me, very true to me, is true to me. The level of spiritual intelligence is in value through the higher the scores obtained the higher the level of spiritual intelligence.

## **RESULTS**

The Kolmogorov- Smirnov test produces test statistics that are used to test for normality.

*Table 1 Shows the descriptive statistics of the Normality test*

### **Normality test**

	Significance
Spirituality	.171
Multicultural sensitivity	.200

$P > 0.05$

The significance value for spirituality was .171 and multicultural sensitivity was .200, both of them are above 0.05, thus the data is normally distributed.

## **CORRELATION**

*Table 1 Descriptive statistics of correlation between the two variables, spirituality, and multicultural sensitivity*

Variable	n	M	SD	P	
				1	2
1.Spirituality(X1)	100	50.89	16.96	.154	-
2. Multi-cultural sensitivity(X2)	100	57. 21	19.66	-	154

$P > 0.05$

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The mean and standard deviation for spirituality is 50.89 and 16.96 and for multicultural sensitivity, 57.21 and 19.66. The significance value is 0.125 which is more than 0.05 and accepts the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between spirituality and multicultural sensitivity.

### T-test

*Table 1 Descriptive statistics of t-test*

	Male		Female		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
<b>Spirituality</b>	50.79	18.46	50.94	16.32	0.42	.96
<b>Multicultural Sensitivity</b>	59.64	20.48	56.01	19.29	0.86	.38

P < 0.05

The table shows the means and standard deviation of Spirituality and Multicultural sensitivity for males and females. The mean score for males in spirituality is 50.79 and the standard deviation for males is 18.46 and for Multi culture sensitivity the mean value is 59.64. For females, the mean score obtained in spirituality is 50.94 and the SD is 18.46 and for multicultural sensitivity mean value is 56.01 and SD is 19.28.

Here the t-value for spirituality is 0.42 and for multi-culture sensitivity, it is 0.86, which is less than 1.96. Therefore, there is no significant difference in spirituality and multi-cultural sensitivity based on gender.

### ANOVA

*Descriptive statistics of Anova based on Religion*

Variables	Christianity		Hinduism		Islam		Atheism		Buddhism		Judaism		F	p
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
<b>Spirituality</b>	50.22	15.81	52.97	19.02	44.75	21.08	38.00	-	44.00	-	64.00	-	.480	.790
<b>Multicultural sensitivity</b>	59.73	18.25	54.48	22.15	51	18.99	45	-	67	-	37	-	.863	.509

p < 0.05

The significance value of spirituality and multicultural sensitivity is greater than 0.05 which indicates there is no significant difference between Spirituality and Multicultural sensitivity based on religion.

## DISCUSSION

The study aimed at analyzing the correlation between spirituality and multicultural sensitivity among young adults. The results obtained after collecting and analyzing the information imply that there is no significant relationship between spirituality and multicultural sensitivity, also based on gender and religion.

When it comes to spirituality's social component every person can only completely become who they are in the context of a personal interaction with others, a specific community (which can only permit engagement in a specific faith), and its culture. At this level, the benefits of spirituality can also be seen as soon as possible in the lives of individuals and how

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they influence religion and culture. (Slater et al.,2001). Even though There is a dearth of data on how culture may affect concepts of God, the studies that are available cast doubt on the whole of Piaget's theory and show that children from various religious cultures have distinct conceptions of God.

More than 80% of people worldwide identify as religious. (Pew-Templeton Global Religious Future Project 2020). At the same time, over 20% of respondents claim to have no religious affiliation. In many nations, the share of irreligious people is increasing, with adolescents and emerging adults leading this increase. (Bullard 2016; Pew Research Center 2018; Poushter and Fetterolf 2019). It may seem as though being religiously affiliated and being religiously unaffiliated are two different things. However, research that examines the cultural groups' beliefs and practices as well as those of its members reveals that the lines between spirituality, religion, and secularism are permeable. Each generational cohort has unique time-of-life difficulties that overlap with religion and spirituality, and as a result, each generational cohort's spirituality may be unique. But spirituality or spiritual growth may not always happen naturally throughout life (Clarke 2005). Since spiritual development affects everyone, whether secular humanists, atheists, Muslims, or methodologists, spirituality, and religion cannot be avoided. Sometimes it occurs deliberately and cautiously, and other times it is thoroughly ingrained in the culture without being conscious of it. (Benson& Roehlkepartain, 2008) Furthermore, Sue (2001) points out that cultural competence is a process, not a thing (more like a verb than a noun), therefore it is a field that will need (and be strengthened by) ongoing research and practice. Thus, multicultural consciousness can be attained through spiritual development along with educational classes.

The transcendent quality that transcends civilizations and gives meaning to all of the fundamental aspects of religion and human functioning is the essence of universal spirituality. (Moberg, 2002). Additionally, there appears to be empirical evidence in support of the idea that spirituality may be innate (D'Onofrio, Eaves, Murrelle, Maes, & Spilka, 1999; Kendler, Gardner, & Prescott, 1997; Miller, Weissman, Gur, & Adams, 2001). Spirituality expresses a person's fundamental orientation towards a wider transcendent reality, especially in a human being who is goal-oriented and intrinsically motivated (Emmons, Cheung, & Tehrani, 1998). (Piedmont, 1999). Baumeister (2002) and Stark (2001) suggested that spirituality is the highest level of motivation that results from an innate and particular human trait that underlies humankind's yearning for meaning in life.

Therefore, quite a few of the differences in religious expression and spiritual experience stem from cultural influences. (Ebaugh, 2007) That is, specific aspects of religion focus on the depth, principles, and convictions of a particular cultural material. In other words, religion is a subset of culture because culture develops a social mechanism that upholds the kind of religiosity that is acceptable to a group of people and may be practiced collectively in a certain cultural environment.

Both gender and spirituality are concepts that denote alterity, particularly a critique of ingrained social norms, such as the norms of regulating personality following organized religion's doctrinal and ritualistic patterns. It is a relatively recent phenomenon to be aware of gender as a hierarchical structure, whereas "spirituality" has a much longer history of use and was developed within an organized religion. (Llewellyn, 2015) However, as it evolved, it became clear that this perspective was distinct from official religious channels and required evaluative intervention. On the construct of spirituality, this survey indicated no statistically significant difference between males and females. (Fuller, 2010) The difference's effect size,

though, was insignificant. In contrast to what most recent research suggests, the findings of this study show that men and women have spirituality levels that are significantly closer to one another. (Simpson, Cloud & Newman 2008).

### **Implication**

Being collectivistic society individuals identify themselves more concerning the different social groups they belong thus religious groups and their tenants play an important role in the lives of the people in India. The present study helped analyze the relationship between spirituality and multicultural sensitivity among young adults. The results have helped in understanding that there is no significant relationship between spirituality and multicultural sensitivity both, based on gender and religion. The study can help counselors and psychologists to understand the clients concerning the client's religion, spirituality, culture, and gender.

The results of the present research can form a basis for forming psycho-education programs for parents to help them understand the relationship between spirituality and multicultural sensitivity. It will help people to understand, accept, and have the willingness to move beyond their differences. Professionals can give care that is culturally specific and considerate of the individual's beliefs by knowing the religion and spiritual beliefs of ethnic groups.

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

The summary of the study and the conclusions drawn from the results of the study is there is no correlation between Spirituality and Multicultural sensitivity among young adults also there is no significant difference in spirituality and Multiculture sensitivity based on gender and there is no significant difference in spirituality and multicultural sensitivity based on religion.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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