

## Relationship between Spirituality and Quality of Life among Male and Female Postgraduate Students: A Correlational Study

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** the current research was done to understand how spirituality impacts people's lives, including their health, relationships, and overall well-being. **Methods:** the objectives were to investigate the relationship between spirituality and quality of life and to compare male and female postgraduate students on spirituality and quality of life. 60 students (30 males, 30 females) participated. To measure Spirituality Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES) and to measure Quality of Life the Flanagan Quality of Life Scale (QOLS) were used. Administered both scales through Google Forms. Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation was used to assess the relationship between spirituality and quality of life and t-test to compare gender differences. **Results:** Found a positive correlation between spirituality and quality of life for both males and females. Correlation, while low, suggests that higher spirituality relates to better quality of life. Mean scores indicated that females scored higher in both spirituality and quality of life. However, statistical tests did not support significant gender differences in this specific group of postgraduate students. **Conclusion:** The study highlights the positive correlation between spirituality and overall quality of life in postgraduate students. While females tended to score higher in both spirituality and quality of life, gender did not significantly influence these variables in this specific group of students.

**Keywords:** Spirituality, Quality of Life

Spirituality is a broad concept with room for many perspectives. In general, it includes a sense of connection to something bigger than us, and it typically involves a search for meaning in life. As such, it is a universal human experience—something that touches us all. People may describe a spiritual experience as *sacred* or *transcendent* or simply a deep sense of aliveness and interconnectedness.

The term quality of life (QOL) references the general well-being of individuals and societies. The term is used in a wide range of contexts, including the fields of international development, healthcare, and politics. Quality of life should not be confused with the concept of standard of living, which is based primarily on income. Instead, standard indicators of the quality of life include not only wealth and employment but also the built environment, physical and mental health, education, recreation and leisure time, and social belonging.

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Received: September 15, 2023; Revision Received: December 14, 2023; Accepted: December 18, 2023

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There are various factors which determine our quality of life like health, environment, education etc, and one such factor is spirituality. Spirituality may refer as a subjective feeling and experiences that occur both within and outside of traditional religious systems that influence various domains of life e.g. physical health, mental health, optimism, resilience and quality of life. There have been several pieces of research which reported that spirituality is positively related to optimism, gratitude and life satisfaction. (Khadeeja Munawar; Ms Alvita de Souza; Hasan Jafari Poor, 2017, 2016, 2012)

Spirituality may serve a sense of peace and satisfaction in the midst of daily hassles. Spirituality may contribute to the ways in which people appraise daily challenges. The idea of impermanence can arise an awareness of our life that no matter what the current situation is, it will change, due to which the person looks at its situation as karma or law of cause and effect. Such high attainment of spirituality doesn't give much importance to our material life. But since it may not be possible for everyone to achieve such heights, a simple sense of awareness about our impermanent life and situations may make our quality of life better. As soon as the person starts giving value to forgiveness, gratitude, happiness etc, his inner wellbeing will start blossoming. Therefore, the present study will be done by taking spirituality and quality of life as variables and will try to investigate whether these two are correlated or not and if it is, then upto what extent.

Over the past several years a number of studies have examined the link between spirituality and quality of life in normal population using a variety of instruments. This study will try to investigate the link between spirituality and quality of life with respect to gender (male and female). To make it specific, the current study was kept limited only to postgraduate students, age ranging from 20 to 25.

### **METHODS**

#### ***Objectives***

- To establish the relationship between spirituality and quality of life.
- To compare male and female postgraduate students on spirituality and quality of life.

#### ***Hypothesis***

- There is a positive correlation between spirituality and quality of life.
- There is no significant difference between male and female postgraduate students on spirituality.
- There is no significant difference between male and female postgraduate students on the quality of life.

#### ***Sample***

60 students out of which 30 are girls and 30 boys who were residents of Lucknow and pursuing post-graduation, age ranging from 20 to 25 will be selected through *convenient sampling technique*.

#### ***Tools used for data collection***

- **Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES)** developed by L.G. Underwood and J.A. Teresi in 2002 which comprises of 16 items. The internal consistency reliability of DSES is estimated with Cronbach's alpha which is .94. The (DSES) is a 16-item self-report measure of spiritual experience. It specifically aims to measure ordinary,

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or daily, spiritual experiences – not mystical experiences (e.g., hearing voices) – and how they are an everyday part of the individual's life. The first 15 items of the questionnaire are measured on a 6-point Likert-type scale: many times a day, every day, most days, some days, once in a while, and never or almost never. Item 16 is measured on a 4-point scale: Not Close at All, Somewhat Close, Very Close, As Close as Possible. **Scoring:** The first 15 items are scored together as a full scale score – the score is kept continuous i.e. option 1 is scored as 1, option 2 as 2 and so on and for item 16 which is measured on 4 point scale, the scoring has been reversed i.e. 4 score is given to option 1, 2 to option 3 and so on. Therefore, the higher the score, more the spiritual experience.

- **Flanagan Quality of Life Scale (QOLS)** developed by John C. Flanagan in 1970s which comprises of 16 items. The internal consistency reliability lies between 0.82 to 0.92. The QOLS was originally a 15-item instrument that measured five conceptual domains of quality of life: material and physical well-being, relationships with other people, social, community and civic activities, personal development and fulfillment, and recreation. After descriptive research that queried persons with chronic illness on their perceptions of quality of life, the instrument was expanded to include one more item: Independence, the ability to do for yourself. Thus, the QOLS in its present format contains 16 items. The items of the questionnaire are measured on 7 point Likert-type scale: "delighted" (7), "pleased" (6), "mostly satisfied" (5), "mixed" (4), "mostly dissatisfied" (3), "unhappy" (2), "terrible" (1). **Scoring:** The QOLS is scored by adding up the score on each item to yield a total score for the instrument. Scores can range from 16 to 112.

### *Procedure*

Both the scales (DSES & QOLS) have been administered using Google Forms. The two scales have been comprised into one form and has been send to the representative sample.

### **RESULT**

The first objective was to find out the relationship between spirituality and quality of life. For this, the hypothesis was that there will be a positive correlation between spirituality and quality of life among male and female post-graduation students in Lucknow. To test this, scores of DSES and QOLS has been computed from selected sample. Pearson's coefficient of correlation method was applied to calculate the correlation between both the variables i.e. spirituality and quality of life.

| <b>GENDER</b> | <b>N</b>  | <b>r</b>    | <b>INTERPRETATION</b>       |
|---------------|-----------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Female</b> | <b>30</b> | <b>0.32</b> | <b>Positive Correlation</b> |
| <b>Male</b>   | <b>30</b> | <b>0.27</b> | <b>Positive Correlation</b> |

The r value between spirituality and quality of life of males is 0.32 which shows that there is low positive correlation between spirituality and quality of life of males.

The r value between spirituality and quality of life of females is 0.27 which shows that there is low positive correlation between spirituality and quality of life of females.

**On the basis of both the above table, the first hypothesis that there is a positive correlation between spirituality and quality of life has been accepted.**

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**Table 2. Shows Mean, S.D. and t-value of male and female on spirituality**

| Group  | N  | Mean  | SD    | t value | df | Result        |
|--------|----|-------|-------|---------|----|---------------|
| Male   | 30 | 60.23 | 14.77 | 0.25*   | 58 | Insignificant |
| Female | 30 | 64.50 | 14.15 |         |    |               |

*\*insignificant at 0.05 significant level*

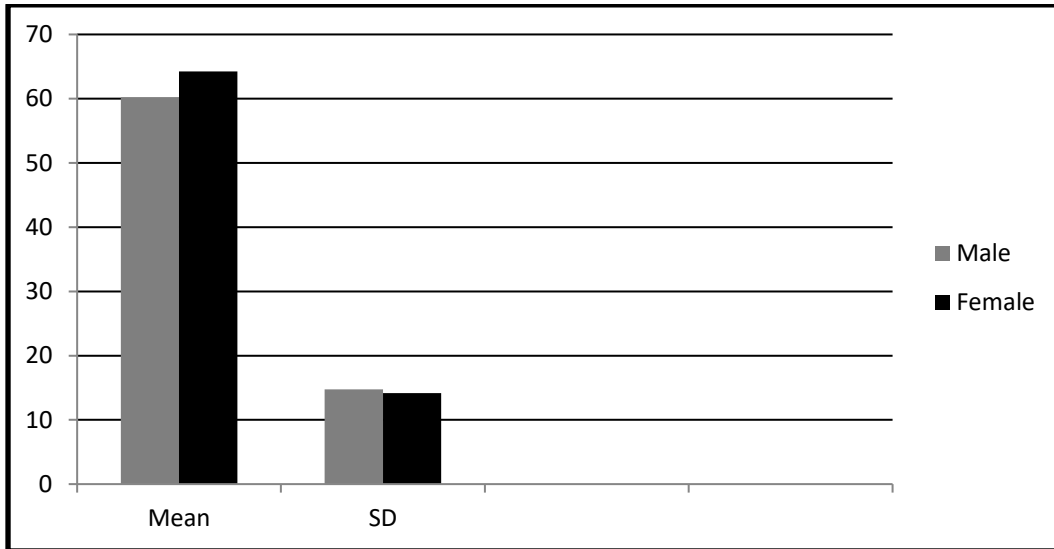
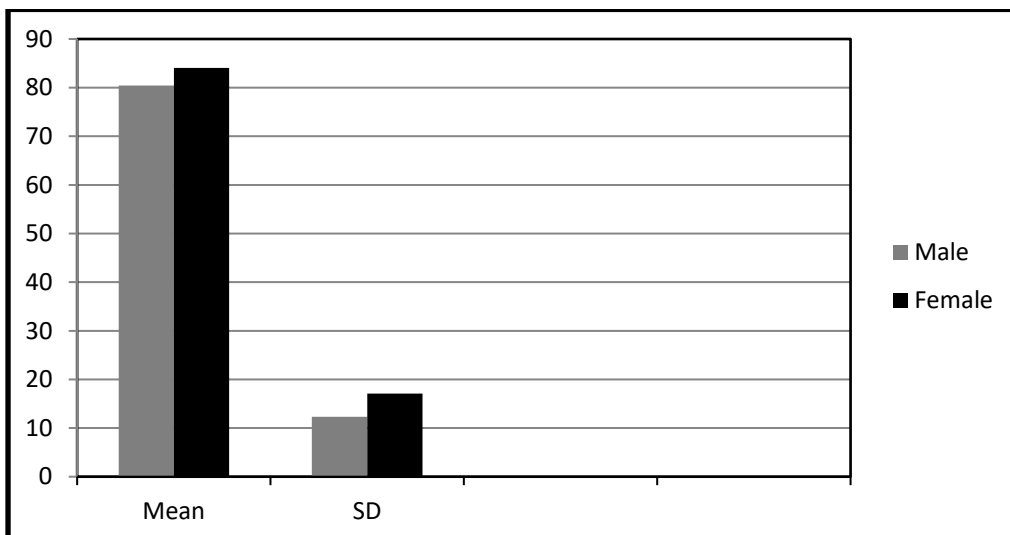


Table no. 2 shows Mean, S.D and t value of male and female on spirituality. The mean of female and male is 64.50 and 60.23 respectively which shows that females are more spiritual than males. The t value is 0.25 which is less than the table value, thus our null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between male and female postgraduate students on spirituality is failed to reject. Thus, both males and females are same on spirituality.

**Table 3. Shows Mean, S.D. and t-value of male and female on quality of life**

| Group  | N  | Mean  | SD    | t value | df | Result        |
|--------|----|-------|-------|---------|----|---------------|
| Male   | 30 | 80.43 | 12.34 | 0.31*   | 58 | Insignificant |
| Female | 30 | 84.06 | 17.11 |         |    |               |

*\*insignificant at 0.05 significant level*



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Table no. 3 shows Mean, S.D and t value of male and female on quality of life. The mean of female and male is 84.06 and 80.43 respectively which shows that the quality of life of females is better than males. The t value is 0.31 which is less than the table value, thus our null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between male and female postgraduate students on quality of life is failed to reject. Thus, the quality of life of both males and females are equal.

### **DISCUSSION**

The present study was conducted to compare male and female postgraduate students on spirituality and quality of life. Findings of the present study revealed that-

Although there was no significant difference found between male and female on both spirituality and quality of life. There was difference present at mean level. The mean of females (64.50) is higher than the mean of males (60.23) on spirituality. Likewise, the mean of females (84.06) is higher than the mean of males (80.43) on quality of life. The cause might be the small sample. The size of the present sample is 30 for both genders, therefore, if the sample size could be increased to 100 or more, the significance of difference can be better estimated.

The study shows a positive correlation between spirituality and quality of life. The correlation between male and female on spirituality is 0.32 whereas the correlation between male and female on quality of life is 0.27. There is positive but low correlation; the reason might be the small sample size. This finding is supported by Adel Mirzaei et.al (2014). They found significantly positive relationship between quality of life and spiritual well-being in their study.

Females are higher on both spirituality and quality of life than males. This suggests that those who are high on spirituality also have better quality of life in comparison to those who are low on spirituality. Since the present study is correlational, it cannot be concluded that high spirituality is the cause of better quality of life or better quality of life leads to spirituality, other factors like financial status, social support, healthy interpersonal relationship could also play vital role for better quality of life.

Many studies have been conducted to assess the gender difference between male and female on spirituality and found that females are more spiritual than males. (Hammermeister, Flint, El-Alayli, Ridnour, & Peterson, 2005). The present study is also supported by Bryant (2007) who found that women are more spiritual than men.

### **CONCLUSION**

- The study showed a positive relation between spirituality and quality of life. This indicates higher the spirituality, better the quality of life.
- No significance difference was found between level of spirituality of male and female. It was therefore concluded that gender did not account for any variation in the level of spirituality of Postgraduate students.
- No significance difference was found between quality of life of male and female. It was therefore concluded that gender did not account for any variation in the quality of life of Postgraduate students.

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### *Delimitations and Suggestions*

#### **Delimitations:**

Following limitations were noted in this research:

- The sample of this study was small. The sample size could have been more in order to get more reliable results.
- The research was conducted only on PG students in Lucknow.
- Age ranging below 21 and above 25 was excluded from this study.

#### **Suggestions:**

The suggestions for further work related to this research are as follows:

- Larger sample could be used.
- The criteria of age could be changed to include different age groups in the research.
- A broader geographical region can be selected like metropolitan cities or states.
- The research can be conducted on different population using the same variables.
- Different variables like Well Being, Religiosity or Life Satisfaction can also be correlated with Spirituality.

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### **Acknowledgment**

I am thankful to all respondents and all those who assisted me by supplying the requisite information towards the completion of the questionnaire there by enable me to collect the relevant data.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

**How to cite this article:** Fatima, M. (2023). Relationship between Spirituality and Quality of Life among Male and Female Postgraduate Students: A Correlational Study. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 11(4), 2253-2258. DIP:18.01.209.20231104, DOI:10.25215/1104.209