

Research Paper

## Spirituality, Religiosity and Psychological Well-Being of Young Adults

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### ABSTRACT

Spirituality and religiosity are salient constructs in the lives of young adults and are associated with several positive physical and mental health outcomes. Spirituality is defined as the quality of being concerned with the human spirit or soul as opposed to material or physical things. Religion is a set of organized beliefs, practices, and systems that most often relate to the belief and worship of a controlling force, such as a personal god or another supernatural being. There are research findings in the area of human development examining the influence of spirituality on developmental outcomes in different stages of lifespan. Spiritual struggles, including troubled relationships with God, negative interactions in religious settings, and chronic religious doubting, were related to psychological distress in adolescents (Ellison and Lee, 2010). Few studies investigate the concept of spirituality and religiosity in the mentally distressed population, adolescents, and not with that of young adults. Therefore, the current study aims to investigate the relationship of spirituality and religiosity with psychological well-being in young adults and also further look into the existing differences in these young adults in spirituality and religiosity. The sample size will be determined based on the research. The obtained data will be analyzed using SPSS for the relationship of the variables and differences of young adults using 't' analysis.

**Keywords:** *Spirituality, Religiosity, Psychological Well-Being*

Spirituality is defined as the quality of being concerned with the human spirit or soul as opposed to material or physical things. The practical application of the founder's teaching forms the foundation of spirituality. Matsuo Basho, a poet from Japan, once said, "Do not seek to follow in the footsteps of the wise. Seek what they sought." (Brady, 2022)

Religion is a set of organized beliefs, practices, and systems that most often relate to the belief and worship of a controlling force, such as a personal god or another supernatural being. Most typically, the teachings, and beliefs of a mythological or historical figure (such as Christ, Buddha, Moses, Krishna, or Muhammad) serve as the foundation for a religion.

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Through oral tradition and written texts, the specifics of their lives as holy or highly evolved beings have been transmitted to us across the mists of time. These figures serve as the focus of worship and adoration and serve as the cornerstone of a community's religious practices and ceremonies. (Brady, 2022)

Both religion and spirituality have their roots in the quest to comprehend the purpose of life and, in certain situations, how a connection to a higher force may affect that purpose. Although the principles of religion and spirituality are identical, they are vastly different in practice.

Spirituality and Religiosity are conceptually different but they go hand in hand in terms of mental health, belief, comfort, and reflection.

Spirituality and religiosity are salient constructs in the lives of young adults and are associated with several positive physical and mental health outcomes. Monitoring young people's spiritual practices and beliefs is crucial since, according to developmental science, sociology, and character education research, they have a positive impact on moral development (Hardy et al., 2018; Volling et al., 2009).

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Knox, D., Langehough, S. O., Walters, C., & Rowley, M. (1998) research paper emphasizes how different college undergraduates who range from the age of 18 to 23 years of age associate with their religious and spiritual beliefs to their well-being. This was done through a questionnaire that was given to around 235 students from 3 prestigious southeastern Universities.

In a study conducted by Caroline C. Kaufman (2021) looks into how people from different cultural, ethnic, races, and economic backgrounds view spirituality in terms of mental well-being. This paper takes the age group of 18 to 25 as they belong to category of population who have diverse amount of thoughts. From the results it was found out that population with higher religious/spiritual beliefs had more self-esteem and positive outlook of life. This was common among people of all races and ethnic groups.

According to a study by Ahmed M. Abdel-Khalek (2018) study that tried to explore between religiosity, spirituality, and self-esteem among Malaysian college students who mostly followed Islam. As per the results the male had higher score in well-being and happiness while the females had higher score in religious well-being. The scales used were the Self-Esteem Scale (s-es; Rosenberg, 1989) The Arabic Scale of Happiness (Abdel-Khalek, 2013), And the Arabic Scale of Mental Health (asmh; Abdel-khalek-2011) As per conclusion religious faith gives more amount of hope and positivity for an individual.

Oxhandler, H. K., Narendorf, S. C., & Moffatt, K. M. (2018), in the following research paper takes the sample of the age group of 18 to 25 as this is the age when many people develop mental illness due to hardships given by life. There were around 55 youths who were studied and they came up with these outcomes positive RS coping, negative RS coping, relationship with God, and implications for RS and mental health. The research paper of Sara M. Sharp (2020) looks at how there has been an increase in mental health issues in society especially among young adults. It also correlates to how lack of faith may be the reason to it. This paper tells us how religion is giving people the purpose and

motivation to live their lives. It has hence shown the correlation between religiosity and hope. It tells us how religion connects to High Self-esteem and self-belief.

### **METHODS**

#### *Aim*

To assess the relationship and differences in Psychological Well-being and multicultural inventory of religion/spiritual well-being of young adults

#### *Objectives*

- To assess the relationship of Psychological Well-being and multicultural inventory of religious/spiritual well-being of young adults.

#### *Operational Definition*

- **Psychological Well-being:** The capacity to cope effectively with life's challenges and achieve optimal mental and emotional health.
- **Religion:** A religion involves worshipping deities, and adhering to moral principles.
- **Spiritual:** Refers to one who seeks inner peace, meaning, and a sense of connection with something greater than oneself.

#### *Research Design*

The purpose of the study is to find out the relationship between psychological well-being and multicultural religious/spiritual well-being among young adults and thus a correlation research design is adopted.

#### *Hypothesis*

- There is no significant relationship between Psychological Well-being and multicultural inventory of religious/spiritual well-being of young adults

#### *Participants and Sampling*

The sampling procedure followed was that of convenience sampling which allows the researcher to choose the sample based on his/her convenience and accessibility to the sample population. The sample for the study was 61 young adults between the ages of 18 to 25 years.

#### **Inclusion:**

1. Both young men and women were included.
2. The young adults were college-going students of Bangalore.

#### **Exclusion:**

1. Young adults with any physical and psychological abnormality were excluded.

#### *Materials*

- **Demographic Sheet:** The researcher developed a form including the demographic details such as name/initials, age, gender, occupation, economic background, and religion of the participants for analysis purposes along with the other questionnaire.
- **Multidimensional Inventory for Religion/Spiritual Well-being:** This survey assessed multiple aspects of religiosity and spirituality consists in a total of 48 items and six subscales (with eight items each). Concerning the German version, the total scale displays an internal consistency of  $\alpha = 0.89$  (Cronbach  $\alpha$ 's for all subscales

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>0.7). The original version of this scale has been applied to different research contexts, were found to be substantially related to different parameters of personality among varying clinical and non-clinical samples.

- **Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale:** was utilized to measure the participants' psychological well-being, encompassing elements related to mental health, emotional well-being, and overall life satisfaction.

### *Procedure*

The data collection process involved utilizing various online platforms, social media, and university campuses to reach potential participants. Prospective individuals were extended voluntary invitations to participate in the study and their consent to participate was taken. Before data collection, all participants were presented with a comprehensive explanation of the study's objectives and procedures. They were duly informed about their rights as participants, ensuring confidentiality, and the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time without facing any consequences. For the process of data collection, two distinct questionnaires were employed first Multidimensional Inventory for Religious/Spiritual Well-being: This survey assessed multiple aspects of religiosity and spirituality consisting of a total of 48 items and six subscales (with eight items each) and Secondly Psychological Well-being Questionnaire: This questionnaire gauged participants' psychological well-being, exploring facets related to mental health, emotional well-being, and overall life satisfaction. Participants were asked to complete the questionnaires online through a secure and anonymous survey platform. The questionnaires were designed to be self-administered and required approximately 40-60 minutes to complete.

Participants were encouraged to respond honestly and to the best of their abilities.

### *Analysis of Data*

The raw data collected from the research conducted will be entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS). Pearson product correlation method was used to obtain the relationship between the variables of the psychological well-being and multicultural inventory of religious/spiritual well-being among young adults.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The framework of analyses of the data in the present study was performed based on the research findings and outcomes of various similar research conducted previously. Although the basic tenet remains the same to find out the effect of a multidimensional inventory of religious/spiritual well-being on the psychological well-being of young adults, the result may vary due to the sample that was taken into consideration and the period when the research was conducted.

**Table 1: Table showing the relationship with variables of Psychological Well-being and multidimensional religion/spiritual wellbeing of young adults.**

Variables	Autonomy	Environmental mastery	Personal Growth	Positive Relations	Purpose of Life	Self-acceptance
General Religiosity	0.217	0.132	0.104	0.096	0.136	-0.096
Forgiveness	-0.027	-0.231	-0.238	-0.417**	-0.275*	0.109
Hope Immanent	0.318*	0.238	0.248	0.152	0.370**	-0.012
Connectedness	0.248	-0.022	-0.214	0.034	0.116	0.074
Hope Transcendent	0.229	-0.130	-0.92	-0.346**	-0.064	0.152

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Variables	Autonomy	Environmental mastery	Personal Growth	Positive Relations	Purpose of Life	Self-acceptance
Experiences of sense and meaning	0.469**	0.181	0.321*	0.203	0.324*	-0.042

*Note: (\*\*) significant at 0.01 level, (\*) significant at 0.05 level.*

The view of the study was to find the correlation between variables of Psychological Well-being and multidimensional religious/spiritual well-being of young adults. The multidimensional inventory of religious/spiritual well-being variable that is forgiveness shows a significant inverse relation to that of Positive Relations and Purpose of Life variables of psychological well-being with the ‘r’ value being -0.417 which is significant at 0.01 level and -0.275 which is significant at 0.05 level. This shows that there will be a decrease in the purpose of life and positive relations if there is a decrease in forgiveness and vice versa. The multidimensional inventory of religious/spiritual well-being variable Hope Immanent shows a significant relationship with the autonomy variable of psychological well-being with a ‘r’ value of 0.318 at 0.05 level and with the variable of Purpose of Life of psychological wellbeing at 0.01 level with the ‘r’ value of 0.370.

The variable of experiences of sense and meaning of multidimensional inventory of religious/spiritual wellbeing shows a significant relationship with the psychological wellbeing variable of Autonomy at 0.01 level with the ‘r’ value of 0.469. It also shows a significant relationship with Personal Growth and Purpose of Life at 0.05 level with the ‘r’ value being 0.321 and 0.324 respectively. This shows that Experiences of Sense and Meaning enhances the Personal Growth and Purpose of Life of psychological wellbeing. This indicates that the hypothesis is partially rejected stating that ‘There is no significant relationship between Psychological Well-being and multicultural inventory of religious/spiritual well-being of young adults.’

The variables of General Religiosity and Connectedness of the multidimensional inventory of religious/spiritual well-being do not show any significant relationship with all the variables of psychological well-being such as Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations, Purpose of Life, and Self-acceptance. Forgiveness does not show any significant relationship with Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, and Self-acceptance. Thus, stating that any change in General Religiosity and forgiveness does not contribute to any enhancement or decrease in Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, and Personal Growth of psychological well-being. The Hope Immanent variable does not show any significant relationship with Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, and Positive Relations. Hope Transcendent variable also does not show any significant relationship with the variables of Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Purpose of Life and Self-Acceptance. Therefore, proving the hypothesis partially, stating ‘There is no significant relationship between Psychological Well-being and multicultural inventory of religious/spiritual well-being of young adults.’ The review discussed in the present study by Caroline C. Kaufman (2021) found out that the population with higher religious/spiritual beliefs had more Self-esteem and a Positive Outlook on Life. Greenfield et al. (2009) discussion that higher levels of spirituality were associated with higher levels of Well-being (Positive Affect, Purpose in Life, Positive Relations with Others, Personal Growth, Self-acceptance, Environmental Mastery, Autonomy), is not accepted in this research as study as this research proves that there is no significant relationship between the variables of psychological wellbeing of the same with the multidimensional inventory of

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religious/spiritual wellbeing. The reason for the change could be the influence of external factors like these young adults staying away from their families for their education; it could also be because of the influence of the peer group that they are living with. The fast-growing change in the development process, thinking, expressing with others and towards themselves.

### CONCLUSION

1. The research proved that the variable of forgiveness inversely shows a significant relationship with positive relations and purpose of life. Hope transcendent is also inversely related to positive relations partially rejecting the hypothesis.
2. The research also proved that the variables of multidimensional inventory of religious/spiritual wellbeing does not show any significant relationship with the variables of psychological well-being.

### Limitations:

1. A larger sample size can be included, in order to get more accurate data.
2. Equal representation of all religions could have been included in the sampling data.
3. To acquire more insight, a different measure of spirituality/religiosity could have been used.

### Suggestions for Further Research:

1. The study can be carried forward as a comparative study between religions.
2. Religiosity/Spirituality can be analyzed with that of complete well-being, as defined by the WHO.
3. A comparative study can be done between men and women in their practice of Religion/Spirituality and Psychological Well-being.

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### Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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