



Impact of Spirituality on Mental Health and Wellbeing Among Geriatric Population

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ABSTRACT

Today, mental illnesses are unthinkable without spirituality. Today, depression, suicide, stress, anxiety, conflict, helplessness and excessive desire have become a part of life. This study aims to examine the social population context; Assesses the mental health and spiritual well-being of seniors who engage in spiritual practices. The descriptive research design was conducted to select a sample of 100 elders practicing spirituality at Brahamkumaris World University of Spirituality, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India. Data were collected by applying the HOPE Survey, FICA Survey, Holistic Approach to Physical and Mental Health Scale and General Health Survey. The results of this study clearly show that higher levels of spirituality are associated with better health among adults who participate in spiritual practices. Topic: Elderly people, mental health, spirituality Introduction Spirituality plays an important role in the elderly. As we get older, moral responsibility becomes more important. Nowadays, there is an increasing trend towards giving importance to the spiritual aspect of health during treatment. Recent studies link spirituality to health (Arcury et al., 2000; Contrada et al., 2004). There are many cross-sectional studies showing that many people turn to spirituality as a source of healing (Ashby and Lenhart, 1994; Keefe and Dolan, 1986; Keefe et al., 1997; Rosenstiel and Keefe, 1983). Spirituality gives true meaning to life for those who practice it. Additionally, Suhail and Chaudhry (2004) found that spirituality provides meaning and purpose and reduces negative emotions. As the number of elderly people increases in India and physical and mental health becomes a major concern for them, healthcare professionals, including senior citizens, doctors and nurses, must understand their spiritual needs and intervene appropriately. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between spirituality and health among adults who participate in spiritual practices. This study found that spirituality helps predict better mental health. Mental illness among the elderly in India It is true that people can suffer from chronic, physical pain.

Keywords: Elderly, Mental Health, Spirituality

I. INTRODUCTION

Spirituality plays an important role in aging. As we get older, moral responsibility becomes more important. Currently, there is an increasing tendency to emphasize spiritual aspects of health during treatment. Recent research links spirituality and health (Arcury et al., 2000; Contrada et al., 2004). There are many cross-sectional studies showing that many people turn to spirituality as a source of healing (Ashby and Lenhart, 1994; Keefe and Dolan, 1986; Keefe et al., 1997; Rosenstiel and Keefe, 1983). Spirituality gives true meaning to life to those who practice it. Additionally, Suhail and Chaudhry (2004) found that spirituality provides meaning and purpose and reduces negative emotions. As the number of elderly people in India increases and physical and mental health becomes their primary concern, healthcare professionals, including senior citizens and doctors and nurses, need to understand their spiritual needs and intervene accordingly. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between spirituality and health among elderly people participating in spiritual practice. The study found that spirituality predicted improvements in mental health. Mental health status of older adults in India It is true that as we age, we become more vulnerable to diseases, physical and mental disorders. As we age, our physical condition deteriorates, making us more prone to diseases. Illnesses in adults are diverse and long-lasting. Data on the mental health of older people can be obtained from hospital and community surveys. Rao and Madhavan's (1983) study on depression and suicidal behavior in the elderly estimated that the prevalence of mental illness in the population aged 60 and older was approximately 89 per 1,000, or approximately 4 million people nationwide. . The risk of some mental disorders increases with age. The overall prevalence increased from 71.5% in those aged 60 years or older to 124% in those aged 70 years or older and 155% in those aged 80 years or older.



The risk of Alzheimer's disease increases with age. Alzheimer's disease and Alzheimer's disease (SDAT) may become a major problem in the coming years as the nation transitions from "young" to "old" (Rao, 1997). Mental disorders in old age, especially depression, late-onset mental illness and dementia, account for a large portion of all mental illnesses in India. Neurosis is also rare (Rao, 1997). In adults, mental illness is less common. The rule is at least two or three different tests. The number of symptoms ranges from 6 to 12. Symptoms are often associated with physical pain, injury, or disability. Spirituality and Mental Health Spirituality appears to be protective against mental illness (Cohen and Coing, 2004). Many studies have shown that spirituality has a positive relationship with life satisfaction, happiness, and morality. Hill et al. (2002) found that spirituality influences the cognitive outcomes, thoughts, emotions, and behaviors that are created and developed in specific environments. Spirituality also appears to protect against dementia (Cohen and Koeing, 2004). Many studies have shown that spirituality has a positive relationship with life satisfaction, happiness, and morality. Pamuk et al (1999) found that quality of life was positively related to several measures of spirituality and negatively related to feelings of hopelessness and hopelessness. Emotions such as peace, comfort, connection, and belief in the existence of death and life are derived from religion, and hope and anxiety are reported to have an infinitely negative correlation (Ironson et al., 2002).

II. METHODOLOGY.

The purpose of this study is to explore the psychological well-being of adults through spiritual practice and to identify the relationship between various variables and the spiritual practice of the elderly. A descriptive research design was used. A total of 100 spiritually practicing older adults (30 men and 70 women) were randomly selected from the Brahmakumaris World School of Spirituality, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India.

INCLUSION CRITERIA

Geriatric population above 60 years of age, Population including both males and females, Geriatric population practising spirituality, With well adjusted to ongoing illness like Diabetes hypertension and age related

problems, Population willing to give their consent.

EXCLUSION CRITERIA:

Geriatric population with serious medical illness, Not willing to give their consent, Have no belief in practising spirituality, Population below 60 years of age.

INSTRUMENTS A session session was used to collect data. The demographic survey included information about the participant's age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, current health status, and spiritual well-being. The FICA survey has 12 questions on a Likert scale from 1 to 5. There are 10 questions in the Hope survey on a Likert scale from 1 to 5. Holistic Approach to Physical and Mental Health consists of 30 questions scaled from 1 to 10. The General Health Survey consists of 30 questions scaled from 1 to 5. It was developed by Paloutzian and Ellison in 1982 to measure good spiritual life. It measures two aspects of man's spiritual life; health welfare (RWB) is one's health from God's perspective; Well-being (EWB) is a more horizontal measure of the health of self and others. Researchers identified potential subjects and invited eligible adults to participate in the study. The study was explained to all subjects by the researchers and informed consent was obtained before the evaluation was started.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.

Spirituality of the elderly has an important role in improving their health and helping them recover from illnesses. Figure 1 shows that 80% of males have spiritual confidence and 73% of females have spiritual confidence. As a result, seniors who are highly spiritual have less stress than seniors who are less religious. Spiritual resources provide a sense of power and are a guide to finding meaning in life. Inner spiritual resources provide a sense of strength in times of crisis when dealing with life's uncertainties (Wills, 2007). Spiritual health is an important part of the human journey in life and includes ultimate concern for the meaning of life and the need for fulfillment, transcendence, or understanding. Being spiritually healthy means having harmony, inner freedom and peace in relationships with professional entities such as God, community energy, nature, the environment or the world. When looking at all mental illnesses among adults, 75% of respondents had a mental illness.



Table 1: Sociodemographic characteristics

Variables		Frequency(n=100)	Percentage
AGE GROUPS	60-70years	60	60
	71-80 years	35	35
	81-90 years	3	3
	>90 years	2	2
GENDER	Male	30	30
	Female	70	70
RELIGION	Hindu	100	100
MARITAL STATUS	Married	100	100

In the above table the contents like age gender marital status and religion has been placed and division of age into groups and calculation of percentages assuming the n =100 significance between these demographic characteristics.

Table 2: Gender and Body mind holistic approach(Total score 300)

Gender	Better influence of spirituality	Much better influence of spirituality	Total	P value
Males	21	9	30	.000
Females	42	28	70	

Table 3: Gender and Hope questionnaire(Total score 50)

Gender	More influence of spirituality	Much more influence of spirituality	Total	P value
Males	0	30	30	.003
Females	5	65	70	

Table 4: Gender and General Health questionnaire(Total score 120)

Gender	Better influence of spirituality	More influence of spirituality	Total	P value
Males	22	8	30	.000
Females	40	30	70	

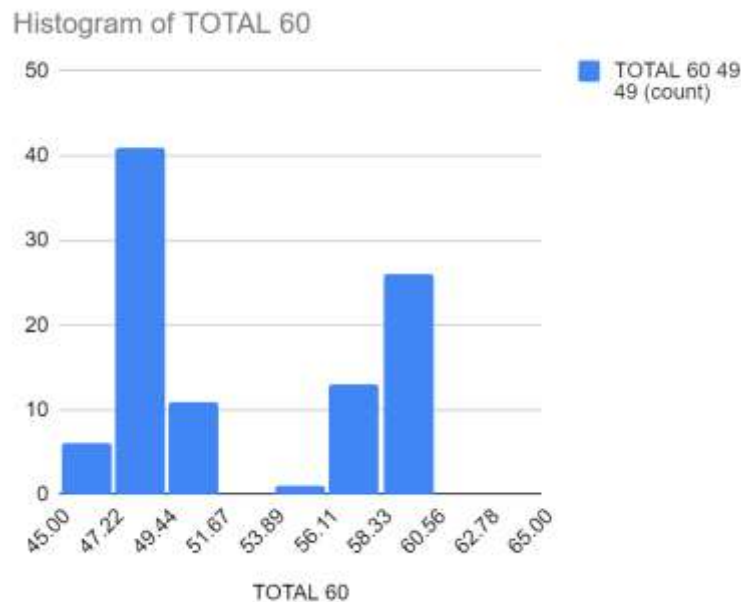


In table 2 the significance of correlation between the Gender and Body mind holistic approach was taken where 70% of females out of which 42 had better influence of spirituality and 28 had much better influence of spirituality. The male 30% 21 had better influence of spirituality and 9 had much better influence of spirituality. Significance of p value obtained was .000

In the table 3 comparison between the Hope and Gender was taken where 39% of males and 65% of females had much more influence of spirituality giving the significance of p value as .003

In the table 4 using the general health questionnaire where 22% of males and 49% of females had better influence of spirituality giving a significant p value of .000

Table 5: FICAQUESTIONNAIRE



The histogram diagram depicts the significant impact of spirituality upto 40% giving the major proportion FICA QUESTIONNAIRE .

Variables	Fica	Hope	General health questionnaire	Body mind well being holistic approach	Result overall spiritual wellbeing.
Age Group	1	.811(**)	.699(**)	-1.84	-.157
Male	.811(**)	1	.814(**)	-.340	-.242
Female	-.699(**)	.814(**)	1	-.184	-.190
Better influence of spirituality	-.184(**)	-.340	-.184	1	.611(**)
Much better influence of spirituality	-.157	-.242	.125	.611(**)	1

The significance of p value is 0.003 statistically significant on comparison with gender and age groups.

IV. DISCUSSION

This present paper attempts to advance the empirical study of linking spirituality and mental health. Spirituality has been reported to have positive impacts on physical and mental well-being. In the present study, the associations between

spirituality and wellbeing are examined with a sample of older adults practising spirituality at Brahmakumaris World Spiritual University, Visakhapatnam Overall, the findings demonstrates that spirituality has a positive effects on health as do other demographic factors such as age, sex, spiritual beliefs etc. Significant percent (63%) of



the elderly were in the age group of (61-65years). More than half (33%) of the elderly show extremely high level of spiritual beliefs. Overall spiritual wellbeing was observed with more than half (70%) of the elders who practice spirituality. Our results show that the majority of the elders considered themselves to have a high level of spiritual wellbeing and their level of life stress was also found to be normal. Spiritual practice is associated with mental and physical health. Numerous studies have found a positive relationship between spiritual practice, such as spiritual meditation, reading spiritual magazine, discussion spiritual matters with others and positive mental health among seniors. Spiritually involved older adults are generally less prone to Stress, suicide, depression, anxiety, smoking and alcoholism, and are more satisfied with their lives, with a greater sense of wellbeing. Studies have found that older adults who practice spirituality regularly have lower blood pressure, fewer heart attacks, stronger immune systems to fight diseases such as cancer, and are less likely to die of coronary artery disease. Moreover, this study states that more than half of the elderly have extremely high level of spiritual belief and majority of the elders practising spirituality are less prone to stress. It may be due to the fact that higher the level of spirituality and lesser will be the level of stress among elderly.

V. CONCLUSION

Social work professionals have their own roles in each stage of geriatric care management. Empirical support has been demonstrated for a positive relationship between spirituality and mental health. Spirituality is associated with deep values, a central philosophy of life, and inner resources of the elderly person. The present research, in essence, aimed at studying the relationship between spirituality and mental health among the elders. The results confirm that spirituality plays a significant role in promoting mental health of the elders. That is why the elder person with good spiritual outcome view that suffering is part of human experience and nature itself as well. The investigator suggests that spirituality grows through continual, mutual process when individuals make choices to actualize potentials which reflect a sense of meaning in life, interconnectedness with all living things, and awareness of a transcendent dimension or being.

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