



A Study on the Relationship of Spiritual Well-Being with Hope, Optimism and Life Satisfaction among Young Adults

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Abstract: Spiritual well-being as a topic now occupies a central position in field of positive psychology. The shift in positive psychology continues to lead psychological research to unexplored areas and topics such as spirituality. The current study aimed to explore the relationship of Spiritual well-being with Hope, Optimism and Life Satisfaction among young adults. A sample of 60 young adults from north-Indian population was selected for the study. Studying this relationship is crucial to better understand the role of positive psychology in nurturing and contributing to the society. Standardized tools were used to assess the variables of interest. Spiritual wellbeing was measured using the Spiritual Well-being scale, a 20-item paper instrument. The Adult Hope Scale, a 12-item measure was used to assess the respondent's level of hope. The level of optimism was assessed using The Revised Life Orientation Test which consisted of 10 items and the life satisfaction was measured using Satisfaction with Life scale, a short 5- item instrument designed to assess overall cognitive judgments of satisfaction with one's life. Results revealed a significant positive correlation between spiritual well-being and hope. Spiritual well-being was significantly positively correlated with optimism. Additionally, a significant positive correlation was also observed between spiritual well-being and life satisfaction. Spirituality provides a framework for understanding the deeper meaning and purpose of life which can foster hope, optimism and life satisfaction especially in challenging times.

Keywords: *Spiritual Wellbeing, Hope, Optimism, Life Satisfaction, Young Adults*

1. Introduction

The rise of positive psychology in the larger field of psychology has led to a theory of knowledge and a theoretical revolution and paradigm shift that have had well-known effects on research directions (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Researchers have now investigated the regions that weren't studied in a systematic way before and weren't the focus of psychological research. Along with positive psychology, spirituality has become a major subject of study. Psychology literature in the 20th century didn't do much research on religion and spirituality. In fact, these beliefs were even linked to psychopathology. There have been a lot of changes in the 21st century thanks to the positive psychology approach. Researchers and practitioners have a new way of thinking about people because to positive psychology. Studies on religion and spirituality that were once ignored have now become more well-known. Howden (1992) says that "purpose and meaning in life" are important parts of spirituality. This includes looking for people and events that give you a feeling of purpose and a reason to live. According to Cavendish et al. (2001), young individuals between the ages of 18 and 24, who are learning how to think abstractly, should spend more time investigating the spiritual side of life. It makes them think about how important their spiritual choices are.

Modern spirituality includes an inner road or journey that helps a person find the true core of who they are and how they may make a difference in the world. It also incorporates humanistic traits and values like love, compassion, hope, patience, forgiveness, wisdom, peace, and a real connection with other people. Keeping your spiritual health is good for you in many ways. These can have to do with both you and the things you do every day. It gives consolation when things are uncertain. People who are naturally dubious of spirituality should look into it the most.

Spiritual wellbeing

Over time, the meaning of the word "spirituality" has grown, and there are now many different definitions and interpretations for it. Spirituality is about things like finding meaning, learning the facts about the universe, connecting with art and nature, finding your purpose, and asking yourself deep questions. Religion, on the other hand, is about things like practices, rites, rituals, shared community practices, and believing in a higher power. Mohr (2006) says that "spirituality is a person's own experience of, or a belief in, a power apart from his or her existence."

Joseph et al. (2017) say that spirituality should be seen of as “a more general, unstructured, personalized, and natural phenomenon in which a person seeks closeness and connection with a higher power or purpose.”

For decades, psychologists have been interested in ideas like spiritual and religious behavior and how positive psychology works in adults. Hsein et al. (2009) did a study that looked at the links between religion/spirituality and quality of life in a group of younger individuals. A New Zealand institution gave the Quality-of-Life Inventory to 218 domestic students and 164 overseas students. The survey also included a separate section concerning their personal opinions about spirituality and religion. The results showed that religion or spirituality had a strong link to the psychological quality of life in two groups and the social quality of life among international students.

Burney et al. (2017) study looked at the importance of spirituality in young adults' mental health and how it affects their mental health. A group of 160 young adults from different universities in Delhi was used as a sample. The Spirituality Scale (Delaney, 2003) and the Psychological Well-being Scale (Ryff & Singer, 1998) were used to help with the administration. We used a t-test and a correlation to look at the differences between men and women and the relationship between the two variables. We performed stepwise multiple regression analysis to figure out the size of spirituality. The t-test showed that there was a big difference between men and women. There was a link between spirituality and mental health that was good.

Pavelea and Culic (2023) did a study to look at the link between religion, spirituality, and well-being in young adults. There were 319 social science students in the study, all between the ages of 18 and 24. People answered questions online. We employed a short, multidimensional assessment of religiousness and spirituality that included three dimensions: the Life Satisfaction Scale and the Well-Being Scale. The study's results showed that emerging adults who assessed their mental health highly had better well-being. Being religious or spiritual can make you feel better.

Hope

Hope is distinct among all pleasant feelings. It is a mentality or viewpoint that positive outcomes will occur. Hope transcends mere optimism; it embodies an action-oriented mindset. The beneficial influence of hope on human life is extensively studied and cannot be overlooked.

Hope can be described as the anticipation that circumstances will improve and the formulation of optimistic aspirations. It is seen as a significant variable in positive psychology (Reichard et al., 2013). Hope, with a distinctive capacity to mobilize individuals, groups, organizations, and communities, is, as per Snyder (2000), not merely a passive enthusiasm that emerges from life's adversities, but rather a process by which individuals actively engage in the mental pursuit of their objectives (Taraghi et al., 2017). Hope assists us in discovering significance in our life experiences and fosters the belief that circumstances will enhance.

Feldman and Snyder (2005) conducted a study on hope and a meaningful existence. The sample comprised 139 college students and assessed their sense of purpose, despair, and anxiety levels. Factor analysis revealed a singular underlying factor in both the measurement of purpose in life and hope. Their findings indicated that hope constitutes a component of life's meaning.

Tirrell et al. (2019) conducted a study aimed at assessing spirituality, hope, and thriving among Salvadoran teenagers. The preliminary findings originated from a faith-based child sponsorship organization that examined positive youth development. A survey was conducted, and data was gathered from a sample of 888 Salvadoran teenagers, comprising an equal distribution of 50 percent females and 50 percent boys. This study examined the linkages among spirituality, hope, and positive youth development, revealing a substantial correlation between hope and spirituality with noteworthy findings.

Frey et al. (2004) conducted a study that provided construct-based validity evidence using component analysis and the investigation of correlations between the spirituality scale and its subscale scores with those of the Children's Hope Scale. Furthermore, an examination of the disparities between male and female students revealed that females achieved higher scores on the life scheme subscale, indicating a heightened feeling of significance in their lives.

Optimism

Optimism is an attitude that embodies a belief or expectation that the results of a particular endeavor, or outcomes in general, will be favorable and advantageous. Optimism is a cognitive disposition towards the expectation of favorable events or outcomes in the future. The early perception and application of the phrase were either neutral or negative, as demonstrated by the writings of renowned philosophers and psychologists such as Descartes, Freud, Hegel, and Nietzsche (Domino & Conway, 2001). As research in psychology progressed and humanistic

psychology gained prominence towards the close of the twentieth century, a transformation in the understanding of optimism emerged. Scheier and Carver initially articulated the notion of optimism within their self-regulation theory, framing it as a personality trait. Subsequently, they coined the phrase 'dispositional optimism.' They characterized it as 'the degree to which individuals vary in their expectations of favorable future outcomes' (Carver et al., 2010).

Koenig et al. (2015) conducted an experimental investigation examining the effects of regular psychotherapy combined with an optimism-based religion intervention. Participants aged 18 to 85 were randomized and received 10 50-minute sessions remotely over a period of 12 weeks. Optimism was assessed using the Life Orientation Test-Revised. Religiosity was evaluated using a 29-item scale that encompassed the significance of religion and spiritual experiences in daily life. Mixed effects growth curve models were employed, concluding that both approaches enhanced optimism; however, among the participants, those with higher religiosity exhibited greater optimism and a more significant increase in optimism throughout the psychotherapy process compared to their less religious counterparts.

A study by Younas et al. (2018) examined Religious Orientation and Optimism among Pakistani religious groups, specifically targeting Muslims and Christians. The instruments employed in the present study were the Life Orientation Test (LOT) and the Age Universal Revised Religious Orientation Scale. The study included a sample of 231 persons. The primary objective of the study was to investigate the correlation between Religious Orientation and Optimism in Muslim and Christian individuals. The whole sample consisted of 145 women and 86 males. The Pearson Product Moment connection indicated a strong positive connection with the Life Orientation Test throughout the entire sample.

Dhingra and Lata (2020) did a study that investigated the correlation between spirituality and optimism on the psychological well-being of the middle-aged adult population. The sample consisted of male (N=87) and female (N=90) adults aged 40 to 60 years. The Daily Spiritual Experience Scale-Revised, Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, and Life Orientation Test-Revised were employed to evaluate the participants' spirituality, optimism, and psychological well-being, respectively. The findings indicated a favorable correlation between spirituality and optimism with the psychological well-being of the subjects.

Life Satisfaction

Life satisfaction denotes the degree to which an individual perceives their life as fulfilling, significant, or of superior quality. It entails an optimistic disposition regarding one's existence. This component embodies a psychological facet of well-being, as it entails deliberate evaluations and appraisals of one's life situation.

Veenhoven (1996) defines life satisfaction as “the extent to which an individual positively evaluates the overall quality of their life as a whole.” The extent to which an individual appreciates their current life circumstances. The comprehension of life satisfaction is seen as fundamental to the objectives of positive psychology.

Several studies have been conducted to determine the role of life satisfaction in the successful functioning of young individuals. A cross-sectional study by Aglozo et al. (2021) examined the correlation between spirituality and subjective well-being, positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction, as well as the potential mediation of this association by optimism and purpose in life. The participants consisted of 235 elderly individuals. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed to examine the direct and indirect correlations. Sobel test was employed to evaluate the specific effects of optimism and meaning in life. The results indicated that spirituality was favorably correlated with positive affect and life satisfaction, while negatively correlated with negative affect.

Kelley and Miller (2007) discovered that spirituality and religiosity are often positively correlated with well-being, encompassing life satisfaction and pleasure. The correlation between life satisfaction and aspects of religiosity/spirituality was examined in a heterogeneous sample of 615 adolescents utilizing the Satisfaction with Life Scale and the Brief Multidimensional Scale of Religiousness/Spirituality (BMMRS). The findings demonstrated that most aspects of religiosity and spirituality correlate with life satisfaction. They additionally observed that consistent spiritual engagement correlates positively with marital satisfaction and good self-concept, while exhibiting a negative correlation with distress.

Alorani and Alradaydeh (2018) examined the correlation between spiritual well-being, perceived social support, and life satisfaction among university students in Jordan. A cross-sectional descriptive-correlational approach was employed, utilizing a convenience sample of 919 students for the investigation. University students indicated ordinary levels of spiritual well-being

and perceived social support, expressing slight satisfaction with their lives. It was noticed that spiritual wellbeing and life satisfaction were positively correlated with each other.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between Spiritual well-being with Hope, Optimism and Life-satisfaction among young adults.

3. Hypotheses

- **H1:** There is a significant relationship between spiritual well-being and the level of hope.
- **H2:** There is a significant relationship between spiritual well-being and the level of optimism.
- **H3:** There is a significant relationship between spiritual well-being and the level of life satisfaction.

4. Methodology

4.1 Sample

A total of 60 young adults in the age range of 18-26 years were selected from the North-Indian population. The sample included 60 young adults comprising of 30 males and 30 females.

4.2 Measures

To assess spiritual well-being, hope, optimism and life satisfaction, the following standardized scales were used:

Spiritual Well-being scale (SWBS): The Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWBS) is 20-item paper instrument, as developed by Paloutzian and Ellison (1982) was used to measure the perceived spiritual quality of life and is understood in two ways - a religious sense and an existential sense. The respondents indicate their level of agreement with each statement on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). The Religious well-being (RWB) subscale provides a score of one's well-being in a religious sense, while the Existential well-being (EWB) subscale gives a score of one's sense of life purpose and life satisfaction. It takes only 10-15 minutes to complete.

The Adult Hope scale (AHS): The adult hope scale is a 12-item instrument of a respondent's level of hope, developed by Snyder et al. (2003). The Adult Hope Scale consists of two subscales, with one measure of agency thinking and one measuring pathways thinking. Adding pathway and agency scores will give a total hope score. Each item is answered using a 8-point Likert scale ranging from "definitely false" to "definitely true." This scale can be used as a valid and an important tool in clinical and educational settings.

Revised Life Orientation test (LOT): The Life Orientation Test (LOT) is a 10-item summary measure of the respondent's level of optimism. It was developed by Scheier and Carver (1985). The Life Orientation Test (LOT) is a standard psychological scale that assesses one's dispositional level of optimism. This scale provides a meaningful insight into possible interventions, such as those to address harmful thought processes. The items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree).

Satisfaction with Life Scale: Satisfaction with life scale is a short 5- item instrument which is designed to assess overall cognitive judgments of satisfaction with one's life and is developed by Diener et al. (1985). This scale usually requires about one minute of a participant's time, where participants answer on a Likert scale ranging from 7 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). It has been noted that the SWLS is suited for use with various age groups.

4.3 Procedure

The data was collected through google forms with the use of standardized scales. The participants giving responses were ensured that data collection will be kept confidential and will only be used for the research study. All the four tools were administered on 60 young adults of north-Indian population.

5. Results

Table 1. Showing Descriptive Statistics

	Spiritual well-being	Hope	Optimism	Life Satisfaction
N	60	60	60	60
Mean	98.9	48.6	15.3	24.5
Median	99.5	49.0	16.0	25.0
Standard deviation	13.0	6.87	3.02	4.56

Minimum	68.0	22.0	8.00	16.0
Maximum	120	59.0	23.0	35.0

Table 2. Relationship of Spiritual well-being with Hope, Optimism and Life satisfaction among young adults

	Spiritual well-being	Hope	Optimism	Life Satisfaction
Spiritual well-being	—			
Hope	0.472***	—		
Optimism	0.347**	0.422***	—	
Life Satisfaction	0.644***	0.381**	0.340**	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

6. Discussion of Results

This study investigates the relationship of spiritual well-being with hope, optimism and life satisfaction among young adults. A sample of 60 young adults from north-Indian population was selected using a correlational research design. Data was collected using the Spiritual well-being scale (SWBS), The Adult Hope scale, Revised Life-orientation test and Satisfaction with Life scale to assess the level of spiritual well-being, hope, optimism and life satisfaction respectively. The study aims to explore how spiritual well-being is related to hope, optimism and life satisfaction among young adults in the age group of 18-26 years.

The descriptive statistics in **Table 1** depicts the mean scores of 60 young adults across four variables: Spiritual well-being, Hope, Optimism and Life satisfaction. Spiritual well-being ($M=98.9$) and Hope ($M=48.6$) had the highest mean scores indicating high level of spiritual well-being and Hope. Optimism ($M=15.3$) had the lowest mean and the least variability ($SD= 3.02$) and Life satisfaction ($M=24.5$) showed moderate mean score reflecting a balanced but not exceptionally high level of life satisfaction. Overall, the data suggests that participants reported generally positive psychological states, with highest variability ($SD= 13.0$) in spiritual well-being and consistent responses across other three variables.

In the current study, Pearson Correlation analysis was used to determine the correlations between the variables. **Table 2** shows the correlation between Spiritual well-being with Hope,

Optimism and Life satisfaction among young adults. A significant positive correlation was found between **Spiritual well-being and Hope** ($r = 0.472$, $p < 0.001$). Thus, implying that when the level of Spiritual well-being increases, the level of Hope increases. A significant positive correlation was found between **Spiritual well-being and Optimism** ($r = 0.347$, $p < 0.01$) suggesting that individuals with greater spiritual well-being experience an increase in the level of optimism. **Spiritual well-being** also showed significant positive correlation with **Life satisfaction** ($r = 0.644$, $p < 0.001$) indicating that as the level of spiritual wellbeing increases, the level of life satisfaction also increases.

These findings are consistent with the results of a study conducted by Carson et al. (1988) which examined the similarities of hope and spiritual well-being and indicated the results of a correlational study examining the association in a sample of healthy individuals. Hope was found to be related to both the existential and religious dimensions of spiritual well-being.

Cid et al. (2022) conducted a study which examined the association between religious/spiritual practices and dispositional optimism in an underprivileged population in Lascano. These practices were positively aligned to with higher optimism, determined by the Life-Orientation Test-Revised (LOT-R). Those who practiced spirituality score on an average, 14.4 percentage points higher on the LOT-R than those who did not.

And another study which supported the findings in this study was conducted by Esteban et al. (2021) determined if religiosity and spirituality are related to life satisfaction among Peruvian citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was a non-experimental, predictive and a cross-sectional study with a sample of 734 people of both genders between 17-75 age range. To measure the variables, the Brief Multidimensional Measure of Religiousness/Spirituality (BMMRS) and The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) were used. A multiple regression analysis was done to study the variables that best predicted life satisfaction. A positive and significant association between spirituality and life satisfaction was found out. ($r = 0.328$, $p < .01$).

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study highlights the relationship of Spiritual well-being with Hope, Optimism and Life satisfaction among young adults. The data revealed that higher level of spiritual well-being is positively correlated with higher level of Hope, higher level of optimism and higher

level of life satisfaction. The findings align with the previous research, such as the study conducted by Albatnuni and Koszycki (2021) which examined the mediators of the relationship between prayer on the well-being in individuals from the Muslim faith. Results showed that spiritual experiences which occur on daily basis and optimism are important variables that explained the positive effects of praying in the sample of 155 participants.

Another study was conducted by Kord and Biadar (2019) that aimed to evaluate the role of spiritual well-being for optimism and life expectancy among women who were referred to health centres. This descriptive study was done which was based on a correlational research design for the purpose 200 females were selected. Several standardized scales were used such as Optimism Questionnaire scale, Miller Hope Scale, and The Spiritual well-being scale. The data were analyzed through the Pearson correlation coefficient and stepwise regression test. The results of the study were consistent with this study's finding and depicted that optimism ($r=0.21$) correlated significantly with the spiritual well-being of women ($p<0.01$).

Spirituality provides a framework for understanding the deeper meaning and purpose of life which can foster hope, especially in challenging times. Conversely, hope can also strengthen spirituality by inspiring individuals to seek meaning, purpose and connection in their lives. Spirituality and Optimism share a similar foundation in promoting a positive outlook on life. Spirituality and optimism often go hand in hand, reinforcing each other to promote a more positive and resilient approach to life.

Spirituality has a notable impact on life satisfaction which leads to deeper sense of fulfilment and contentment with life. Overall, the implications of spirituality are far-reaching, influencing not only individual wellbeing but also relationships, communities and society. By acknowledging and fulfilling spiritual needs, people can have more meaningful, fulfilling and peaceful life.

There are several limitations of this study that must be considered. The sampling method non-randomized. Sampling is an important part of the research design. In the present study, Convenience sampling was used to select the subjects for data collection. Only young adults from the North-Indian population were taken. Because it was not a truly randomized sample, this could affect the study's validity. Regardless of the confidential nature of the survey, there is a possibility that some students may not have responded truthfully and honestly.

Future research on Spirituality can explore several areas to deepen our understanding of its impact and implications. It is important to conduct longitudinal studies to examine the long-term effects of spirituality on various aspects of well-being. It is necessary to investigate how spirituality is understood and practiced across different cultural, religious and spiritual traditions. Examining how spirituality affects marginalized or vulnerable populations is crucial. By pursuing these avenues of research, one can advance his or her understanding of spirituality and its implications for human flourishing and growth.

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