

SPIRITUALITY, RELIGIOUS ORIENTATION AND LIFE SATISFACTION IN STUDENTS; THE STUDY OF A CAUSAL MODEL

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Abstract

The study of religiosity and spirituality role in mental health and research about them has recently found a particular place in the research scopes about mental health. So, the present research has investigated the relationship of spirituality and life satisfaction by the mediation of religious orientation in the causal relationship frame. The participants of this research all were chosen in the random cluster method; included 308, male students 136, female students 172; students of Shiraz University and Shiraz Medical University. We used Reed's inventory about spirituality (1986) and Allport and Rosses' inventory about internal and external orientations (1967) and the scale of life satisfaction.(Diener et al,1985). Research analysis was simultaneously multiple regressions and was based on Baroon and Keni's stages (1986). The results showed that: (a) Expected positive spirituality was in both external and internal religious orientation, however the expected ability internal orientation was high. (b)Due to religious orientation, spirituality directly indicated the expected life satisfaction.(c) Both kind of religions orientations showed the same positive life satisfaction.(d) The internal orientation was more powerful mediation associated with spirituality and students life satisfaction. It totally concluded that spirituality and religiosity were the cause of mental health significant expectation, and they had more shares in life satisfaction they made religious beliefs profound and internalized them.

Keywords: satisfaction of life, spirituality, internal orientation of religion, external orientation of religion

Introduction

Positive psychology approach has been considered by psychologists recently, because it paid much attention to human's aptitudes and abilities rather than human abnormalities and disturbances .It's final aim is recognition of the constructions and the methods which are following human's happiness and well-being .Therefore , the most fundamental constructions which have been studied in this approach are the factors caused human to be much more adaptable with life's threats and needs. Cognitive theorists have use the term of life satisfaction in mental health and define happiness in term of individual's cognitive judgments about meeting of the needs and desires.(Kampble et al,1976;Kan Trill, 1965;narrated by ferrish,2005).So , life satisfaction is defined as" a process of the cognitive judgment during which an individual compare her or his conditions with the criteria which she or he thinks that they are suitable."(Diener , Emmons , Larson , and Griffin ,1985 quoted by Ferish,2006).

Accordong to this approach the least the imagination distance is between an individual's achievements and wishes, the more is the satisfaction scale (ferri and statzer ,2001 ,narrated by Ferish,2006).When we refer to the investigations and the studies of the psychologists, we all will accept that we all seek for internal and innate satisfaction in the life and its difficulties and easiness, and all of our actions and reactions. Among this, the spirituality has found a special position in the positive psychology and mental health fields.

The researches of the positive psychology approach have particularly paid much attention to the spirituality and religiosity in the recent days. Spirituality is a word that has been derived from a Latin word (spiritualities) which means (breath) and its concept is broader than the religion. It's an

investigatory, personal, and experimental process affected the individual's world view. Some aspect of spirituality have been divided into such frames as : the effort for meaning and purpose , superiority (the feeling that humanity is beyond the simply psysical existence) , connectedness (connecting with the other people , nature , or divinity), and values (such as love , sympathy , justice).(Muller ,Plevak, Rummans, 2001).

More over, the meaning and purpose of the life, self_consciousness, connection with self and others , and superior fact are considered as the components of spiritual health.

The religion has been derived from a Latin word (religare) which means (to bind together). A religion organizes the collective experiences of a group of the people in a system or beliefs and practices .The common degree of these beliefs and actions approval in an organized religion is considered being religious .(Howks , Thalman , Richins ,1995).It must be mentioned that religious orientation has been a central perspective in the psychology since four decades ago.(Tilliopoulos et al,2007).

In explanation of religious and mental consequences, Ross and Allport argued that it is necessary to discriminate internal and external orientation which is called the tools of religion (religion as a tool) means maladjusted use of religion for selfish purposes.

But internal religious orientation which is called religious purpose (religion as a goal) refers to religious beliefs in an increasing way and serves as a dominant motivation and directs an individual's direction.

People with external religious orientation use the religion to attain security, safety, and peace. Religion is extensively beneficial and expedient for them and their belief is usually superficial. (Barret et al,2005). People with internal religious orientation accept religion as a dominant motivation and tend to construct their life according to their religious beliefs.(Tiliooulose et al , 2007; Allport 1996).They are described as persons who are quite obliged to their religious beliefs and the effect of their life . (Lewis et al,2005). The investigations of Lewis et al,(2005) showed that it is very useful to discriminate between external and internal orientation in order to explain the relation ship of religion , well being , and life satisfaction.

As the consequence of spirituality and religiosity , many researches have refered to improvement of life satisfaction and mental health levels .(Biener , Lucos , Aushi , 2002 ; Longonof et al ,2003)

The present research accomplished to investigate how spirituality affects on satisfaction of the life agent of religious orientation in the light of of the researches fulfilled in this field. The supposition of suggested pattern of this study was based on the facts that spirituality causes the improvement of mental health and life satisfaction in individuals because of the sort of individual's orientation toward religion and particularly their internal religious orientation.

The questions of this study are: 1- does each of religious orientation (internal or external) have an agent variable role related to the spirituality effects on life satisfaction?

2- if the religious orientation is the agent variable , how much is the scale of direct or indirect spirituality on life satisfaction in terms of this variable?

Methodology

a) the participants and the plan of this research

The participants of this study included 308 students , 136 male female students , and 172 female student of shiraz university and shiraz medical university . Since the lists of their names weren't available , we chose them in a random multiparts cluster method .For choosing the sample group randomly.

b) Tools

The religious orientation scale (ROS) Allport and Ross (1967) made a self_report scale with twenty questions in order to measure religious internal or external orientation. From these

questions eleven of them is about internal and nine of them is about external orientation of the people. Validity and reliability was desirable in internal and external researches.(Allport and Ross ,1967; Hosseini 1389).In order to attain reliability we used (Alpha coefficient) of Kornbakh and to gain validity, we used factor analysis method. The resulted alpha coefficient for internal orientation dimension was 73% and for external was 66% .The confirmed factor analysis results account for two factors in the scale .(KMO coefficient was 86% and KHI was $0.001 > p$ in the two Bartlet's tests.)

The life satisfaction scale (Diener , Emmons, Larson ,and Griffire , 1985) has five questions with five choices .Samani and Khayer (2004) adjusted this scale for using in Iran .Samani et al , 2004 has reported that reliability to this scale to alpha coefficient was 80%.The alpha coefficient of this scale in the study got 80% .In order to examine validity , we also used confirmed factor analysis method .(KMO coefficient was 79% and the amount of KHI was 447.70 in the two Bartlet's tests which was significant in 0.0001 level.)

The spirituality scale .(Reed 1986) has eleven questions with five choices .The reliability of this questionnaire was calculated 90% for total score by Kornbakh;s alpha coefficient and its validity was calculated by criterion and differential validity. Alpha coefficient for this scale in this study got 90%and in order to examine validity, we also used confirm factor analysis method. The amount of KMO coefficient was 92% and the amount of KHI was 2176.10 which was significant in 0.0001 level.

c) Method of performance

At first, we chose randomly among three majors of the colleges among shiraz university and shiraz medical university to perform this research. Finally, we chose one classes randomly and asked them to complete the given scale .The average and standard deviation of girls age correspondingly were 22.93 and 5.05 years and about male students were 23.54 and 4 .69 years .However ,when the students completed given scales, we offered them some explanations about the purpose of this research and the method of completing the given scales.

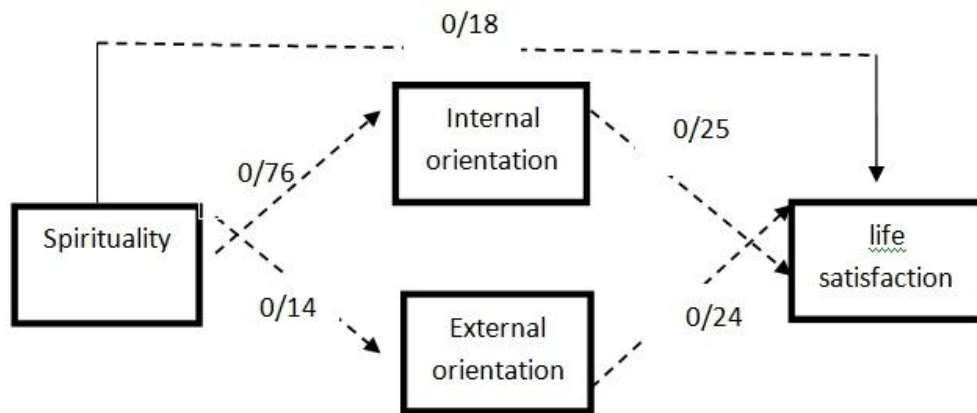
Research Results

The table (1) shows average and standard deviation of variables and the correlation of them to each other. At first to study the mediation role of religious orientation variable for spirituality and life satisfaction, we calculated the amount of β about life satisfaction on spirituality by simultaneously successive regression method .The resulted coefficient for internal religions orientation ($\beta = 0.76$, $p < 0.001$) and external religious orientation ($\beta = 0.14$, $p < 0.001$) were both positive and significant.

In order to control the endurance role and determine the mediation of external and internal religious orientation variable. We calculated simultaneous regression of life satisfaction on spirituality and internal and external religious orientation .The prediction power of spirituality variable in this stage than the time when it was in the equation alone was correct and the amount of β declined . (from 0.40 at the first stage declined to 0.18 at the second stage) . And the sagittal form of spirituality predicted the satisfaction of the life. And the prediction of both religious orientation was positive satisfaction of life.($\beta = 0.25$, $p < 0.001$).

Table (1)- Average and standard deviation of variables and their correlation to each other.

Correlation 4	Correlation 3	Correlation 2	correlation 1	Average/ standard deviation	Variable	Row
		1.00	1.00	(11.9)45.59	Spirituality	1
		1.00	0.76	(7.3)32.9	Internal religious orientation	2
	1.00	0.39	0.14	(5.6)19.2	External religious orientation	3
1.00	0.36	0.49	0.40	(4.2)15	Satisfaction of life	4



The findings of these three stages confirmed the mediation role of the religious orientation variable in relation to spirituality and life satisfaction as we are reviewed the suggested pattern and the reply of the first question of research.

To reply the second question of this research that was about indirect effect measure of spirituality on life satisfaction , we multiplied the resulted coefficients of spirituality directions toward religious orientations by the religious orientations toward life satisfaction . And the result was positive and significant . [indirect effect = (0.14) * (0.04)=(0.03); for internal religious orientation (0.76) * (0.25)= (0.19) , p < 0.001]

The result suggested that the spirituality variable not only have direct effect on life satisfaction through both internal and external orientations, but also have significantly indirect effect on it by internal orientation. This finding indicate that spirituality creates an internalized belief and profound insight toward the religious training that prepares more life satisfaction in individuals. On the other hand the final goal of the religion is more profound relationship between God and spiritual person through which the most stable mental health and well being produce in an individual.

Result and discussion

The goal of this present research was an investigation of a causal model about the role of spirituality and religiosity on life satisfaction. The coefficient of the direction showed that spirituality in terms of religious orientation and also direct way predicts the life satisfaction. This finding is the same as Logonof et al's research (2009). and suggested that the reduction of spirituality and religiosity causes the reduction of mental health and produces many kind of illnesses in individuals.

All religions all over the world recall their followers for positive activities and affect on their behavior and cognition as an effective factor . The avoidance of violence and antisocial behaviors consistently is ordered by different religions. And both of these aspects , to be positive and do positively and avoidance of negative activities , creates the positive value sense in religion's followers.

Religion affects on an individual's evaluation and mental process about daily events of life . Many researchers believe that it is easier to challenge with the emotions and social conditions by means of religion and spirituality.(Diner , Locus , oishi , 2002) as a result it creates life satisfaction.

The finding of this research showed two points . First in term of mediation role of the religious orientation albeit the two orientation had ,mediation role between spirituality and life satisfaction , the internal orientation have very strong power .The finding indicates that spirituality creates an internalized belief and profound insight toward religious training that prepares more satisfaction of life. Furthermore , a spiritual person will have more profound relationship with God that is a final goal of a religion through which a more stable mental and well being will be attained.

The other result of this study is the equality of these two religious orientation about the prediction of life satisfaction. This finding suggested that , religiosity whether in an external actions and reactions frame in an internal belief and trust causes the improvement of the life quality and satisfaction . accordingly, it is advised that internal and external religious orientation must be promoted simultaneously to develop religion culture.

The demographic conditions of the participants has an important role to distinguish between spirituality and religiosity , therefore we suggest that the people who have post graduated degree should be chosen as the comparative group in the future researches.

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