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Spiritual practice and happiness among elder

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Study of positive aging is a speedily developing area for research and practice. Spiritual practice and happiness, both are important concepts of human life. Comprehensive researches show that spiritual practices and spiritual beliefs help to reduce symptom and seriousness of physical and mental illness, unpredictability of events in later life. The objective of this study was to investigate whether there existence of any effect of spiritual practice on happiness of elders. Study was conducted on 160 (80 male & 80 female) respondents. Spiritual practice scale, i.e. Adhyatmic Abhayas Mapani (Choudhari & Singh, 2018) and Happiness scale, i.e., Prasanna Mapani (Choudhari & Singh, 2018) were used as tools for data collection. The outcome of the analysis indicated that R^2 coefficient was 0.35.1 ($p < 0.01$) which indicates that spiritual practice predicted 35.1% of the variance on happiness. However, the role of gender was found to be insignificant. It indicated that increasing spiritual practice enhanced level of happiness in the elderly.

Keywords: elderly, spiritual practice, happiness, gender, regression analysis

Spirituality is considered as very important in Indian society especially in elders, the role of spirituality become more important. Spirituality exists in all traditions and cultures. We can put our spirituality in to practice in our daily life through common activities. Spiritual practice is a discipline of regular activities of various domains performed to create spiritual experiences. It is also called a spiritual path.

Spiritual practice is undertaken to reach a goal such as being saved from loss or harm, union with the divine, and freedom from worldly troubles. Although, yoga, a physical and mental discipline, is a spiritual practice, people accompany spiritual practice for different reasons; like prayer, faith, social support, community service, culture, tradition, friendship, commitment to the community and many more.

In recent years, psychologist showed their keen interest in the study of spiritual practice. Many studies have linked spirituality with health (Arcury, Quandt, Mc-Donald, & Bell, 2000; Contada et al., 2015). Interestingly enough studies demonstrate a close link between spiritual practice and happiness.

As we grow older, we naturally move deeper into the stages of our lives when spirituality becomes more and more essential and necessary. By age of 50 and beyond, most of us have had our fair share of suffering we have experience all the pains of a typical human life, we might begin turning to a more personalized spirituality and most of us do become more sage with age. Mc-Fadden (2005) shows that for many, but certainly not to all older people, religious beliefs and experience of the sacred contribute to life quality. It shows that spirituality provides a framework that guides individuals through painful events. There are a number of cross sectional studies that indicate many people turn to spirituality as a resource for dealing

with their pain (Ashby & Lenhart, 1994; Keefe & Dolon, 1986; Keefe et al., 1997; Rosenthal & Keefe, 1983). Spirituality is also a powerful coping mechanism providing elders with the ability to adapt to changing individual needs (Fargament & Cummings, 2010; Faigin & Fargament, 2010). This coping strategy help them to be happy in later life.

There are numbers of studies conducted on happiness in later life. Studies show that happiness is linked with better coping and lower morbidity (Fredrickson, 2001; Pressman & Cohen, 2005; Salovey et al., 2000). Older age is a time when happiness is particularly important, however, there is little evidence to support a link between aging and diminished happiness (Blazer, 2003). Numerous studies shows that there are no decline in average levels of happiness in old age (Baltes & Mayer, 1999; Brandtstaedter & Wentura, 1995; Cantril, 1999; Carstensen et al., 2000; Mroczek & Kolarz, 1998; Ryff, 1989; World values study group, 1994). Many studies reported that happiness increases with age after midlife (Cantril, 1999; Diener & Suh, 1997; Ryff, 1989; World values study group, 1994). This is supported by cross-sectional and longitudinal studies that happiness dips at middle age and then rises again after late 50s (Blachflower & Oswald, 2008-09; Change et al., 2014).

Modern psychology has focused primarily on a post materialistic view of happiness (Diener et al., 2002) that emphasizes pleasure, satisfaction and life meaning. Spirituality have positive association with well-being. Campbell (1981) suggested that well-being depends on the satisfaction of three basic kinds of needs: The need for having, the need for being; and the need of transcendence. The need of transcendence may be actual by adopting spiritual practice. Many studies showed that spirituality has a positive correlation with life satisfaction, happiness and higher morale. Gender differences have less assessed in the past reviews spiritual well-being literature. Kellans (1995) found that minor gender effects might be presents in the spiritual well-being; other literature examining gender and spiritual well being does not exist.

Above review clearly demonstrates that spiritual practice is a causal factor for happiness, however, it is not clear whether spiritual practices have similar impact on happiness in males and females or

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its effect is different in males and females. Then, the present research aimed at to examine the role of spiritual practices in happiness of elderly males and females. Objective and hypothesis in this regard were as under :

Objective of the study

To examine weather spiritual practice would enhance happiness among elderly and to examine whether spiritual practice have different roles for males and females.

Hypothesis of the study

- H1: There would be a significant positive role of spiritual practice in determining happiness among elderly.
- H2: There would be a significant role of gender in determining happiness among elderly.
- H3: There would be difference influence of spiritual practice on happiness in males and females.

Method

Participants

Total of 80 males and 80 females (age range ≥ 50) were selected from elderly population with the help of purposive sampling technique.

Instruments

Adhyatic Abhayas Mapani (Spiritual Practice Scale) developed by Choudhari and Singh (2018) were used to measure level of spiritual practice of the subjects. The scale consists of total 44 item of scale are in form of statements. There are five options to each statement, i.e., 1. Regularly, 2. Almost, 3. Seldom, 4. Very less and 5. Never. The respondent was to select one option to answer each statement. The positive items on the scale (i.e., nos. 1, 2, 7, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, 49, 51, 52) are scored as 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively for five options and reverse pattern of scoring is adopted for the negative items (i.e., Nos. 4, 13, 22, 33, 47, 53, 55, 58, 59). Higher the score on the scale is indicative of high spiritual practice level. The highest score is 220 and minimum score is 44. Reliability of this scale was

established by calculating Cronbach alpha methods. The internal consistency reliability of the scale was 0.77 and split half coefficient is 0.72.

Prasanna Mapani (Happiness Scale) developed by Choudhari and Singh (2018) were used to measure level of happiness of the subjects. The scale consists of total 25 item to be answered. There are five option to each statement, i.e., strongly agree, natural disagree, strongly disagree. The respondent has to select one option to answer each statement. The positive items on the scale i.e., nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 25, 27, 34, 35, 37, 39, 40, 41, 43, are scored as 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively for five option and reverse pattern of scoring is adopted for the negative items (i.e., nos. 16, & 26). Higher the score on the scale is indicative of high happiness level. The highest score is 125 and minimum score is 25. The test is highly reliable and valid, the Cronbach alpha is 0.84 are highly significant and split half coefficient is 0.77.

Statistical analysis

The present study based on a correlation research design. Data were analyzed by using multiple regression techniques with the help of SPSS 25th (Licensed) version.

Procedure

Subject was clearly explained about the purpose of the study. Agreed subjects were assured that whatever answer they were going to reveal would be kept confidential. After establishing proper rapport and making the subjects feel comfortable the tests were administered. The time taken to complete the questionnaire was about 45 minutes. It varied from subject to subject. After completion of the tests, the researcher expressed her deep sense of gratitude for the valuable cooperation of the subjects.

Results

To study the role of spiritual practice in determining happiness of elderly male and female, data were analysed by using multiple regression technique. Spiritual practice and gender as independent variables and happiness as outcome variable. Table 1, Present the model summary and coefficients in this regard.

Table 1 : Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F. Change
1	.095	.009	.003	17.827	.009	01.444	1	158	.231
2	.600	.360	.352	14.367	.351	86.252	1	157	.000

Model	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Significant
	b	Std. Error	β			
(Constant)	44.746	13.164	-		3.399	1.001
Gender	03.021	02.272	.085		1.330	0.186
Spiritual Practice	00.510	00.055	.593		9.287	0.000

a. Predictor (Constant), Gender
 b. Predictor (Constant), Gender, Spiritual Practice

In the regression model included gender and spiritual practice as predictor and the value of R^2 was .360 which is significant at .001 level and jointly explain the contribution of spiritual practice and gender to happiness. Furthermore, R^2 change is .351 which significantly explains the actual contribution of spiritual practice on happiness which is 35%. The β coefficient for spiritual practice is .593 which is significant ($t = 9.287, p < .001$). The coefficient for

gender $\beta = 0.085, t = 1.330, p > 0.05$ which is found not to be statistically significant.

To examine the difference in roles of spiritual practice in females and males, separate regression analyses were done. Obtained results are being presented as in tables 2 and 3 for female and males, respectively.

Table 2 : Effect of spiritual practice on happiness of females

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F. Change
1	.634*	.401	.394	13.711	.401	52.300	1	78	.000
Coefficients									
Model	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Significant			
	b	Std. Error	β						
(Constant)	33.360	18.865	-		1.768	.081			
Spiritual Practice	00.586	00.081	.634		7.232	.000			

a. Dependent Variable: Happiness

Table 2 indicates the spiritual practice is predictor of happiness of female, the value of $R^2 = .401$ which is significant at .001 level and explain 40.1% contribution of females spiritual practice on

happiness. It shows that spiritual practice determined 40% of happiness in female, β coefficient was .634, $t = 7.232, p < .001$.

Table 3 : Roll of spiritual practice in happiness among males

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F. Change
1	.569*	.323	.315	14.904	.323	37.293	1	78	.000
Coefficients									
Model	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Significant			
	b	Std. Error	β						
(Constant)	60.003	17.370			3.454	.001			
Spiritual Practice	00.456	00.075	.569		6.107	.000			

a. Dependent Variable: Happiness

Table 3 indicates the males spiritual practice is a significant predictor of happiness which explain 32% of variance of happiness of male ($\beta = .569, t = 6.107, p < .001$).

A close study of the results given in table 2 and 3 demonstrates that role of spiritual practice in determining happiness in females is higher than in males. Explained variance in females score is 40% while it is 32.3% in males.

Discussion

The findings show that there is no significant contribution of gender

on happiness. This is consistency with the previous research findings of Hyde (2005) and Kellums (1995) where they found minor gender effect of spiritual well-being. Findings clearly demonstration significant predict contribution of spiritual practice to happiness among elders. These finding supported many previous research finding for example Shah, Ramani, Gopal, Anju, and Mukhopadyyay (2017); Wirawan, Jufri, and Patak (2017); Sharma and Sharma (2016); Salim, Rajia, and Khan (2015); Kansal and Paliwal (2012); Wallace (2010). Study reported that spiritual practice was closely associated with happiness.

This finding is supported by a number of studies, spirituality and religion have positive association with well-being and general psychological function (Hase et al., 1992; Reed, 1986, Tanyi, 2002; & Saleem et al., 2015). Females use spiritual practice as a instrument, they are want to achieve something by their spiritual practice and they are more emotional attached with their family when they achieve these goals they become more happy on the other hand man do their spiritual practice like natural process. They don't consider much and therefore, their spiritual practice determine their happiness with relatively less extent.

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