

Religious Orientation and Psychological Capital as Predictors of Spiritual Well Being among University Students

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Abstract:

The purpose of the present research was to find out the relationship of Religious Orientation and Psychological Capital as predictors of Spiritual Well-being among university students. Sample of 200 university students were selected. The age range was 18-23 years. The random sampling was used for the data collection. Correlational design was used in the research. The data was analyzed using the multiple regression analysis. Result showed that Spiritual Well-being has positively related to Religious Orientation but there is no significant relation with Psychological Capital among university students. The relative contribution of Religious Orientation was found to be much remarkable as compared to Psychological Capital in determining Spiritual Well-being among university students.

Keywords: Religious Orientation, Spiritual Wellbeing and Psychological Capital.

I. INTRODUCTION

A religious (using the word as a noun) is, in the terminology of many Western Christian denominations, such as the Catholic Church, Lutheran Churches, and Anglican Communion, in common language one would call a "monk" or "nun".

More precisely, a religious is a member of a religious order or religious institute, someone who belongs to "a society in which members pronounce public vows and lead a life of brothers or sisters in common". A religious may also be ordained into the clergy, but ordination does not in itself define someone as a religious.

SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING

Spiritual well-being, a critical component of holistic health, encompasses a sense of purpose, inner peace, and connection to a higher power, nature, or community. It significantly impacts emotional stability, psychological resilience, and life satisfaction, guiding individuals through challenges with a sense of meaning. Central to spiritual well-being are personal beliefs, ethical values, and practices like mindfulness, meditation, and prayer, which enhance self-awareness, authenticity, and inner peace.

This research examines the interplay between religious orientation and psychological capital—comprising hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism—as predictors of spiritual well-being. By exploring these relationships, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how spiritual practices, belief systems, and psychological resources collectively shape well-being, fostering healthier lifestyles and greater emotional resilience.

RELIGIOUS ORIENTATION

Religious orientation reflects the motivations and attitudes individuals hold toward their faith, often categorized as intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic orientation involves engaging with faith for personal growth and meaning, while extrinsic orientation is linked to seeking social approval or external benefits. Research highlights that individuals with a strong intrinsic orientation often report higher levels of spiritual well-being, deriving deeper satisfaction from their beliefs and practices.

This orientation also significantly influences mental health outcomes, with strong religious commitments being associated with lower anxiety and depression levels, enhancing overall spiritual health. Additionally, religious communities foster a sense of belonging and support, further contributing to positive mental health and spiritual well-being. This interplay between religious orientation, mental health, and spiritual well-being underscores the importance of intrinsic faith engagement in promoting holistic health.

PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL

Defined as the positive psychological resources that individuals possess, encompassing four key components: **hope**, **optimism**, **self-efficacy**, and **resilience**. Research has consistently shown that high levels of psychological capital are associated with better mental health, greater life satisfaction, and improved coping strategies in the face of adversity. Each of these components plays a crucial role in fostering a positive outlook on life and navigating challenges effectively.

Hope: - It enables individuals to set and pursue meaningful goals, which can enhance their sense of purpose and fulfillment.

Optimism: - It promotes a positive mindset, allowing individuals to view challenges as opportunities rather than obstacles.

Self-efficacy: - It instills confidence in one's abilities, empowering individuals to take proactive steps toward achieving their goals.

Resilience: - Facilitates recovery from setbacks, further supporting a positive trajectory toward spiritual and psychological well-being.

Research shows that high levels of psychological capital are associated with greater life satisfaction, mental health, and effective coping strategies during adversity. This study examines how psychological capital not only influences well-being but also interacts with religious orientation in shaping spiritual well-being.

The relationship between religious orientation and psychological capital is a dynamic area of exploration in this study. Individuals with strong religious foundations may rely on their faith to strengthen their psychological resources, drawing on hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience from their spiritual beliefs and community support. Conversely, those with high psychological capital might be more receptive to spiritual experiences, enhancing their engagement with their beliefs and fostering spiritual growth. Understanding how these constructs influence each other can provide essential insights for promoting spiritual well-being and designing interventions that bolster both psychological and religious engagement. This research aims to investigate these relationships, exploring how religious orientation and psychological capital serve as predictors of spiritual well-being and contribute to holistic health. By examining these variables, the study seeks to offer a comprehensive framework for understanding how personal faith and positive psychological resources collectively enhance one's sense of purpose, emotional stability, and resilience in life.

RESEARCH METHOD

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out the relationship between religious orientation, psychological capital, and spiritual well-being among university students.
- To find out the relative contribution of religious orientation and psychological capital in determination of spiritual well-being.

HYPOTHESES

- Spiritual well-being would be positively related to religious orientation and psychological capital.
- Relative contribution of religious orientation would be much remarkable as compared to psychological capital in determination of spiritual well-being.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF THE TERMS

- 1) **Religious orientation:** - Religious orientation is a combination of both intrinsic orientation and extrinsic orientation. Intrinsic orientation refers to a mature form of religious sentiment that serves as a master motive and guide for one's way of life, while extrinsic orientation addresses the issue of immature faith that serves as a means of convenience for self-serving goals.
- 2) **Psychological capital:** - Psychological capital (PsyCap) is a positive psychological state comprised of four key components: self-efficacy (confidence in abilities), hope (the will and means to succeed), optimism (expectation of positive outcomes), and resilience (ability to recover from setbacks). Together, these elements enhance overall well-being and effectiveness, making PsyCap essential for improving individual and organizational performance.
- 3) **Spiritual well-being:** - The religious, "vertical" dimension (RWB focuses on how one perceives the well-being of his or her spiritual life as this is expressed in relation to God. The social psychological, "horizontal" dimension (EWB concerns how well the person is adjusted to self, community, and surrounding. This component involves the existential notions of life purpose, life satisfaction, and positive or negative life experience.

SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

A random sample of 200 university students were selected from Agra. Out of 200 students, 100 girls and 100 boys were selected. The age range is between 18 to 23 years.

DESIGN

In present research a correlational design was used to study the relationship among religious orientation, psychological capital, and spiritual well-being among university students.

VARIABLES

Predictor Variables

1. Religious orientation.
2. Psychological capital.

Criterion Variables

1. Spiritual well-being.

Control Variables

- 1) Age (18 to 23 years).
- 2) University students.

TOOLS USED

Religious Orientation Scale: - The Religious Orientation Scale-Revised (1/E-R) measures intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientations based on Allport's original framework, developed by Allport in 1989. Research shows that extrinsic orientation divides into personally oriented (Ep) and socially oriented (Es) categories, the scale was updated. This 14-item scale uses a 5-point response format and includes 8 items for intrinsic orientation and 6 items each for the two extrinsic types. Higher scores indicate higher levels of a religious orientation. Reliability of intrinsic dimension has Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.83$, extrinsic dimension has Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.65$.

Psychological Capital Scale: - The Psychological Capital (PsyCap) Scale by Luthans et al. (2007) is a reliable and valid tool measuring hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism (HERO). It demonstrates high reliability with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.88 to 0.94 and test-retest reliability exceeding 0.70. Validity is supported by strong construct, criterion-related, and content validity, with factor analyses confirming its four-factor structure. It contains 14 items to measure psychological capital.

Spiritual Well-Being Scale: - The Spiritual Well-Being (SWB) Scale developed by Paloutzian and Ellison (1982) measures the subjective quality of life through two dimensions: religious well-being (RWB) and existential well-being (EWB). It consists of 20 items—10 for each dimension—assessing overall spiritual well-being without focusing on theological aspects. RWB items include the term "God," while EWB items address life purpose and satisfaction. Each item uses a 6-point Likert scale, with successors ranging from 1 to 6. Higher scores indicate greater well-being, resulting in RWB and EWB scores from 10 to 60 and a total SWB score ranging from 20 to 120. The SWB Scale demonstrates strong validity through face validity. Test-retest reliability coefficients for four different samples with 1, 4, 6, and 10 weeks between testing's ranged from .88 to .99 for RWB, .73 to .98 for EWB, and .82 to .99 for SWB.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data was analyzed by using the Multiple Regression Analysis and formed to estimate the relative contribution of each predictor variables (religious orientation, psychological capital) in the prediction of criterion variable (spiritual well-being).

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The main aim of analysis and interpretation is to find sense to the raw data collected, test the hypotheses, and draw inference with the help of statistics. The present study aimed to examine the religious orientation and psychological capital as predictors of spiritual well-being among university students. The raw scores obtained from the three scales were analyzed with multiple regression analysis.

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation was computed to test the hypotheses. Table 4.1 shows the Correlation Matrix with the coefficient of correlation (r), which exposes the inter-correlation among the variables- religious orientation, psychological capital, and spiritual well-being.

TABLE 1: CORRELATION MATRIX

Variables	M	SD	SW	RO	PC
SW	67.25	11.34	1		
RO	70.88	13.57	0.67**	1	
PC	23.34	3.66	-0.08	0.005	1

**p < 0.01

Relationship of Religious Orientation, Psychological Capital, and Spiritual Well-being

The matrix of coefficient of correlation (Table – 1) reveals a positive and significant correlation between religious orientation and spiritual well-being ($r=0.67$). This indicates that an increase in the scores of religious orientations tends to increase the scores of spiritual well-being. This means religious orientation can lead to increased spiritual well-being in an individual.

A matrix of coefficient of correlation reveals a negative and non-significant correlation between psychological capital and spiritual well-being ($r=-0.087$). This value is non-significant or negligible. This indicates that the correlation of psychological capital is just because of chance factors.

- The hypothesis No.1 that **spiritual well-being would be positively related to religious orientation and psychological capital** is partially accepted. As correlation between religious orientation and spiritual well-being is significant and correlation between psychological capital and spiritual well-being is non-significant.

Relative Contribution of Religious Orientation is much remarkable as compared to Psychological Capital (Regression Analysis)

For carrying out multiple regression analysis religious orientation was taken as significant predictor along with psychological capital. For carrying out multiple regression analysis, a correlation matrix was formed (Table – 1). It includes inter-correlations among all predictors and the criterion variable.

Table 2: Summary Of Regression Analysis

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.675	0.456	0.451	8.41

a. Predictors: (Constant), PC, ROI

TABLE 3: ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE (ANOVA)

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	11689.803	2	5844.902	82.64**	0.01
Residual	13937.697	197	70.750		
Total	25627.500	199			

a. Predictors: (Constant), PC, ROI

**p < 0.01

b. Dependent Variable: SW

TABLE 4: TABLE OF COEFFICIENTS

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Coefficient of Determination (R ²)	t	Sig.
	b	Std. Error	Beta			
Constant	33.891	4.934			6.870	.000
ROI	0.560	0.044	0.670	0.448	12.754**	0.000
PC	-0.272	0.163	-0.088	0.001	1.669	0.097

a. Dependent Variable: SW

**p<0.01

Regression Equation:

$$Y = a + b_1 \cdot x_1 + b_2 \cdot x_2$$

$$Y = 33.891 + (0.560 \cdot 70.8850) + (-0.272 \cdot 23.345)$$

$$= 33.891 + (39.6956) + (-6.34984)$$

$$= 33.891 + 39.6956 - 6.34984$$

$$= 73.5866 - 6.3498$$

$$= 67.24$$

The above table (2) shows the results of multiple regression analysis when total spiritual well-being was taken as dependent variable. To see the strength of relationship between dependent variable and several independent variables, coefficient of multiple correlation was computed. The value of multiple R of 0.675 (F (2, 197) = 82.64, p<0.01) was found. The value of multiple R² of 0.45 indicated that 45% of the variance in spiritual well-being is to be accounted for by these variables, In the table the value of Adjusted R square was found to be 0.451 which indicated that 45% variance in spiritual well-being is to be explained by the combined predictor variables. The individual contribution of religious orientation scores were found to be 44% which is a worth nothing finding that the association between spiritual well-being and religious orientation is positive. Thus, increase in religious orientation scores increase the spiritual well-being scores of the subjects. Moreover, 1% variance out of 45% variance in spiritual well-being is to be explained due to psychological capital.

The contribution of religious orientation was highest than the other predictor variable on spiritual well-being i.e., 44% variance in spiritual well-being was due to religious orientation. Whereas psychological capital was not found to be a significant predictor of spiritual well-being.

The regression equation indicates that one unit increase in religious orientation, the predicted value of spiritual well-being increases by 0.56 units.

A one unit increase in psychological capital is associated with a 0.272 unit decrease in spiritual well-being.

Findings and Discussions

The findings of the present study are based on the hypotheses to be undertaken are as follows:

1. Spiritual well-being has positively related to religious orientation but there is no significant positive relation with psychological capital among university students.
2. The relative contribution of religious orientation was found to be much more remarkable as compared to psychological capital in determining Spiritual well-being among university students.

Relation of Religious Orientation and Psychological Capital with Spiritual Well-being

- The results show a positive and significant correlation ($r=0.67$) between religious orientation and spiritual well-being, indicating that individuals with a stronger religious orientation tend to have higher levels of spiritual well-being.
- This result was supported with studies by **Mahalik and Lagan (2001)** and **Parviniannasab, Bijani, and Dehghani (2022)**, which found that religiosity can positively impact spiritual well-being and mental health. Some research demonstrated that spirituality is strongly associated with positive psychological outcomes, including spiritual well-being, among elderly individuals.

This study observed a non-significant correlation between psychological capital and spiritual well-being, suggesting that PsyCap does not strongly influence spiritual well-being in this sample.

- This contrasts with studies such as those by **Parviniannasab et al. (2022)**, which found that PsyCap positively influences mental health and spiritual well-being. However, the results may indicate that the relationship between PsyCap and spiritual well-being is context-specific or could be more pronounced in populations with life demands, such as nursing students or those facing significant challenges.

Regression Analysis: Contribution of Religious Orientation and Psychological Capital to Spiritual Well-being

- Through regression analysis, found that religious orientation contributed 44% of the variance in spiritual well-being, while PsyCap accounted for a negligible amount (1%). This further emphasizes the stronger role of religious orientation over PsyCap in predicting spiritual well-being in this sample.
- This finding is supported by **Miner's (2009)** work on attachment to God and religious orientation reflects this point; it shows that religious frameworks offer a unique support system, especially when intrinsic religious beliefs align with an individual's spiritual values.

Conclusion

Overall, the findings of this study underscore the strong impact of religious orientation on spiritual well-being, supporting previous research on the unique role of religiosity and its intrinsic value for personal well-being. However, PsyCap may require context-specific activation (e.g., in high-stress environments) to show a significant effect on spiritual well-being, as seen in the studies by Parviniannasab et al. (2022). These results suggest that interventions aimed at enhancing spiritual well-being may benefit from focusing more on fostering meaningful religious orientation rather than general psychological capital. Emphasizing intrinsic religious practices or beliefs that align with individuals' values may help improve spiritual well-being more effectively than developing general psychological strengths.

Implications

This study provides valuable insights for enhancing spiritual well-being among university students. Since religious orientation emerged as a significant predictor of spiritual well-being, educational institutions and mental health practitioners might consider integrating spiritually supportive programs to foster a stronger sense of purpose and belonging. These could include workshops focused on spiritual growth, personal belief exploration, and community support initiatives. Recognizing the limited role of psychological

capital (PsyCap) in this context, it suggests that PsyCap alone may not be as impactful on spiritual well-being without a strong religious or value-based framework. However, adding elements of PsyCap to spiritual well-being programs, such as promoting resilience and hope, could still benefit overall student wellness.

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