

6th World conference on Psychology Counseling and Guidance, 14 - 16 May 2015

Predictability of Students' Resiliency by Their Spirituality

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Abstract

Background: Students' resiliency against educational challenges may be related to their spirituality. Objective: This study intended to examine the relationship between resiliency and spirituality and predict students' resiliency using their spirituality components. Method: The population is comprised of all male and female undergraduates and graduates who were studying in three universities of Tehran, Iran (2010-2011). There were 200 subjects: 100 males and 100 females (aged 18-27) studying at Al-Zahra University, Allameh Tabataba'i University, and Shahid Beheshti University, randomly selected. Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (2003) and Parsian and Donning Spirituality Scale (2009) were recruited. Results: The findings revealed a positive significant correlation between resiliency and spirituality components. Regression results indicated that students' spirituality can be a reliable predictor of their resiliency. Conclusion: Students with higher levels of spirituality show greater resiliency.

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Peer-review under responsibility of Academic World Research and Education Center.

Keywords: Resiliency; Self –consciousness; Spiritual beliefs; Spiritual activities; Spiritual needs.

1. Introduction

World Health Organization (WHO) has defined man as a biological, psychological, social and spiritual entity. Spirituality is personal beliefs and practices influenced by the relationship with God or a supreme power in the universe (Mason, Singleton, & Webber, 2007). Since a spiritual history can be a source of emotional support besides

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being a means of positive interpreting life events, it may facilitate the coming coping styles. So, its application can bring about health. Researchers stress that increased levels of meaning and spirituality in life not only helps overcome adversity, but also provides satisfaction with life (Khodabakhshi-Koulaei, Heidari, Khoshkonesh, & Heidari, 2014). Glover, Marini and Buck (2007) found that what allows an individual to obtain a better mental ability and fortitude to bear pain in life is seeking meaning, perceiving life phenomena, having psychological strength and a firm desire for higher grades in life. Arc and colleagues (2009) indicated that individuals with high resiliency tend to show positive emotions in the face of events of emotional, neutral or unknown nature. They believe this may be due to an individual's ability to successfully cope with difficult conditions, especially those of an interpersonal nature. Letzring, Block and Founder (2005) believe that resiliency is the ability to adapt level of control according to environmental conditions.

Individuals with good resiliency are remedial and flexible; they adapt to environmental changes and quickly return to recovery mode after the disappearance of stressors. Those with the lowest levels of resiliency slightly and hardly adapt themselves to new conditions. Such individuals slowly recover from stressful conditions to normal ones (McAllister & MacKinnon, 2009). According to Friberg and colleagues (2005), resilient individuals enjoy greater flexibility in the face of traumatic conditions and protect themselves against such conditions. With an aim to examine the prediction of resiliency by spirituality, this study was conducted on a sample of BA and MA students of Al-Zahra University, Allameh Tabataba'i University, and Shahid Beheshti University. The study hypothesis was that the students with more spiritual components enjoy greater resiliency.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The population is comprised of all male and female undergraduates and graduates who were studying in three universities of Tehran, Iran (2010-2011). There were 200 subjects: 100 males and 100 females (aged 18-27) studying at Al-Zahra University, Allameh Tabataba'i University, and Shahid Beheshti University. The subjects were randomly selected. This study is a correlational research.

2.2. Measuring Instruments

Parsian and Donning Spirituality Scale (2009): The scale is composed of 29 items and respondents are asked to rate each item on a four-point Likert-type rating scale. Parsian and Dunning has reported the internal consistency for the total scale and the subscales (self-consciousness, importance of spiritual beliefs in life, spiritual activities and spiritual needs) respectively, 0.94, 0.91, 0.91, 0.80 and 0.89. No significant difference was indicated between the scores of the first and second phases by the results of test-retest in a 10-week period which shows suitable reliability for the scale. For this study, Cronbach's α coefficient was 0.76 for the total scale.

Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) (2003): The original CD-RISC is an instrument comprised of 25 self-rated items (Connor & Davidson, 2003). Each item is rated on a five point frequency response ranging from 0 (not at all true) to 4 (true nearly all of the time). The total score range is between 0 and 100. Higher scores correspond to greater resilience. The CD-RISC currently exists in a 25 item version as well as 10 and 2 item versions. Connor and Davidson generated the scale after a broad-range search of resilience literature (1979-1991). Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the scale has been reported 0.93. The CD-RISC has been used and validated across various groups. The scale was standardized in Iran by Mohammadi (2005). Mohammadi in a study on 718 male subjects (18-25 years), implementing CD-RISC on normal and consumer groups, reported 0.89 for the scale reliability coefficient by Cronbach's α (Khodabakhshi-Koulaei, et al., 2014).

2.3. Implementation Method

This study was conducted within 3 months on students from three universities in Tehran, Iran. The universities were randomly selected. Interested students were asked to participate in the study voluntarily. To encourage students' participation, they were told that they could receive their test results. Moreover, they were assured that

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