

SPIRITUALITY, FAMILY SUPPORT AND FLOURISHING WELLBEING IN WORKING ADULTS

Jaweria Afzal¹, Dr. Mahira Ahmad^{*2}, Zaeema Farooq³

¹Department of Humanities, COMSATS University Islamabad, Lahore Campus,

^{*2}Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities, COMSATS University Islamabad, Lahore Campus,

³Lecture, Department of Humanities, COMSATS University Islamabad, Lahore Campus.

¹jaweriaafzal449@gmail.com, ^{*2}mahira.ahmad@cuilahore.edu.pk, ³zaemafarooq@cuilahore.edu.pk

Corresponding Author: *

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to establish the link between spirituality and flourishing well-being in working adults. Additionally, the study also aimed to investigate the moderating role of family support in the association between spirituality and flourishing well-being. To assess the objectives of the research, a correlation research design was utilized. A sample size of 247 (116 males & 131 females) university working personnel with their age ranged 30-45 years (M= 34.82, SD= 4.994) were assessed. To assess the variables self-report measures of The Daily Spiritual Experiences Scale, Flourishing wellbeing Scale, and Perceived Social Support-Family Scale were implemented. Pearson correlation analysis showed that there is a statistically significant correlation between spirituality and flourishing well-being. Moreover, the moderation analysis revealed that family support acts as a potential moderator between the relationship of spirituality and flourishing well-being. The findings of the research not only fill the gap in the existing literature in the field but also have practical implications for clinical practices, research, education, and policymaking. The paper suggests some recommendations for future researchers in this field and practical approaches that are effective in assisting these working personnel to work on their well-being.

Keywords: spirituality, family support, flourishing wellbeing, working adults

INTRODUCTION

In the era of materialism where people are running after worldly life, the search for spirituality has become an integral part of finding inner peace. It is important to incorporate the quest of spirituality in lives, even if one is hopeless and has developed the sense of despair. Everyone wants peace and strives to find meaning and a sense of purpose in their lives; the search for spirituality is what helps people find the direction and meaning to find peace and fulfillment in life. Spirituality is a broad concept. This term describes the idea that covers one's search for a connection with the transcendent, encompasses an individual's religious values and beliefs, and sense of purpose in life (Westera, 2017).

As Pakistan is a Muslim country, spirituality is often associated with religion. It is crucial to address that there exists a difference between spiritual

experiences and religious practices. It is a country where the spiritual influence on the life of an individual can still be explored in-depth. In Pakistan, spirituality is rooted at the base of society, and its effect on individual life makes for more worthy study. Faced with rapid urbanization, technological change, and globalization, it is important to understand the role of spirituality in promoting the flourishing well-being of the workforce in Pakistan. Because it is aimed at understanding the nature of the connection between spirituality and a flourishing life for working personnel, its significance lies more in trying to gain an idea of what spiritualistic implications exist in both daily life and within work itself.

The relationship between spirituality and flourishing well-being is a fascinating area of research that

encompasses psychology, sociology, and spiritual studies. Despite all the cultural and individual differences and varying research approaches, some consistent themes have emerged. Spirituality enriches people with a profound sense of purpose and meaning in life (Ryff, 2014). It helps them to understand their place in this world and contributes to highlighting their sense of fulfillment (Ryff & Singer, 2008). Research has found that when people engage themselves in spiritual practice, such as prayer, and meditation, it leads to enhanced emotional well-being, deeper inner peace, contentment, and joy in life as well as decreased levels of stress and anxiety (Butler & Kern, 2016). Abundant research also suggests that spirituality is a source of comfort and strength during tough times (Howell et al., 2011). It enhances coping mechanisms and makes people resilient and capable enough to navigate life challenges with greater optimism (Chalofsky, 2003). The spiritual values that are developed and refined by practicing spirituality in daily life emphasize love, kindness, and compassion for self and others, thus leading to more positive and nurturing relationships. These connections create positive influences that are essential in the promotion of overall well-being and life satisfaction. (Cerimar et al., 2021). Moreover, the impact of spirituality extends beyond personal being into the professional domain as well. Integrating spirituality into work life tends to elevate job satisfaction and engagement, nurturing flourishing well-being across various aspects of people's lives (Tischler et al., 2002).

The theoretical framework of the study drew upon William James' work, "The Varieties of Religious Experience," to understand the association between spirituality and well-being. He introduced the concept that religious and spiritual experiences are diverse and can widely vary among individuals. This identified mystical and transcendent experiences as well as everyday forms of religious and spiritual experience. These religious and spiritual experiences can affect psychologically and mentally an individual deeply, but the work also pinpointed their prominent social impact. The exploration of how these spiritual experiences contribute to the sense of purpose, meaning, and fulfillment in life serves as the foundation for understanding the potential positive impact on wellbeing (James, 2013)

This study will fill the gap in the existing literature by analyzing the in-depth relationship between spirituality and flourishing well-being among the working population of Pakistan. Though many researchers have acknowledged the positive association between spirituality and well-being, only a few studies have investigated this relationship in the Pakistani context (Aslam et al., 2020). So, this research study aimed to expand the existing body of knowledge on spirituality and its impact on the well-being of employed adults in Pakistan.

Furthermore, the current research aimed at acknowledging the potential moderating impact of family support on the association between spirituality and well-being. In Pakistani society, the family holds a central position and has a major influence on an individual's thoughts, principles, and overall personality. Previous studies have highlighted that family support is a pillar of strength that promotes emotional well-being, personal growth, and social connectedness all of which contribute to a fulfilling and flourishing life (Lu et al., 2006). The study could contribute to revealing complex dynamics between spirituality, flourishing well-being and family support, offering insight into the ways in which family support can promote or hinder the positive impact of spirituality on well-being.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Hypotheses formulation

With the growing emphasis on finding inner peace, researchers are turning their focus more on exploring various aspects of positive psychology. The association between spirituality and flourishing well-being serves as a fundamental aspect of the human experience. Numerous studies have unveiled the positive associations between spirituality and various dimensions of well-being. Many researchers have demonstrated that individuals who incorporate spirituality into their lives often report heightened levels of purpose and meaning, greater life satisfaction, and enhanced overall well-being. A study discovered a positive relationship between daily spiritual experiences and psychological well-being, suggesting that individuals reporting more frequent spiritual encounters also reported elevated levels of flourishing (Marcin, 2021). Similarly, another study explored the relationship between

spirituality and two crucial dimensions of flourishing well-being i.e. quality of life (QOL) and psychological well-being (PWB). The results indicated a significant association between spirituality and QOL, encompassing three of its domains, among both religious and non-religious individuals (Saleem, 2017).

Additionally, when it comes to the factors that contribute to human flourishing and well-being, one of the things that surface most often is the importance of a family support system. The family system, the foundation of social relationships, unparalleled influences people's emotional bonding and general quality of life. This section includes the significant connection between family relations and achieving a happy life in its variety, through complete surveys and theoretical exchanges as well as systematic research. This has also been demonstrated in literature. For instance, one of the previous research examined the association between family harmony and different aspects of wellbeing such as happiness, flourishing and harmony in life. The results showed a strong association between family harmony and these variables. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that an increase in family harmony significantly impacts happiness and harmony in life. Importantly, this was associated with increased flourishing well-being (Demirci, 2021).

Based on the above-mentioned empirical evidence, these hypotheses were developed:

H1: there will be a significant positive association between spirituality and flourishing well-being.

In today's world people search for love, peace, and understanding despite material prosperity, technical and scientific advancement, etc. Spirituality is a missing dimension of life but is an integral part of physical, emotional, and mental well-being (Nadi and Sajjadian, 2011). It has significant positive effects on people's lives (Kent et al., 2021). It does not only give peace, freedom, and happiness but also treats stress, anxiety, and depression. Moreover, it helps in building healthy relationships, enhancing personal values, and maintaining a better work-life balance (Pawar, 2016). Spirituality enables people to understand the significance of personal values, allocating time for solitude, attaining inner peace, achieving job fulfillment, upholding an active lifestyle, managing life's equilibrium and control, enhancing health and longevity, fostering an

enduring spiritual community, and better connections with others (Zhou & Kwok, 2021). All these factors contribute to the flourishing well-being of an individual. Previous research has also highlighted the positive association between spirituality and flourishing well-being. One of the important studies explored the association among spirituality, religion, and subjective well-being, across different national cultures. The study found that measures of spirituality and religion are positively associated with subjective well-being, except for spiritual practice across national cultures. Many measures of spirituality and religion were found to be positively associated with life satisfaction and contentment (Sergio et al., 2022)

Keeping in view of the above literature discussion, this hypothesis was formulated.

H2: age is positively associated with high spirituality and flourishing well-being.

Age has a positive significant correlation with spirituality and flourishing well-being. Multiple previous studies have revealed a moderate to strong positive association between age and spirituality (Alexander et al., 1990; Zimmer et al., 2016). In addition, another study has discovered that life satisfaction for older adults exceeds that of the younger generation (Becker & Getstorf, 2008). The research likewise indicated that the older people grew, the more positive and balanced their perspectives on life became, thereby contributing to increased well-being. It indicates that there are several factors behind this such as life experience, accumulated wisdom, and so on that can all contribute to gaining a better insight into oneself and one's environment. A better understanding of the spiritual aspects of life usually is arrived at following this greater knowledge and awareness, which in turn engenders greater meaning and a sense of purpose, both necessary for the perfect conditions for well-being to have taken form. Furthermore, the formation of beliefs becomes distinctly clear as people grow older. Or perhaps materialistic interests will be replaced by other things more related to the self, such as spiritual questing. This reevaluation of human values represents greater levels of contentment and a shift towards eternal sources of satisfaction. Moreover, old people are turning to spirituality more and more as a means by which to survive in their old age when they must deal with problems of illness or

death. When the self needs strength and refuge from conditions such as these, spirituality can help maintain one's overall health. Thus, based on the above empirical discussion, the following hypothesis was developed.

H3: there will be a significant difference in spirituality, flourishing well-being, and family support in working personnel, with respect to their gender.

It is crucial to explore gender differences, especially when working with the workforce population to get a comprehensive understanding. Only in a few research, did male participants score more on wellbeing and spirituality, while the majority of the literature suggested that female participants usually scored higher. Research investigated the gender differences in spirituality and well-being among adults. The results revealed that females scored higher in spirituality and well-being compared to males. It also suggested that females, on average, reported a higher sense of spiritual connection and fulfillment (Cotton et al., 2006). Thus, based on the above empirical literature discussion, the following hypothesis was assumed.

H4: family support would moderate the relationship between spirituality and flourishing well-being.

Family support acts as a necessary factor when there comes a need to improve the well-being of people. The working personnel, especially, need more family support in order to function properly in their personal and professional life. This concept that has greatly interested scholars also offers several benefits to both the individual and society, is flourishing well-being whether manifested as hedonic well-being or eudemonic well-being. Many researchers have highlighted the importance of family support, either emotional or financial, in the life of an individual. The relationships between social support provided by family and friends and well-being of old Africans present in America were assessed in previous research. The research focused on these key aspects of well-being that is happiness, life satisfaction, and self-esteem. This study revealed significant associations between various forms of social support and well-being among individuals aged 65 and older. Notably, increased family contact was associated with greater life satisfaction. Subjective family closeness was positively associated with increased life satisfaction and happiness. They also found that

subjective closeness to friends and family interaction is related to a higher degree of happiness as well as self-esteem. These findings highlight the unique contributions of family and friend relationships to the well-being of older adults (Nguyen et al., 2016). Family support has not been explored as a potential moderator between spirituality and flourishing well-being previously, but it has played a moderating role in the relationship with other variables (Liu et al., 2015). So, in the present study, family support was assumed to have a moderating pathway in the relationship between these two variables.

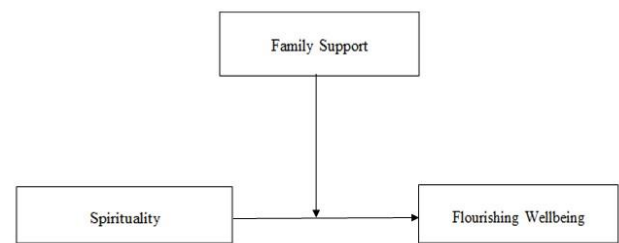


Figure no.1: Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

Participants: A correlational research design was used in this study to find out the association between spirituality, flourishing well-being, and family support. The sample comprised university teachers (N=247) age ranged 30 to 45 years (M =35.2, SD =6.4). In order to collect the data from university teachers (public and private sector), a convenient sampling technique was used.

Procedure

First of all, permission for conducting research was obtained from the ethical committee at COMSATS University. The scales for the research were selected and permissions were taken from the authors. After this, the consent form was constructed, and the relevant demographic characteristics were added to it. Then, the permission letter for the data collection was approved by the head of the department. Finally, after all this, the participants were approached and provided with informed consent. The participants voluntarily participated in the research. The researcher ensured them to maintain their confidentiality. After the introduction and informed consent form, participants were provided with the demographic sheet and then they were asked to fill out the daily spiritual experience scale, perceived social support-family scale, and the flourishing

wellbeing scale. They then responded to the measures. In the end, the researcher appreciated the participants for their time. Then SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) was utilized to analyze the collected data (SPSS; V. 21).

Measures

The Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES) developed by (Underwood, 2003) was used to measure spirituality. The scale comprised of 16 items (first fifteen items are rated on a 6-point Likert Scale, while the 16th item measured on a 4- point Likert scale). The reliability analysis reported a Cronbach's Alpha value of DSES to be more than 0.9, suggesting strong reliability. Then an 8-item Flourishing well-being scale (FS) developed by (Diener, 2009) was used to measure flourishing well-being. The Cronbach's Alpha value of the Flourishing Scale has been reported to range from 0.85 to 0.91 across

numerous studies (Diener et al., 2010; Hone et al., 2014; Seligson et al., 2013). Then, a 20-item Perceived Social Support – Family Scale (PSS-Fa) developed by (Prcoidano & Heller, 1983) was utilized to measure the family support. The scale is valid and reliable, as Cronbach's alpha value was recorded to be .89.

ANALYSIS

The Table 1 indicates the demographic characteristics of the individuals participating in the study, encompassing details of age, gender, education, employment institute, employment experience, and family system, number of family members, marital status, and number of children. Mean and standard deviation were calculated for continuous variables while frequencies and percentage were reported for categorical variables.

Table No. 1

Demographic Profile of participants.

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
Age	34.82	4.994		
Gender				
Male			116	47.0
Female			131	53.0
Education				
PhD			68	27.2
Master/M.Phil.			179	72.5
Employment Institute				
Government			96	38.9
Private			151	61.1
Employment Experience				
Below 5 years			97	39.3
5 years or above			150	60.7
Family System				
Nuclear			140	56.7
Joint			107	43.3
Number of Family members				
2-4			71	28.74
5-7			119	48.18
8-10			37	14.18
11-13			14	5.67

14-16	6	2.43
Marital Status		
Single	98	39.7
Married	149	60.3
Number of Children		
0	121	49.0
1-2	82	33.20
3-4	39	15.78
5-6	5	2.02

Reliability

The Table 2 represents the reliability analysis, according to which all scales showed good reliability

which is above 0.6. Alpha values ranged from .6 to .9 seems to be acceptable according to the criterion for judging alpha (Streiner, 2018)

Table No. 2
Reliability Coefficients

Study variables	K	α	M	SD	Range
Spirituality	16	0.90	80.26	11.11	26-96
Flourishing wellbeing	8	0.89	45.54	7.40	14-56
Family Support	20	0.86	13.83	4.71	2-20

Note. k= no. of items, α = Cronbach’s alpha, M = mean, SD = standard deviation

Correlation

The association between the study variables and one of the demographic variables, i.e., age, was examined through Pearson correlation analysis. It was hypothesized that there will be a significant correlation between spirituality, flourishing wellbeing, and family support. Table 3 showed that spirituality is positively correlated to the flourishing

wellbeing as well as the relationship between flourishing wellbeing and family support is also positive. Hence, the hypothesis was approved. Moreover, the table also shows that spirituality and flourishing wellbeing is also positively associated with age, which indicates that spirituality and flourishing wellbeing increases as the person grows older.

Table No.3

Person Correlation Analysis

	1	2	3	4
1. Age	–	.129*	.149*	.078
2. Spirituality	–	–	.560**	.429**
3. Flourishing wellbeing	–	–	–	.501**
4. Family Support	–	–	–	–

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

Independent Sample T- test

Independent sample t-test was run on SPSS to examine the gender difference between the study variables. Table 4 showed that there is a statistically significant difference in spirituality of male and female participants. The female participants showed higher level of spirituality as compared to male participants. The effect size is moderate, indicating a meaningful difference. Similarly, there is also a

significant difference in flourishing wellbeing between male and female participants. The female participants have high flourishing wellbeing than male participants. The effect size is small to moderate indicating a relatively less difference compared to spirituality. However, in case of family support there is no significant difference between male and female participants. The effect size is small suggesting a negligible difference.

Table No. 4
Mean Differences between male and female participants.

	Male (n = 116)		Female (n = 131)		t(df)	p	Cohens d
	M	SD	M	SD			
Spirituality	77.28	13.26	82.90	7.94	-4.08 (245)	0.00	0.513.
Flourishing Wellbeing	44.34	7.99	46.60	6.69	-2.41(245)	0.01	0.306.
Family Support	13.41	4.61	14.20	4.77	-1.32(245)	0.18	0.168

Moderation

Table 5 presents the results of moderation analysis to examine the moderating pathway of family support in the association between variables i.e. spirituality and flourishing wellbeing. Overall, the model explained 40.7% variance in the flourishing wellbeing, $F(3) = 55.70, p > .000$. The spirituality in block 1 explained 31.3% of variance in the flourishing wellbeing, $F(1) = 111.72, p > .000$. This shows that spirituality significantly predicts flourishing wellbeing. When family support was added in block 2, the model explained 8.4% of

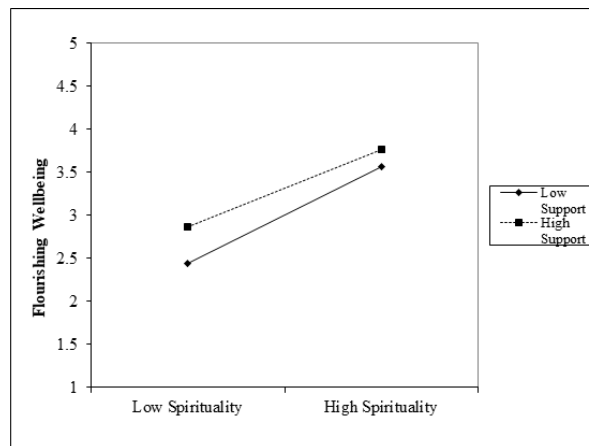
variance in the flourishing wellbeing, $F \text{ change}(1, 244) = 33.90, p > .000$. This indicates that family support positively predicts flourishing wellbeing as well. When interaction (the product of spirituality and family support) was added in the block 3, the model explained 1% of variance in the flourishing wellbeing, $F \text{ change}(1, 243) = 4.304, p > .039$. In block 3, the interaction term also significantly predicts the flourishing wellbeing. As the interaction term is significant, it proves that family support acts as a significant moderator between spirituality and flourishing wellbeing.

Table No. 5
The coefficients of moderation analysis

Variables	B	95% CI for B		SE B	β	R ²	ΔR^2
		LL	UL				
Model 1						.313	.313
Constant	45.422***	44.651	46.193	.391			
Spirituality	4.274***	3.477	5.070	.404	.560***		

Model 2					.397	.084
Constant	45.402***	44.678	46.126	.368		
Spirituality	3.225***	2.397	4.052	.420	.422***	
Family Support	2.409***	1.594	3.224	.414	.320***	
Model 3					.407	.010
Constant	45.705***	44.930	46.479	.393		
Spirituality	2.923***	2.052	3.794	.442	.383***	
Family Support	2.281***	1.462	3.099	.416	.303***	
Interaction	-.713**	-1.390	-.036	.344	-.114**	

Figure no. 2
 Interaction plots between spirituality and flourishing wellbeing.



The Flourishing wellbeing was higher for low spirituality when there was high family support in comparison with low family support. In addition, in high spirituality, the flourishing wellbeing was higher when family support was greater than low family support. It shows that higher family support contributes to higher flourishing wellbeing in both levels of spirituality. Despite the fact that the statistical analysis shows a negative moderation effect, the graphical plots showed that family support is essential for enhancing flourishing well-being. This gives further evidence that family support has a uniformly positive effect, on both the high and low level of spirituality.

DISCUSSION

The primary aim of this study was to investigate the link between spirituality and flourishing well-being, as well as the mediating effect family support had on their relationship. This study developed the hypotheses from the William James works. The data were collected through purposive and convenience sampling techniques from the university teachers of Lahore, Pakistan. The results confirmed the study's assumptions by getting a significant positive impact of spirituality on flourishing well-being. The findings of the research are also supported by previous research as well. A study explored the

importance of spirituality in promoting the well-being of older adults, and the results showed that spirituality significantly promotes the well-being of older adults (Janet and Parker, 2007). These studies have highlighted that spiritual knowledge enables an individual to have a clear and defined vision, make accurate and quick judgments, and feel at peace, and all of these save energy and positivity in the individual, thus enhancing well-being. Moreover, spirituality also enables an individual to stabilize in the true nature of their self and thereby, to experience a deeper level of peace. All of this contributes to the flourishing well-being of an individual.

Moreover, the discovery of a significant moderating effect of family support on the relationship between spirituality and flourishing well-being provides valuable insight into how family support contributes to the well-being of working personnel. The results of the present study suggest a significant moderation between spirituality and family support in relation to flourishing well-being, but the moderation was found to be negative. Previous studies frequently highlight the positive effect of spirituality on psychological outcomes. However, the multifaceted role of family support in this relationship has not been explored extensively. However, in previous studies, family support has been explored as a moderator in the relationship of different variables. Previously, the role of family support as a moderator between workplace stress and psychological well-being was examined in one study that found it to be significantly significant for buffering negative consequences stemming from workplace stress leading to mental health outcome (Liu et al., 2015). The reason behind the negative moderating role of family support might be that individuals with low levels of spirituality rely more on external support such as family support to help themselves cope with life stressors. Meanwhile, individuals of high spirituality tend to have their own internal ability to deal with stressors based on their own set of beliefs and therefore lack dependence upon support from outside. That in turn is why higher levels of family support are connected to high levels of flourishing wellbeing, whether low or high level of spirituality.

CONTRIBUTIONS

The study gives valuable insights into the dynamic relationship between spirituality, family support, and

flourishing well-being within the specific cultural and religious context of Pakistan. This knowledge is highly beneficial for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers who aim to create interventions specifically designed to address the cultural complexities of the working personnel. In view of the diversity of cultures in Pakistan, mental health practitioners should employ culturally responsive strategies that acknowledge the importance of family support and spirituality in fostering well-being. Customized treatment approaches have the potential to improve mental health outcomes among individuals in Pakistan. The study also advocates for additional investigation in varied ethnic and religious settings. This consequence emphasizes the necessity of a more extensive comprehension of the interplay between spirituality, familial support, and well-being among diverse communities, thereby enhancing the depth and breadth of our knowledge. Additionally, the study's findings can provide valuable information for the creation of proactive mental health interventions that focus on improving family support. Implementing proactive strategies to enhance familial bonds can help prevent mental health issues and foster overall well-being among employees.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Despite being a valuable addition to existing literature, this study also has its own limitations. Firstly, as spirituality is a highly personal experience, people were reluctant to participate in the research and it was hard to collect the data. Secondly, the findings of the research are limited to the contextual and cultural context of Pakistan. As Pakistan is a Muslim country it might have introduced cultural and religious bias, thus potentially limiting the generalizability of the results to a more diverse or non-Muslim population. In Pakistan, people usually relate spirituality with religion which might also limit the inclusivity of the study. Thirdly, participants exhibited social desirability bias by conforming their responses to societal norms, which raises questions regarding the reliability of self-reported measures of spirituality and the possibility of distorted findings. For future research, it is important to address all these limitations for a more comprehensive understanding.

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