

Religiosity as Predictor of Life Satisfaction among School Teachers

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Abstract:

The present study was conducted to find out the association between life satisfaction and religiosity among school teachers. Life satisfaction can be defined as cognitive and affective assessments of life. Religiosity refers to as the state of one's belief in God, characterized by his piety and religious passion. A sample of 100 males and females school teachers was selected by convenient sampling technique in a cross-sectional survey research design. Muslim Religiosity Personality Inventory (MRPI) by Steven Eric Krauss (2011) and Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) by Diener (1985) were used to assess the religiosity and life satisfaction respectively. Permissions to use the scales have already obtained from authors. Descriptive and inferential analyses were made by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 20.0 version. It was revealed from results of Pearson Product Moment Correlations that there is statistically significant positive correlation between life satisfaction and religiosity at ($p < .001$). Findings of Hierarchal Multiple Regression Analysis showed that religious rituals and gender predict 25% variance on life satisfaction among school teachers. The research will be useful to enhance life satisfaction of male and female school teachers.

Key words: Life Satisfaction, Religiosity, School teachers

Introduction

The present study was carried out to find out the relationship between life satisfaction and religiosity among school teachers of district Gujrat. Teaching in Pakistan is very stressful and less paid occupation and as a result life satisfaction of teachers is reduced. Many extrinsic factors like monthly income, facilities of life provided by government, religiosity and social status affect life satisfaction of any individual (Barbera & Gurhan, 1997; Sacks, Stevenson, & Wolfers, 2013). But, some intrinsic factors like personality, emotional intelligence, optimism, and religiosity also play a vital role in life satisfaction (Aghili & Kumar, 2008; Baco, 2010). In our society external sources of life satisfaction are not fulfilling properly. So, it is vital to identify internal aspects affecting the life satisfaction of teachers. Religiosity is one of the key factors that could affect the teachers' life satisfaction (Gull & Dawood, 2013).

Life satisfaction can be defined as cognitive and affective assessments of life. These assessments contain emotional responses to occasions as well as cognitive judgment of satisfaction and contentment (Diener, 2003). Thus, life satisfaction is a comprehensive idea that contains suffering pleasurable sentiments and low level of negative attitudes (Diener, 2003).

Religiosity may be defined as actions, sentiments, and feelings which are related with a specific religious ritual (Dedert, Studts, Weissbecker, Salmon, Banis & Septhon, 2004, as cited in Sutantoputi & Watt, 2013). In other words, religiosity might be stated as the state of one's faith in God, considered by his piousness and religious passion. Devoutness and religious passion are positively connected with faith in God and religiosity (Salleh, 2012). Synonymous of religiosity are religiousness, belief, faith, devoutness, dedication, and piety (Lewis, 1978; as cited in Holdcraft, 2006).

There is evidence that a religion offers purpose and meaning, giving a result of well-being. Religious involvement may increase the level of well-being in at least four ways: through social integration and support, through the formation of personal relationships with a divine other, through the delivery of systems of meaning and existential coherence, and through the promotion of more specific outline of religious organization and personal lifestyle (Ellison, 1991, as cited in Chang, 2009).

A lot of studies on association between life satisfaction and religiosity revealed positive relationship among these variables. Gull and Dawood (2013) investigated positive relationship between religiosity and life satisfaction in 100 adults above the age of 60 years in Lahore, Pakistan by using purposive sampling strategy. Levin (2011) revealed that importance of God in one's life is associated with greater happiness. Bacó (2010) suggested that religiosity positively predict life satisfaction. Khalek (2010) studied positive relationship between subjective well-being and religiosity among 224 Kuwaiti undergraduates. Lima and Putnam (2010) suggested that religious people are more satisfied with their lives. Chang (2009) investigated positive relationship between religious attendance and satisfaction with life in an Eastern-culture country. Aghili and Kumar (2008) investigated that feeling of happiness is associated with religious attitude in Iranian population. Barbera and Gürhan (1997) studied that religious belief has positive impact on life satisfaction.

Significance of the study

A lot of work on life satisfaction has been done in western countries but a fewer has been done in Pakistan. It might be supposed from past studies that in Pakistani culture and Islamic background the religiosity can play an important role in life satisfaction of teachers. In Pakistan there are variety of

customs, cultures, and traditions in five provinces, FATA and Azad Kashmir. But all regions of Pakistan have common religion. This study will be of great value for all regions of Pakistan. In Pakistan external aspects like income, facilities of life and social status that play a vital role in life satisfaction are not satisfying properly. So, by increasing internal factors such as personality, intelligence, optimism and religiosity, it is probable to increase life satisfaction. Religiosity is one of the significant aspects that could affect the life satisfaction. Religiosity positively affects the life satisfaction of any individual (Gull & Dawood, 2013). Religious rituals and maumalats affect life satisfaction in three ways. First, religion may act as a source for solution of many challenging conditions. Second, religion could be used to boost self-empowerment. Third, religion could deliver the foundation for a sense of significance, direction and personal identity. The present study will discover role of religiosity on life satisfaction among male and female school teachers of district Gujrat.

Objectives of study

The objectives of the study were:

- To investigate the relationship between life satisfaction and religiosity among school teachers.
- To examine the impact of religiosity on life satisfaction.

Method

Participants

A sample of 100 school teachers (50 male and 50 female) of district Gujrat was selected through convenient sampling strategy. Age ranged from 20 to 50 years and their education ranged from M.A/M.Sc. to PhD. Range of monthly income of teachers was 10,000 to 50,000 PKR.

Measures

MRPI: Religiosity of the participants was measured by using Muslim Religiosity Personality Inventory developed by Steven Eric Krauss (2011). It contains 33 items from which eighteen items measures rituals and fifteen items measures maumalats. Participants were asked to answer to the statements relevant to their personal life experiences. Answers are to be given on 5-point rating scale (*1 = never, 5 = always*) with high score indicated high rituals and maumalats, and low score revealed minimum rituals and maumalats. The reliability coefficient of Muslim Religiosity Personality Inventory was found ($\alpha = 0.89$) (Krauss, 2011). In current research the reliability coefficient was found ($\alpha = 0.90$).

SWLS: Satisfaction with Life Scale developed by Diner (1985) was used to assess the life satisfaction. It consists of five items. Each item is to be rated on 7-point rating scale (*1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree*) with high score meaning high life satisfaction and low score suggested low life satisfaction. The reliability coefficient of Satisfaction with Life scale was ($\alpha = 0.82$) (Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003). The reliability coefficient for satisfaction with life scale in current research was found ($\alpha = 0.83$).

Demographics: Demographic information about teacher's age, gender, father's education, mother's education, father's occupation, mother's occupation, marital status, spouse education, spouse occupation, sect, region of residence, family system, monthly income, employment type and qualification were also obtained on a data sheet.

Procedure

The consent form from every participant and permission for data collection was taken from competent authority of the

institution. Confidentiality and privacy of the research were briefed to the participants. Booklet of questionnaire was contained instructions and these instructions were read to the participants and they were encouraged to ask any query regarding questionnaire. Time taken for completion of questionnaire was 10 to 15 minutes approximately.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical analysis was made by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 20 versions. Descriptive analysis was calculated to find out the frequencies and percentages of demographic variables. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to calculate the correlation between life satisfaction and religiosity. Hierarchal Multiple Regression Analysis was calculated to find out the predictors of life satisfaction.

Results

Table 1 Inter Correlation of Life Satisfaction and Religiosity (N = 100)

Variables	1	2	3	M	SD
1. SWL	-	.38***	.34***	26.22	5.95
2. RP (Rituals)		-	.55***	75.20	9.58
3. RP (Muamalats)			-	68.43	5.65

Note. SWL = satisfaction with life; RP = religious personality.
*** $p < .001$.

Life satisfaction is positively associated with religious rituals and religious maumalats ($r = .38, p < .001$ and $r = .34, p < .001$ respectively).

Table 2 Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Study Variables Predicting Life Satisfaction (N = 100)

Predictor	β	ΔR^2
Step 1		.05
Age	-.06	
Gender	-.15	
Marital status	.04	
Sect	-.01	
Step 2		.20***
RP (Rituals)	.29**	
RP (Muamalat)	.21*	
Total R^2		.25

Note. RP = religious personality

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

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis was carried out to find out the predictors of life satisfaction. In first step no significant predictor emerged. In second step religious rituals emerged as a significant predictor of life satisfaction with $\beta = .29$, $p < .01$. In this step religious maumalats also emerged as a significant predictor of life satisfaction with $\beta = .21$, $p < .05$. Both demographics (age, gender, sect and marital status) and religiosity overall, accounts 25% variance on life satisfaction.

Discussion

The present study was conducted to find out the relationship between life satisfaction and religiosity among school teachers. The sample of the study was teachers of schools of district Gujarat. The hypothesis controlling this research provided the overall framework for the discussion of findings of research. Responses from 100 school teachers provide the basis following findings.

Results of current results indicated that religious rituals have significant positive correlation with life satisfaction, and it is the strongest predictor of life satisfaction. These findings are in line with those of Baco (2010); Lima and Putnam (2010);

Chang (2009); Aghili and Kumar (2008); Headey, Schupp, Tucci, and Wagner (2008). Findings of present study also indicated significant positive association between life satisfaction and religious maumalats, and identified religious maumalats as very strong predictor of life satisfaction. These results are consistent with those of Kogana, Sasakib, Zouc, Kimd and Cheng (2012); Ivtzan, Chan, Gardner, and Prashar (2011); Levin (2011); Bacó (2010); Tiliouine and Belgoumidi (2008); Barbera and Gürhan (1997).

In present study it was revealed that religiosity has significant positive correlation with life satisfaction. Results of current study are also consistent with those of conducted in other Islamic countries such as Khalek and Lester (2013), Khalek (2010) calculated the positive association among life satisfaction and religiosity in Kuwaiti undergraduates. Aghili and Kumar (2008) found positive connection among religiosity and pleasure. Tiliouine and Belgoumidi (2008) explored the positive association between religiosity, Meaning in Life, and life satisfaction in Muslim students from Algeria.

In many researches similar results found with different scales to calculate life satisfaction and religiosity. Gull and Dawood (2013) used Religiosity Index and Trait Well-being Inventory to study the connection between life satisfaction and religiosity. Khalek and Lester (2013) examined positive relationship between life satisfaction and religiosity, using Arabic Scale of Mental Health (ASMH) and self-rating scales assessing physical health, mental health, and religiosity. Khalek (2010) used World Health Organization QOL scale-Brief (WHOQOL-Bref) and six self-rating scales of physical health, mental health, happiness, satisfaction with life and religiosity to explore the relationship among life satisfaction and religiosity.

Current results that religiosity and life satisfaction are positively associated to each other are also in line with studies conducted in non-Muslim countries such as Barbera and

Gürhan (1997) conducted a study to see the relationship between life satisfaction and religiosity in New York. Lima and Putnam (2010) conducted study in America and offer strong indication of influence of religion on life satisfaction. Levin (2011) investigated the relationship between life satisfaction and belief in God in Jewish sample from Israel. Han & Lai (2010) studied the relationship among religion and life satisfaction in Chinese population in Hong Kong and Australia. The findings of current study showed that there is a significant positive relationship between life satisfaction and religiosity. So, it supports the hypothesis of the study that life satisfaction will be positively related to religiosity. These findings are consistent with those of Baco, 2010; Barbera and Gurhan, 1997; Chang, 2009; Gull and Dawood, 2013; Khalek, 2010; Khalek and Lester, 2013; Levin, 2011; Lima and Putnum, 2010; Mccullough and Willough, 2009; Tiliouine and Belgoumidi, 2008. Findings of these studies suggested that there is a significant positive relationship between life satisfaction and religiosity.

Limitations

The main limitation of the study is its cross-sectional design which resists from drawing causal inferences. From studies with such designs we can only conclude if the variables are related to each other or not. Another limitation of the study is that teachers were not selected randomly so, we cannot claim about the teachers being representative of general population. Another possibility is that self-presentational concerns have influence their responses. Furthermore, sample size was small which affect the generalizability of the research. Another limitation was that close ended questions may leave insufficient room for variation in choice. Finally an important limitation of the research was that questionnaires used in the research were not standardized in the context of Pakistan.

Implications

Practical implication of study proposes that religiosity play a vital role to increase life satisfaction in male and female schools teachers of district Gujrat. Alongside all other demographics (income, education, rural/urban) religiosity becomes the strongest predictor of life satisfaction. Religiosity and the teachings of Islam; rituals and maumalat, teach us contentment and tolerance hence, increase the life satisfaction.

Recommendations

Questions should be homogeneous according to local norms. It is suggested for additional research that qualitative and quantitative, mixed design should be used.

Conclusion

The current study was aimed to determine the relationship among religiosity as predictor and life satisfaction as outcome variable among school teachers of district Gujrat. In present study religious rituals and maumalats were found significant predictors of life satisfaction of male and female school teachers, rituals and maumalats accounted for 25% variance on life satisfaction.

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