Gender Differences in Spiritual Personality

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Abstract

In the present era of stress and strains, it is very important to keep one's spiritual side strong and steady to be able to sustain oneself in the present scenario of cut throat competition, work pressures of pressures to perform in the given deadlines even at the cost of compromising on one's principles and ethical considerations. And all this in the name of that elusive dame named success. Excellence may not be the motive of today's generation but success is and at any cost. Literature reviews indicate that spiritual strength in personality is related to one's self esteem, locus of control and perceived success. Men and women differ in many of the psychological constructs in various ways. In this study an attempt was made to find out gender differences in the spiritual personality. Results seem to be interesting and it is concluded that there exist gender differences in personality which account for the differences in their socialization process too.

Keywords: *Spirituality, gender, personality, socialisation*

Introduction

Personality in simple terms has been defined as a prediction of what a person will do in a given situation. Different persons differ significantly in their reactions to different situations. This happens because of differences in their personality structure.

Personality refers to psychological qualities and organizational structure, which differentiate one with another human being. It is the sum totals of attributes that make one unique and distinctive. It encompasses temperament, mood, character, physical appearance and behaviours. It fuses the unique biological, psychological and social experience of an individual.

Allport (1937) collected some more than 50 definitions of personality and also created one of his own. According to Allport , "Personality is dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustments to his environment."Later on, Allport (1965) revised his definition of personality This new definition contained word "characteristic" for word "uniqueness" and words "behavior and thought" in place of adjustment. The new definition reads, "Personality is a dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his characteristic behavior and thought".

According to Pervin (1970) Personality represents those structural and dynamic properties of an individual or individuals as they reflect themselves in characteristic response situation. According to this perspective, personality is to be ultimately defined in terms of behavior and that consistency within a single individual consistency across all the individuals and consistency along the groups of individuals are the salient features of personality.

Spirituality is a belief in an ultimate or an alleged immaterial reality. Reality is the state of things as they actually exist, rather than as they may appear or might be imagined an inner path enabling a person to discover the essence of his/her being, In a wider definition, reality includes everything that is and has been, whether or not it is observable or comprehensible. A still more broad definition includes everything that has existed, exists, or will exist. Traditionally, many religions have regarded spirituality as an integral aspect of religious experience. Among other factors, declining membership of organized religions and the growth of secularism in the western world have given rise to a broader view of spirituality. The term "spiritual" is now more frequently used in contexts in which the term "religious" was formerly employed. Secular spirituality emphasizes humanistic ideas on qualities such as love, compassion, patience, tolerance, forgiveness, contentment, responsibility, harmony, and a concern for others i.e. it talks about the aspects of life and human experience which go beyond a purely materialist view of the world, without necessarily accepting belief in a supernatural reality or divine being. Spiritual practices such as mindfulness and meditation can be experienced as beneficial or even necessary for human fulfillment without any supernatural

interpretation or explanation. Spirituality in this context may be a matter of nurturing thoughts, emotions, words and actions that are in harmony with a belief that everything in the universe is mutually dependent. This stance has much in common with some versions of Buddhist spirituality.

As far as present investigation is concerned main objective was to explore the gender differences in spiritual personality. Before getting into much depth of the topic its important to have a bird's eye view on what spiritual personality is . It is the vehicle through which the self (the *spiritual* self, the soul) operates in the world, particularly in social interactions, From my perspective, fundamentally accepting the existence of the soul and free will, the personality is the **lower self** while the soul is the **higher self**. Personality is the 'costume' worn by the soul as it operates in the material world in human form. There is a deep, inner part of the personality — that 'selective filtering' which is the framework specially adopted by the soul for a specific human lifetime. This 'deep' or 'true' personality reflects our soul's purposes in life.

Developing a definition of spiritual personality that can be accepted by everyone studying personality seems to be difficult, but test developers have made an attempt to define spiritual personality. The spiritual personality may be defined as. "An individual who knows how to anchor his lifestyles around his noble attitude toward others and follows the path of moral rectitude". A spiritual person keeps his thoughts anchored, focused, and disciplined. The essential characteristics of spiritual people are love, peace and unity. A spiritual person's behaviour is governed by fundamental attributes of the divine character.

A spiritual person is like the mariner is a storm, he slackens sail, waits, hopes, and the storm do not prevent him from loving the sea. Person who loves God shall get the essence of spiritual quality; and those who desire spiritual life with his full faith, wisdom and whole heart shall find it. If a person is truly spiritual, he would believe the unity in diversity and the oneness of all life on earth.

For a man with spiritual personality, the responses to life are, in their quality, established and well-organized; one can count in him. He has positive emotions, desires, and ideas. He is a whole person with a unifying pattern of thoughts and feelings that gives coherence to everything that he does. His "well-integrated" life does not mean placid life, with all conflicts resolved. Many great souls have been inwardly tortured. In all strong characters, when one listens behind scenes, one hears echoes of strife and contentions. Nevertheless, far from being at loose ends within themselves, such persons have organized their lives around some supreme values and achieved a powerful concentration of purpose and drive.

A spiritual personality do not hold high ideals and ambitions in their glory, and in the development of personality. Building the spiritual personality is impossible if the individual finds outside himself, in devotion to which he forgets himself. To be a spiritual person you must develop placidity under deepest provocation.

A non spiritual person constantly runs upon self-focused life and lives miserably striving to find happiness through "Self-expression''. Popularly self-expression has meant: ''Let yourself go; knock the being from your emotional barrels and let them gurgle!'' As a protest against petty moralists this is easily explicable and as a means of release to some individuals.

A spiritual person who has genuinely identified himself with other persons has done something of first rate importance for himself without intending it. He is completely at peace with oneself :

"A mind at peace with all below ;
A heart whose love is innocent."

Review of literature

Ballon (1995) Contrasted spirituality with western science and logic and she linked seventeenth century shifts towards rationality and empiricism with the patriarchal agenda, that is, with materialism, scientism and power. As masculinity, science and patriarchy have been historically intertwined in this way, it follows that definition's of spirituality may have inadvertently more accessible to those with feminine orientations.

Francis(1997) found that major theoretical framework's used to explain statistical gender differences in religious participation and belief and some theorist's interpret these differences in the context of women's socialization, which stresses, conflict resolution, submission, gentleness, nurturance and other expressive values that are congruent with religions emphasis.

Ozorak (2003) contended that women and men embrace different relational schemas----- or formulated, role bound way's of interacting in a particular relationship--------in describing their relationship with God and experience within their religious communities, where as women focus on the personal connections forged with a loving God and with members of their religious communities.

Buchko (2004) Suggested that college women, to a greater extent than college men experience a strong spiritual relational component their religious faiths.
Bryant (2007) found that women's scored higher than men's in terms of religiosity ; women were also found higher in spirituality score as compared to males.

Objective

To investigate the differences occurring in gender in terms of spiritual personality.

Hypotheses : It was hypothesized that there will not be any differences occurring in gender in terms of spiritual personality.

Methodology

Sample

Random sampling technique was used in order to collect the data. A sample of (n=100) respondents, aged between 19 to 22 years was taken. Sample was further divided into (n=50) males and (n=50) females who sample belonged to urban area All the participants were assured that information will remain confidential. The data was collected in this manner

Tools Used

Spiritual Personality Inventory

Spiritual Personality was used to measure, the spiritual personality. The test was developed by Husain, A. Luqman, N., Jahan, M. The test consists of 32 items and has have two sub dimensions namely ***Noble attitude towards others*** & ***Moral rectitude.***

Noble attitude is, the essential characteristic of spiritual person and his noble attitude toward others. A spiritual person is one whose behavior is governed by divine attributes such as trustworthiness, righteousness, faithful, generous, God-fearing, kindness, truthful and who lives for the sake of others.

***Moral rectitude** is the development of morality in an individual. Having moral rectitude means that a person will develop healthy personality and will act nobly. The core characteristics of a spiritual person whose behavior is governed by moral rectitude are self-controlled, steadfast, firm and patient, pure and clean, satisfied*

Procedure

In order to collect the data purposive sampling technique was used by the investigator. Respondents were contacted by the researcher individually. All respondents were instructed by the researcher how to fill the questionnaire. They were assured that information collected will remain confidential**.** Keeping in view the nature and purpose of the present investigation, investigator applied t-test for further computation of results.

Result and Discussion

Table1: Gives the comparison of both the genders on the "Noble Attitude towards Others''.

Variables	Mean	SD	t-value(98)	sig
Males	24.7	8.37		
Females	30.3	10.18	3.00	significant

Result presented in above table shows comparison of both the genders on one sub-dimension of the scale,

Results show that mean score (M=24.7) for males, while mean score for females (M=30.3), while the t(98) is 3.00 which is significant. Tthus above results show that Females show more noble attitude towards other as compared to males.

Table2: Gives the comparison of both the genders on the "Moral Rectitude''

Variables	Mean	SD	t-value(98)	sig
Males	27.7	8.37		
Females	31.8	12.02	3.43	significant

Result presented in above table shows comparison of both the genders on one sub-dimension of the scale, Results show that mean score (M=27.7) for males, while mean score for females (M=31.8), while the t(98) is 3.43 which is significant, Thus above results show that Females show more rectitude towards other as compared to males.

Table 3: Gives the comparison of both the genders on the total scores

Variables	Mean	SD	t-value(98)	Sig
Males	24.72	8.37		
Females	35.66	15.42	4.40	significant

If we look at above table we will find that table 3 gives details of overall scores for both the genders, if we look at the table we will find that mean score for males is (M=24.72) and mean score for females is (M=35.66), while the t(98) is 4.40 which is highly significant.

Conclusion

A look at the above results will indicate that, findings indicate females scored higher on in terms of both dimensions and in overall scores. In the   Indian perspective religious and moral values of females are high irrespective of any religion . This leads to spiritual conditioning of females   which is more spiritually dominant as compared to males. It can be concluded that, females are more spiritually sound as compared to males. This is also corroborated with Francis(1997) who found that major theoretical framework's used to explain statistical gender differences in religious participation and belief s in terms of the conditioning from childhood of girls. Some theorists interpret these differences in the context of women's socialization which stresses conflict resolution, submission, gentleness, nurturance and other expressive values that are congruent with religious emphasis. This could also be a reason for women scoring high in spirituality trait of personality.

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