

Intrinsic-Extrinsic Religiosity and Life satisfaction of Adolescents

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Abstract

The present study examined the relationship of intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity with life satisfaction by analyzing the role of gender. The religiosity scale and satisfaction with life scale were administered to examine 197 participants age ranged 14-18 years. They were drawn from government schools of Varanasi City. Results revealed positive and significant relationship between intrinsic religiosity and life satisfaction and the relationship between extrinsic religiosity and life satisfaction was also positive but it was not significant. No significant gender difference was found with respect to the relationship of intrinsic-extrinsic religiosity with life satisfaction.

KEYWORDS: Intrinsic, extrinsic religiosity, life satisfaction and adolescents

Introduction

Religion is a concern over what exist beyond the visible world (operating through faith and intuition, as opposed to reason). It generally refers to the idea of existence of a single being, a group of beings, an eternal principle, or transcendental spiritual entity that has created the world, that governs it, that its destinies, or that intervenes occasionally in the natural course of its history.

In addition, religion refers to a specific fundamental set of belief and practices generally agreed upon by a number of person or sects. It is the idea that ritual, prayer, spiritual exercises, or certain principles and conduct arise naturally as human response to the belief in such a being or eternal principles.

Interest in the psychology of religion can be traced to the early 1900s when William James (1902) composed his masterpiece '*The Varieties of Religious Experience*'. In this book, James catalogued the manifold ways in which human reveal their interest in transcendent matters. He concluded that religion is "an essential organ of our life, performing a function which no other portion of our nature can so successfully fulfil." Therefore, religion has potential to influence human behavior both in positive and negative manners, depends on the nature of individual.

Religious orientation

Religious orientation involved the manner how we orient to our religious beliefs and how these beliefs are applied in our life. Allport and Ross (1967) described two types of religious orientation including extrinsic and intrinsic religiosity.

Extrinsic religiosity contains trying to achieve external rewards from religious participation. The individual described by extrinsic religiousness who use their religion to fulfil more basic need such as social relation or personal comfort but “the embraced creed is lightly held or else selectively shaped to fit more primary needs” (Allport & Ross 1967). Thus, extrinsic religiosity defined as a means to achieve one’s interest and personal purposes (e.g., security, social status, entertainment, self-justification, life-style support). The belief system was superficially sustained and selectively fulfilled to meet more pragmatic and beneficial needs, and then it was purely utilitarian and instrumental (Allport & Ross, 1967; Hunsberger, 1999; Nielsen, 1995).

Intrinsic religiosity defined religion as an end and shaping one’s life around religious belief. Intrinsically religious people tend to be more deeply committed and religion became the organizing principle of their lives. Intrinsically religious person were thought to live their religion to find meaning and direction of life. These individuals find their master motive for life in religion and their other needs are brought into harmony with their religious beliefs.

Intrinsic orientation was negatively related with prejudice, enmity, contempt, and intolerance as opposed to the extrinsic, which is positively related with these attitudes (Allport, 1966; Allport & Ross, 1967). On the contrary, extrinsic religiosity was positively related with self gratification, which did not contribute to the integration of personality or self reflection (Allport, 1950), while religion itself is the eventual end and guideline of life for the intrinsically inclined individual (Allport, 1966).

Life satisfaction

Human beings are the complex and calculating creature who always evaluating their life situation in terms of satisfaction what they achieve and lose. The final aspiration of almost every human being is to attain one’s goal and this attainment leads to life satisfaction. Therefore, life satisfaction is the central aspects of human life. It is the ultimate goal and each human being is strives to achieve this goal throughout the life.

Life satisfaction is a multidimensional concept related to psychological and environmental life condition. According to Diener (1984), it refers to an individual’s personal judgment of well-being and quality of life based on his or her own chosen criteria. Life satisfaction is the conscious and cognitive judgment of one’s life in which the criteria of judgment depends upon the individual (Pavot & Diener 1993). So, it is a dynamic process which goes on throughout one’s life. In addition life-satisfaction is the degree to which a person positively evaluates the overall quality of his/her life as-a-whole.

Life satisfaction is characterized as a subjective, cognitive appraisal of one’s own condition regarding different life domains (Herschbach, 2002). It may define as a subjective process in which individual asses the quality of their lives by their own standards (Pavot & Diener, 1993). Subjective life satisfaction, thus, reflects the differences between individuals’ hopes, expectations and desires, and what individuals consider their current state (Calman, 1984), it can be assessed globally or domain specifically (e.g., regarding work, family, relationship). In addition, life satisfaction is an overall assessment of feelings and attitudes about one’s life at a particular point in time ranging from negative to positive; (Diener, 1984). Very often life satisfaction is used

synonymously with subjective well-being, quality of life, and is an important component of “positive mental health” (George, 2002).

Thus, the concept of life-satisfaction denotes an overall evaluation of life. The appraisal that life is ‘exciting’ does not necessarily mean that it is ‘satisfying’. An overall evaluation of life involves all relevant criteria in the mind of the individual for example, how good one feels, how well expectations are likely to be met and how desirable various factors are deemed to be? The positive answers of these questions lead satisfaction in human life.

Intrinsic-Extrinsic religiosity and Life-satisfaction

Research reported a positive correlation between intrinsic religiosity and life satisfaction and negative correlation between extrinsic religiosity and life-satisfaction (Kawa, Khan, Khan and Baby, 2015). An intrinsic religious orientation was positively associated with self regulation, self-esteem, physical health, mental health, life satisfaction, and having a purpose in life (Wulff, 1997). Moreover, intrinsically religious people often report a stronger sense of subjective well being. An association between religiosity and life satisfaction was observed in studies of British adolescents (Francis, Jones, & Wilcox, 2000), and of Spanish adolescents (Casas, Figuer, Gonzalez, & Malo, 2007). Another study (Singh and Bano, 2017) conducted with Indian adolescents found that intrinsic religiosity was positively correlated with self acceptance.

Researchers have also reported that religion and spirituality in many studies are related and interact with well-being and life-satisfaction (Mcfadden, 1995). Religious people have reported higher levels of happiness and satisfaction with life (Poloma & Pendelton, 1990). It was found that intrinsic orientation was positively related to appropriate social behavior, self-acceptance and self-actualization, unification and organization of the personality, as well as opening and mental flexibility whereas extrinsic orientation was predominantly related to these variables in a negative way (Ventis, 1995). It was also reported that extrinsic religiousness tends to be positively correlated with negatively evaluated characteristics (Donahue, 1985).

Thus, the present study is unique because it was conducted in a context where the philosophy of life is very much different from western world and understanding of intrinsic, extrinsic religiosity and life satisfaction particularly in our cultural context operates different meaning. In this study, we examined the relationship of intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity with life satisfaction of adolescents.

Methodology

The study was carried out with 197 participants age ranged 14-18 years drawn from government schools of Varanasi City. The participants were examined by using satisfaction with life scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985) and religiosity scale (Markel, 2012).

Result

Product moment correlation and t-test was used to analyze the data. At the initial level, no significant gender difference was evident on intrinsic-extrinsic religiosity and life satisfaction, hence further analysis was based on the clubbed data.

Table 1: represent the correlation between intrinsic-extrinsic religiosity and life-satisfaction. Finding revealed positive and significant correlation between intrinsic religiosity and life satisfaction (0.205, $p < .01$). It also revealed that extrinsic religiosity was positively correlated with life satisfaction (0.117) but it was not significant.

Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of the present study was to assess the relationship of intrinsic-extrinsic religiosity with life satisfaction. Finding revealed significant positive correlation between intrinsic religiosity and life satisfaction. The similar findings were reported by Kawa, Khan, Khan and Baby (2015), they found positive association between intrinsic religiosity and life satisfaction among university student of Kashmir. Wulff (1997) also found that intrinsic religious orientation was positively associated with self regulation, self-esteem, physical and mental health, life satisfaction, and having a purpose in life. It means that with intrinsic religiosity people show satisfaction with their life.

The results of the present study also revealed no significant relationship between extrinsic religiosity and life-satisfaction but previous researches found negative relationship between extrinsic religiosity and life-satisfaction (Garcia- Alandete & Bernabe- Valero, 2013). Another study (Mela, Marcou, Baetz, Griffin, Angelski, Deqiang, 2008) was also reported positive relationship between intrinsic religiosity and Psychological well-being and inverse between extrinsic and psychological well-being. Our findings showed slightly different trend with respect to the relationship of intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity with life satisfaction. In this study, both intrinsic and extrinsic religiosities were positively correlated with life satisfaction. It may be due to the fact that mostly individuals were fatalist and believed that everything will be fine with the grace of God. They were performing religious rituals in order to avoid stress and anxiety for getting relaxation and peace of mind. Our previous study (Singh & Bano, 2017) reported positive correlation between extrinsic and intrinsic religiosity, suggesting that extrinsic religiosity serve as a means to approach intrinsic religiosity in Indian context.

It can be concluded that intrinsically oriented individuals were more satisfied with their life as compared to extrinsically oriented, even extrinsic religiosity was positively correlated with life satisfaction.

Implication of the study

The findings have several implications for conceptual understanding of intrinsic-extrinsic religiosity and life-satisfaction in our cultural context where the philosophy of life and religion are very much different from different part of the world. It suggests that religiosity may be a buffer for protecting ourselves from adverse circumstances and enable us to meet the challenges of life.

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Table 1: Correlation between intrinsic-extrinsic religiosity and life satisfaction of adolescents.

Variables	Life-satisfaction
Intrinsic religiosity	.205**
Extrinsic religiosity	.117

*P<.05 **P<.01