



Gender, Work Status and Spirituality among Elderly

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Abstract

In this study, researchers tried to find out the effect of gender and work status on spirituality among elderly. For this purpose, 116 subjects (58 male and 58 female) were randomly selected. Out of which 52 elderlies were employed and 64 elderlies were unemployed. 'Spirituality Scale' constructed by Prof S.N. Rai and Mrs. Deepika Gupta was used to measure spirituality of the subjects. 2*2 factorial analysis was used to test the hypotheses. Results showed that there is no significant effect of gender as well as work status on spirituality while the interaction effect of gender and work status is significant. On the basis of the results it can be conclude that gender as well as work status is not a significant variable that affect spirituality among elderly. Though there is a significant gender difference in employed elderly, means employed female elderly become significantly more spiritual than the employed male elderly, but this is not so in case of unemployed male and female elderly. There is also a significant difference between employed and unemployed female elderly, means employed female elderly become more spiritual than the unemployed female elderly, while this is not so in case of employed and unemployed male elderly. Due this counter effect the interaction effect of gender and work status is significant. Means when gender and work status come together they jointly affect the spirituality of the elderly.

Keywords Gender, work status, Spirituality, Elderly

IntroductionThe word spirituality comes from the Latin word 'Spiritus'. The meaning of the word 'Spiritus' is 'breath of life'. It is the way of experience that comes through about the awareness of ultimate power. Spirituality is characterized by some observable values in regards to nature, life, self and other. (Elkins, Hedstrom, Hughes, Leaf, and Saunders, 1988).

Spirituality plays an important role in the lives of older peoples (Koeing, 2001; Levin, 1994). Spirituality is one of the most important sources of direction and strength in people's lives. It provides many abilities to adopt to changing individual needs (Ardelt., Ai, & Eichenberge, 2008). Spirituality is primarily a personal and inward experience. Each person has the capacity for spirituality (Bianchi, 1997). In 1983, Dollard says that spirituality is concerned with our ability. Spirituality is a human phenomenon and exist in almost all persons. It is a unified quality of heart, mind and soul. It is concerns with individual subjective experiences, sometimes shared with

others. Spirituality plays an important role in Indian society across all stages of life. As one gets older, the role of spirituality becomes more important.

Bensley, (1991) has described spirituality in term of subjective belief system which includes awareness towards one self and reference to a transcendence dimension, provides purpose and meaning in life, and feeling of relatedness with the larger reality. Some psychologist defined spirituality in of relationship which exists between a person & ultimate power which operates the world (Amstrong, 1995).

Hill. et.al (1998) defined spirituality as the thoughts, behaviours and feelings that arise from a search for the sacred. Paragament & Mahoney (2013) also defined spirituality as a search for the sacred. They argue that spirituality is a vital part of society and psychology within the United States. Kirby, E.S., Coleman, G. P. & Daly, D. (2004) says that spirituality is a significant predictor of psychological well-being. It is a resource of maintaining psychological well-being.

Considering all the above mentioned views, spirituality is adopting a framework or a creative positive attitude towards supreme higher power or God, self, others, nature and life ensuring well-being of self and society as a whole.

In 1986, Bynum said that without considering gender, spirituality cannot be studied. Bryant, A. N. (2007), indicated that women were found to have higher spirituality scores then the men. In another research Khan, I. & Singh, N. (2013) found that females have high spirituality then the males. Hammermeister, J. et.al (2005) also reached on similar findings concerning gender and spirituality.

Rodrigues, L.R. et.al (2017) studied the relationship of spirituality and religiosity with gender, age and family income of the 643 elderly people. Results indicated that the elderly women presented higher averages in most dimensions of religiosity and spirituality.

Joy, K. M. A. et.al (2015) investigated the spirituality and moral identity among 140 randomly selected government employees and its impact at work. The results showed that the participants have average level of moral identity and high level of spirituality. Furthermore, it has been conclude that male participants have lesser level of spirituality than female. There was also, found a moderate positive correlation between moral identity and spirituality. The government employees stated that spirituality and moral identity have at work.

Joseph, M. I., & Jayanthi, P. N. (2013) studied the spirituality and adjustment status in aged persons residing in old age homes and their own homes. The results revealed that aged persons residing in old age homes, females, and the economically dependent groups of aged person shows poor adjustment. The female has more spiritual orientation than the males.

Objectives: Objectives of the study were as follows –

- To study the effect of gender on spirituality among elderly.
- To study the effect of work status on spirituality among elderly.

- To study the interaction effect of gender and work status on spirituality among elderly.

Hypotheses: Hypotheses of the study were as follows –

- There will be no significant effect of gender on spirituality among elderly.
- There will be no significant effect of work status on spirituality among elderly.
- There will be no significant interaction effect of gender and work status on spirituality among elderly.

Methodology

Research Design-

2*2 factorial design was used in the study. Details of division of variables were as follows-

	Work Status (B)		
		Employed (B1)	Unemployed (B2)
Gender (A)	Male (A1)	A1*B1	A1*B2
	Female (A2)	A2*B1	A2*B2

Sample-

Primarily there were 225 elderly out of which 116 elderly were selected randomly using SPSS software. In the present study the total sample consisted of 116 elderly. There were 38 male who were employed and 20 male who were unemployed. There were only 14 female who were employed while 44 female who were unemployed. Thus there were 58 male and 58 female elderly. All the subjects were above 60 years of age.

Tool used-

In this research for assessing spirituality, ‘Spirituality Scale’ constructed by Prof S.N. Rai and Mrs. Deepika Gupta was used. This scale has ten dimensions with 56 Items. The test –retest reliability of the test was 0.87 and validity was 0.83.

Procedure of data collection-

The researcher contacted the subjects individually to make the rapport with them and to collect data. After getting basic information like, age, education, gender, and work status of elderly people, the researchers read aloud the instruction of Spirituality Scale before the subject. There was no time limit so filled-in scale was taken back from the subject as and when he/she finish the work. Subjects were thanked for their valuable cooperation.

Result and Discussion

To test the hypotheses 2*2 factorial analyses was used. Table -1 shows the two-way analysis of variance among gender and work status on spirituality among elderly. F-ratio for gender was $F(1,112) = 2.06, p = .154$. F-ratio for work status was $F(1, 112) = 2.33, p = .130$. F-ratio for interaction of gender and work status was $F(1, 112) = 9.79, p = .002$.

Table 1

Showing the summary of two way ANOVA for 2*2 factorial designs with n-116

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	420.02	1	420.02	2.06	p= .154
Work status	475.42	1	475.42	2.33	p= .130
Gender * Work status	1998.08	1	1998.08	9.79	p= .002
Error	22839.50	112	203.92		

Table -2 shows the summary of simple effect of gender. F-ratio for male and female working elderly was $F(1, 112) = 10.42, p = .002$ while F-ratio for male and female non-working elderly was $F(1,112) = 1.44, p = .248$.

Table 2

Showing the summary of ANOVA for simple effect of A i.e Gender

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
A for B1	2125.15	1	2125.15	10.42	p= .002
A for B2	292.95	1	292.95	1.44	p= .248
Error	22839.50	112	203.92		

F-ratio for female subjects who were employed and who were not employed was $F(1, 112) = 10.84, p = .001$. It means that there is a significant variance on spirituality between female elderly who were in job before the age of 60 year and who were not in job before their 60s. F-ratio for male subjects who were in job before the age of 60 year and who were not in job before the age of 60 years was $F(1,112) = 1.29, p = .279$ as shown in Table No.-3.

Table 3

Showing the summary of ANOVA for simple effect of B i.e work status

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
B for A1	262.11	1	262.11	1.29	p= .279
B for A2	2211.39	1	2211.39	10.84	p= .001
Error	22839.50	112	203.92		

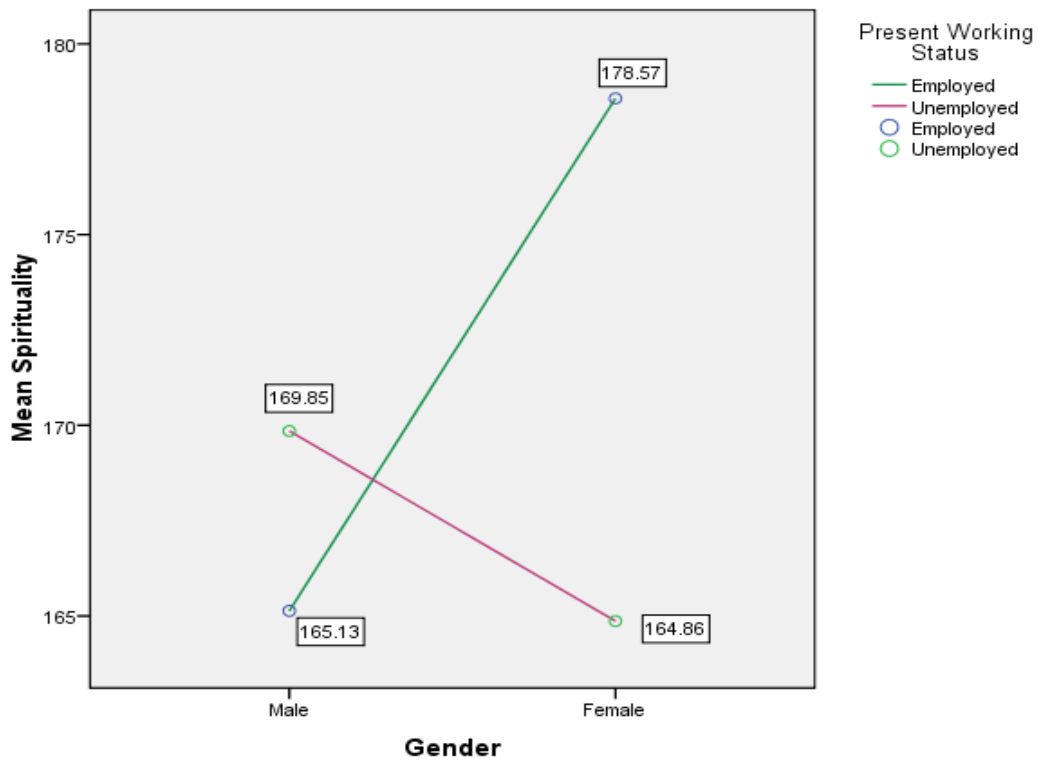


Fig.1. Showing the simple effect of gender

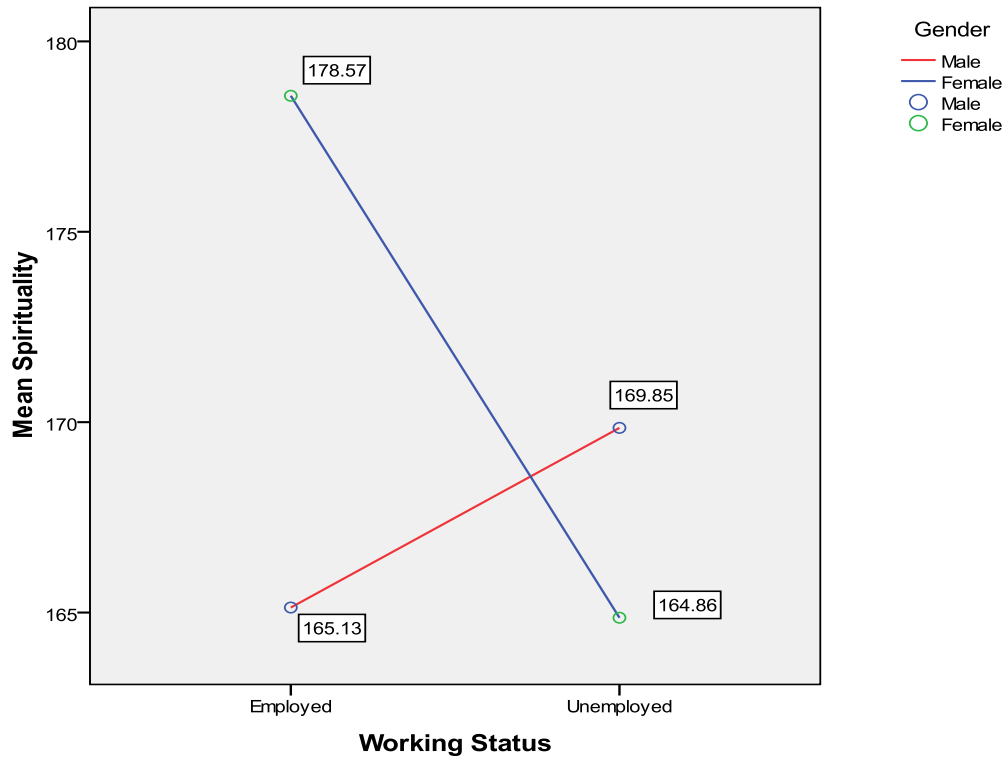


Fig.2. Showing the simple effect of work status

Results depicted that gender exert no effect on spirituality among elderly. Another variable i.e. work status also showed no significant effect on spirituality among elderly. While interaction effect of gender and work status has a significant effect on spirituality. In view of above results it could easily be inferred that gender and work status of elderly independently has no effect on spirituality while when come together they exert a significant effect on spirituality.

Further analysis showed that gender itself does not emerge as significant variable to affect spirituality among elderly. It means both male and female more or less have same spirituality. Figure 1 showed that mean of spirituality of female elderly who were employed is higher than that of male elderly who were employed and mean of spirituality of male elderly who were unemployed is higher than that of female elderly who were unemployed. This counter effect of male and female mean nullify the effect of gender in total. So we accept our first hypothesis. But it is clear from the results that employed female elderly are more spiritual than the employed male elderly. It may be due to the religious belief that old age is for prayer and meditation. It may also be due to the belief that in old age when you have spare time, you should use that time for religious practices and work or it may be a time management technique to use her spare time in valuable work or due to the belief that they have earn whole life and now this the time for prayer and religious practices. While the women who were unemployed fully devoted to her for household work and in old age also they take it as their duty and enjoy household work. In case of male elderly the situation is reverse.

Next part of analysis showed that overall effect of work status is not significant. There is no significant difference between male elderly who were employed and who were not employed. Female elderly who were employed are significantly more spiritual than the female elderly who were unemployed. This counter effect of employed and unemployed means nullify the effect of work status in total. So we accept our second hypothesis. If we look into the family structure of Indian families, we found that male elderly plays the role of Head of the family. Due to this he enjoy the feeling of belongingness, feeling of power, feeling of respect, besides this male elderly have the freedom to go outside the home and can spare time with other elderly in the area. But this is not so with female elderly in the family or in the society. So they spare their time either in household work or in religious activities.

The interactional effect of gender and work status is significant so we reject our third hypothesis. It means that when gender and work status comes together they jointly affect the spirituality of subjects. When we look at the fig-1 and fig-2 we found that mean line of male and female subject & mean line of employed and unemployed subjects are crossing to each other. These non-parallel lines indicate the presence of interaction. Thus make the interactional effect significant.

Conclusion

On the basis of above findings, we can conclude that gender as well as work status is not a significant variable that affect spirituality among elderly. Though there is a significant gender difference in employed elderly, means employed elderly female become significantly more spiritual than the employed elderly male, but this is not so in case of unemployed elderly male and elderly female. There is also a significant difference between employed and unemployed elderly female, means employed elderly female become more spiritual than the unemployed elderly female, while this is not so in case of employed and unemployed elderly male. Due this counter effect the interaction effect of gender and work status is significant. Means when gender and work status come together they jointly affect the spiritually of the elderly.

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