

Spiritual Personality as Related to Perfectionism among Undergraduate Students

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Abstract:

The present investigation was undertaken to examine the relationship between spiritual personality and perfectionism among under graduate students of Aligarh Muslim University. Two hundred fifty students (125 male and 125 female) were randomly selected from the undergraduate classes of Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. They were asked to complete the measures of the Spiritual Personality Inventory (SPI) developed by Husain, Luqman and Jahan (2012) and Perfectionism Inventory by Hill, Huelsmann, Furr, Kibler, Vicente, and Kennedy (2004). Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to analyze the data. Results revealed that spiritual personality was significantly positively related to perfectionism.

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Introduction:

Spirituality as a concept indicates feeling of inter-connectedness with people, an ability to transcend the ordinary and to see things as sacred in everyday life. Through spirituality one gets a meaning and purpose of life. A sense of compassion, trust, harmony, and sharing prevails making person perform at optimum level and sometimes even at a higher level which usually in normal consciousness person does not think of achieving that level.

Spirituality is often understood by people as being to do with a sense of awe, wonder and mystery, a search for meaning and purpose, feelings and emotions, self-knowledge and beliefs not necessarily to do with a religious belief system (O'Brien, 1998). Spirituality can of course be understood and assessed differently in relation to various domains; one aspect through which spirituality may be understood is in terms of spiritual personality.

Spiritual Personality

A spiritual person keeps his thoughts anchored, focused and disciplined. The essential characteristics of such persons are love, peace

and unity. A spiritual person's behavior is governed by the fundamental attributes of the divine character such as trustworthiness, righteousness, faithfulness, generosity, fear of God, and kindness. 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.

Husain, Luqman and Jahan (2012) have identified two main components of spiritual personality i.e., noble attitude toward others and moral rectitude.

1 *Noble attitude toward others* refers to such divine attributes as trustworthiness, righteousness, faithfulness, generosity, fear of God, kindness, trustfulness, and living for the sake of others.

2 *Moral rectitude* refers to the characteristics such as self-control, steadfastness, firm and patient, pure and clean, and satisfied.

Perfectionism

Another personality variable which is studied in the present investigation is perfectionism. Perfectionism refers to a set of

self-defeating thoughts and behaviors aimed at reaching excessively high unrealistic goals. Perfectionism is defined as the striving for flawlessness (Flett & Hewitt, 2002) which has both adaptive and maladaptive components (Rice & Preusser, 2002). In the pursuit of perfectionism, individuals often display some characteristic behavioral tendencies. Such characteristics include having a low tolerance for mistakes, having a preference for order and organization (Frost, Marten, Lohart & Rosenblate, 1990) and a strong need for admiration (Rice & Preusser, 2002). Perfectionism generally defined as a striving to achieve excessively high standards while adopting stringent self-evaluations (Frost, Marten, Lahart & Rosenblate, 1990), it has been regarded both as an adaptive personality trait and a debilitating vulnerability factor (Blatt, 1995; Pacht, 1984). Roedell (1984) also supports this notion that perfectionism has both positive and negative aspects.

Perfectionism can also be viewed in a negative perspective. Parker and Adkins (1995) define perfectionists as “people who strain compulsively toward impossible goals and who measure their own worth entirely in terms of productivity and accomplishment”. They also viewed as perfectionism as “the striving for that non-existent perfection that keeps people in turmoil and is associated with a significant number of psychological problems”. A number of researchers sharing Pacht's (1984) concern which have linked perfectionism with depression, anorexia-nervosa, bulimia, migraine, personality and psychosomatic disorders; Type A coronary-prone behavior and suicide.

Perfectionism is not always a healthy pursuit of excellence. Viewing perfectionism from the negative widow-pane, it is found to be coupled with a finishing attitude towards one's own efforts; can cripple the imagination; kill the

spirit, and so handicap an individual for whom it may never be possible to fulfill the promise of early talent (Roedell, 1984). Perfectionists are likely to experience decreased productivity, impaired health, troubled personal relationship and lower self-esteem (Hewitt & Flett, 1991; Hewitt et al., 1994).

Objectives of the study:

1. To examine the relationship between dimensions of spiritual personality and perfectionism among male and female undergraduate students.
2. To examine the relationship between spiritual personality and perfectionism among male and female undergraduate students.

Perfectionism Inventory (PI) developed by Hill, Huelsman, Furr, Kibler, Vicente and Kennedy (2004) was used to measure perfectionism. The PI consisted of 59 items. The PI provides a measure of eight different scales, namely, concern over mistakes, high standards for others, need for approval, organization, perceived parental pressure, planfulness, rumination, and striving for excellence. There are two factors of PI inventory: conscientious perfectionism and self-evaluative perfectionism. Coefficient alphas ranging from 0.83 to 0.91. Test-retest correlations for the PI scales ranged from 0.71 to 0.91 over a 3-6 week interval.

Procedure:

Prior to the administration of the scales, the investigators have established rapport with the subjects. The purpose of the study was explained in brief to the subjects. They were assured that their responses will be kept strictly confidential and will be used for research purpose only.

Data Analysis:

The data were analyzed by Pearson Product coefficient of correlation.

Results:**Table1: Showing Correlation Coefficients between Spiritual Personality and Perfectionism.**

Variables	1	2	3	4
1.Noble Attitude toward Others				
2. Moral Rectitude	.395**			
3. Total Spirituality	.834**	.627**		
4. Perfectionism	.338**	.203**	.212**	

*p<0.05 **p<0.01

Table 2: Showing Correlation Coefficients between Spiritual Personality and its dimensions and Perfectionism among Female undergraduate students.

Variables	1	2	3	4
1.Noble Attitude toward others				
2. Moral Rectitude	.337**			
3. Total Spirituality	.731**	.546**		
4. Perfectionism	.326**	.192*	.121	

*p<0.05 **p<0.01s

Table 3: Showing Correlation Coefficients between Spiritual Personality and its dimensions and Perfectionism among Male undergraduate students.

Variables	1	2	3	4
1. Noble Attitude				
2. Moral Rectitude	.528**			
3. Total Spirituality	.915**	.826**		
4. Perfectionism	.419**	.226**	.386**	

*p<0.05 **p<0.01

Table 1 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients between spiritual personality as well as its two dimensions and perfectionism in undergraduate students. Significant positive relationship was found between two components of spiritual personality (noble attitude toward others and moral rectitude) and perfectionism ($r=.338, p<.01$ and $r=.203, p<.01$) among undergraduate students. Significant positive relationship was also found between scores obtained on spiritual personality and perfectionism inventory ($r=.212, p<.01$).

Table 2 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients indicating associations between spiritual personality as well as its two components and perfectionism among female undergraduate students. Significant correlation was not found between spiritual personality and perfectionism. Significant positive relationships were found between noble attitude towards others and perfectionism ($r=.326, p<.01$) and moral rectitude and perfectionism ($r=.192, p<.05$).

It can be seen from Table 3, significant positive relationships were found between noble attitude toward others and perfectionism ($r =.419, p<.01$), and moral rectitude perfectionism ($r =.226, p<.01$) in male undergraduate students. Significantly positive correlation was also found between overall scores obtained on spiritual personality and perfectionism ($r=.212, p<.01$).

Discussion:

In the present study, an attempt was made to find out whether spiritual personality is related to the perfectionism among male and female undergraduate students. The findings of this study indicate that spiritual personality as well as its two components are significantly related to perfectionism among male undergraduate students. Significant relationship was not found between spiritual personality as a

whole and perfectionism, whereas two components of spiritual personality (noble attitude toward others and moral rectitude) and perfectionism were found to be positively related among female undergraduate students.

On the basis of above findings it can be concluded that those who are spiritual are more perfectionist, whether they are male or female. Perfectionists strive for flawlessness, adaptive, having a preference for order and organization and a strong need for admiration. Spirituality and perfectionism both may be regarded as having an adaptive personality traits and positive aspects.

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