

Connecting People, Environment and Spirituality: Reflections upon the Possession Syndrome

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Abstract

A high level of beneficial affect, a small amount of negative impact, and a high degree of fulfilment in life are all ways in which the word subjective well-being, or SWB, is used in the field of psychological research. On the other hand, eudaemonists define well-being as the extent to which individuals are able to realise their potential via their current level of functioning (Waterman, 1993). The term "psychological well-being" (PWB; Ryan & Deci, 2001) is commonly used interchangeably with "eudemonism" in the positive psychology literature.

Keywords: Subjective well-being, positive psychology, negative effect, eudaemonist approach

Introduction

Positive evaluations of oneself and one's past experiences (Self-Acceptance), a belief that one is continually growing and developing as a person (Personal Growth), a conviction that one's life has a significance and purpose (Purpose in Life), the presence of quality relationships with other people (Positive Relations With Others), the ability to effectively manage one's life and the outside world (Environmental Mastery), and a sensation of meaning and purpose in life

Nearly 20 years ago, with the advent of the positive psychological movement, researchers in the fields of psychology and mental health began to shift their focus from a narrow focus on diseases and disorders to a broader focus on well-being. The study of well-being has developed along two primary axes: the hedonistic approach and eudemonia. Hedonism is an approach to well-being that emphasises the importance of hedonic pleasure (Watson et al., 1988).

The notion of PWB is in line with the 1948 World Health Organisation (WHO) definition of health as "a condition of full mental, physical, and social well-being" (WHO, 1948). A reduction in the expression of the conserved transcription response to trauma in immune cells is related with high levels of PWB, as is a reduced chance of developing depression .

Spirituality

Spirituality is "a more broad, unstructured, personalised, and spontaneously occurring phenomena, where a person seeks proximity and/or connectivity between him or herself and a higher force or purpose," as defined by Joseph et al. (2017, p. 506).

It's possible to see spirituality as an ever-evolving reality whereby one is always learning something new, which

may include expanding one's understanding of the limits of the universe and the ultimate purpose of one's existence.

Kharitonov (2012), Mueller (2001), Miller and Thoresen (2003), Mueller et al. (2012), Unterrainer et al. (2014), and other researchers have shown that spirituality has a positive effect on physical and mental health, as well as other beneficial health effects such as feelings of well-being, health-related aspects of life, abilities to cope, recovery from mental illness, and reduced addictive or suicidal behaviours.

Health-Related Behavior

Some of the factors that determine one's health potential include one's way of life and the choices one makes about one's health. Any action made to maintain or restore physical or mental health is considered a health behaviour. Health behaviours are often categorised as either those related to physical activity, food, or the use of psychoactive substances in research on health behaviour and behavioural change (Norman et al., 2008).

The primary purpose of this research was to analyse the association between spirituality, health-related behaviour, educational background, and mental health.

The findings show a correlation between spirituality and health-promoting behaviours and mental wellbeing. Students in the mind of humans and spirit group had a more robust correlation between religion and psychological health. Kor et al.'s (2019) longitudinal research on teenagers demonstrates that their spirituality is consistent over time and contributes to their improved sense of well-being. It's possible to see it as a key component of growth and a basic strength of character. Therefore, spirituality may also improve emotional health.

A similar correlation was found between spirituality and health-related actions, and these actions in turn were linked to greater psychological wellbeing. That is to say, it seems that spirituality may not only be directly linked to psychological health, but also modulated by health-related behaviour.

Adolescents who report higher levels of spiritual, emotional, and existential well-being also report lower levels of depressive symptoms. However, Jafari et al. (2010) discovered a strong correlation between spiritual health and psychological wellness.

When attempting to define what it means to be mentally and emotionally well, spirituality and health-related behaviours might be crucial factors. Focusing on one's own physical well-being and the human body, or one's psychosocial health and the mind and soul, may also play a role in determining overall mental health. However, additional study is needed to substantiate these assertions, particularly with regards to a holistic and analytical method for diverse health-related behaviours, spiritualities, and elements of mental health. There is a need for further study into the factors, such as beliefs about one's health, faith, and personal growth, that influence a student's choice of major in university.

Spirituality is a vague idea that defies precise definition. Those who have attempted to define it have focused on a wide range of experiences, including: a sense of community or relating in the universe; faith in a higher power; the pursuit of meaning and purpose; the realisation of transcendence; the discovery of one's own ultimate truths; the comprehension of the unity of the visible and invisible; an inwardly focused connection with the divine; the experience of boundless love; and the pursuit of personal wholeness.

Despite their differences, spirituality and religion are frequently treated as if they were the same. When compared to religion, which is an institutionalised system of beliefs, practises, and standards that a person accepts and follows, spirituality is more worried with firsthand knowledge of latent higher awareness inside oneself, i.e. the interior space. Many other schools of thought, including Jainism and Buddhism from Hinduism and Sufism as a criticism of orthodox Islam, emerged as a backlash against the established faiths of their respective eras.

Throughout history, every religion has begun with the enlightenment of a single individual, who then saw fit to share his or her insights with others by consolidating them into a body of doctrine.

Role of spirituality in alleviating mental illness

Modern scientific approaches have been used in recent years by academics in a wide variety of fields, including psychiatry, psychology, medicine, neurology, theology, ageing, and nursing, to find evidence that spirituality aids in alleviating a wide range of mental and physical disorders. Within a spiritual framework, the seemingly insurmountable anguish that accompanies nearly all mental and physical disorders is reframed as a journey or journey that gives rise to hope and allows people to find purpose in their anguish.

Spiritual and religious communities fill a critical void in modern societies, where nuclear families are increasingly rare, by providing members with the kind of social support that prevents them from feeling alone, gives them pride in who they are, and helps them bounce back from adversity.

The idea that people are linked and need each other is so essential to the psychotherapeutic process that many professionals consider it a spiritual endeavour in its own right. The patient is able to confront and incorporate the rejected aspects of themselves because of the therapist's openness and acceptance.

Spirituality may be included into psychotherapy in two main ways. The term "explicit integration" refers to a therapeutic approach that openly, directly, and methodically addresses spiritual concerns in treatment and employs spiritual approaches like yoga, meditation, prayer, and the teachings of holy texts for the aim of healing and change. Others advocate for a more indirect strategy, where the counsellor is open to discussing and addressing spiritual themes, but does not do so until the client brings them up on their own.

Spirituality among Adults with Mental Health Difficulties

Although there is growing recognition of the benefits of spirituality in behavioural health situations, there is still a 'religiosity gap' between the priority that experts and service users assign to spirituality and religion. People's spiritual needs may be ignored, disregarded, or pathologized in therapeutic practise owing to a lack of awareness of the complexity of people's connections to spirituality within modern society and psychological situations.

Because of the significance of addressing problems of hope, meaning, and purpose in one's life, spirituality and religion play an essential role in the effective administration of holistic and person-centered treatment (Swinton, 2001). Spirituality is increasingly being considered an ethical need of professional care in healthcare practise, research, and policy . In recent years, psychiatrists have been more open to their patients' religious and spiritual issues, reflecting a societal shift.

When it comes to the diagnosis and treatment of mental health issues, taking into account a patient's spirituality, religious beliefs, and practises is crucial (Moreira-Almeida et al., 2016; Verhagen, 2017). This statement was accepted by the Executive the Committee of the World Psychiatry Association in 2015.

There is a growing recognition that the social, economic, and health costs associated with mental illness are substantial. There is a significant frequency of spirituality and religiosity among individuals with severe mental illness, according to empirical studies , and there are good and negative connections between religious and spiritual practises and health.

The need for psychiatric and other psychological professionals to learn the language of spirituality in the healthcare setting is growing as research shows it helps patients make sense of their experiences and find hope even in the face of adversity .

Instead of seeing mental health issues via a medical or psychological lens, using a spiritual one may help one gain new insights, inspiration, and purpose in life.

"The successful inclusion of spiritual methods into clinical practise has the potential to lead to the next leap leap in the creation of effective person-centered systems of care," write Russinova and Blanch (2007). The incorporation of a spiritual framework into mental healthcare practise "may open the way to a new and richer vision of healing" (Blanch, 2007, p. 255). To improve mental health and rehabilitation, Fallott (2007) argues that the first step is for mental health services to become "spiritually aware," or to learn more about the potential effects of spirituality.

The emergence of environmental leadership in the literature

There has been a growing consensus for some time now that both government and corporations need to demonstrate environmental leadership (EL). Some authors (Hart 1997, for example) say that the first time businesses started thinking about the environment was in the 1960s. Some scholars date these developments to the 1990s, although others place them later.

There is general agreement, however, as environmentalist viewpoints have grown in prominence, with many businesses seeing the need to minimise negative impacts on the natural world as part of their operations and investigating the potential of a greener, cleaner business model (Hart, 1997). The political and economic consensus is that corporations have a duty to protect the environment. For instance, President Obama's 'Green agreement' in the United States (US) has helped spur significant change, particularly in the automotive sector, by tying a \$800 billion stimulus plan to cuts in greenhouse gas emissions (Sandhu, 2010).

Major environmental catastrophes prompted people to realise the importance of EL. The Union Carbide India limited pesticide facility in Bhopal, India, was the site of the 1984 Bhopal chemical catastrophe (Sheoin,2009), which claimed the lives of thousands of people throughout the globe. Transgenerational effects from the Chernobyl nuclear catastrophe were already being felt within two years after the disaster (Shrivastava, 1995).

The recent BP oil rig accident and subsequent oil leak in the Gulf of México has been catastrophic to the region (Evan et al., 2010).Commoner (1971) made a comment about the 'environmental problem' of the twentieth century before any of these tragedies happened, attributing it to politics, expanding population, poverty, industry, human violence, capitalism, religion, and technology.

Organisations first welcomed risk reduction measures in reaction to environmental disasters and risks in the twentieth century, but today view environmental initiatives as chances for development (Hart, 1997; Shrivastava, 1995).

The literature generally shows two tiers of advantages to learning EL. To begin, it establishes a connection between an organization's core principles and the continuation of human life on Earth, mostly through resource-saving methods. Second, it demonstrates to the economic rationalist arguments that EL has real-world benefits.

It's interesting that despite the phrase "environmental leadership" being used often in popular literature, media, and academic books from a broad variety of fields, it's seldom defined (Falkner, 2007). Rather, EL often takes the form of a broad appeal for people and groups to show leadership in addressing the environmental problems that face the globe today.

The complexity of EL is encapsulated in a definition created by Egri & Herman (2000):

The capacity to inspire others and galvanise groups towards a shared goal of ecological sustainability is at the heart of what it means to be an environmental leader. "Environmental leaders are guided by unconventional ideals and assumptions as they work to alter economic and social institutions that they regard as threats to the biophysical environment."

The Concept of Spiritual Leadership and Spiritual Values

Numerous works in the fields of business, business ethics, leadership, and management are now concerned with spiritual issues and their impact on organisational contexts.

Tawney (1922) all conducted research on the intersection between business and spirituality in the latter half of the twentieth century. According to Tawney (1922), rather than rejecting material interests, Christians and businesspeople can find common ground by devoting the virtues so valued in the marketplace to the service of God. These include thrift, meticulousness, sobriety, and frugality.

Maslow (1970) claimed that spirituality permeated all aspects of life, including labour.

Synergies between spiritual and environmental leadership

Wallace (2000) finds a connection between religion and environmental degradation by comparing the "present environmental catastrophe" to "spiritual sickness" and "ecocide." Emotionally using the power of metaphor, he

draws parallels between the planet's deteriorating ecosystem and the destructive effects of addiction and obsessive conduct on an individual's health and happiness.

It has been argued that ideas about leadership and spirituality are culturally specific (Prince, 2005). Religion as well as other spiritual worldviews are often cited by cultural specialists as evidence of a society's cultural values (Samover & Porter, 1991).

Social and ecological sustainability values such as stewardship or "guardianship" viewed in what appear to be comparable manners (Turner et al., 2000) have been mentioned in both the spiritual leadership literature and the socio cultural aspects of EL. According to Starik and Rands (1995), sustainability "is focused on the long-term survival and growth of entities in ways that allow for the survival and growth of others."

Hernandez (2008) describes the importance of sustainability in stewardship and draws from the literature to draw the conclusion that management with a focus on sustainability encourages a positive cycle of long-term sustainability and intergenerational reciprocity in which stakeholder and community well-being is prioritised in organisational decision making. Though the "behavioural leadership drivers of stewardship in organisations have remained largely studied," Hernandez (2008) has pointed out their absence. There are many who believe that religions should "do more to educate people about climate change and sustainability," and this group includes prominent CEOs of ecologically friendly organisations (Holliday, 2010).

In a groundbreaking article for the *Academy of Management Review*, Starik and Rands (1995) discussed how spiritual and environmental values in leadership could be communicated in organisations through training and education, decision-making (possibly through criteria established to approve proposals), formal role descriptions, and evaluations of employee performance. Leadership in spiritual and ecological environments are nearly inseparable, and this is reflected in an organization's lived values. Similar strategies may be used to the promotion of both spiritual and ecological values.

More research is needed to determine whether or whether environmental and religious leadership have an ontological relationship with transformational leadership, making them conceptually consistent. Further empirical and theoretical study is needed to answer questions like whether or not environmental and religious leadership can be recognised as the same individuals and roles, and whether or not they can be embedded in synergistic, simultaneously ways in organisational practises.

Religions & their Ecological beliefs

Vedic Hinduism provides symbolism that highlights the significance of nature's might. ground (bhu), air (bhuvah), and sky (sva) have all been lauded by Vedic scholars in a variety of writings and rites, as have Prthivi, the goddess of the ground, and Ap, Agni, and Vayu, the gods of water, fire, and air. They have pointed out that the prominence of these deities indicates a deep ecological awareness within Hinduism. The Samkhya school of Indian philosophy formalised these Vedic ideas into the five main elements (mahabhuta) of prthivi (earth), jal (water), tejas (fire), vayu (air), and akasa (space).

Muslims are commanded to protect and preserve the natural world, as Allah created it, and to act in accordance with this symbiotic relationship. Allah's creation cannot be changed in any way. For Muslims, green is the most auspicious hue. The Qur'an makes reference to the earth 453 times, but only to the sky and the heavens 320 times. The world was created for me as a religious institution and a method of purification, declared the Prophet Muhammad.

Christianity: Reading the Old Testament with an eye towards ecological issues yields new perspectives for Christians. Preserving the "land" and the "earth" as a sacred inheritance is a theme that runs throughout the Bible. Christians should be cautious without being destructive, since they see nature as valuable in and of itself. Christians are supposed to respect the environment with great care, and the Bible provides several instances. Proper treatment of household animals and regard for wildlife are emphasised in Deuteronomy 25:4 and 22:6. Those who have abused the land will face God's judgement as described in Isaiah 5:8-10. God's love and care for his creation is proclaimed in Job 38:25-28 and Psalm 104:27-30. Pope Benedict XVI has just updated the list of sins to include "Polluting the environment."

The Buddhist tradition sees Buddha's enlightenment and the substance of the four noble truths as an act of universal compassion since they provide light on the origins and remedies for human suffering. They wish for

peace and happiness for all sentient creatures and hope that they will be protected from harm. The Cakkavattisihanvda Sutta states that a good ruler must look out for the welfare of all living things, including humans, animals, and birds. The Fifth Pillar Law of King Ashoka, which states that he protected numerous wild species, is one of the oldest examples of a deliberate conservation programme. Buddhists extend their compassion and generosity to inanimate objects such as plants and the planet itself.

Conclusion

At its core, sustainable development is spiritual because it provides us with a more complete view of the world, abundant rewards, and a mechanism for increasing our sensitivity to the need to safeguard our home planet. Concerning environmental matters, we must take the initiative. Training and raising people's consciousness must be prioritised at all levels of society, including in the workplace and at home. Good leadership and policies in vital areas like resource management, healthcare, manufacturing, revenue generation, and technology may take form as a result of an education infused with spiritual ideals and affirmations.

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