

EXPLORING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PATHWAYS LINKING SPIRITUALITY AND HAPPINESS TO PROSOCIAL BYSTANDER BEHAVIOR: MEDIATING ROLE OF ALTRUISM AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Pro social bystander behavior, or willingness to help others in need is critical component for building a compassionate and just society. Helping others in need is crucial for building a kind and fair society. But what motivate people to help? This quantitative research investigate the relationship between spirituality, happiness, and pro-social bystander behavior among university students. The data was collected from 300 universities students, using online survey. The correlation research design was used to find correlation between study variables and regression analysis was used to find the mediating role of altruism. The results revealed that spirituality is positively correlated with happiness which indicate that students who reported higher level of spirituality also experience greater happiness. The results also indicate that the relationship between spirituality, happiness, and pro-social bystander behavior is mediated by altruism. This suggest that spirituality and happiness promote altruistic tendencies, which in turn foster pro-social bystander behavior. The finding of this results help to understand the complex interplay between spirituality, happiness and pro-social bystander behavior. This study highlight the importance of cultivating altruism in promoting positive social behaviors among university students.

Keywords: Spirituality, Happiness, Altruism, Pro social Bystander Behavior

INTRODUCTION

Helping others can take many forms, from financial help to simple acts of kindness, which have varied motivations such as genuine empathy or just for appreciation. Pro-social bystander refers to any voluntary action taken by an individual when he or she witnesses or is someone in need and decides to provide help. It may involve different ways of helping such as, volunteering time, doing charity, helping someone in distress, donating blood or simply providing emotional support. Helping behavior can promote cohesion in society, promote supportive communities and also enhance mental health and well-being. There are many factors that influence helping behaviors or pro-social bystander behaviors including empathy, altruism, social norms, environmental factors, personality traits, cultural values etc. Willingness to help others in need, or pro-social bystander behavior, is essential for creating collaborative universities or other academic environments. As spirituality and happiness are identified as key components of pro-social tendencies, this study aims to examine the interplay between these factors and the mediating role of altruism. By examining the relationship between spirituality, happiness and altruism, this research seeks to uncover the underlying mechanisms promoting pro-social bystander behavior among university students.

Positive psychology is a branch of psychology that marks a significant departure from traditional approaches focused on pathology and diagnosis to prioritizing the promotion of mental wellbeing, resilience, and positive emotions. Positive psychology emphasizes the study of character strengths such as spirituality, positive experiences and behaviors, as well as happiness and altruism (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 2014). Within positive psychology, spirituality is acknowledged as an important aspect of humanity, which promotes

resilience, finding purpose, and living a fulfilling life (Houskamp et al., 2004). Different studies conducted in spirituality show that it has a positive correlation with subjective wellbeing and internal characteristics that include life satisfaction (Kelley & Miller, 2007), and happiness (Argyle, 2001; Francis et al., 2000). Spirituality is considered as the main factor that affects volunteering behavior and happiness in young adults (Mahaarcha, 2010). Pro-social behavior is a term that is used to describe any act of kindness or volunteering behavior. While altruism refers to selfless concern for helping others while prioritizing others' needs. People with an altruistic or pro-social personality may also include traits like agreeableness, a positive attitude toward others, moral reasoning and empathy. There is a positive relation between spirituality, altruism, and pro-social bystander behavior among children (Yonker et al., 2012; Holder et al., 2016). Spiritual involvement may enhance children's happiness through similar pathways as those observed in the case of adults and adolescents. Spirituality is said to increase social relationships (Ellison, 1991), and for adults, social relationships are an important factor for happiness (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005) and this association is also found for children (Holder & Coleman, 2008). The relationship between religiosity and happiness has been studied across various different age groups, that also include both adolescents and elderly. Studies conducted on three age groups, such as adolescents, young adults and older adults show that from all three age groups, those people who consider themselves as religious are more happy than those who do not consider themselves as religious (Francis et al., 2000).

Some studies indicate that religiousness or religiosity is associated with altruism

(Benson et al., 1980; Morgan, 1983), but other studies refused from the presence of such link (Shariff & Norenzayan, 2007). Association of spirituality with empathy and altruism may change as change of age, maturation, and religious background (Koenig, 2006). Moreover, it is evident by Bonner, Koven, and Patrick (2003) that spirituality have a positive correlation with pro-social behavior. They suggest that spiritual beliefs contribute to increased selfactualization and pro-social engagement by promoting personal fulfillment and worthiness.

Social psychology literature highlights bystander nonintervention in critical situations (Myers, 2002), but equally significant is the exploration of situational and dispositional determinants of prosocial bystander engagement (Batson, 1998). Previous research (Layard, 2005) suggests that most important elements in happiness are 1. Health, 2. Family, and 3. Human relationships, and 3. Spirituality. Stark and Maier (2008) have recently noted, the literature on religion and happiness is rather scattered.

Even when factors like education, age, and occupation are kept constant, religiosity still has a noticeable impact on happiness (Argyle, 1999; Witter et al., 1985). Research suggests that selfless people have more meaningful lives, and such people often enjoy better mental and physical health (Van Willigen, 2000). There is a strong correlation between being emotionally and behaviorally compassionate and experiencing greater wellbeing, happiness, good health, even a longer life (Bergsma et al., 2009). People who engage in volunteer work often experience greater satisfaction with their lives and find improvements in how they feel, compared to those who do not volunteer. Interestingly, Van Willigen (2000), found that older adults benefit even more from volunteering and experience, and they experience

greater positive changes in their perceived health as compared to younger volunteers. Many psychologists agree that helping others can ease negative emotions, prevent feelings of guilt or shame, and often brings positive feedback like appreciation, respect, or a sense of pride – all of which contribute to a deeper sense of happiness (Batson et al., 1991). Researchers investigated the relationships between subjective well-being, happiness, and spirituality.

Diener (2000), explored national indicators of happiness and cultural influences on subjective well-being. The psychological aspects of spirituality and its connection to well-being was explained by Pargament et al. (2002). There is also a link between religious and health outcomes variables (Miller & Thoresen, 2003). The connection between religion, spirituality and health was identified by hill & Pargament (2003).how people perceived their well-being in different cultures and religion was inquired by Wills (2009). A large number of studies are on spirituality, prosocial behavior and happiness. Most of these researches show that being spiritual, volunteering and performing prosocial and altruistic behavior enhance an individual overall quality of life and happiness (Einolf 2011; Portes 1998; Putnam 2000). Moreover, studies also revealed association between religiosity, prosocial behavior and spirituality (Musick and Wilson 2008; Saroglou 2006). Research has shown that religiosity is linked with pro-social behavior, suggesting that spirituality may also promote altruistic behaviors.

Altruism is helping behavior that means working voluntarily for others' welfare. Altruism is a complete selfless concern. Altruistic traits vary, but are considered as an essential moral of many societies and religions. Happiness is an important emotion of human beings, and it is considered as a highly valued goal in many societies (Diener, 2000).

Joy comes from taking part in activities that cause happiness, satisfaction, and/or positive wellbeing (Lyubomirsky, 2008). Lishner and Stocks (2016) define altruism as a motivation to increase the well-being of other people. Klein and Dollenmayer (2014) define altruism as giving benefits to others or helping others at the risk of personal harm. Hobbes (1651) suggests that humans have altruistic desires, while a study conducted by Batson (1991) found that humans exhibit altruistic behaviors. A large number of research has looked into factors behind helping behavior and tried to explain the motivation behind such behavior. Although, there is still no one specific answer. According to Tolman (2016), successful random acts of kindness require three essential elements; situational awareness, effective communication and recipient receptivity. Altruistic behavior promotes happiness and positive emotions of helpers (Aknin & Whillans, 2020). This kind of effect is observed in variety of altruistic behavior, that include volunteering (Huang, 2018), blood donation (Buyx, 2009), charity (Liu & Aaker, 2008), spending money on others (Dunn et al., 2008), showing that even a small acts of kindness, such as simply offering coffee to someone, being kind to others, or bringing smile to someone face (Rudd et al., 2014). Main goal of altruistic behavior is to help others or benefit others, but the motivation behind this behavior comes from various sources and this kind of behavior may also be driven by self-focused motives (Batson & Shaw, 1991), such as respect and public persona (Griskevicius et al., 2010), financial gain (Gneezy et al., 2011), reduced concern of societal reprisal (Bénabou & Tirole, 2006), and positive emotions (Batson, 1987).

“Happiness is characterised as feeling joyful, satisfaction, and positive well-being in one’s life” (Lyubomirsky, 2008). Engaging in altruism not only benefits the recipient but also yields emotional

rewards for the altruist, including feelings of happiness, satisfaction, and serenity. Luks (1988) calls this the ‘helper’s high, which means that people who show such helping behavior are motivated to show such behavior again in the future. A survey was conducted by Luks (1988) on helper’s high which showed that after helping behavior about two out of three of the helpers felt experienced physical sensations and half experience high feelings. Some research has also shown positive correlation among kindness and happiness.

Peristianto (2020) suggests that people who have high religiosity have high life satisfaction.

The connection between personal well-being and the overall good of society has been questioned for a long time. Some believe that what’s best for individuals and what’s best for society often in clash (Dawes, 1980), while others argue that they can work together in a way that serve both individual and society (Mansbridge, 1990). Research shows that acts of kindness—like volunteering or donating—not just benefit those who are in need but also bring happiness and fulfillment to one who do it (Thoits & Hewitt, 2001). Just like Maslow, researchers also indicate that people have a need for belonging (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). When this need is not satisfied, it can lead to antisocial behaviors such as violence and aggression (Twenge et al., 2001). The lack of belonging can also reduce an individual's willingness to cooperate and engage in prosocial behaviors, such as donating or volunteering (Twenge et al., 2007). Some studies show that when people feel connected, their aggressive tendencies decrease (Twenge et al., 2007). According to Kin selection theory people are more likely to show helping behavior toward those who share genetic connection with them (Hamilton, 1964), and according to Sober & Wilson, (1998), people are

more generous toward other when they are known to them. According to reciprocal altruism, altruism is evolutionary beneficial even if it comes at a personal cost, but it may be benefit altruist in future. In other word people are more likely to help those who can help them in the future (Trivers, 1971). According to indirect reciprocity, altruists publicize their preference to ensure future assistance and cooperation from others, which mean that individuals often help others to build a reputation for being generous or cooperative, which can increase the likelihood of help from others in future (Alexander, 1987).

Pro-social behavior refers to any action that is taken to help or benefit others, like offering help or making donation. While altruism is about motivation behind these actions, it refers to helping others out of genuine care rather than for any personal gain. Sometimes, people help other not because they truly care, but just for personal gain, like they expect some kind of personal benefit in return. There is an ongoing debate in psychology and other fields about whether we can truly separate altruistic and self-centered (egotistic) motivations when people act in prosocial ways. For example, if we help someone because it makes us feel good or relieves guilt, is that genuine altruism, or are we ultimately acting out of self-interest? Social psychologist are looking at how prosocial behavior changes depending on different situations (Dovidio et al., 2006). There are several ways of helping behavior or act of kindness, such as cost and benefit that involves cooperation, donating, or volunteering, urgency which may involve immediate response v/s planned help and duration like a onetime act or long term commitment. Personality psychologist suggest that those who have high agreeableness trait are more likely to engage in pro-social behaviors (Graziano & Tobin, 2009). Developmental psychologists are interested

to study hoe pro-social behavior develop from infancy to adulthood. Their focus is on how environmental factors along with age and personality, shape this growth (Eisenberg, Fabes, & Spinrad, 2006). The key factors that influences pro-social behaviors include parenting style, socialization, moral identity formation and secure parentchild relationship. Mostly in adulthood pro-social behavior takes a broader role, where individual feel a sense to contribute to others and society, this concept is known as a generativity (de St. Aubin, McAdams, & Kim, 2004). Early adolescence is a important stage in developmental periods of an individual for understanding hoe pro-social behaviors develop, because at this stage people start encountering more opportunities to engage in acts of kindness and helping others (Carlo et al., 1999). For instance, many adolescents begin participating in volunteer work, and research shows that the number of teens involved in charity organizations has significantly increased in recent years (Independent Sector, 1999).

RATIONALE

Pro-social bystander behavior or willingness to help others in need or simply providing helping behaviors when witnessing someone in need. It is a crucial aspect of building harmonious and supportive communities. Spirituality is considered to be correlated with empathy, compassion, and selflessness, while happiness is characterized by positive emotions and life satisfaction, which help in promoting helping behavior and pro-social behavior. University students, as future leaders and citizens, play a vital role in shaping societal norms and values. Despite the established link between spirituality, happiness, and pro-social behavior, the relationship between these variables and pro-social bystander behavior remains poorly understood, particularly among university students. The mediating role of altruism in this context has

received negligible attention. This study aims to find strategies that will help to promote prosocial behavior among university students. Findings of this research will influence the development of programs and intervention that promote happiness, spirituality and altruism, ultimately enhancing prosocial behavior in various setting, such as education, community development and organizational setting. This study is based on the selfdetermination theory. It is proposed that human behaviors are motivated by three innate psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

OBJECTIVES

This research seek to;

- Investigate relationship between spirituality and pro-social bystander behavior among university students.
- Examine relationship between happiness and pro-social bystander behavior among university students.
- Determine that spirituality is positively correlated with happiness among university students.
- Determine mediating role of altruism in relationship between spirituality, happiness and pro-social bystander behavior among university students.
- Explore difference in pro-social bystander behavior of university students based on demographics (e.g. gender, age, socioeconomic status and educational level).
- Examine that female university student's exhibit higher level of spirituality and happiness compared to male university students.
- Explore that male university show more pro-social bystander behavior as compared to female university students.
- Determine that female university students are more altruistic than male university students.
- Examine spirituality and happiness across urban and rural university students.
- Explore that upper class university students are happier and spiritual than middle and lower class university students.

HYPOTHESES

- Spirituality is negative correlation with pro-social bystander behavior among university students.
- Happiness is negative correlation with pro-social bystander behavior among university students.
- Spirituality is positive correlation with happiness among university students.
- Altruism is positive correlation with spirituality among university students.
- Happiness is positive correlation with altruism among university students.
- Altruism moderate the relationship between spirituality, happiness and prosocial bystander behaviors.
- Female university students exhibit higher levels of spirituality compared to male university students.
- Female university students are expected to be happier than male university students.
- Male university students exhibit higher level of pro-social bystander behavior as compared to female university students.
- Female university students exhibit higher level of altruistic behavior as compared to male university students.
- University students residing in urban areas will exhibit higher level of spirituality as compared to those residing in rural areas.
- University students residing in urban area will exhibit higher level of happiness as compared to those residing in rural areas.

- Upper class university students will report higher level of happiness as compared to middle and lower class university students.
- Doctoral university students will exhibit higher level of happiness as compared to undergraduates and graduates university students.

METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

Correlation research design and quantitative research technique were used in the study.

Data were collected from different universities' students using purposive sampling technique.

SAMPLING

The target population for this study consisted of university students aged 18-above. A sample of 300 university students (comprising 142 male and 158 female students from various disciplines and levels of study) was selected for the study. Data were collected through an online survey that was administered to participants. The survey questionnaire was designed using Google Forms, and the survey link was disseminated to participants through social media platforms. Participants provided informed consent prior to participating in the study, and confidentiality protocols were strictly adhered to in order to protect participants' privacy.

Inclusion Criteria

Participants were required to be currently enrolled as students in a graduate or undergraduate degree program at a university.

Exclusive Criteria

Participants with any physical or mental disabilities.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Spirituality

Spirituality is define as inner value system that a person relies on strength (Houskamp et al. 2004). The word "spirituality" was derived from the Latin word "spiritus", which

mean take breath (Moreira-Almeida & Koenig, 2006). Zinnbauer & Pargament (2005) state that spirituality is an ongoing process of exploring, protecting, and embodying the sacred, leading to spiritual growth and self-awareness. Spirituality is often consider conscious choice to explore, discover, and know more about oneself, universe, and meaning of life (Benson et al., 2012). For measuring spirituality spiritual well-being scale was used, which was developed by Ray Paloutzian and Craig W. Ellison.

Happiness

A person's happiness is often characterized by their individual evaluation of life's joyful moments and overall emotional fulfillment (López, Pedrotti, & Snyder, 2019). Internal characteristics are also accountable for variability of happiness as similar to the external characteristics. Some of the internal characteristics are personality traits such as extroversion and neuroticism (Furnham & Brewin, 1990), attributional stability (Cheng & Furnham, 2001), self-esteem (Cheng & Furnham, 2003; Hills & Argyle, 2001), emotional stability (Hills & Argyle, 2001), loneliness (Neto, 2001), and locus of control (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998). For measuring happiness, subjective happiness scale was used, which was developed by Sonja

Lyubomirsky.

Pro-social Bystander Behavior

Bystander mean someone who witness an event but do not directly involve. Bystander observe the emergency situation but do not provide any help or assistance (Myers, 2002). Then a question arised that why bystander get involved in helping behavior (Batson, 1998). Other situational factors that also impact prosocial behavior includes victim appearance, severity of victim need, cost of helping, and the number of bystanders present (Darley & Latane, 1968). Pro-social bystander have an

internal locus of control and empathy and high social responsibility (Bierhoff et al., 1991). The prosocial bystander behavior was measure through Pro-social Bystander Intervention Scale. This scale was develop by Horton and McMahon (2003) and later adapted by Banyard and Moynihan (2011).

Altruism

Altruism is a type of pro-social behavior (Lay & Hoppmann, 2015), which is define as commitment to help other and to meet the need of other without self-interest (Bussing et al., 2013), even on the cost of self-harm. Altruism is the opposite of egoism, it is motivation to rise other's welfare (MacIntyre, 1967). Altruism was measure through Generative Altruism

Scale, which was developed by Büssing et al., (2013).

PROCEDURE

This study utilized a quantitative research design to examine the relationships between spirituality, happiness, altruism, and pro-social bystander behavior among university students. Data was collected through an online survey administered via Google Forms. The survey was disseminated through social media platforms and email invitations. Participants were requested to complete the online survey, which required

approximately 15-20 minutes. Participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. The data was analyzed by using both descriptive and inferential statistics. SPSS software was used for data analysis.

PROPOSED DATA ANALYSIS

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. The reliability of the scales was calculated through Cronbach's Alpha. Descriptive statistical analysis were performed to examine the normality of data. Pearson correlation analysis was employed to investigate relationships among the variables. To examine gender differences, an independent samples t-test was conducted. Additionally, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed to investigate the effect of demographic variables on outcome variables. For finding the mediating role of altruism, regression analysis was performed.

RESULTS

This study aims to examine the impact of spirituality and happiness on pro-social bystander behavior; mediating role of altruism. Statistical analysis used in this study includes alpha reliability, Pearson correlation, Independent sample t-test, ANOVA and Regression analysis through process macro.

Table 1: *Frequency and percentage of participants (N=300)*

Variables	Categories	F	%
Gender	Male	142	47.3
	Female	158	52.7
Age	18-20	58	19.3
	21-23	110	36.7
	24-26	94	31.3
	27-older	38	12.7
Degree level	Undergraduates	136	45.3

Faculty	Graduates	136	45.3
	Doctoral	28	9.3
	Natural Science	78	26.0
	Social Science	174	58.0
Marital status	Health Science	48	16.0
	Signal	202	67.3
	Married	94	31.3
	Divorced	3	1.0
Area of residence	Widowed	1	0.3
	Urban	164	54.7
	Rural	136	45.3
	Upper class	67	22.3
Socioeconomic status	Middle class	171	57.0
	Lower class	62	20.7

Table 1 shows frequencies and percentage of university students with respect to gender, age, faculty, degree level, marital status, area of residence & socioeconomic status. The table show that male university students ($f=142$, 47.3%) are greater than female university students ($f=158$, 52.7%). the number of university students from different age groups are; 18-20 ($f=58$, 19.3%), 21-23 ($f=110$, 36.7%), 25-26 ($f=94$, 31.3) and 27-older ($f=38$, 12.7%). The number of university students from social sciences ($f=174$, 58%) was greater than number of university students from health science ($f=48$, 16%) and natural science ($f=78$, 26%). The number of undergraduate students ($f=136$, 45.3) was equal to the number of graduates students ($f=136$, 45.3), but the number of doctoral students was less than both ($f=28$, 9.3). The number of single university students ($f=202$, 67.3%) was greater than married ($f=94$, 31.3%), divorced ($f=3$, 1.0%) and widowed ($f=1$, 0.3%). The number of university students from urban area ($f=164$, 54.7) was greater than number of university students from rural area ($f=136$, 45.3). The number of university students from middle class ($f=171$, 57%) was greater than number of university students from upper ($f=67$, 22.3%) and lower class ($f=62$, 20.7%).

Table 2: Psychometric properties of study variables among universities students (N = 300)

Variables	N	M	SD	α	Range		Skewness	Kurtosis
					Potential	Actual		

SWB	300	78.0	13.5	.92	20-120	41-108	-.40	-.258
SH	300	13.9	4.7	.75	0-28	9-28	-.40	-.962
PSBI	300	22.7	6.27	.86	10-50	10-41	.42	-.10
GA	300	26.1	5.3	.80	0-52	11-42	-.29	-.51

Note. SWB= spiritual well-being, SH= subjective happiness, PSBI=pro-social bystander intervention, GA=generative altruism

Table 2 shows psychometric properties of study variables. Reliability analysis shows that alpha

coefficients among universities students are .90, .75, .86 and .80. Values of kurtosis are less than +1 and -1. Both values of skewness and kurtosis show that normality of data is not problematic.

Table 3: Pearson correlation of study variables among universities students (N = 300)

Variables	1	2	3	4
SWB	-	.40**	-.72**	.548**
SH		-	-.21**	.35**
PSBI			-	-.57**
GA				-

Note. **p < .01 SWB= spiritual well-being, SH= subjective happiness, PSBI=pro-social bystander intervention, GA=generative altruism

Table 3 shows Pearson correlation of study variables among universities students.

Results shows that spiritual well-being has significant correlation with happiness ($r = .40$, $p < .01$), and altruism ($r=.54$, $p < .01$), but has

significant negative correlation with pro-social bystander behavior ($r= -.7$, $p< .01$). Happiness has significant negative correlation with pro-social bystander behavior ($r=.21$, $p<.01$) and significant positive correlation with altruism ($r=.3$, $p<.01$). Pro-social bystander behavior has negative correlation with altruism ($r=-.5$, $p<.01$).

Table 4: Mean, standard deviation and t-values for male and female universities students on spiritual well-being, happiness, pro-social bystander behavior and altruism (N = 300)

Variables	Male (n=142)		Female (n=158)		t(298)	P	95% CI		Cohen's d
	MD	SD	MD	SD			LL	UL	
SWB	74.8	13.9	80.8	12.5	-3.8	.000	-8.9	-2.9	0.45
SH	19.8	4.4	20.0	4.8	-3.7	.70	.18	.51	0.04
PSB	24.3	6.4	21.3	5.6	4.3	.000	1.6	4.4	0.49
GA	25.5	5.8	26.5	4.8	-1.5	.12	-2.1	.26	0.18

Note, SWB= spiritual well-being, SH= subjective happiness, PSBI=pro-social bystander intervention, GA=generative altruism

Table 4 shows mean, standard deviation and t-values for male and female university students on spiritual wellbeing, happiness, pro-social bystander behavior and altruism. Results indicate significant mean differences on Spiritual well-being with $t(298) = -3.8, p < .01$. The finding shows that female university students ($M = 80.8, p < .01$) scored high on spirituality as compared to male university students ($M = 74.8, p < .01$). Results indicate non-significant mean difference on happiness with $t(289) = -3.7, p > 0.05$. The finding shows that female university students ($M = 19.9, p > .05$)

scored high on happiness as compared to male university students ($M = 19.8, p > .05$). Results also shows significant mean differences on pro-social bystander behavior with $t(298) = 4.3, p < .001$. Finding show that male university students ($M = 24.3, p < .001$) scored high on pro-social bystander behavior as compare to female university students ($M = 21.3, p < .001$). Similarly, results indicate non-significant mean differences on altruism with $t(298) = -1.5, p > .05$. Which show that female university students ($M = 26.5, p > .05$) score high on altruism as compared to male university students ($M = 25.5, p > .05$).

Table 5: Mean, standard deviation and t-values for urban and rural universities students on spiritual wellbeing, happiness, pro-social bystander behavior and altruism (N = 300)

Variables	Urban (n=164)		rural (n=136)		t(298)	P	95% CI		Cohen's d
	MD	SD	MD	SD			LL	UL	
SWB	78.3	13.3	77.5	13.7	.52	.60	-2.2	3.9	0.05
SH	20.5	4.6	19.1	4.7	2.7	.00	.42	2.5	0.30
PSB	22.8	5.8	22.6	6.7	.36	.71	1.1	1.7	0.03
GA	26.8	5.6	25.2	4.9	2.5	.01	3.8	2.7	0.30

Note, SWB= spiritual well-being, SH= subjective happiness, PSBI=pro-social bystander intervention, GA=generative altruism

Table 5 shows mean, standard deviation and t-values for urban and rural university students on spiritual wellbeing, happiness, pro-social bystander behavior and altruism.

Results indicate non-significant mean differences on Spiritual well-being with $t(298) = .52, p > .05$. The finding shows that urban university students ($M = 78.3, p > .05$) scored high on spirituality as compared to rural university students ($M = 77.5, p > .05$). Results indicate significant mean difference

on happiness with $t(289) = -3.7, p > 0.05$. The finding shows that urban university students ($M = 20.5, p < .001$) scored high on happiness as compared to rural university students ($M = 19.1, p < .001$). Results also shows significant mean differences on pro-social bystander behavior with $t(298) = .36, p > .05$. Finding show that urban university students ($M = 22.8, p > .05$) scored a little high on pro-social bystander behavior as compare to rural university students ($M = 22.6, p > .05$). Similarly, results indicate non-significant mean differences on altruism with $t(298) = 2.5, p < .05$. Which show that urban university students ($M =$

26.8, $p < .05$) score high on altruism as compared to male university students ($M = 25.2$, $p < .05$).



Table 6: Mean, standard deviation and f values for upper, lower and middle universities students on spirituality, happiness, pro-social bystander behavior and altruism(N = 300)

Variables	Upper (n = 67)		Middle (n = 171)		Lower (n = 62)		F	P
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
SWB	76.3	15.1	80.7	11.8	72.0	13.9	10.6	.000
SH	20.4	4.5	20.2	4.5	18.5	5.1	3.7	.02
PSB	23.5	6.9	21.2	5.2	25.9	6.8	14.6	.000
GA	24.8	5.5	26.8	4.9	25.3	6.0	4.0	.01

Note. SWB =spiritual well-being, SH = subjective happiness, PSB = pro-social bystander behavior, GA = generative altruism

Table 6 shows mean, standard deviation and f-values for upper class, middle class and lower class university students on spirituality, happiness, pro-social bystander behavior and altruism. The results showed significant differences in subjective well-being, $F(2, 297) = 10.66$, $p < .001$, pro-social bystander behavior, $F(2, 297) = 3.7$, $p = .02$, altruism, $F(2, 297) = 14.6$, $p < .001$, and spirituality, $F(2, 297) = 4.0$, $p = .01$. Post-hoc analyses indicate

that middle SES students ($M = 80.0$, $p < .000$) reported the highest subjective well-being, while lower SES students exhibited the highest pro-social bystander behavior ($M = 25.5$, $p < .000$) and middle SES students exhibited highest altruism ($M = 26.8$, $p < .05$). Upper SES ($M = 20.4$, $p < .05$) students exhibited highest happiness. Lower SES students reported the lowest spirituality ($M = 72$, $p < .000$). These findings suggest that socioeconomic status influences students' well-being, altruistic tendencies, and prosocial behaviors.

Table 7: Mean, standard deviation and f values for undergraduates, graduated and doctoral universities students on spirituality, happiness, pro-social bystander behavior and altruism(N = 300)

Variables	Undergraduates (n=136)		Graduates (n = 136)		Doctoral (n = 28)		F	P
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
SWB	78.9	14.3	76.5	13.1	80.5	10.4	1.6	.19
SH	18.6	4.8	20.7	4.7	22.2	3.5	11.1	.000
PSB	22.5	6.5	23.0	6.3	22.1	4.4	.420	.65
GA	26.0	5.4	25.6	5.2	28.6	4.8	3.6	.02

Note. SWB =spiritual well-being, SH = subjective happiness, PSB = pro-social bystander behavior, GA = generative altruism

Table 7 shows mean, standard deviation and f-values for undergraduates, graduates and doctoral university students on spirituality, happiness, pro-social bystander behavior and altruism. The results revealed a significant effect of academic level on subjective happiness, $F(2,297) = 11.1$, $p < .001$, and

Table 8: Mediation Estimates (Spirituality= X; Altruism = M; Pro-social bystander intervention = Y)

Effect	Label	Estimate	SE	LL	UL	t	p
Indirect	a × b	-.33	.015	-.09	-.03	-	-
Direct	c	-.27	.02	-.31	-.23	-12.9	.000
Total	c + a × b	-.33	.015	-.37	-.30	-18.2	.000

The table 8 show mediation analysis conducted to examine whether altruism mediates the relationship between spirituality and pro-social bystander behavior. The total effect of spirituality on prosocial bystander behavior is significant, $B = -0.33$, $SE = 0.019$, $t(298) = 18.2$, $p < .001$, indicating that spirituality significantly predicts pro-social bystander behavior. The direct effect of spirituality on prosocial bystander behavior, while controlling for altruism, remained significant, $B = -0.274$, $SE = 0.021$, $t(298) = -12.9$, $p < .001$, suggesting that spirituality has an impact on prosocial bystander behavior beyond the influence of altruism. The

altruism, $F(2,297) = 3.6$, $p = .02$, while non-significant difference on spirituality $F(2, 297) = 1.6$, $p > .05$, and pro social bystander behavior $F(2, 297) = .42$, $p > .05$. The results shows that doctoral university students reported highest spirituality ($M = 80.5$, $p > .19$), happiness ($M = 22.2$, $p < .01$) and altruism ($M = 28.6$, $p < .05$). While graduates university students reported highest prosocial bystander behavior ($M = 23.0$, $p > .05$).

indirect effect of spirituality on prosocial bystander behavior through altruism is $B = 0.33$, $SE = 0.015$, with a 95% confidence interval of $[-0.09, -0.03]$. Since the confidence interval does not include zero, the indirect effect is statistically significant, confirming that altruism partially mediates the relationship between spirituality and prosocial bystander behavior. As the direct effect remained significant, these results suggest partial mediation, meaning spirituality influences prosocial bystander behavior both directly and indirectly through altruism.

Table 9: Mediation Estimates (Happiness= X; Altruism = M; Pro-social bystander intervention = Y)

Effect	Label	Estimate	SE	LL	UL	t	p
Indirect	a × b	-.26	.05	-.37	-.16	-	-
Direct	c	-.02	.06	-.15	-.11	-.33	.74
Total	c + a × b	-.02	.07	-.43	-.14	-3.8	.000

Table 9 show mediation analysis conducted to examine whether altruism mediates the relationship between happiness and prosocial bystander intervention. The total effect of

happiness on prosocial bystander intervention is $B = -0.028$, $SE = 0.075$, $t(298) = -3.8$, $p < .001$, suggesting a significant overall relationship. The direct effect of happiness on prosocial bystander

intervention, while controlling for altruism, was $B = -0.022$, $SE = 0.067$, $t(298) = 0.33$, $p = .741$. Since the p -value is not significant ($p > .05$) and the confidence interval $(-0.15, 0.11)$ includes zero, this indicates that the direct effect is non statistically significant. The indirect effect of happiness on prosocial bystander intervention through altruism is $B = -0.26$, $SE = 0.05$, 95% CI $(-0.37, 0.16)$. Since the confidence interval does not include zero, the indirect effect is statistically significant, confirming that altruism mediates the relationship between happiness and prosocial bystander intervention. Since the direct effect became nonsignificant, this suggests full mediation, meaning the effect of happiness on prosocial bystander intervention is entirely explained through altruism.

DISCUSSION

This study investigate the impact of spirituality and happiness on pro-social bystander behavior; mediating role of altruism among university students. A quantitative approach was employed, using online survey to collect data from a sample of university students. Results of this research revealed several key findings. The results of present study indicate significant correlations among study variables, such as spirituality, happiness, prosocial bystander behavior and altruism. Findings of this study reveal a negative correlation of spirituality and happiness with prosocial bystander behavior that contradict the research hypothesis and most of the previous literature. Previous researches reported positive association between spirituality and prosocial bystander behavior. A study conducted by García-Vázquez et al. (2022) found that spirituality and happiness are positively associated with altruism, and it did not have a direct relationship with pro-social bystander behavior, although the relationship between spirituality, happiness and prosocial bystander is mediated by altruism. Similarly, meta-analysis

spanning nearly six decades reported modest positive correlation between religiosity and prosociality (Kelly et al., 2024). The stronger associations was observed in self-reported measures compared to direct behavioral assessments. This suggests that the relationship between spirituality and pro-social behavior may be context-dependent and influenced by measurement methodologies (Kelly et al., 2024). Another study show that existential well-being was associated negatively with pro-social behavior (Malti, 2023). These findings suggest that impact of spirituality on pro-social bystander behavior may vary across different cultural and demographic contexts. There are several factors that account for the negative correlation observed in this study. Like, the individual with high spirituality may prioritize personal spiritual practices over direct intervention in social situations, especially, in such cultures where the public display of prosocial behavior are less common.

Findings support the idea that spirituality is positively correlated with happiness. This result aligns with an extensive body of research indicating that spirituality plays a significant effect in enhancing an individual well-being and life satisfaction (Koenig, 2012; Joshanloo, 2018). Individuals who engage in spiritual practices often report greater emotional stability, resilience, and a deeper sense of purpose, all of which contribute to overall happiness (Schnell & Keenan, 2011). A research conducted by (Sharma & Sharma, 2016), aimed to find the correlation between spirituality and happiness among individuals aged 25 to 30. This research used the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS) to measure happiness and the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES) for measuring spirituality, data was collected from 100 participants in Udaipur city which show that spirituality is highly correlated with happiness (Sharma & Sharma,

2016). The cross-sectional study conducted by (Hatami & Shekarchizadeh, 2022) showed that spiritual health positively impact happiness and resilience in dental students of Iran. The results indicated that spiritual health was directly associated with both happiness and resilience.

The results of this study support the hypotheses that altruism is positively correlated with both happiness and spirituality. These findings align with previous research suggesting that engaging in altruistic behavior enhances well-being and is often rooted in spiritual beliefs and practices (Post, 2005; Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005). Altruistic people are more likely to experience greater life satisfaction and emotional fulfillment, as helping others fosters positive emotions and strengthens social bonds (Weinstein & Ryan, 2010). Similarly, A study conducted by Chettri and Vimala (2024) investigated the influence of spiritual intelligence on altruistic behavior among young adults aged 18-25. Spiritual Intelligence SelfReport Inventory (SISRI24) is used to measure spirituality and the Self-Report Altruism Scale (SRAS) for measuring altruism, the research finding shows that spirituality is positively correlated with altruism (Chattri & Vimala, 2024). The relationships among spiritual intelligence, altruism, and intercultural willingness to communicate was examined by Clark, Lin, and Maher (2015). Their findings indicated that individuals with higher levels of spiritual intelligence are more likely to exhibit higher levels of altruism and a greater willingness to engage in intercultural communication. This suggests that spiritual intelligence may improve one's tendency to act altruistically, particularly in diverse cultural contexts (Clark et al., 2015).

The next finding is that female university student's exhibit higher spirituality as compared to male university students. This finding is consistent with

previous research suggesting that women tend to report stronger spiritual beliefs, greater religious commitment, and higher engagement in spiritual practices than men (Francis & Penny, 2014; Saucier & Skrzypińska, 2006). Studies across various cultural and religious contexts have also observed this trend, with women often demonstrating a greater inclination toward spiritual experiences and practices that emphasize emotional connection, compassion, and interpersonal relationships (Piedmont, 2005). Similarly a study conducted by Rich (2012) shows that women are more spiritual than men. Further research by Elaine Hoan and Geoff MacDonald analyzed data from nearly 6,000 single adults, revealing that single women are generally happier than single men in various life aspects, including emotional and sexual satisfaction. Women tend to be more satisfied without a partner, often due to strong platonic relationships and finding romantic relationships less beneficial, as they typically shoulder more household duties and receive less sexual gratification (Elaine, 2024). Similarly the other finding of this study is that female university students more happier than male university. Consistent with the previous findings that female score higher on spirituality, and there is positive correlation between spirituality and happiness its meant that as female are more spiritual than male similarly they are more happier than male. This finding also align with previous studies that revealed that female/ women are happier that male/men. Previous studies show that women tend to experience and express greater positive emotions, which contributes to higher levels of subjective well-being (Diener et al., 2013; Fujita, Diener, & Sandvik, 1991). A study conducted by Nolen-Hoeksema and Rusting (1999) reported that "a number of studies have found that women

report experiencing greater happiness and more intense positive emotions than men”.

The findings of this study show that male university students exhibit higher level of prosocial bystander behavior as compare to female university students. This finding align with previous studies, showing that men are more likely to intervene in situations requiring direct action, particularly in public or emergency scenarios (Griskevicius et al., 2007). Some studies have found that men report a higher intention to act as bystanders in certain situations. For example, research indicates that men exhibit greater intention to intervene in scenarios related to sexual violence (Amar, 2014). Men are more likely to help others in public situations that involved risk or courage. This is linked with traditional beliefs that see men as protectors and brave individuals (Martinez-Gregorio et al., 2023). The results also show that female university students exhibit high altruistic behavior as compare to male. This result aligns with previous research suggesting that women tend to engage in more prosocial and empathetic behaviors, and this is driven by emotional sensitivity and social bonding tendencies (Eagly & Koenig, 2006; Carlo et al., 2019). Studies have consistently shown that women are more likely to engage in altruistic acts, particularly in situations that involve caregiving, emotional support, and interpersonal connections (Piff et al., 2010). Simmons and Emanuele (2007) use US dataset Giving and Volunteering 1999 in their study and found that on average, women are likely to give more of both their money and time. The study show that variables affecting monetary donations were significant for both genders, but women consistently contributed more than men (Simmons and Emanuele, 2007).

The findings of this study indicate that urban university students exhibit higher levels of

spirituality compared to rural university students. This result contrasts with traditional assumptions that rural environments foster greater religious and spiritual engagement due to close-knit communities and stronger cultural traditions (McCullough & Willoughby, 2009). However, it aligns with recent research suggesting that urban settings provide diverse spiritual opportunities, exposure to different philosophical perspectives, and access to a variety of spiritual practices beyond conventional religious beliefs (Roof, 2015). Additionally, higher levels of education and socioeconomic diversity in urban areas might contribute to the development of more reflective and personal spiritual beliefs. Research suggests that individuals in urban environments have greater opportunities for selfexploration and existential questioning, which can lead to a more profound and personal connection to spirituality (Zinnbauer et al., 1997). Urban students may also experience higher levels of stress due to fast-paced lifestyles, that motivate them to seek spiritual practices such as mindfulness, meditation, and holistic wellbeing techniques as coping mechanisms (Koenig, 2012). The research finding show that students from upper socioeconomic status are happier as compared to students of lower and middle university students. Research on the relationship between happiness and socioeconomic status present different findings. Some studies show that upper class people mostly report higher level of happiness as compared to lower and middle class people. Upper-class Americans have a distinct advantage in terms of economic well-being compared to those in the middle and lower classes. They express significantly higher satisfaction with their financial situation, with nearly half (49%) reporting being very satisfied (Pew research center, 2012). In contrast, only 32% of middle-class individuals and 13% of lower-class individuals

share the same level of financial contentment. A study conducted by Pew Research Center found that 42% of upper-class adults described themselves as very happy, compared to 32% of middle-class and 20% of lower-class adults. Similarly, Matthew Killingsworth, (2024), challenges the view that higher income ceases to impact happiness beyond a certain threshold. His study indicates that happiness continues to increase with income, even for high earners. Which suggest that people from upper socioeconomic status are tend to be happier than people from lower and middle socioeconomic status. This results finding show that among undergraduate, graduate and doctoral students, doctoral students are happier. Contrary to prevailing literature, this study hypothesizes that doctoral students experience greater happiness and life satisfaction than graduates and undergraduate students. This hypothesis can be justified through theoretical framework, such as Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), which suggest that individual with higher level of intrinsic motivation, such as pursuing knowledge for personal growth, tend to experience greater autonomy, competence and relatedness, which lead to higher level of happiness and wellbeing. Similarly, according Maslow's hierarchy of needs, doctoral students already fulfilled their basic, psychological and security needs, which is why they can focuses on higher needs like personal growth, and self-actualization (Maslow, 1943).

The findings of this study indicate that altruism mediates the relationship of spirituality and happiness with prosocial bystander behavior. This suggests that individuals with higher levels of spirituality and happiness engage in pro-social bystander actions as compare to other people primarily due to their altruistic tendencies. These results align with previous research indicating that altruism plays a crucial role in motivating prosocial

behaviors, which mean an individuals with a strong sense of altruism are more willing to help others in need (Carlo et al., 2010; Batson, 2011). García-Vázquez et al., (2022) conduct research on the relationship between spirituality, happiness, pro-social bystander behavior and altruism and suggest that although both spirituality and happiness are not directly correlated with prosocial bystander behavior, but altruism mediate the relationship between spirituality, happiness and pro-social bystander behavior. That more spirituality and happiness lead to altruism behavior that directly influence the tendency to help someone in need (García-Vázquez et al., 2022).

IMPLEMENTATION

Findings of this research have significant implications for promoting pro-social bystander behavior among university students. The results suggest that by promoting spirituality and happiness increase altruistic tendencies, which increase pro-social bystander behavior among university students. Universities can incorporate happiness and spirituality in their wellness programs to promote more positive and helping behaviors among university students. Universities can also encourage students to engage in pro-social behavior, such as volunteering and social services. That will help students to promote a sense of social responsibility and connectedness.

LIMITATIONS

While this study provides valuable insights into the relationships between spirituality, happiness, altruism, and pro-social bystander behavior, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study primarily focused on university students, which limits generalizability of the findings to other age groups and populations. Similarly, this study was conducted within a specific cultural setting, which may affect the applicability of findings to other contexts. This study's finding should be interpreted

with cautions due to its reliance on self-report measures and a sample limited to university students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For future researchers it is recommended to,

- Replicate the study using more diverse sample, such as different age groups, cultures and populations.
- To examine the impact of culture on the relationship between spirituality, happiness, and pro-social bystander behavior.
- Exploring additional mediators and moderators, such as personality traits or social support, could refine the theoretical framework
- Investigating situational and environmental influences on prosocial bystander behavior could offer a more comprehensive understanding.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the role of spirituality and happiness in pro-social bystander behavior, with altruism as a mediator. Spirituality negatively correlated with prosocial behavior but positively with happiness. Altruism was positively linked to both and mediated their impact on pro-social behavior. Spirituality and happiness is not directly correlated with pro-social bystander behavior although this relation is explained through altruism. These findings highlight altruism's key role in fostering pro-social actions. Future research should further explore these relationships to enhance understanding and practical applications.

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