



International Journal of Allied Medical Sciences and Clinical Research (IJAMSCR)

IJAMSCR | Volume 8 | Issue 4 | Oct - Dec - 2020
www.ijamscr.com

ISSN:2347-6567

Research article

Medical research

Association Between Spirituality and Spiritual Well-Being Among Displaced Older Adults in Marawi City

Ashley A. Bangcola*, Hamdoni K. Pangandaman

College of Health Sciences, Mindanao State University, Marawi City, 9700, Philippines.

*Corresponding Author: Ashley A. Bangcola
Email id: ashley.bangcola@msumain.edu.ph

ABSTRACT

Geriatrics or advanced aging as one of the most vulnerable and affected population in a post-war conflict may have different spiritual inclination affecting their spirituality and spiritual well-being which is unique from the normally established developmental pathway of older adults. This study described the profile, spirituality and its association with spiritual well-being of older adults displaced in the evacuation centers as survivors of Marawi siege. A descriptive correlational technique was adopted and Raosoft sample size calculator yielded 97 older adults as sample participants which randomly stratified in the selected and densely populated evacuation centers in the Municipality of Saguiaran, Pantar, Balo-I, Maria Christina and Iligan City in Mindanao, Philippines. Data were collected through an adopted Spiritual Experience Index (SEI) and Spirituality Assessment Scale (SAS) questionnaire which then coded and analyzed using Microsoft Excel and IBM-SPSS computer software application. Result shows that most of the older adults' married (60%) women (64%) at their late sixties ($\mu=68.1$; $sd=6.98$) attained a strong level of spirituality ($\mu=5.26$) and a fair spiritual well-being ($\mu=3.80$). Based on Pearson r Correlation, there was a positive correlation between spirituality and spiritual well-being ($p=.043$). The study concluded that as spirituality of displaced older adults increases so does their spiritual well-being. Amidst challenges they encountered, spirituality is seemingly a strength for them despite normal physiological decline and social crisis. So, awareness of the importance of spirituality and spiritual well-being in caring for these group of people is necessary. Authorities are recommended to provide more comprehensive and appropriate care services to elderly patients and to dedicate programs and approaches to enhance spirituality and spiritual well-being.

Keywords: Spirituality, Spiritual Well-being, Older Adults, Displaced, Evacuation Center.

INTRODUCTION

Advanced aging in a situational crisis may have different spiritual inclination affecting their spiritual well-being. In a post-war crisis, older adults vacuum in maintaining their spirituality has been altered due to emerging psychophysiological problems including coping with trauma [1], health issues, financial capability [2] and significant others support [3]. They are also the most vulnerable and affected population [4, 5] and so may have unique level of spirituality and spiritual well-being unique from the normally established developmental pathway of older adults [6].

'Spirituality' is a noun which denotes the essence of people's being and the purpose in being, which permeates

how they live, and brings awareness of who and what they are, and what their inner resources are which shape their life journey [7]. It is a personal quest for understanding answers to ultimate questions about life, about meaning and about relationships that are sacred or transcendent [7, 8]. As can be gleaned from the related literature, it seems that the predominant concept of spiritual needs is finding a sense of meaning and purpose in life.

Over the years, the health literature available on the topic of spirituality and the provision of spiritual care has grown. Spirituality includes feelings of connection to others and finding meaning in life [9-12]. It has also been associated with a variety of positive health outcomes for individuals [13, 14]. This may be due to spirituality serving as an individual resource for dealing with illness [15] when

usual coping mechanisms are ineffective[11]. Spirituality then thus encourages positive emotions [13, 15] which interesting to explore in the post-war conflict such the case of Marawi siege in the Philippines.

Some researchers have also found that the importance of spirituality tends to increase during later adulthood[16, 17]. Increasing longevity in modern society puts spiritual needs of older adults at the forefront of societal priorities. Understanding individual spiritual perspectives become increasingly important, given the issues of loss, physical illness and mortality that are confronted in old age [7]. Increasing spiritual goals and pursuits with an increase in introspection are a natural part of the maturational process from mid to later life[10]. Based on this supporting literature, it can be said that as people grow older, some tend to contemplate more on matters of mortality and spirituality.

Moreover, the role of spirituality in health and health care is recognized by health professionals[7, 8]. Researchers stated further that spirituality has important positive relationships with various measures of life satisfaction such as physical and mental health[16, 17]. Moberg (1978) also notes that its benefits therapy for recovery of illness and is a source of meaning in life. In general, it can be said that although people vary in their needs, spiritual needs remain an important component, which must be satisfied. Although the fields of spirituality and spiritual well-being have been extensively explored, there still remains much debate over the concept itself. Spirituality has been associated with improved perception of health status, especially among women who are experiencing challenges to their health and well-being[18].

While there has been a lot of research done on the topic of spirituality, only few have focused on geriatric respondents and the possible link between their spirituality and spiritual well-being especially under unusual situation in the case of those who have been displaced in evacuation centers which presumed having special needs and priorities than their spirituality and spiritual well-being. Exploring and understanding older adults' spirituality, spiritual well-being and the significant relationship between them is an exclusive contribution to the body of knowledge in dealing with and providing health intervention in promoting spirituality and spiritual well-being.

METHODS

This research study employed a descriptive correlation design to assess the correlation between spirituality and spiritual well-being of older adults living or having lived in Marawi City, which mostly has been displaced in the evacuation centers at Municipality of Saguwaran, Pantar, Balo-I, Maria Christina and Iligan City. Total population of older adults (N=128) were retrieved from each Social Service Office evacuation centers and employed Raosoft online sample size calculator [19] (n=97) which evenly distributed in evacuation centers through stratified random technique.

As a selection criterion, the participants have been selected on the basis of their age (that they be at least sixty years old and above), regardless of their gender and has lived in Marawi City. Additionally, participants of both genders, living with immediate family, mobile, and were able to communicate verbally, were defined as inclusion

criteria. Exclusion criteria included individuals who had no ability to answer the questions and partake in the interview.

The study was carried out through a survey method using questionnaires as the main instrument. Data collection tools included a modified three-part questionnaire developed from research and through literature review related to spirituality and spiritual wellbeing.

Part I dealt with the profile of the respondents and includes measures of demographic characteristics. All information gained in this section had been used only for the preparation of a general profile for individuals participating in this research. Part II of the research instrument measured the spirituality of the respondents using the Spiritual Experience Index (SEI) developed by Genia (1991) to measure spiritual maturity in persons of diverse religious and spiritual beliefs[20]. The SEI is a 23-item scale that measures faith and spiritual journey, aiming to not impose any particular faith as part of the questions. This questionnaire is a revised version of the Spiritual Experience Index[20]. Mainly, the original has been shortened, and, through factor analysis, been revised into two subscales: 1) Spiritual Support (13 questions) which reflect a dimension of faith that provides a strong undergirding for the personality and 2) Spiritual Openness (10 questions). Using Cronbach Alpha, reliability for the Spiritual Support and Spiritual Openness scales were 0.95 and 0.79 respectively (n=286). Internal consistency for the full scale of 23 items was 0.89[20].

Meanwhile, Part III of the research instrument assessed the spiritual well-being of the respondents utilizing a 28-item in a Likert scale Spirituality Assessment Scale (SAS) questionnaire developed by Ellison (1983) [21] and further validated through construct validity for the four-factor model of spirituality and reliably tested (Cronbach alpha=0.92) by Howden (1994)[22]. The researchers prepared a translation of the questionnaires to Tagalog or Meranaw language for older persons who cannot be able to understand English.

Prior actual data gathering, the researchers consulted Local Government Unit (LGU) ethics review board for elderly in the Municipality of Saguwaran, Lanao del Sur forethical clearances and approval (LGU-ERB: Nov1717). The older adults voluntarily decided to take part in the study. A written informed consent was taken from the eligible participants after the researchers explained the whole protocol of the study.

Questionnaires were personally distributed by the researchers to all older adults available in the evacuation centers who have met the inclusion criteria. The data gathered were tallied, coded and tabulated in Microsoft Excel and which then imported to IBM-SPSS (Statistical Package and Service Solution) version 20 computer software for statistical analysis and interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-demographic characteristics

All the participants (n=97) were Meranao Muslims from five evacuation centers: Iligan City (14.4%), Municipalities of Saguwaran (23.71%), Pantar (21.64%), Baloi (31.95%), and Maria Christina (8.24%), where most of the families were displaced due to the Marawi City siege. The statistics on the older persons in

These evacuation centers were based on the records

available in the designated social work office. Of the 97 older adults who participated in the research, 62 (64%) were women, and all were between 60 and 99 years old, with a mean of 68.1 years ($sd=6.98$). Older adults between 60 to 69 years old predominated (53.9%), along with older adults who were married (60.1%). In terms of education, more than half were high school graduates (51.5%). The majority

(66.0%) had a monthly income of less than 10,000 pesos. Most of them consider themselves as moderately religious - attending religious events at least once a week, a believer who believes in the power of Supreme Being, and had recently experienced situational crisis such as financial difficulty, death of spouse, and being displaced in other place, that fairly affects their health.

Table 1 - Spiritual Support Subscale of the Older Adults

Statement Indicators		Mean	Standard Deviation	Descriptive Rating
1.	My faith guides my whole approach to life.	5.74	0.833	Strongly Agree
2.	My faith is a way of life.	5.68	0.758	Strongly Agree
3.	I gain spiritual strength by trusting in a higher power.	5.53	1.022	Strongly Agree
4.	My faith helps me to confront tragedy and suffering.	5.52	1.052	Strongly Agree
5.	My faith is an important part of my individual identity.	5.49	0.991	Strongly Agree
6.	Sharing my faith with others is important for my spiritual growth.	5.43	0.889	Strongly Agree
7.	My faith is often a deeply emotional experience.	5.35	1.071	Strongly Agree
8.	My relationship to God is experienced as unconditional love.	5.35	1.217	Strongly Agree
9.	My faith gives my life meaning and purpose.	5.14	1.090	Agree
10.	I make a conscious effort to live in accordance with my spiritual values.	5.10	1.246	Agree
11.	I often think about issues concerning my faith.	4.96	1.010	Agree
12.	My faith enables me to experience forgiveness when I act against my moral conscience.	4.93	1.218	Agree
13.	I often feel strongly related to a power greater than myself.	4.23	1.212	Somewhat Agree
Over-all Mean:		5.265		Strongly Agree

Spirituality

Table 1 illustrates the spirituality of the older adults using the Spiritual Support Subscale derived from the Spiritual Experience Index[20]. The older adult in general, reflects a stronger spirituality or reliance on spiritual beliefs and practices as support based on the collective findings with a total point of 68.45 and overall mean (5.265). The indicator in the Spiritual Support Subscale with the highest mean was the statement about the respondents' 'faith guiding their approach to life' (mean=5.74, $sd=0.833$) while the statement "I often feel strongly related to a power greater than myself" garnered the lowest mean score (mean=4.23, $sd=1.212$).

The older adults in this study have put more emphasis on faith as a guide to their approach to life and consider it as a way of life, part of their individual identity. They trust the Almighty to earn strength in helping them to confront tragedy and suffering. They are deeply emotional in their faith, their relationship with God is experienced as an unconditional love, and they shared their faith with others to promote spiritual growth. This supports the literature that older adults have higher sense of spirituality[16, 17].

It may be reasonably assumed that in the context of the Marawi crisis, major conflicts do not lessen one's spirituality, and may even be a cause for increasing spirituality as it is in one's lowest point where one might seek comfort and meaning in a higher power. One's faith and commitment to their religion may provide a coping mechanism and a source of strength for persons experiencing loss and crisis[23]. Especially for Muslim Filipinos who are generally deeply religious and traditional. This may be why most of the items had 'strongly agree' as

the rating.

On the one hand, people facing crises may blame God or any other higher power for letting it happen to them, but on the other hand they may increase their prayers in seeking for guidance and relief, which may be the reason why the last item 'I often feel strongly related to a power greater than myself' has the lowest score. This may also be because in Islam, its adherents strongly feel that there is nothing equal nor anything that can be likened to God (Allah), and thus they feel they can only somewhat agree in feeling 'related' to Him.

Then on the other hand again, the statement 'My faith guides my whole approach to life' has the highest score, probably because for its believers, Islam is a whole way of life, and not only a religion. It does not only have a religious aspect, but a social and civil aspects as well, an example of which is the Shariah law, which guides and governs the conduct of Muslims.

In addition, the older adults agree that their faith gives life meaning and purpose and makes conscious effort in accordance with their spiritual values. They also acknowledge issues concerning their faith and consider asking for forgiveness when their actions are against their moral conscience. They somewhat agree that they feel strongly related to a power greater than themselves. This may be attributed to their need for strength in a time of confusion and chaos amidst the happening of the Marawi siege.

Spiritual Well-being

Table 2 illustrates that the older adults who have lived in Marawi City generally 'somewhat agree' with an overall

mean of 3.80 on the subscales of spirituality assessment or spiritual well-being in the context of unifying interconnectedness (mean=4.07, sd=1.113), meaning or purpose in life (mean=3.50, sd=1.144), inner resources (mean=3.74, sd=1.172), and transcendence (mean=3.89, sd=1.104).

The score on the Spirituality Assessment Scale representing the older adults' spiritual well-being ranges

from 28 to 168. Over-all, the subscales generally describe the spiritual well-being of the older adults from Marawi City based on the average scores of 106.26. The data in Table 2 mean that the older adults in this study have a fairor mixed positive and negative spiritual well-being which imply that, although their spiritual well-being is not strong, it is at least slightly above average, or their positive spiritual well-being outweighs their negative spiritual well-being.

Table 2 - Summary of Spirituality Assessment Scale (Spiritual Well-being)

Subscales	Scores	Mean	SD	Descriptive Rating
Unifying Interconnectedness	36.59	4.07	1.113	Somewhat Agree
Meaning or Purpose in Life	20.42	3.50	1.144	Somewhat Agree
Inner Resources	33.66	3.74	1.172	Somewhat Agree
Transcendence	15.59	3.89	1.104	Somewhat Agree
Over-all:	106.26	3.80		Somewhat Agree

The subscale that garnered the highest score of 36.59 is the unifying interconnectedness which is defined as the older adults' sense of belongingness, ability to forgive, stability of the environment, feeling of kinship and connection to all of life, service to others, and of feeling responsible in preserving the planet. This is consistent with the research of Jafari et.al (2010) where it was found that individuals having active spiritual life are healthy people mentally, self-confident, and can find a deeper connection with other people and the environment. These people are inclined to see themselves lovely, skillful and competent and can find a God so that guide them in their lives, make them happy and support them when they need. The results of the research confirm that patients having spiritual well-being and great hope turn to related behaviors to health such as prayer to improve chance of being alive and the quality of their life[24].

In the context of the Marawi crisis, one explanation for why the first subscale, unifying interconnectedness, has the highest score may due to the harsh circumstances, that the respondents had faced. Tragedy has a way of bringing

people together, through shared understanding and pain. There is also the matter of the respondents' spirituality factoring into it. Ordinarily, in the face of such overwhelming violence, some people would lose hope, be focused only on their own survival, feel as if there was no longer any meaning to life, lose their self-confidence, or be unable to overcome their own experience[6]. However, it is notable that despite the occurrence of crisis the levels of the respondents' spiritual well-being are still relatively positive, which corresponds with the high levels of spirituality the respondents have as shown by the data.

Correlation of Variables

The results of the present research indicated that there is a significant relationship between spirituality and spiritual well-being among older adults in Marawi City. As revealed in the findings, spirituality has low correlation with spiritual well-being ($\rho=0.451$), which was still however found to be significant (p value=0.043) because the obtained p value is lesser than the alpha level of significance at 0.05.

Table 3 – Correlation of Spirituality and Spiritual Well-being

Correlated Variables	Pearson r value	p value	Interpretation
Spirituality and Spiritual Well-being	0.451	0.043*	Significant
**0.05 level of significance			

The relationship of the variables is positively correlated, which means that as spirituality increases, spiritual well-being also increases. These findings are consistent with the results of previous researches. Despite the numerous researches on spirituality and spiritual well-being, scholars have not begun to explore the relationship between the said variables in the context of older adults [23, 25-

29]especially those currently undergoing a crisis in their lives. Although it might be suggested that these variables have unidirectional relationships, there has not yet been available evidenced-based practice research. By building on this idea, the researchers decided to examine the relationship of the said variables in the context of older adult Meranaos.

The central findings of this research show that Meranao

older adults have strong spirituality and heavily rely on their spiritual beliefs and practices. The results show that they have mixed positive and negative spiritual well-being. These variables have proportional or unidirectional relationship, in which an increase of spirituality will also mean an increase in their spiritual well-being.

The result of this study reaffirms in particular, the reliance and tenacity of Meranaos in the context of the Marawi crisis, as well as their deep abiding commitment to their spiritual values, beliefs and practices[30]. The result of a mixed positive and negative spiritual well-being may be justified by the struggle and challenges the Meranaos are currently experiencing due to the conflict in their place of origin. The result may even be expected as some of the respondents expressed uncertainty on the quality of life in the context of health and functioning, independence, control over life, home and neighborhood, and financial circumstances, immediately in the aftermath of the crisis.

This study was focused on validating a hypothesis concerning the relationship between an older person's spirituality and spiritual well-being. If advanced age leads to increased spirituality, then older persons will have increased spirituality which will then have an impact on their spiritual well-being.

This study validated these propositions by examining the level of spirituality and spiritual well-being of the older person respondents who were victims of the recent Marawi crisis. Through the study, we were able to prove that there was in fact a significant relationship between the respondents' spirituality and spiritual well-being. Thus, it also means that spirituality of a person affects their spiritual well-being.

REFERENCES

1. J. Mutambara and T. Sodi, "Exploring the role of spirituality in coping with war trauma among war veterans in Zimbabwe," *Sage open*, vol. 8, no. 1, p. 2158244017750433, 2018.
2. R. S. Murthy and R. Lakshminarayana, "Mental health consequences of war: a brief review of research findings," (in eng), *World Psychiatry*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 25-30, Feb 2006.
3. J. M. Fegert, C. Diehl, B. Leyendecker, K. Hahlweg, and V. Prayon-Blum, "Psychosocial problems in traumatized refugee families: overview of risks and some recommendations for support services," *Child adolescent psychiatry mental health*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 1-8, 2018.
4. D. Somasundaram and S. Sivayokan, "Rebuilding community resilience in a post-war context: developing insight and recommendations-a qualitative study in Northern Sri Lanka," *International journal of mental health systems*, vol. 7, no. 1, p. 3, 2013.
5. R. S. Murthy and R. Lakshminarayana, "Mental health consequences of war: a brief review of research findings," *World psychiatry*, vol. 5, no. 1, p. 25, 2006.
6. A. M. Stinson, "Spiritual Life Review with Older Adults: Finding Meaning in Late Life Development," 2013.
7. M. Ramezani, F. Ahmadi, E. Mohammadi, and A. Kazemnejad, "Spiritual care in nursing: a concept analysis," *International nursing review*, vol. 61, no. 2, pp. 211-219, 2014.
8. H. G. Koenig and H. J. Cohen, *The link between religion and health: Psychoneuroimmunology and the faith factor*. Oxford University Press, 2002.
9. B. S. Barnum, *Spirituality in nursing: From traditional to new age*. Springer Publishing Company, 2006.
10. M. L. Friedemann, J. Mouch, and T. Racey, "Nursing the spirit: The framework of systemic organization," *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, vol. 39, no. 4, pp. 325-332, 2002.
11. J. M. Simoni, M. G. Martone, and J. F. Kerwin, "Spirituality and psychological adaptation among women with HIV/AIDS: Implications for counseling," *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, vol. 49, no. 2, p. 139, 2002.
12. M. E. O'Brien, *Prayer in nursing: The spirituality of compassionate caregiving*. Jones & Bartlett Learning, 2003.
13. P. C. Hill and K. I. Pargament, "Advances in the conceptualization and measurement of religion and spirituality: Implications for physical and mental health research," *American psychologist*, vol. 58, no. 1, p. 64, 2003.
14. W. R. Miller and C. E. Thoresen, "Spirituality, religion, and health: An emerging research field," *American psychologist*, vol. 58, no. 1, p. 24, 2003.
15. J. Kelly, "Spirituality as a coping mechanism," *Dimensions of Critical Care Nursing*, vol. 23, no. 4, pp. 162-168, 2004.

The respondents' have a strong level of spirituality, while they have a fairly above average level of spiritual well-being considering the circumstances they are facing. These relationships were validated as being correlated and unidirectional, such that the stronger the spirituality of the respondents, the better the spiritual well-being.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The older adults in the study presented a strong level of spirituality and have a fair or mixed spiritual well-being. Additionally, there is a significant relationship between spirituality and spiritual well-being. Therefore, as spirituality increase so does spiritual well-being, and as spiritual well-being increases, so does quality of life.

In conclusion, the significant relationships found between spirituality and spiritual well-being are further evidence that the healthcare community should focus on the fourth dimension of health in providing care to older adults. The results of this study point to the need to provide spiritually and religious-based care, so that nurses can propose care plans, including nursing diagnoses and interventions that are holistic in nature in order to provide comprehensive care for older adults.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors acknowledge their colleague's encouragement and inspiration in the process of making this study possible. Same goes to the time and effort shared by participants.

16. J. Graham, D. Coholic, and J. Coates, "Spirituality as a guiding construct in the development of Canadian social work: Past and present considerations," *Critical Social Work*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 1-17, 2006.
17. D. O. Moberg and P. M. Brusek, "Spiritual well-being: A neglected subject in quality of life research," *Social Indicators Research*, vol. 5, no. 1-4, pp. 303-323, 1978.
18. C. F. Musgrave, C. E. Allen, and G. Allen, "Spirituality and health for women of color," *American Journal of Public Health*, vol. 92, no. 4, pp. 557-560, 2002.
19. I. Raosoft, "Sample size calculator," Available from: www.raosoft.com/samplesize, 2004.
20. V. Genia, "The spiritual experience index: Revision and reformulation," *Review of religious research*, pp. 344-361, 1997.
21. J. W. Howden, "Development and psychometric characteristics of the Spirituality Assessment Scale," 1994.
22. L. L. Ellison, "The spiritual well-being scale," 2006.
23. J. Manning-Walsh, "Spiritual struggle: Effect on quality of life and life satisfaction in women with breast cancer," *Journal of Holistic Nursing*, vol. 23, no. 2, pp. 120-140, 2005.
24. E. Jafari, M. Najafi, F. Sohrabi, G. R. Dehshiri, E. Soleymani, and R. Heshmati, "Life satisfaction, spirituality well-being and hope in cancer patients," *Procedia-Social Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 5, pp. 1362-1366, 2010.
25. R. E. Lark, "The relationship of mood and spirituality to state hope and dispositional forgiveness," 2007.
26. N. Mascaro, D. H. Rosen, and L. C. Morey, "The development, construct validity, and clinical utility of the spiritual meaning scale," *Personality Individual Differences*, vol. 37, no. 4, pp. 845-860, 2004.
27. A. E. Rippentrop, E. M. Altmaier, and C. P. Burns, "The relationship of religiosity and spirituality to quality of life among cancer patients," *Journal of Clinical Psychology in Medical Settings*, vol. 13, no. 1, p. 29, 2006.
28. C. R. Snyder et al., "The will and the ways: development and validation of an individual-differences measure of hope," *Journal of personality social psychology*, vol. 60, no. 4, p. 570, 1991.
29. D. P. Yoon, "Factors affecting subjective well-being for rural elderly individuals: the importance of spirituality, religiousness, and social support," *Journal of Religion Spirituality in Social Work: Social Thought*, vol. 25, no. 2, pp. 59-75, 2006.
30. F. Tantoco and C. Nelson, "The Spirituality of Effective Public School Principals in Northern Mindanao, Philippines," *Advanced Science Letters*, vol. 24, no. 11, pp. 8003-8006, 2018.

How to cite this article: Association Between Spirituality and Spiritual Well-Being Among Displaced Older Adults in Marawi City. Ashley A. Bangcola, Hamdoni K. Pangandaman. Int J of Allied Med Sci and Clin Res 2020; 8(4): 722-727.

Source of Support: Nil. **Conflict of Interest:** None declared.