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PARENTS SOCIOCULTURAL BACKGROUND AND RELIGIOSITY IN PREUNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract:

Follow a line of investigation has shown that conditions of socio cultural factors in parents can be interrelated to the religiosity in children and the aim of the present study is to find out correlation between parents socio cultural background and religiosity in pre university students. The sample comprised 214 (108 males and 106 females) subjects from two pre university in Iran. Family socio cultural background questionnaire and Muslim religiosity-personality inventory (MRPI- Krauss et al. 2006) carried out on the student's group sample. The effects of gender on religiosity and family socio cultural background were also examined. Pearson correlation analysis and two independent sample T test were used to analyze the data. The results have revealed that the level of religiosity is significantly correlated with family socio cultural background. Moreover it was found that there is significant gender difference in religiosity, whereas there is no significant difference between family socio cultural backgrounds.

KEY WORDS:

Pre university students, Religiosity, Spirituality, Family Socio cultural Background.

INTRODUCTION

Interaction between society, religion and culture is one of the most complex phenomena experts have attempted to understand and explain around the world. Societies and cultures are in modification and this Change is shaped by many factors. Culture is part of the fabric of every society, including our own. It shapes "the way things are done" and our understanding of why this should be so. This more comprehensive approach is proposed in the definition of culture adopted at the World Conference on Cultural Policies (Adelman, et al. 1971). To analyze such interaction in a nation in which the predominant religion has historically been somewhat weak institutionally and in which there have been high levels of competition from other religions, as well as ideologies, presents clear challenges. "Religion" derives from religio, "to bind back." Like "spirituality," the term "religion" has suffered from a multiplicity of definitions. Many definitions of religion are possible and they may always be criticized as somehow influenced by philosophical, theological, and, in general, ideological conceptions of religion, as well as cultural and historical "incarnations" of religion. It may also happen that definitions of religion emphasize one or another psychological theory. Religion refers to a system of beliefs and worship, including religious practices and spiritual approaches to life. The right to religious freedom is guaranteed under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Religiousness has specific behavioral, social, doctrinal, and denominational characteristics because it involves a system of worship and doctrine that is shared within a group. Spirituality is concerned with the transcendent, addressing ultimate questions about life's meaning, with the assumption that there is more to life than what we see or fully understand. Spirituality can call us

beyond self to concern and compassion for others. While religions aim to foster and nourish the spiritual life—and spirituality is often a salient aspect of religious participation—it is possible to adopt the outward forms of religious worship and doctrine without having a strong relationship to the transcendent. (Breault and Barkey, 1982)

Religiosity as a basic of culture has important effect in individual life. Man's faith is as old as humankind itself. Priests and physicians were often the same individuals in different civilizations (Bhugra 1996). The inner experience of spiritual feelings and awareness are an integral part of the everyday religious and spiritual lives of many individuals. As far back as James's *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature* (James, 1994), there has been interest in this experience of the individual from a psychological perspective. The aspects of religiosity can be categorized in 3 important dimensions:

1. Psychological functions of religion (in Birth and Death, Life Passages, Life Meaning, Ageing, Child Rearing, Life events and marriage).
2. Sociological aspects of religion (Mental Health, Life Satisfaction and Coping with stress).
3. Individual and environmental health.

It can be a basis of ego support and enhance positive experiences, such as hope and optimism. Combination of cultural and religious traditions is well exemplified in the wedding ceremony. Studies have shown that religiously active marriages are more satisfying and less prone to divorce. (Dudley & Kosinski 1990). Frankl (1965) emphasized the importance of searching for life meaning as important dimension of religion. In the social dimension, it can be very effective factors in control of people and to maintain cultural traditions. More over the social support that provides by religion can be is a major therapeutic tool used in all forms of counseling and psychotherapy (Browne, 1998). Koenig (1988) examined coping strategies among different populations including persons facing serious health problems, or in the midst of severe life stress - concluding that religion (faith in God, prayer, scripture reading, or attending church, mosque or synagogue) was the important factor that enabled them to cope with difficult or stressful life circumstances. Spirituality can refer to an ultimate or an alleged immaterial reality, an inner path enabling a person to discover the essence of his/her being; or the “deepest values and meanings by which people live. Vassallo (2001) states that spirituality is “the essence or the life principle of the person, which transcends the bio and psychosocial nature,” while religion is “a system of beliefs and practices in which a group of people seek to find the meaning in the universe, life, and a higher being.” Spirituality is more frequently described than defined. The word derives from the Latin spirare, which means, to breathe. In modern usage it includes such a wide range of human experience--traditional religions, New Age teachings, personal mystical experience and the quest for meaning in life--which researchers have not been able to agree on a universal definition that can be measured. Stack (1983); define spirituality as “a quality that goes beyond religious affiliation that strives for inspirations, reverence, awe, meaning and purpose, even in those who do not believe in any God.” They also state that an individual's spirituality involves the search for answers about the infinite, which often come into focus in situations of emotional stress, physical illness, or death. Spiritual practices, including meditation, prayer and contemplation, are intended to develop an individual's inner life; spiritual experience includes that of connectedness with a larger reality, yielding a more comprehensive self; with other individuals or the human community; with nature or the cosmos; or with the divine realm (Tacey , 2003). Spirituality is often experienced as a source of inspiration or orientation in life (Shafranske and Gorsuch.1984) It can encompass belief in immaterial realities or experiences of the immanent or transcendent nature of the world. Religious belief and practice enhance health and wellbeing, although aspects of this relationship are contested. The psychological literature suggests that the benefits to wellbeing flow from the social support, existential meaning, and sense of purpose, coherent belief system and moral code that religion provides. Religiosity and well-being was the subject of different studies. Several studies have revealed a positive association between religiosity and well-being (Greene & Yoon, 2004; Hackney & Sanders, 2003; Maselko & Kubansky, 2006). Koenig (2004) identified that religious beliefs and practices associated with significantly less depression and faster recovery from depression, lower suicide rates, less anxiety, less substance abuse, greater well-being, hope, and optimism, more purpose and meaning in life, greater marital satisfaction and stability, and higher social support. More over religious beliefs and activities have been associated with better immune function, lower death rates from cancer, less heart disease or better cardiac outcomes, lower blood pressure, lower cholesterol, better health behaviors (less cigarette smoking, more exercise, and better sleep), and longevity. More recently, Merrill, Read, and Le Cheminant (2009) found that religiosity had a beneficial influence on both negative outcome, such as lowering feelings of anger and positive outcomes (e.g., promoting feelings of confidence in one's ability to handle personal problems) associated with stress in college students. The aim of the present study

is to find out correlation between parents socio cultural background and religiosity in pre university students. The objectives of the presents study focuses on the Prediction of Students Religiosity through family Sociocultural Background in pre university students of Iran and it assumed that combination of family Sociocultural Background can be good prediction for Students Religiosity.

METHOD

Sample and data collection

The participants in this study includes 214 (108 males and 106 females) in pre university students in Iran. The sample group selected randomly with multistage sampling.

Tools and materials

The instruments used in the research study are as follows :

- a. Family sociocultural background questionnaire: This questionnaire developed by researcher and contains 18 items to measure family sociocultural background. The reliability and validity properties of the questionnaire evaluated through face validity by two expert professors in sociology, and internal consistency alpha coefficient was computed 0.88.
- b. Muslim religiosity-personality inventory (MRPI) (Krauss et al. 2006).
In this study, Muslim religiosity-personality inventory (MRPI) (Krauss et al. 2006) used to measure the religiosity of students. The adopted form of this scale contained of 38 items in four dimensions. Psychometric results by the researcher indicate that the scale is reliable, valid and relevant for use with Iranian students.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

Results of the present study through coefficients of correlations between students religiosity and family sociocultural background are presented in table below.

Table 1: descriptive statistics and coefficients of correlation between student's religiosity and family sociocultural background.

category	descriptive statistics		Analysis of Correlation	
	Mean	SD	coefficient of correlation	p value
	students religiosity	49.35		
family sociocultural background	55.87	6.72		

n= 214

The coefficients of correlations given in table 1, showed significant positive relationship between student's religiosity and family sociocultural background. Table 2 presents the scores of boys and girls in two variables.

Table 2. Means, standard deviations and estimated two independent samples T test of boys and girls in two variables

Variables	SEX	Mean	SD	T
Religiosity	male	42.07	8.98	7.61**
	female	54.11	10.41	
Family sociocultural background	male	55.87	7.23	.413
	female	55.89	6.61	

N: 214. ** Differences are significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

An examination of the mean scores of males and females on table 2 indicates that:

1. Regarding to the Family sociocultural background scores Females scored slightly higher than mail (m = 42.07, SD = 8.98 for mail and m = 54.11, SD=10.41 for Females) and [T= 7.61, p <.01].
2. Regarding to the religiosity scores there is not significantly differences between two gender groups (m = 55.87, SD = 7.23 for mail and m = 55.89, SD=6.61 for Females) and [T= .413, p >.01]. Inspection of descriptive statistic between student's religiosity and family sociocultural background revealed that the level of religiosity is correlated with family sociocultural background. According to the above - mentioned results, the students religiosity can be related to family sociocultural background. It is also reported by the other researchers that getting higher level of family sociocultural background lead to increasing in religiosity. The present study aims to evaluate the relationship between student's religiosity and family sociocultural background. According to the above - mentioned results: there is a significant positive correlation between religiosity and teacher's socio education background.

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