

The Manifestation of Religiosity in Mental Health Realization

Ahmad Bahrami and Zahra Allah Verdi

Department of Islamic Studies, Boroujen Branch, Islamic Azad University, Boroujen, Iran

Corresponding Author email: bahramiahmad53@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: Peace is a missing mental dimension that humans are seeking to it with his all desire. Sometimes people are made a mistake in recognizing the true thing and are misguided to achieve to this issue. In such a condition, the effort to internalize the religious values and make it pure using religious doctrines is so significant. Because each society's development and progress depends on its mental and spiritual health to some extent. Today, the philosophy of education is based on someone's personality dimensions, that is to say, to develop and bring up an innovative and useful humans to society, the intellectual and scientific development as the well as to foster the emotional and physical forces must be taken into consideration. The importance of the role and place of religion in human life is to the extent that all components of mental and physical life have been overshadowed. Physical and mental health researchers found the growing findings that indicating that there is a relationship between human's spiritual life and mental and physical well-being. Highly religious people can be better coped with stressful conditions and are experienced less amount of negative emotions and depression and also less affected with anxiety and are required with higher social support. This article aims to consider the relationship between religiosity and mental health among the community.

Keywords: religion, religion and psychology, the definition of religiosity, the definition of mental health.

INTRODUCTION

Given the prevalence of mental illness among the community, the efforts to promote mental health of individuals in a society becomes more obvious. The most important issue in this regard is the prevention of the issues that cause individual's mental health to be disturbed and therefore negative consequences are followed. Prevention this factor being incurred is not possible but becoming familiar with mental health situation among people in a community. Because becoming familiar with the current situation make us hopeful to the status quo it can help us in applying suitable methods in order to eliminate the detrimental health factors and using appropriate tools in this regard. Behaviors such as trust in God, patience, prayer, pilgrimage, etc. can cause an individual's inner calmness through creating positive attitudes within. The belief that there is a God and control the situations and is in charge of the worshipers causes someone's anxiety associated with the concerned position is greatly reduced so that most devoted people describe their relationship with God the same as a very intimate friend and believe that uncontrollable situations can be controlled in some ways through reliance and recourse to God. The religious people are immune from mental illness to the extent that they have strong faith. Among the effects of religious faith is composure. Religious faith, in order that man is a side deal direction and emotion as an another one, is led to confidence and reassurance, it also eliminates the anxieties and concerns of the community behaviors against human and instead gives him peace of mind. The issue of mental health among people is so significant due to the necessity of having efficient and healthy workforce.

Research Theoretical Perspective

Although the treating the physical and mental illness in medicine is currently based on using conventional medical, physical and common psychiatric methods, and the most emphasis in these methods can be seen in educational books, intercultural studies performed by psychiatrists, psychologists and the scholars in anthropology indicate that the relationship between faith and religious belief is an established issue not only in eastern countries, but in religion followers around the world. Therefore, using this potential force in improving physical illnesses and emotional and behavioral disturbances is currently needed to having thoughts regarding the effectiveness of religious beliefs on all human affairs, especially emotional and spiritual issues more than ever.

Today, many scholars and pundits believe that religion has an undeniable impact mental and physical dimensions of human life, and among religions, Islamic commands on physical and psychological health and other issues are complete commands in such a way that classifying behavior in terms of Islam is influenced by normal and abnormal concepts. Since there is a positive relationship between religiosity and paying attention to religious values and mental health, guiding the new generation and passing through current turbulent world will be possible in the light of religious teachings. Given the significance of religiosity and its relationship with individual's mental health caused the significance of paying attention to it much more times. in continuous, religion, its dimensions, models of piety, the psychology of religion and the relationship between religion and mental health will be briefly studied.

Religion

Religion or faith means to connect to one another. The term religion means solidarity which in principle implies originally of a series of concerns that the involved one are connected to one another and creates a close solidarity between them (Mirchaeliade: 1996).

There was a long debate for years over how religion can be defined and how it must be separated from magic, philosophy and science in one hand and some systems and social and political feelings and interests on the other hand (Tavasoli, 2001).

Different definitions have been proposed by scholars concerning religion which some instances is pointed out:

Professor Stratton maintains that religion is the perception of an unseen world which is often an occult companion. Schleiermacher believes that the essence of faith is the feeling of absolute dependence. Immanuel Kant believes that religion is the recognition of all duties as divine commands (Sadeghi Jahanban and Araghi, 1999).

Religion and Religiosity in the Contemporary World

In recent years, social and economic structures of Islamic countries has substantially been changed, and to some extent, modernized. However, to respect God's commands and Quranic teachings are so significant in Muslim's life. As a result, it seems that Islamic modernists have much effect than traditionalists in Islamic countries, because they could create a reasonable mix between of modern and traditional values. Muslims have shown that their religious motivations have been largely maintained in the modern world. (Turner,1994). Nevertheless, they have not still been acquired seriously the ultramodern world and globalization and do not reflect upon it in which the adherence to a religion that encompasses all facets of life is so difficult. However, whatever the form and power of religion in ultramodern period, it may be said that religion was more powerful in Islamic communities than that of other ones. This is due to the fact that Muslims are motivated to be submitted against God's commands which forms an integral part of the original teachings of their faith. This dynamicity created a particular model of Sharia in the traditional world which made Islam distinct from other religions in terms of applying religious regulations in daily life and maintained it as a strong and dynamic in the modern period. Therefore, if the future of a culture is affected by its history, therefore it is most probable that the dynamics of being submitted to God's commands causes new models of Sharia in accordance with new period are created by Muslims in order to maintain the religious feelings and criteria efficiently (in comparison to other religions).

Dimensions of Religiosity

Hugel.B.F.V, 1908) who was a Roman Catholic and a non-theologian priest introduced three elements for religion or three ways to perception or growing attitude long before the advent of factor analysis. These three elements are (Azarbaijani, 2006).

1. Traditional or historical, which mostly depends on senses, analysis, memory and initiation from childhood.
 2. Argumentative or systematical, which is obtained through being competent in thinking, reasoning and abstraction.
 3. Intuitive and deliberately which indicates internal experience and external function.
- Ch. Glock (1962) proposed consequential and experimental rituals, ideological and intellectual dimensions for religion.

Table1. Dimensions of Religiosity in terms of Hogol, Purt and Glock Perspectives

Hogol	Purt	Glock
1. Traditional (Historical)	1. Traditional	1. Ideological (faith)
2. Discursive	2. Discursive	2. Rituals (practical)
3. Intuitive	3. Mystic	3. Intellectual (knowledge)
	4. Practical and ethical	4. Experimental (emotions)
		5. Consequential (outcomes)

Models of Religiosity

Alport defined unifying single mechanisms and beliefs, which is reflected in the healthy personality more than neuroticism as “ having direction”. Having direction affects all one’s life dimensions and the one is led to objectives and give them reasons for life by unifying one’s desires and motivations (Dezutter 2006).

Alport and Ross argues that religious attitudes determine how religious functions are used as a mechanism for evaluation associated with stressful life events. This evaluation can make a relationship between religious attitudes and health (Moradi: 2006). They believe that the religious desire and inclination is an independent and autonomous element in the human character and all other parts make personality unified in a single general system. Regarding human personality, they found out that all human life depends on his faith, that is to say, the more an individual is acquired to internal religiosity, the more mental health one is acquired to. However, if religion is to be used in well-being and meeting social needs and its essence is not to be regarded, lower mental health one is acquired to (Alport and Ross, 1967).

Alport and Ross’s Model

Alport and Ross used an experimental model which assessed the relationship between mental health and religiosity in people based on two religious orientations (inside and outside religious faith). This model is used in a research performed by Abdolali Lahsaie entitled “ study of religious orientation and mental health about the immigrants of Gasre Shirin” (quoted from Journal of Social Sciences, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad).

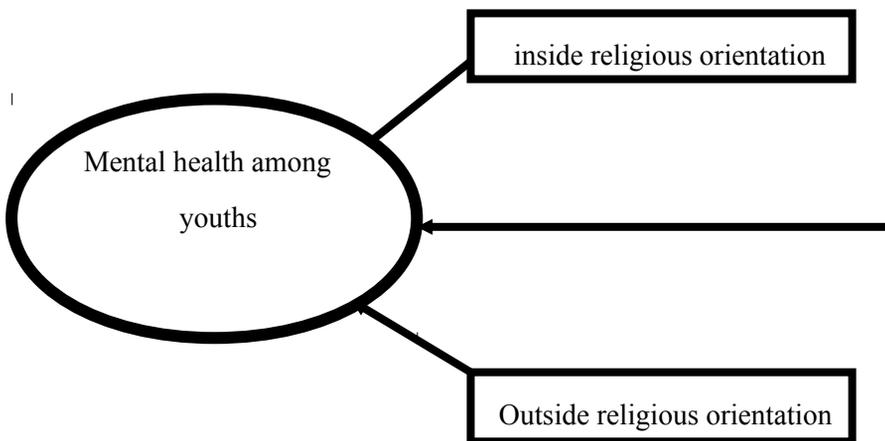


Figure 1. Alphorn's Experimental Model

Gluck and Stark's Model

The discussions of Glock and Estark about multi-dimensionality of religion drew the attention of researchers to multi-dimensionality of religiosity's definitions. Therefore this issue is linked to the name of these two people. According to Glock and Estark, there are common areas, despite some differences in detail, where religiosity is manifested. These areas which can be considered as the central aspects of religiosity are religious, ritual, emotional and consequential dimensions.

The religious beliefs are the ones which are expected to be believed by the followers of that religion.

Ritual dimensions or religious practices comprises certain religious practices such as worship, prayer, participation in certain religious rituals, fasting, etc. which is expected the followers of that religion adhere to.

The experimental dimension or religious emotion governing the emotions, imaginations and feelings about having a divine relationship or essence like God or an ultimate reality or excellent authority.

The intellectual dimension or religious knowledge, including basic information about the beliefs of any religion which the followers of each religion should know about.

The consequential dimension or religious effects governing the effects of beliefs, practices, experiences and religious knowledge on daily life of followers.

Measurement of the Muslim's Religiosity

If religiosity dimensions of Glock and Estark's models is to be adopted with Islam, a set of beliefs called religious principles can be adopted to religious beliefs. These includes believe in God, the prophecy of the Holy Prophet Muhammad as the seal of prophets and His miracle, Quran, and also having belief to resurrection.

Having belief to observe some religious practices such as daily prayers, fasting during Ramadan, Jihad against active enemies of Islam, paying quint and Zakat and commanding to good thing and forbidding from bad ones can also be considered as parts of Islamic beliefs. Having belief to The Twelve Imams, as the legitimate successors of the Prophet (PBUH) must have a certain stance towards the above-mentioned beliefs. As a result, these beliefs can be used to the Muslim religious beliefs. Regarding the religious practices (rituals), daily prayers, fasting in Ramadan are considered as obligatory practices for every matured Muslim. Reading Quran, participation in congregation and Friday prayers, participation in ceremonies and mourning in mosques and or other religious places are also strictly recommended. These activities can be used in the ritual dimension of Islam (Serajzade, 2004).

As far as religious emotions (experimental dimension) is concerned, in Islam as well as the two other monotheistic religions, Christianity and Judaism, it is expected that the believers be experienced with the emotions and feelings such as virtue, repentance and closeness to God, the Prophet and Imams. The depth of these experiences can be used to measure the emotional religiosity.

Concerning the consequential outcome, according to Islam, there are many standards of behaviors that a Muslim should strictly comply in his/her own daily life. It comprises covering or wearing some parts of the body, especially for women, avoidance of oral intake specific beverages such as alcohol, pork meat, not being dominated by non-Muslim rules and adhering to Islamic rules in everyday life. The Muslim's attitudes regarding these commands can be indicative of the effects of religiosity in their daily life and or their consequential aspect of their religiosity.

The Definition of Mental Health

Mental health is a state of health in which someone becomes familiar with his/her capabilities and can cope with natural stresses of life, and be efficient and useful for his society and are capable to make decisions and collective participation. Ever since, there have been various definitions of "mental health" which all insists on the significance of integrity and integration of personality.

Goldestin. K maintains that mental health is a balance between members and environment to achieve self- prosperity. Chauhan (1991) interprets mental health as a state of psychological maturity which is the maximum efficiency and obtained satisfaction from social and individual interactions which comprises positive emotions and feedbacks towards oneself and that of others. In recent years, Canadian Mental Health Association defined “ mental health” into three parts (Motahari, 2006):

Part 1: feedback about the “ self” including : coping with one’s own emotions, awareness of one’s own weaknesses and satisfaction of one’s own pleasure.

Part 2: feedbacks about others including being interested to long and intimate friendships, sense of belonging to a group, sense of responsibility to the human and material environments.

Part 3: feedbacks about life, including: accepting responsibilities, the talents to develop resources and one’s own interest, the ability to take personal decisions, the talent to work efficiently.

Chahen indicated four patterns of behavior regarding mental health as follows (Motahari, 2006).

Sense of responsibility

the one who have mental health is sensitive to other’s needs and tries to satisfy their desires and comfort.

Sense of self-confidence

the one who is qualified to mental health have confidence to oneself and one’s abilities and believes that problems are temporal phenomena which can be solved. Hence, his moods would not be damaged by the setbacks.

Goal orientation

it refers someone who have a clear concept of life ideals and hence all his powers and creativities are directed to achieve these goals.

Personal values

such person has a philosophy based on certain convictions, beliefs and goals in his/her life which is led to the prosperity and happiness of oneself and those of others round him which is required to increased social participation.

Religion from the Perspective of Psychology

Psychological theories indicate that religion is something personal and is raised from individual’s inner sources. In addition, based on this theory, religion is the product of human tendency to search for global understanding and also resulted from human wisdom and the talent of analogy, generalization and conclusion from observation and experience. From the perspective of psychology, there are many functions and utilities by religion. No new knowledge could identify the amazing secrecies of religion and religiosity and made clear its inevitable necessity in the living world in a concrete way but psychology. It should be also noted that psychology does not basically aims to determine the right from the wrong, or by other explanation , true value; for determining this issue is out of the capacity and function of this knowledge. What this knowledge follows and is qualified to is the mental consequences and functions of religion, regardless of its legitimacy and true value.

Among the functions of psychology of religion and religiosity are as follows:

Giving Meaning to Life

One of the basic functions of religion is to explain the meaning of life. Each person asks himself what this life is for? What the sufferings and death rates imply for? And as a whole, is this world worth living or not? Finding a correct answer to these questions are useful and to being failed against it is a kind of fiasco.

Religion by elaborating immortality, wisdom and purpose of existence and its orientation to goodness, perfection and excellence in the light of God the merciful and compassionate, give the most wise and pleasurable meaning of human life and the world.

Victor Frankel also maintains that the power of religion is because of a super-meaning, that is religion give the most appropriate meaning to live. Some sociologists also believe that essence of religion is to respond against being threatened to meaninglessness in human life and to effort to view the world as a meaningful reality.

Some of the psychological consequences of the interpretation of religion of life are as follows:
Feeling of optimism and satisfaction, making life pleasurable in life system, hope, responsibility, alacrity and progress.

Mental health and composure

One of the basic needs of human is mental health and composure. Despite the stunning scientific and technological advances in today's world, they are affected by anxiety, apprehension, depression and unrest more than ever and needs more mental and psychological comfort. The role of religion in mental health and composure is important in several ways. The studies performed by psychologists is noteworthy.

Religiosity and tolerating mental stress

The studies performed shows that religious manifestations have effective role in appeasing mental suffering, reducing anxiety and tolerating mental stresses and faithful people are less suffered to mental illness.

Religiosity and Depression

According to the research performed, there is an inverse relationship between religion and depression, stress and anxiety. This problem today is considered by many psychologists and scholars.

Willer maintains that faithful people cope with their problems through religious faith and are linked to a wide network of social supports through religious practices and participation in religious ceremonies.

Meador also puts it that because of the fact that religious dependency acts like other variables effective to mental health such as economical status and social support is led to reduced depression prevalence (Shakerin, 2008).

Religiosity and Delinquency

The studies indicate that there is a negative relationship between religiosity and delinquency and crime and religious practices can make a distinction between them.

Religiosity and reducing alcohol and drug use

According to the studies performed by Adolf, Smart, Outar and Davids, religious people do not use drugs or use in a much low amount.

According to Louch and Hughes, among the religious people, fundamentalists are less inclined to drug use and the more strong one's faith, the less probable he/she use alcohol or drugs (Shakerin, 2008).

Religiosity and reduced suicide

The problem of suicide is one of the serious crises in current human civilization. Etelaat Magazine dated 17/9 in the page Crossing the Five Continents under the title above wrote: World Health Organization has recently issued an interesting statistics about suicide in different countries around the world. According to this statistics, suicide among people aged 15-44 years old is the third cause of death rates in these countries in seven industrial countries.

Religiosity, Marital Satisfaction and

The problem of family instability and its disintegration is one of the great crises in today's civilized worlds in the wake of devastating mental and psychological results. According to the studies performed, religion is the most significant factor in commitment to family, marital satisfaction and reduced divorce and this issue by itself is a significant factor in family's mental health.

The Constancy between inside and outside world and reduced suffering

Another advantage raised from religious interpretation is making compatibility between inside and outside world and inevitable the sufferings and discomforts. There are undoubtedly some differences between human's desires and inclinations and what exists in outside world. These

differences are sometimes in a way that outside conditions are painful and discomforting for human (Shakerin, 2008).

Giving objectives and ideology

One of the most significant functions of religion is to represent desired ideal. An ideal is an issue or a principle that humans are intended to and it is the aims for making effort. Ideal causes the type of human to be formed. People, consciously or unconsciously, assess all phenomena with it and make it valuable to be judged. Humans have chosen ideals such as well-being, wealth, fame, stature, love, beauty, knowledge, etc.

The Response to Feeling of Loneliness

One of human's suffering which has been increased in the industrial world and creating metropolitans is the problem of feeling loneliness. This feeling is not merely a physical loneliness, that is to be separated from others, but it is manifested in other ways such as being unable to respond some of human needs, lack of other's understanding of the person or being busy to their own affairs and seeking to acquire their own benefits and lack of deep, serious and sympathetic attention to meet other's needs and requests. In other words, an individual are involved in a mass of people who are bound to their self-benefits and if seemingly they do a suitable and good work, it will mainly be replete with type of requests, inclinations and hidden and apparent self-benefits and there is none who do me a favor in a complete way without any benefits for oneself. However, humans are never lonely in accordance with religious perspective (Shakerin, 2008).

Enhancing the power to control instincts

one of the dangers which always threatened human society and incurred many dangers in the era of power and technology for human kind is uncontrollable instincts, pride and bodily instincts. This inauspicious phenomenon is not only controllable by science, knowledge and human philosophies, but the masters of power and knowledge have also been enslaved to and science and technology is used as a tool in this way.

CONCLUSION

Meeting human's health and enhancing their potential capabilities is one of the basic issues in the global societies which ought to be taken into consideration into three dimensions namely physical, mental and social ones. According to the measurements performed by World Health Organization (WHO), the prevalence of physical and mental illnesses in recent decades have dramatically been increased which many physical and spiritual costs are imposed upon communities.

It has been reported , in the various studies performed in Iran , that the amount of mental disturbances prevalence in the society, especially among youths, is high so that it is necessary to diagnose the factors affecting mental health and to identify preventive measures. On the other hand, lack of success of the classical orientations to control and treat physical and mental illnesses and also increasing development of their diversities and amounts makes clear the necessity to create novel and multi-dimensional orientations in mental health.

According to the current studies, the planning to promote mental health among people to direct the society's attention to religious values and bases is one of the necessities of societies which by considering the effects of increased religious tendencies to reduce depression and anxiety and as a result increased mental health, the authorities must pay a special attention to promoting religious tendencies among youths and different strata of the society in their planning. This issue requires promoting religious institutions and the faithful dimension of families. In fact, some measures must be taken to reduce anxiety, depression and spiritual illnesses in which saying prayer, fasting, prayer , ceremonies and practicing other services be increased among youths in order to mental health of people be achieved more than ever in the way of realizing the society's goals as the best way as possible.

REFERENCES

Allport gw, ross mj. jr.1967. Personal religious orientation and prejudice. Journal of personality and psychology , vol.5,pp.432-443.

- Azarbaijani M, Mousavi Asl A. 2007. "An introduction to the psychology of religion", SAMT Publications, Tehran.
- Dezutter J, Huotsebaut D.2006."Religiosity and Mental Health :A Further Exploration of The Relative importance of Religious Behavior vs. . Religious Attitudes". Personality And Individual Differences,Vol.40,pp.807-818.
- Dezutter J, Huotsebaut D.2006:"Religiosity and Mental Health 5Further Exploration of The Relative importance of Religious Behavior s.
- Douki S, Ben Zineb S,Nacef F, Halbreich U.2007."Women's Mental Health in the Muslim Word: Cultural, Religious, and Social Issues. Journal of Affective Disorders, Vol.102,pp.177-189.
- Harold G, Koenig P, Kahle A, Robbins J. 2004. The power of spirituality in therapy: integrating spiritual and religious belief in mental health practice.
- Mirchailade D. 1993. "the message in the history of religions", translated by Jalal Sttari, Tehran University Press.
- Mirchailade D. 1996. "the research on religion", translated by Khoramshahi, The Institute of Human Sciences and Cuktural Studies, Tehran.
- Mordai G. 2006. "study of economical and social factors associated to the quality of mental health among immigrants", a case study performed in Islamabad Qarb, MA thises, Shiraz University, Faculty of Social Sciences.
- Motahari J. 2006. "the role of values in mental health", Keyhan Magazine.
- Rosenstiel AK, Keefe FJ.1993. The Use of Coping Strategy in Chronic Low Back pain patient: Relationship to Patient Characteristics and Current Adjustment, Journal of pain , No.17,pp.33-44 .
- Sadeghi Jahanban H, Najm Eraghi L. 1999. "the psychological analysis of religion, the stance of religion in mental health", Tarighe Kamal Publications.
- Serajzadeh A. 2000. "the ethical congregation of Muslims", Tarhe No Publication, Tehran.
- Serajzadeh A. 2004. "the challenges of religion and modernity", Tarhe No Publication, Tehran.
- Shakerin H. 2008. "science of religion", Maaref Publications, Qom.
- Sohrab P. 2001. "the effects of adhering to religion and spirituality on health", New Weekly Journal of Medicine.
- Tavasoli Gh. 2001. "the sociology of religion", Sokhan Press.