

Spirituality and Gratitude in Spanish nursing students: a cross-sectional and correlational study

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Background

Previous findings have reported the positive benefits of spirituality and gratitude, and their links to physical and mental health. To date, little is known concerning the relationship between spirituality and gratitude and its effectiveness in the training and practice of nursing.

Methods

A cross-sectional correlational study design was used to analyse the relationship between spirituality, gratitude and a set of criteria variables in a nursing student sample. A convenience sample of 187 nursing students at the University of Alicante (Spain) who were enrolled in the teaching subject of Psychology participated in this study. Data were collected in 2020–2021 using self-report questionnaires, Spirituality (the short form of the Spanish version of the Meaning in Life Scale, MiLS-sp/sf; Jim et al. 2006; Reig-Ferrer et al. 2012, 2015) and the Spanish version of the Gratitude Questionnaire (GQ-6) (Magallares et al. 2018). Another six variables were used to assess the following aspects: self-assessments of health, quality of life (general and recent), personal happiness, religiosity, and belief in the afterlife. The data were analyzed using descriptive and relational statistics.

Results

Table 1 shows the correlation matrix among the two scales. The main results showed a positive low relationships between level of gratitude and spirituality.

Tabla 1. Correlation coefficients between the items and total scores of Spirituality and Gratitude Scales

	GQ6-1	GQ6-2	GQ6-3	GQ6-4	GQ6-5	GQ6-6	GQ6 Total Score
MiLS-sp1/sf	.07	.12	.05	.16*	.08	-.13	.09
MiLS-sp2/sf	.07	.00	.02	.14	.12	.13	.12
MiLS-sp3/sf	.11	.01	-.07	.14	.08	.17*	.11
MiLS-sp4/sf	.03	-.02	-.02	.10	-.04	-.15	-.01
MiLS-sp5/sf	.17*	.19*	-.06	.38*	.23**	-.10	.20**
MiLS-sp6/sf	-.11	.15*	.13	.13	.19*	-.09	.17*
MiLS-sp7/sf	.08	.15*	.01	.28**	.15	-.03	.17*
MiLS-sp/sf Total Score	.13	.13	.02	.27**	.19*	-.04	.18*

**p<0.01; *p<0.05

Tabla 2. Bivariate analysis of subjective well-being variables and total scores of Spirituality and Gratitude Scales

	MiLS-sp/sf Total Score	GQ6 Total Score
Health status	.24**	.19*
General QOL	.35**	.22**
Current QOL	.29**	.13
Happiness	.52**	.20**
Religiosity	.19*	.01
After life	.15	.10

**p<0.01; *p<0.05

The total score for spirituality was significantly correlated with each of the self-evaluated variables of self-referred subjective well-being and religious well-being: at a greater level of spirituality, the perceived health status was higher, a greater quality of life was reported, both in general and currently, and the students reported a greater level of happiness. The same pattern was observed for the Gratitude Scale, with the exception of current quality of life and religiosity (see Table 2). Finally, we can add that spirituality and gratitude were independent of the belief in an afterlife.

Conclusion

To conclude, Spirituality and Gratitude may play an important role on psychological well-being, quality of life, and self-rated health for nursing students. There is a significant positive low relationship between Spirituality and Gratitude. Out of the four meanings of spirituality, Peace was found the construct most strongly correlated to gratitude.

References

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