

Spirituality/Religiousness and the General Well-Being of Older Adults

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Abstract: Spirituality is an important resource for older adults in terms of an intra-psychic means of coping and adaptation with issues of daily life, loss, and death. However, little is known about impact of spirituality/religiousness on the general well-being of older adults. The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of spirituality/religiousness on the general well-being of older adults in seven central states. This study is important for social workers to increase their assessment and intervention skills utilizing religiousness/spirituality to minimize the health problems of older adults. Methods: This cross-sectional study was conducted through a convenience sampling method for 143 older adults 65 year-old or over from 15 counties in seven central states. To measure various domains of health status, the General Well-Being Schedule (GWBS) was used. To measure spirituality/religiousness, the Brief Multidimensional Measures of Religiousness/Spirituality (BMMRS) was used. Results: The respondents ranged in age from 65 to 97. The other characteristics showed female (55.2%); Caucasian (63.4%); married (47.9%). Regression results showed that higher spiritual experience is significantly associated with lower anxiety ($B = -.37, \leq .01$), greater positive well-being ($B = .46, \leq .01$), and greater vitality ($B = .36, p \leq .05$). Religious support is a negative factor in the positive well-being of older adults ($B = -.24, p \leq .05$). Implications: Social work practitioners should assess the religious background of clients, family, community, and nation and level of concerns in use of spiritual recourses. However, the religious/spiritual intervention of social work practitioners should be offered as a type of therapeutic options because some clients do not like religious/spiritual activities and some religious/spiritual intervention can cause negative results to clients.

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