

The Role of Spirituality in Alleviating Psychological Distress Among University Students: Exploring Meaning in Life as a Mediator

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates how spirituality affects the psychological distress experienced by university students, with meaning in life acting as a mediating variable. A correlational and quantitative research design was employed, using a purposive sampling technique to select 500 university students from five universities in southern Punjab, Pakistan. Data were collected using validated instruments to measure psychological distress, spirituality, and meaning in life. Statistical analyses, including frequency distribution for demographic variables, correlational analysis, and mediation analysis, were conducted using SPSS. The results revealed a significant negative relationship between spirituality and psychological distress, confirming that meaning in life significantly mediates this relationship. These findings underscore the role of spirituality and meaning in life as protective factors against psychological distress among university students, offering reassurance and hope for their mental well-being. The study concludes by discussing its implications and suggesting directions for future research.



Introduction

Spirituality is widespread worldwide. It has had a significant impact because it is one of the most potent influences on life, death, health, and illness. The twenty-first century is the most spiritual of all times, according to (Lane, 2012). "An account of the manners and customs of the modern Egyptians" is the title of his book. "Spiritual honor is considered the highest honor among Muslims," he stated (Mbah, 2013). Islam is the religion with the fastest rate of growth and the

second largest in the world. Islam has many different forms. Dimensions are similar to those of other faiths in some ways. While Islam is comparable to other religions in some ways, it is distinct in others. As indicated by the majority of its followers, a genuine Islam puts together and interfaces all features of human life (El Bwietel, 2015)

The study's main objective was to find out whether religiosity has a significant impact on psychological discomfort. Another aim is to examine how spirituality affects psychological distress in university students, meaning in life as a mediator. Therefore, this study aimed to examine the direct and indirect effects of spirituality on psychological suffering. Additionally, compared to other research, the results of this study may provide an alternative explanation for the dynamics of the link between spirituality and psychological well-being. In conclusion, nothing is known for sure about how spirituality affects mental health and is mediated by quality of life, especially since young adults tend to be envious of their belief system (Turner, 2024).

Moreover, this is the case despite a sizable conceptual and empirical literature on adult spirituality. As a result, the primary purpose of this study is to define and measure the influence of spirituality and psychological distress to give a preliminary knowledge of their impact on the quality of their lives. As a result, initiatives that assist adults in becoming spiritually and psychologically healthy are required. Also, the concept of weakness in spirituality is emerging, which can be comprehended in terms of a significant reason for psychological distress. As a result, the availability of programmes promoting meaningful life may assist university students in meeting their basic psychological requirements and feeling life satisfaction. In addition, even though spirituality benefits family and academic life (Weber & Huebner, 2015), this study focuses solely on spirituality's effects on adult well-being. In conclusion, adults with intense spirituality satisfy their fundamental psychological needs, which is a factor in achieving life satisfaction (Yu-Ting et al., 2022). Psychometric properties have all been the subject of studies on meaning and spirituality, focusing on Pakistani students' samples and contexts (Dasti & Sitwat, 2014). It is still important to investigate how university students' psychological distress is influenced by aspects of meaning in life and other psychological constructs, and based on previous empirical research, (Oishi et al., 2011) proposed that people's value orientation determines the degree to which they achieve and preserve well-being based on their sense of purpose in life. As a result, this will vary between individuals and groups. According to (Dasti & Sitwat, 2014), religious orientation and the socio-cultural context, which are frequently intertwined, frequently drive and even determine value orientation. According to (Paloutzian & Park, 2013), globalization is vital in interconnectedness. Earlier studies did not explore the psychological discomfort that differentiates between eudemonic and hedonic aspects, the dynamics of spirituality that separate religion and anguish, and the distinction between the pursuit of meaning and its existence in life.

This study aims to determine if spirituality, a religious and existential sense of well-being or meaning in life, and the pursuit and existence of meaning are more powerful mediators of emotional suffering among college students. Further, this study aims to investigate the impact of spirituality on the psychological distress of adult university students in southern Punjab, Pakistan, with a particular focus on the mediating role of meaning in life. By examining how spiritual beliefs and practices influence levels of anxiety, depression, and stress, this research seeks to understand the protective factors that can enhance mental well-being. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights into how spirituality can mitigate psychological distress and highlight the importance of meaning in life as a crucial mediator. This study will inform future mental health interventions and programs, promoting holistic approaches incorporating spiritual and existential dimensions. Additionally, it will pave the way for further research on the diverse spiritual

experiences of students and their nuanced impacts on mental health, potentially leading to more tailored and effective support systems within educational institutions.

Literature Review

Spirituality

Spirituality is the quality of being concerned with the human spirit or soul instead of material or physical things. The shift in priorities allows us to embrace our spirituality more profoundly (Semmel, 2023). Spirituality is a global phenomenon. It has had a significant effect since it is one of the most potent forces affecting life, death, health, and illness. According to Novak (1998), the twenty-first century will be the most spiritual. Religiosity has become more assertive throughout the Arab world, especially in colleges. Students, at least in the last 20 years. Health behaviour in Romanian adolescents (Brassai et al., 2011); acculturation in Hong Kong and Australia (Pan et al., 2008); mothers and the elderly (Zika & Chamberlain, 1992); American and Japanese students' comparisons and spirituality as a path to meaning and purpose among senior managers in South Africa (Mohan). According to (Zika & Chamberlain, 1992), the meaning was shown to be more strongly connected dimensions. But (Dasti & Sitwat, 2014) have voiced concern that most of these empirical investigations are correlated, which means that assuming causation is impossible. Different spiritual qualities and maybe different pathways can lead to different outcomes in terms of psychological well-being. The processes that underlie spirituality's beneficial impacts on well-being are discussed. Given that Islam is the second most prevalent religion in the world and is growing at a pace of roughly 0.5% per year, mental health professionals should have some grasp of the religion. The main factor influencing a person's psychological well-being is his or her perspective on various facets of life. Psychological well-being is defined as a person's degree of delight, meaning, and fulfilment with life, and it is heavily influenced by how they view different areas of life.

Psychological Distress

Psychological distress is broadly defined as a state of emotional suffering characterized by symptoms of depression (e.g., loss of interest, unhappiness, desperateness) and anxiety (e.g., restlessness, feeling tense) (BELAY, 2022). Islam brought forth several thought-provoking and inventive ideas for people with mental illnesses. Islam emphasizes the moral requirement that those who are vulnerable be protected and cared for, as directed by God. On the other side, attitudes towards and fears about mental illnesses are influenced by ideas on "possession." The condition of mental health services and related laws in the various Islamic nations indicate this peculiar blend (Tzeferakos & Douzenis, 2017). Consequently, it's critical to comprehend how religion affects mental wellness. College life can indeed be challenging and put students at risk for health problems like stress, anxiety, depression, and emotional issues (Kalemi et al., 2017). The following are a few relevant discoveries: The benefits of spiritual and religious coping for people's well-being and happiness have been shown in earlier research. Using behavioral and cognitive coping strategies that revolve around beliefs and values to manage stress is known as religious and spiritual coping (Waseel et al., 2023). On the other hand, both negative and positive religious/spiritual coping were linked to lower psychological health and lower life satisfaction in a sample of Portuguese university students. These effects appear to be explained by problems with emotional control (ER) rather than specific ER techniques, including suppressing expressive emotions or cognitive reappraisal.

Moreover, a study found that among Malaysian university students, higher spiritual intelligence was linked to better psychological health (PWB) and lower levels of depression and anxiety. Psychological well-being is associated with more muscular immune systems and greater stress resilience. Youth spiritual growth increases confidence and significantly reduces stress, anxiety, and depression. However, spiritual problems are linked to deteriorating mental health symptoms and trouble adjusting. Why does spiritual wellness in our study substantially correlate with WTHD yet not with MIL? First, the FACIT-Sp-derived spiritual well-being construct appears to be more comprehensive than the MIL construct since it incorporates not just MIL but also additional components like peace and faith. Second, while the FACIT-Sp assesses the spiritual condition from an intensity a historical perspective (nomothetic approach) (informal approach), the SMILE instrument gauges respondents' satisfaction with particular life areas that they consider as supplying to their personal MIL (Brandstätter et al., 2014). These two approaches to solving this issue are not antagonistic; instead, they are complementary. Another interesting conclusion is that the negative association between spiritual wellness and psychological distress was much more significant than the relationship between spiritual health and WTHD.

Meaning in life

Their conceptualization of meaning in life considers it a three-part construct: “The extent to which one’s life is experienced as making sense, as being directed and motivated by valued goals, and as mattering in the world.”(Brandstätter et al., 2014). Meaning in life is defined as a generally stable sense of purpose, an accompanying sense of fulfilment (Baumeister, 1991), and a contributor to psychological health (Brassai et al., 2015). In the disaster context, meaning in life can help people cope well and predict satisfaction with life (Buzea & Dimitrova, 2017) and contribute to post-disaster resilience (Park, 2016). However, the role of meaning in life in disaster boredom has rarely been studied. The meaning that spirituality either provides or enriches life's importance. Excellent spiritual and religious contentment levels are likewise connected with a high level of life meaning. According to (Steger, 2014), discovering a life's purpose can improve one's general well-being by encouraging a relationship with God, which is linked to religious observance and spiritual well-being examined the role of meaning in life as a mediating factor between religiosity and psychological well-being. According to (Mbah, 2013) research, well-being—which they characterized as positive thinking, self-worth, and contentment with life—and religion were mediated by meaning in life. In a separate study, (Byron & Miller-Perrin, 2009) examined the function of life goals as a mediator.

"Religiosity" is a convenient way to describe the various facets of religious belief, devotion, and practice. It is defined as a combination of spiritual beliefs and practices about a figure of power, a supernatural being, and an organized religious association (Shafranske & Malony, 1990). The term "psychological distress" refers to a state of mental turmoil that is typically characterized by depressive and anxious symptoms, such as melancholy, hopelessness, and interest loss, as well as restlessness and tension (Mirowsky & Ross, 2002). Moreover, physical symptoms (such as headaches, exhaustion, and insomnia) are linked to symptoms. The stress-distress model defines psychological distress as a state in which an individual experiences distress that negatively impacts their health, an inability to manage the distress, or a psychological strain in the absence of productive coping mechanisms. Most research has examined the inverse relationship between the majority of religious markers and specific characteristics of psychological disorders (Dasti & Sitwat, 2014).

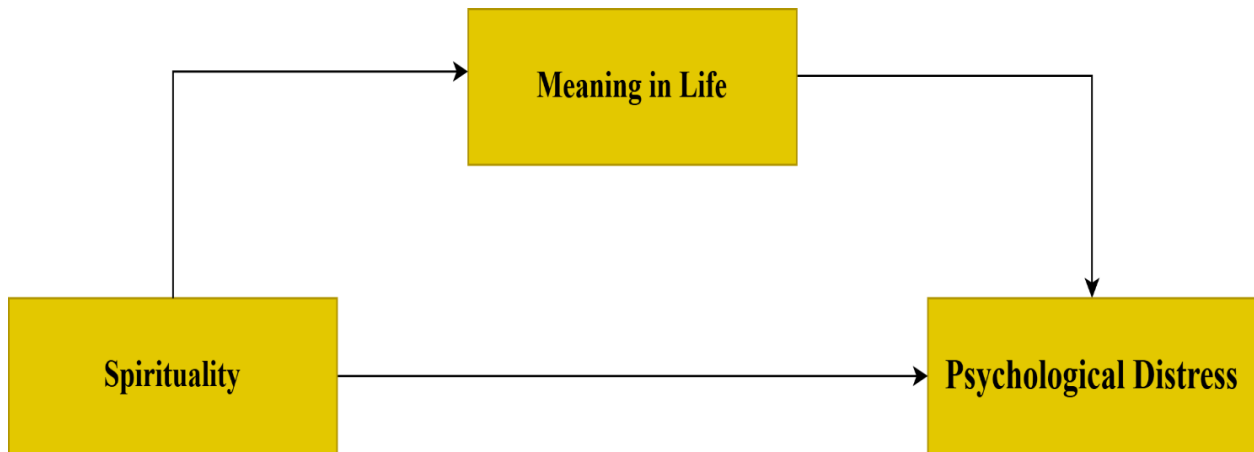


Figure 1: Research Model

Hypothesis Development

Association Between Spirituality and Psychological Distress

Spirituality, defined as the pursuit of meaning, purpose, and connection to a higher power or transcendent reality, has been recognized as a potential protective factor against psychological distress. Psychological distress encompasses feelings of anxiety, depression, and stress, often stemming from life challenges and uncertainties (Baumeister, 1991). Spirituality offers individuals a framework for interpreting life events, providing hope and acceptance even in adversity. This capacity to find meaning and purpose can alleviate emotional turmoil and foster resilience. Spirituality's ability to enhance emotional regulation is one of the primary mechanisms by which spirituality influences psychological well-being (Crawford et al., 2006). Practices commonly associated with spirituality, such as meditation, prayer, and mindfulness, are known to reduce stress and promote relaxation. These practices encourage self-awareness and acceptance, which can help individuals manage their emotions more effectively (Dolcos et al., 2021). Moreover, the belief in a higher power or divine support can instill a sense of comfort and security, reducing feelings of loneliness or helplessness that often accompany psychological distress. Empirical evidence supports this association, with numerous studies reporting lower levels of depression, anxiety, and stress among individuals with higher levels of spirituality (Brandstätter et al., 2014; Dasti & Sitwat, 2014). This inverse relationship is frequently explained through concepts like existential well-being and spiritual coping. Spiritual coping mechanisms, such as relying on faith or spiritual practices to manage stress, help individuals reframe negative experiences, fostering optimism and a positive outlook. Such mechanisms align with the stress-buffering hypothesis, which posits that spirituality acts as a buffer against the harmful effects of stressors. Additionally, cultural and social contexts amplify the role of spirituality in mitigating psychological distress (Bryant-Davis & Wong, 2013). In collectivist societies, spirituality is often intertwined with communal values and rituals, providing individuals with a strong sense of belonging and social support. This collective aspect of spirituality further reduces distress by fostering a shared identity and emotional connection (Canda et al., 2019). In individualistic cultures, spirituality may emphasize personal growth, inner peace, and self-reflection, offering tools for individuals to navigate their emotional challenges independently. This hypothesis underscores spirituality's critical role in mental health, offering theoretical and practical insights. By empirically testing the negative association between spirituality and psychological distress, researchers can contribute to a deeper understanding of how spiritual dimensions influence psychological well-being and explore

interventions to enhance mental health outcomes. According to the above arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Spirituality has a negative relationship with psychological distress

Association Between Spirituality and Meaning in Life

Spirituality, which involves a quest for purpose, transcendence, and connectedness, is often linked to a greater sense of meaning in life. For university students who frequently face complex developmental and existential challenges, spirituality can serve as a valuable foundation for understanding their life's purpose and direction (Bryant-Davis & Wong, 2013; Canda et al., 2019). This sense of meaning is essential during this transitional period as students navigate identity formation, academic pressures, and uncertainties about the future (Mesidor & Sly, 2016). Spirituality fosters meaning by providing a framework for individuals to interpret their experiences. Spiritual beliefs and practices encourage reflection, allowing students to view their struggles and achievements as part of a larger purpose (Mattis & Jagers, 2001). Making meaning helps individuals find coherence and significance, contributing to their overall sense of fulfillment. Empirical evidence supports this connection, showing that individuals who engage in spiritual practices or identify as spiritual report higher levels of meaning in life. For many university students, spiritual engagement often offers opportunities to explore existential questions, pursue personal growth, and align their values with their actions. This alignment deepens their understanding of their goals and motivations, ultimately enhancing their sense of purpose. Spirituality often includes communal aspects and individual reflection, such as participation in spiritual or religious groups (Miller & Pescaroli, 2018). These communities give students a sense of belonging and shared purpose, further reinforcing their understanding of life's meaning. Additionally, spiritual practices like meditation, prayer, or mindfulness enable students to connect with their inner selves and transcend immediate concerns, promoting a broader perspective on life. The above literature discussion proposed the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: Spirituality has a positive relationship with meaning in life

Relationship Between Meaning in Life and Psychological Distress

Meaning in life, defined as the sense that one's life has purpose, coherence, and significance, is crucial in mitigating psychological distress (Martela & Steger, 2016). Psychological distress includes feelings of anxiety, depression, and emotional turmoil, often arising when individuals confront challenges or uncertainties that threaten their sense of stability and purpose (Zika & Chamberlain, 1992). A strong sense of meaning is a protective buffer against this distress, allowing individuals to face adversities with resilience and hope (Ryff, 2014). The connection between meaning in life and psychological distress can be understood through existential fulfillment (Martela & Steger, 2016). When individuals view their lives as meaningful, they are more likely to experience positive emotions, such as satisfaction and contentment, which help counter feelings of despair and anxiety. In contrast, a lack of meaning can create existential voids, leading to increased psychological distress. By providing direction and purpose, meaning in life helps individuals contextualize their struggles, reducing the perceived intensity of stressors. Empirical research consistently supports this association, indicating that those with a strong sense of meaning in life report lower levels of psychological distress (Battista & Almond, 1973; Canda et al., 2019). This relationship is often mediated by emotional regulation and effective coping mechanisms. Engaging meaningfully in activities and relationships fosters adaptive coping strategies, allowing individuals to manage stress and negative emotions more effectively. Additionally, the sense of coherence

derived from meaning in life reduces cognitive dissonance, further alleviating distress (Buzea & Dimitrova, 2017). Meaning in life also nurtures hope and optimism, crucial for maintaining mental health. By concentrating on long-term goals and values, individuals with a strong sense of meaning are better equipped to keep perspective during difficult times. This outlook lessens the intensity of negative emotions and enhances their capacity to recover from setbacks. In summary, meaning in life acts as a psychological anchor, shielding individuals from the harmful effects of psychological distress (Dolcos et al., 2021). It boosts emotional resilience, fosters adaptive coping, and cultivates a sense of coherence and hope all vital for sustaining mental well-being. Exploring this relationship through empirical research can help develop interventions to enhance meaning in life and reduce psychological distress. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed.

Hypothesis 3: Meaning in life has a negative effect on psychological distress

The mediating Role of Meaning in Life

Meaning in life—the sense that one’s life has purpose, coherence, and significance is essential for reducing psychological distress (Baumeister, 1991). Psychological distress includes feelings of anxiety, depression, and emotional turmoil, often arising when individuals confront challenges or uncertainties that threaten their sense of stability and purpose (BELAY, 2022). A strong sense of meaning is a protective buffer against this distress, allowing individuals to face adversities with resilience and hope (Brassai et al., 2015). Existential fulfilment can explain the connection between meaning in life and psychological distress. When individuals view their lives as meaningful, they are more likely to experience positive emotions, such as satisfaction and contentment, which help counter feelings of despair and anxiety. In contrast, a lack of meaning can create existential voids, leading to increased psychological distress (Bryant-Davis & Wong, 2013). By providing direction and purpose, meaning in life helps individuals contextualize their struggles, reducing the perceived intensity of stressors. Empirical research consistently supports this association, indicating that those with a strong sense of meaning in life report lower levels of psychological distress (Sumner et al., 2018; Ward & King, 2017). This relationship is often mediated by emotional regulation and effective coping mechanisms. Engaging meaningfully in activities and relationships fosters adaptive coping strategies, allowing individuals to manage stress and negative emotions more effectively.

Additionally, the sense of coherence derived from meaning in life reduces cognitive dissonance, further alleviating distress. Meaning in life also nurtures hope and optimism, crucial for maintaining mental health. By concentrating on long-term goals and values, individuals with a strong sense of meaning are better equipped to keep perspective during difficult times. This outlook lessens the intensity of negative emotions and enhances their capacity to recover from setbacks. In summary, meaning in life acts as a psychological anchor, shielding individuals from the harmful effects of psychological distress (Miller & Pescaroli, 2018). It boosts emotional resilience, fosters adaptive coping, and cultivates a sense of coherence and hope, all vital for sustaining mental well-being (Pan et al., 2008). Exploring this relationship through empirical research can help develop interventions to enhance meaning in life and reduce psychological distress. Along these lines, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 4: Meaning in life significantly mediates the relationship between spirituality and psychological distress.

Methodology

Data Collection and Sample

University students were chosen through convenience sampling for this study due to their significant psychological, emotional, and existential challenges. These challenges make them ideal for exploring spirituality, meaning in life, and psychological distress. This life stage, marked by academic pressures and career uncertainties, often increases psychological distress. The age range of 20 to 30 represents a phase where individuals seek purpose, and their spirituality may evolve. The study includes 500 students from five universities in southern Punjab, Pakistan, ensuring cultural relevance and diversity. Males and females (250 each) are equally represented. This demographic offers insights into how spirituality and the search for meaning impact mental health, guiding interventions for young adults.

Measurement of Variables

Psychological Distress: The Psychological Distress, developed by (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995), is a globally recognized procedure. It is a 42-item self-report tool intended to gauge an individual's three generally negative states of stress, anxiety, and depression.

Spirituality: This scale measures spiritual experience associated with a sense of connectedness through 48 items. The experience of a "sense of connection with the cosmos, with people, with nature, and with locations is covered by scale objects (Wheeler & Hyland, 2008).

Meaning in Life: The Meaning in Life Questionnaire is a 10-item scale that evaluates the Presence of and Search for Meaning in Life. (Steger, 2014), this paper describes its development and validation.

Data Analysis

Initially, SPSS software was used to enter and evaluate the primary data gathered through surveys. Before being subjected to statistical analysis, the data were initially screened to ensure accuracy by examining missing values, aberrant values, multivariate outliers, and normality tests (Hair et al., 2012). Using SPSS version 19, descriptive statistics and reliability results were calculated for each construct. Enumerates the values of each scale's alphas, skewness, kurtosis, standard deviations, and item numbers. Item's mean and dividing means and standard deviation by the total number of items in the scale, the standard deviation for each scale was computed. To gauge reliability, Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of each variable's items. The range of the alpha coefficient is 0 to 1. According to (Steiner et al., 2003), an alpha value near 1 indicates a higher reliability coefficient for the item and lessens the effect of measurement error on test results. For every scale in the current pilot study, the alpha values varied from .77 to .95. The skewness and kurtosis values were utilised to analyse the data's normalcy.

Table 1: Statistics of Descriptive and Reliability Analysis

Construct	Items	Mean	S.D	Alpha	Skewness	Kurtosis
Spirituality	48	-4570	1.06537	.976	.563	.641
Meaning in life	10	3.2612	.96366	.880	-.017	.102
Psychological Distress	42	1.6300	.74816	.980	.559	-.338

Statistics of Descriptive and Reliability Analysis” provides a detailed summary of the statistical measures for two constructs: Spirituality and Meaning in Life Psychological Distress. The table lists the number of items for each construct, mean, standard deviation, alpha (Cronbach’s alpha for reliability), skewness, and kurtosis. The high alpha values (.976 for Spirituality and .880 for Meaning in Life Psychological Distress) indicate strong internal consistency, suggesting that the items within each construct reliably measure the same underlying concept. The mean values offer insight into the average responses, while the standard deviation shows the variability of these responses. Skewness and kurtosis values provide information on the distribution shape of the scores, indicating how they deviate from a normal distribution. This table is valuable as it concisely presents the reliability and descriptive statistics, which are crucial for validating the constructs and ensuring the robustness of research findings.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

The entire set of variables underwent an exploratory factor analysis because this was the first time the instruments had been used extensively in the Yemeni context. The two main goals of the analysis were to examine the relationships between the study’s latent variables and determine whether the extracted factors matched their original theoretical form. Therefore, the maximum likelihood extraction approach was used to obtain factors on all scales, with the data presented as having a normal distribution.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics & Inter-Correlations Summary

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1. Spirituality	-.4570	1.06537			
2. Psychological Distress	1.6300	.74816	.412**		
3. Meaning in Life	3.2612	.96366	.435**	.419**	1

***.* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

This part of the table shows the correlation coefficients between the variables, indicating the strength and direction of their relationships. The double asterisks (**) denote that these correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), meaning there is a less than 1% chance that these correlations are due to random variation. This positive correlation suggests that higher levels of spirituality are associated with higher meaning in life. This positive correlation indicates that higher levels of spirituality are associated with higher levels of psychological distress. This might seem counterintuitive and could be an area for further investigation. This positive correlation suggests that higher levels of meaning in life are associated with higher levels of psychological distress. This could imply that individuals who find more meaning in life might also experience more psychological distress, possibly due to their challenges in finding that meaning.

Testing Mediating Effects

All P-values are .000, indicating that the results are statistically significant at 0.01. This means there is strong evidence to support the hypotheses tested. Spirituality's direct effects on Meaning in Life and Psychological Distress are substantial, suggesting that Spirituality directly influences both the mediator and the outcome variable. The significant estimates for Meaning in Life P indicate that Meaning in Life plays a crucial mediating role in the relationship between spirituality and

psychological distress. This means that Spirituality affects Psychological Distress directly and indirectly through its impact on Meaning in Life. The total effect of Spirituality on Psychological Distress is also significant, reinforcing the importance of considering both direct and indirect pathways in understanding the relationship between these variables.

Table 1: Mediating Results

Variables	B	S.E	R	P
Spirituality	.2891	.0322	8.9767	0.000
Psychological Distress	.1952	.0337	5.7558	0.000
Meaning in life	.0939	.0174	5.3976	0.000

Discussion

This is the first study to identify and describe the psychological effects of spirituality and distress while looking at the mediating effect of meaning in life among university students in Pakistan. The results of the present survey indicate the importance of spirituality in affecting the psychological health of university students. In this study, the most prominently male students (260%) took part compared to females (260%). Our findings are relevant to the previous research (Mesidor & Sly, 2016). The present study results also observed that most participants were younger, between 18 and 24 years old, and affected by distress. However, our findings are similar to those of previous research, which was concluded through results and a review (Mirowsky & Ross, 2002). Through demographic variables, it was also observed through the present study results that most participants graduated 40%. A past study also supports our findings in which it was observed that elements linked to stress, anxiety, and depression were graduated (Chu & Mak, 2020). For measuring the psychological symptoms of stress, depression, and anxiety, the DASS-42 scale is used in the current study. It was evident from the results of this study that almost the majority of the participants reported the mentioned symptoms. Previously, there was sufficient evidence of the psychological effects of spirituality on university students. However, if we investigate the literature, we can find that in student research, the Republic of Ireland is significantly the same as Singapore and India regarding the overall severity level of DASS-42 (Siswanto). There may be the same level of psychological assistance provided to participants in other research, which might contribute to the lower ratings in the mentioned countries as in our country. The main conclusions of this study have therapeutic implications since it is vital to safeguard the psychological health of our university students.

This study offers a profile of students who may be vulnerable to PTSD, depression, anxiety, or stress. The profile should help students and managers spot vulnerable students prone to psychological discomfort so that these students can receive the right kind of care. If our profession is supported, we can also offer persons with psychological distress a high caliber of service. The results of this study highlight the necessity for SLP managers to keep an eye on and safeguard the psychological health of all students, especially those studying at university.

Practical Implications

In addition to highlighting the psychological effects of spirituality, this study serves as a mediator by identifying students who may be at risk for depression, anxiety, stress, or a lack of purpose in life. The results could help researchers determine which pupils need long-term monitoring and psychological support while they study and in the event of any future medical emergencies. This

study serves as a foundation for further research and adds to the body of evidence demonstrating the necessity of university students. The results of this study also contribute to a better understanding of psychological demands and could influence how preparedly future health emergencies are handled.

Limitations and Future Directions

This survey was conducted mainly in southern Punjab in Pakistan, with some part of the online survey from other cities of Pakistan, so the results may not reflect all university students dealing with psychological distress in Pakistan. Questionnaires were used to assess each variable in the current study. Since all of the study's instruments were self-announced scales, the likelihood of a social influence increases. Moreover, most university students of the target population from a few universities took part in this survey, which may limit the generalizability of the research findings. Furthermore, some of the data was collected online. Due to this, the study's external validity may be compromised, making it difficult to generalize its findings to different populations. These are proposals for the future about these factors, taking into account the shortcomings and limits of the current study. The material in this research only relates to the southern portion of Punjab. In-depth research of Pakistan's many cultures is necessary to identify cultural variations in the study variables and demographic data. This study needed to explore the reason for mean differences in population comparison as distress and non-distress. The results of this study indicate that many more studies on spirituality, including a wide range of religious traditions, including Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity, can be undertaken in the future. It is advised that the meaning of life between students and non-students be compared in comparative group research. Nature's answers are needed to address subjective problems concerning spirituality, sorrow, and meaning in life—for example, the treatment of medical, psychological, or spiritual and its relevance grade.

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