



Role of Spirituality and Leadership in The Day-To-Day Interaction with Patients

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Abstract: The relationship between spirituality and leadership in the healthcare Industry can be significant. By incorporating spiritual principles into their leadership styles, healthcare leaders can create a more compassionate, ethical, and supportive environment for patients and staff alike. Healthcare can be emotionally challenging, and leaders must be resilient in the face of adversity. Spiritual leaders often encourage practices like meditation, prayer, or mindfulness, which can help build resilience and reduce stress. Leaders who prioritize resilience can create a healthier work environment for their staff. The objective of the study was to gain insights & understanding concerning the perceptions entailing spirituality and spiritual care held by patients with illness or disease. The aim was to gain a profound understanding about their views surrounding the role of spirituality & leadership in the day-to-day interaction with patients. This study is an exploration of the variables explored after the extensive literature review. A primary database analysis has been conducted where leaders of the healthcare industry are at the centre. Teamwork and communication among the service providers under the shadow of spirituality have been also discussed qualitatively and quantitatively. A correlation matrix has been developed where various factors have been discussed and explored. The results and conclusions are supportive and well-aligned with the objectives. The study has concluded that there is a significant role of spirituality and leadership in the day-to-day practices of doctors in the healthcare industry.

Key Words: Spirituality, Leadership, Healthcare, Medical fraternity, and day-to-day Practices.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The international consensus conference on spiritual care in health care has stated spirituality is “The way individuals seek ultimate meaning, purpose, connections, value or transcendence”¹. The mind, body, and soul are interconnected. The health of one element may have an impact on the health of another. Several studies have indicated that spiritual people are much livelier than non-spiritual ones. According to other research, those who consistently engage in spiritual practises live longer lives and are better able to deal with pain, disease, and stress, which lead to better health outcomes and well-being. Some research suggests that your health and your beliefs are linked. Meditation and religious practises can enhance health because they promote good thinking and vitality. Spirituality aids in reducing stress by fostering feelings of forgiveness, calm, and purpose. It promotes self-confidence, self-respect and self-restraint. Spirituality can provide you with a feeling of strength during times of illness, which helps you heal more quickly. Any ailment might get someone to start wondering what their purpose in life is, which makes them pessimistic. Speaking to spiritual leaders gives people hope, which is often beneficial when coping with medical issues. The focus of medicine has shifted from a medical-oriented and service-oriented model to a cure-oriented and technologically-oriented model, as a result of technological advancements. In the last several decades, researchers and medical professionals have been trying to strike a balance between technological developments and health’s holistic view, trying to regain the spiritual roots of medicine because it’s been realized that spirituality has always been a critical part of health care². The Doctors can help the patients by showing interest in their spiritual history and interest. If the misery of the patient can mitigate, then the doctor should include special practices in the treatment process. If they also listen to the fear of patients about treatment, and their hopes regarding the treatment, then this will help in providing better care. A patient should share his spiritual beliefs with doctors as it may influence a patient’s mindset about their health condition. If the need for a patient’s spiritual care is fulfilled then it can help in faster healing, depletion in suffering, and individual development. It is indicated that providing spiritual care is mainly the responsibility of nurses. The nurses can provide spiritual care by listening to the beliefs of patients by making them comfortable so that they can share their thoughts. Due to insufficient training in spiritual care nurses feel uncomfortable while conversing about spiritual values and beliefs³. The nurses other healthcare professionals, does not feel fully prepared in order to fulfil the spiritual needs of patients. Spirituality helps in reducing the emotional burden of family caregivers of patients with chronic diseases and patients with critical conditions. There is an increased risk of tension, burden, and anxiety among caregivers who are less spiritually active⁴.

I.1 Leadership and Healthcare Delivery

The environment of a healthcare setting is dynamic and intricate. It has to deal with many problems that arise from inside and outside the environment. The problems from internal environment include – increasing demand for more transparent and accountable standards, continuous growing influence of stakeholders like social groups and political groups, those who possesses beneficial interest in industry, scarcity of health care

providers due to ageing workers. The problem is from outside environment includes change in population statistic, changing policies by government, monitory factors, technological advancements in health technologies and IT. In a sector like healthcare, leadership is crucial for providing better and effective services by analysing these problems and finding the suitable solutions⁵. The contribution of good leaders makes the business thrive. A proficient leader motivates the personnel of the healthcare organisation to work more efficiently so that they can provide more benefit to the patients their co-workers and the overall organisation. The health administrators, head nurse and doctors who supervise their teams and every day activities on a regular basis, however, it is possible that some of them are not born leaders. Good leaders have some qualities and attributes. They are humble in nature, as the healthcare leaders sometimes don’t have answers to all the questions so they take help of their co-workers and value their efforts and perspectives; they have a long vision, set goals and give guidance to the team to achieve those goals whether the are patient related goals or organisational goals; act as a mentor for their healthcare students and help them in defining their professional goals; they are trustworthy and honest not only with their co-workers but also with their patients; they believe in teamwork, as in healthcare it is very important to have good collaboration between different healthcare providers specially in case of patient handoff⁶. Doctors play the role of leaders in two scenarios that is one within the hospital and other outside the hospital. When performing surgery, a doctor who is leading it tells his team what each individual has to do. A doctor handling an emergency case takes the decision of what has to be done by whom. In the same way, doctors are sometimes asked to be in a role of leader outside the hospital also. If a person fall ill during a flight journey, the crew members asks if there is any doctor present and then request doctor to save the life of that person by leading the rescue operation. There are many cases in which doctors have helped the patient in spite of the unavailability of proper medical equipments⁷. When you are a caregiver, you are automatically put in the role of leader. There are some situations in which the caregivers have to take hard calls⁸ You have to provide direction and show strength in front of other people even if inside you feel same like them. It is also important for the nurses to take up the leader role for delivering better quality of care and improving patient safety. As the nurses are the one who provide direct care to the patients, it is very important for them to acquire leadership skills, so that they can provide direction and support their team and patient during the whole caregiving process⁹.

I.2 Correlations among Physical, mental, and spiritual Health in day-to-day Practices

The definition of health given by WHO includes mental, physical, and social welfare, but it disregards the spiritual health of the person. As a good diet is related to physical health and a happy lifestyle is related to mental health, in the same way, a strong connection to the divine is necessary for one’s psyche to be at peace. The foundation of good physical health and mental health is built upon the feeling of good connection and balance with the spiritual world¹⁰. All the three components of health are related and have an impact on each other. People who have chronic physical health issues are more likely to experience mental health problems¹¹. A bad physical condition can be a cause of

many mental health issues like depression, tension, decreased spiritual engagement, and anxiety. Similarly, people who are suffering from mental health issues have higher chances of having physical health problems. Mental health issues can make the immune system of the person weak, which makes the body vulnerable to infections and diseases. Also, a person with a lack of spiritual engagement is more likely to have mental health issues, as due to decreased spiritual engagement people can feel hopeless, purposeless, and become impatient, likewise decreased spiritual engagement can lead to physical health-related issues, and these issues can be due to factors like bad hygiene and lacking confidence¹². Spiritual degeneracy can disturb the balance of mind and body through negative thoughts and divergence from righteous deeds¹³. In many cases it is observed that doing physical activities like cardio or weight training exercises can help in reducing the symptoms of depression. People who are suffering from mental illness such as depression are usually physical less active than individuals who are not suffering from such illness. In many studies it is found that there is a relationship between mental health and physical activity¹⁴. The people suffering from severe mental disorders like bipolar disorder and depression are commonly less physically

healthy. Those with severe mental disorder may benefit from physical activities and can ameliorate their life's quality by reducing mental and social disabilities and ameliorating physical fitness¹⁵. There can be reduction in the quality of life of those people who are suffering from physical and mental illness at the same time; this can worsen the health condition and can prolong the course of illness¹⁶. People suffering from severe mental conditions are more likely to develop physical health-related issues¹⁷. Hormonal imbalance and changes and sleep patterns are common in people having medical conditions, which make them vulnerable to physical illness¹⁸. The functioning of the body can be influenced by the physiological condition of a person. The long-lasting physical condition could lead to stress, which makes the body weaker and also less resistant to fighting against the disease. According to some studies, in people having stress the healing process of wounds from surgery or any injury is very slow¹⁹. People who have good spiritual health also have better physical health and a healthy lifestyle than others. These people have better interpersonal relations and also have good relations with themselves²⁰. The improvement in the spiritual health of a patient might not help to cure the disease; however, it might help them in fast recovery²¹.

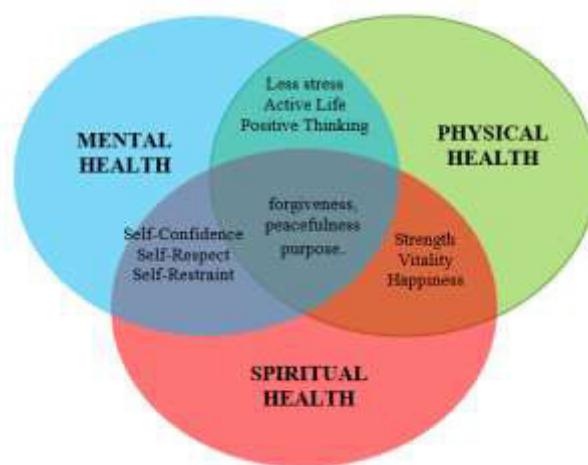


Fig 1: Health Model

The diagram shows the correlation between physical, mental and spiritual health. Mind and body are seen separately but they are actually intertwined, your physical health have positive or negative effect on your mental health²². A good spiritual health might prevent from some health issues and also assist in coping with tension, disease and demise²³. In addition to improving mood physical activities aids in reducing stress; a good diet also has positive effects on mental health, having long-term good physical health a person feel better overall²⁴. Exercising on a regular basis can help in reducing tension, depression, and anger. Regularly participating in spiritual activities like meditation creates a balance between mind and body which results in enhancing the healing ability of the body²⁵. In a study²⁶ it was noticed that the patients suffering from HIV indulges in meditation practice and it helped in lowering the decline rate of immune cell count. In another study²⁷ it has emerged that "Mindfulness meditation produces demonstrable effects on brain and immune function," this suggests that practicing meditation on a regular basis can affect the functioning of the immune

system and mind. Spirituality can also be used along with any therapy for curing Blood Pressure, as it not only helps in promoting physical health but also positively impact the functioning of the mind³¹. In a study, it was found that having good physiological health reduces the chances of acquiring cardiovascular diseases. A healthy mind enhances feelings of joy, serenity, and contentment. People with good mental health are able to make positive and correct decisions about their lives and they experience a feeling of belongingness towards society. They have a positive attitude towards society and one's self²⁸.

1.3 *Spirituality and Standpoints of Illness*

Spirituality and the role of a higher power can become salient in all aspects of a person's life, including health cognitions, behaviors and outcomes as well as explanations/interpretations of why a person gets sick or stays healthy (e.g., clean living or having sinned)^{29,30}. According to the Common Sense Model of Illness Representation³¹ religious/spiritual identity may inform

how individuals understand illness. Illness and treatment may also play a role in patients' narratives about their lives and the way that an illness may be impacting their spiritual journey³². Spiritual beliefs have been shown to affect patients' medical decisions, conflicting with medical treatment and/or influencing compliance with those treatments^{33,34,35, 36}. In their review of spirituality and patient care, Stewart and colleagues³⁷ found that religious practices, including prayer, provide positive results in patients' lives through various measurable factors, including knowledge about their disease, adherence to treatment, coping with disease, quality of life and overall health outcomes.

1.4 Role of Spirituality in Health Promotion and Intrusion

Health promotion efforts aim to engage healthcare consumers at the individual and community level in order to change disease risk and health behavior^{38,39}. In order to effectively engage consumers at the individual and community level, interventionists are encouraged to focus on more patient-centered strategies, which include shared decision-making⁴⁰. This type of engagement is made possible by considering cultural characteristics, such as spirituality, that make an impact on both an individual and community level. The evidence of the impact of spiritual involvement on health behaviors is mixed, with spirituality serving as a promoter as well as a barrier to health and health behavior⁴¹. In recent years, health promotion efforts at the community level have increasingly involved faith-based institutions, as there has been evidence for the efficacy of using religious institutions for promoting health behavior change⁴².

1.5 Research Methods and Data Analysis

Some research suggests a correlation between spirituality and outdoor patient treatment. In general, spirituality refers to a sense of connection to something greater than one refers to and can involve beliefs about the nature of the universe, the meaning of life, and the purpose of human existence. Outdoor patient treatment, also known as outdoor therapy, is a form of psychotherapy that takes place in an outdoor setting, such as a wilderness area, rather than in an office or clinical setting. Outdoor therapy is often used to treat a range of mental health

conditions, including depression, anxiety, addiction, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). One study published in the Journal of Environmental Psychology found that patients who participated in outdoor therapy reported a greater sense of spirituality and connection to nature than those who received traditional indoor therapy. The study also found that patients who reported greater spirituality and connection to nature experienced greater improvements in their mental health outcomes. Another study published in the Journal of Religion and Health found that spirituality was a significant predictor of treatment outcomes in outdoor therapy. The study found that patients who had higher levels of spirituality reported greater improvements in their mental health outcomes compared to those with lower levels of spirituality. It is important to note, however, that the relationship between spirituality and outdoor patient treatment is complex and may depend on a variety of factors, such as the specific type of therapy being used, the individual patient's beliefs and values, and the nature of the mental health condition being treated. Additionally, not all patients may be interested in or receptive to incorporating spirituality into their treatment, and it is important to respect their beliefs and preferences. It is proven that there is a relationship between spirituality and health. Spirituality has a significant role in delivering better health outcomes and it affects the critical aspects of illness including decisions of treatment and care. It helps people to deal with stress and suffering that result in improvement in health outcomes. The use of spirituality by healthcare care providers as a way of coping with mental health issues may be beneficial, as it helps in gaining more inner power, improving the health condition, and enhancing patient satisfaction with the care provided. The fulfilment of patients spiritual needs results in a decrease in agony, stress, and depression helps in the improvement of mental disorders, and achieves a sense of hope for mentally ill people. Good leadership is about motivating the team to perform to the best of their abilities to benefit the patients, co-workers, and the entire organization. All healthcare providers perform the role of a leader at their respective care units so that they can provide better care to patients. There is an inter-relationship between spiritual health, mental health and physical health. Physical activities affect mental well-being similarly people with mental illness are more likely to develop bad physical issues.

Table 1: Data reliability Test

| Cronbach's Alpha | Samples |
|------------------|---------|
| 0.901 | 200 |

The key items that have been included in the study have an alpha coefficient. In this analysis, the alpha coefficient is .901. The higher value of the alpha coefficient shows that all items used in the study is having relatively high internal consistency. (The standard reliability coefficient should be more than 0.800, which is accepted in social sciences research). There is a great correlation among the explored factors of the study including leadership, spirituality, mental wellness, and day-to-day practices of the Doctors. The doctor-patient relationship can be greatly influenced by spirituality, which refers to a deep-seated sense of connection to something greater than oneself, such as a higher power, nature, or the universe. Depicted correlation matrix is

enough to discuss about the relationship among all the factors soundly. Since the p-value is greater than .01 for mental wellness and day-to-day practices which is behaving as a mediating variable, which seems to acceptance of the null hypothesis at the 1 % of significance. Thus, it is concluded that there is no significant correlation between mental wellness and the day-to-day practices of doctors. Another relational matrix, it is showing that spiritual aspects have a strong relationship with leadership in the healthcare industry. Many emphases on the complicated idea of day-to-day medical practices, with a lot of focus on spirituality.

2. CONCLUSION

The study reflects that spirituality & leadership play a vital role in dealing with patients on day-to-day as they express their spirituality in distinctive and unique way. Being able to dispense thoughts about their spiritual beliefs and concerns during a disease or illness was comprehended as a benefit to them.

2.1 Suggestions

| | MW | DDP | SA | Lp |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|----|
| Mental wellness | 1 | | | |
| Day-to- Day Practices | .67** | 1 | | |
| Spiritual aspects | .74 | .62** | 1 | |
| Leadership | .50 | .53 | .72** | 1 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Spirituality can provide patients with a sense of hope and meaning during difficult times. It can help patients cope with the emotional and spiritual challenges that often accompany illness, such as fear, anxiety, and despair. Incorporating spirituality into healthcare can help doctors take a more holistic approach to treatment. This means addressing the patient's physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, rather than just focusing on the disease or illness. In order to incorporate spirituality into the doctor-patient relationship, doctors must be trained to recognize and respect the spiritual beliefs of their patients. They should also be aware of their own beliefs and biases, and strive to maintain a non-judgmental attitude towards their patients' beliefs. By doing so, doctors can create a more supportive and compassionate environment that promotes healing and well-being for their patients. Spirituality encourages a deeper level of understanding and empathy between doctors and patients. When doctors take the time to understand their patients' spiritual beliefs and values, they are better equipped to

Healthcare workforce must identify patients who severely require support and assistance in connecting to suitable spiritual care resources. Thus, if patient's spiritual needs are properly considered it will further assist in improving the quality of life, more satisfaction with care among patient's and reduced the dependence on availing healthcare services.

communicate with them in a compassionate and respectful manner.

3. AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT:

Mr. Vivekanand Shukla and Dr. Jaya Yadav have theorized and intended the framework of this study. Moreover, Dr. Krishna Kumar Singh and Dr. Amit Kumar Pandey have intensely discussed the methodology and levied efforts in curating, analysing and interpreting the data. All the authors have significantly contributed their valuable inputs in structuring the manuscript and interpreting the results thereof. All the authors have thoroughly read the final version of the manuscript and have approved the same for further proceedings.

4. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflict of interest declared none.

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