

The Comparison of Time Perspective, Spiritual Well-being and Psychological Well-being in the Young Participating and not Participating in I'tikaf Rite

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Abstract

Background and Objective: Given the importance of upbringing faithful youths in our religious teachings, some institutions organized various activities to encourage them to develop positive attitudes to religious beliefs and practices. One of the most important activities in this regard is I'tikaaf, which has wide social and personal effects. This study attempted to compare the perspective of time, spiritual well-being and psychological well-being in the youth participating and not participating in the I'tikaf rite in Tabriz, Iran.

Methods: The method used in the present study causal-comparative. The statistical population of this study included all participants aged 35-38 years in the I'tikaf ceremony in 2018 in Tabriz, out of whom 250 people were selected and 220 people filled in the questionnaires. 220 people were matched with the study group. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and MANOVA. In this study, all ethical considerations were observed and no conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Results: The results showed that there was a significant difference in the components of purposeful life, self-acceptance and the total score of psychological well-being between the two groups ($P < 0.01$). The mean related to religious well-being was significantly higher in the non-participating group ($P < 0.01$). Finally, the mean related to the components of negative past, future and destiny in the participating group and the mean of the hedonistic component in the non-participating group was significantly higher ($P < 0.01$).

Conclusion: Based on the findings, participating in religious activities such as I'tikaaf is probably an opportunity for participants to improve, purify their souls and promote human virtues. By participating in this spiritual ceremony, people try to confront their negative past, rebuild their life goals, and achieve perfection. These results can help to present valuable strategies for promoting mental health of the society.

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Summary

Background and Objective

In our religious teachings, a special attention has been paid to upbringing of the youth. In this respect, for years, official and non-official organizations have organized different activities

for encouraging them to develop a positive attitude in them toward original religious beliefs and actions. I'tikaaf is one of the most important actions. I'tikaaf includes different acts of worship as attending the mosque, fasting, prayer, supplications, recitation of the Holy Quran, reciting the holy rosary and blessed thoughts (1). According to studies, the perspective of time and

religion create self-regulation and give direction and purpose to human life (2). Therefore, it is logical that religiosity and adherence to religious practices such as i'tikaaf are related to one's attitude towards time. Time perspective in Zimbardo and Boyd's theory includes past negative, past positive, present fatalism, present hedonistic and the future (3). In addition, religious belief and adherence to religious practices are related to physical and mental health (4) and spiritual well-being (5). Reef's theory of psychological well-being includes self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, autonomy, mastery of the environment, purposeful living, and personal growth (6). Spiritual well-being is also the tendency to seek the meaning and purpose of human existence, the habit of inquiry, and understanding abstract matters (7) and consists of religious and existential well-being (8). Accordingly, the current study was conducted to compare the perspective of time, spiritual well-being and psychological well-being in devout and non-devout youths in Tabriz Iran.

Methods

Compliance with ethical guidelines: To keep the participants' personal information confidential, the questionnaires were completed anonymously and there was no threat either a life threat or ethical threat to the respondents. The consent of every single participant was obtained. The questionnaires were distributed and information was gathered with the cooperation of the Research Deputy of the Faculty of Humanities, Urmia University.

The method of the study was causal-comparative. The statistical population included all participants aged 18-35 in the i'tikaaf ceremony in Tabriz. 15 mosques were randomly selected based on geographical areas and on the first day and before the start of the ceremony; 250 copies of the questionnaires, providing required explanations, were distributed among them; 70% of the participants were in the desired age range. The final sample included 220 participants. A comparison group of 220 people was selected by purposive sampling and matched with the study sample. Descriptive statistical and MANOVA were used for data analysis.

The instruments used in the present study included Zimbardo and Boyd's Time Perspective (8), Palutzin and Ellison's spiritual well-being (9), and Reef 18-item Psychological Well-Being questionnaire (10).

Results

The total mean scores related to psychological well-being and the components such as purposeful life, self-acceptance, religious well-being and hedonistic mood were significantly different in the non-devoted group from the devoted group and more desirable. There was no difference between the two groups in the components of existential well-being and positive past. In other components, the mean for the devoted group was higher.

Conclusion

The average negative past was higher in the participating youths. Apparently, these people turn to i'tikaaf because religious beliefs can help to reassess life events and reconsider their meaning to see the positive aspects of it and facilitate the personal growth resulting from facing it (12).

On the other hand, people who participate in important religious activities, due to their lower satisfaction with their current situation, always seek to strengthen their faith and beliefs, which can justify the lower religious wellbeing of the devoted youths. Also, the average components of self-acceptance and purposefulness were lower in the devoted youth. People who are more involved in religious activities are more likely than others to seek or strengthen meaning and purpose. Therefore, participating in religious activities is a form of goal-seeking and looking for the meaning of life (13). In addition, self-esteem and a sense of efficiency are different parts of their acceptance. Probably, the people with strong religious beliefs, who participate in difficult religious activities such as i'tikaaf, are less satisfied with their current situation and realize their potential to reach perfection and improvement.

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Ethical considerations

According to the authors, the Vice Chancellor for Research of the Faculty recognized this study as consistent with the principles of ethical research in biomedical research.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

Authors' contribution

Designing the study, and supervising its execution, collaboration in writing the article: first author; Collaboration in article writing, and data analysis: second author; and collaboration in data collection, editing and writing: third author.

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