Chapter 3

METHOD

The purpose of the present research was to examine the relationship of spiritual beliefs and spiritual practices with daily spiritual experiences among Hindu and Muslim religious devotees. The methodological steps used in the present study are introduced in this chapter.

3.1 Research Design

In terms of the nature of the research Quantitative Research design was used for collecting the research data; and in terms of the statistical analysis Correlational Research design was used for examining the relationship of the predictor variables; namely, spiritual beliefs and spiritual practices with the criterion variable; namely, spiritual experiences. After that Step-wise Multiple Linear Regression analysis (SMRA) was applied in order to know the percent of variance explained by the predictors in criterion.

3.2 Participants

In the present research, random sampling technique was used. The sample for the study comprised of 400 (n= 200 Hindus, 50% and n= 200 Muslims, 50%) adult religious devotees. Of these, 200 Hindu religious devotees both male (n= 100, 25%) and female (n= 100, 25%) were randomly selected from different temples and Hindu residential areas situated in Aligarh district of Uttar Pradesh. Age of Hindu religious devotees ranging from 21 to 58 years (Mean and SD were 36.48 and 12.72 respectively). Two hundred Muslim religious devotees, both male (n= 100, 25%) and female (n= 100, 25%) were randomly selected from different Mosques and Muslim residential areas situated in Aligarh district of Uttar Pradesh. Age of Muslim religious devotees ranging from 24 to 60 years (Mean and SD were 33.15 and 9.40 respectively). Mean and SD of the overall participant’s age were 36.02 and 12.68 respectively. 134 (33.5%) participants were having education up to the level of intermediate, 122 (30.5%) were graduate, and 144 (36.0%) were post-graduate. Among all of the participants, 199 (49.8%) participants were hailing from urban areas, 133 (33.3%) from rural areas, and 68 (17.0%) from sub-urban areas.
BREAK UP OF THE SAMPLE

Religious devotees
N = 400

Hindu Religious Devotees
n₁ = 200

Males
n₁ = 100

Females
n₁ = 100

Muslim Religious Devotees
n₁ = 200

Males
n₁ = 100

Females
n₁ = 100

Inclusion criteria:
Willingness of the participants and their cooperation were the main inclusion criteria. Those Hindus and Muslims who believe in the existence of God and observing prayer daily at least 2 or 3 times respectively at the temple/mosque or at their home, and also have some educational qualification were included into the sample.

Exclusion Criteria:
Those people were excluded from the study whose age was below to 21 years and those, who did not fully complete the set of questionnaire as well as those, who did not seriously responded to the questions of the given set of questionnaire.
3.3 Tools

In the present study the following tools were used to measure spiritual beliefs, spiritual practices and spiritual experiences of Hindu and Muslim religious devotees.

1. **Spiritual Belief Scale (SBS).**
2. **Spiritual Practices Scales (SPSs).**
3. **Daily Spiritual experience Scale (DSES).**

**Spiritual Belief Scale (SBS)**

In the present study SBS developed by Schaler (1996) was used to measure spiritual beliefs of Hindu and Muslim religious devotees. It is an 8-item self-report instrument, originally intended to measure the nature and extent of spiritual thinking among addiction treatment providers based on AA philosophy. “Spiritual thinking refers to any belief in a metaphysical power said to influence personal experience characterized by feelings of release, gratitude, tolerance and humility” (p.9). It is a two dimensional scale based on AA philosophy: ‘release, gratitude, humility’ dimension (subscale a= .95, n= 281) and the other is ‘tolerance’ dimension (subscale a= .53, n= 290). It is a 5-point Likert scale for each item ranging from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’. The items scored in a positive direction, the total scores ranging from 5 to 40. The highest possible score is 40. The higher the score, the more the subject tend to engage in spiritual thinking along two dimensions described. The scale appeared to be a highly reliable instrument, as indicated by high Cronbach’s alpha= .92 (n= 280). Validity of the scale determined by calculating correlation matrix of subscales, was r= .50.

The SBS was standardized among Hindu religious devotees (n= 597). For the convenience of the participants, the scale was translated into Hindi language by following Double-Backward Translation Method. ‘Good’ internal consistency reliability was confirmed, as indicated by Cronbach’s alpha= .89 (George & Mallery, 2003). Moderately high Construct validity (57.70%) was found with SPSS Version 17.00. The SBS emerged as a uni-dimensional scale among Hindus while applying Statistical Analysis System (SAS) for Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).

The SBS was also standardized among Muslim religious devotees (n= 249). Hindi translation was used. Internal consistency reliability was found to be ‘Acceptable’, as indicated by
Cronbach’s alpha = .75 (George & Mallery, 2003). Moderately high Construct validity (52.69%) was found with SPSS Version 17.00. The SBS emerged as a uni-dimensional scale among Muslims also while applying SAS for CFA.

Spiritual Practices Scales (SPSs)

In the present study two spiritual practices scales were used to measure the extent and nature of spiritual practices performed by Hindu and Muslim religious devotees separately: Spiritual Practices Scale for Hindus and Spiritual Practices Scale for Muslims. Detailed descriptions of these two scales are as follows.

Spiritual Practices Scale for Hindus (SPS-H)

The SPS- H developed by Singh and Husain (2015) was used in the present study to measure the extent and nature of spiritual practices performed by Hindu devotees. It is a 15 item self-report instrument, 11 items with 5-point Likert scale and remaining 4 items with 3-point Likert scale. All the items were scored in a positive direction i.e. from 5 to 1 or from 3 to 1. Total scores range from 15-67. SPS- H was found to be a ‘Good’ reliable instrument as indicated by Cronbach’s alpha= .85 (George & Mallery, 2003). Factorial/ Construct validity varies from 15.87 to 20.29 indicated high construct validity of the scale. It is a three dimensional scale:

Positive Transformation: 1, 2, 8, 9, 11 and 14.
Self-Purification: 7, 10, 12 and 13.
Expanding Awareness: 3, 4, 5, 6, and 15.

Positive Transformation: Most traditional practices help people to progress on the spiritual path. Practices such as Reading religious literature or scriptures (Shri Ramcharitmanas, Ramayan, Shrimad Bhagavad Gita etc.), Watching or listening religious programs on T.V or radio, Doing Meditation (Devotional exercises) consisting of mental efforts directed towards God with qualities, Doing Yoga, Enjoying with nature/ beautifully explaining natural scenes (touching of clouds with hills, rising or setting the sun from the sea, explaining the clouds in different-different figures), Doing Havan-Yagya can deepen the capacity for positive transformation. These practices lead to love, freedom to the individual, and the wholeness concerned with the well-being of the whole life.
**Self-purification:** There are few spiritual practices such as *Attending religious congregation (Satsang), Going on pilgrimage (Thirthyatra), Charity (Daan), Attending jagaran,* are used by religious people for the purpose of self-purification.

**Expanding Awareness:** Practices such as *Praying personally apart from temple, Thanking (remembering) God before or after taking meal or any specific work at home, Going to the temple, Fasting, Singing or listening sacred music (including songs, hymns, psalms and devotional chant) apart from prayer* that quiet the mind and can expand awareness, and refine perceptual power to develop subtle levels of consciousness.

**Spiritual Practices Scale for Muslims (SPS-M)**

SPS-M developed by Husain, Singh and Khan (in press) was used to measure the extent and nature of spiritual practices performed by Muslims religious devotees. It is a 12 item self-report instrument, 10 items with 5-point Likert scale and 2 items with 3-point Likert scale. All items were scored in a positive direction i.e. from 5 to 1 or from 3 to 1. Total scores range from 12 to 56. The higher the score, the more the subject tend to engage in spiritual practices along with dimensions described. The internal consistency reliability of the SPS-M is ‘Acceptable’, as indicated by Cronbach’s alpha= .71 (George & Mallery, 2003). Factorial/Construct validity varies from 14.623 to 17.108 indicated moderate level of Construct validity of the scale. It is a three dimensional scale: individual practices, collective practices and sacred practices-

**Individual Practices:** 1, 10 and 12.

**Collective Practices:** 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

**Sacred Practices:** 2, 3, 4 and 11.

Detailed descriptions of these three dimensions are as follows:

**Individual Practices:** The dimension of individual practices consist of the spiritual practices which one may perform individually or personally like *reading religious literature or scriptures (holy Qur’an etc.), going on pilgrimage (Haj), observing tahajjud prayer.*

**Collective Practices:** The dimension of collective practices consist of the spiritual practices which are performed in the spiritual/religious gathering like *going mosque, visiting dargah/*
khankah (holy shrines), fasting, attending religious congregation (iztama) and doing meditation.

**Sacred Practices:** Sacred practices include *watching or listening religious programs on T.V or radio, praying personally apart from mosque, thanking (remembering) God before or after taking meal or any specific work at home, enjoying with nature.*

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**Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES)**

The Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES) originally developed by Lynn Underwood in 1997 intended to measure an individual’s perception, interaction and involvement with the transcendent (i.e., God, the divine) in life. Details on the English version of DSES were published in Underwood (1999), Underwood and Teresi (2002), Underwood (2006) and Underwood (2011). It is a uni-dimensional scale. It is a paper-pencil, self-report instrument consisting of 16-item self-report scale along a 6-point Likert scale (item 1 to 15) anchors labelled “Many times in a day, Every day, Most days, Some days, Once in a while and Never” and 4 point- Likert scale (item 16) labelled as “Not at all, Somewhat close, Very close and As close as possible”. For the sake of ease in interpreting the results, all of the items scored in a positive direction, for first-15 items scoring was ranging from 6 to 1 (6 for Many times in a day, 5 for Every day, 4 for Most days, 3 for Some days, 2 for once in a while and 1 for Never) and for the last item (item no- 16) scoring was ranging from 1 to 4 (1 for Not at all, 2 for Somewhat close, 3 for Very close and 4 for As close as possible). The total score ranging from 16 to 94, the higher the score, more frequent daily spiritual experiences. According to Underwood and Teresi (2002) the DSES was originally designed to assess nine dimensions: connection, interaction with the transcendent, transcending the difficulties of the present physical ills or psychological situation, a sense of wholeness and integral integration, awe, gratefulness, compassionate love, mercy and spiritual longing.

Underwood and Teresi (2002) reported adequate reliability for DSES, as indicated by Cronbach’s alphas .94 and .95 for the DSES suggesting a highly internal consistency of the instrument. They also presented preliminary estimate of Construct validity of the DSES. The results of the SWAN study (Study of Women across the Nation) with sample size of 233, revealed that on the DSES African-American women scored lower than Caucasian women did. This finding was significant in that a greater degree of daily spiritual experiences were
indicated by lower mean score on the DSES. Underwood and Teresi reported that this finding was consistent with the findings of the GSS (General Social Survey) in addition to other studies which revealed higher degree of religiousness among African-American based on religious involvement and subjective rating.

The DSES translated in Hindi by Gupta and Underwood in 2012 was used in the present study to measure daily spiritual experiences among Hindu and Muslim religious devotees. It was standardized on Indian population (n= 947) among Hindu (n= 597) and Muslim (n= 350) adults. ‘Good’ internal consistency of the DSES was confirmed as indicated by Cronbach’s alpha .86 (George & Mallery, 2003). While applying CFA, item no 16 was rejected, so the final draft consisted of 15 items along 5 point Likert scale. Unidimensionality of the scale was confirmed in CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis). The Construct validity (59.81%) was found to be highly satisfactory. For 15- item version, scoring procedure remain the same 6 to 1, total score of the scale ranges from 15 to 90. The highest possible score is 90, the higher the score, the more the subject tend to experience daily spiritual experiences and lower the score indicate hardly any daily spiritual experiences.

3.4 Procedure

The data were collected individually from Hindu (n= 200) and Muslims (n= 200) adults. It was decided that the data from Hindu and Muslim religious devotees will be collected from different temples and mosques situated in Aligarh district of Uttar Pradesh. After getting the consent of participants they were given a set of questionnaire in which SBS, SPS- M for Muslims/ SPS-H for Hindus and DSES were attached as a booklet form. The researcher established a rapport with the participants and requested them to fill the demographical information first. After that the SBS was administered. The researcher asked to the participants to read the instructions carefully, if you have difficulty in understanding in any item of the scale; the researcher explained and helped them to understand that item of SBS. After obtaining the data on SBS, the researcher administered SPS-H to the Hindu participants and SPS-M to the Muslim participants and asked the participants to give their responses to all of the items of the scale. Similarly, DSES was also filled by the participants. At the end, the researcher assured to the participants that their information would be kept confidential and it would be used only for research purpose. The participants generally took 40-45 minutes to complete all the scales. All the participants were approached for data collection during the whole year i.e. 2014.
Scoring of the responses was done manually by the investigator according to the scoring procedure described above for each instrument in the manual. The data was tabulated very carefully for analyzing the data so that the results can be interpreted and briefly communicated in a comprehensive manner.

3.5 Statistical Analysis

SPSS Version 17.00 of windows software was used to analyze the data. The following statistical techniques were used to analyze the data.

1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis was applied by using Statistical Analysis System (SAS) in order to confirm the factor structures of SBS and DSES among Hindu and Muslim adults.
2. Descriptive statistics were calculated to determine the sample characteristics and standard descriptive statistics such as Mean, SD, minimum, maximum scores on the variables for sub groups.
3. Pearson’s Product Moment correlation coefficients were calculated to find out the relationship of spiritual beliefs and spiritual practices with spiritual experiences among Hindu and Muslim religious devotees as well as gender-wise among them.
4. Separate Step-wise Multiple Regression models were conducted with spiritual experiences for Hindu and Muslim religious devotees as well as gender-wise among them.
5. Sub-group analysis was used to determine the moderating effects of demographical variables (age, gender and educational qualification) on the relationship of spiritual beliefs and practices with spiritual experiences separately among Hindu and Muslim devotees.

Next chapter shows the results and general discussion drawn from different statistical analysis about proposed hypotheses.