

## The Relationship Between Spiritual Health and Self-Awareness with Positive-thinking in Second-Grade Female High School Students of District One of Tehran City

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**Abstract**

**Purpose:** Students from any country are considered as intellectual and spiritual resources of the country and their issues and problems are important for successful study and providing their physical and mental health. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between spiritual health and self-awareness with positive-thinking in second-grade female high school students of district one of Tehran city.

**Methodology:** The present study was a descriptive (correlational) one in terms of method and an applied one in terms of the purpose. The statistical population of the present study was second-grade female high school students of district one of Tehran city in the academic year of 2017-2018. The sample of the study was 100 students who were selected by multi-stage cluster sampling. Data collection was done by Self-Awareness Questionnaire by Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss (1975), Self-Awareness Questionnaire by Oxford Argyle (2001), and Spiritual Health Questionnaire by Ploetzin and Ellison (1982). For statistical analysis, the mean and standard deviation of descriptive statistics and multivariate regression were used at the level of inferential statistics and the correlation coefficient was used using SPSS22 software at a significance level of 0.05.

**Findings:** The results showed that the relationship between spiritual health and self-awareness with positive-thinking was significant in the female high school students in Tehran city, so that these two variables had the ability to predict positive-thinking and were able to explain positive-thinking variable to 14.4 percent ( $P < 0.01$ ). **Conclusion:** Self-awareness and its role in spiritual health showed that self-awareness was related to mental and physical health.

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## 1. Introduction

Teens period is an important and prominent in the social and psychological development of a person. In this period, the emotional balance, especially the balance between emotions and wisdom, the understanding of the existential value of self, spiritual health with real choices in life, the emotional independence of the family, maintaining own psychological and emotional balance against the stressors of life and the environment and establishing right relationships with the others, the recognition of healthy and effective life and how to handle it are the most important needs of adolescents (Shoarinejad, 2013).

Students from any country are considered as intellectual and spiritual assets of the country and their problems to study successfully and to provide their physical and mental health are important. Therefore, it seems that spiritual health and self-awareness are useful for promoting the positive-thinking of the individual in relation to himself, others and the world (Montazeri et al., 2014).

Positive-thinking as one of the most important variables influencing mental health of students plays an important role in creating the secure context and preserves the individual, social and educational functions of students (Pour Razavi et al., 2013). One of the effective factors in providing peace of mind and mental security, is having positive thoughts, because the psychological, physical state and experience of happiness or pain, and in general, the quality of our life, arise from the mental arrangement and the style of our thoughts. Most of the stress and life problems are caused by negative thoughts, and there has always been a tremendous conflict between positive and negative thoughts (Parsa, 2013). Research has indicated that positive thoughts lead to psychological and physical health and increase the longevity of individuals. The need for positive-thinking in this century is felt more than ever, those with positive thoughts, have a greater mental health (Klinike, 2005).

Positive-thinking can be defined as the use of all positive, and promising mental capacities in life to not surrender to the negative factors created by the mind and the disappointing feelings caused by the difficulty of communicating with humans and confronting nature. In other words, positivism can be defined as "positive-thinking" toward the world, man, and self (Abedi et al., 2010). Positive-thinking and hope with are positively and significantly correlated with physical and mental health, and negatively correlated psychological pathological indicators, such as depression (Cohen et al., 2009).

Future and retrospective studies of positive-thinking and hopefulness show that individuals with optimistic explanation style, compared to those with a pessimistic explanatory style, have less physical problems, depression and frustration when confronted with major stressful events of life or commit suicide. These people are healthier and happier. They work better, take more advantage of effective coping strategies, such as re-evaluation and problem-solving, overcome psychological stress, avoid active lifestyle stress, build better social support networks, and have better health styles (Petersons, 2006). On the other hand, researches have indicated that there is a correlation between spirituality with purpose of life, life satisfaction and health (Abdollahzadeh et al., 2009). The lack of spirituality in life can make a person in an obscure, absurd, and inflexible, and prevent a person from being able to properly decide in his life and correct his problems properly, because with strengthening the spirituality, students can properly understand the meaning of their lives, so that they follow rational and logical behaviors, and their relationship with the others become a human and religious relationship; the spirituality change their attitude toward himself and the others, positively (Jamcs 1977, quoted by Asadi et al., 2011).

On the other hand, one of the features that can affect the students is self-awareness. Self-awareness has been considered as a field in psychology since 1960 (Morin, 2005). Self-awareness, having a deep understanding of your emotions, your strengths and weaknesses, and your values and motivations (Caldwell, 2010). Self-awareness is a true and realistic perception of the interests, values, skills, limitations and preferences of a person's life. Self-awareness is thought to be a personality trait that is said to play an important role in regulating individuals' performance and gaining leadership (Singh, 2006, quoted by

Rafatpanah and Seif, 2014). Self-awareness skill include the ability to recognize thoughts, beliefs, excitements, personality traits, personal values, habits, biases, abilities, weaknesses, and psychological needs that prompts the behavior of people. This affects the person's diagnostic ability to react to environmental symptoms and how excites in interacting with the others (Rothman, Greenland & Lash, 2008). According to what has been said and considering the importance of the student community in the country and the prevalence of psychological problems in them, as well as the need to address mental health and the factors affecting it in this group, the present study attempts to examine that if there a relationship between spiritual health and self-awareness with the positive-thinking of female high school students in the first district of Tehran city.

## 2. Methodology

The present research is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive (correlation) type in terms of method, because the goal of correlation method is to examine and measure the relationship of variables with each other. The statistical population of the study was all female second-grade high school students in the first district of Tehran city in the academic year 2017-2018. The sample group size should be at least 100 in regression and correlation studies (Hooman, 2016). Therefore, a sample of 100 female second-grade high school students in the first district of Tehran was selected by random cluster sampling. Data collection was done by Self-Awareness Questionnaire by Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss (1975), Self-Awareness Questionnaire by Oxford Argyle (2001), and Spiritual Health Questionnaire by Ploetzin and Ellison (1982). The self-knowledge questionnaire contains 23 questions and was made and standardized in 1975 by Scheier and Buss. This scale measures three distinct tendencies of self-awareness (private self-awareness, general consciousness, social anxiety). The scoring of questionnaire was based on a five-point Likert scale, with a minimum score of 0 and a maximum of 92. In the research done by Fenigstein et al. (1975), Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the components of private self-awareness, general self-awareness and social anxiety were 0.84, 0.79 and 0.73 respectively, and in the research done by Scheier and Buss (1985), 0.84, 0.75 and 0.79. The validity of the self-awareness scale in the research done by Rafatpanah and Seif (2014) through the factor analysis with the VARIMAX rotation showed that this instrument measures the three independent dimensions of private self-awareness, general self-awareness and social anxiety.

Oxford Argyle Positive-thinking Questionnaire (2001), contains 29 four-option questions, each item's options being scaled from zero to three. Therefore, the highest score is 87 and the lowest is 0. Francis, Brown, Leicester and Philip (1998), reported acceptable the internal-test consistency by Cronbach's alpha. Hills and Argyle (2001), reported the coefficient of reliability of the questionnaire to be 0.91 and the internal correlation of the items, have been ranged from 0.54 to 0.65. Also, a high positive correlation was found between this questionnaire and the other tests (Life Orientation Test, Attention to Life Index, Self-Examination, and Life Satisfaction Scale), which indicates the validity of this questionnaire.

Spiritual Health Questionnaire by Ploetzin and Ellison (1982) consists of 3 parts: demographic information, religious health and existential health. In the study done by Sayyed Fatemi et al. (2006), validity of the spiritual health questionnaire was determined through content validity and its reliability was confirmed by Rezaei in Tehran in 2007 with a Cronbach alpha of 0.82.

For statistical analysis at the descriptive level, the mean, standard deviation etc. were used, and also multivariate regression analysis was used at the level of inferential statistics. Normality of data was also assessed by Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Finally, the correlation coefficient was used using SPSS22 software at a significance level of 0.05 for multivariate regression analysis.

### 3. Findings

The descriptive findings of this study indicated that all students were female; among them, 35 percent were in the tenth grade, 35 percent were in the eleventh grade, and 30 percent were in the twelfth grade. On the other hand, each specified range (west, east, north, south and center of district 1 of the education) accounted for 20% of the sample.

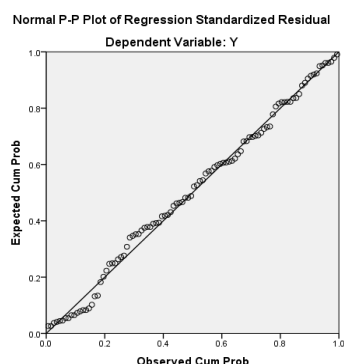
**Table 1.** indices of central tendency and distribution of scores of the study variables

variable	mean	median	Standard deviation	variance	range changes	minimum	maximum
positive-thinking	44.7	46	11.55	133.51	57	14	71
Spiritual health	59.72	60	3.07	9.45	14	52	66
Self-awareness	52.42	52	8.71	75.92	37	37	74

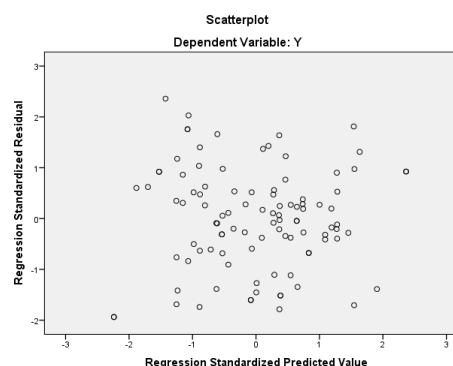
Findings of table 2 showed that all of the study variables had a normal distribution. Also, the diagram of Smarter Plot (figure 1) indicates the linearity of the relationship between the variables. Therefore, all the hypotheses of regression analysis were available.

**Table 2.** Results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to verify the normality of the data

variable	Value K-S	Significance level
positive-thinking	.944	.335
Spiritual health	.689	.105
Self-awareness	.758	.554



The scatter plot diagram for checking the outlier



The P-P plot diagram to check the linearity of relationship

**Fig. 1.** Examining the outlier and the linearity of the relationship between variables

The purpose of the study was to find that "if there is a relationship between the spiritual health and self-awareness with positive-thinking in the female second-grade high school students of Tehran city". The findings showed that in the first step, with the entry of the self-awareness variable as the strongest variable, the multiple correlation coefficient equal to 0.315. In the second step, and with the entry of the spiritual health variable, the multiple correlation coefficient increased to 0.377; in the way that both self-awareness and spiritual health variables were able to explain 14.2% of students' positive-thinking. Also, for one unit change of standard deviation, the level of self-awareness was changed to 0.298 in the standard deviation of the criterion (positive-thinking). This coefficient for spiritual health was equal to 0.207 and with increasing self-awareness and spiritual health scores, the level of positive-thinking also increased (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Results of the second step of the spiritual health regression analysis and self-awareness with positive-thinking

	Results of the second step of regression analysis					F test of regression significance	
	regression coefficient	Beta value	t value	Significance level	Multiple correlation	Correlation square	F value
y-intercept	-22.503		-1.039	.301			
Predictor							
variable 1 (self-awareness)	.395	.298	3.157	.002			
					.377	.142	8.03
Predictor							
variable 2 (spiritual health)	.778	.207	2.195	.031			

#### 4. Discussion

The findings indicated that the relationship between spiritual health and self-awareness with positive-thinking in female second-grade high school students of Tehran city was significant so that they could predict positive-thinking and were able to explain 14.4%, the positive-thinking variable. In adapting the findings to the findings of previous studies, it should be noted that a research was not found exactly with this title, but the results of the present study were in some way consistent with some previous studies. A part of the findings of this research suggests that there is a significant relationship between spiritual health and positive-thinking. The findings are consistent with the findings of the researches done by Ebadi et al. (2016), Ghasemi Jubaneh et al. (2016), Kamari et al. (2015), Ashouri et al. (2014), Hasanzadeh et al. (2014), Mozafferinia et al. (2014), Montazeri et al. (2014), Mahmoudi Katki (2013), Bab al-Hawaiji et al. (2011), Asgari et al. (2010), Sanagoo et al. (2007), within the country, and Tankamani and Shahidi (2016), Mickelson et al. (2016), Braun et al. (2014), Scolares et al. (2012), Ho et al. (2010), and Moriah-Almadia (2006), in abroad.

In addition, the examination of the theoretical foundations of both above variables suggests that the relationship between these variables is supported by the theoretical perspective. George et al. (2002), suggest that four psychological mechanisms explain why religion has a positive impact on health, health and life satisfaction. First, by promoting health-related behaviors, health life styles, and educating what makes a person care for his/her body. The second mechanism is social support that has powerful effects on health. The third mechanism is the psychological resources such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, optimism, hope, forgiveness and merit, and the fourth mechanism is belief structure, such as the sense of interconnectedness, acts as a buffer against the stress (Asgari, 2010). Evidence suggests that spiritual exercises increase awareness and insight toward multiple levels of consciousness and have a positive effect on individuals' performance. In this world where materialism has overshadowed everything, getting to the depth of human nature is one of the most important concerns and basic needs of man in the present age (Hassanzadeh et al. 2014).

A part of the findings of this research indicated that there is a significant relationship between spiritual health and positive-thinking. The findings are consistent with the findings of the researches done by Ghasemi Jubaneh et al. (2016), Ghaderi et al. (2015), and Latifian and Seif (2007), in the country, and researches done by Heinz et al. (2017) and Caradis (2006), in abroad. In addition, the examination of the theoretical foundations of the both above variables suggest that the relationship between these variables is supported by the theoretical perspective. In the explanation of this finding one can admit that self-awareness means what a person percepts from himself and how he feels on the basis of this perception. The type of our self-awareness predicts the satisfaction with ourselves and our lives. Satisfaction is the feeling that almost all of our activities are focused on it. Feeling dissatisfied with ourselves is a sign warning the person that he needs

to change. The most basic and fundamental part of this change is the development of self-awareness. Self-awareness is the ability to recognize oneself, weaknesses and strengths, desires, fears and hatreds, those who have self-awareness, identify their feelings and are aware of them and control these feelings, weaknesses and strengths, and rely on strengths to reduce their weaknesses (Ashrafi et al., 2014).

Also, the study done by Brown and Ryan (2003), with the aim of the advantages of self-awareness and its role in psychological health, show that self-awareness is associated with mental and physical health. Our life satisfaction depends heavily on our feelings about the value of ourselves. Spiritual health provides a coordinated and integrated relationship between the internal forces and is characterized by the characteristics of stability in life, fit and harmony, a sense of close relationship with oneself, God, society and the environment; the only force that harmonizes physical, psychological, and social dimensions. When spiritual health is seriously compromised, a person may experience mental disorders such as loneliness, depression and loss of meaning in life (Lin et al., 2003).

In the end, according to the research findings and educational experiences of the researcher, it is suggested: 1) Considering the fact that there is a relationship between spiritual health and positive-thinking, so that the increase of spiritual health leads to increase the positive-thinking, planning and providing the necessary training to raise the level of spiritual health can lead to positive-thinking; 2) Based on the findings of this study, and considering the relationship between self-awareness and positive-thinking, the educational planners should emphasize the level of the students' self-awareness to improve their positive-thinking and in this regard, planning is necessary; 3) It is also suggested that educational planning be carried out to promote positive-thinking among the students.

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