

# The Impact of Spiritual Well-being on Psychological Distress in Patients with Spinal Cord Injury: The Mediating Role of Loneliness and Hopelessness

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## Abstract

**Background and Objective:** Spiritual well-being is one of the fundamental concepts in chronic diseases and is considered an important approach to improve public health. Given the importance of spiritual well-being and its role, the purpose of this study is a structural model which examines the impact of spiritual well-being on psychological distress with regard to loneliness and hopelessness as mediators.

**Method:** This descriptive study is correlational. Participants were 144 patients with spinal cord injury in Isfahan selected through convenience sampling. The data were collected using the Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWBS), UCLA Loneliness Scale, Beck Hopelessness Scale and DASS-21 Scale. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed as statistical technique for data analysis of the study. All ethical issues were observed in this study and the researchers declared no conflict of interests.

**Results:** The results demonstrated that Spiritual Well-being, Loneliness and Hopelessness significantly correlated with Psychological Distress. Further, the test of mediation by bootstrapping method established significant mediating role of Loneliness and Hopelessness in the relationship between Spiritual Well-being and Psychological Distress.

**Conclusion:** These findings can beneficially contribute to the clinical settings in treatment of psychological distress among the patients with spinal cord injury.

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## Summary

**Background and Objective:** The injuries to the spinal cord are among the most dangerous physical injuries which can not only disrupt the function of different organs but also be even life-threatening (1). Quadriplegia is injury to spinal cord for any reason, including stroke, brain tumor or cancer, cerebrovascular conditions, car accidents, or congenital problems in which spinal cord from the myelencephalon down to the network of cauda equina protected by the sheath of spinal cord is partly or completely damaged experiencing crushing and degenerative changes; consequently, there will be motor and sensory or autonomic disruptions in one or more organs and torso (2). No matter what the reason, spinal cord injury will have profound effects on one's physical and mental health as well as his lifestyle (3).

Following this life-changing incidence, many individuals whose spinal cord is injured will experience depression, anxiety, disorientation, and loneliness. Depression is a state of mind that reduces self-esteem, making the person feel useless, incompetent with an undesirable self-image. Anxiety is a painful feeling which is related either to a current trigger or to an impending threat with an unknown root (4). Loneliness has been a matter of focus as one of the symptoms of depression and also an independent factor in causing psychological damage. A depressed person usually evades social relationships, and loneliness is one of the most commonly observed disorders in those with spinal cord injuries (5). The results of the previous studies have shown that there is a positive and significant relationship between loneliness and depression and frustration among patients (6). Thus, given the importance of the issue, the present study aims to

examine whether spiritual well-being is associated with psychological anxiety in patients with injured spinal cord and if there is a mediating role of loneliness and hopelessness in the relationship between spiritual well-being and psychological distress of these patients.

**Method:** This study is descriptive and correlational. The statistical population included all males with spinal cord injury in Isfahan who referred to Borna Institute of Science and Sport for rehabilitation purposes in 2016. 144 patients were selected from this statistical population through convenience sampling. The participants aged from 19 to 52. Their disability afflicted them from waist down and was related to car accidents and the like, not being congenital. The participants' consent was initially obtained and then in the specified time they filled out the questionnaires. Instructions were given to the participants upon their completion of questionnaires. In this study, the data were collected using four questionnaires, namely Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale (DASS-21), the Spiritual Well-being Scale (SWBS), Loneliness Scale, and Beck Hopelessness Scale.

**Results:** The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was employed to check the normality of the data. The results showed that the assumption of zero on the normality of the data was confirmed in this study ( $P > 0.05$ ), suggesting that this assumption is supported. Furthermore, calculating correlation coefficient indicated that all the correlation coefficients at the  $P \leq 0.001$  levels are significant and the highest correlation coefficient is related to stress and anxiety (0.77) and the lowest correlation coefficient is related to spiritual well-being and hopelessness (-0.27). The results also showed that spiritual well-being, loneliness, and hopelessness had a significant relationship with psychological distress ( $P \leq 0.001$ ). In order to evaluate the proposed model, structural equation modeling was utilized. The fitness of the proposed model was based on a combination of fitness versions to determine the suitability of fitting the proposed model with the data. The results indicated the desirable fit of the pattern. In addition, the test of mediation by bootstrapping method showed significant mediating role of loneliness and hopelessness in the relationship between spiritual well-being and psychological distress.

**Conclusion:** The findings indicate that in the proposed model of this study, the fitting indices were very good, implying that the data fitted to this pattern is appropriate. Moreover, the results show that there is a negative and significant relationship between spiritual well-being and the mediators of loneliness and hopelessness. In their study, Palutzin and Ellison concluded that there is a negative relationship between spiritual well-being and loneliness, and that spirituality is an important predictor of loneliness (7). The negative relationship between spiritual well-being and loneliness has been corroborated by Miller et al. (6) and Michley et al (5 & 6). Other findings of this study adduce the argument that there is a negative and significant relationship between spiritual well-being and hopelessness among patients with spinal cord injuries.

A review of advanced cancer patients by Mckleen et al. showed that patients with a higher spiritual level are less likely to feel hopeless (8). Hopelessness is one of the major symptoms of depression. The results of the studies conducted in Iran also show that spiritual education and interventions as well as spiritual cognitive counseling can lower depression in patients (9).

Based on the other part of the findings, a negative and significant correlation between spiritual well-being and hopelessness (10), emotional instability and temperament disorder (11) and stress (12) has been reported. Hoffman et al. (13) conducted a longitudinal study on depression in 1035 patients with spinal cord injury. The results showed that 21% of patients who had been suffering from the injury for one year; and 18% of patients who had been affected for five years had major depression. Therefore, psychological clinical intervention seems essential in identifying risk factors among this group of people. Given the findings of this study and the dominant religious culture of the Iranians, it seems that by developing a comprehensive medical care that includes spiritual well-being, nursing and therapeutic interventions for patients with injured spinal cord and easing loneliness and hopelessness in them will be more effective.

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## تأثير الرفاهية المعنوية على الاضطرابات النفسية لدى المرضى الذين يعانون من إصابة الحبل الشوكي: دور الوسيط للشعور بالوحدة واليأس

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### معلومات المادة

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### الكلمات الرئيسية:

الاضطرابات النفسية  
 الرفاهية المعنوية  
 الشعور بالوحدة  
 المرضى الذين يعانون من إصابة الحبل الشوكي  
 اليأس

### الملخص

**خلفية البحث وأهدافه:** إن الرفاهية المعنوية إحدى المفاهيم الأساسية في الأمراض المزمنة والتي تعتبر رؤية هامة في تعزيز الصحة العامة لدى لأفراد. نظراً لأهمية الرفاهية المعنوية ودورها فإن الغرض من هذا البحث، دراسة النموذج الهيكلي لتأثير الرفاهية المعنوية على الاضطرابات النفسية، مع التركيز على دور الوسيط للشعور بالوحدة واليأس.

**منهجية البحث:** اجري هذا البحث الوصفي بطريقة ارتباطية واشتملت عينة البحث ١٤٤ مريضاً يعاني من إصابة الحبل الشوكي في مدينة اصفهان وقد تم اختيارهم بطريقة أخذ العينات المتاحة. تم جمع البيانات باستخدام مقياس الرفاهية المعنوية ومقياس الشعور بالوحدة ومقياس «بيك» للاكتئاب واستمارة الكآبة والقلق والاضطراب (DASS-٢١). ولجمع البيانات تم استخدام المنهج الاحصائي لنمذجة المعادلة الهيكلية (SEM). تمت مراعاة جميع الموارد الاخلاقية في هذا البحث وإن مؤلفي المقالة لم يشيروا الى اي تضارب في المصالح.

**الكشوفات:** اظهرت الكشوفات ان هناك علاقة ذات دلالة احصائية بين الرفاهية المعنوية والشعور بالوحدة واليأس وبين الاضطرابات النفسية. كما ان اختبار متغيرات الوساطة الاحصائية بطريقة bootstrap اظهر ان لدور الوسيط للشعور بالوحدة اليأس اهمية بالغة في العلاقة بين الرفاهية المعنوية والاضطرابات النفسية.

**الاستنتاج:** قد تكون النتائج مفيدة في الحالات السريرية التي هي في صدد علاج الاضطرابات النفسية للمرضى الذين يعانون من إصابة الحبل الشوكي.

يتم استناد المقالة على الترتيب التالي:

Abbasi M, Ghadampour E, Amirian L. The Impact of Spiritual Well-being on Psychological Distress in Patients with Spinal Cord Injury: The Mediating Role of Loneliness and Hopelessness. J Res Relig Health. 2018; 4(4): 80- 93.

# تأثیر بهزیستی معنوی بر آشفتگی‌های روان‌شناختی بیماران دارای آسیب نخاعی: نقش میانجی‌گری احساس تنهایی و ناامیدی

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## اطلاعات مقاله

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## چکیده

**سابقه و هدف:** بهزیستی معنوی یکی از مفاهیم بنیادین در بیماری‌های مزمن است که رویکردی مهم در ارتقای سلامت عمومی افراد در نظر گرفته می‌شود. با توجه به اهمیت بهزیستی معنوی هدف مطالعه‌ی حاضر مدل ساختاری تأثیر بهزیستی معنوی بر آشفتگی‌های روان‌شناختی با تأکید بر نقش میانجی‌گری احساس تنهایی و ناامیدی است.

**روش کار:** این پژوهش مطالعه‌ی توصیفی از نوع همبستگی است. نمونه‌ی مطالعه شامل ۱۴۴ بیمار دارای آسیب نخاعی شهر اصفهان است که با روش نمونه‌گیری در دسترس انتخاب شدند. داده‌ها با استفاده از مقیاس بهزیستی معنوی (SWBS)، مقیاس احساس تنهایی، مقیاس ناامیدی بک و پرسش‌نامه‌ی افسردگی؛ اضطراب و استرس (DASS-۲۱) جمع‌آوری شد. برای تحلیل داده‌های مطالعه نیز از روش آماری مدل معادلات ساختاری (SEM) استفاده شد. در این پژوهش همه‌ی مسائل اخلاقی رعایت شده است و نویسندگان مقاله هیچ‌گونه تضاد منافع‌ی گزارش نکرده‌اند.

**یافته‌ها:** نتایج نشان داد که بهزیستی معنوی، احساس تنهایی و ناامیدی با آشفتگی‌های روان‌شناختی رابطه‌ی معنی‌داری داشت. همچنین آزمون میانجی‌گری با روش بوت استرپ نشان‌دهنده‌ی معنی‌داری نقش میانجی‌گری احساس تنهایی و ناامیدی در رابطه‌ی بهزیستی معنوی و آشفتگی‌های روان‌شناختی بود.

**نتیجه‌گیری:** یافته‌های به‌دست‌آمده می‌تواند در موقعیت‌های بالینی برای درمان آشفتگی‌های روان‌شناختی بیماران دارای آسیب نخاعی مفید باشد.

## واژگان کلیدی:

آسیب‌های روان‌شناختی  
احساس تنهایی  
بهزیستی معنوی  
بیماران دارای آسیب نخاعی  
ناامیدی

استناد مقاله به این صورت است:

Abbasi M, Ghadampour E, Amirian L. The Impact of Spiritual Well-being on Psychological Distress in Patients with Spinal Cord Injury: The Mediating Role of Loneliness and Hopelessness. J Res Relig Health. 2018; 4(4): 80- 93.

## مقدمه

می‌شود که نابودی انسان و در برخی مواقع معلولیت وی را در پی دارد. از جمله‌ی این موارد پدیده‌ی آسیب یا ضایعه‌ی نخاعی است (۱). صدمات وارد شده به نخاع یکی از مخاطره‌آمیزترین آسیب‌های جسمانی است که می‌تواند موجب ایجاد اختلال در دستگاه‌های مختلف بدن و حتی تهدیدکننده‌ی حیات فرد باشد (۲). طبق قطعنامه‌ی ۴۸/۹۶

در کنار کامیابی‌های فراوان انسان امروزی در زمینه‌های مختلف، بروز حوادث و ضایعات مرتبط با شرایط حاکم بر زندگی جوامع صنعتی، اجتناب‌ناپذیر است. برای مثال استفاده‌ی بی‌رویه و غیراصولی از فناوری، به حادثی منجر

دوره‌ی ۴، شماره‌ی ۴، پاییز ۱۳۹۷

مجله‌ی پژوهش در دین و سلامت