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## Measuring Spiritual Health: Spiritual Health Assessment Scale (SHAS)

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### **Abstract:**

*Objective: To develop a spiritual health assessment scale to measure spiritual health*

*Materials and methods: The study was started with the definition of spiritual health and its review. The spiritual health assessment scale was developed after discussing its rationality. This scale contains three domains for assessment of spiritual health v.i.z. Self-development, Self-Actualization and Self-Realization. Each of the domains has seven items in itself, related to domain. Each of the item is given scoring of between '1' to '5' on Likert scale. Likewise, total spiritual health score ranges from '21' to '105'. Poor spiritual health was considered when spiritual health score between '21' to '49', fair spiritual health was considered when spiritual health score between '50' to '77' and good spiritual health was considered when spiritual health score between '78' to '105' Applicability, reliability and validity of this scale was tested by applying it on randomly selected 1050 individuals of 20-60 years residing in Dausa city of Rajasthan.*

*Results: Applicability of this SHAS scale was 98.2%, test-retest reliability 81.14% and internal consistency validity 0.81. Discriminate validity to discriminate within poor, fair and good spiritual health was significant ( $P < 0.001$ )*

*Conclusions: This scale can be used to measure spiritual health as it has good applicability, reliability and validity. It can be used for all sections of the community as it is not based on religion.*

**Key words:** Spirituality, Applicability, Reliability, Validity, Cronbach's Alpha Test

### **1. Introduction**

Spiritual health is an important dimension of health on which health can be enjoyed and is an important base of other dimensions of health. Spiritual orientation can help people to cope with the consequences of a life stress situation which can lead to many physical and mental diseases<sup>1</sup>. Spirituality has now been identified globally as an important aspect for providing answers to many questions related to health and happiness. The World Health Organization is also looking beyond physical, mental and social dimensions of the health i.e. the spiritual health and its impact on the overall health and happiness of an individual.<sup>2</sup> However the knowledge on the role of spirituality on health is limited because of the limited researches in this field. Most researches<sup>3-9</sup> of this field are based on measures of morality, religiosity etc. rather than spirituality. Authors realized this need and initiated a research to develop a more applicable, statistically reliable and valid spiritual health assessment scale to measure spiritual health of individuals.

### **2. Materials and Methods**

Spiritual Health Assessment Scale (SHAS) to measure spiritual health of individuals was developed going through the following stages:

#### *2.1. Definitions of Spiritual Health with Its Determinants*

To start with to develop a Spiritual Health Assessment (SHAS) various definitions of spiritual health was explored to find out its determinants.

Oxford English Dictionary,<sup>10</sup> define spirit as "intelligent or immaterial part of man, soul" The word "spiritual", was defined in a variety of ways, but all of which have one common that they imply a phenomenon that is not material in nature but belongs to the realm of ideas that have arisen in the minds of human beings, particularly ennobling ideas. "By shaping people's actions and ways of life", these philosophical, religious, moral or political ideologies have had a profound influence on the physical, mental and social well-being of the people.<sup>2</sup> concerned. Spiritual dimension plays a great role in motivating people's achievement in all aspects of life.

Spiritual health means various things to different people. To some, it means the help found in new age philosophy, to some the order of organized religion, in some the freedom of spiritual experiences and to others the integration of the person for optimum wellness. For some Spiritual health is the ability to practice moral or religious beliefs in your everyday life.

Spirituality is unique to each individual. Your "spirit" usually refers to the deepest part of you, the part that lets you make meaning of your world. Your spirit provides you with the revealing sense of who you are, why you are here and what your purpose for living is. It is that innermost part of you that allows you to gain strength and hope.<sup>1</sup>

Many factors play a part in defining spirituality: religious faith, beliefs, values, ethics, principles and morals. Some gain spirituality by growing in their personal relationships with others, or through being at peace with nature. Spirituality allows us to find the inner calm and peace needed to get through whatever life brings<sup>1</sup>

Spiritual Wellness is a personal matter involving values and beliefs that provide a purpose in our lives. It is important for everyone to explore what they believe is their own sense of meaning and purpose.

The path to spiritual wellness may involve meditation, prayer, affirmations, or specific spiritual practices that support your connection to a higher power or belief system. Yoga and meditation can also help you develop spiritual wellness.

Spiritual health is a: State of being where an individual is able to deal with day-to-day life in a manner which leads to the realization of one's full potential; meaning and purpose of life; and happiness from within. Spiritual health is known as the good connection between mind, body and soul.

### 2.2. Review of Subject

Health is wealth and is considered '*Pahala Sukh*' in Hindu mythology. It is defined in various ways by various authors. Initially "health" was defined in negative terms as "the absence of disease", just as life define as the absence of death.<sup>10</sup> When the founding fathers of WHO came to prepare the Constitution in 1946, they concentrated First of all on formulating a definition of "health" that uses positive terms and defined health as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."<sup>11,12</sup> But a number of other factors are known to influence the health status of individuals, including their background, lifestyle, and economic and social conditions; these are referred to as "determinants of health." Studies have shown that high levels of stress can affect your health.<sup>13</sup> According to the WHO; the main determinants of health include the social and economic environment, the physical environment, and the person's individual characteristics and behaviors.<sup>2</sup> Regardless of what is done to provide health care for the body and the mind, a man may remain lost and restless until the spiritual aspect of life is not seen. Dr Mellbye in 1983 mentioned the factors related with behavior and lifestyle of individuals also affect on health.<sup>14</sup> These behavioural determinants of health have been expressed similarly, but in other terms by Dr Abdul Rahman Al Awadi of Kuwait.<sup>15</sup> Similar views culminated in May 1983 at the 36<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly and the question of the "spiritual dimension" was raised and discussed at some length.<sup>16</sup> The initiative came in the form of a draft resolution from twenty-two countries from different regions and with different religious beliefs.<sup>17</sup> In May 1984, the 37<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly took the historic decision to adopt resolution WHA37, which made the "spiritual dimension" part and parcel of WHO Member States' strategies for health.<sup>1</sup>

Spiritual health is defined by various authors in various ways and likewise various efforts were also made in the earlier decades to provide assessment instruments to measure spirituality.<sup>3,9,18</sup>

### 2.3. Generation of Scale

Spiritual Health Assessment (SHAS) generated basically out of author's own spiritual experiences in the light of available literature on the subject.

### 2.4. Author's Experience

Both the authors (Husband and wife couple) are inclined towards science of spirit since childhood; however they started practicing it regularly through meditation since last 25 years. They were engaged to explore their own 'spirit' by experiencing spirituality with its determinants and its stages. They have found out that:-

- Spiritual health is enjoying good connection between mind, body and soul/spirit
- Spirituality is associated with religion, but spirituality does not mean religion
- Spirituality is associated with morality, but spirituality does not mean morality
- Spirituality defines as 'living the life in the light of own spirit'. To live in light of own spirit, one needs to realize her/his own soul so and so that not only realize once but should always be one with it. So the level of spirituality is 'How near is one with his/her own spirit in living his/her life'
- Self-Development, which is based on morality and mental ability, is the basic requisite to know and realizing owns self.
- Spirituality has following two measure stages i. e. Self-Actualization and Self-Realization
- So, spirituality has three domains to measure level of spirituality, i.e. Self-Development, Self-Actualization and Self-Realization
- Self-Development is analyzing and applying the moral values in their thoughts and actions.
- Self-Actualization is consciously aware of you and your values
- Self-Realization is consciously aware your own soul.

### 2.5. Development of SHAS

This scale contains three domains of spiritual health v.i.z. Self-Development, Self-Actualization and Self-Realization. Each of the domains has seven items in itself related to domain.

**Self-Development:** To achieve and maintenance of spirituality, development of self is needed which can be assessed by:-

- Prudence i.e. wisdom of discrimination
- Gratitude i.e. respect others
- Generosity i.e. feeling of equity
- Charity i.e. helping people
- Patience i.e. calm in adverse
- Self control i.e. able to control emotions
- Moral Actions i.e. act according to moral values

**Self-Actualization:** How much you know yourself can be assessed by by following items;-

- Introspection: How much you thought about your own self
- Purpose of life: How much you know about purpose of your life
- Way of Life: How much you know about the way you want to live your life
- Strengths: How much you know about your own strength
- Weaknesses: How much you know about your own weaknesses
- Solutions: How much you know about solutions to deal with your weaknesses
- End of Life: How much you thought about end of your life

**Self-Realization:** How much you realize yourself can be assessed by following items

- Thoughtlessness: Zero state of mind
- *Yoga*: Feeling one with yourself
- Satisfaction: Feeling self-satisfaction i.e. completeness
- Freedom: Feeling of eternal freedom
- *Nigum* Facts: Eternal facts understanding
- Bliss: Feeling of pleasure without outside objects
- Sixth Sense: Intrusions and inspirations from one's inner self

Each of items is given scoring on 5 point Likert scale i.e. score '1' for 'Never', score '2' for 'Rarely', score '3' for 'Seldom', score '4' for 'Often' and score '5' for 'Always'

Likewise each domain score ranges from '7' to '35' and total spiritual health score ranges from '21' to '105'.

Poor spiritual health was considered when spiritual health score between '21' to '49', fair spiritual health was considered when spiritual health score between '49' to '77' and good spiritual health was considered when spiritual health score between '77' to '105'. (Annexure 1)

### 2.6. Testing of SHAS

Applicability, reliability and validity of this scale were tested by applying it on randomly selected 1050 individuals of 20-60 years residing in Dausa city of Rajasthan. For having representation of all the sections of the society, these individuals were selected through 30 cluster technique and from each cluster 35 individuals were selected of age group 20-60 years.

Reliability was assessed by Test-retest reliability. Validity of internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach alpha. Discriminate validity of items was determined ANOVA and post-hoc **Tukey test** to distinguish differences between poor, fair and good spiritual healthy subjects.

### 3. Results

Equal weightage was given to each of the three domains of the SHAS i.e. Self-development, Self-actualization and self-realization

Out of total 1050 subjects, scale was not applicable to only 18 subjects so applicability of scale was observed very good i.e. 98.28%.

Out of total 1050 subjects, scale was found reliable in grading spiritual health in 852 subject on retesting so through test-retest reliability scale was observed good i.e. 81.14%.

As far as the validity was concerned, internal consistency validity was also observed good i.e. Cronbach alpha 0.82. On testing discriminate validity of this scale within grading of spiritual health, it was found significant ( $P < 0.001$ ). When discrimination was assessed between poor and good, poor and fair and fair and good health it was found significant.

S. No.	Tests	Value
1	Applicability	98.28%
2	Reliability	81.14%
3	Validity Internal Consistency	0.82

Table 1: Testing of SHAS

S. No.	Grading of Spiritual Health (No. of Subjects)	SHAS Score Mean ± SD	Post-hoc Tukey Test Significance at <0.05
1	Poor Spiritual Health (758)	27.8 ± 4.6	With 2 & 3
2	Fair Spiritual Health (289)	56.4 ± 5.8	With 1 & 3
3	Good Spiritual Health (3)	79 ± 1	With 1 & 2
	Total Individuals = 1050	ANOVA test= 3599.16 P Value < 0.001 LS= S	

Table 2: Discriminate Validity of SHAS within grading of Spiritual Health

**4. Discussion**

This proposed Spiritual Health Assessment Scale is based on ‘spiritual health is enjoying good connection between mind, body and soul/spirit’ and ‘living the life in the light of own spirit’. So level of spirituality/spiritual health is ‘How near is one with his/her own spirit in living his/her life.’ Self-Development is the basic requisite to know and realizing owns self. So, this proposed SHAS has three domains to measure level of spiritual health i.e. Self-Development, Self-Actualization and Self-Realization. Dhar N et al<sup>18</sup> also develop well comparable SHS 2011 focuses on the Self-Evolution, Self-Actualization and Transcendence; in which twenty seven (27) spiritual Determinants of health have been identified v.i.z Commitment, Introspection, Honesty, Creativity, Contemplation, Prayer, Philanthropy, Extending Self, Empathy, Yoga and Exercise, Questioning Injustice, Aesthetics, Value for Time, Being away from Comparisons, Human Values, Courage, Managing Ego, Humour, Involvement with Detachment, Sixth Sense, Virtues, Sensitivity, Purpose for One's Life, Compassion, Pure Feelings, Faith in the Supreme and Selfless Action. All these 26 spiritual Determinants of health were identified by 126 items. Although this scale is devoid of religious and cultural bias but is exhaustive and complex so limited to highly educated individuals. Whereas in the proposed SHAS only three domains with total 21 items scaled on 5 point Likert scale are there which is easy to administer and easy to discriminate the level of spiritual health.

Another Ellison’s scale “Spiritual Well-Being Scale, SWBS”<sup>3</sup> which focus on religious well-being, reflecting on one's perception and feeling of God so it could not applied to atheist. Likewise, Kass’s “Index of Core Spiritual Experiences, INSPIRIT”<sup>4</sup> and Edward’s “Spiritual Assessment Inventory, SAI”<sup>5</sup> relevant only for the believers.

Some scales like SAS Beazley’s<sup>6</sup> scale “Spirituality Assessment Scale”, and Rojas’s scale ‘Independent Spirituality Assessment Scale’<sup>7</sup> are limited to the organizational situations and dealing with impact of the individual's spirituality on the growth of the organization and not on the growth of the individual.

Whereas Richardson’s scale<sup>8</sup> “Myers-Briggs Type Indicator MBTI”, focuses on the already actualized and transcendent individuals, but its validity for the common worldly person is questionable.

However, no standard instrument is available on measurement of spirituality, as such, neither in India nor outside India so far which focuses on a common worldly person and is devoid of religious and cultural bias.

**5. Conclusion**

The SHAS is having good applicability, reliability and validity to measure the spiritual health of a common worldly person, which is devoid of religious and cultural bias and is based on own spiritual experiences. It is easy to administer and easy to discriminate the level of spiritual health so can be used to measure spiritual health.

**6. Annexure**

**Spiritual Health Assessment Scale (SHAS)**

Where you’ll keep yourself on likert scale in each of items of each of domain.

Encircle  the wright answer in front of item.

**Likert Scale: 1. Never 2. Rarely 3. Seldom 4. Often 5. Always**

**Self-Development:**

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Prudence i.e. wisdom of discrimination	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Gratitude i.e. respect others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Generosity i.e. feeling of equity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Charity i.e. helping people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Patience i.e. calm in adverse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Self control i.e. able to control emotions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Moral Actions i.e. act according to moral values	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Self-Actualization:** How much you know yourself can be assessed by following items;-

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Introspection: How much you thought about your own self                   | © | © | © | © | © |
| 2. Purpose of life: How much you know about purpose of your life             | © | © | © | © | © |
| 3. Way of Life: How much you know about the way you want to live your life   | © | © | © | © | © |
| 4. Strengths: How much you know about your own strength                      | © | © | © | © | © |
| 5. Weaknesses: How much you know about your own weaknesses                   | © | © | © | © | © |
| 6. Solutions: How much you know about solutions to deal with your weaknesses | © | © | © | © | © |
| 7. End of Life: How much you thought about end of your life                  | © | © | © | © | © |

**Self-Realization:** How much you realize yourself can be assessed by following items

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Thoughtlessness: Zero state of mind                            | © | © | © | © | © |
| 2. <i>Yoga</i> : Feeling one with yourself                        | © | © | © | © | © |
| 3. Satisfaction: Feeling self-satisfaction i.e. completeness      | © | © | © | © | © |
| 4. Freedom: Feeling of eternal freedom                            | © | © | © | © | © |
| 5. <i>Nigum</i> Facts: Eternal facts understanding                | © | © | © | © | © |
| 6. Bliss: Feeling of pleasure without outside objects             | © | © | © | © | © |
| 7. Sixth Sense: Intrusions and inspirations from one's inner self | © | © | © | © | © |

Level of Spiritual Health	Scoring Between
Poor Spiritual Health	21 to 49
Fair Spiritual Health	50 to 77
Good Spiritual Health	78 to 105

Table 3: Level of Spiritual Health

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