

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

**Spirituality and Life Satisfaction in Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Healthcare Professionals**

HÜSEYİN ÇAKSEN

*Divisions of Pediatric Neurology and Genetics and Behavioral-Developmental Pediatrics, Department of Pediatrics, Necmettin Erbakan University, Meram Medical Faculty, Meram, Konya, Türkiye*Correspondence to Prof. Hüseyin Çaksen, MD, PhD, E-mail : [huseyincaksen@hotmail.com](mailto:huseyincaksen@hotmail.com), Telephone: +90 332 223 66 84, Facsimile: +90 332 223 61 81 and +90 332 223 61 82**To the editor**

Spirituality in its general meaning is the quality or state of being spiritual or being attached to questions and values concerned with religion. It is also frequently used in a non-religious sense to designate a capacity to understand fundamental moral and existential questions regarding the nature of soul<sup>1</sup>. Religion and spirituality are becoming increasingly important in the care of seriously ill patients<sup>2</sup>. Life satisfaction is the way in which people show their emotions, feelings (moods) and how they feel about their directions and options for the future<sup>3</sup>. Here, we presented our observations about spirituality and life satisfaction in pediatric hematology/oncology healthcare professionals to draw attention to the spiritual aspects of health professionals.

Pediatric oncologists are faced with life-threatening conditions and psychosocial problems that can negatively affect their life satisfaction<sup>4</sup>. Ecklund et al<sup>2</sup> reported that a large proportion of pediatric oncology clinic staff identify themselves as spiritual, although many do not have a traditional religious identity. This may have implications for the training of pediatric oncologists and the spiritual care of seriously ill children and their families<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, many studies performed in different cultures of the world showed that there was a positive and significant correlation between spirituality and life satisfaction<sup>5-7</sup>. In our practice, we have observed that many pediatric hematology/oncology healthcare professionals have a high life satisfaction because they believe the following spiritual/religious teachings: If any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people<sup>8</sup>. The best of people are those that bring most benefit to the rest of mankind<sup>9</sup>. In addition to continuously gaining reward for the sick person and for those who look after him for Allah's sake, illness is a most important means for the acceptance of supplications. Indeed, there is significant reward for believers looking after the sick<sup>10</sup>. The most precious of assets is life. And the most valuable among duties is service to life. And the most valuable service among life's services is to work for the transformation of the temporary world life into a continuous and permanent life in the hereafter. All the value and importance of this life is that it is the core, starting point and source of the eternal life in the hereafter<sup>11</sup>. With the right intention, all the other acts of someone who performs the prescribed prayers become like worship. He can make over the whole capital of his life to the hereafter in this way. He can make his transient life permanent in one respect<sup>12</sup>.

Consequently, we would like to emphasize that there is a positive correlation between spirituality and life satisfaction; the higher spirituality is the higher life satisfaction. We strongly believe that the spiritual/religious teachings are keep people calm and alive in body, soul, heart and mind and motivate them to work for both the present and the hereafter worlds. Therefore, we think that healthcare professionals caring seriously ill patients should be trained for spiritual teachings.

**Author Contributions:** Conceptualization, HÇ; Writing—original draft, HÇ; Writing—review & editing, HÇ.

**Declaration of Conflicting Interests:** The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

**Funding:** The author received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

**Ethical Approval:** This study was a review of published literature and no ethical approval was required.

**REFERENCES**

- Hussain K. Spirituality in Islam. In: Anjum Awan MR, ed. *Essentials of Islamic Sciences: Quran, Hadith, Fiqh & Tasawwuf*. New Delhi: Adam Publishers & Distributors; 2020; 469-490.
- Ecklund EH, Cadge W, Gage EA, Catlin EA. The religious and spiritual beliefs and practices of academic pediatric oncologists in the United States. *J Pediatr Hematol Oncol* 2007; 29: 736-42.
- Life satisfaction. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia [Online]. 2022 [cited 2022 Jul 23]. Available from: URL: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Life\\_satisfaction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Life_satisfaction)
- Stenmarker M, Palmérus K, Márky I. Life satisfaction of Swedish pediatric oncologists: The role of personality, work-related aspects, and emotional distress. *Pediatr Blood Cancer* 2009; 53: 1308-14.
- Khan MA, Shirazi M, Ahmed M. Spirituality and life satisfaction among Adolescents in India. *J Subcontinent Res* 2011; 3: 71-84.
- Anand V, Jones J, Gill PS. The relationship between spirituality, health and life satisfaction of undergraduate students in the UK: an online questionnaire study. *J Relig Health* 2015; 54: 160-72.
- Carranza Esteban RF, Turpo-Chaparro JE, Mamani-Benito O, Torres JH, Arenaza FS. Spirituality and religiousness as predictors of life satisfaction among Peruvian citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Heliyon* 2021; 7: e06939.
- Surah Al-Maidah. The Holy Quran. Chapter 5; Ayat 32. The World's Largest Quran Portal [Online]. [cited 2022 Jul 23]. Available from: URL: [https://www.theholyyquran.org/?x=s\\_main&y=s\\_middle&kid=14&sid=5](https://www.theholyyquran.org/?x=s_main&y=s_middle&kid=14&sid=5)
- Best of the Best, The. Sunnah Online [Online]. [cited 2022 Jul 23]. Available from: URL: <https://sunnahonline.com/library/purification-of-the-soul/194-best-of-the-best-the>
- Nursi BS. From the Risale-i Nur Collection. Flashes. The twenty-fifth flash [Online]. Istanbul: Söz; 2012 [cited 2022 Jul 23]. Available from: URL: <http://www.erisale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.203.277>
- Nursi BS. From the Risale-i Nur Collection. Barla Letters. Third addendum to the twenty-seventh letter (in Turkish) [Online]. Istanbul: Söz; 2012 [cited 2022 Jul 23]. Available from: URL: <http://www.erisale.com/#content.tr.8.115>
- Nursi BS. From the Risale-i Nur Collection. The Words. The fourth word [Online]. Istanbul: Söz; 2012 [cited 2022 Jul 23]. Available from: URL: <http://www.erisale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.201.33>