

Development and Validation of Women Spiritual Help-Seeking Behaviour Measure(WSHBM)

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ABSTRACT This paper describes the development and validation of Women Spiritual Help-seeking Behavior Measure(WSHBM). Recent research findings revealed that more women than men seek help from spiritual houses, yet little is known regarding the type of problems that women seek spiritual help for. Africans' believe in spirits and the supernatural has reflected in their help-seeking behavior, therefore their preference for spiritual houses and not formal help centers. Despite the volume of available researches in the area of women help-seeking, there is no known indigenous help-seeking behavior measure that could be used particularly to access women spiritual help-seeking behavior. It is believed that WSHBM can be useful in helping psychologists, counselors and help-givers in carrying out easy and valid assessment of the help-seekers. Using a systematic random sampling procedure, 500 women help-seekers aged 17-69 years old were sampled. This sample was drawn from 8 help-giving centers that were identified through snowballing sampling technique. The scale has a Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of .97 and Guttman split-half reliability of .90. The factor structure of the scale was extracted by performing principal component analysis with varimax rotation which showed that WSHBM has a five factor structure(Family, Health, Career, Finance and Persecutory). Study findings showed that WSHBM has a good structural characteristic and is a reliable and valid instrument that can be used for measuring women spiritual help-seeking behavior.

INTRODUCTION

The process by which individuals seek help for problems or stressful life situations they experience has been a focus of inquiry in the literature for several decades and a great deal of research has examined the help-seeking process, resulting in a multitude of helpseeking correlates and predictors (Koenen et al., 2003). It is a common practice in western culture to provide aid to individuals who are considered to be in need and the finding that such help is sometimes greeted without enthusiasm may seem somewhat unusual since, traditionally; help or assistance has been viewed largely in terms of the benefits afforded to the recipient and research in the area of help-seeking has established that assistance from others may indeed be perceived as a mixed blessing (for instance, sometimes the help-seeker has to follow certain instructions (as given by the help-giver) that may be contrary to her usual practice just because she desires a solution to the problem she has presented (Fisher et al., 1982). As a consequence of the aforementioned, some people in need may choose not to seek help from available resources at all, thus effectively working against their own selfinterest

(Page, 1983; Page and Day, 1990). This does not however imply that others do not use the available resources.

The place of informal help centers such as the spiritual houses in helping people; particularly in the African culture has been recurrent in literature over time (Peltzer, 2003). Literature reviewed as well as result of the pilot study conducted by this researcher have also implicated that more women than men seek spiritual help to cope with their stressful life challenges (Rahman, 2000). This finding has also been justified by the prominent believes of the Africans in spirits and the supernatural.

Despite the findings that women help-seekers patronize spiritual houses more for help, there is no known indigenous scale to measure women spiritual help-seeking behavior. This of course has serious implication for the conduct of researches particularly in the area of women help-seeking behavior in the African and particularly, Nigerian context. Personal observation made by this researcher and reports from other indigenous researchers have shown that scales that are not culturally relevant (in terms of wordings, items, and other such things) have serious limitations and may not give valid and reliable results when

used in a culture that is different from the culture in which it was developed. It is against this background that this researcher has embarked on the development of this scale in order to provide an indigenous measure of women spiritual help-seeking behavior.

METHOD

The development of the scale was in two stages.

First Stage

At the first stage of the development of the scale, focused group discussion and indepth interviews were conducted with spiritual help-givers as well as women spiritual helpseekers. This was deemed necessary in order to be able to generate the pool of items to be included on the scale to be developed. The F.G.D and in-depth interviews of Key Informants were done within the period of two weeks. A total of 10 key helpgivers were interviewed and 30 women, randomly allocated into three groups of help-seekers (10 women per group) who were involved in the F.G.D. At the end of the F.G.D and interviews, a total of 75 items to be included on the proposed scale have emerged.

Procedure for the FGD and Interview of Key Informants: A total of 30 women were systematically randomly sampled and randomly distributed into two groups for the purpose of the F.G.D. (The ballot system of random selection was used in allocating participants for the group discussion into two groups as described below.

The inscriptions; 'Group 1' and 'group 2' were written separately on pieces of paper, these papers were wrapped so as to prevent participants from knowing what was written on them and were kept in a sac. Each of the participants was thereafter asked to pick one of the papers and was thus allocated into the group that is reflected in the piece of paper that she picked. In this way, three groups of 10 participants each; who participated in the group discussion were constituted.

After familiarization, explanation of the essence of the group and adequate socialization, each of the participants was asked to narrate why she was seeking spiritual help, how she got to know the spiritual house to go and the kind of problem she is seeking spiritual help for. Each participant had an average of 20 minutes to narrate

her experience; this amounted to a total of 600 minutes in all (i.e. 10 hrs). Each session lasted for one hour and this was done for two weeks. (1 hour per day, Monday-Friday since there was a consensus by the group members that it was convenient with them that way).

The 10 help-givers were also approached and structured interview was conducted with them after securing appointment with each of them. Questions that this researcher asked them included the following:

- What problem do women seek help for in your centre?
- Would you say these women have always received satisfactory attention?

They were also asked to comment freely on the general help-seeking behavior of women generally as they (the help-givers) perceived it. Information thus gathered from the F.G.D. and Key Informants interview, was subjected to item analysis which resulted to a pool of 75 items.

Experts' Rating: The pool of 75 items that were generated as reported above were typed out and given to five university dons who were experts in the field of psychology to rate in order to establish the face validity of the scale. Any item that was rated by less than three experts was expunged from the pool of items (such an item is considered weak or not valid). At the end of the experts rating, a total of 50 items emerged. This means that 25 items out of the original pool of items that were generated had been dropped, because they did not meet the three out of five experts' rating criteria which imply that they may not be regarded as valid items if included on the scale.

Second Stage

At the second stage of the study, the 50 items that emerged at the end of the experts' rating was administered to 250 women help-seekers who were randomly selected from the population of women who seek help from spiritual houses within Ibadan metropolis in South-Western Nigeria. The questionnaires were collected back the same day of administration since the approximate time of completion was 15 minutes.

Final WSHSB structure: Exploratory factor analyses using Principle component extraction method with Varimax rotation and Eigen value >1, were used to examine the items in each of the five

domains of the scale. The purpose was to select items that best represent the facets, and to reduce items that did not fit in well with other items in any facets under the domain. Confirmatory factor analyses were then conducted to confirm the item-facet and facet-domain structure of the domains. Comparative fit index and the Chi-square value were reported to show the structure fitness. The facet scores were used to test the overall facet-domain structure of the WSHSB. On the final analysis, 39 items emerged that were included in the final scale.

Reliability: To test the reliability of the scale, the internal consistency of the whole scale was measured at it yielded an Alpha reliability coefficient of .97 and split-half reliability coefficient of .90, which seem to be a high reliability.

Scoring: The scale was in the likert format, with response options as follow: 0=Not applicable, 1=Undecided 2 = strongly disagree, 3 = Disagree, 4 = Agree 5 = strongly agree. The scoring is direct; a score above the mean is interpreted as high spiritual help-seeking behavior while a score below the mean is interpreted as low spiritual help-seeking behavior.

Scale's Dimensions: The scale has five dimension (i.e. Family dimension (items 1-16); Health dimension (items 17, 18 and 24); Career dimension (items 19-23, 28, 32, 37 and 39); Financial dimension (items 25-27 and 29); Persecutory dimension (items 30-31, 33-36 and 38). A summation of the scores from each of these dimensions gives the composite score of the individual for the entire scale.

DESCRIPTIVE FINDINGS

A total of five hundred (500) participants were sampled for the purpose of this study. Of this sample, 227, (45.4%) were singles, 242, (48.4%) were married. Others fall into the categories of divorced, widowed, and separated 11, (2.2%), 7, (1.4%), 13, (2.6%) respectively. 334 (66.8%) were first born, 121 (24.2%) were middle born, while 45 (9.0%) were last born. 391 (78.2%) practiced monogyny, while 109 (21.8%) practiced polygyny. Participants' ages ranged between 17-69 years. 336 (67.2%) were within the ages of 17-35 years and 164 (32.8%) were within the ages of 36-69 years.

Considering occupation of research participants, 160 (32%) of them were civil servants; 140 (28%) were students; 103 (20.6%) were

businesswomen and 97 (19.4%) were artisans. Based on income level, 389 (77.8%) of the total sample were low income earners; 91 (18.2%) were moderate income earners, while only 20 (4.0%) were high income earners. 211 (42.2%) of the total sample lived in low socio-economic class residential area, 173 (34.6%) lived in middle-class residential area, while 116 (23.2%) lived in high socio-class residential area.

DISCUSSION

The development and validation of the WSHSBM is a step toward establishing an indigenous measure of women spiritual help-seeking behavior in Africa and particularly in Nigeria. The result presented based on statistical analysis and qualitative research from focus groups, revealed that more than one domain would be necessary in measuring women spiritual help-seeking behavior. Four criteria were used in ascertaining the interpretability of results and all were met, including the number of factors retained. (a) At least three items loaded on each retained factor. (b) The items that loaded on a given factor shared a common conceptual meaning. (c) The items that loaded on different factors measured different conceptual meanings. Finally, the rotated factor pattern demonstrated simple structure in that (1) items that had high pattern loadings ($\geq .40$) on one factor also had low loadings on the other factor, and (2) each factor had high loadings for some items and low loadings for the others.

While the factor structure of the WSHSBM questionnaire is statistically justified, this researcher believes that the structure is consistent with face validity as well. It is also believed that having the different dimensions, like many psychological scales will aid the help-givers in targeted interventions. The uniqueness of this scale lies mostly in its indigenous nature and the fact that most of the available measures of help-seeking were not constructed along spiritual help-seeking. As mentioned earlier, its use by researchers and help-givers is expected to facilitate targeted interventions.

CONCLUSION

I have developed an indigenous self-reported women spiritual help-seeking behavior measure, field test results indicated that the structure of the scale was valid and the psychometric

properties were good. It could facilitate targeted intervention in a typical Nigerian setting.

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- 13 If I am finding it difficult to get a husband I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 14 If I am having broken engagements, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 15 If I am having problem of spirit husband I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 16 If I suspect I may have troublesome in-laws, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 17 If I have health related problems I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 18 No matter the nature of health problems I have, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 19 If I am constantly experiencing disfavor, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 20 If I observe that I constantly fail where others succeed, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 21 If I find it difficult to make headway in my career, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 22 If I cannot meet my life's basic needs I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 23 If I thought I was cheated and deprived of my right, I would seek spiritual assistance.
- 24 If I am emotionally disturbed, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 25 If I am not making sales as expected in my shop, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 26 If I need money to for business purpose, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 27 If I need financial breakthrough, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 28 If I need accelerated progress in life, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 29 If people owe me money(no matter the amount) I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 30 If I continually have evil dreams, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 31 If I suspect that witches are after my life, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 32 If my promotion is delayed in my office, I will seek for spiritual assistance.
- 33 The fear of the unknown will make me seek spiritual assistance.
- 34 If I feel my life is threatened by anyone, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 35 If I have to travel,(no matter the distance), I will always seek spiritual assistance.
- 36 If I have any problem that I do not understand, I will seek spiritual assistance to know the source of my problem.
- 37 If I have an interview or exam to attend, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 38 If I need guidance on any issue of life, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 39 If I feel cheated and molested, I will seek spiritual assistance.

APPENDIX

Women Spiritual Help-Seeking Behavior Measure

- 1 If my husband behaves unsatisfactorily I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 2 If my husband is not sincere with me I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 3 I will seek spiritual assistance when I observe my husband is dating another woman.
- 4 If my husband is maltreating me, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 5 If y husband is dating another woman, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 6 If my husband fails in his financial duties, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 7 I will seek spiritual assistance if my husband keeps late night.
- 8 If I hear any evil report about my husband I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 9 The best way to handle the problems of in-laws is by seeking spiritual assistance.
- 10 Family problems are better handled by seeking spiritual assistance.
- 11 If I am childless, I will seek spiritual assistance.
- 12 If any of my children has wayward tendencies, I will seek spiritual assistance.