

Letter to the Editor

Considering Spirituality in Its Context: A Commentary on Dr. Sadat Hoseini et al.

Sadat Hoseini et al. discussed the necessity of considering the patients' spiritual and religious interests besides their physical dimension of health (Sadat Hoseini, Panah, & Alhani, 2014). Hereby, we intend to add some points to their invaluable paper.

First of all, does the authors' definition of health have the same meaning as the definition provided by the World Health Organization (WHO) or medical physicians? It seems that in defining each word, we should use the background, methodology, and epistemological instruments only for that subject. Therefore, sharing one word in different fields like psychology, sociology, medicine, mysticism, and ethics may result in nothing more than equivocality and ambiguity. In fact, if there is no reference to the spiritual dimension of health in the WHO definition, it may be due to the fact that this definition is made in a specific field and for a specific group of persons with their own language.

Second, they did not clearly explain the differences between the spiritual health and intellectual health. It seems that the meanings of these two words were sometimes mixed with each other. Moreover, this kind of health (spiritual) cannot be measured quantitatively or qualitatively. So how can we differentiate between spiritual health and spirituality (Vader, 2006)? Furthermore, the authors added the term of religion to their above-mentioned expressions without a clear definition of it. Are religion and spirituality the same? As a result, we should be careful about debates in contemporary philosophy of religion in this critical field (Smith & McSherry, 2004).

Moreover, although some questionnaires have been designed to assess spiritual health in recent years, there are a lot of shortcomings in their validity, reliability, generalizability, and so on. It seems that they mostly measure the mental health instead of the spiritual health (Daaleman & Frey, 2004).

Additionally, although Hoseini et al. claimed that they reviewed the philosophical aspects of health, they consid-

ered the Quran and traditional texts, especially in their Shia's reading, and never explained the philosophic opinions of philosophers on this subject; whatever they mentioned referred to the Quranic exegetical works of Islamic philosophers, which are not exactly philosophical. Since there are various kinds of thoughts and disciplines with different methodological and epistemological aspects in Islam like the Quran, philosophy, mysticism, ethics, and jurisprudence, it seems that defining health under one of them and generalizing it to the whole is not correct. In this way, it is possible to present different definitions of one term under Islamic knowledge.

Finally, in the last paragraph of the conclusion, the authors considered ideal nurses as theosophists who should produce spiritual health. Are nurses really able to do it? Do nurses have such duties as moral directors?

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