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The role of spirituality in later life

A study of older adult university students in Portugal

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ABSTRACT

Title: The role of spirituality in later life: a study of older adult university students.

Objectives: Longevity and increased life expectancy have created a greater need for research in the areas of spirituality and its relation to successful aging. Previous research has discovered that spirituality can impact people's health; reduce depression, increase resilience, and aide to cope with loss and illness. Currently, the country with the most publications in the area is the United States; creating a need to explore the european perspective. In Portugal, little has been done to investigate spirituality and its impact in later life. This study aims to discover whether or not spirituality contributes to successful aging in the lives of Portuguese older adults, focusing in the area of subjective well-being.

Methodology: This mixed-methods research study is based in Porto, Portugal. The sample size is 58 participants students from various universities of the third age, ranging from the ages of 65 to 89 with no cognitive deficit. Data was collected by using a demographic questionnaire, Pinto & Pais-Ribeiro Spirituality Scale as well as Carol Ryff's Scale of Psychological Well-Being followed by a mix method questionnaire. The quantitative instruments of this study were analyzed using descriptive statistics by using R (version 3.6.1) in RStudio (version 1.1.456). The mix-methods questionnaire was analyzed by performing a thematic analysis.

Results: results showed the participants rated high in both the spirituality scale and the psychological well-being scale. More specifically the researcher conducted a Spearman's rank correlation between spiritual/religious beliefs and hope/optimism and found there is a significant correlation between the average score on spiritual religious beliefs and the average score on hope/optimism. The data also showed the existence of a statistically significant and positive relationship between the dimension of hope/optimism and the dimension of autonomy of the PWB scale; as well as a statistically significant and positive relationship between global spirituality and the dimension of autonomy from the PWB scale. The mix-methods questionnaire showed 90% of the participants believe in God or a higher power, 81% considered themselves spiritual/religious while 89.4% felt spirituality has always been a part of their lives. The three most significant themes that emerged from the thematic analysis were connection to a higher power/divine, personal well-being and the importance of spirituality throughout lifetime.

Discussion: Spirituality demonstrated to be correlated with the participants ability and perception of autonomy and independence; having their spirituality/religion as a coping mechanism to deal with life's adversities while being able to look at the future with optimism. Spirituality and religion are often terms that are intertwined in the discourse of the participants of this sample, both concepts carry on a special meaning and can provide purpose, guidance and meaning in the later years of life. One limitation of this research study is that it cannot be generalized to the entire Portuguese elderly population. Further research can provide a deeper understanding of spirituality and open a platform for discussion amongst professionals in the field.

Keywords: Spirituality, Aging, Subjective well-being.

RESUMO

Título: O papel da espiritualidade na vida futura: um estudo de estudantes universitários adultos mais velhos.

Os objetivos: A longevidade e o aumento da esperança de vida criaram uma maior necessidade de investigação nas áreas da espiritualidade e a sua relação com o envelhecimento ativo. Pesquisas anteriores descobriram que a espiritualidade pode ter impacto na saúde das pessoas; reduzir a depressão, aumentar a resiliência, e ajudar a lidar com perdas e doenças. Atualmente, o país com mais publicações na área é os Estados Unidos; criando uma necessidade de explorar a perspectiva europeia. Em Portugal, pouco tem sido feito para investigar a espiritualidade e o seu impacto na velhice. Este estudo visa descobrir se a espiritualidade contribui ou não para o envelhecimento bem-sucedido na vida dos adultos portugueses mais velhos, concentrando-se na área do bem-estar subjetivo.

Metodologia: Este estudo de investigação de métodos mistos tem a sua base no Porto, Portugal. O tamanho da amostra é de 58 estudantes participantes em várias universidades da terceira idade, com idades compreendidas entre os 65 e 89 anos, sem défice cognitivo. Os dados foram recolhidos utilizando um questionário demográfico, a escala de espiritualidade Pinto & Pais-Ribeiro, bem como a escala de bem-estar psicológico de Carol Ryff, seguida de um questionário de método misto. Os instrumentos quantitativos deste estudo foram analisados utilizando R (versão 3.6.1) no RStudio (versão 1.1.456). O questionário de métodos mistos foi analisado através da realização de uma análise temática.

Resultados: os participantes receberam uma classificação elevada tanto na escala da espiritualidade como na escala do bem-estar psicológico. Mais especificamente, o investigador conduziu uma correlação de classificação do Spearman entre crenças espirituais/religiosas e o otimismo de esperança e descobriu que existe uma correlação significativa entre a pontuação média em crenças espirituais/religiosas e a pontuação média em esperança/otimismo. Os dados também mostraram a existência de uma relação estatisticamente significativa e positiva entre a dimensão de esperança/otimismo e a dimensão de autonomia da escala PWB; bem como uma relação estatisticamente significativa e positiva entre a espiritualidade global e a dimensão de autonomia da escala PWB. O questionário de métodos mistos mostrou que 90% dos participantes acreditam em Deus ou num poder superior, 81% se consideravam espirituais/religiosos enquanto 89,4% sentiam que a espiritualidade sempre fez parte das suas vidas. Os três temas mais significativos que emergiram da análise temática foram a ligação a um poder superior/divino, o bem-estar pessoal e a importância da espiritualidade ao longo da vida.

Discussão: A espiritualidade demonstrou estar correlacionada com a capacidade e perceção de autonomia e independência dos participantes; tendo a sua espiritualidade/religião como um mecanismo para lidar com as adversidades da vida e ao mesmo tempo ser capaz de olhar para o futuro com otimismo. Espiritualidade e religião são frequentemente termos que se entrelaçam no discurso dos participantes desta amostra, ambos os conceitos carregam um significado especial e podem fornecer propósito, orientação e significado nos últimos anos de vida. Uma limitação deste estudo de investigação é que ele não pode ser generalizado a toda a população idosa portuguesa. Uma investigação adicional pode proporcionar uma compreensão mais profunda da espiritualidade e abrir uma plataforma de discussão entre profissionais da área.

Palavras-chave: Espiritualidade, Envelhecimento, Bem-estar subjetivo

List of abbreviations

PWB- Psychological well-being scale

WHO-World Health Organization

INE- Instituto Nacional de Estatística

UN- United Nations

PORDATA-Contemporary Portugal database

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1. INTRODUCTION

The role of spirituality in later life is a topic that has not received a lot of attention in the area of health and social sciences. In general, research in the later stage of life is important especially because of the increasing number of aging populations around the world. According to the United Nations (2019) World Population Aging Report; by 2050 1 out of 6 people in the world will be over the age of 65. At the same time in 2019, there were around 703 million older adults age 65 and older in the world and the number is expected to continue to grow over time. The World Health Organization (2019) report also states that about 2/3 of the total elderly population in the world will reside in less developed countries and will be situated mostly in South-East Asia and Europe.

Across the world, age survival continues to increase, by the year 2050 people 65 years or older are expected to live 19 more years, and by 2050 women are supposed to account for 54% of the world population (Nations, 2019). Focusing in Portugal, where this study took place, latest projection by the INE, states that between the years 2018-2080, the number of elderly residents over the age of 65 will increase from 2.2 to 3 million; these projections are made taking into consideration fertility, mortality and immigration. We must not forget these are assumptions with high levels of uncertainty due to unforeseen events like the current Covid-19 pandemic and it could impact future outcomes. Nevertheless, these numbers help us get a better understanding of our aging society and its importance; as far as how it will impact future endeavors to meet the needs of the elderly population.

The interest in the area of Spirituality in the field of aging wasn't a topic of interest until the 1970s. It wasn't until the White House Conference on Aging was held in 1971 that the concepts of spirituality and religion were up for debate and discussion (Nelson-Becker, 2011). Before the 1970's discussing these subjects openly, could negatively affect not only careers but even possible research opportunities. Oftentimes, professionals were skeptical to bring up this subject with their patients out of fear of engaging in ethical violations (Nelson-Becker, 2011).

Fortunately, advancements in the field of aging and scientific research in the area of spirituality and religion have appeared since. According to Sadler and Biggs (2006), the attempts to examine a possible relationship between spirituality and successful aging are few and have taken place in North America and Britain. The researcher conducted a literature review between the years 2000 and 2020 and found the following research studies that have

shown there's a positive relationship in later life between spirituality, health, and psychosocial functioning.

To begin, a qualitative study of 102 older adults conducted by Fernandes (2020) found spiritual well-being was linked to higher levels of life satisfaction. A case study conducted by Kumari and Sharma (2018) studied 20 older adults and found the elderly find meaning and purpose through their spirituality and it assists in them experiencing successful aging. Another qualitative study with 14 older adults conducted by Malone and Dadswell (2018) discovered spirituality was a source of strength, comfort, and hope which allowed participants to deal with life challenges as they age. It also helped the participants build a sense of social identity, belonging, and community.

E. Dias and Pais-Ribeiro (2018) quantitative and cross-sectional study looked at 400 older adults and the results highlighted the highest correlation between spirituality and quality of life as it related to psychological well-being. The authors stated spirituality is a coping mechanism for older adults in times of need. Tomás, Sancho, Galiana, and Oliver (2015) studied a sample of 224 Spanish older adults and found spirituality can help cope with adapting to the aging process as well as can be a predictor of hope and optimism. Cowlshaw, Niele, Teshuva, Browning, and Kendig (2012) studied a group of 324 older adults age 75 to 96, and the results associated spirituality with increased life satisfaction over time. It allows individuals to make sense and find meaning in their lives thus leading to successful aging. It gives older adults the capacity to find meaning in life events which in return leads to life satisfaction and subjective well-being.

Cohen and Koenig (2003) in a US Study of 838 older adults aged 50+ found that both spirituality and religiousness were significantly associated with social support and low levels of depression. Fry (2000) found that spirituality is more related to well-being among people living in a community, and religiosity was a more important source of well-being among the institutionalized group. Wink and Dillon (2002) were able to conduct a longitudinal study of a group of adults over a span of 40 years. This study aimed at finding the role of spirituality, religiousness, and psychosocial functioning, and the findings show that a stable pattern of religiousness over 40yr period was positively related to well-being in later life. One significant finding was that there is an increase in spirituality during the transition between middle to older adulthood. This research was also linked to coping when dealing with loss or health issues which seemed to trigger the development of spirituality. All of this research sheds light on the relationship between spirituality and the psychological well-being of older adults.

According to Crowther, Parker, Achenbaum, Larimore, and Koenig (2002) multiple studies suggest that religious involvement for example attending church or being part of a church group is associated with a longer life span. Some studies suggest that religious involvement has been linked to more resilience in the face of illness or better adaptation when having to care for someone who's dealing with an illness (Crowther et al., 2002).

Crowther et al. (2002) conducted 17 cross-sectional studies where they found positive associations between religiosity and well-being in older adults. Fry (2000) found that religion and spiritual variables like spiritual practices and religious involvement were better predictors of well-being than physical health, social support, or stressful life events. Cohen and Koenig (2003) believe that religion and spirituality affect the physical and mental health of older adults. Older people tend to find a sense of control through their religion, which may help bring meaning into their lives. It may also increase satisfaction with the relationships they have with family, friends, and their chosen God as well as the relationship they have built within the church community.

In a study conducted by Chaves and Gil (2015); spirituality and religion are often concepts that go hand in hand. We cannot assume that just because someone doesn't consider him/herself a member of a particular faith, that he/she is not spiritual (McFadden, 2008). Both religion and spirituality help people on their life journey, for some it may be through facilitating their role in their community, to others it alleviates pain and loss. Many of the research that has been done in the area of Spirituality and Successful aging explore this relationship and how it plays a role in people's lives. Keeping in mind all of the above makes for an even deeper need to invest not only in governmental policies, healthcare, and other societal needs this population requires, but to also develop ways to enhance and broaden research that expands our understanding of other aspects of aging such as spirituality.

Looking into Portugal's aging conditions, according to the latest INE (National Statistics Institute), it is predicted that by the year 2060 the amount of younger population will decrease compared to the increase in population over the age of 65. The low fertility rates and the increase in the older population will continue to impact all different areas of development. According to the INE 2011 census, over 80% of the Portuguese population considered themselves religious. The fact that Portugal is a country deeply rooted in religion, made finding a connection between spirituality and successful aging, a topic worth researching (Moleiro & Freire, 2015).

While researching the above literature, it was found that the previous studies have several limitations, for example, comprehensive life course studies are scarce meaning it is hard to find studies that have focused on the long-term effects of spirituality in a person's life; at the same time, most of the studies only focus on a small group of participants and seem to have been developed only on certain countries like the USA and UK, leaving out a possible influencing factor, like culture. The reason why developing research in this area is important is because research with the Portuguese population has been understudied.

It is important to emphasize that the purpose of this study will primarily be on what is called Positive Spirituality. Before discussing what positive spirituality is, let's focus first, on what it is not. There's a general understanding that religion can in some cases negatively affect mental and physical health. It can be restraining rather than freeing and religious beliefs "can work as a way to justify feelings of hatred, hypocrisy, and self-righteousness" (Crowther et al., 2002, p. 614). Belonging to a certain religion can exclude people from seeking medical care and even strain relationships between families. During this study, the focus will be primarily on positive spirituality which is seen as a link between spirituality and religion and which allows an individual to develop a sense of well-being, purpose, and meaning (Crowther et al., 2002) and the role it plays during old age and whether it affects different areas important to successful aging.

During the later stages of life, many suffer losses like loss of relationships, work, and financial strain, all of these can influence a person's sense of wellbeing. However, the individual's sense of meaning, their religious or spiritual beliefs can help cope with these changes. This type of research is important because several studies like the one conducted by Fernandes (2020) argued that including spiritual support in regular medical practices can aid patients to cope with illnesses as well as promote health and dignity. At the same time, promoting practices to enhance elderly religious faith, optimism and spiritual involvement can assist caregivers to reinforce their use of religious coping to help their older adult relatives get through difficult life situations. It can open the platform to incorporate spiritual resources and religious involvement into behavioral programs of self-care and stress management for older adults.

The purpose of this research is to enhance some of the already acquired knowledge, but this time related specifically to the Portuguese population. It can demonstrate the importance of spirituality in the prediction of successful aging, as well as help gerontologists and other healthcare professionals, further their understanding of the subject to add it as part of their

private practices. Although the research was conducted with Portuguese citizens, expansion of the research in this particular area will also bring greater understanding that can be used on a more global scale. Spirituality is an open concept for many individuals. The study provides a closer examination of the personal role spirituality plays in the life of all participants. The study seeks to advance this conceptual framework, as well as use spirituality as a tool to enhance teaching and learning. The purpose of this research was to discover how the elderly perceive the meaning of spirituality and how spirituality can be incorporated into the attainment of successful aging. This study hoped to understand spirituality and how it can be used as a tool for learning, change, and adaption leading to successful aging.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGION

2.1.1 DEFINITION OF SPIRITUALITY

In order to understand the role spirituality plays in the later stage of life, we must first understand the meaning and definition of spirituality and religion. The following previous research studies have defined Spirituality as follows.

As per Gerson (2001), descriptions of spirituality most often include some reference to a power bigger than yourself, a connectedness with something seen as Divine. Ortiz and Langer (2002) believed that for older people spirituality was a sum of themes that included: connection to a higher power, power to cope with adversity, and feeling of hope and faith. Cohen and Koenig (2003) understand spirituality may or may not be especially related to a religious framework and can draw on either religious or secular experiences or a combination of both. They believe the term to be intrinsic, meaning it has to do with an individual's beliefs and personal experiences.

Pais-Ribeiro (2007) believes that there is still not a definite definition of spirituality, although, in some instances, the same concept is highly related to religion. Nelson-Becker (2009), states that spirituality and religion are often considered complex terms. To try to define them by one set definition can run the risk of ignoring other important aspects. The definition of either term is based on the individual personal background, experiences, beliefs, and life trajectory.

Jahan and Khan (2014) believe spirituality creates a deep sense of meaning, purpose, and belonging. It applies to all, even those who do not believe in God. Whether a person considers themselves religious or not, spirituality can assist in answering deeper questions as to who we are, what is life's meaning and what is our purpose in this lifetime. It can also work as a tool for inner strength, despite any physical limitations, emotional or mental stress. At the same time Puchalski, Vitillo, Hull, and Reller (2014) define spirituality as an intrinsic aspect in which an individual seeks to find purpose and transcendence; either by inner growth and soul search or by creating relationships with those around them. These practices can be expressed

through values, everyday practices, and traditions and finally, Fernandes (2020) defines spirituality as a mechanism to adapt to life's changes during old age.

2.1.2 DIMENSIONS OF SPIRITUALITY

Lepherd et al. (2019); stated that spirituality is bounded to many different dimensions that work together. They believed spirituality was the key element in life that allows an individual to find purpose, value in themselves and the people around them. They focused on the idea that people can develop and maintain relationships and connect to others to “seek meaning and purpose to others, nature and the sacred” (Van de Geer & Wulp, 2011, p. 88)

Thauvoye, Vanhooren, Vandenhoeck, and Dezutter (2018) focused on the different dimensions of spirituality to provide a better understanding of its definition and the aspects that are included within this concept. They divided spirituality into 4 dimensions:

- Connectedness with the transcendent: a relationship that exceeds the self and creates a feeling of hope and adoration of something bigger than yourself, or as often refers to as a “higher power”.
- Connectedness with the self: building a deeper connection with the self in a quest to find balance, harmony, and inner peace.
- Connectedness with others: often demonstrated by action towards those around us in the form of help, care, and compassion.
- Connectedness with nature: often demonstrated by feelings of gratitude and wonder to the creation and the world around us.

2.1.3 POSITIVE SPIRITUALITY

For this study, the researcher focused on what is known as positive spirituality. According to Crowther and colleagues (2002), there’s a missing factor in the current models of successful aging and that is positive spirituality, “is not bound by race, ethnicity, or class and promotes the wellness and welfare of self and others” (Crowther et al., 2002, p. 614). It involves the merging of both religion and spirituality. It increases the purpose and meaning of life. Crowther et al. (2002) suggest that positive spirituality focuses on the positive aspects of spirituality or related to successful aging. It may produce a lot of positive outcomes and assist successful aging in that it can reduce the sense of loss and helplessness that accompanies illness and it can reduce stress and create a higher level of overall life satisfaction, especially when dealing with tough events or challenging illnesses.

2.2 DEFINITION OF RELIGION

At the same time we are looking at spirituality, it was important to also define religion, reason being that these two concepts seem to interrelate. Authors like Sanchetee (2020) explain that religion is seen as ritualistic and public, while spirituality is seen as something sacred and transcendent linked to being more subjective.

According to Koenig (2006) religion is an organized system of beliefs, practices, rituals, and symbols designed to facilitate closeness to the sacred (God, higher power, or ultimate truth) and to foster an understanding of one's relation and responsibility to others in living together in community. According to Mitchell and Weatherly (2000), the term religion can be seen as the institution itself (church), which has its own set of activities. Religion as a concept is extrinsic meaning it is possible to be quantitatively measured while on the other hand, spirituality as such is harder to be measured due to its intrinsic nature. According to Martins, Pinto, Caldeira, and Pimentel (2015) the concept of spirituality is more abstract compared to religion in that it focuses on areas such as the meaning of life, love, personal values, individuality, inner peace, and tranquility. Following, for Kumari and Sharma (2018) some adults considered themselves spiritual but not religious, meaning that they had developed their own beliefs and practices that are not based on a church-based structure. This is the reason why it was important to present both; The researcher focused on spirituality as a unique individual and personal experience, paying extra attention to that rather than a religious affiliation being guided by the following affirmation; according to Martins et al. (2015, p. 90) "Spirituality is universal and present in all people, religious beliefs are not a pre-requisite of spirituality".

The table below was adapted to provide a more concise understanding of each term described above, their differences and similarities.

Table 1. Distinctions between Spirituality and Religion and Positive Spirituality

Spirituality	Positive Spirituality	Religion
Individualistic	A blend between community and individualism. Incorporates religious and spiritual features that yield positive outcomes	Community-focused
Intrinsic, subjective, less measurable	Measurable, extrinsic	Extrinsic, organized and, measurable
Emotionally oriented, inward practices	Both emotion and behavior-oriented	Behavior oriented, outward practices
Unifying, not doctrine oriented	Unifying promotes life-enhancing beliefs	Doctrine oriented
Little accountability, not authoritarian	Accountability based on positive actions	Authoritarian in terms of behavior

Source: Adapted from Crowther, et.al (2002) Rowe and Khan’s Model of Successful Aging Revisited: Positive Spirituality-The Forgotten Factor.

3. SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGION IN PORTUGAL

Portugal is considered to be one of the oldest independent countries on earth, with a total of 10,561,614, where 20% of the population is 65 years or older. The increase in the elderly community in the past years is mostly due to low fertility and the increase in life expectancy. According to a recent United Nations report, Portugal, in 2015, ranks fifth among the world's most aged countries, ranking third in 2030, behind Japan and Italy (WHO, 2015).

Focusing on the historical background of religion in Portugal, it is known that religion played an important role in their society, not only in their legacy but also in their political views. Since the reign of Afonso Henriques in 1139, the relationship between the church and the government has been intertwined. Since then, Portugal has been for the most part a country dominated by Roman-Catholic beliefs. It was until the First Republic 1910-1926 and later in the institution of the Constitution of 1976 that separation between church and state occurred. The incorporation of Portugal into the European Union in 1986 has made Portugal a somewhat more open, liberal, and diverse society that has allowed for migration to bring with it the arrival of new religions. Due to the close influence of religion throughout history and its importance

not only in politics but customs and traditions, is imperative to try and discover if spirituality plays a role in the process of successful aging (Franca, Fernandes, & Cravidão, 2018).

Religious diversity accounts for 11% of the total population, under these it includes religious such as Orthodox, Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim, with a very low number of those considered atheists. Religion has played an important role in the development of traditions and beliefs across Portuguese culture, making most of their holidays and celebrations linked to Catholic traditions. This results in their strong connections to Catholic religious belief and how although there is no clear relationship between church and state, the church still plays a high role in their cultural development (Franca et al., 2018). According to the last census of 2011, Portugal is considered a highly religious country. With the INE reporting a percentage of 81% of total inhabitants considering themselves Catholics. Out of the 308 municipalities, 223 rated higher and 128 rated themselves above 90%. These results show Catholicism as being the strongest and most prevalent religion in Portugal. It was imperative to develop a thesis to find out if spirituality plays an important role in the elderly community as a means to cope and experience successful aging (Franca et al., 2018).

A study that evaluated 8 European countries including Portugal, concluded that 92% of the Portuguese population believed in God, while 15% believed in a force bigger than themselves or a spirit. They also support the idea that there appears to be a link or a relationship between spirituality and psychological well being. It also appears that engaging in religious rituals like praying or meditating can play an important role in coping with life stressors or an illness. This same study concluded that there is still no known place for spirituality and religion in the Portuguese health system. It is also not known whether spirituality or religion is being incorporated into health practitioners' approach to treating patients, in the context of enhancing their quality of life and overall health (Freire, Moleiro, & Rosmarin, 2016).

The northern part of Portugal which includes the Metropolitan Area of Porto is considered the area where Catholicism is the strongest of religions in Portugal. With a high 90% of its residents claiming to be Catholic (Villaça, 2016). Below is a table from Freire et al. (2016) that explains the religious affiliation from Portuguese population. That table was reprinted from the INE 2012 report based on the 2011 census.

Table 2. Religious identification of the Portuguese Population.

		<i>N</i>	%
Religion	Portugal	8.989.849	100.00
	Catholic	7.281.887	81.00
	Orthodox	56.550	0.63
	Protestant	75.571	0.84
	Other Christian	163.338	1.82
	Jewish	3.061	0.03
	Muslim	20.640	0.23
	Other non-Christian	28.596	0.32
	Not religious	615.332	6.84
	Did not answer	744.874	8.29

Source: Freire, Moleiro & Rosmarin (2016) Calling for awareness and Knowledge: Perspectives of Religiosity, spirituality and Mental Health in a Religious Sample from Portugal (a mixed-methods study).

3.1 PREVIOUS STUDIES OF SPIRITUALITY IN PORTUGAL

To understand the scope of Spirituality especially in a country like Portugal, it is important to look at other previous studies that have been conducted in this particular area and what methodology has been used in the past to try and comprehend Spirituality.

One research study conducted by Romeiro, Martins, Pinto, and Caldeira (2018), reviewed a total of 76 thesis and master's dissertation conducted in Portugal. It discovered that most research conducted in Portugal related to spirituality, has been in the health sciences of nursing and psychology. The study also revealed that the interest in the area of spirituality began in 2002. Most studies conducted used a quantitative approach. The sample size varied from eight to 1876 participants and its majority were elderly patients with a chronic disease. The most used tool in both quantitative or mix-methods studies was the spiritual well being questionnaire (SWBQ). There was only one longitudinal study found, while the rest were cross-sectional. One of the limitations the authors found in the available research of spirituality is the lack of valid scales geared towards spirituality that has been translated to the Portuguese Language (Romeiro et al., 2018). Based on these findings, there is a lack of mix-method research available in Portugal that focuses on spirituality that can also incorporate subjectivity. Using a mix-methods design can create a deeper understanding of spirituality to develop new strategies to help the lives of the elderly and their families. This also encourages the need for the development of further research to create a deeper understanding of spirituality to create strategies to help the lives of older adults and their families.

4. SUCCESSFUL AGING

To develop this research study, it was important to understand what successful aging is and how the definition of this term has evolved in the last 20 years. The first conceptual definition was done by Havighurst in 1960 which focused on older adults being able to experience life satisfaction and exempting society from any financial burden (Tam, 2014). As per Tam (2014), the definition of this concept has shifted from a biological to a multidimensional where subjective and objective factors are taken into consideration and which hold equal importance. Successful aging can be defined as a process where an individual is able to deal with his/her wellbeing and quality of life.

In the year 2002, the WHO, created the term active aging or also known as successful aging to recognize the process of aging as one when they emphasize the need to preserve quality of life, emphasizing social, psychological, and social autonomy (World Health Organization, 2002). Successful aging is not seen as a process that begins after retirement, instead is seen as a lifelong process that evolves with an individual path that is unique to each person (Paul, 2018). According to the latest work by the World Health Organization, healthy aging is the main focus from 2015-2030, and like active or (successful) aging, it aims at mobilizing action to maintain older adults active and seen as a resource to their family, community and their economies. The latest definition by the World Health Organization (WHO) defines healthy aging as the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables well-being in older age. Where there are opportunities available to achieve good health, participate in social activities and the community, as well as feel safe in their environment. In Europe, the model of successful aging has been used to promote the development of policies and strategies targeted towards encouraging the participation of older adults in society (European Commission, 2013; Hijas et al., 2020)

According to Malone and Dadswell (2018), successful aging means approaching life in a productive and fulfilling manner, and promotes a person's sense of independence, well-being, and participation in society. Four pillars are considered fundamental coming from the United Nations approach to active aging and that gives older adults the support to exercise their right to be active participants in their aging process, therefore, making them the main and active player (Bárrios, 2015). As per Ribeiro and Paul (2018) the four pillars are health, participation, security, and lifetime learning.

- **Health:** means focusing on providing the resources from an early age to maintain health throughout the lifetime and guaranteeing a healthy individual who is capable of caring for themselves and living a life with autonomy.
- **Participation:** helps to maintain a level of self-esteem, worth and building of relationships within the community as well as by exercising their right to civic duty.
- **Security:** having confidence and feeling safe in the environment where we live. An environment without violence and risk; that provides good infrastructures, safe housing and protection from harm.
- **Lifelong learning:** means preserving the right to have access to education throughout the lifetime including older age. Whether it may be informal or formal education but that it can provide older adults with the knowledge to remain connected to an ever rapidly changing society and to foster a feeling of inclusion.

As per Sancho, Tomás, Oliver, Galiana, and Gutiérrez (2019), spirituality has often been an omitted factor in the current definition of successful aging, the authors believe this to be because the model used to explain what successful aging means often only includes physical and biological aspects of aging. All these definitions of successful aging tend to focus on a state of optimal being, high level of physical, psychological and social health, but ignore the dimension of spirituality.

Some of the literature available on successful aging has been criticized because it tends to focus only on the physical health, meaning successful aging is seen as process where there's an absence of illness and disability. It is important for the sake of this research study, to focus on the subjective area of successful aging which includes psychological well-being and how it can be related to Spirituality. Someone can be physically ill but still consider her/him as aging well.

Based on this criticism, authors Wahl, Siebert, and Tauber (2015), explained that focusing only on biomedical factors of aging can exclude certain types of population. For example, the very old, who according to the authors, can already be suffering from several health conditions; also the financially impaired and the less privileged. In other words, those who are experiencing situations or conditions not deemed "desirable" can in fact, also

experience successful aging and assuming they do not; just because of the factors mentioned above, can affect our understanding of what aging successfully truly means. To summarize, the idea of whether or not someone is experiencing successful aging should come from the individual and his or her own perceptions. In order to do so, we as researchers, should take into account both the objective and subjective criteria (Wahl et al., 2015).

There are several previous studies that have confirmed the role spirituality plays in successful aging. Some examples of this research includes a study conducted in the UK by Malone and Dadswell (2018) of 14 older adults living in West London. The researchers were interested in finding out importance of religion and spirituality in order to experience successful aging. Their results explained that Spirituality helped their participants in different areas of life. It provided them with a source of strength and hope, as well as coping mechanisms to deal with life's challenges as they aged. It enabled them to participate in society by being part of social groups linked to their faith and helped them feel less isolated and lonely; because they were able to feel part of a community. Another study conducted by Sancho et al. (2019) studied adults age 55 and older attending an university of the third age in Valencia, Spain, these study's findings concluded that spirituality can at times help cope with life's struggles and enhance quality of life and successful aging.

Since this study was focused on Portuguese older adults, it is imperative to also mention the relationship between Successful Aging and culture. Often times the word "success" can mean very different things based on the culture where a study is being conducted. It is relevant to certain norms and values important to a particular culture. Wahl et al. (2015) explains the word success as being ambiguous because it's mere definition can change according to the culture. For example, he states that in Western culture, success is often associated with the idea that you are doing "better than others" (Wahl et al., 2015, p. 2). Various research studies looking at different cultures have explored the factors that contribute to successful aging and are shared amongst these cultures. Some of those factors include, physical and mental health, social relationships, subjective well-being, active participation, autonomy, learning, community and participation (Tam, 2014). A few examples of studies who have focused on the influence of culture on successful aging relate that for example Japanese culture values social participation and volunteering as a compensating mechanism for poor health, so although some of the elders may be suffering from either chronic or other types of illness, they manage their own aging process by assimilating coping mechanisms that enhance their quality of life. Unfortunately, there aren't many studies focusing on the influence cultural values and beliefs shape older

adults' definition of successful aging. Most of the current comparative studies focus on a west vs east cultures comparisons which state the Asian cultures have a more positive outlook on aging in which elders are seen with respect and as providers of wisdom, while in the West, there are more negative views about aging (Tam, 2014). All of these factors create a curiosity and need to study cultures like the Portuguese one where these cultural factors have not been studied in greater depth.

4.1 THEORIES OF SUCCESSFUL AGING

There are several theories that explain successful aging, the researcher decided to focus on 3 that focus on the subjective components of life and are important specially to understand the changes that occur in an individual's later stage of life.

4.1.1 ERICK ERICKSON'S THEORY: of psychosocial development can be linked to successful aging. In the way that Erickson (1963) described old age by the individuals need to resolve internal tensions of ego vs despair in other words to have the ability to think back on our lives and accept all that has happened, whether it be positive or negative and being ok with the idea of dying. According to Sadler and Biggs (2006) "this points to the possible role of contemplation, reflection and life review that are sources for successful aging" (Sadler & Biggs, 2006, p. 272). At the same time, Erickson theory explains that reaching integrity enhances a person's wisdom. Wisdom to him meant being able to accept growing old, with its changes, successes and losses. Accepting the idea of death and coming to terms with one's accomplishments and shortcomings (Ardelt, Landes, Gerlach, & Fox, 2013).

4.1.2 THE LAWTON'S THEORY: is defined as being composed of 4 independent dimensions that include both subjective and objective criteria, 1. Perceived quality of life, for example satisfaction with various life domains like friends, family, and housing. 2. Psychological well-being for example: optimism, happiness, and congruence between desired and attained goals 3. Behavioral competence for example: the ability to care for thyself, good health, motor and cognitive abilities and 4. Objective Environment ex: having a good income, safe living conditions (Triado, Villar, Solé, & Celdrán, 2007). If we look deeper into this theory, Freund and Riediger (2003) believe that Lawton described quality of life not by focusing on life as a whole, but instead focusing on each of its domains. The same with psychological well-being, meaning that Lawton didn't just focus on overall happiness but mainly with having a positive outlook in life. He believed that if a person developed well into those 4 domains than he/she would be capable of experiencing successful aging in old age. For the matters of this research, Lawton's idea of Psychological well-being will be the main focus. Meaning Spirituality will play an important role in determining whether someone can develop optimism and congruence between desired and attained goals, as well feel happiness during this stage in Life.

4.1.3 THE THEORY OF GEROTRASCENDENCE BY TORNSTAM (1997): proposes that older adults develop a change in perspective when it comes to life meaning as they age. The word gerontrascende is divided in gero, meaning old age and transcende meaning rising above. It's considered a process where older adults experience a shift from a materialistic view of life to a more cosmic which leads to overall higher levels of life satisfaction (Rajani & Jawaid, 2015).

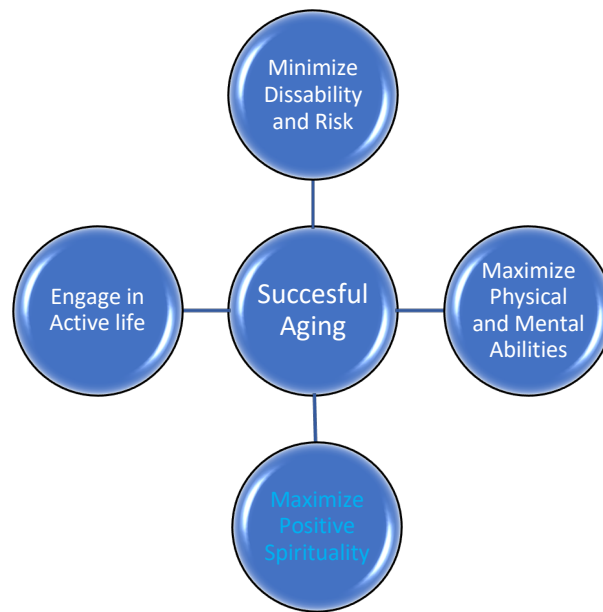
Gerotrascendence is thought to bring a sense of wisdom and life satisfaction. Tornstam described these changes as being divided in 3 levels: the self, the cosmic and the social. The self refers to shifting from being concerned only with the self, material or external traits and starting to look inward. The cosmic is higher sense of connection to nature and the universe. The social focuses on the person becoming uninterested in maintaining or developing aloof relationships and instead focuses on alone time in order to get to know him-herself and be able to create deeper more meaningful connections (Sadler & Biggs, 2006). At the same time, Tornstam believes that human beings are not just biological and social beings, but we are on the search to achieve a higher level of wellbeing (Fry, 2000). He also believed that human beings search for well being in later life by searching for meaning and purpose and to be transformed along lines that are cosmic, spiritual and in communion with a higher identity of the self (Levin, 1994). This theory has been studied across different cultures and it has been used to understand the process of active aging. As per Rajani and Jawaid (2015) the shift to the transcendent or comic allows older adults to reflect on life in a more meaningful way.

5. MODELS OF SUCCESSFUL AGING

There are two models of successful aging that are important in understanding the role of Spirituality in later life.

5.1.1 ROWE AND KHAN'S MODEL OF SUCCESSFUL AGING: focuses on maintaining health, engaging in social activities and maintaining cognitive and physical functions. Although this model focuses on various aspects of aging, it is missing the spiritual and religious outlets older adults have in their lives. Crowther et al. (2002) believe that adding spirituality into the Rowe and Khan's model of successful aging can promote health and wellness in older adults. According to Ellison (1991) spirituality has shown to positively affect subjective well-being thus diminishing feelings of depression and increasing life satisfaction. The authors argue that Rowe and Khan's model fails to acknowledge over 4 decades of previous studies who have recognized spirituality to be an important factor in older adults' lives and that can lead to enhancing their quality of life thus leading to successful aging; with this in mind, the authors do not mean to discriminate or exclude those to whom spirituality is not important (Crowther et al., 2002). The authors also believe that every process leading to successful aging whether psychological, social, biological or spiritual are all interconnected and by accepting spirituality into this model, it can aid gerontologists to become aware of its importance and consider adding spiritual tools into interventions to promote successful aging. At the same time, the authors focused on using religion or spiritual beliefs as a coping resource that in return would elevate the patient's psychological well-being and lower stress levels (Crowther et al., 2002). The following figure was adapted from their model to give a better understanding of their conceptual framework.

Figure 1. Revisited Model of Successful Aging by Rowe and Khan



Source: Adapted from Crowther et,al Rowe and Khan’s Model of Successful aging revisited: Positive Spirituality- The forgotten factor

5.1.2 CAROL RYFF’S MULTIDIMENSIONAL MODEL: Ryff is an author that has been able to focus on the subjective criteria of successful aging. Ryff created a model that makes the evaluation of subjective well-being easily measurable since the criteria is subjective and personal to each participant. Her model integrates within different theorists like Erikson, Jung and Buhler. Her PWB (Psychological well-being) model focusses on cognitive and affective characteristics. The model looks at an individual’s constant development, the attainment of personal goals, objectives that create a meaningful life. The importance of developing positive relationships and the ability to cope to life’s challenges and pressures (Novo, 2000). Her model can describe successful aging in psychological terms. Her interpretation of each dimension, creates a better understanding of successful aging by looking at an individual from different angles, not just merely focusing on a notion of happiness and life satisfaction (Novo, 2000). Her model was made taking into consideration a multidimensional perspective, that can be used in participants from different cultures, ages and life circumstances, broadening the interpretation and definition of well-being (Novo, 2000). She focuses on six dimensions that she deems important and comprehensive to the definition of successful aging. Self-acceptance, autonomy, personal growth, purpose of life, environment mastery and positive relationships

(Wahl et al., 2015). The following table 3 was created to illustrate the definitions of each of the six dimensions by Carol Ryff (Ryff,1989).

Table 3. Definitions of the six dimensions of Carol Ryff

Self-acceptance	the individual experiences maturity, self-actualization and hold positive attitudes towards oneself. Having the ability to accept one’s past and fostering positive attitudes towards the present.
Positive relations with others	being able to maintain and foster meaningful relationships with those around, while being able to develop trust and empathy with others.
Autonomy	having a sense of freedom and independence, people no longer require approval from the outside world and are autonomous to make decisions that impact their life
Personal growth	is explained as the ability to continue to develop their own potential
Purpose in life	achieving personal goals, engaging in activities that are aligned with personal objectives and promotes feeling of productivity
Environmental mastery	having control over their environment and decision-making. Having a sense of freedom and independence and the ability to choose or create their own environment with active participation.

Source: Ryff (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Exploring on the meaning of psychological well-being

5.1.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING IN SUCCESSFUL AGING

Subjective well-being plays an important role in successful aging. It is the ability to live a satisfactory life despite its many challenges (Wahl et al., 2015). Focusing primarily on the concept of subjective wellbeing which is one of the main dimensions to achieve successful aging, subjective well-being refers to a positive state of mind that affects both short term and long-term components (Kozma, 1991). At the same time, spirituality, often provides a sense of meaning and aides with coping from economic or health problems. It is believed that this impact can aide for subjective well-being because negative situations can be withstanding easily and their impact be diminished (Ardelt et al., 2013). One study conducted in 2015, found that

spirituality provides connection with something that is transcendent. The participants found spirituality as a tool to deal with loss and limitations. This study suggested greater findings in the area of subjective well-being, “favoring the development of positive thoughts and feelings which in return gives higher levels for quality of life” (Chaves & Gil, 2015, p. 3650). The purpose of this study was to contribute to the knowledge that spirituality plays an important role in old age and a better outcome on people’s outlook in life and overall quality (Chaves & Gil, 2015).

6. THE 4TH PILLAR OF SUCCESSFUL AGING: LIFELONG LEARNING

The reason why the researcher decided to bring extra attention to this 4th pillar of successful or active aging is because the group of participants studied for this research are older Portuguese adults who are students at universities of the third age, therefore, they are actively engaging in lifetime learning.

Lifelong learning is by definition a process that can be either formal or informal and occurs during the later stages of life (Tam, 2014). According to Hijas-Gómez et al. (2020) lifelong learning refers to the importance to have access to knowledge and information to be able to remain active in society. Besides the brief description of this pillar in an earlier chapter, lifetime learning is considered also to be an outlet to help empower older adults. It provides them with the tools to grow in knowledge and understand the world around them, as well as allows them to have a voice, advocate on their own behalf and grow personally and socially. It gives older adults a space to develop a social network, practice peer to peer development, teaching opportunities and leadership (Inglis, 1997).

It allows older adults to access the new digital world and feel a part of their society and their community. Granting older adults, the opportunity to continue to learn, creates new opportunities for cognitive development and improvement in their quality of life. Lifetime learning is about promoting autonomy, decision-making and encourages social participation and social inclusion (Vandenplas-Holper & de Jesus, 2000).

Ageist views of aging which associate it with a time of inaction and stagnation should no longer be part of current discourse of aging. We are living in an ever-changing world, where as a society we are growing technologically. Only by promoting continued learning is that older adults will have the essential tools that can serve them for a lifetime. There are several studies

who have confirmed the importance of lifelong learning engagement in later life. One study conducted by Tam in 2014, links benefits related to intellectual stimulation and networking; as well as cognitive functioning (Tam, 2014).

6.1 UNIVERSITIES OF THE THIRD AGE

This research study was conducted with a sample of Portuguese older students actively enrolled in universities of the third age. Understanding the history and evolution of these universities is an important conceptual topic to include as well as how these universities have evolved in Portugal.

The concept of Universities of third age began in Europe. The concept was born in France, at the University of Toulouse in the 1970s, and by the 1980's it was acquired by Britain. Both Britain and France follow different models. The French Model is taught by professors of higher learning universities, with a set curriculum and regular classes, while the English Model taught by peer-educators, follows a volunteer approach where students can become teachers, meaning a system of reciprocity and volunteering (Villar, Celdrán, Pinazo, & Triadó, 2010).

The French model of education was very formal. Meaning the teachers were paid and followed a more structured framework. Unlike the French, the British decided to opt for a more informal approach, focusing more on the idea of socialization and cultural exchange where teachers functioned on a volunteer basis (Páscoa & Gil, 2019).

6.1.1 UNIVERSITIES OF THE THIRD AGE IN PORTUGAL-ALSO KNOWN AS SENIOR UNIVERSITIES.

Portugal has adopted the English model in what is known as Senior Universities. Since 2001, the investment in older adult education has drastically increased in Portugal and it has attracted the interest of municipalities (Luis Jacob, 2012). The model used in Portugal is open to all older adults regardless of their educational background, making it more inclusive (Pocinho, 2015). The first senior university was founded in 1976 in Lisbon. Currently in Porto, there are 17 senior universities with the first one founded in 1979 by the name of Universidade Popular do Porto (Carvalho, 2015).

The participants from this study were comprised of students of universities of the third age. The reason why this type of senior citizen is important for this study is because they are an

active example of the pursuit of successful aging. They are willfully engaging in learning and therefore they exhibit autonomy in their own decision making and willful desire to continue to remain engaged and current in terms of knowledge and learning. As discussed previously, active or successful aging is a process in which the individual is able to experience self-determination.

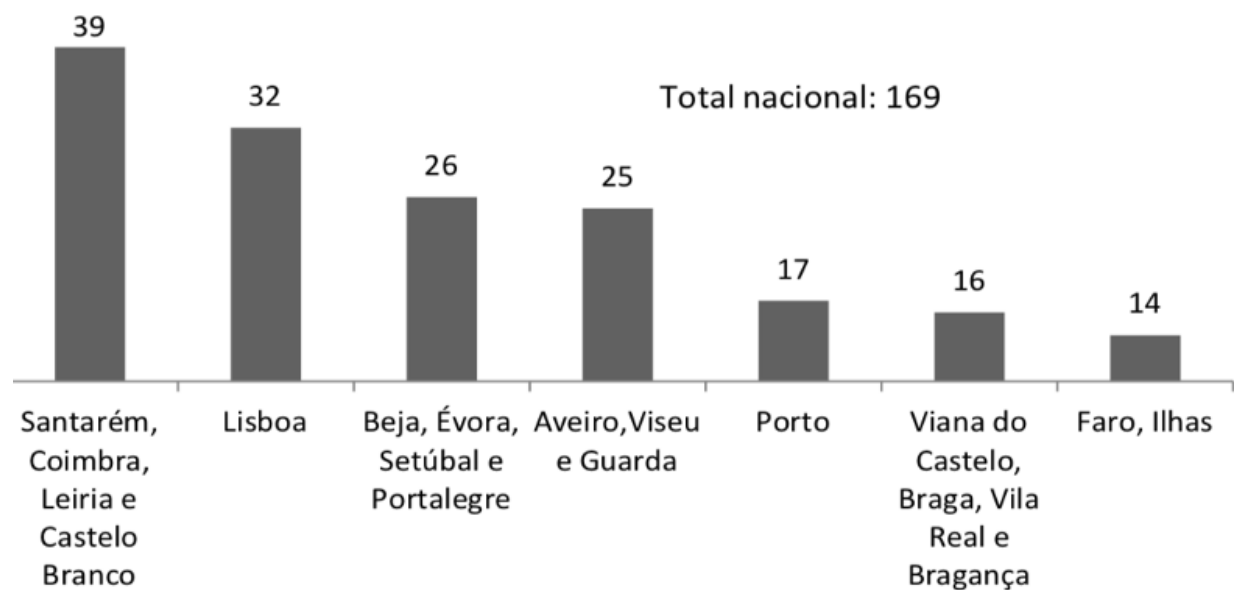
According to Ribeiro and Paul (2018) there are four pillars of active aging and these are Health, Safety, Social Participation and Learning throughout the lifespan. Learning throughout the life span means self-actualization despite retirement of the workforce. It promoted inclusion into society. Páscoa and Gil (2019) believe that having the capability and the will to continue to learn after retirement is an important tool to experiencing successful aging, allowing each individual to feel part of society, empower in their decision making and bringing with it quality of life and dignity. Blanco-Molina, Pinazo-Hernandis, and Tomas (2019) conducted a cross-cultural study of a sample of Spanish and Costa Rican older adult university students. The study focused on the cultural aspects of a population that can affect it's understanding and definition of successful aging. This study also highlighted the lack of current literature available on the impact of spirituality in older adults attending universities of the third age. The authors highlighted older adults who seek engaging in activities of learning after retirement and remaining socially active contributes to aging well (Blanco-Molina et al., 2019).

Focusing on what senior universities are and their importance in active aging, it is imperative to discuss their history in Portugal. First of all, based on the definition published by the Presidência do Concelho de Ministros nº 76/2016 “a senior university is as socio-educational response that aim to create and regularly energize activities in the social, cultural, knowledge and social areas, preferably to and for those over 50 years, whose activity is pursued by public or private entities, with or without profit purposes” (Republica, 2016). According to Luis Jacob, Lisa, and Pocinho (2019) the increase of the elderly population has created a demand for the creation of universities of the third age. Attending a university of the third age has had multiple advantages that affect the elderly in a positive way. One of the main advantages is promoting succesful aging by keeping their minds engaged and active while at the same time, encouraging socialization. There is an entity in Portugal that was created in 2005 called RUTIS (Network Association of Universities of the Third Age). This entity's mission is to promote successful aging, increase social participation and quality of life with dignity. Their latest report (2019), reported a total of 38,000 registered students nationwide, as well as a total of 4,500 teachers and 303 Senior universities. This network promotes activities offered in these

universities to include: music, theater, literature, culture, technology, foreign languages , gymnastics (Páscoa & Gil, 2019). Portuguese senior universities were created as a social response in order to enhance the lives of their residents 50yrs or older. Through an informal teaching structure, the individual is expected to develop different roles; not just as a student, but as a teacher or an administrator (L. Jacob, 2015).

There are several studies conducted in relation to the effects of attending senior universities and its relation to successful aging. According to Almeida (2016) universities of the third age allow for the development of networks that promote relationships outside the home. They also aide on the expansion of knowledge, cultural engagement, help combat depression, loneliness and isolation. The below chart 1, shows the number of universities of the third age located Portugal

Chart 1. National Total of Universities of the Third Age in Portugal



Source: Jacob, Luis (2012a) Universidades Sénior: Criar novos projetos de vida.

7. METHODOLOGY

This research study was developed using a mix-methods design. This type of design uses qualitative and quantitative data collection. Results and integration are used to provide in-depth evidence for a case or cases (J. W. Creswell, 2014). Mix methods approach has gained popularity since the 1990's and it seems to be more appealing to researchers because it allows for a more comprehensive understanding. According to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), using mixed methodology data collection means a researcher is able to gather both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study. This can be done by using the same data collection strategy or by using more than one. Authors state that "mixed methodologists are interested in numeric data as well as narrative data for their analysis" (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009, p.12).

Being able to integrate data, allows for new insight that otherwise could not be obtained by using each method independently (J. W. Creswell, 2015). As per Ozturk and Sahin (2019) the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods is a good way to reach answers when one research method alone is not enough. It can allow for a better understanding of the question at hand and more in-depth answers can be found. When using mix methods research, the researcher has to determine two important aspects, time order and time emphasis. Ozturk and Sahin (2019) follow a research method explained by Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) that says the researcher needs to figure out which research methods will be more dominant and if they will be applied together or sequentially.

The table below describes several dimensions concerning mixed methodology that will be followed throughout this study:

Table 4. Dimensions of Mixed Methods Research Design

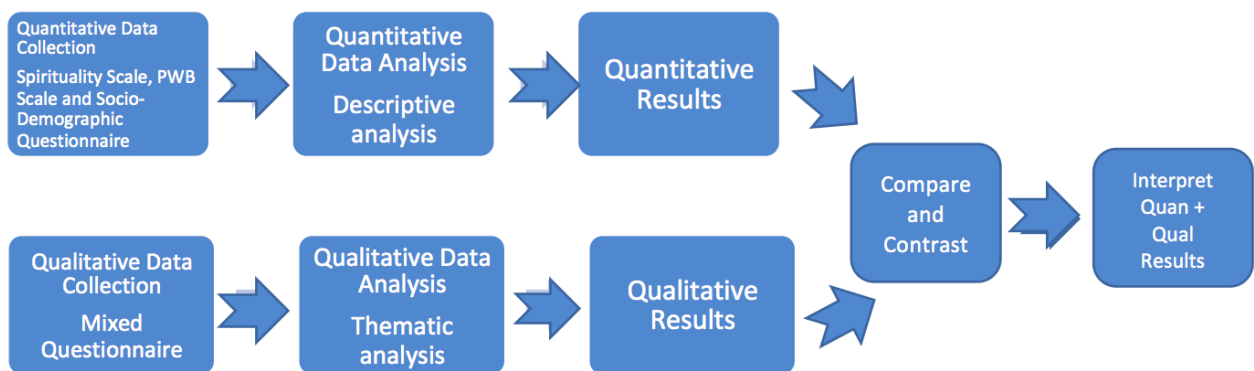
Dimensions	Mixed Methods Position
Paradigm	Pragmatist
Research Questions	Quantitative & Qualitative
Form of Data	Numeric plus narrative
Purpose of Research	Exploratory
Role of theory	Inductive and Deductive Logic
Design	Convergent
Sampling	Purposive
Data Analysis	Thematic and Statistical
Validity/Trust	Inference Quality

Source: Graph created by author.

For the sake of this research, both quantitative and qualitative aspects were equally dominant and will be collected at the same time. Following this process, J. W. Creswell (2015) proposed six types of mixed methods, for the purpose of this study, the research followed a convergent parallel design. This design consists of the following sequence, quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, compare or relate the data followed by interpretation of the findings. As the authors state “the researcher often gives equal priority to both quantitative and qualitative data and collects both data concurrently or simultaneously during the study”. (J. W. Creswell, 2012, p. 540) During a convergent parallel design, the researcher’s main goal is to gather both quantitative and qualitative data to be able to grasp a better understanding of the studied phenomena. One type of data supports the other making it denser and richer. The researcher can then compare if the results support or contradict each other. It sees both processes as equally important (Ozturk & Sahin, 2019). Moreover, by using a convergent design, the researcher is capable of validating one database with the other while at the same time acquiring a more wholesome understanding of each database alone (J. W. Creswell, 2015). As per Decuir-Gunby (2017) utilizing a convergence model describes the phenomena while trying to possible demonstrate how the data analysis support or contradict each other. There are different patterns

as to why the use of convergent design. According to J. W. Creswell (2015) there are 3 different patterns: the blind faith approach, the matching approach and the data diffraction approach. For the purpose of this study, the researcher used the matching approach, meaning intentionally collecting data from both qualitative and quantitative collection. Matching qualitative questions with scales of quantitative instruments, hoping to obtain enough relatable data to understand the variables or phenomena. The following triangulation figure was designed to explain the convergence model used for this research study.

Figure 2. Triangulation for research study



Source: chart created by author

Being that the main purpose of this study is to find if there is a relationship between Spirituality and Successful Aging, the use of a quantitative approach contributed to providing an empirical degree of associations between variables, while at the same time, having a qualitative approach provided a deeper understanding of each of the participants views of spirituality and the meaning it has in their lives (Caruth, 2013). Some of the advantages of using a mix-methods design is that it can handle a wider range of questions that could somehow be missed by using a single method. It can present a richer set of results alongside with a greater capacity to for the results to be generalized. Mixing methods allows for richer insights and opens the debate for future studies (J. W. Creswell, & Creswell, J. David, 2018). On the other hand, some of the disadvantages of using mix-methods is that it is time consuming and the researcher needs to become knowledge of both quantitative and qualitative research design in order to provide effective and accurate results (Caruth, 2013)

By using a mix-methods approach for this study, the researcher gathered a deeper understanding into the theme which is the role of spirituality in later life. The researcher measured spirituality and psychological well-being individually and combined those findings to figure out if there's a relation between them spirituality (independent variable) and psychological well-being (dependent variable). The researcher applied an additional measure which was the open ended questionnaire, to decipher whether there is a relationship between the independent and depend variable. The reason behind this research development is called complementary, meaning the use of qualitative results increased the interpretation after quantitative research (Ozturk & Sahin, 2019).

Based on the literature review, a mix methods approach can aide into the scope of this research and create a greater understanding of the phenomena being studied.

7.1 OBJECTIVES

This mixed methods study addressed spirituality and its impact in later life. A convergent mixed methods design was used, and it is a type of design in which qualitative and quantitative data are collected in parallel, analyzed separately, and then merged. In this study, the Spirituality Scale and PWB scale were used to predict whether spirituality positively influenced psychological well-being therefore leading to successful aging for older adult students of universities of the third age. The mix-methods questionnaire explored spirituality in the lives of these older adult students at universities of third age in greater depth in order to understand the meaning of spirituality in their lives. The reason for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data was to gain a greater understanding of spirituality in older adults and its significance in their lives that could otherwise will not be possible by utilizing only one of the above types of data.

The general objective of this study was to understand the meaning of spirituality to older Portuguese adults and how it relates to their everyday lives. The researcher wanted to be able to understand if there was a relationship between spirituality and successful aging by analyzing one of the main subjective contributors to active aging which is subjective well-being.

The more specific objectives include discovering if these older adults consider themselves spiritual, discover if they practice or are involved in activities related to their spirituality and if spirituality played a role in their life after retirement.

The research questions guiding this study are the following:

7.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. Is there a relationship between spirituality and subjective well-being in older Portuguese adults?
2. How do older Portuguese adults define the term spirituality?
3. Is spirituality a contributing factor towards successful aging?

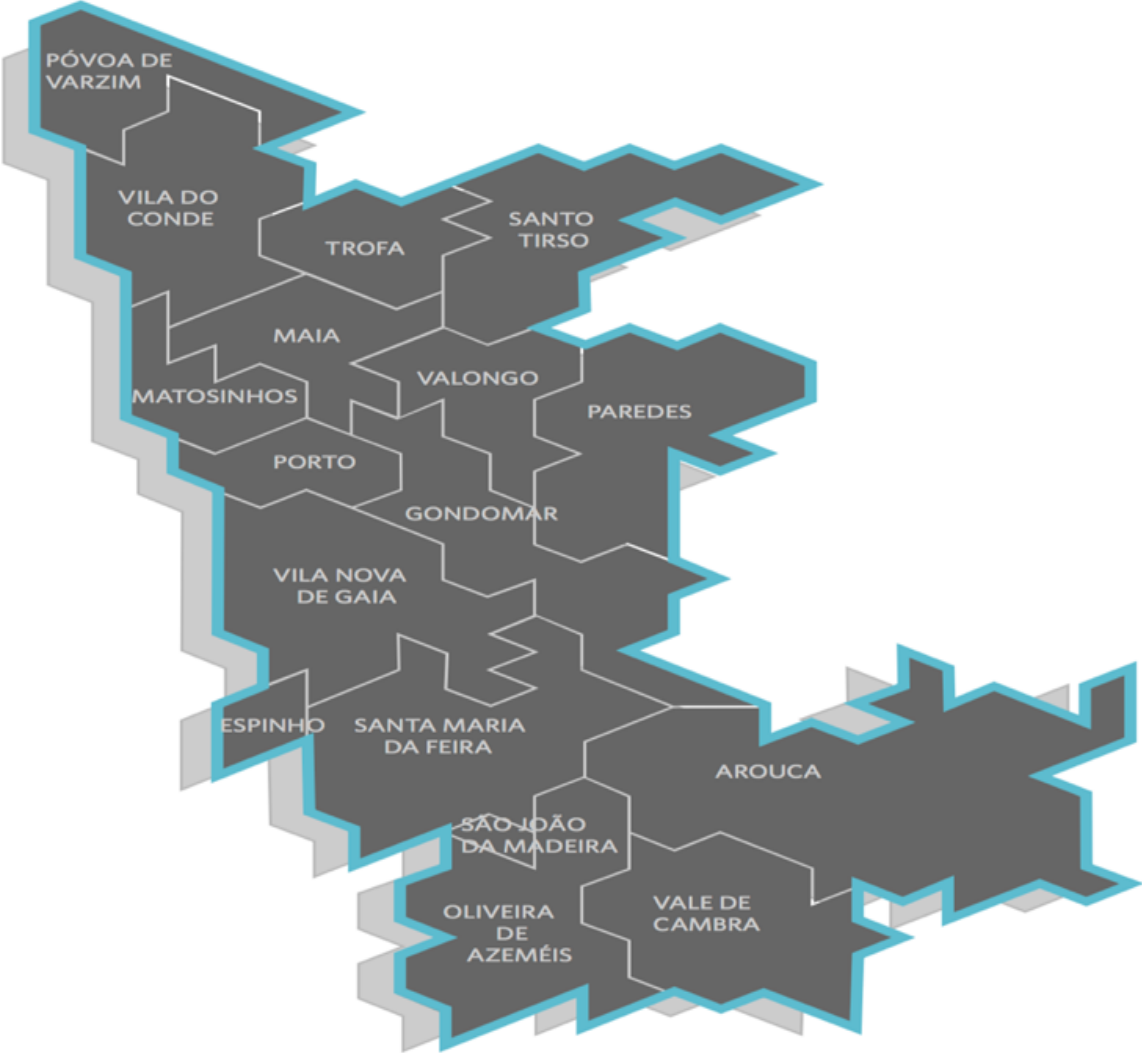
In order to meet the objectives mentioned above, the researcher engaged in a mixed-methods study that lasted about 9 months researching older adults' students of universities of the third age in municipality of Porto.

7.3 CHARACTERIZATION OF THE SAMPLE

The research study was conducted in the metropolitan area of Porto. Following is a brief description of the city and the areas pertaining to this city which will part of this study. The Metropolitan Area of Porto consists of 17 different municipalities which are Porto, Espinho, Gondomar, Maia, Matosinhos, Pova de Varzim, Valongo, Vila do Conde and Vila Nova da Gaia, Arouca, Olivéria de Azeméis, Paredes, Santa Maria da Feira, Santo Tirso, São João de Madeira, Trofa and Vale de Cambra. The Metropolitan Area of Porto has been suffering from what is called "demographic aging" meaning their elderly residents continue to rise while the younger generations diminish (Esteves, 2010).

Below is a graph of the Municipality of Porto and the cities within this municipality.

Figure 3. Map of the Municipality of Porto



Source: <http://portal.amp.pt/pt/>

Regarding the sampling selection, a non-probabilistic sampling technique was used. It means that some units in the population are more likely to be selected than others since it will be impossible to select the entire population (Bryman, 2016). A convenience sample was used due to the factors of accessibility. Although convenience sampling will not allow for generalization, it can add important findings to target additional research in the area of research (Bryman, 2016). Participants were chosen from different universities of the third age in Porto, Portugal. The criteria for the sample of this study consisted of a group of individuals that met the following characteristics: Live alone or with a family member; age 65 years or older, retired and no longer employed and a current student at a University of the Third Age. One of the requirements was that each participant had what is called “decisional capacity” which means he/she has the understanding capacity to make decisions and their cognitive functions are not compromised (J. Gubrium, & Sakar, A. , 1996). Due to the nature of the questions and subject of spirituality, no participant with a previous diagnosis of cognitive deficiency as dementia or alzheimer’s was allowed to participate. The sample size were 63 participants from 9 different universities of the third age in Porto. More information about the collection process is provided in a later chapter of this thesis.

7.4 DESCRIPTION OF EACH OF THE PARTICIPATING UNIVERSITIES.

The researcher contacted several universities of the third age in the Metropolitan Area of Porto but due to the Covid-19 pandemic many were unable or unwilling to participate. Some were closed because of the pandemic and others were not accepting face to face contact with students since this population was the most affected and the most vulnerable. This study was delayed several months due to the inability to reach several universities of the third age; closure of many of these universities between the months of March thru October of 2020 halted this research study.

Here is a brief description of the universities that agreed to participate in this study.

Viver a Aprender Senior

This university is located in the municipality of Maia which is part of the Metropolitan Area of Porto. According to their magazine CES Pedras Rubras; the idea to create this university started 3 years ago in order to promote successful aging. The university offers different classes for their students that include, English, Portuguese, yoga, Pilates, technology, arts & crafts,

theatre, physical therapy, viola and ukulele and social activities. Some of those social activities include guided tours around the city, Christmas celebration. Some of the senior university students have formed various clubs like the Poetry, Theater and Singing Club. ("CES Pedras Rubras Magazine," 2020).

Academia Senior de Gaia

The academy was founded in 1999 and is situated in Villa Nova de Gaia. The creation of this university of the third age began as a social project to improve the quality of life of older adults by providing them with activities that could promote cognitive and physical abilities. The university offers an array of classes that range from Art, Chorus, Design, French, Music, Technology, Yoga, Tai-Chi, Theater. The classes are 50 minutes long and run from the months of October until June. The classes are targeted to adults age 45 to 83 of age (Câmara Municipal Vila Nova de Gaia).

Universidade Senior Mutualista

This university was founded in 2018 and is located the Metropolitan Area of Porto. Its objective is to assist it's associated members by providing them with classes to enhance and create new knowledge. Some of the classes offered include: Cooking, Arts, Tai-Chi, Technology, Sociology, Psychology, Gymnastics, English Level I and II , Italian and History (AB Familiar).

Universidade de Avintes

This university was found on January 20th, 2014 and is located in Avintes in Gaia. The objective of this university is to empower older adults by giving them the opportunity to share experiences, attend activities outside their home, promote cultural, educational and sport activities (ACMA Avintes).

Academia Senior Sabiduria de Canelas

University was founded in 2003, in the city of Gaia. It offers classes that include: English for beginners, Swimming lessons, Chorus, Pilates, Art, Technology, European dance, Theater and Taiichi. (ASSC).

Ser+ Universidade Senior

This university was founded in 2016 and is situated in Senhora da Hora. It provides informal education to improve the lives of older adults. Its focus is providing cultural enrichment, cognitive and educational development. This university offers classes of German, Arts, Astrology, Sewing, Oriental Dance, Traditional Portuguese Dance, Painting, Music education, Spanish, Digital photography, French, Technology, Tai-Chi, Gymnastics, Theater, Yoga, History. Additionally, it creates events and trips to involve its students in cultural activities (Ser+ Universidade Senior).

Universidade Senior Contemporânea

This university was founded in 2006 and is located in the Metropolitan Area of Porto. Their main objective is to offer older adults activities to enjoy in their free time with theoretical and practical classes. This university is the first to work alongside research scientists in the first scientific magazine called *Revista Transdisciplinar de Gerontologia* geared towards new developments in the area of gerontology. Currently they are on their 8th edition. Some of the classes they offer include: social sciences, health, technology, internet use, dance, theater, chorus, web TV, conferences and study visits. The university has a Facebook page to keep their students informed of the latest activities and news (Universidade Sênior Contemporânea, 2021)

Universidade Senior Rotary de Matosinhos

This university was founded in the year 2007 and is located in Matosinhos. It is called rotary because it involves clubs of 4 different councils from Leça da Palmeira, Matosinhos, S. Mamede de Infesta and Senhora da Hora and recently a 5th council in Leça do Balio. The main objective of this organization is to improve the quality of life of their students, by creating an inclusive environment that not only focuses on education but also cultural enrichment. They work with public and private organizations in the principles of solidarity, ethics and service. Currently it has 140 students and 29 professors. Some the classes they offer include: Spanish, Portuguese, Guitar, Gymnastics, Arts, Painting, Religion, Universal History, Health, Psychology, History. They also engage in annual events and study visits (Universidade Senior de Matosinhos).

Universidade Orfeão de Madalena

This university was founded in 2017 in the city of Gaia. Classes they offer are English, Music, Theater, Yoga, Guitar, Painting, Gymnastics, Relaxation, English, Music History, Religion History, Technology. The university also keeps a Facebook page in order to maintain their students active (Universidade Orfeão de Madalena).

7.5 INSTRUMENTS

To meet the objectives of this study, the following instruments were used for the data collection. In this study there were both quantitative and qualitative instruments. The instruments were provided in a paper form package as well as were made available to a certain group of the participants on an electronic format. Both options were available due to the decrease of in-person class attendance because of Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. The researcher believed having the questionnaire available both on paper and online format could reach more participants. According to Ponto (2015), having paper and electronic format of a survey available to the participants gives them a choice to choose and can guarantee a better sample coverage thus making it more inclusive.

Using google forms, the researcher replicated the hand-written package including a section to include an explanation of the study, confidentiality, and participation agreement. The order of the presentation of the scales, sociodemographic questionnaire and mix-method open ended questionnaire were the same. Google forms is a free and user-friendly way to administrate a questionnaire, while ensuring confidentiality, data keeping without sacrificing security. Questionnaire data could be copied to a separate excel spreadsheet for later data analysis (Rayhan et al., 2013).

According to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), questionnaires are used to allow a participant to feel at ease and have the privacy to express their ideas and perspectives about a subject without the presence of an “outsider”. A self-completion questionnaire as Bryman (2016) refers to, has to be easy to understand since for this type of data collection tool, there will be no researcher present. Therefore, the author believes these types of questionnaires must be short, clear and concise as to prevent any confusion or misinterpreting of the questions. Questionnaires are often used to perceive and measure a participant’s attitudes about a topic being studied. They are not expensive and give the research the ability to gather a larger number while at the same is a faster kind of data gathering technique. Questionnaires can be distributed in many different forms, can be mailed, sent electronically or provided directly to the participant to be completed on their own time and in the comfort of their home. One of the benefits of

having a self-completion questionnaire is that it will reduce any bias that might be created by the research as far as influencing an answer based on the researcher personal characteristics like race, age or social background (Bryman, 2016). This bias can create what is called “social desirability” which prompts a participant to provide answers that are more accepted and likeable (Bryman, 2016). The researcher believes that for a topic as personal as Spirituality, the participant will feel more at ease to answer without fear of judgement.

Questionnaires can be designed to have either only closed ended questions, open ended questions or a combination of both. The objective of this type of questions is up to the researcher. Usually closed ended questions are looking for a more specific and narrow answers whereas open ended questions allow a participant to elaborate deeper on their thoughts and opinions. (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). There are different reasons why a researcher may choose to use closed or open-ended questions in questionnaire. For the purpose of this research study, the researcher focused on expansion. O’Cathain and Thomas (2004) refer to a process called expansion; which refers to creating a questionnaire presenting the participant first with a closed ended question, followed by an open question. The reason behind this technique is because the researcher is interested in a more detailed and personal response by the participant where he/she is allowed to elaborate on the why and how. As the authors explain these questions are created to help the participant explain in greater detail and expand on their answer (O’Cathain & Thomas, 2004). Open ended questions used as an extension can be treated as qualitative data because they will be analyzed in order to discover certain themes and explain in greater detail the experiences and thoughts of the participant. (O’Cathain & Thomas, 2004) Quantitative questionnaires can include attitude scales and personality inventories and usually closed-ended questionnaires include Likert Scales, rank orders and checklists.

7.5.1 SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

The sociodemographic questionnaire created by the researcher is composed of 7 questions that pertain to age, civil status, degree level, profession and religion affiliation (Copy attached in Annex A).

7.5.2 SPIRITUALITY SCALE (PINTO & PAIS-RIBEIRO)

This scale was constructed by Pais-Ribeiro with the focus on the dimension spirituality. This scale was created based on the theoretical construct of 2 different scales, the Quality of Life (QOL) scale and the spirituality sub-scale of the World Health Organization Quality of Life

Questionnaire (WHOQOL) (Pais-Ribeiro, 2007). Even though this scale was geared toward hospital patients, the scale's objective is to understand the individual's perspective about spirituality without affiliating it to a religious practice. The authors aim was to focus in questions 1 and 2 on the use of spirituality to find life meaning and as a coping mechanism; whereas question 3, 4 and 5 focus on the individual's capacity to see life positively and with optimism, meaning that spirituality helps deal with stressors and is used as a coping mechanism in times of need (Pais-Ribeiro, 2007). The scale consists of 5 questions related to the importance of spirituality and the answers are recorded via the use of a Likert Scale. Answers can range from "Don't agree" (1), "Agree a little" (2), "Agree a lot" (3), "Fully agree" (4). This scale is composed of two domains which are life meaning/beliefs and optimism/hope. The higher that values, the greater the link with the evaluated domain.

7.5.3 SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING SCALE (CAROL RYFF ,1989)

This scale was created to provide a more detailed understanding of what it means to experience psychological well-being. Ryff focused on six different dimensions: Self-acceptance meaning holding a positive attitude towards oneself; positive relationship with others focuses on friendships, close unions with others and positive relations. Autonomy as self-determination and freedom. Environmental mastery ability to control the environment we live in and having the opportunity to engage with it. Purpose in life as having goals and sense of direction and finally personal growth as being open to experiences and self-realization (Ryff, 1989). The items are rated using a Likert Scale which vary from 1 to 6: (1) "Completely disagree", (2) "Somewhat disagree", (3) "Partially disagree", (4) "Partially agree," (5) "Somewhat agree", (6) "Completely agree". There are currently three versions of these scales that differ only in the number of items: the first proposed version comprises twenty items per dimension, the overall instrument being 120 items; the second and third versions comprise fourteen and three items per dimension, for a total of 84 and 18 items respectively. The latter two versions are currently the most widely used. The version composed 18 question items was translated to Portuguese by Novo, Silva & Peralta, 1997 (Novo, 2000b). The final scores can range from 18 to 108 points, the higher the number of total points, the higher indication of PWB. The final result obtained in each scale corresponds to the level of well-being in the assessed domain. The scale has positive and negative items. Positive items identify positive characteristics corresponding to the dimension they belong to and are scored from 1 to 6. Negative items identify negative characteristics to the well-being conditions are quoted with an

inverse scale score (reordered from 6 to 1) In the Annex D, the researcher provides a sample of the 18 items scales (Couto, 2011). The reason why the researcher decided to utilize the 18 items scale is because is a shorter version and will be easier to administered in a self-completion questionnaire package (Copy in Annex G).

7.5.4 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

As explained in Lepherd et al. (2019), the process of validity and reliability of a research study focuses on the rigor used in process of developing and conducting the study. The psychometric properties of the Spirituality scale were tested in a study conducted by E. Dias and Pais-Ribeiro (2017) on 400 Brazilian elderly participants, the results demonstrated an internal consistency based on a coefficient alpha of .081 for the global scale, 0.85 for the Beliefs Category and 0.70 for the Hope and Optimism category. Meaning each item in the scale are consistent with the construct which is being studied, in this case, spirituality. The scale also demonstrated acceptable results relating its validity. Therefore, the results showed this scale is reliable and adequate for use with the elderly population. The Scale of Psychological Well Being reduced to 18 questions scale (Portuguese version) was validated for use with the Portuguese population by Novo, et.al, 2006 The construction of the Portuguese version of the scales took place mainly between 1996 and 1997 (Novo et al., 1997). The scale demonstrated adequate internal and temporal consistency and reported a Cronbach's alpha between 0.74 and 0.86 for the six scales and 0.93 for the global scale (Novo, 2005). The researcher also conducted a pre-test of this study to explore the questions being asked in the mix-method questionnaire to analyze if they were easily understandable and if they were constructed correctly. The participants were not required to identify themselves. Each questionnaire was given a number thus to protect client's privacy. All documentation related to this study was kept in a password protected computer.

7.5.5 MIX-METHOD QUESTIONNAIRE

Mixed methods questionnaires include both open-ended and closed ended questions. The researcher in this case has a close ended question, followed by an open-ended question to provide the participation room for a free-flowing answer. Open ended questions questionnaire will assist the researcher in creating a better understanding of each participant's unique experience.

The reason why mix method questionnaires were used was to seek a more in depth understanding of the question at hand and an exploring older people owns views that might not be able to be discovered through questionnaires with closed ended questions. It is also more beneficial when the theme of the investigation deals with more sensitive topics like in this case Spirituality (J. Gubrium & Sankar, 1996). These questions were related to the theme of the research and allowed for the participants to have room to express their own opinions and ideas. Open ended questions are the best way to create this dynamic. It creates an environment where the participant is able to freely write down their ideas (J. Gubrium & Sankar, 1996). When formulating the questions , it is important to keep in mind who is our audience? What are their cultural and social characteristics? What is their educations level? Knowing all of this prior will allow us to create questions that are easily understandable and relatable. It is important to create questions that are especifically related to the theme and will not detour the investigation.

Advantages of using open ended questions include allowing the participant to answer questions on their own time, environement and at their own pace. They are not provided with fixed responses. They allow the participant room to explore a topic they might not have had the time to think about before. Open ended questions will provide a platform to engage the participant in a topic that starts with their understanding of what spirituality is and its importance in their life.

Disadvantages of using an open-ended self-completion questionnaire is the risk of obtaining low response rates , the researcher will not be present to clarify any doubts about the questionnaire and it will be difficulty to ask a lot of questions about the topic (Bryman, 2016)

In addition, one disadvantage of self-completion questionnaire is that they are often inappropriate for a certain kind of audience. For this study the population are students of universities of the third age, according to previous research studies, older adult students of universities of the third age show greater level of literacy and will be able to complete these questionnaires.

The open-ended questionnaire created for this study is composed of 5 questions. The questions are both closed and open-ended (Copy in Annex G).

The objective of the following questions is as follows:

1. Discover if they believe in God, a higher power or a Sacred force.
2. Analyze if they consider themselves spiritual/religious and why.
3. Obtain a personal definition of what spirituality means to them.
4. Discover if they are involved in any activities associated to their spirituality and the reasons behind it.
5. Analyze if they believe spirituality has impacted their life after retirement.

These questions were introduced lastly on the self-complete package in order to gain greater insight into their own perspectives about spirituality. In the first page of this questionnaire there is a disclosure asking each participant to be as thorough as possible when developing their answers, since a more detailed response would assist the researcher to rigorously analyze their answers. The participants were also advised they were free to add additional pages if they believed the space provided under each question was not enough for them to write down their answers. Since this questionnaire was given to Portuguese citizens, the questions were created in Portuguese and were revised by a native Portuguese citizen to ensure adequacy of translation. The online version also provides ample space for the participants to elaborate their answers if they choose to do so.

7.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A key component of research is providing each participant with an informed consent form. The informed consent form included all pertaining information about the study as well as a disclosure of confidentiality. The purpose of this disclosure is for each participant to have a clear understanding of the objectives, be voluntary willing to participate and be able to leave the study if chosen to do so (Gubrium & Sakar, 1996). Also, each participant was informed that all answers will be kept anonymous (Consent form attached in the Annex E). This element of confidentiality and anonymity were both present in the paper and electronic version of the survey package.

7.7. ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

As a researcher it is important to keep in mind that there are certain skills that must be developed prior to conducting research. In order to be efficient and produce effective results, the research must first and foremost, get rid of any preconceived ideas or stereotypes about the theme and the aging population (Gubrium & Sakar, 1996). Getting to know general information,

sharing the importance of their participation and the impact of their answers for the study is key for the participant to understand its role in the project. The researcher developed a letter of appreciation to provide to each of the participants with a detailed review of the study and thanking them for their collaboration (letter attached in Annex F) Understanding of the phenomenon from an outsider's point of view also adds objectivity since the researcher does not have and particular link to any of the organizations that participated in this study.

7.8. DATA COLLECTION PROCESSES

7.8.1 PRE-TEST

Pretesting is important when developing a questionnaire to double-check areas of the survey that might be missing or difficult to understand while also ensuring the order of the questions. Administering the survey on a smaller scale prior to distribution to a wider range of participants allows the researcher the opportunity to “trial-run” the study, make sure the questions, the delivery and order make sense to the researcher and the participant (Gillespie, Ruel & Wagner, 2016).

Pre-test sample: In October 2020, The researcher contacted 10 universities of the third age, most of them were closed due to the pandemic. The researcher was able to recruit 4 participants from Viver a Aprender senior university. It was the only university that accepted to be part of the pre-test. The participants ranged from age 65 to 73. The participant met the requirements for this study.

Data collection:

The participants were given the written questionnaire and asked to complete at their own convenience. The researcher picked up the completed questionnaires on a later date.

Data analysis:

After analyzing the responses from the participants, the researcher realized there was a question that needed to be added to the open-ended mixed-questionnaire in order to meet one of the objectives of the study which is to understand what spirituality means to the participants. At the same time, the researcher discovered, the open-ended questions would benefit from a more detailed description to guide the participant.

Corrections made to the original survey:

Based on the review of the responses of the pre-test participants, there were 3 changes made to the original survey.

1. The researcher added question number 3 to the open-ended questionnaire. See Annex G.
2. The researcher added under question 4.1 Please explain the reason for your answer. See Annex G.
3. The researcher added under question 5.1 Negative or positive impact. See Annex G.

The researcher felt question 4.1 and 5.1 needed additional probing to guide the participant as to how to elaborate their answers.

7.8.2 COLLECTION PROCESS

The researcher resumed the collection process once the government allowed the re-opening of centers and organizations for the elderly population and began gathering data in April 2021. The data collection process took place in several steps that are described in greater detail.

Step 1: The researcher did an online search in the RUTIS website (www.rutis.pt) in order to find all the universities of the third age located in the municipality of Porto. According to the website there are currently 40 universities, but out of those only 33 qualified because according to their location, they do not belong to the Metropolitan Area of Porto.

Step 2: The researcher created an excel sheet with the contact information of each of these universities in order to keep a log with dates of contact and follow up information.

Step 3: First contact was done via email was in April 2021. The researcher sent an email to all universities with information about the study and invitation to participate.

Step 4: After waiting for about two weeks for a response, the researcher then proceeded to contact each university telephonically to confirm email receipt. Many of the universities responded they had received the email but hadn't had time to look it over, others confirmed they did want to participate and that's when a visit was scheduled to hand deliver the questionnaires. Out of the 33 universities that were contacted either by email or by phone, 10 stated they were closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and would reopen next semester.

Step 5: Out of the 23 universities only 9 agreed to be part of this study.

Step 6: Some surveys were dropped off to the universities in May 2021 and later on in June 2021 the survey was converted to an electronic format to allow for the participation of the students. The universities were given the choice to have their students participate via a hand-written questionnaire or an online questionnaire. 4 of the universities accepted to have the questionnaire hand delivered and the rest accepted to complete it electronically. The format of the online form was kept identical to the original. The only additional question added to the online survey was a question to the sociodemographic survey to identify which university of the third age the participant belonged to.

Step 7: After two months that survey was closed and did not allow any more responses. The data collection process was finalized in August 2021. A final total of 40 hand-written responses were received and 23 online surveys.

8 DATA ANALYSIS

Data was analyzed through descriptive statistics (frequencies, means and standard deviations), To verify the relationship between Spirituality and Psychological well-being, Pearson's Correlation test was used. The quantitative instruments of this study were analyzed using R (version 3.6.1) in RStudio (version 1.1.456). The mix-methods questionnaire was analyzed by performing a thematic analysis. Out of the 63 responses, 5 were excluded from the analyses since they did not meet the criteria to participate in study. The total number of surveys used for the analyses was then reduced to 58. Following the methods described in J. W. Creswell, & Creswell, J. David (2018), the researcher will first analyze the findings from the quantitative statistical results and then discuss the findings in the qualitative results. A mix-methods approach, compares the findings from both results. The researcher utilized the same sample size on both the quantitative and qualitative sides of this study in order to ensure validity of the study.

9. RESULTS

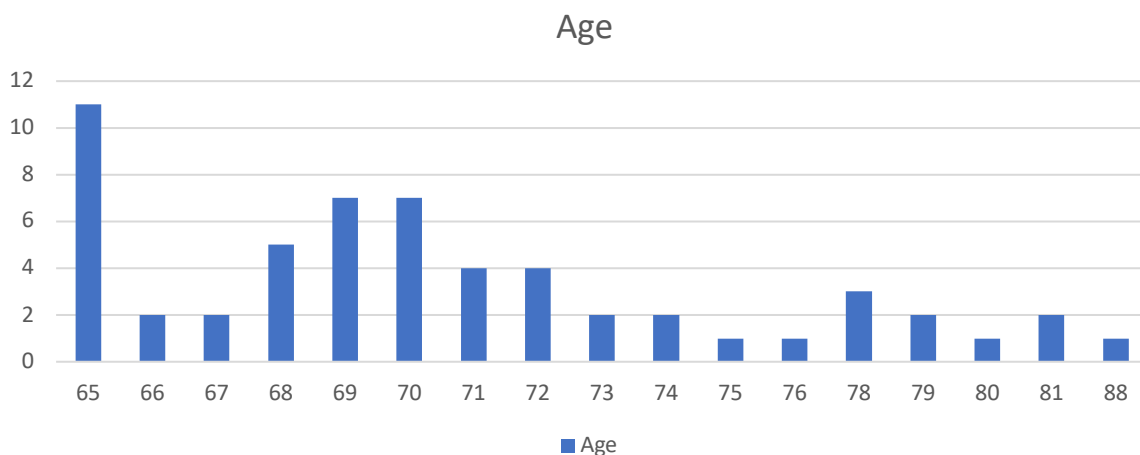
Sociodemographic data from the sample

The sociodemographic data was analyzed and results concluded there were a higher number of female participants than male; a total of 69% of the participants were female and 31% male. The age range of the participants ranged from 65 to 88 yrs. of age, with the highest 19% of the participants being 65 yrs. old. When looking at marital status, the results showed that 48% meaning almost half of the participants were married or living in non-marital partnership. Data was interpreted in Table 5 and Chart 2.

Table 5. Gender and marital status of the sample based on sociodemographic data

Variable	N=58	%
Sex		
Male	18	31%
Female	40	69%
Marital status		
Single	4	7%
Married/non-marital union	28	48%
Divorced/separated	11	19%
Widowed	15	26%

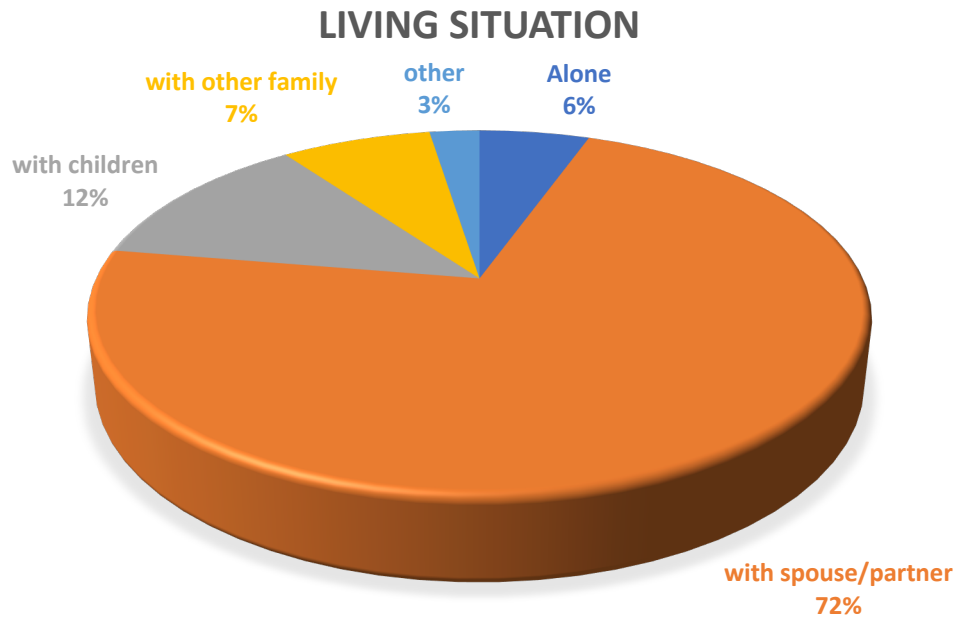
Chart 2. Age distribution of the participants based on sociodemographic data



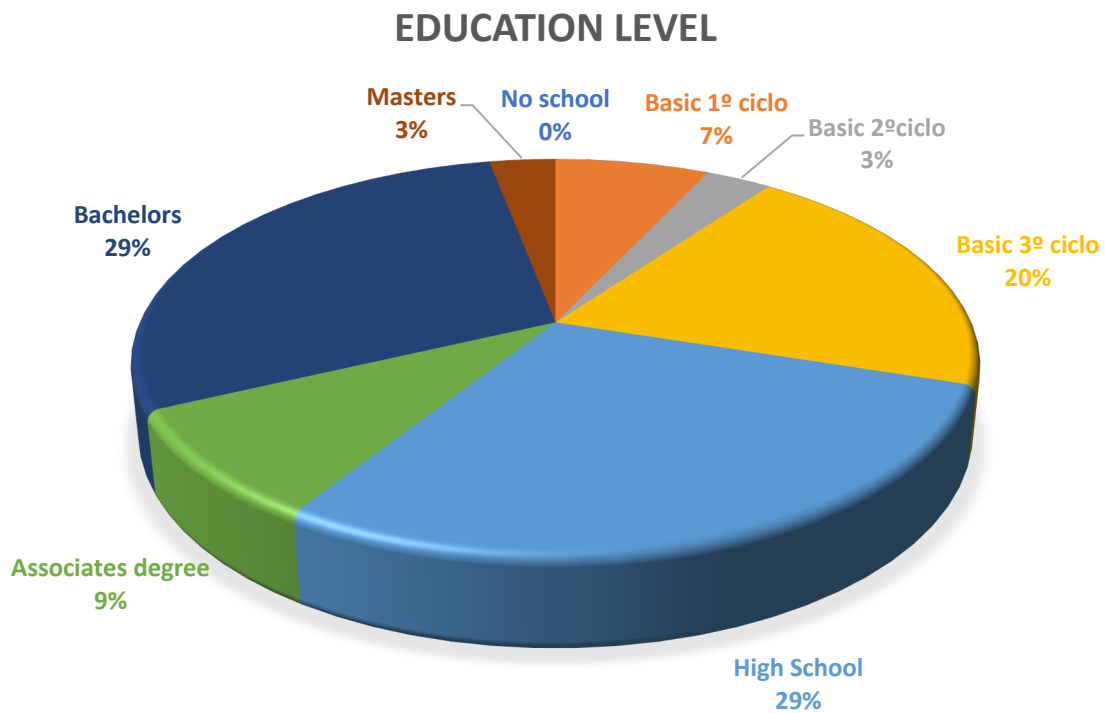
During the analysis of the living situation and education level, the results showed that the majority of the participants were living with a spouse/relative as shown in Graph 1. In terms of

education level, there was a tie between having completed high school and a bachelor's degree of 29% each as shown in Graph 2.

Graph 1. Living Situation of the participants



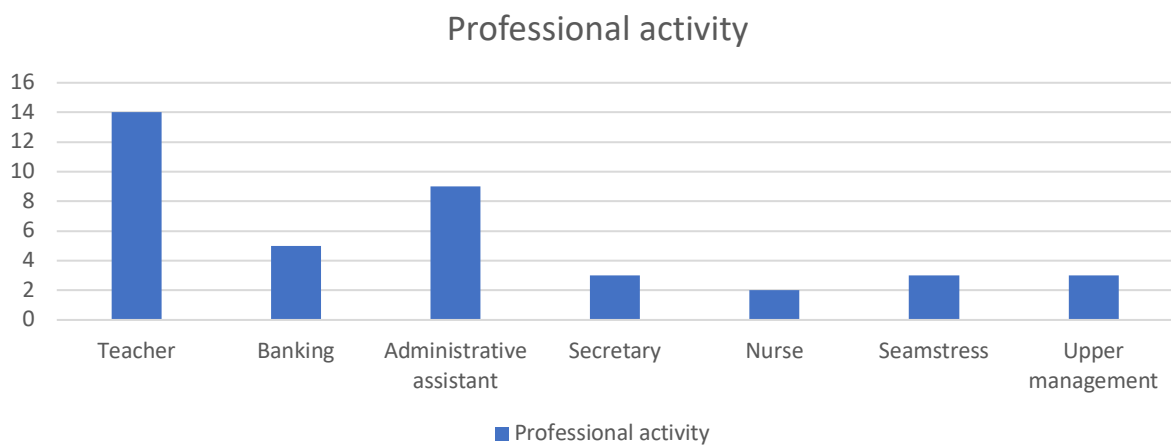
Graph 3. Participant's Education Level



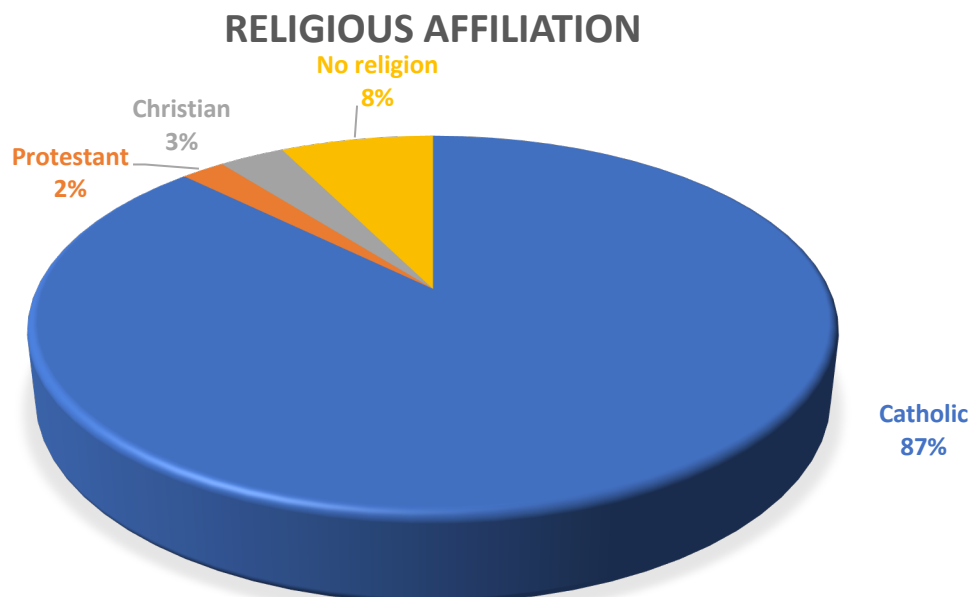
As far as professional occupation prior to retirement, the answers varied but there were some professions that were most popular amongst the sample. These professions are represented in Chart 3 with teacher being the most prevalent amongst the participants.

In terms of religious affiliations, 87% of the population considered themselves Catholic and 7% not religious as seen in Graph 4.

Chart 3. Distribution of the most prevalent professional activity produced by the sociodemographic data.

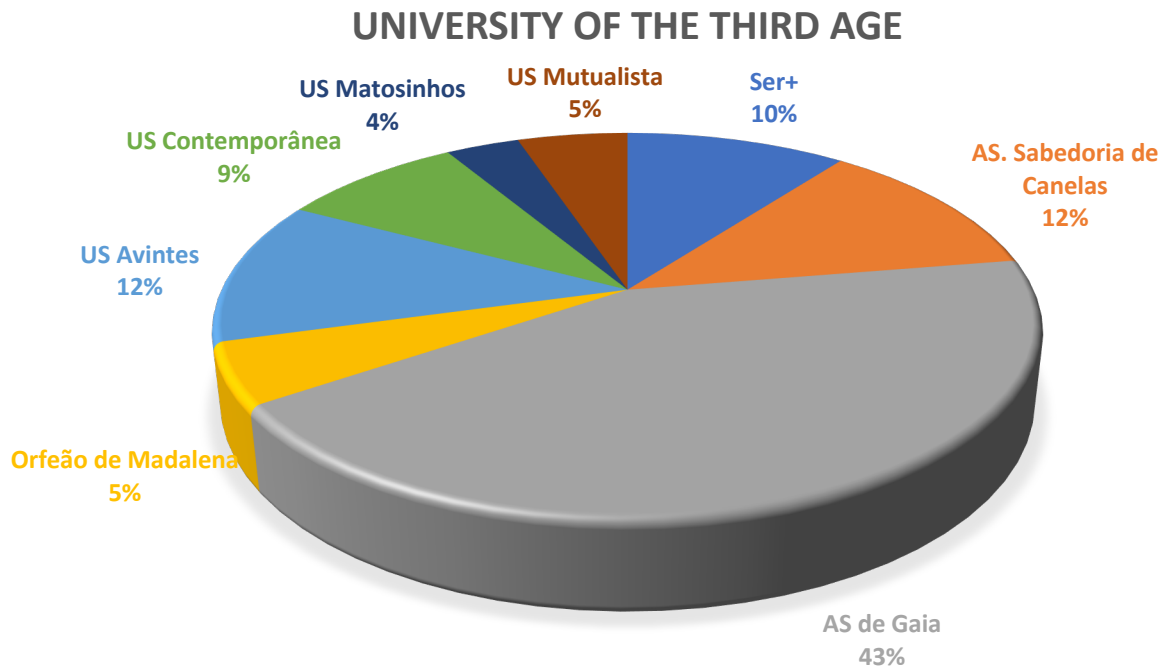


Graph 4. Religious Affiliation based on data from the sociodemographic questionnaire



Looking at the distribution of the sample according to university of the third age, the universities with the most responses were Academia Senior da Gaia with 43% as shown in Graph 5.

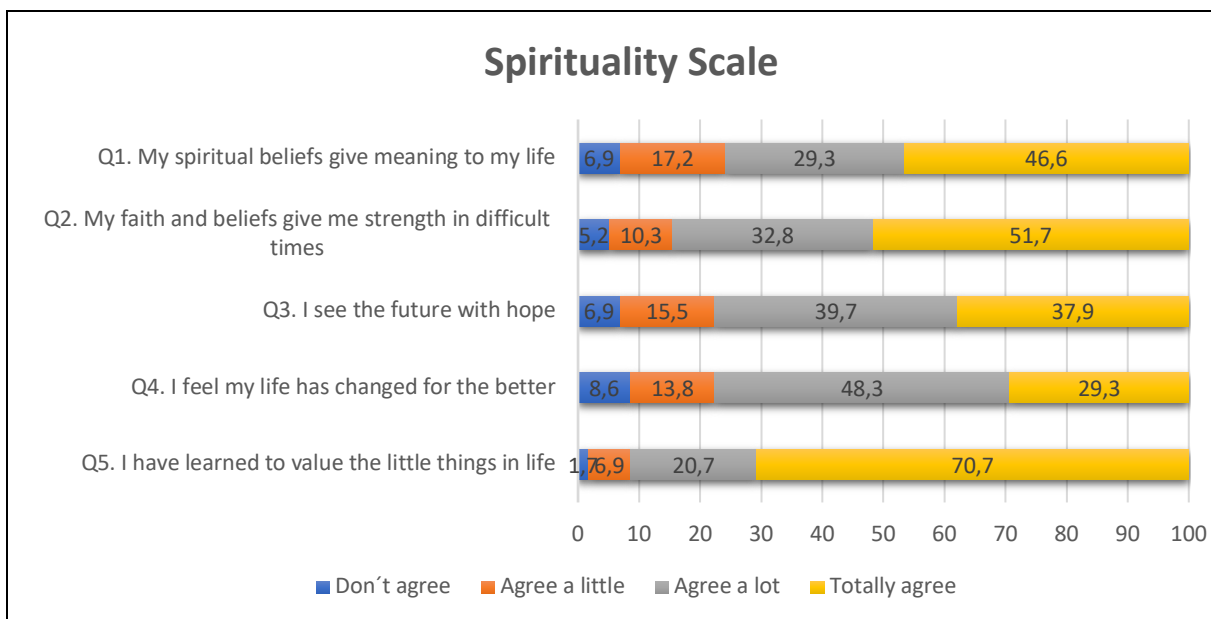
Graph 5. Distribution of participants according to university



9.1.1 RESULTS OF THE SPIRITUALITY SCALE

The spirituality scale was the first scale to appear in the package presented by the students as well as in the electronic version. The purpose of this scale is to determine if spirituality, without being related to a specific religious affiliation, is used by the participants in times of need as coping mechanism and whether or not they see life with optimism. This scale original language is Portuguese, the researcher translated the questions only for the result analysis to make it understandable to a broader audience for the purpose of this thesis writing. The original questions of this survey are presented in Annex G.

Chart 4. Frequency of questions in the Spirituality Scale



Observing the results of Chart 4 and analyzing each question responses as percentages, overall, the respondents show a higher and positive interpretation of spirituality in their life.

Looking at questions 1 and 2 that explore meaning in life and coping. Half of the participants rated high on the scale with Q1 having 46.6% as totally agree and Q2 having 51.7% as totally agree as well. Meaning half of the participants believe their spiritual beliefs gives their lives meaning and strength in difficult times. Out of questions 3, 4 and 5 that examine optimism and hope, 70,7% of the participants “totally agree” with the statement I have learned

to value the little things in life; while 48.3% “agree a lot” with feeling their lives have changed for the better and 39.7% seeing their future with hope.

Table 6. Index of Spirituality from the participants in this study

Spirituality	Participants		
	Mean*	Median	SD
Spiritual/Religious Beliefs	3,233	3,500	0,87
Hope/Optimism	3,224	3,333	0,64
Total Score	3,228	3,4	0,65

*Score (1 to 4)

It can be observed by looking at Table 6 that the elderly presented almost the same values in the domain "religious/spiritual beliefs" when compared to "hope" of the Spirituality scale of Pinto and Pais-Ribeiro. The total score for the Spirituality scale presented a high degree of importance of spirituality in the lives of the participants.

The researcher conducted a Spearman’s rank correlation between Spiritual/Religious beliefs and Hope Optimism and found there is a significant correlation ($p\text{-value}=3.735e-08$) between the average score on Spiritual/religious beliefs and the average score on Hope/Optimism as determined using Spearman’s rank correlation ($\rho= 0.6483673$).

In addition, the researcher also conducted a wilcoxon rank-sum test (equivalent to Mann-Whitney U test) to compare values from two of in the independent variables gender (male and female) in order to determine if there were any significant differences between gender and Spirituality. The Shapiro-Wilk tests were analyzed to evaluate the normality of the data. The observed p-value were significant, indicating a non-normal data distribution. Consequently, non-parametric tests were used to assess the impact of gender on the scores. There were no significant changes reported between men and women. The values for the Shapiro Wilk normality test: $W=0.91711$, $p\text{-value}=0.0007365$.

9.1.2 RESULTS FROM THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING SCALE (PWB)

When analyzing the Psychological Well Being scale results, it is important to have as a guide the Definitions of Theory Guided Dimensions of Well Being. The researcher used the table below to further analyze the results found.

Table 7. Definitions of Theory-Guided Dimensions of Well-Being

<p>Self-acceptance</p>	<p>Higher scorer: positive attitude toward self and past life. Accepting of the self and demonstrates a positive attitude about life Lower scorer: Disappointed in the self and the past, struggles to accept self, wishes to be different</p>
<p>Positive relations with others</p>	<p>Higher scorer: Exhibits warm and trusting relationships with others, able to demonstrate feelings of empathy and reciprocity Lower scorer: Has few close relationships, isolated, difficulty being open and trusting of others</p>
<p>Autonomy</p>	<p>Higher scorer: Independent, and self-reliable. Follow own personal standards and doesn't get influenced or pressured by the crowd. Lower scorer: concern about society's influences, pressures and expectations. Seeks approval and doesn't take judgement from others well.</p>
<p>Environmental mastery</p>	<p>Higher scorer: Able to manage the environment around them, uses opportunities to create an environment that suits their needs. Lower scorer: Difficulty managing the environment around them, feels unable to create change, lacks self-control over the environment.</p>
<p>Purpose in Life</p>	<p>Higher scorer: Possesses a sense of direction and works toward goals. Able to find a purpose and creates objectives. Lower scorer: Struggles to find life's meaning, unable to find purpose</p>
<p>Personal Growth</p>	<p>Higher scorer: in a constant search for personal improvement, fulling their potential Lower scorer: Stagnant, lacks motivation in personal improvement.</p>

Source: Ryff and Keyes (1995, p.1072)

The researcher analyzed the psychological well-being scale as presented in Table 8. and was able to determine that overall, the participants scored high on the total score of PWB with

a 4,5. The higher scores were obtained in the dimension of personal growth with a 4,65 and positive relations with a 4,63; followed by self-acceptance at 4,52 autonomy 4,51 and the domains that presented the lowest global scores values were environmental mastery with a 4,47 and life purpose with a 4,2.

Table 8. Descriptive analysis of dimensions of Psychological Well Being Scale

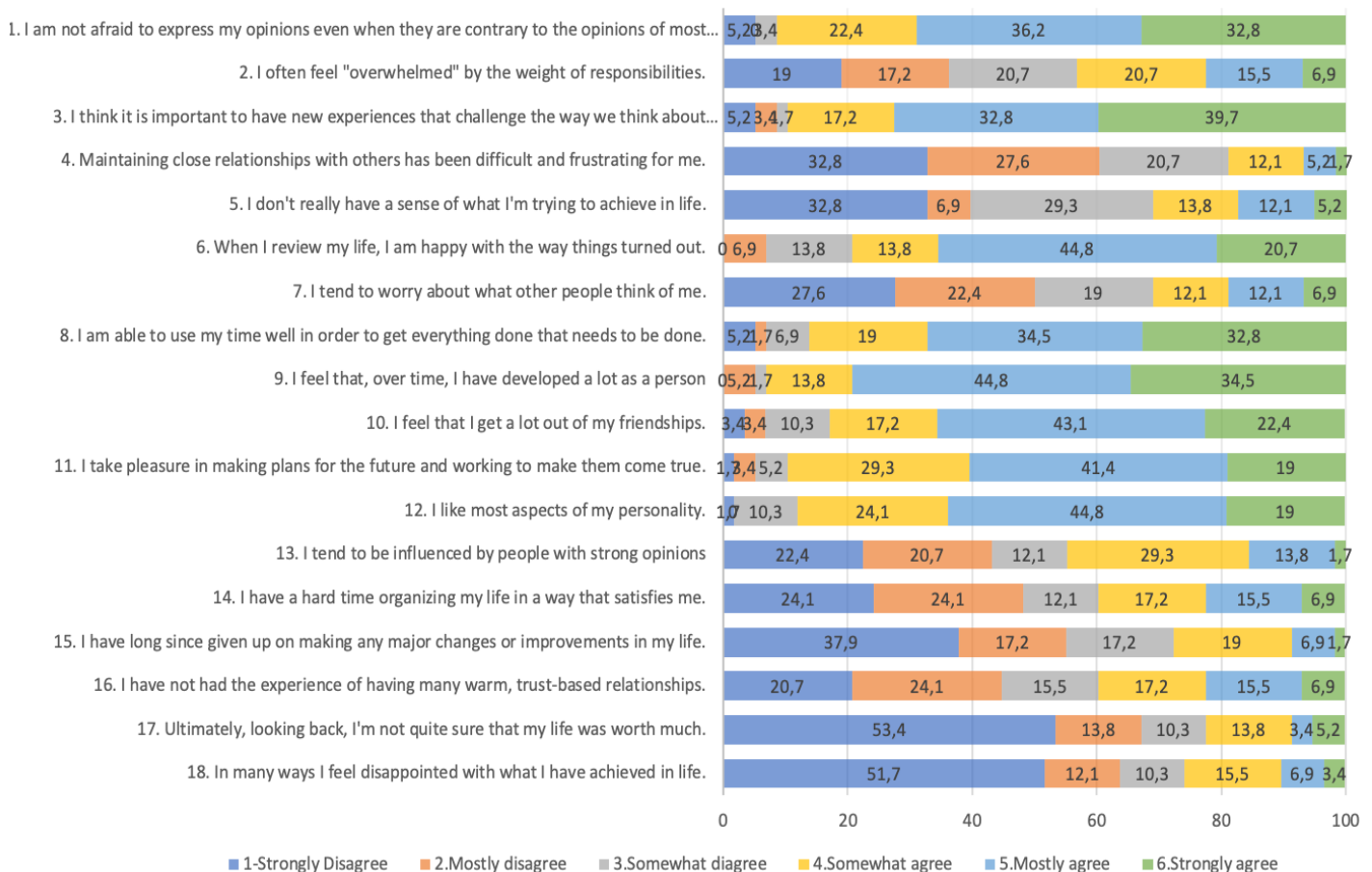
Dimensions of PWB	Sample N=58		
	Mean	Median	SD
Autonomy	4.511	4.500	0.74
Environmental Mastery	4.477	4,667	0.91
Personal Growth	4,655	5,000	0,92
Positive Relations	4,632	4,833	0,88
Life Purpose	4,207	4,333	1,15
Self-Acceptance	4,523	5,000	1,33
PWB Total	4,501	4,556	0,72

*Score (1-6)

The researcher also created Chart 5 to be able to see the frequencies of the answers to each question. In order to understand the responses of the scale, it is important to keep in mind that the scale has positive and negative items. Meaning positive items identify positive characteristics (ordered from 1 to 6). Meanwhile, negative items identify negative characteristics to the well-being conditions and are quoted with an inverse scale score (reordered from 6 to 1). To exemplify this, for example *Q1* “*I am not afraid to express my*

opinions even when they are contrary to the opinion of most people” is a positive question, in which 32.8% of the participants answered “strongly agree” and 36.2% answered “mostly agree”; this question belongs to the autonomy dimension meaning the majority of the participants rated high on a positive response to a positive characteristic. On the other hand, Q18 is a negative question, “*in many ways, I feel disappointed with what I have achieved in life*” and only 3.4% answered “strongly agree” and 6.9% “mostly agree”, meaning most of the participants do not agree with this question. Questions 1-3 analyze the Autonomy dimension, Questions 4-6 analyze the environmental mastery dimension, 7-9 analyze the personal growth dimension, 10-12 analyze the positive relations with others dimension, 13-15 analyze the purpose in life dimension and finally questions 16-18 analyze the self-acceptance dimension. Thus, the final result in each question identifies the degree of intensity defining the dimension underlying it, so that a high result will correspond to a high level of well-being in the specific domain evaluated (Novo, 2005).

Chart 5. Frequencies from questions in the psychological well-being scale



One of the main objectives of this study is to find out if there was a correlation between Spirituality and Psychological well-being. The following table present the results.

Table 9. Correlation between PWB and Spirituality

PWB Scale	Spirituality Scale		
	Life Meaning	Hope/Optimism	Global Spirituality
Autonomy	,294	,019*	,046*
Environmental Mastery	,309	,476	,257
Personal Growth	,958	,800	,835
Positive Relationships	,110	,195	,080
Life Purpose	,492	,406	,446
Self-acceptance	,531	,401	,415
General score	,466	,369	,317

*p<0,05

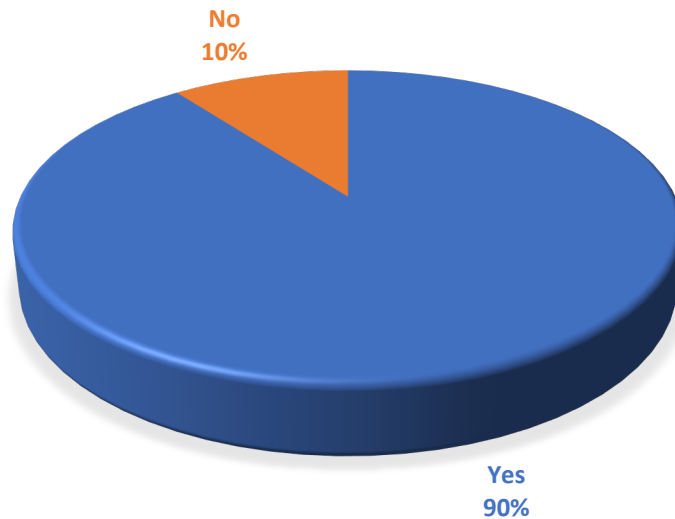
The data was analyzed by conducting a Spearman's correlation. The analysis showed the existence of a statistically significant and positive relationship .019 between the dimension of Hope/Optimism and the dimension of Autonomy of the PWB* scale; as well as a statistically significant and positive relationship ,046 between global spirituality and the dimension of autonomy from the PWB* scale.

9.1.3 RESULTS FROM THE MIX-METHOD QUESTIONNAIRE

The mix-method questionnaire used in this study was composed of both open and closed ended questions. A closed-ended question preceded an open-ended question as to allow the participant to explain in further detail the reason behind their answer. The first two questions that were asked were 1. *Do you believe in God, a sacred source or a Higher Power?* To illustrate the response of the participants is Graph 6.

Graph 6. Percentage of participants who believe in God/sacred or Superior Power.

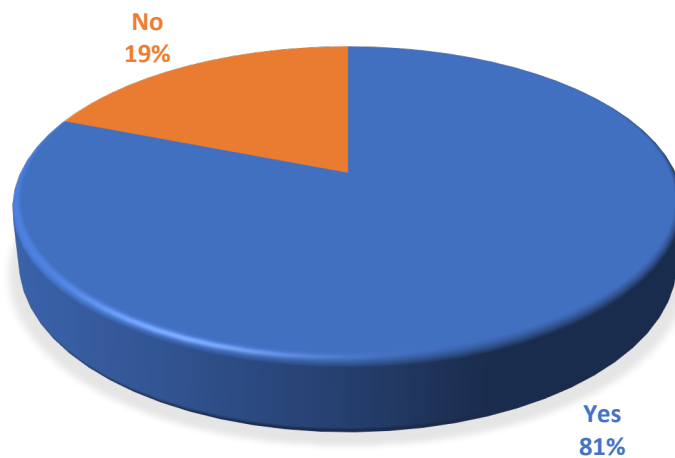
DO YOU BELIEVE IN GOD, A SACRED OR SUPERIOR POWER?



As explained above, 90% of the surveyed participants answered yes and 10% no. The second question that was asked is *Do you consider yourself a religious or spiritual person?* To illustrate the response of the participants, see Graph 7 below.

Graph 7. Percentage of participants who consider themselves religious or spiritual.

DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF A RELIGIOUS OR SPIRITUAL PERSON?



As seen above, 81% of the respondents considered themselves religious or spiritual and 19% neither of those. At this point of the survey, those who answered *No* to the questions were then asked *What keeps you away from religion or spirituality?* It was important for the researcher to also pay attention to those who showed no interest or affiliation to the concept of spirituality or religion and why. Further research on this matter presented later in this section.

The mix-method questionnaire was analyzed by using a thematic analysis. A thematic analysis is used to be able to gather a deeper understanding of a participant's perspective or point of view. It is a way to analyze data into patterns, especially helpful for open-ended questionnaires like the one used in this study. (*Thematic Analysis of Survey Responses From Undergraduate Students*, 2019). Having open ended questions in this mix-methods questionnaires allowed the researcher to gather responses of the participants about a personal subject like Spirituality in their lives in order to understand in their own words the meaning they attributed to the term and how it has impacted or not their lives. Using a thematic analysis will aid the researcher to organize and analyze common patterns or themes that arise from the responses of each participant.

The researcher followed a rigorous and organized process of data analysis by following a number of steps:

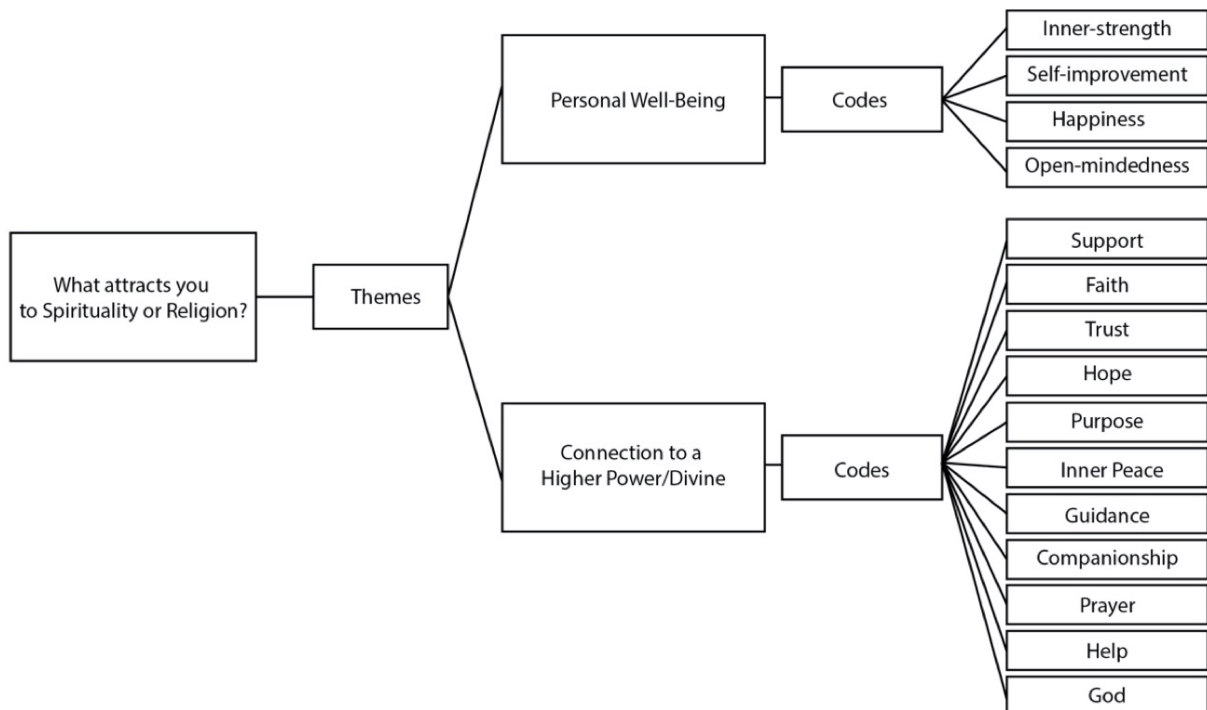
1. Familiarize with the data
2. Create initial codes or labels
3. Organize the responses into themes
4. Review these themes
5. Define the main themes
6. Create a report

For this research study, the coding was done manually. The researcher collected the data that were recurring from the responses of the participants and generated codes to represent significant data. The codes were those deemed important phrases used by the participant to describe Spirituality and how it has impacted their lives. Out of these codes, the researcher started to search for themes. The researcher followed the six steps as described above by Braun and Clarke (2006).

The question 2.2 asked the participants *What attracts you to spirituality or religion?* From these questions two major themes were found. A connection to a higher power/divine and personal well-being.

The thematic analysis of the answers is shown in the graph below:

Graph. 8. Thematic Analysis of question 2.2



Theme 1. Connection to a higher power/divine. In this theme the participants expressed their connection to something bigger than themselves, often referred to as God which brought them a sense of hope, trust, purpose, and support. Whom they felt they could trust in times of need and to search for guidance.

Here are some of the quotes from the participants:

“E19, mulher, 68 anos, sem profissão.... *O que me atrai a religião é que temos alguém que nos guarda, que nos ajuda nos momentos difíceis, nos conduz ao bom caminho. Esse Deus é o meu guia e o meu grande amigo...*”

Translation: What attracts me to religion is that we have someone to guard us, to help us in difficult times, to lead us to the right path. This God is my guide and my great friend.

“E56, mulher, 70 anos, professora...*O acreditar num Ser/Entidade superior que me acompanha e ajuda...*”

Translation: Believing in a superior being/entity that accompanies and helps me.

“E7, homem, 81 anos, bancário...*Acreditar que há alguém nos orienta e nos conduz e a tranquilidade e calma que nos são proporcionadas em momentos de meditação.*”

Translation: Believing that there is someone guiding us and leading us and the tranquility and calm that are provided to us in moments of meditation.

“E10, mulher, 65 anos, educadora...*Tenho momentos na minha vida em que acredito haver um ser superior que me comanda. Nem sempre compreendo no próprio momento, o "porquê" do que me acontece, no entanto como decorrer do tempo percebo e agradeço o que me acontece*”

Translation: I have moments in my life when I believe that there is a superior being that commands me. I don't always understand in the moment, the “why” of what happens to me, but as time goes by, I understand and appreciate what happens to me.

Theme 2. Personal well-being. In this theme, the participants expressed being attracted to spirituality/religion because it brings them a sense of inner strength, happiness and self-

improvement. It also provides their life meaning and purpose; thus, allowing for self-introspection.

Here are some quotes that illustrate some of the responses from the participants:

“E38, mulher, 70 anos, administrativa...*A tranquilidade que me traz...*”

Translation: The tranquility it brings me.

“E39, homem, 88 anos, bancário... *Sendo uma pessoa de fé, considero a espiritualidade como o alimento essencial da vida*”

Translation: Being a person of faith, I consider spirituality as the essential food of life.”

E58, mulher, 81, administrativa...a tentativa de sintonização com o meu eu interior...

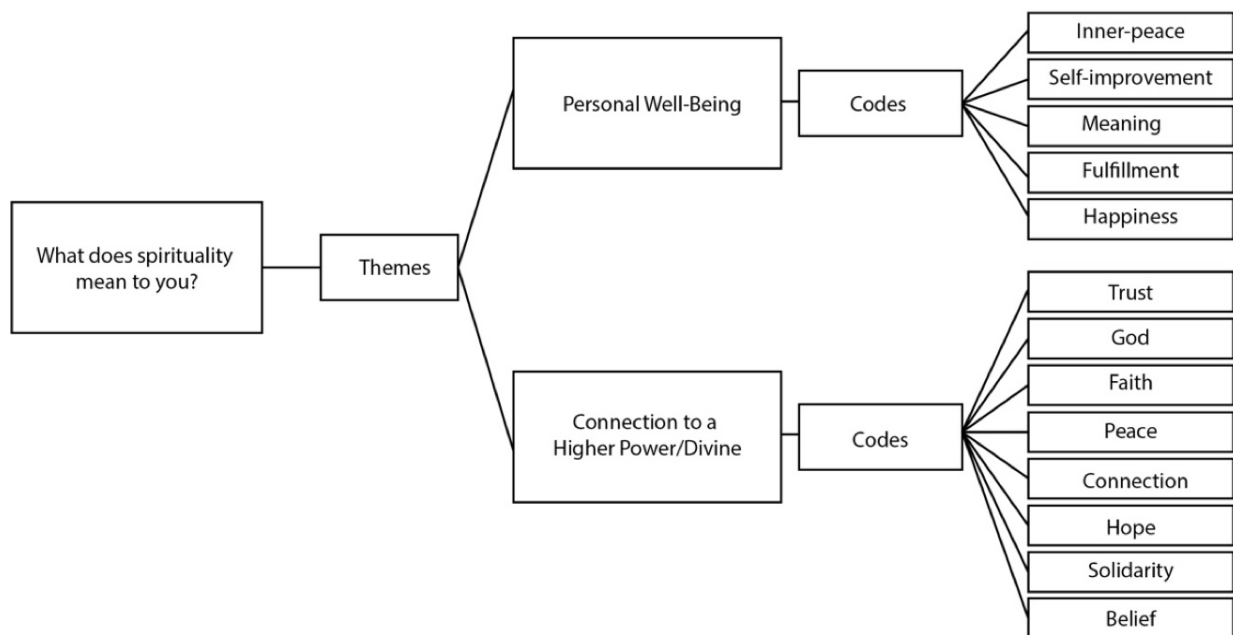
Translation: The attempt to tune in to my inner self.

“E47, homem, 78, professor... *Dar sentido ao Eu..*”

Translation: Give meaning to the self.

The 3rd question asked them *what does spirituality mean to you?* In the answer to this question, the same two themes were found. The themes are represented in Graph below.

Graph 9: Thematic analysis of question 3.



Theme 1. Connection to a higher power/divine. The participants described spirituality in terms of a relationship they have with a higher being or power whom they trust that leads them to feeling safe, happy and overall well-being. Below are some quotes from the participants response:

“E10, mulher, 65 anos, empregada de escritório.... *Acredito que existe uma força superior no universo. Para mim a espiritualidade eco amor correspondido, a amizade, a empatia, o prazer em ajudar, dar felicidade e ser feliz. Gostar de mim e de quem merece...*”

Translation: I believe that there is a higher power in the universe. For me spirituality is echoing love, friendship, empathy, pleasure in helping, giving happiness and being happy. To like myself and those who deserve it.

“E26, mulher, 70, costureira...*Deus é o meu refúgio...*”

Translation: God is my refuge

“E47, homem, 69 anos, trabalhador do CTT... *Fé e esperança...*”

Translation: Faith and Hope

“E5, mulher, 77, administrativa...*Ter fé em Deus...*”

Translation: to have faith in God

“E53, homem, 69, engenheiro civil...*O meu Ser, a minha Vida interior, a minha relação com Deus...*”

Translation: my being, my inner life, my relationship with God

Theme 2. Personal Well Being: the participants expressed spirituality to be a vessel that allows them to find their purpose, to want to help others, it's a feeling that gives them inner peace, happiness and strength to carry on. To some of the participants spirituality is not necessarily linked to religion but instead something that is personal, private and unique to every individual that allows them to find meaning and purpose.

Below are some quotes expressed by the participants:

“E23, mulher, 70 anos...*Encontro paz interior, força para mim e para ajudar outras pessoas...*”

Translation: I find inner peace, strength for myself and to help others”

“E51, homem, 70 anos, *é uma forma de estar bem comigo e com os outros porque acredito no amor e no bem comum*”

Translation: It is a way to be well with myself and with others because I believe in love and the common good.

“E8, mulher, 65 anos, empregada comercial...*é uma força interior que não sei explicar, mas que nos transporta para um bem-estar geral.*”

Translation: it is an inner force that I do not know how to explain, but it transports us to a general well-being.

“E41, homem, 78 anos, professor, *A procura de ser melhor*”

Translation: The search to be better.

“E50, mulher, 70 anos, professora...*Cumprir aquilo em que acredito. Ajudar e partilhar com o outro, principalmente com quem mais necessita, não materialmente mas também em afeto e companhia...*”

Translation: To fulfill what I believe in. To help and share with the other, mainly with those who need it most, not materially but also in affection and companionship.

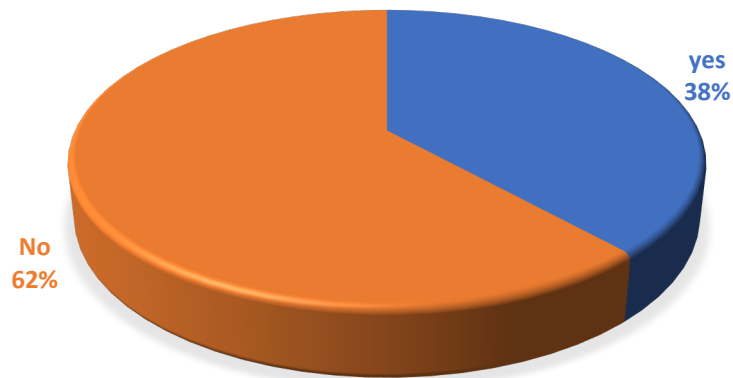
“E44, mulher, 78 anos, professora...*A espiritualidade pode ou não estar ligada a uma vivência religiosa. É a propensão do ser humano para a busca do significado da vida..*”.

Translation: Spirituality may or may not be linked to a religious experience. It is the propensity of the human being to search for the meaning of life.

The 4th question asked the participants, *do you participate in any religious or spiritual activity?* See graph below.

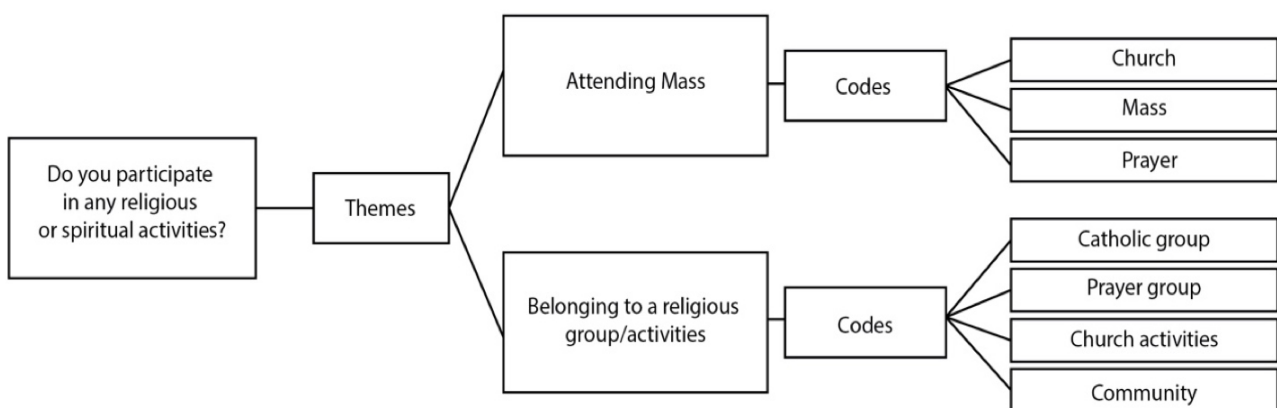
Graph 10. Percentages of participants who participate in a religious/spiritual activity.

DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN ANY RELIGIOUS OR SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY?



The question 4.1 asked the participants to discuss what activities they participate in if their answer was Yes. Results in Graph 11.

Graph 11. Thematic analysis of questions 4.1



The researcher was also interested in discovering if the participants engaged in any activity related to their spirituality or religion; more than half of the participants said they did not participate in any activities. For those who do participate, there was an additional question to find out why. The thematic analysis of this question discovered 2 themes as to why they choose to attend religious/activities, attending mass/religious service and belonging to a religious group or activity.

Theme 1. Attending mass: a number of participants stated to attend church on Sundays. Here are some of the quotes the participants shared in the questionnaire many of them in search of answers or to have a space to have a conversation with a higher power/God. These moments and conversations with a higher power allowed them to find comfort in difficult times.

“E32, mulher, 70 anos, administrativa...*Participação semanal na missa dominical porque este encontro com a palavra de Deus me ajuda a ultrapassar as dificuldades da semana...*”

Translation: Weekly participation in Sunday Mass because this encounter with God's word helps me overcome the difficulties of the week...

“E17, mulher, 68 anos...*Vou a missa falar com Deus na casa dele..*”.

Translation: I go to Mass to talk to God in his house...

“E50, mulher, 70 anos, professora.... *Ida à missa e ajudar no que me é solicitado*”

Translation: Going to Mass and helping in whatever is asked of me.

Theme 2. Belonging to a religious group: a number of participants stated to belong to a prayer, or catholic group or community groups related to their faith or religion which also allows for interaction with others, promotes social interaction and a sense of belonging to a community. It also promotes socialization with those with similar religious beliefs thus serving as a way to combat isolation.

“E23, mulher, 70 anos...*Participo em atividades religiosas nas quais colaboro como a música e sinto-me feliz encontrando muitas vezes respostas para as minhas dúvidas.*”

Translation: I participate in religious activities in which I collaborate like music and I feel happy finding answers to my doubts.

“E51, homem, 70 anos...*Sempre fiz parte de movimentos de Ação católica como a: J.O.C juventude operária católica. L.O.C/M.T.C liga operária católica/movimento de trabalhadores cristãos...*”

Translation: I have always been part of Catholic action movements like the: J.O.C. - Catholic Worker Youth. L.O.C/M.T.C Catholic Workers League/Christian Workers Movement.

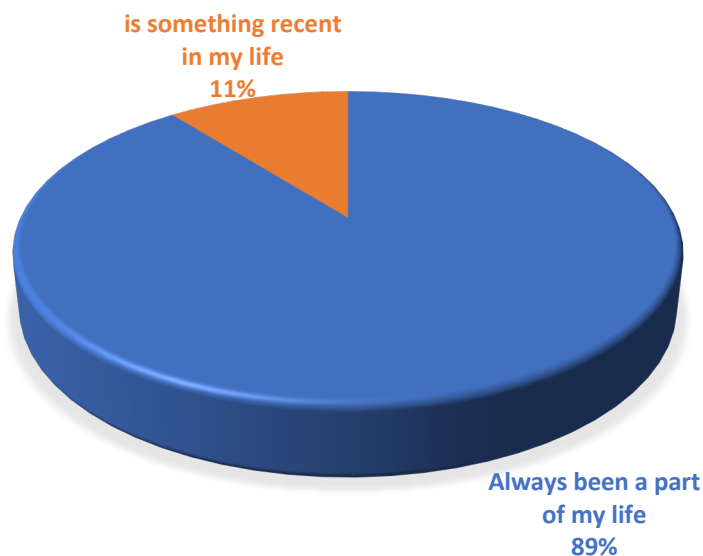
“E39, mulher, 65, educadora de infância... *Terço, no mês de maio. Entro numa igreja, sempre que posso. Retiros espirituais e religiosos, quando posso...*”

Translation: Rosary, in the month of May. I go into a church, whenever I can. Spiritual and religious retreats, whenever I can.

The 5th question asked participants *do you feel that spirituality has always been a part of your life or is it something recent?* Results in Graph 12 Below.

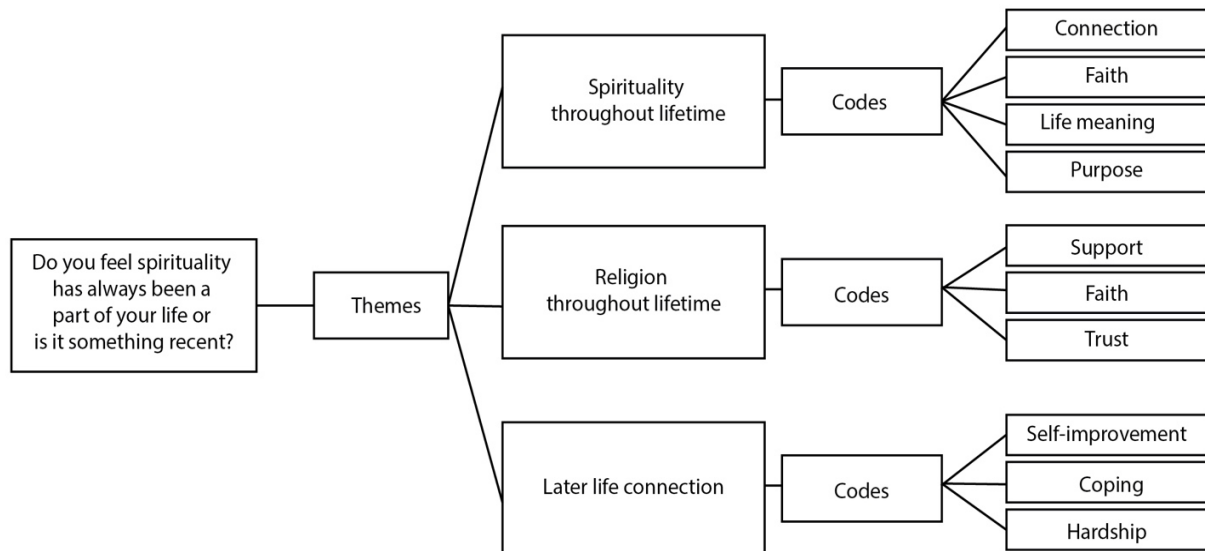
Graph 12. Percentage of participants who feels spirituality has been a part of their life or if it's something recent.

DO YOU FEEL THAT SPIRITUALITY HAS ALWAYS BEEN A PART OF YOUR LIFE OR IS IT SOMETHING RECENT?



Question 5.1 asked participants to explain their answer in more detail as to be able to understand the why. Here are the results of the thematic analysis conducted.

Graph 13: Thematic analysis of question 5.1



The thematic analysis from the question as to why was divided in 3 themes; Spirituality throughout the lifetime, Religion throughout the lifetime and Later Life connection.

Theme 1. Spirituality throughout the lifetime: some of the participants expressed their early connection with a higher power or force not particularly linked to any religion that has helped them throughout their life in different ways as a source of strength and guidance. Here are some quotes from the participants responses:

“E4, homem, 70 anos, bancário...*Desde cedo senti que tem de haver algo que nos transcende e para mim não é em igrejas com rituais mecânicos que eu iria buscar respostas para as minhas questões. Ao tentarmos através da meditação olhar bem para dentro de nós sentimos que demos uns passos à frente...*”.

Translation: From early on I felt that there has to be something that transcends us, and for me it is not in churches with mechanical rituals that I would seek answers to my

questions. When we try through meditation to look well inside ourselves, we feel that we have taken some steps forward.

“E3, mulher, 68, professora...*Desde que me lembro de mim "como gente" que me interrogava O que é que andamos aqui a fazer? Não pode ser só isto.... Como a Igreja (a Católica e as outras) nunca me deram respostas satisfatórias, fui procurá-las noutras "disciplinas. A Astrologia (Cármica/Evolutiva/Transpessoal) foi onde, até hoje, encontrei mais respostas e mais sentido para este grande mistério que continua a ser a nossa existência...*”

Translation: Ever since I remember myself "as people" I have wondered "What are we doing here? It can't be just this ...". Since the Church (the Catholic Church and the others) never gave me satisfactory answers, I went looking for them in other "disciplines". Astrology (Karmic/Evolutive/Transpersonal) was where, until today, I found more answers and more sense for this great mystery that continues to be our existence.

“E44, mulher, 78, professora ...*A procura pelo sentido da vida sempre fez parte da dimensão espiritual do ser humano. Faz parte da vida, de forma mais tranquila ou mais intensa*”.

Translation: The search for the meaning of life has always been part of the spiritual dimension of human beings. It is part of life, either quietly or intensely.

Theme 2. Religion throughout the lifetime: some of the participants expressed their religious education since early life and how that has stayed with them throughout their lifetime, religion thus becoming a path to follow due to family ties or by personal choice. Here are some quotes from the participants responses:

“E9, mulher, 65 anos, educadora de infância...*Sempre fui católica, sempre acreditei em Deus, sempre soube agradecer o que de bom me acontecia e ultimamente também agradeço o que às vezes não estou de acordo, achando que eu nem sempre tenho razão*”.

Translation: I have always been catholic, I have always believed in God, I have always been thankful for the good things that happen to me, and lately I am also thankful for what sometimes I don't agree, thinking that I am not always right.

“E17, mulher, 68 anos... *A minha família era católica e ensinou-me a ser. Faz parte da minha vida...*”

Translation: My family was catholic and taught me to be. It is part of my life.

“E19, mulher, 79 anos, telefonista da CTT...*Logo após a comunhão, integrei-me na catequese e em vários movimentos pelo que sempre senti que a espiritualidade estava sempre presente na minha vida...*”

Translation: Soon after communion, I joined catechism classes and various movements, so I always felt that spirituality was always present in my life.

“E51, homem, 70 anos... *Sempre fez parte da minha vida porque tento levar em linha da conta o que nos transmite o evangelho e a doutrina social da igreja. Sempre muito atual com as suas preocupações alertando-nos para problemas com o bem comum, as desigualdades sociais, o meio ambiente e ecologia e o mundo do trabalho*”.

Translation: It has always been part of my life, because I try to take into account what the gospel and the social doctrine of the Church transmit to us. It is always very current with its concerns, alerting us to problems with the common good, social inequalities, the environment and ecology, and the world of work.

Theme 3: Later life connection, some participants expressed their connection with spirituality only began later in life when they embarked on a quest for self-improvement or when they were faced with changes as they aged with included loss and illness. Here are some quotes from the participants responses:

“E8, mulher, 65, empregada comercial...*Após a perda da minha Mãe, há quatro anos, e com a perda também do meu marido, sempre encontrei todos os meus esforços foram em lhes proporcionar uma melhor qualidade de vida, nem tempo tinha para pensar em mim e na minha realização pessoal e profissional...*”

Translation: After the loss of my mother, four years ago, and with the loss of my husband as well, I always found all my efforts were in providing them a better quality of life, I didn't even have time to think about myself and my personal and professional fulfillment.

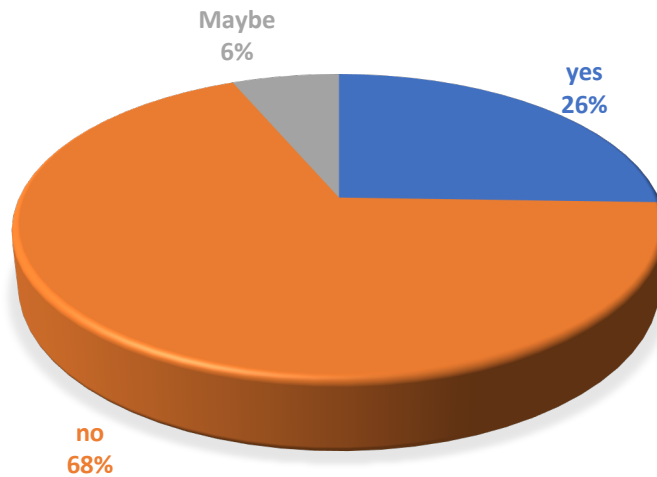
“E52, mulher, 71, professora de Ensino básico... *Foi depois da reforma.*”

Translation: It started after retirement.

Question 6 asked participants *do you feel spirituality has had any impact in your life after retirement?* Results in Graph 14 Below.

Graph 14. Percentage of participants who feel spirituality has had any impact in their life after retirement.

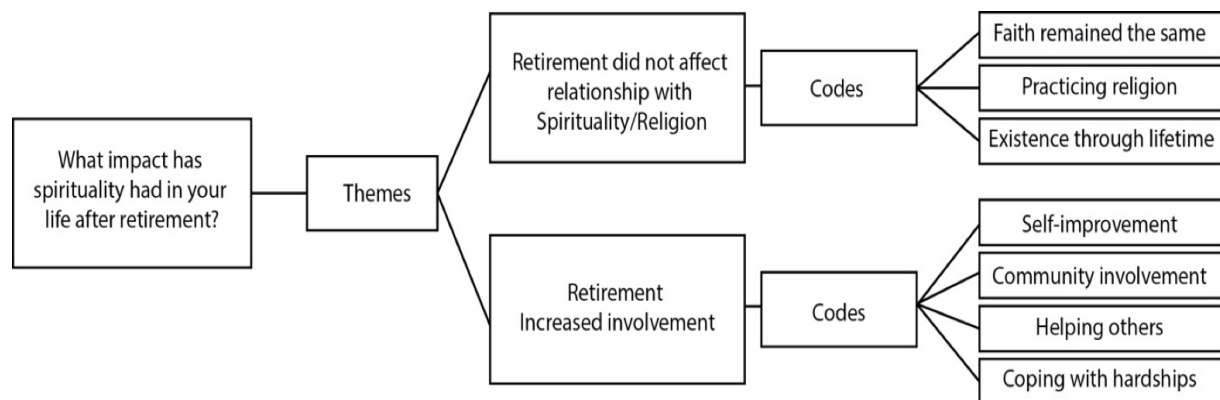
DO YOU FEEL THAT SPIRITUALITY HAS HAD ANY IMPACT ON YOUR LIFE AFTER RETIREMENT?



And finally Question 6.1 asked them to explain in greater detail their answer as to find out why.

Here are the results from the thematic analysis:

Graph 15. Thematic analysis of question 6.1



The last question of the questionnaire asked the participants if they felt spirituality had any impact in their lives after retirement. To this question more than half of the participants answered that it didn't have an impact. Some of them voiced that spirituality/religion had always been part of their life, while others stated their proximity to spirituality had gotten stronger after retirement due to illness and loss finding refuge in spirituality had helped them through the changes and events that can happen as we age. During the thematic analysis of this question, two main themes emerged:

Theme 1. Spirituality/Religion did not have an impact in life after retirement. For some, religion/spirituality had already been present in their lives since earlier in life and being retired did not affect it, meaning spirituality had been present in their lives since childhood or earlier adulthood. Here are some of the quotes from the participants:

“E3, mulher, 68 anos, professora de inglês...Respondi "Não" porque o impacto da espiritualidade na minha vida manifestou-se muito antes da reforma. Mas tenho a plena noção de que, sem ela, este período da minha vida seria muito menos feliz...”

Translation: I answered "No" because the impact of spirituality in my life manifested itself long before retirement. But I am fully aware that without it, this period of my life would be much less happy.

“E38, mulher, 68 anos, professora de história...*Não é diferente da que existia antes da reforma*”.

Translation: No different from what existed before the reform.

“E50, mulher, 70 anos, professora...*Não teve algum impacto, uma vez que em nada alterou os meus princípios nem atitudes...*”

Translation: It has had no impact, as it has not changed my principles or attitudes at all.

“E51, homem, 70 anos...*A espiritualidade sempre teve impacto em minha vida não pelo facto de ser reformado sempre guiei a minha vida e da minha família tendo por base aquilo que nos transmite o evangelho e a doutrina social da igreja. Só assim a nossa vida faz sentido estando nos ao serviço dos outros.*”

Translation: Spirituality has always had an impact on my life, not because I am a reformed person but because I have always guided my life and my family based on what the gospel and the social doctrine of the church tells us. Only this way our life makes sense, being at the service of others.

Theme 2: Spirituality/Religious did have an impact in life after retirement. Some of the participants stated their relationship with spirituality or religion began later in life and impacted their lives, in the way they seek of answers to life’s questions, or at the outlook they have in their lives. At the same time, others reported spirituality to have been born out of a need to cope with adversity.

Here are some of the quotes from participants:

“E52, mulher, 71, professora de ensino básico...*teve um impacto positivo porque agora vejo a vida doutra maneira...*”.

Translation: *It had a positive impact because now I see life in a different way.*

“E40, mulher, 75 anos, professora de ensino básico ...*Foi mais positivo, porque agora tenho muito mais tempo para me dedicar à leitura e participar em workshops e cursos...*”

Translation: It was more positive because now I have much more time to dedicate to reading and participating in workshops and courses.

“E20, mulher, 74, costureira, *O impacto é positivo porque apesar de viver só não me sinto só. Na medida do possível estou sempre pronta para ajudar ao outros , o que me deixa sempre feliz nem que seja com um simples telefonema.*”

Translation: The impact is positive because even though I live alone, I don't feel lonely. As much as possible I am always ready to help others, which makes me happy even with a simple phone call.

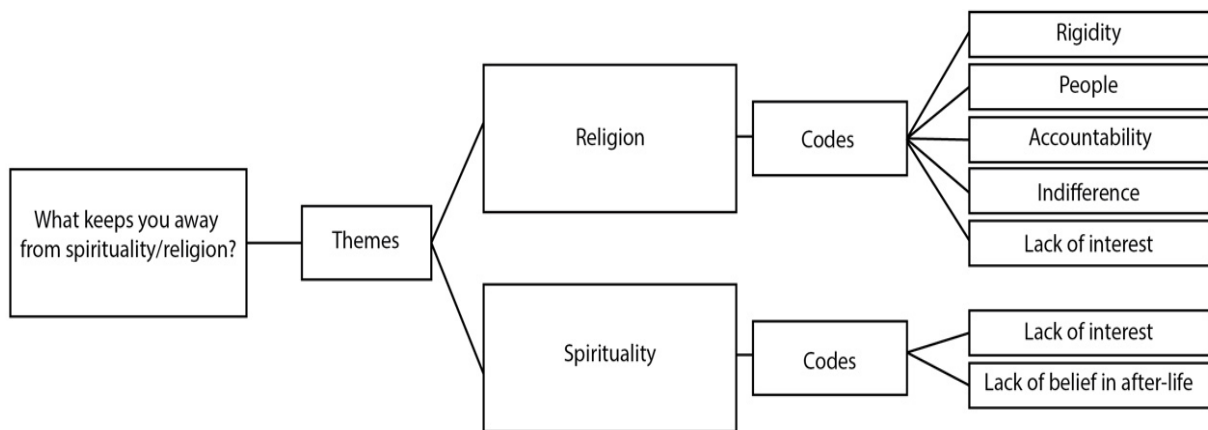
“E19, mulher, 79, telefonista...*Apos a reforma estive mais ativa nos movimentos que estava integrada, porque quando estava no ativo our meus horários não eram sempre iguais, trabalhando por turnos e também aos domingos. Assim sendo , não estava condicionada pelo trabalho.*”

Translation: After retirement I was more active in the movements that I was integrated, because when I was active my schedules were not always the same, working in shifts and also on Sundays. Therefore, I was not conditioned by work.

The themes that emerged from this analysis related directly to the objectives mentioned in the beginning of this study in order to understand the participants definition and understanding of spirituality in their lives as well as whether or not spirituality has affected their lives after retirement thus leading to successful aging.

It is important to mention that this questionnaire also had a question for those who did not consider themselves religious/spiritual or who did not believe in God a higher power and the question asked what keeps them away from religion or spirituality. The researcher also conducted a thematic analysis of these answers and the results gave two different themes:

Graph 16. Thematic analysis of Question 2.2



Theme 1: Religion. Some of the participants kept away from religion because they felt as is the institution is indifferent towards the needs of others, is rigid and strict, takes accountability away from people and some lack interest in the subject.

“E57, mulher, 72, professora... *A religião acomoda o ser humana. Acham que alguém fara as coisas por eles?*”

Translation: Religion accommodates the human being. They think that someone will do things for them?

“E31, homem, 71 anos, professor...*o código de conduta que as religiões impõem...*”

Translation: o code of conduct that the religious impose.

Theme 2: Spirituality. Some of the participants kept away from spirituality because they lacked believes in any after-life or guiding force, as well as had a lack of interest in the subject.

Here are some of the quotes from the participants:

“E1, mulher, 67, empregada de escritório...*Não ter a Certeza do que existe para lá da vida e o motivo da nossa passagem por esta vida*”

Translation: Not to be certain of what exists beyond life and the reason for our passing through this life

“E34, homem, 80, diretor técnico... *O número significativo de dúvidas existentes ...*”

Translation: The significant number of doubts that exist.

The researcher did not do any further analysis of these answers since there wasn't enough data to compare this subset of participants to the rest. Further research is needed to compare the relationship between spirituality and well-being with a control group who does not believe in God/higher power to see if the results differ. As mentioned in Malone and Dadswell (2018), spirituality does not always bring about positive feelings. There have been studies to point out that for some individuals, spirituality can in fact be a source of sadness and can instigate feelings of remorse and punishment. Further research in this matter is needed to compare how older adults who do not consider themselves spiritual or religious experience older age and if they also experience successful aging despite not having a spiritual component in their lives.

10. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The discussion session is divided in the interpretation of the demographic results which gives a profile of the participants in this study and the second part focuses on the discussion of the results from the Spirituality Scale, Psychological well-being scale and the Mix-Methods questionnaire.

1) Social and demographic characteristics:

In the sample of the participants in this study, the female gender was the most prevalent aligning with the latest data from the INE, which states the total number of women surpasses men by half a million (INE, 2021) and also agrees with Esteves (2010), which in the year 2010 stated that the municipality of Porto presented a higher proportion of older women. At the same time, 20% of the participants were 65 years of age, meaning they fall under the term known as “young older adults” since this is usually related to those falling between the ages of 60-74 (Papalia, Olds, & Feldman (2006) as cited on Lopes, de Araújo, and do Nascimento (2016).

Almost half of that participants in this study stated they are married or in a non-marital union and a 72% stated they live with a spouse or a partner which according to Araújo, Sousa, and Bós (2016), living with a spouse or a partner is beneficial to an older person’s well-being because it maintains their ability to socialize with others, it can positively affect their self-esteem and it can be a resource to maintain their autonomy.

The level of education of this sample was different from that of the profile of older adults in Portugal, since 58% of the sample had completed high school or had a bachelor’s degree, this could be because this study was done with students of universities of the third age. According to the 2019 PORDATA, the education level of older adults age 65+ in Portugal was 67% having no basic education level, 6,2% having high school education and only 11.1% having a graduate degree.

In terms of religious affiliation, 87% of the participants consider themselves Catholic which agrees with the previous noted information in an earlier chapter of this dissertation which stated that the INE reported 81% of Portuguese older adults considered themselves of the Catholic faith, and therefore, there is high prevalence of Catholicism (Franca et al., 2018)

2) Spirituality and Psychological well-being scale:

The results from the Spirituality scale presented that the sample of older adults that participated in this study showed a high degree in the domains of both the Spiritual/religious belief and Hope/optimism meaning these two concepts are important in the lives of these older adults. These results can be linked to Pinto (2010) findings that stated that older adults find meaning and comfort in religion/spirituality as they age. At the same time, using religion/spirituality as tool to overcome adversity and as a way to cope with change and find purpose.

The results from the psychological well-being scale the participants scored overall high in the scale stating they expressed a high level of well-being in all domains evaluated. When analyzing a correlation between Spirituality and Psychological well-being it was found that there were two positive relationships; one between Hope/Optimism and Autonomy meaning the older adult participants find they are capable of taking care of themselves today and see aging not as a hinder but with a positive regard in which they are still able to remain independent and self-reliable. They are hopeful about the future and their expectations of their own capabilities to care for themselves. This correlation also aligns with Lawton's theory in which he believes maintaining a positive outlook in life can lead to experiencing successful aging. In other words, he also believed Spirituality can play an important role in determining whether someone can develop optimism and therefore feel more life satisfaction in the later stage of life.

Jahan and Khan (2014) study cited George, Larson, Koenig, and McCullough (2000) where they believed that spirituality is directly linked to PWB because it allows an individual to develop a more positive view in life. At the same time, the above authors conducted a systematic review of 100 studies in which 10 of them gave results that reported spirituality led to higher levels of PWB.

The second finding and positive correlation was found between global spirituality score and the autonomy domain from the PWB, meaning Spirituality can influence the perception of these older adults into retaining their autonomy and independence while having their Spirituality/religion as a coping mechanism to deal with life's adversities while being able to look at the future with optimism.

As already stated in Crowther et al. (2002), there is usually a misconception that as people age, they often see life with a much more negative outlook, they are often faced with illness, loss and the idea of death, but instead it has been shown that subjective well-being remains stable even on late adulthood. According to Thauvoye et al. (2018) there is a correlation between spirituality and well-being in older adults where despite life's challenge, those who

report high levels of spirituality are able to better cope with life therefore showing higher degrees of subjective well-being.

These results are in alignment with Crowther et al. (2002) revisited model of successful aging by Rowe and Khan in which they believed spirituality should be considered an important factor of successful aging as it can positively affect subjective well-being by increasing life satisfaction, perspective in life and diminish stress levels.

It is imperative to take into consideration cultural influences of this study, meaning from the perspective of Portugal being a predominant Catholic country. According to Lun and Bond (2013), the relationship between spirituality and subjective well-being was seen as stronger in communities or cultures where religion was higher in importance. The authors believed that being born or living in a culture that welcomes and is open to a particular religious practice can also affect the relationship between spirituality and subjective well-being.

3) Mix-methods questionnaire

In the questionnaire they were both closed and open-ended questions. The researcher divided the thematic analysis based on the objectives described earlier in this dissertation in order to interpret the main findings: The objectives of the mix-method questionnaire was to find out the following:

Objective 1. Discover if they believe in God, a higher power or a Sacred force. Which was represented in question 1. For the 1st question of the mix-method questionnaire which focused on personal beliefs. The results showed that 90% of the participants believe in God, a sacred or superior power. while 81% considered themselves spiritual or religious meaning the participants felt spirituality (linked or not to religion) does play an important role in their lives. This result is in alignment with the theory of Gerotranscendence which looks at the individual in older age as a being in a quest for wisdom and life satisfaction. This search is created by an interest in developing a sense of connection to the universe, spiritual in nature and with others around him. The results are also similar to a research study conducted by Chaves and Gil (2015) in which the participants also found spirituality to be related to a sacred or higher power. Offering meaning and to understand the world around them.

Objective 2. Analyze if they consider themselves spiritual/religious and why; which was represented by Question 2. The results for this question were that 81% of the participants considered themselves spiritual or religious meaning the participants felt spirituality (linked or

not to religion) does play an important role in their lives. This result is in alignment with the theory of Gerotranscendence which looks at the individual in older age as a being in a quest for wisdom and life satisfaction. This search is created by an interest in developing a sense of connection to the universe, spiritual in nature and with others around him. The results are also similar to a research study conducted by Chaves and Gil (2015) in which the participants also found spirituality to be related to a sacred or higher power. Offering meaning and to understand the world around them

Objective 3: Obtain a personal definition of what spirituality means to them. These were questions 3 and 4 which were open ended questions that were analysed by a thematic analysis. The main themes that arise from this analysis were (1) Connection to a higher Power and (2) Personal Well Being. The theme of having a connection with God or a supreme power has developed positive feelings in their lives and had helped them find happiness, guidance and purpose. The results align with some previous research findings, like in Crowther et al. (2002), which explains that spirituality when seen as connection with a higher being/force as previously stated in the themes from the thematic analysis, can help older adults cope with life struggles and hardships. Ciarrochi et al. 2008 as cited on Crowther et al. (2002) also explains spirituality to be linked with higher levels of well-being, hope and happiness.

The theme of personal well-being: a few participants expressed how spirituality/religion helped have inner peace and allowed them to become better versions of themselves by helping others and by getting to know themselves better. These results are similar to those found in Blanco-Molina et al. (2019) in how spirituality is often under-estimated as a key predictor to well-being.

Objective 4: Discover if they are involved in any activities associated to their spirituality and the reasons behind it. These were questions 4 and 4.1. To this question 60% of the participants answered they did not participate in any religious or spiritual activity, meaning more than half of the participants did not engage in activities. For those who answered yes to this question, a thematic analysis was conducted to analyse the reason behind their attendance or participation. The thematic analysis revealed 2 themes (1) importance of attending mass/religious service and (2) belonging to a religious group or activity. These results match some previous research findings which stated that older adults find purpose, and life satisfaction by the relationships they are able to build within their religious communities (Cowlshaw et al.,

2012) The intrinsic factors that were mentioned by the participants like hope, faith, inner peace and prayer can act as coping mechanisms for older adults to face adversity. This is in line with literature like Malone and Dadswell (2018) who's research indicates that seeking spiritual support through involvement in religious groups can strengthen successful aging. At the same time, older studies like the one conducted by (George et al., 2000); argued that involvement in religious groups or activities can affect subjective well-being by encouraging social bonds and social support.

Objective 5: Analyze if they believe spirituality has impacted their life after retirement. This objective was targeted by question 5 and 6. Question 5 wanted to find out if spirituality had always been part of their lives or it was something recent. The themes that emerged were (1) spirituality throughout lifetime (2) religion throughout lifetime and (3) later life connection. There was a difference between religion and spirituality in that some attributed religion as something been taught to them since childhood and passed out through family which did not occur as a personal choice. Spirituality on the other hand did come out of personal choice in the search for meaning, guidance, purpose and connection to a higher force/divine. These results align with previous research where it was found that spirituality is not something that appears once a person reaches older age, but instead something that develops over time (Shaw, Gullifer, & Wood, 2016). It also aligns with Jernigan (2001), spirituality transcends religion and it allows to find life meaning despite difficult situations and losses. Results showed 89% of the participant's stated spirituality has always been part of their lives. This aligns with one longitudinal study conducted by Wink and Dillon (2002, p. 93) in which they discovered spirituality not to be something that just appears in a person's life, but rather an evolving process and their results "supported the general view that spiritual development tends to occur in the second half of adult life, and that it is enhanced by the combination of being a psychologically minded and unconventional individual who has also experienced discontinuity and adversity". It also aligns with Ardel et al. (2013) study of adults 55yrs+ that discovered spirituality is significantly related to subjective well-being looking at strengths like wisdom and purpose in life which are often strengthened throughout a person's lifetime. Meaning those who develop spirituality throughout their lifetime are in some ways preparing for successful aging and these preparations begin long before a person is considered "old". Another longitudinal study conducted by Cowlshaw et al. (2012), explored the effects of spirituality over time and the results showed that spirituality is associated with overall increased quality of life and subjective well-being. The authors argue that when an individual follows religion/spirituality as part of

their daily lives; the events that occur around them whether good or bad can be interpreted “as opportunities and challenges, rather than threats and demands” (Cowlshaw et al., 2012, p. 1255).

Question 6 asked if spirituality had any impact in their lives after retirement; to this question 68% said it had not impacted their lives. When conducting the thematic analysis, two themes emerged (1) retirement did not affect relationship with Spirituality/Religion (2) retirement increased involvement. Some of the participants stated that religion or spirituality had been present throughout their lives, similar to the question above. Therefore, it was not something that had appeared as a consequence of retirement. On the other hand, spirituality appeared later in life, after retirement, as a mean to cope with changes, the loss of a loved one or to find purpose in their own lives. After retirement they found more time available to dedicate to themselves and their own personal journey. These results in line with the Theory of Gerotranscendence where the participants no longer have work responsibilities and have more time available to focus to feed or develop an already existing spiritual connection (Shaw et al., 2016).

Following Ryff's PWB perspective, it can be seen by the participant's discourse that spirituality affects many of the dimensions previously mentioned under the PWB perspective. They mention (i) how spirituality has impacted their feelings of self-worth and acceptance, (ii) it has increased their feelings of solidarity towards others, (iii) it opens a door to create positive relations with others in their spiritual/religious communities, (iv) it gives them a sense of trust in themselves, their own capabilities and strength; and finally, (v) it allows them to grow and get to know themselves and the reason for their existence. As per Cowlshaw et al. (2012), successful aging is seen now with a different lenses than in the past. It no longer only focuses on physiological and biological factors associated with aging, it also includes subjective well-being, which can be high despite the presence of illness or disease. By the results of this study, the sample participants expressed their overall satisfaction with life and well-being, whether directly or indirectly, their spiritual beliefs and religious orientations seems to affect this relationship. Finding done by Kirby, Coleman, and Daley (2004) support this finding in that spirituality was shown to be a contributing factor to the prediction of subjective well-being in older adults.

Finally, the results from both quantitative scales and the qualitative questionnaire demonstrate that these participants find spirituality to be important in their lives and they do demonstrate high levels of PWB. Combining the results from both instruments give us a deeper

understanding on the role spirituality plays in the lives of the participants; how they perceive it and interpret it and how it has been present throughout their lives.

11. LIMITATIONS TO THE STUDY

Scientific research has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Researchers are faced with having to look for alternate ways to continue to conduct research while at the same time keeping each participants' health and safety as top priority (Nicol, Piccirillo, Mulsant, & Lenze, 2020). Older adults are the most vulnerable during these times therefore, minimizing face to face interactions and finding a contingency plan to be able to complete research and gather data is important. For researchers interested in social research as is the case of this study, conducting field work has been highly impacted. The way researchers are allowed to interact with participants has to be altered and reframed (Howlett, 2021). According to Howlett (2021), having to resource to alternative means to gather information away from in-person interactions are actions that researcher did not have to deal with before. Technology for example has taken center stage in the assistance of data collection, but often cases, using technology to reach older populations are harder to implement because of their lack of training and inaccessibility.

The original methodology chosen for this study was to utilize quantitative questionnaires and in-person interviews; despite the researchers' efforts, she was prevented from having direct contact with students of universities of the third age due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, Portugal suffered several lockdowns during 2020 and 2021, prompting closure of all Universities of the Third age. This delayed the process of data collection and the researcher alongside mentors decided to replace in-person interviews with mix-method questionnaires. This contingency plan was created in order to be able to gather data for this study while maintaining participant's safety.

In addition, it is important to note that this research project has a small sample of participants which belong to the same country and belong predominately to the same religious denomination consequently it will not be possible to generalize the findings to all older adults. This study was exploratory, the gender imbalance and the fact that all participants belonged to a university of the third age reduces the representativeness of the sample.

Another possible limitation of this study is that some of the open-ended questions were broad and might have been difficult to answer. Asking the participants to write down their opinions and beliefs about a sensitive topic like spirituality might have been difficult to some. Having the researcher present during the completion of these questionnaires might have improved the response of some of the questions and answered any doubts. Even though this study provides insight into spirituality in older age, the conclusions could not be generalized to the general older population other than the one in this study.

12. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore if there is a relationship between spirituality and subjective well-being, how do older adults define spirituality and if spirituality is a contributing factor towards successful aging. The main research questions of this study were addressed through both quantitative and qualitative measures. The main findings highlight how spirituality and religion are important to the way of life for these older adults.

Throughout the themes discovered in this analysis, it was clear that spirituality has played an important role in the lives of the participants. Whether it was through religion or by a more spiritual connection with a Divine force, the participants expressed the importance of their faith, the search for meaning, guidance and protection in times of hardship; as well as the search for fulfillment, purpose, and happiness. The quantitative results of both scales discovered the participants perceived spirituality/religion to be important in their lives as well as rated high in subjective well-being. The results from the correlation of the Spirituality Scale and the PWB scale demonstrated a positive correlation between Spirituality and one of the dimensions of the PWB which is Autonomy. Using the mix methods questionnaire to evaluate the concept of spirituality/religion even further, it can be seen by their discourses that it is something they do think about and has been a part of their lives. The study cannot conclude that spirituality does affect life after retirement, but it can conclude that an individual develops spirituality throughout their life journey and as they age, it becomes a source of strength and hope to help cope in troubled times. As seen in Sanchetee (2020, p. 1) “aging is a dynamic, lifelong adaptive process” and so is spirituality for the participants in this sample.

The mixed methodology used in this study helped the researcher to explore in a deeper level complex concepts like spirituality in the lives of older adults. Analyzing both the quantitative results and the qualitative data from the open-ended questions provided a better and more robust findings that it would have been by only use one of the methods. The results of this study align with some previous research findings , like in Crowther et al. (2002), which explains that spirituality when seen as connection with a higher being/force as previously stated in the themes from the thematic analysis, can help older adults cope with life struggles and hardships. Ciarrochi et al. 2008 as cited on Crowther et al. (2002) also explains spirituality to be linked with higher levels of well-being, hope and happiness.

The present study is able to support previous research findings on the importance of spirituality for the well-being of older adults. It also able to provide how it influences their

everyday lives and how spirituality can in fact, be included in the definition of successful aging. It is able to provide some insight into the perceptions of Portuguese retired older adults and the need to properly explore and evaluate spiritual needs.

Ryff's scale of psychological well-being has not been widely used in the Portuguese population therefore, more research is encouraged. In this sample of participants, it is important for professionals working alongside older adults, to understand that religious engagement and spiritual involvement is part of these older adults' lives and it should be part of their assessment and used as part of the interventions to provide better quality of care. Religious traditions, rituals, spiritual beliefs should be explored as a way to offer support and coping.

As the population continues to age, despite current events like the Covid-19 pandemic, it is important to focus on further research in aging and the effects spirituality and religion have on older adults as they age. This sample was comprised of a small subset of respondents with their own profile of age, education level and religious affiliation. It will be interesting to continue to develop studies like this one between different subsets of individuals within the same country in order to discover what similarities and differences might be found.

At the same time, we should keep in mind that spirituality does not always have a positive effect on individuals, therefore, professionals in the field should practice caution, great sensitivity and give the individual the choice whether or not to include spirituality/religion as a way to promote successful aging.

Finally, looking back to the research questions of this study, the researcher concluded that there is a relationship between spirituality and subjective well-being since the analysis mentioned above and the discourses of the participants highlighted its importance in terms of support, guidance and inner peace. Following Malone and Dadswell (2018), successful aging means approaching life in a productive and fulfilling manner, promoting a person's sense of independence, well-being, and participation in society. This reflects the results of this study by the participants use of religion and spirituality as a buffer to counteract the effects of anxiety, in many instances bringing feelings of peace, autonomy, connection and community. The study cannot define what spirituality means to all older Portuguese adults, but looking at the responses of these sample of participants, spirituality is interpreted as connection to a higher power/source and a search for personal well-being. As described by words of the participants faith, peace, solidarity, connection, hope, self-improvement, meaning, fulfillment, and happiness. All these words were used to described spirituality and it led us to believe that spirituality brings to these participants positive feelings that whether directly or indirectly can work as a coping

mechanism and a source of strength as they age, eventually leading to successful aging. Although the participants didn't feel that spirituality has affected their life after retirement, it is important to focus on the idea that it has been a part of their lives and it has continued to develop throughout the years. The benefits of including spirituality as an integrating part of getting to know the individuals we work with is imperative to their well-being.

Spirituality and religion are often terms that are intertwined in the discourse of the participants of this sample, both concepts carry on a special meaning and can provide purpose, guidance and meaning in the later years of life. For professionals in the area of gerontology, this research study can open the opportunity to look at an older adult not just by their physical or biological needs, but as a whole, as Rowe's and Khan's revisited model of successful aging, including spirituality as an essential part of understanding the human condition, and to promote their well-being in late adulthood. Adding spirituality as a source that can contribute to successful aging will aid to a much more holistic understanding of an older adult. Much research is still needed to understand Portuguese older adults. Researchers need to understand how spirituality is experienced and how culture also plays a part in this relationship. Future research into spirituality needs to remember cultural relevance, since spirituality and religion have a different meaning to different cultural groups.

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13. ANNEX

- A. Demographic list of participants
- B. Demographic questionnaire
- C. Scale of Spirituality
- D. Scale of Psychological well-being
- E. Consent Form
- F. Welcome letter to participants
- G. Mixed-Methods Questionnaire
- H. Authorization for the use of the scales

ANNEX A

Demographic list of participants

Participante	1. Sexo	2. Idade	3. Estado Civil	Nível de escolaridade	Atividade Profissional	Religiao	Qual universidade senior frequenta ?
1	Feminino	67	Divorciado(a) ou	Ensino secundário (atual 12o ano/antigo	Empregada escritório	Católica	Ser+ Universidade para Seniores
2	Feminino	68	Solteiro(a)	Licenciatura	Assistente Executiva	Católica	Ser+ Universidade para Seniores
3	Feminino	68	Divorciado(a) ou	Licenciatura	Professora de Inglês	Sem religião	Ser+ Universidade para Seniores
4	Masculino	70	Divorciado(a) ou	Ensino secundário (atual 12o ano/antigo	Bancário	Sem religião	US de Matosinhos
5	Feminino	77	Casado(a)ou em	Ensino secundário (atual 12o ano/antigo	Administrativa na ARS	Católica	Ser+ Universidade para Seniores
6	Masculino	81	Casado(a)ou em	Bacharelato (inclui antigos cursos médios	Empregado bancário	Católica	US de Matosinhos
7	Feminino	65	Viúvo(a)	Ensino básico 3o ciclo (atual 9o ano/antig	Costureira	Católica	Ser+ Universidade para Seniores
8	Feminino	65	Viúvo(a)	Ensino básico 3o ciclo (atual 9o ano/antig	Empregada comercial	Católica	US Mutualista
9	Feminino	65	Viúvo(a)	Bacharelato (inclui antigos cursos médios	Educadora de infância	Católica	US Mutualista
10	Feminino	65	Solteiro(a)	Licenciatura	Empregada de escritó	Sem religião	US Mutualista
11	Feminino	73	Casado(a)ou em	Ensino secundário (atual 12o ano/antigo	Ministerio de educaça	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
12	Feminino	67	Solteiro(a)	Licenciatura	Professora 1rº ciclo	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
13	Feminino	69	Divorciado(a) ou	Ensino secundário (atual 12o ano/antigo	seguros	Sem religião	Academia Sénior de Gaia
14	Feminino	65	Casado(a)ou em	Ensino secundário (atual 12o ano/antigo	Profissional	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
15	Feminino	79	Divorciado(a) ou	Licenciatura	Professora	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
16	Masculino	65	Casado(a)ou em	Ensino básico 3o ciclo (atual 9o ano/antig	Carteiro	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
17	Feminino	68	Solteiro(a)	Ensino básico 1o ciclo (atual 4o ano/antig	Sem resposta	Católica	Universidade Senior de Avintes
18	Masculino	69	Casado(a)ou em	Ensino básico 2o ciclo (atual 6o ano/antig	Fabricante de artigos	Outra cristã	Universidade Senior de Avintes
19	Feminino	79	Viúvo(a)	Ensino básico 3o ciclo (atual 9o ano/antig	Telefonista da CTT	Católica	Universidade Senior de Avintes
20	Feminino	74	Divorciado(a) ou	Ensino básico 3o ciclo (atual 9o ano/antig	Trabalhei em confecç	Católica	Universidade Senior de Avintes
21	Feminino	66	Divorciado(a) ou	Ensino secundário (atual 12o ano/antigo	Auxiliar de um lar de i	Católica	Universidade Senior de Avintes
22	Masculino	73	Casado(a)ou em	Ensino básico 3o ciclo (atual 9o ano/antig	Fui funcionário de tele	Católica	Universidade Senior de Avintes
23	Feminino	70	Casado(a)ou em	Bacharelato (inclui antigos cursos médios	sem resposta	Católica	Academia Senior da Sabedoria de Canelas
24	Feminino	71	Viúvo(a)	Licenciatura	Enfermeira	Católica	Academia Senior da Sabedoria de Canelas
25	Feminino	65	Casado(a)ou em	Ensino básico 1o ciclo (atual 4o ano/antig	Hoteleria	Católica	Academia Senior da Sabedoria de Canelas
26	Feminino	70	Casado(a)ou em	Ensino básico 1o ciclo (atual 4o ano/antig	Costureira	Católica	Academia Senior da Sabedoria de Canelas
27	Feminino	72	Viúvo(a)	Ensino básico 2o ciclo (atual 6o ano/antig	Sem resposta	Católica	Academia Senior da Sabedoria de Canelas
28	Feminino	69	Casado(a)ou em	Ensino básico 3o ciclo (atual 9o ano/antig	Ensino básico de um lar de i	Católica	Academia Senior da Sabedoria de Canelas
29	Feminino	70	Viúvo(a)	Ensino básico 1o ciclo (atual 4o ano/antig	Domestica	Católica	Academia Senior da Sabedoria de Canelas
30	Masculino	72	Casado(a)ou em	Ensino secundário (atual 12o ano/antigo	Gestor Pessoal	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
31	Masculino	71	Casado(a)ou em	Mestrado	Professor	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
32	Feminino	70	Casado(a)ou em	Ensino secundário (atual 12o ano/antigo	Administrativa	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
33	Masculino	88	Casado(a)ou em	Ensino básico 3o ciclo (atual 9o ano/antig	Fui bancário e auditor	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
34	Masculino	80	Viúvo(a)	Licenciatura	Diretor técnico-comer	Católica	-Academia Sénior de Gaia
35	Masculino	68	Casado(a)ou em	Ensino básico 3o ciclo (atual 9o ano/antig	bancário	Sem religião	Academia Sénior de Gaia
36	Feminino	65	Casado(a)ou em	Ensino secundário (atual 12o ano/antigo	Técnica bancassuran	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
37	Masculino	69	Casado(a)ou em	Bacharelato (inclui antigos cursos médios	Gestor de equipamen	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
38	Feminino	68	Divorciado(a) ou	Licenciatura	Professora de História	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
39	Feminino	65	Viúvo(a)	Mestrado	Educadora de Infância	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
40	Feminino	75	Viúvo(a)	Licenciatura	Professora do Ensino	Sem religião	Academia Sénior de Gaia
41	Masculino	78	Casado(a)ou em	Licenciatura	Peofessor	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
42	Feminino	78	Viúvo(a)	Ensino secundário (atual 12o ano/antigo	Contabilidade	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
43	Masculino	74	Casado(a)ou em	Ensino secundário (atual 12o ano/antigo	Ainda trabalho como	Protestante	Academia Sénior de Gaia
44	Feminino	78	Casado(a)ou em	Licenciatura	Professora	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
45	Masculino	66	Casado(a)ou em	Licenciatura	Enfermeiro	Católica	Universidade Sénior Contemporânea
46	Feminino	72	Viúvo(a)	Licenciatura	Professora	Católica	Universidade Sénior Contemporânea
47	Masculino	69	Casado(a)ou em	Ensino secundário (atual 12o ano/antigo	Aposentado dos CTT	Católica	Universidade Sénior Contemporânea
48	Feminino	65	Divorciado(a) ou	Ensino secundário (atual 12o ano/antigo	operadora	Católica	Universidade Sénior Contemporânea
49	Feminino	65	Casado(a)ou em	Ensino secundário (atual 12o ano/antigo	Gerente	Católica	Universidade Sénior Contemporânea
50	Feminino	70	Casado(a)ou em	Licenciatura	Professora	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
51	Masculino	70	Casado(a)ou em	Licenciatura	Sem resposta	Católica	Universidade Senior de Avintes
52	Feminino	71	Viúvo(a)	Licenciatura	Professora do ensino	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
53	Masculino	69	Casado(a)ou em	Licenciatura	Engenheiro Civil	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
54	Masculino	65	Divorciado(a) ou	Bacharelato (inclui antigos cursos médios	Técnico-Comercial	Outra cristã	Ser+ Universidade para Seniores
55	Feminino	69	Casado(a)ou em	Ensino secundário (atual 12o ano/antigo	Empregada de escritó	Católica	Orfeão da Madalena
56	Feminino	71	Viúvo(a)	Ensino básico 3o ciclo (atual 9o ano/antig	Chefe de equipa	Católica	Academia Sénior de Gaia
57	Feminino	72	Divorciado(a) ou	Ensino secundário (atual 12o ano/antigo	Professora	Sem religião	Academia Sénior do Orfeão da Madalena
58	Feminino	81	Viúvo(a)	Ensino básico 3o ciclo (atual 9o ano/antig	ADMINISTRATIVA	Católica	Outra

ANNEX B

Demographic questionnaire

QUESTIONÁRIO DE DADOS SOCIODEMOGRÁFICOS

Com este questionário pretende-se recolher informação de caracterização sociodemográfica dos inquiridos.

1. Sexo

Masculino
Feminino

2. Idade: _____ anos

3. Estado Civil

Solteiro/a
Casado/a ou em união de facto
Divorciado/a ou separado/a
Viúvo/a

4. Indique com quem vive. (assinale todas as opções que se aplicarem à sua situação)

Sozinho/a
Com o cônjuge ou companheiro/a
Com filho(s)
Com outros familiares
Outra situação. Qual _____

5. Indique o seu grau de escolaridade completo.

Sem grau completo
Ensino básico 1º ciclo (atual 4º ano/antiga instrução primária/4ª classe)
Ensino básico 2º ciclo (atual 6º ano/antigo ciclo preparatório)
Ensino básico 3º ciclo (atual 9º ano/antigo 5º liceal)
Ensino secundário (atual 12º ano/antigo 7º liceal/ano propedêutico)
Bacharelato (inclui antigos cursos médios)
Licenciatura
Mestrado
Doutoramento

6. Se exerceu ou exerce uma atividade profissional, indique a sua profissão.

(descreva com detalhe o que faz/fazia).

--

7. Indique qual e a sua religião.

Católica	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ortodoxa	<input type="checkbox"/>
Protestante	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outra cristã	<input type="checkbox"/>
Judaica	<input type="checkbox"/>
Muçulmana	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outra não cristã	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sem religião	<input type="checkbox"/>

ANNEX C

Scale of Spirituality

ANEXO

ESPIRITUALIDADE (Pinto C & Pais-Ribeiro JL)

As frases / expressões seguintes referem-se à sua espiritualidade / suas crenças pessoais, e ao modo como elas afectam a sua qualidade de vida. Por favor, **marque** com uma **X** aquela opção que melhor expressar a sua opção, na **última semana**. Não existe resposta certa ou errada.

	Não concordo	Concordo um pouco	Concordo bastante	Plenamente de acordo
1 - As minhas crenças espirituais/religiosas dão sentido à minha vida	1	2	3	4
2 - A minha fé e crenças dão-me forças nos momentos difíceis	1	2	3	4
3 - Vejo o futuro com esperança	1	2	3	4
4 - Sinto que a minha vida mudou para melhor	1	2	3	4
5 - Aprendi a dar valor às pequenas coisas da vida	1	2	3	4

ANNEX D

Scale of Psychological well-being

ESCALAS DE BEM-ESTAR PSICOLÓGICO:

Chave de Cotação da Versão Reduzida

ITENS

Inclui 3 itens de cada uma das Escalas da Versão Portuguesa:

- Autonomia
- Domínio do Meio
- Crescimento Pessoal
- Relações Positivas com os Outros
- Objetivos na Vida
- Aceitação de Si

Inclui Itens Positivos (8) e itens negativos (10)

Os itens negativos são os seguintes:

2; 4; 5; 7; 13; 14; 15; 16; 17; e 18.

COTAÇÃO

➤ **Itens Positivos**

Atribuir a pontuação direta correspondente à resposta dada pelo respondente.

➤ **Itens Negativos**

Inverter a pontuação, i.e.: 1 → 6; 2 → 5; 3 → 4; 4 → 3; 5 → 2; 6 → 1

EBEP*

As afirmações que a seguir se apresentam pretendem ajudá-lo(a) a descrever o modo como avalia o seu bem-estar e a satisfação consigo próprio(a). Leia cuidadosamente cada uma delas e, em seguida, escolha a resposta que melhor se aplica a si próprio(a). Deverá indicar o número que corresponde ao seu grau de concordância/discordância com cada uma das afirmações, observando as seguintes possibilidades:

1 – Discordo Completamente	4 – Concordo Parcialmente
2 – Discordo em Grande Parte	5 – Concordo em Grande Parte
3 – Discordo Parcialmente	6 – Concordo Completamente

Resposta
(1,2,3,4,5ou6)

1.	Não tenho medo de exprimir as minhas opiniões mesmo quando elas são contrárias às opiniões da maioria das pessoas.	
2.	Sinto-me, frequentemente, “esmagado(a)” pelo peso das responsabilidades.	
3.	Penso que é importante ter novas experiências que ponham em causa a forma como pensamos acerca de nós próprios e do mundo.	
4.	Manter relações estreitas com os outros tem-me sido difícil e frustrante.	
5.	Não tenho bem a noção do que estou a tentar alcançar na vida.	
6.	Quando revejo a minha vida, fico contente com a forma como as coisas correram.	
7.	Tenho tendência para me preocupar com o que as outras pessoas pensam de mim.	
8.	Sou capaz de utilizar bem o meu tempo de forma a conseguir fazer tudo o que é preciso fazer.	
9.	Sinto que, ao longo do tempo, me tenho desenvolvido bastante como pessoa.	
10.	Sinto que tiro imenso partido das minhas amizades.	
11.	Tenho prazer em fazer planos para o futuro e trabalhar para os tornar realidade.	
12.	Gosto da maior parte dos aspectos da minha personalidade.	
13.	Tenho tendência a ser influenciado(a) por pessoas com opiniões firmes.	
14.	Tenho dificuldade em organizar a minha vida de forma a que me satisfaça.	
15.	Há muito tempo que desisti de fazer grandes alterações ou melhoramentos na minha vida.	
16.	Não tive a experiência de ter muitas relações calorosas e baseadas na confiança.	
17.	Em última análise, olhando para trás, não tenho bem a certeza de que a minha vida tenha valido muito.	
18.	Em muitos aspectos sinto-me desiludido(a) com o que alcancei na vida.	

* Versão Experimental Reduzida construída a partir das Scales of Psychological Well-Being de C. Ryff (1989) por Rosa Novo (FPCE-UL), M^a Eugénia Duarte Silva (FPCE-UL) e Elizabeth Peralta.

ANNEX E

Consent form

O papel da Espiritualidade na vida após a reforma

Giuliana Casanova

O presente projeto de investigação insere-se num estudo a desenvolver no âmbito da dissertação de Mestrado em Gerontologia social do Instituto Superior de Serviço Social do Porto e tem como principal objetivo avaliar o papel da Espiritualidade no Envelhecimento Ativo. Para o efeito, recorre-se à aplicação de dois questionários e de uma entrevista escrita,

1. Toda a informação fornecida será mantida anónima e confidencial e utilizada apenas para os fins deste trabalho académico.
2. Pode optar por não participar ou retirar-se do estudo em qualquer altura, sem qualquer tipo de penalização.
3. Os resultados do estudo podem ser publicados, sendo sempre garantido que não será publicada nenhuma informação que possa por em causa o anonimato.

Data ____ / ____ / ____

Assinatura da investigadora

DECLARAÇÃO DE CONSENTIMENTO

Eu, (nome) _____ declaro que conheço os objetivos do estudo O papel da Espiritualidade após a reforma e aceito colaborar com a investigadora **Giuliana Casanova**. Sei também que os meus dados pessoais não serão divulgados nem utilizados para outro fim e não serão nunca divulgadas ou tornadas públicas quaisquer opiniões identificadas.

Data ____ / ____ / ____

Assinatura do participante

ANNEX F

Welcome letter to participants

Caro participante,

Obrigada pela sua disponibilidade para participar na pesquisa que estou a desenvolver para a minha tese de Mestrado em Gerontologia Social, no Instituto Superior de Serviço Social do Porto, sobre o papel da Espiritualidade na Vida após a Reforma.

A espiritualidade é um conceito muito pessoal: é por isso que a sua participação neste estudo é tão importante. O estudo proporciona um exame mais atento do papel que a espiritualidade desempenha na vida de todos os participantes.

Dentro deste pacote encontrará 2 pequenos inquéritos e uma entrevista escrita composta por 4 perguntas abertas. Encontrará também um formulário de consentimento informado e um questionário sociodemográfico para fins estatísticos.

Peço-lhe que devolva este pacote completo ao seu professor, o mais breve possível, para que eu possa proceder ao seu levantamento.

Cordiais cumprimentos,

Giuliana Casanova

Mestranda em Gerontologia Social do Instituto Superior de Serviço Social do Porto

Email: 190121003@issssp.pt

ANNEX G

Mix Methods Questionnaire

Entrevista

O papel da Espiritualidade no Envelhecimento

Por favor, responda a todas as perguntas com o maior detalhe possível. Quanto mais completa for a explicação, mais o investigador disporá de dados para analisar com rigor. Pode acrescentar folhas se o espaço fornecido não for suficiente para desenvolver as suas respostas.

1. Acredita em Deus, uma fonte sagrada ou um Poder Superior?

Sim
Não

2. Considera-se uma pessoa religiosa ou espiritual?

Sim
Não

2.1. Se respondeu "**Sim**", o que o/a atrai para a religião ou a espiritualidade?

2.2 Se respondeu "**Não**", o que o afasta da religião ou a espiritualidade? (se escolheu não, a sua entrevista termina aqui)

3. Qual e o significado de espiritualidade para si?

4. Participa em alguma atividade religiosa ou espiritual?

Sim

Não

*4.1 Se respondeu “**Sim**”, em quais atividades participa e **porquê**?*

5. Sente que a espiritualidade tem feito parte da sua vida desde sempre ou é algo recente?

Sempre fez parte da minha vida

É algo recente na minha vida

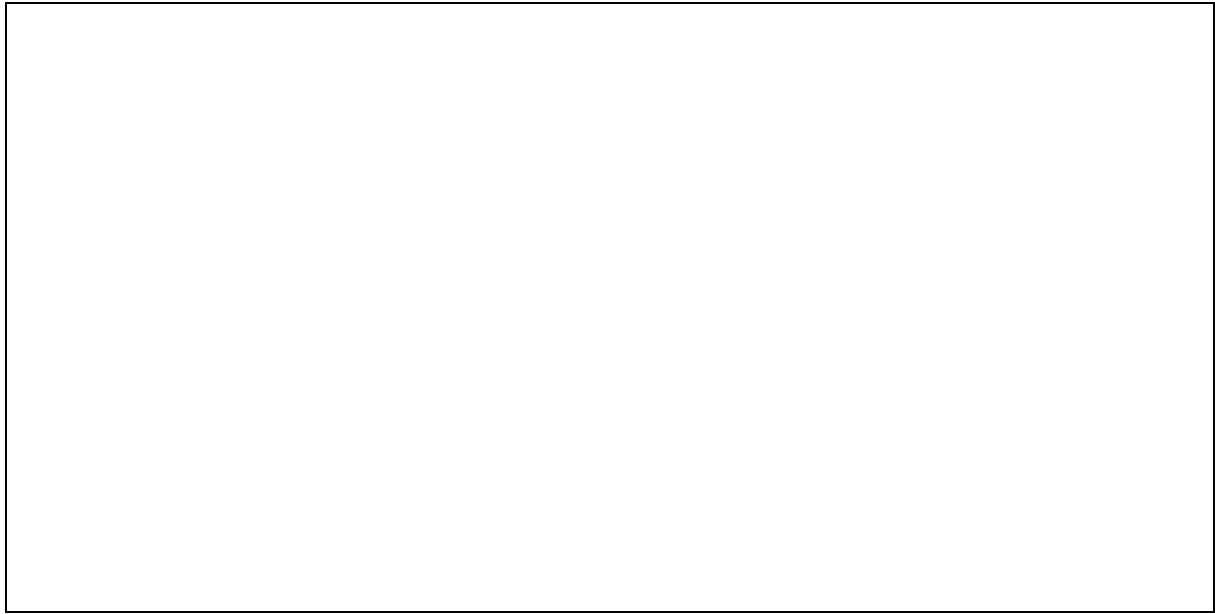
5.1. Por favor, explique com *mais detalhe* a sua resposta. (Explique as *razoes* ou *motivos*)

6. Caso esteja reformado, sente que a espiritualidade teve impacto na sua vida após a reforma?

Sim

Não

6.1. Se respondeu “Sim”, de que forma teve impacto? Por favor, explique com detalhe (*Impacto positivo ou negativo e porque*)



Obrigada pela sua colaboração!

ANNEX H

Authorization for the use of scales.



Giuliana Casanova <190121003@issp.pt>

Autorização para utilizar a Escala de Bem Estar Psicológico

Rosa Ferreira Novo <rново@psicologia.ulisboa.pt>
Para: Giuliana Casanova <190121003@issp.pt>

9 de julho de 2020 às 19:47

Cara Giuliana Casanova

Correspondendo ao seu pedido, aqui vai a Escala de Bem-Estar Psicológico de C. Ryff, na versão portuguesa reduzida (escala compósita de 18 itens).

Tem liberdade de uso da Escala na sua investigação; espero que lhe seja útil e contribua significativamente para o seu estudo.

Envio-lhe o instrumento final e os dados necessários à cotação. Pode obviamente, a partir deles, fazer um ficheiro em SPSS ou Excel e fazer a cotação diretamente.

Deve referenciar a Escala do seguinte modo:

Novo, R. F., Duarte-Silva, M. E., & Peralta, E. (2004). *Escala de BEP: versão portuguesa (reduzida)*. Lisboa: FPCE-UL.

A escala não mereceu ainda nenhum estudo normativo específico, mas tem sido utilizada em numerosos estudos.

Segue um trabalho que lhe dá alguns indicadores psicométricos de referência para poder comparar com os dados que obtiver.

Novo, R. F., Neto, D., Marcelino, A. & Santo, H. (2006, Outubro). *Estudo de validação de medidas de Bem-Estar Psicológico em amostras com e sem psicopatologia identificada*. IX Conferência Internacional de Avaliação Psicológica: Formas e Contextos. Braga: Universidade do Minho.

Há muitos trabalhos já publicados com esta versão, referencio-lhe dois que facilmente encontrará na net.

Couto, M. C., Novo, R., & Koller, S. H. (2009). Relações entre rede de apoio social, bem-estar psicológico e resiliência na velhice. In D. Falcão & L. Araújo (Orgs.), *Psicologia do envelhecimento* (pp. 27-44). Campinas, SP: Alínea Editora.



Giuliana Casanova <190121003@issp.pt>

Autorização para utilizar a Escala de Avaliação da Espiritualidade

Cândida Pinto <candidapinto@esenf.pt>
Para: Giuliana Casanova <190121003@issp.pt>

13 de julho de 2020 às 11:29

Cara Giuliana Casanova

Serve o presente e-mail para a autorizar a utilizar a referida escala, no trabalho de investigação abaixo referido.

Mais informo que as orientações da referida escala estão no artigo referente, mas que lhe envio caso não o tenha.

Com os melhores cumprimentos

Cândida Pinto

(RN,MSc,PhD)

[Citação ocultada]



Construção de Uma Escala de Avaliação da Espiritualidade em Contextos de saúde.pdf
65K



Giuliana Casanova <190121003@issp.pt>

Authorization for the use of the Scale of Psychological Well-Being translated to Portuguese

THERESA M BERRIE <berrie@wisc.edu>
Para: Giuliana Casanova <190121003@issp.pt>

14 de julho de 2020 às 18:35

Also attached are the translation(s) and translator information of which we are aware. We cannot vouch for the quality of any translations, as we were not involved in creating them.

You also have Dr. Ryff's permission to translate the scales, should you choose to do so. We would appreciate receiving a copy of the translation when it is completed, along with complete contact information for yourself and/or the translator that we can share with others.

Also, I missed your request to reproduce the scales in your dissertation. Carol prefers that her scales not be included in dissertation appendices. She does not want the complete scales available without people contacting her to receive additional information about using them.

--

Theresa Berrie

UW-Madison Institute on Aging

berrie@wisc.edu

Hours: Tues-Thurs, 7am-3:30pm

[Citação ocultada]
