

## The Impact of Spirituality on the Voluntary Simplicity Lifestyle Tendency: An Explanatory Study on Turkish Consumers

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**Abstract :** Spirituality has a motivational influence on consumers' psychological states, lifestyles, and behavioral intentions. Spirituality refers to the feeling that there is a divine power greater than ourselves and a connection among oneself, others, nature, and the sacred. In addition, spirituality concerns the human soul and spirit against the material and physical world and consists of three dimensions: self-discovery, relationships, and belief in a higher power. Of them, self-discovery is to explore the meaning and the purpose of life. Relationships refer to the awareness of the connection between human beings and nature as well as respect for them. In addition, higher power represents the transcendent aspect of spirituality, which means to believe in a holy power that creates all the systems in the universe. Furthermore, a voluntary simplicity lifestyle is (1) to adopt a simple lifestyle by minimizing the attachment to and the consumption of material things and possessions, (2) to have an ecological awareness respecting all living creatures, and (3) to express the desire for exploring and developing the inner life. Voluntary simplicity is a multi-dimensional construct that consists of a desire for a voluntarily simple life (e.g., avoiding excessive consumption), cautious attitudes in shopping (e.g., not buying unnecessary products), acceptance of self-sufficiency (e.g., being self-sufficient individual), and rejection of highly developed functions of products (e.g., preference for simple functioned products). One of the main reasons for living simply is to sustain a spiritual life, as voluntary simplicity provides the space for achieving psychological and spiritual growth, cultivating self-reliance since voluntary simplifier frees themselves from the overwhelming externals and takes control of their daily lives. From this point of view, it is expected that people with a strong sense of spirituality will be likely to adopt a simple lifestyle. In this respect, the study aims to examine the impact of spirituality on consumers' voluntary simple lifestyle tendencies. As consumers' consumption attitudes and behaviors depend on their lifestyles, exploring the factors that lead them to embrace voluntary simplicity significantly predicts their purchase behavior. In this respect, this study presents empirical research based on a data set collected from 478 Turkish consumers through an online survey. First, exploratory factor analysis is applied to the data to reveal the dimensions of spirituality and voluntary simplicity scales. Second, confirmatory factor analysis is conducted to assess the measurement model. Last, the hypotheses are analyzed using partial least square structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). The results confirm that spirituality's self-discovery and relationships dimensions positively impact both cautious attitudes in shopping and acceptance of self-sufficiency dimensions of voluntary simplicity. In contrast, belief in a higher power does not significantly influence consumers' voluntary simplicity tendencies. Even though there has been theoretical support drawing a positive relationship between spirituality and voluntary simplicity, to the best of the authors' knowledge, this has not been empirically tested in the literature before. Hence, this study contributes to the current knowledge by analyzing the direct influence of spirituality on consumers' voluntary simplicity tendencies. Additionally, analyzing this impact on the consumers of an emerging market is another contribution to the literature.

**Keywords :** spirituality, voluntary simplicity, self-sufficiency, conscious shopping, Turkish consumers

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