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## **A Study of the Relationship between Spiritual Intelligence and its Components with Happiness in Youths**

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### **Abstract:**

*The present study aims to examine the relationship between spiritual intelligence and its components with happiness in youths. This is a descriptive, correlational research. The research society consists of all undergraduate students in state universities in the academic year 2013-2014, aged from 19 to 25. The sample size is 375 students who have been selected by multi-stage cluster sampling. Research tools are Argyle Spiritual Intelligence Questionnaire and Oxford Happiness Questionnaire. The Pearson correlation results show that there is a positive and meaningful relationship between spiritual intelligence and its components (namely inner peace, spiritual experiences, forgiveness, and self recognition) with happiness. Moreover, the results of the independent T-test show that there is a meaningful difference between female and male students in terms of the spiritual intelligence-happiness relationship with both variables larger in female students.*

**Keywords:** *spiritual intelligence, happiness, inner peace, spiritual experiences, forgiveness, self recognition*

### **1. Introduction**

The youth time is a period of life when values change and value-related concepts are questioned and doubted. Young people consider it as a must to adopt a philosophy of life of their own. They seek to assess their egos and feel to be in need of responses as to the world, the sense of human existence and even themselves and naturally look for relevant responses in religion (Ahmadi, 1992). Mc Ewan (2004) maintains that spirituality would boost an individual's knowledge about his or her own life and enable him or her to think about who s/he is and from where s/he has come. Once a young person grows spiritually, he or she can abandon imprecise and unreal perceptions and know more about his/ her inner world (Abdollahzadeh, 2011). Spiritual intelligence as the ultimate human intelligence produces a mechanism for resolving the sort of problems that one may face concerning the meaning and values (Brendan, 2004). By the intelligence, we may find a grasp of our own acts and find which one is invaluable and which track of lie is worth to take (Wolman, 2001). It also grants every individual an overview about life, experiences and events, empowering him or her to reframe and reinterpret his or her experiences and deepen his or her inner knowledge (Abdollahzadeh, 2011). Livn (2000) holds that spiritual intelligence would emerge once an individual tends to tie spirituality with life and act based on spiritual guidelines.

Richards (1999) and Beikman (1990) showed that spirituality would bring calm to life and boosts mental health while reducing physical problems. Paragment quotes Lopper (2009) as saying that spirituality would carry happiness once it is fully incorporated in an individual's life. Researchers have shown that spirituality is a solid precursor of happiness. Bude maintains that happiness is actually the sort of positive assessments an individual makes of his life and self (Bude, 2009).

Many researches are out there that point to positive effects of happiness on human's mental health. Happy individuals may deal with problems more effectively and eventually overcome them (Honey, 2006). Numerous studies have shown that hope, mental calm, religious beliefs, self knowledge, and self confidence would leave positive effects on an individual's happiness (Carr, 2006). Cognitive theory maintains that happy individuals consider the events around as more beautiful than others and may increase their happiness by checking in their thoughts (Diener, 1984). Such people are creative and optimistic and may better tackle the problems of life (Honey, 2006). Accordingly, spiritual intelligence both brings the internal and external aspects of life into harmony with one another, bringing happiness (Vaughan, 2002) and facilitates daily affairs, helping one to reach his or her goal (Emmos, 2000).

The present study aims to examine the relationship between spiritual intelligence and its components with happiness in youths.

## 2. Research Hypotheses

- There is a relationship between spiritual intelligence and happiness in youths.
- There is a relationship between inner peace and happiness in youths.
- There is a relationship between spiritual experiences and happiness in youths.
- There is a relationship between self recognition and happiness in youths.
- There is a relationship between forgiveness and happiness in youths.
- Male and female differ in terms of spiritual intelligence.
- Male and female differ in terms of happiness.

## 3. Methodology

Population, sample, data collection method:

The present study is descriptive, correlational research. The research society consists of all undergraduate students of state universities in Tehran in academic year 2013-2014. The statistical sampling, developed based on Morgan table consisted of 375 students aged from 19 to 25 whom were selected from among the target society by multi-stage cluster sampling; first, three universities were selected randomly from among the state universities in Tehran, namely 'Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran University and Science and Industry University.' Then, three faculties were selected from every university by chance. Next, five classes were selected from every faculty by chance either. At every class, students aged from 19 to 25 were selected by draw. In the next stage, questionnaires were given to the selected students who were 220 female and 155 male students.

## 4. Measurement tools

Oxford's 29-item Happiness questionnaire and the 97-item Spiritual Intelligence Questionnaire were applied in the study.

### 4.1. Validity of Oxford Happiness Questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed in 1989 by Argyle et al, modeling Beck's Depression Test. The test consists of 29 items with various studies confirming their validity. Argyle and Hills (2001) have reported the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient as to be 0.90. Cheng (1999) has acquired the replication coefficient and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient as 0.78 and 0.93 respectively. A norming study by Alipour and Nourbala (1999) of 101 undergraduate students showed that all the 29 items in the questionnaire have a high correlation with the total sum. They founded the replication coefficient and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to be 0.79 and 0.93 respectively after three weeks of administration (Bayani, Koochaki, & Goodarzi, 2007). The test reliability by split-half method produced a correlation of 0.58 between the forms while Guttman split-half method produced a correlation of 0.91 (Alipour and Nourbala, 1999; Hills and Argyle, 2001). The OHI test in the Iranian society proved all the 29 items show a high correlation with the total sum while the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.91 for the entire list. The mean of the Iranian subjects in the Oxford happiness test was 42.07, inconsistent with Argyle's point of 35.6. The studies also showed that the OHI for the happiness test in the Iranian society enjoys a favorable validity (Alipour, 2007).

The questionnaire has 29 four-choice items with the choices A to C having zero point, one point, two points and three points respectively. The total sum of the test thus may vary from zero to 87.

### 4.2. Validity of the Spiritual Intelligence test

Developed by Argyle in 1989, the questionnaire is a 97-item four-scale tool with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.92. A norming study by Naseri (2007) of 557 students in Allameh Tabataba'i University in the academic year 2007-2008 showed a reliability of 0.95 while the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was reported 0.958 for all questionnaire items. The rating method follows the 1-to-4 scale so that the 'almost always,' 'often,' 'seldom' and 'never' choices will be given 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. Note that 27 items of the questionnaire are reversely rated (Naseri, 2007)

## 5. Research findings

maximum	minimum	Standard deviation	mean	number	
293	228	12/350	265/99	375	spiritual intelligence
37	19	2/536	27/02	375	Inner peace
40	18	3/857	31/40	375	Spiritual experiences
69	39	4/881	58/51	375	Self recognition
45	23	3/569	35/80	375	Forgiveness
81	5	11/950	48/33	375	happiness

Table 1: spiritual intelligence and its components and happiness's scores

Pearson Correlation Coefficient was applied to examine the relationship between spiritual intelligence and its components with happiness.

Number	Significance level	Correlation coefficient	Index/ variables
375	0.000	0.38	Spiritual intelligence and happiness
375	0.000	0.21	Inner peace and happiness
375	0.000	0.31	Spiritual experiences and happiness
375	0.000	0.51	Self recognition and happiness
375	0.000	0.20	Forgiveness and happiness

Table 2 : Relationship between spiritual intelligence and happiness

The results are given in the following table:

- The table shows there is a positive and meaningful relationship ( $p < 0/01$ ,  $r = 0/39$ ) between spiritual intelligence and happiness in youths. That is to say the hypothesis is proven with  $p = 0.99$  assurance.
- The table shows there is a positive and meaningful relationship ( $p < 0/01$ ,  $r = 0/21$ ) between inner peace and happiness in youths. That is to say the hypothesis is proven with  $p = 0.99$  assurance.
- The table shows there is a positive and meaningful relationship ( $p < 0/01$ ,  $r = 0/31$ ) between spiritual experiences and happiness in youths. That is to say the hypothesis is proven with  $p = 0.99$  assurance.
- The table shows there is a positive and meaningful relationship ( $p < 0/01$ ,  $r = 0/51$ ) between self recognition and happiness in youths. That is to say the hypothesis is proven with  $p = 0.99$  assurance.
- The table shows there is a positive and meaningful relationship ( $p < 0/01$ ,  $r = 0/20$ ) between forgiveness and happiness in youths. That is to say the hypothesis is proven with  $p = 0.99$  assurance.
- In order to assess the likely difference between male and female student in terms of the relationship between spiritual intelligence and happiness the T-test of two independent groups was applies. Tables 3 and 4 show the results.

means difference	Significance level	Degree of freedom	t	Leven's test		Std. Deviation	mean	number	Statistical indicator	
				Significance level	F					
2.87	0.027	373	2.226	0.215	1.539	11.768	267.18	220	female	Spiritual intelligence
						12.985	264.31	155	male	

Table 3: T test for comparing spiritual intelligence in the female and male groups

Leven's test shows that all the variances are homogenous. The t test results for the two independent groups show that the t (2.226) with the freedom degree of 373 would be meaningful at the 0.05 level. That is to say there is a difference between female and male students in terms of spiritual intelligence with female students showing a higher spiritual intelligence according to the mean of the two groups.

means difference	Significance level	Degree of freedom	t	Leven's test		Std. Deviation	mean	number	Statistical indicator	
				Significance level	F					
3.25	0.012	291.999	2.53	0.006	7.56	10.89	49.67	220	female	Happiness
						13.10	46.42	155	male	

Table 4 : T test for comparing happiness in the female and male groups

Leven's test shows that all the variances are not homogenous. Accordingly, the second line is used in interpreting the computerized data (it has been assumed that the variances are not equal to one another). The t test for the two independent groups shows that the t (2.535) with the freedom degree of 291.999 would be meaningful at the 0.05 level. That is to say there is a difference between female and male students in terms of happiness with female students showing a higher happiness according to the mean of the two groups.

### 6. Discussion and Conclusion

The results point to a meaningful relationship between the spiritual intelligence and happiness variables. An analysis of the collected data has been offered in the Table 2, showing that the relationship between the variables is meaningful at  $\alpha = 0.01$  level that is to say the more spiritual intelligence is higher in youths the more they enjoy happiness. Studies by Mayer (2000) and Bude(2009), Beikman (1990), Gholami, Norouzi,& Azizi (2010), and Tilenoui (2010) have respectively pointed to a meaningful

correlation both between spirituality and happiness, well being, life satisfaction, and optimism and between spiritual intelligence and mental health, creativity, and marital satisfaction. Argyle (2004) quotes Aristotle as saying that there are three types of happiness of which spiritual happiness rests atop. In fact, spiritual intelligence may be considered as an applied aspect of spirituality and serves to employ spiritual abilities and resources (Nasel, 2004) to eventually reach happiness in a purposeful life with mental health and other similar psychological factors. The second, third, fourth and fifth hypotheses in the Table 2 shows that there is a meaningful and positive relationship between spiritual intelligence components and happiness at  $\alpha=0.01$  level. The results are consistent with those of Grily (1975, quoted by Hosseini, 2006) and Enright (2002, quoted by Ghobari Banab, Lavasani, & Mohammadi, 2007). The two researchers respectively showed that religious experiences lead to happiness and that forgiveness lead to a drop in depression and anxiety while it helps inter-personal relationship to improve. Abdollahzadeh (2011) maintains that human may adopt an otherwise approach to life once it discovers its own self by learning not to allow external situations to affect its inner self and beliefs, helping create an inner power that proves very useful in life. Spirituality leads to self confidence and self confidence in turn leads to a stronger spirit and a lively feeling in any individual, helping him or her to enjoy a calm and open mind. Moreover, lower negative excitements, including anger, depression, and anxiety would contribute to further personal growth, calm and happiness. The sixth and seventh hypotheses consider the difference between female and male students in terms of the relationship between spiritual intelligence and happiness in the tables 3 and 4. They show that female students have a larger spiritual intelligence and happiness than males. The present study's results are consistent with those off Jafari's (2006) that showed a meaningful difference between boys and girls in terms of mean of religiousness with girls showing a higher religiousness. Girls probably show a larger interest in religious affairs since they come of religious age (under Islam) sooner than boys. Furthermore, women are more affectionate than men and since religious affairs are deeply seated in affection, women are more readily affected by the truth and Divinity. Clam and purposefulness is significant in life and may set a favorable stage for developing and boosting happiness in youths. Happiness in return may improve spirituality. Imonez (quoted by Saghravati, 2011) concludes that spiritual intelligence may be grown like other types of intelligence. An education of skills related to spiritual intelligence seems imperative. By incorporating the spiritual intelligence concept in university curriculum, students will be helped to better materialize their abilities and reach their goal. A stronger spiritual intelligence would also guarantee personal and social growth and help create happiness in individuals. It is suggested to offer appropriate programs by councilors and physiologists to students through workshops with a view to enhance their spiritual intelligence.

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