

## **The study of relationship between spiritual intelligence with personality traits among physical education managers in Isfahan province**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Spiritual intelligence is a set of adaptive mental capacities based on non-material and transcendent aspects of reality. Thus, the spiritual intelligence is the consequence of the highest level of individual growth in the fields of cognition, meaning attainment, transcendental and moral communication. Furthermore, the purpose of this research was to examine the study of relationship between spiritual intelligence with personality traits among physical education managers in Isfahan province. For this aim, a total of 121 physical education managers (with age ranged from 34-47 years-old) were selected in Isfahan province. To collect data, all managers filled in the spiritual intelligence, King's self-reporting questionnaire and NEO Personality Inventory Revised (NEO-PI-R). The collected data was analyzed by descriptive (mean and standard deviation) and inferential (Pearson's correlation test and Cronbach's alpha coefficient) statistical tests with SPSS Version 15. Results shows that there is a positive meaningful correlation between spiritual intelligence sub-scales with Openness to Experience, conscientiousness, Agreeableness and Extraversion ( $P < 0.05$ ). On the other hand; the results showed that the negative and significant correlation between Neuroticism and spiritual intelligence sub-scales ( $P < 0.05$ ). Based on these results, we conclusion that the spiritual intelligence and personality traits are two important components for physical education managers and there were meaningful role in organization.*

**Key words:** Personality Traits, Spiritual Intelligence, Physical Education Managers, Isfahan Province

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Human being has different abilities so that the relationship and impact of these characteristics and attributes have an important role in his overall performance and behavior. Without considering the relationship and impact of these factors, it would be difficult to understand and interpret behavior. Spiritual intelligence is one of these characteristics [1]. According to Amram's definition (2009), spiritual intelligence is a kind of ability that causes self-consciousness, self-control, profound understanding of meaning of life, purposefulness, increase in peace, the ability to communicate effectively with others and mental health [2]. Vaughan (2002) stated that the spiritual intelligence is the consequence of the highest level of individual growth in the fields of cognition, meaning attainment, transcendental and moral communication [3].

Amran (2005) argued that spiritual intelligence consists of sense of meaning and having a mission in life, sense of holiness in life, balanced perception of material value and believing in betterment of the globe [4]. SQ moved beyond individual's physical and cognitive relationship with the environment of an individual about life, and clarifies the answers of some questions: such as; "who am I" "why I am here" and "what is important". In this way a

person can finally discover secret love and enjoyment which are hidden beyond stressful and distress in daily life and help him selves and others [5-6]. Zhoohar and Marshar (2000) recognized spiritual intelligence as a mental talent people use it unto solve him own spiritual and valuable problems and drives his life to ward a plain of meaning [7].

In recent years much attention was to the meaning of spirituality and its utilization in real world especially in west, therefore some new subjects such as God, religion spirituality etc has entered into scientific researches about humanity [6]. Generally the number of studies about this subject is about to increase both in psychological and management fields. A number of workshops and meeting have been held in this regard so far. One of the subjects that emerged out of these meetings and conferences is spiritual intelligence. In reality besides the increasing concern to emotional intelligence, the combination of two concepts i.e. spirituality and intelligence and creating a new concept called spiritual intelligence has been considered either [3]. Zhohar and Marshal (2000) believe that spiritual intelligence facilitates association between cause and emotion, as well as, body and mind and builds a supportive force for growth and rising. It provides an active, unity, and meaningful centre for soul to help people think profoundly about essential subjects and try to solve their daily problems [7]. There for intellectual intelligence combines mental and not sensible aspects of spirituality with individual's problems in sensible and objective world [8].

Based on these evidences and documents, the research has proposed that spiritual beliefs, practices, and commitments seem to be linked with positive results like psychological, psychological, and physical health/well-being; marital satisfaction and stability; positive interpersonal performance/functioning; and personality traits [9-10]. Edwards (2003) has pinpointed to/denoted differentiation between/characterizing use of spiritual intelligence or sources to resolve spiritual dilemma/troubles, and employing them in solving non-spiritual problems. Of course, spiritual intelligence is not simply integrating one's intelligence with his/her spirituality [11]. On the contrary, it represents a blend/combination of the individual's personality characteristics, neurological processes, specialized cognitive capabilities, and spiritual qualities and interests [9-10]. Thus, the formation of personality is a complex situation that necessitates examining individuals' biological, psychological and sociological components. This structure has two important factors [12]. Personality is formed as a result of the interaction of these two factors [13]. In psychology researches, there are many different personality types, and it is sometimes difficult to classify a person into a single type as there are many different personality traits you can possess. Thus, the model of Big Five personality traits are five broad domains or dimensions of personality that are used to describe human personality. The Big Five factors is called the Five Factor Model (FFM) such as Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism [13-14]. Furthermore, the purpose of this research was to investigate and examine the study of relationship between spiritual intelligence with personality traits among physical education managers in Isfahan province.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was the correlation study design. Participants were included 121 physical education managers in Isfahan province and their ages ranged from 34-47 years-old. All participants were contacted face-to-face by the researchers and informed about the nature of the study. They were then asked to fill in the questionnaires in their free time, on their own, and in quiet conditions if they decided that they wished to participate in the study voluntarily. In this research, to evaluate spiritual intelligence, King's self-reporting questionnaire of spiritual intelligence was used. It has 24 items with 5 options. The options are scored from 0 to 4 as the Likret Scale. There is not any proportion with my features=0, it does not match much with my conditions=1, it is partially true about me=2, it is consistent with my characteristics a lot, it is quite compatible with my features=4. It includes 4 factors such as critical existential thinking subscale, creating a personal meaning, expanding awareness and transcendental awareness. The range scores of self-reporting spiritual intelligence questionnaire is from 0 to 96. A high score is the sign of high spiritual intelligence and a low score is the sign of low spiritual intelligence.

Through Cronbach's alpha method, King (2008) reported the final coefficients of spiritual intelligence self-reporting questionnaire were obtained 0.92 for critical existential thinking, 0.78 for creating a personal meaning, 0.87 for transcendental awareness and 0.90 for expanding awareness [15]. In the present research, Cronbach's alpha method was used for final determination of this questionnaire. Based on Cronbach's alpha results, the coefficient for spiritual existential intelligence questionnaire sub-scales such as critical thinking, creating a personal meaning; transcendental awareness and expanding awareness were obtained 0.91, 0.73, 0.82, and 0.84 respectively. Also, the

NEO Personality Inventory Revised (NEO-PI-R) was used to measure the personality traits among managers based on the FFM of personality. This questionnaire divided to five sub-scales included neuroticism, openness to experience, extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. According to Costa and McCrae (1992), the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the five personality traits vary from 0.86 to 0.92 [16]. In this research the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for all sub-scales were obtained from 0.79 to 0.90. Finally, the collected data was analyzed by descriptive (mean and standard deviation) and inferential (Pearson's correlation test and Cronbach's alpha coefficient) statistical tests with SPSS Version 15.

## RESULTS

Table 1 shows the mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) of spiritual intelligence and personality traits variables.

**Table1. Mean and standard deviation of the variables used in this research**

Variables	M	SD
critical existential thinking	<b>16.10</b>	<b>2.8</b>
creating a personal meaning	<b>13.50</b>	<b>3.6</b>
transcendental awareness	<b>17.10</b>	<b>2.7</b>
expanding awareness	<b>13.40</b>	<b>2.7</b>
spiritual intelligence	<b>60.10</b>	<b>11.8</b>
Openness to Experience	<b>14.50</b>	<b>3.50</b>
Conscientiousness	<b>17.40</b>	<b>3.60</b>
Agreeableness	<b>14.90</b>	<b>3.1</b>
Neuroticism	<b>12.30</b>	<b>2.70</b>
Extraversion	<b>15.8</b>	<b>2.2</b>

Table 2 represents correlation matrix between spiritual intelligence and Big Five personality traits. Results shows that there is a positive meaningful correlation between spiritual intelligence sub-scales with Openness to Experience, conscientiousness, Agreeableness and Extraversion ( $P < 0.05$ ). On the other hand; the results showed that the negative and significant correlation between Neuroticism and spiritual intelligence sub-scales ( $P < 0.05$ ).

**Table2. The matrix correlation among personality traits and spiritual intelligence**

Variables	Critical thinking	creating a personal meaning	transcendental awareness	expanding awareness
Openness to Experience	<b>0.71*</b>	<b>0.73*</b>	<b>0.76*</b>	<b>0.72*</b>
Conscientiousness	<b>0.76*</b>	<b>0.77*</b>	<b>0.81*</b>	<b>0.77*</b>
Agreeableness	<b>0.66*</b>	<b>0.67*</b>	<b>0.75*</b>	<b>0.64*</b>
Neuroticism	<b>-0.66*</b>	<b>-0.68*</b>	<b>-0.70</b>	<b>-0.67*</b>
Extraversion	<b>0.77*</b>	<b>0.67*</b>	<b>0.61*</b>	<b>0.65*</b>

\*Significant at level of  $P < 0.05$

## CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this study was to find out association and correlation between spiritual intelligence with Big Five personality traits among physical education managers in Isfahan province. Result that presented in table 2 showed that the positive and significant correlation between spiritual intelligence sub-scales with openness to experience, conscientiousness, agreeableness and extraversion. Also, the negative and meaningful correlation obtained between spiritual intelligence sub-scales and neuroticism.

Positive association between agreeableness and spiritual intelligence are in line with previous studies [17]. The negative correlation is evident in neuroticism and spiritual intelligence sub-scales revealing those high on neuroticism reflect low spiritual intelligence sub-scales. Negative relationship between neuroticism and spiritual intelligence was also revealed in a study on university students [18-19].

On the other hand, the review of literature reflects that numerous studies have been conducted showing an association between spiritual intelligence and the two personality traits namely extraversion and neuroticism [20-23]. On the other hand, based on Meta analysis, opposite trend has been reported by DeNeve and Cooper (1998) suggesting that well being and these two traits are not strongly associated and rather traits such as agreeableness and conscientiousness are associated with well being [24].

Also, Amrai et al. (2011) found that the predicting changes in spiritual intelligence are possible only through extroversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness. In other words, among the five personality traits, just these three can explain 0.52 variance of spiritual intelligence. But the other two, Neuroticism and openness to experience are not able to explain any of the variance. This result is in line with the studies related to general intelligence and emotional intelligence. But there is no exclusive research studying personality traits and spiritual intelligence [18]. Also there is no research done on prediction of spiritual intelligence variance exclusively from personality traits, while literature of this relation and prediction is available for general intelligence and especially emotional intelligence [25-27] which are in accordance with the current study. Based on evidences about this field, the spiritual intelligence is the way we assign meaning and feel connected to the power of larger than ourselves. Spiritual intelligence is one of the several types of intelligence that can be developed independently and contributes to psychological well being, personality traits and overall healthy human development [3]. Spiritual intelligence is a set of adaptive mental capacities based on non-material and transcendent aspects of reality [28]. The four components of spiritual intelligence are critical existential thinking, personal meaning production, transcendental awareness and conscious state expansion. Critical existential thinking is best described as the capacity an individual to critically contemplate meaning, purpose, and other existential/metaphysical issue; to come to original existential conclusions or philosophies; and to contemplate non-existential issues in relation to one's existence. An ability to derive personal meaning and purpose from all physical and mental experiences, including the capacity to create and master a life purpose is regarded as personal meaning production. Transcendental awareness is the capacity to identify transcendent dimensions/patterns of the self, of others, and of the physical world during normal states of consciousness, accompanied by the capacity to identify their relationship to one's self and to the physical world [27-29]. Conscious State Expansion is defined as an ability to enter and exit higher/spiritual states of consciousness at one's own discretion. Significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and mental health has been reported in previous studies [30].

Generally, reviewing the literature showed that, the spiritual intelligence can improve with training. Adolescence is an important period for spiritual intelligence training and gratitude as a subscale in SQ has ability to increase that fortunately, many individuals have described specific exercises to promote gratitude. As a sort of intelligence, spirituality extends the psychologist's conception of spirituality and allows its association with rational cognitive processes like goal achievement and problem resolution. The spiritual intelligence provides a general basis for the individual to be able to consider his seeking for goals and meaning in life, and to move in the direction of the aims which are personally meaningful. It aids the individual in directing his/her concerns to the wider image and in focusing, consciously, his/her activities in a context that is wider.

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