

## Spiritual intelligence: An overview

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### Abstract

The paper gives the concept of Spiritual Intelligence with respect to psychological context. It develops Spiritual Intelligence on the basis of educational psychology. In this paper an attempt has been made to recognize, comprehend, find out, analyze, synthesize, evaluate and critically examine along with to develop positive attitude, appreciate, and take interest in the dominant factors responsible for strengthening spiritual intelligence. The paper concludes 'Spiritual Intelligence' as "it is intelligence which helps to fulfill the potentialities of the individuals' abilities through the non-cognitive virtues to prepare them to solve the everyday problems for life creatively and constructively in the new situation of the socio-psycho-physical environment for attaining the highest knowledge and wisdom, if the teachers enable to modify such kind of behavior patterns of individuals, - this is spiritual intelligence." However, the present study suggests that spiritual intelligence would be beneficial for the teachers in particular and individuals in general for the betterment of the global society as a whole.

**Keywords:** Spiritual, Intelligence

### Introduction

Spiritual intelligence is consisted of two words-spiritual and intelligence. The word spiritual derived from Latin word *spiritus*, which means "that gives life or vitality to a system." (Zohar, 1997) [16]. Many social scientists, psychologists, philosophers, thinkers, educators, educationists and educational concerns believe that intelligence is based on mind that is ability to develop mind and values mind, while they devalues spirit. So what is the relationship between 'spiritual' and 'intelligence'? Zohar (1997) [16]. Asserted that the constructs of 'spiritual' and 'intelligence' are related with one another. The relation between the spiritual and intelligence is what constitute "spiritual intelligence" which is the factor to a well-being of a person and for fulfilling life.

Zohar (1997) [16]. Coined the term 'Spiritual Intelligence' and introduced the idea of it "It is the intelligence that makes us whole, that gives us our integrity. It is the soul's intelligence, the intelligence of the deep self. It is the intelligence with which we ask fundamental questions and with which we reframe our answers (Zahar and Marshall 1999) [18]. Further, Zahar and Marshall (2000) [20]. defined spiritual intelligence as "the intelligence with which we address and solve problems of meaning and value, the intelligence with which we can place our actions and our lives in a wider, richer, meaning -giving context, the intelligence with which we can assess that one course of action or life-path is more meaningful than another." Emmons (1999) wrote, "Spiritual intelligence is a framework for identifying and organizing skills and abilities needed for the adaptive use of spirituality."

Emmons (2000a, 2000b) [3, 4] argued that "spiritual intelligence can be viewed as a form of intelligence because it predicts functioning and adaptation and offers capabilities that enable people to solve problems and attain goals." Emmons (2000a) [3] initially proposed five components of spiritual intelligence:

- ability to utilize spiritual resources to solve problems;
- ability to enter heightened states of consciousness;
- Ability to invest everyday experiences;
- capacity for transcendence of physical and material;
- Capacity to be virtuous.

However, Emmons (2000b) [4] Removed the capacity to be virtuous and retained the first-four components of the model. Levin (2000) [7] argued, "Spiritual intelligence is exhibited when we live in a way that integrates spirituality into our daily life."

Wolman (2001) [14] defined spiritual intelligence as "the human capacity to ask ultimate questions about the meaning of life, and to simultaneously experience the seamless connection between each of us and the world in which we live."

Vaughan (2002) [13] described, "Spiritual intelligence is concerned with the inner life of mind and spirit and its relationship to being in the world. Spiritual intelligence implies a capacity for a deep understanding of existential questions and insights into multiple levels of consciousness. Spiritual intelligence also implies awareness of spirit as the ground of being or as the creative life force of evolution. If the evolution of life from stardust to mineral, vegetable, animal, and human existence implies some form of intelligence rather than being a purely random process, it might be called spiritual. Spiritual intelligence emerges as consciousness evolves into an ever-deepening awareness of matter, life, body, mind, soul, and spirit. Spiritual intelligence, then, is more than individual mental ability. It appears to connect the personal to the transpersonal and the self to spirit. Spiritual intelligence goes beyond conventional psychological development. In addition to self-awareness, it implies awareness of our relationship to the transcendent, to each other, to the earth and all beings. Working as a psychotherapist, my expression is that spiritual intelligence opens the heart, illuminates the mind, and inspires the soul, connecting the individual human psyche to the underlying ground of being. Spiritual intelligence can be developed with practice and can help a person distinguish reality from illusion. It may be expressed in and culture as love, wisdom, and service"

Nasel (2004) [8] defined spiritual intelligence as the "ability to draw on one's spiritual abilities and resources to better identify, find meaning in, and resolve existential, spiritual, and practical issues. Such resources and abilities, be it prayer,

intuition, or transcendence, ought to be relevant to facilitating an individual's capacity for finding meaning in experiences, for facilitating problem solving, and for enhancing an individual's capacity for adaptive decision making."

Zahar and Marshall (2004) defined, "Spiritual intelligence is the intelligence with which we access our deepest meanings, purposes and highest motivations." They introduced 12 qualities of SI namely-self-awareness, spontaneity, being vision, holism, compassion, celebration of diversity, field independence, humility, tendency to ask fundamental "why" questions, ability to reframe, positive use of adversity, and sense of vocation.

Emmons (2000) <sup>[3, 4]</sup> defined spiritual intelligence as "the adaptive use of spiritual information to facilitate everyday problem solving and goal attainment."

Wigglesworth (2006) <sup>[15]</sup> defined spiritual intelligence as "the ability to act with wisdom and compassion, while maintaining inner and outer peace, regardless of the circumstances." She arranged four quadrants of spiritual intelligence as higher self / ego self-awareness, universal awareness, higher self / ego self-mastery, and spiritual presence / social mastery.

According to Amram (2007) <sup>[1]</sup>, "SI is defined as the ability to apply and embody spiritual resources and qualities to enhance daily functioning and wellbeing." and gave 7 major themes of SI. They are:

- a) Consciousness: Developed refined awareness and self-knowledge;
- b) Grace: Living in alignment with the sacred manifesting love for and trust in life;
- c) Meaning: Experiencing significance in daily activities through a sense of purpose and a call for service, including in the face of pain and suffering;
- d) Transcendence: Going beyond the separate egoic self into an interconnected wholeness;
- e) Truth: Living in open acceptance, curiosity, and love for all creation (all that is);
- f) Peaceful surrender to Self (True, God, Absolute, true nature); and
- g) Inner-Directedness; inner-freedom aligned in responsible wise action.

King (2008) <sup>[6]</sup> defined spiritual intelligence as "a set of adaptive mental capacities based on non-material and transcendent aspect of reality, specifically those that contribute to the awareness, integration, and adaptive application of the non-material and transcendent aspects of one's existence, leading to such outcomes as deep existential reflection, enhancement of meaning, recognition of a transcendent self, and mastery of spiritual states."

The study may be considered as a significant from the point of view that spiritually intelligent individuals may be influenced by their non-cognitive factors. So they constitute a group of individuals who are unknown till this day. The study may bring out a fact that such a group of individuals does exist. Similarly, the study may bring to the light on the existence of the group of individuals who are better spiritually intelligent as compared to other group. This may be considered as one of the contribution of the study.

Tiwary (2013) <sup>[12]</sup> observes that education has four pillars-knowledge, wisdom, spiritual perception, and eloquent speech. It has been said that knowledge is power. Knowledge is the source by which all worldly powers could be grabbed. It is the source of all material resources. This is why knowledge in any

field makes a man powerful in that field. The next pillar is wisdom-which is not the synonym of intelligence, rather intelligence with sensitivity and sensibility. It is a sense of right or wrong, emotional stability, flexibility and maturity of mind. It is closely related to spiritual perception which builds up divinity in human being. Here, the man of spirituality believes in the principle of 'Live and let live'. It believes in peaceful coexistence for better and brighter tomorrow and the last is eloquent speech. Those who are well versed in particular branch of knowledge with wisdom and spiritual perception do have eloquent speech.

Keeping in view the above fact, it seems essential to study how the individuals are coping with spiritual intelligence in particular and in what way they are different with other. Accordingly, it has been decided by the investigator to undertake a conceptual research study of spiritual intelligence of individuals.

- Whether the individuals have spiritual intelligence?
- Is the sex playing an important role, while influencing their spiritual intelligence?
- Whether cognitive factors affect the spiritual intelligence of individuals?
- Whether non-cognitive factors have impact on spiritual intelligence of individuals?
- Whether cognitive and non-cognitive factors have impact on spiritual intelligence?
- Whether body, mind, heart and spirit affect the spiritual intelligence?

#### **Need and Significance of the study**

The study is needed and significant from several points of view not only in bringing excellence among individuals but also in revealing the probable interplay between cognitive and non-cognitive aspects of education. Besides cognitive competence and skills, there is a need of social skills which will build up spiritual development. National Curriculum for School Education, NCERT (2000) <sup>[9]</sup> has observed that curriculum has to provide learning experiences which will improve individual's thoughts, feelings and actions. Very few researches have been developed to study spiritual intelligence in India and its contribution to the field of education, spiritual intelligence is less explored. The study is philosophical in its nature because it indicates normative aspect of education with respect to aim of education, curriculum, and method of teaching, discipline, students, teachers and schools. This study has sociological bases of education because of being related to social needs according to society. This study covers psychological aspect of education for instance growth and development of the students, learning, motivation, personality development and adjustment, etc. It is well known to all that Indian society is a spiritual based society. Some of the scholars felt that after independence the spirituality gradually disappear and it will have no impact on Indian educational system. India is a neither developed nor undeveloped country but where development is required in each and every sphere of human life. Spiritual intelligence and its implications are increasing day by day. For the appearance of the spirituality in the development of the educational system, in this connection, Kothari Commission (1966) <sup>[5]</sup> points out, "In the development that we envisage in the future, we hope that the pursuit of men, material affluence and power would be subordinated to

that of higher values and the fulfillment of the individual. This concept of the mingling of 'Science and Spirituality' is of special significance for Indian Education."

The article indicates that an analysis of the various problems of spiritual intelligence in the psychological perspective, may be accepted by the researchers and practitioners of spiritual studies for carrying out research on what is required is that the individuals as well as society internalize the understanding of the Spiritual Intelligence and bring about a dynamic change in their living patterns. It seems that in a country like ours programs of identification and nurturing of talent should receive a very high priority.

In this paper an attempt has been made to recognize, comprehend, find out, analyze, synthesize, evaluate and critically examine the dominant factors responsible for strengthening spiritual intelligence and its impact on education of today and tomorrow in Indian society. This study may help the students to understand and to solve the problem of education more efficiently. They may flower into excellent of our nation. Hence the investigator has decided to conduct the present study.

### **Delimitation of the Study**

Keeping in view the limitation of time, resources and energy, the study is limited to one aspect of the subject which is spiritual intelligence. It is entirely based on the secondary data as for examples-books, journals, periodicals, newspapers etc. this constitutes a major constraint of the study as the journals and periodicals are sometimes subject to manipulations and information available in them is in historical nature.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To recognize and define spiritual intelligence
2. To recognize factors responsible for strengthening spiritual intelligence
3. To critically examine factors responsible for strengthening spiritual intelligence
4. To analyze factors responsible for strengthening spiritual intelligence
5. To comprehend factors responsible for strengthening spiritual intelligence
6. To synthesize factors responsible for strengthening spiritual intelligence
7. To evaluate factors responsible for strengthening spiritual intelligence

### **Methodology**

Methodology takes a significant role in any type of research as the reliability and validity of the findings depend upon the methods adopted and applied in the study. This paper is descriptive in nature. It is mainly based on secondary data and is largely collected from different sources like books, journals, articles, and periodicals. This study is conducted mainly by applying analytical cum descriptive method for the research. The investigator has made effort to express spiritual intelligence critically.

### **Analysis and Interpretation**

The concept, meaning, and principles in the term of spiritual intelligence have been dealt with clarity and deep insight. Before we discuss the factors responsible for strengthening

spiritual intelligence, it is essential for us to know the meaning of spiritual intelligence. The term 'spiritual intelligence' has different meanings to different psychologists in different context. But the 'Spiritual intelligence', working with the paper "Spiritual Intelligence of Prospective Teachers" Srivastava (2014) [11], defined as "it is the intelligence which enhances capabilities, capacities, competencies and skills of the individual to solve the everyday problems creatively and constructively in the new situation of the social environment for attaining ultimate aims of education" and working with the paper, Spiritual intelligence, Srivastava (2014) [11] defined as "it is the intelligence which enhances capabilities, capacities, competencies and skills of the individual to become achievement-motive and emotionally intelligent to solve the everyday problems creatively and constructively in the new situation of the socio-psycho-physical environment for attaining ultimate aims of education".

Modern education, however, lays great emphasis on spiritual intelligence. Perhaps, this is precisely the cause why the learner seeks only to learn and study about the discovering own soul/ spirit. With this consideration of spirit, the development of spiritual intelligence is purely and surely to please the modern learner. It is, however, spiritual intelligence helps in the development of the natural man into the ideal man.

### **Major Findings**

To be quite honest and fair, the field of spiritual intelligence is too much vast and it is not easy to achieve a well-balanced perspective of what is really happening and what is lacking in our research work. The study under consideration has been carried out with the recognizing, comprehending, examining critically, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating the spiritual intelligence has great relevance to the present-day inside schools, colleges, and universities or outside and it can bring about a dynamic change in the educational system not only of the country, but also the world. Here, the impact of modifying patterns of the Indian educational system in the terms of cognitive, affective and psychomotor abilities would be analyzed in depth and thus it may contribute in solving the everyday problems of individuals' life creatively and constructively in the new situation of the socio-psycho-physical environment for their wellbeing. The spiritual gains of light, bliss and power and its impact in the field of education- the concepts which have been identified.

### **Conclusion**

Moreover, there is a problem of lack of spiritual intelligence within individuals in our India today because each and every school or college or university suffers from affective ability and it is because of this problem that our entire educational system is going aimlessly. That is why it may be said that educationists, teacher educators, teachers, educational administrators, educational supervisors, curriculum constructors and educational planners in our country should wake up to the task of the curriculum construction, curriculum development and curriculum transaction of spiritual intelligence and its aims and objective, method of teaching and techniques by understanding a critical examination of the present set up of spiritual intelligence for human wellbeing, and furthermore, in order to sustain and to strengthen its spiritual growth and development, India needs a fast

development in the area of research on spiritual intelligence. This can be done by strengthening the pillars of professional education particularly the teacher education. Otherwise, the ignorance of spiritual intelligence will result in exploitation, corruption, aggression, destruction, disaster, selfishness and hatred. In short, it may say that spiritual intelligence regulates positive personality and control negative personality.

Spiritual education must become an integral part of teacher education as well as school education and ultimately study of spiritual science will become a part of all courses in Humanities and Social Sciences at University level also. The quality of spiritual science must also be raised considerably so as to promote a deep understanding of its theory and principle to solve the everyday problems of life for attaining ultimate aim of education.

All constructive and creative works related to spiritual intelligence, it is felt that there is a great deal has been done to trace the development of spiritual intelligence and its cognitive and non-cognitive factors with special reference to spiritual doctrines and assumptions, much has also been done to spiritualize education in India to draw in broad an outline of spiritual wealth and much has so far been also done to investigate the spiritual intelligence of individuals for recreating and reconstructing a spiritual society in our country through non-cognitive tasks viz- a sense of responsibility, initiative, love and sympathy, co-operation, social –justice and a great importance was given on the democratic concept of education as the means of discovering truth. Greater emphasis is being paid to spiritual world and a great deal has also been done.

All the books and writings on spiritual intelligence, of course, yield useful information regarding spiritual learning and training, and also give details of spiritual basis of education as well as help in progressive basis of education for the betterment of the pupils of the spiritual society as a whole.

To have an access to the realization of thought and action with respect to Spiritual Philosophy which serves as a foundation of nurturing spiritual intelligence, which reflects spiritual education for achieving highest aim of education and beneficial for human engineering and soul doctoring. Keeping in view in mind, the author concludes the ‘Spiritual Intelligence’ as “it is intelligence which helps to fulfill the potentialities of the individuals’ abilities through the non-cognitive virtues to prepare them to solve the everyday problems for life creatively and constructively in the new situation of the socio-psycho-physical environment for attaining the highest knowledge and wisdom, if the teachers enable to modify such kind of behavior patterns of individuals, - this is spiritual intelligence.”

. That is why, therefore, it may be described in terms of an individual’s cognitive and non-cognitive behaviors which are beneficial for human engineering and soul doctoring that appears to have made a considerable progress and development of the society. However, the present study suggests that spiritual intelligence would be beneficial for the teachers in particular and individuals in general for betterment of the global society as a whole.

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