

## Spiritual Intelligence and Happiness for Adolescents in High School

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**Abstract:** The aim of the current study was to investigate the relationship between spiritual intelligence and happiness in for Adolescents in High School. The research sample consisted of 221 high school students who took spiritual sensitivity scale and General Health Questionnaire. The results of the study showed that there is a significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and happiness. The results of regression analysis showed that awareness sensing, mystery sensing, value sensing and community sensing significantly anticipated happiness.

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### 1. Introduction

Adolescence is considered a complex stage of life with its own specific biological, psychological, and sociological aspects. According to Erikson (1968), the development of a healthy individual identity is a major task of adolescence during which every adolescent experiences an identity crisis. If an integrated sense of identity cannot be established by the end of adolescence, the state of identity confusion is experienced. Adolescence is also a period of cognitive development. Rapid cognitive changes result in increased interest in abstract ideas and issues (Piaget and Inhelder, 1973). These changes take place in a context of cognitive, physical, and psychosocial development (Collins and Repinski, 1994; Steinberg, 2005; La Greca and Harrison, 2005) which enables adolescents to become more stable and mature (Lerner, 1985; Moore and Boldero, 1991). The rapid changes in development may cause adaptation problems. For instance, adolescents who experience identity confusion-related distress had more school and behavioural problems (Wires et al. 1994), many adolescents have a propensity for risk taking behaviours as a result of cognitive immaturity (Steinberg, 2004). These negative experiences prevent adolescents from fulfilling their responsibilities and developmental tasks (McKnight et al. 2002). As a result, the changes experienced during this period might affect adolescents' mental health. In the literature, numerous studies have focused on various factors for increasing individual's mental health (Buss, 2000; Lyubomirsky, 2001). Spirituality is one of these factors. It means different things depending upon an individual's personal interpretation on world view (Mcsherry & cash, 2004). In recent years, the specialized studies relating

to the spirituality are developing ever increasingly. Research results demonstrated beneficial effects of spirituality on individual's adaptation and coping with social pressure and life stressors (Pargament and Smith, 1998; Ferguson, 2001; Vannes & Kasel, 2003). Studies have also found correlations between spirituality and mental health variables such as stress (Woodbury, 1992); anxiety (Alvordo, 1995); emotional instability and mood disorders (Jang & Johnson, 2004; Leach, & Lark, 2004); depression (Genia, 2001; Doolittle & Farrell, 2004 & koening, 2007), neurotism and substance abuse (Elmer, MacDonald, & Friedman, 2003).

Similar studies have also shown relationships between spirituality and mental health in adolescents (Wong, Rew & Slaikou, 1993; Cotton, Zebracki, Rosenthal, Tsevat, & Drotar, 2006; Cotton, Larkin, Hoopes, Cromer & Rosenthal, 2005; Dew, Daniel, Goldston, & Koenig, 2008). But during the last decade, research on mental health have mostly emphasized on positive strengths and potentialities of human being rather than their disappointment and unhappiness conditions such as anxiety and depression. While there are many studies between spirituality with mental disorders and negative effects, there isn't enough investigation in positive aspects of human strengths such as happiness. happiness consists of three components: (1) one's average level of satisfaction over a particular period; (2) the quantity and extent of one's positive affect; and (3) the relative absence of one's negative affect (Argyle, 2001). Theoretically, Spirituality can relate to mental health, happiness and subjective well being by means of affecting their coping strategies, their attribution style, their connectedness with environment and their sense of meanings. James

(1901/1999) and Maslow argued that on individual's spiritual experience can act as a mechanism for problem solving in relation to issues of meaning and value (Adams and Hyde, 2008). so it is possible the conceive of spirituality as a type of intelligence (Emmons, 2000; Zohar & Marshall, 2000 and Hyde, 2004).because the intelligence concerns the ability to solve problem and adaptation with environment (Ruzgis & Grigorenko,1994). Spiritual intelligence mixed concepts of spiritual and intelligence in a new concept. Zohar and Marshall (2000) define spiritual intelligence as the mental aptitude used by human beings to address and find solution to problems of meaning and value in life. It is the intelligence makes whole and gives integrity. Spiritual intelligence includes various methods that can coordinate innate life and spiritual with extend life and it may lead to well being and important of life quality (vagan, 2003).while we have many inquiries between spirituality, psychological health and subjective well being in adolescents, there is no investigation in spiritual intelligence. So Carrying out such a research is of high importance between students which constitute a relatively large class of people in society and is a step toward identifying the effective factors on the happiness and decreasing mental disorders. According to the aforementioned goal, this study aimed to assess relationship between spiritual intelligence and happiness of the adolescents in Iran.

## 2. Material and methods

### 2.1. Participants

In the current research, 221 students on high school of Shiraz were chosen by multiple cluster sampling.

### 2.2. Measures

#### 2.2.1. Oxford happiness inventory

It consists of wide range of a individual happiness used the department of experimental psychology at Oxford University. (Abir et al, 2008). The scale include 29 items and each item is presented in four incremental levels numbered from 0 to 3 and the score will be added and the final score on the basis the number of questions was between 0-87. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the original questionnaire of Oxford was 0.90 – 0.92 (Argyle et al, 1989). Validity and reliability in Oxford happiness inventory were acceptable. (Cheng & Furnham, 2003). In this study internal consistency of Oxford happiness inventory was 0.89.

#### 2.2.2. Spiritual sensitivity scale

Spiritual sensitivity scale is the spiritual intelligence scale applied to multiple Intelligence scale is applied to multiple Intelligence profile questionnaire (MIPQ: Terri & Komulainen, 2002). Terri, Nokelainen and Ubani (2006) extend 20 items of this scale based on Hay's (1998) and Bradford's (1995) definition of spirituality the spiritual

intelligence scale applied as the eighth dimension of the MIPQ IS based on spiritual sensitivity scale consisting of following four dimensions:

- I. Awareness sensing
- II. Mystery sensing
- III. Value sensing
- IV. Community sensing

Terri, Nokelainen and Ubani (2006) Evaluated Spiritual sensitivity scale with an empirical sample of preadolescents, adolescents and adults (N=496) and estimated the reliability range from 0.62 to 0.75. In this study internal consistency of spiritual sensitivity scale was divide into four subscale: awareness sensing, Mystery sensing, value sensing and community sensing. Their consistencies were 0.73, 0.69, 0.71, and 0.67 respectively. The total score was used as measure of spiritual intelligence.

### 2.3. Procedure

Design of current research is an ex post facto (co relational study), in which the relation between spiritual intelligence and mental health has been investigated.

## 3. Results

In the analysis of data, person's correlation coefficient was used to study correlation between spiritual intelligence and mental health, step by step regression analysis mental was used in order to consider that how much score of spiritual intelligence can predict the scores of mental health.

To study the relation between spiritual intelligence and Happiness investigators used multiple correlation analysis, Inspecting data in table 1, we can conclude that there's a significant correlation between spiritual intelligence and happiness ( $r=0.8$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). It can be concluded that there's a significant and positive relation between happiness and spiritual intelligence.

Also the correlation of four subscales of spiritual intelligence (i.e. Awareness sensing, Mystery sensing, Value sensing and community sensing) is significant by happiness. Step by step regression was used in order to consider that how much scores of spiritual intelligence can predict score of happiness which its results are presented in table 2.

As it is seen from the table, all subscales of spiritual intelligence can significantly predict the happiness. In the first step aware sensing is entered into the regression equation. This variable solely predicts 53 percents of scores variance of happiness.

Mystery sensing is entered into the equation in the second step which the rate of explanation coefficient ( $R^2$ ) is reached to 0.62 by adding this variable, which is 0.08, is added to the explanation coefficient. In the third step with entering value sensing into the equation, 0.08 is added to the explanation coefficient and finally by adding

Community sensing in the forth step, the rate of explanation coefficient is reached to 0.67. Generally, all subscales of spiritual intelligence can predict 67 percent of variations in the scores of happiness.

#### 4. Discussion & Conclusion

The aim of this research was to study relationship between spiritual intelligence and happiness for adolescents in high school. The results of the study revealed a significant correlation between domains of spiritual intelligence (i.e. Awareness sensing, Mystery sensing, Value sensing and community sensing) and happiness of high school students. While there is no exclusive research studying spiritual intelligence and happiness, but these finding were consistent with the studies related to spirituality. These studies toted that those who engage in meaningful relationships (Myers & Diener, 1995) and have a well-developed sense of spirituality (Myers, 2000) tend to be happier. Dockery (2005) found that open-mindedness, feeling in control of one's life, and having aspirations which transcend enhancing one's financial status, such as aspirations in social and moral matters is significantly correlated with happiness.

Since many joys are temporary and vanish quickly human beings unstable usually seek more joy. Activities done by those who seek spirituality such as helping others and compassion, can lead them to happiness (Shaw, 2008). Spirituality contributes to promote the mental health by providing a framework for describing life's experiences and because of that creating a sense of integrity and existential interconnection. Individuals with spiritual experience and religious beliefs can cope with their stress and

psychological problems and the confrontation methods are stronger in them, spirituality creates a power which affects on the physical postures, feelings, thoughts and communications and will be affected by them.

Actually, spirituality has a protective effect and acts against stress and leads to gain physical and psychological healthy, having goal and meaning in life, hopefulness, optimism and improves individual's psychological status (Harvey, 2004). During adolescence, spirituality represent important sources of hope, ideals, worldviews and role models that influence the course of identity development (King, 2003; Roeser, Issac, Abo - Zena, Brittian, & Peck, 2008; Smith & Denton, 2005). The intelligence use of spiritual information can contribute to positive life out comes such as emotional wellbeing, positive social functioning and an enhanced overall quality of life (Emmons, 2000). Spiritual intelligence includes various methods that and can coordinate innate life and the spirit with external life and it may lead to happiness (Vaguan, 2003). Therefore, promoting spiritual intelligence of the students adolescents can help them to have a meaningful and happy life, And individual who are happier have longer life expectancy, are more active, and are less likely to have conditions associated with mental disease (Post, 2005; Veenhoven, 2008). This study is not without limitations. First, the demographic characteristics of the study sample must be taken into account before the results can be generalized. Another limitation of this study is that all participants were adolescents attending high school.

**Table 1.** Correlation matrix between spiritual intelligence and mental health

variable	Awareness sensing	mystery sensing	value sensing	community sensing	spiritual intelligence
Happiness	0.73	0.64	0.68	0.4	0.8

P< 0.01

**Table 2.** Step by step regression analysis for predicting of happiness

Step	predictive variable	B	Beta	R	R <sup>2</sup>
1	aware sensing	3.27	0.73	0.73	0.53
	aware sensing	2.48	0.54		
2	mystery sensing	2.23	0.36	0.78	0.62
	mystery sensing	2.23	0.36		
Step	predictive variable	B	Beta	R	R <sup>2</sup>
3	aware sensing	1.2	0.43	0.81	0.66
	mystery sensing	1.57	0.25		
	value sensing	1.67	0.27		
4	aware sensing	1.85	0.41	0.82	0.67
	mystery sensing	1.52	0.24		
	value sensing	1.54	0.25		
	Community sensing	0.58	0.09		

The results showed here should also be tested on adolescents who are not in high school or engaged in further education, have chronic illness and psychiatric diagnosis.

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