



Gender Difference on Spiritual Intelligence Among Adolescents

KEYWORDS

Spiritual Intelligence, Personal Meaning Production, Conscious State Expansion, Critical Existential Thinking

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ABSTRACT *Spiritual intelligence is the mental capacity of an individual that make an individual aware of self and transcendental aspect of one's existence, enhance meaning of self and helps to mastery the spiritual state. It is above all types of intelligence. The aim of the present study is to measure spiritual intelligence among adolescents studying in two schools of Aligarh city. For this purpose, Spiritual Intelligence Self Report Inventory (SISRI-24) developed by D. King (2008) was administered to the sample of 60 adolescents. Of these, 30 were male and 30 were female students. The main findings were as follows: Significant difference were found between the two groups, on subscales, namely, Personal Meaning Production (PMP), Transcendental Awareness (TA) and Conscious State Expansion (CSE), Critical Existential Thinking (CET) and composite scores on spiritual intelligence*

Introduction

From infancy to adulthood each stage is the stage of crisis and growth. But among all the stages of psychosocial development, adolescence is the stage of major transition, identity crisis and search for goals and direction for executing actions to attain growth. Spiritual intelligence can empower the adolescents to have a different look on their problems and to find the more satisfactory solutions. Spiritual intelligence may help them to critically contemplate the meaning of their life, understand the potentialities of self, to obtain greater satisfaction by expanding their vision to metaphysical aspects of existence such as generosity, beauty, love for fellow beings and acts of nurturance, than the physical aspects of human existence. Therefore, the present study aims to examine spiritual intelligence among male and female adolescents.

Based on classical theories many standardized tools were there to measure intelligence. But after the year 2000, there is a marked shift in the so called construct IQ used to define intelligence. In the year 1997 Dannah Zohar came up with the concept of 'Spiritual intelligence' in her book *Rewiring the Corporate Brain*. Different spiritual thinkers define spiritual intelligence in their own terminology. According to Zohar and Marshall (2000) define 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 one life-path is more meaningful than another" (p. 3-4).

The measurement of spiritual intelligence was a cumbersome job and therefore attempts were continued to elaborate the components of spiritual intelligence so that its measurement will become easy. For example, Amram (2007) gave following components of spiritual intelligence: meaning, consciousness, grace, transcendence, truth, peaceful surrender to Self, and inner-directed freedom. In the same process, King (2008) came up with the measure namely, Spiritual Intelligence Self Report Inventory (SISRI) and gave following factors of spiritual intelligence:

(1) Critical Existential Thinking

(2) Personal Meaning Production

(3) Transcendental Awareness

(4) Conscious State Expansion

Critical Existential Thinking

Oxford dictionary (2001) defines existential as "having to do with existence". Chance (1986) define critical thinking as "the ability to analyze facts, generate and organize ideas, defend opinions, make comparisons, draw inferences, evaluate arguments and solve problems".

It is the thinking ability of an individual to critically contemplate the metaphysical issues such as thinking about the meaning and purpose of life, sources of non-material aspects of life satisfaction, death, life after death etc. Thinking over these existential issues requires vision of critical contemplation. Simply thinking does not show the complete mastery over this ability. A critical thinker has a questioning mind behind the reason of an issue.

Personal Meaning Production

It is the second factor of spiritual intelligence as per given by King (2008). It is simply a conscious effort of an individual to understand the meaning of one's own life. There are so many sources which could provide us meaning of life, such as our relationships, our social roles and responsibilities, our wishes and realistic goals. Life without meaning is like body without soul, meaning non-functional.

Oxford Dictionary (2001) simply defined meaning as "a sense of purpose". Reker (1997) defined Personal meaning as "having a purpose in life, having a sense of direction, a sense of order and a reason for existence" (p. 710). Nasel (2004) would concur, suggesting that spiritual intelligence "involves contemplation of the symbolic meaning of personal events and circumstances, in order to find purpose and meaning in all life experiences" (p. 52).

Transcendental Awareness

Oxford Dictionary defines Transcendent as "going beyond normal or physical human experience" or "existing apart from and not subject to the limitations of the material uni-

verse" (Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 972). King et al. (2001) contend that spirituality involves "a person's...sense of a relationship or connection with a power or force in the universe that transcends the present context of reality" (p. 1015-1016).

Thus conclusively to transcend means going to metaphysical world from physical world. A question arises in mind how is it possible for a person who is alive to enter into metaphysical world, which is intangible? It is possible when a person start looking at the beauty of nature, leaves the materialistic gain and seek bliss from non-material aspects such as an act of generosity and charity, sensitivity for the sufferings of have not, seek wisdom and truth, foresee unity as a functional thread for society etc.

Conscious State Expansion

Consciousness simply seems to mean the state of awareness to internal and external environment, where a person is aware of his emotions, sensations and to the events of his surroundings. The conscious state expansion is self descriptive, meaning to expand the immediate consciousness to that level where an individual become aware of spiritual state, state where he attain wisdom, truth and tranquillity. King and DeCicco (2009) call this state as "spiritual state of consciousness (e.g., pure consciousness, cosmic consciousness, oneness)" (p.71).

Objectives

The objectives of the present study are:

- (1) To examine the difference between male and female adolescents on each dimensions of spiritual intelligence and,
- (2) To examine the difference between male and female adolescents on composite score of spiritual intelligence.

Method

Participants

30 male and 30 female adolescents served as participants in this study. The age range of participants was from 12 to 19, years. Participants were drawn from two schools of Aligarh city.

Measure

Spiritual Intelligence Self Report Inventory (SISRI-24) developed by King (2008) was used to measure spiritual intelligence among adolescents. The scale comprised of 24 items on five point rating scales ranging from not at all true of me to completely true of me. This inventory measures four dimensions of spiritual intelligence namely Conscious State Expansion (CST), Critical Existential Thinking (CET), Personal Meaning Production (PMP) and Transcendental Awareness (TA). The cronbach coefficient alpha of the inventory was found to be .92 and the factorial validity of the scale was also found to be high (King, 2008).

Procedure

The data was collected randomly from participants studying in different schools of Aligarh city. First of all investigator informed the participants, that the information to be obtained from them will be used only for the research purpose and will be kept confidential. After that SISRI-24 was administered on the participants. Participants were thanked for their co-operation. Finally, Scoring of each questionnaire was done manually.

Data analysis

The data was analysed by using SPSS-16.0 Version and t-test was used to analyse data.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Showing the summary of results of independent sample t-test for difference between male and female adolescents on four dimensions of spiritual intelligence.

| Dimensions | Groups | N | Mean | SD | t |
|--|--------|----|-------|------|------|
| Conscious State Expansion | Female | 30 | 15.13 | 4.36 | 3.66 |
| | Male | 30 | 18.56 | 2.69 | |
| Critical Existential Thinking | Female | 30 | 21.86 | 5.3 | 2.78 |
| | Male | 30 | 25.5 | 4.77 | |
| Personal Meaning Production | Female | 30 | 17.53 | 4.25 | 2.18 |
| | Male | 30 | 19.6 | 2.95 | |
| Transcendental Awareness | Female | 30 | 22.63 | 6.1 | 2.05 |
| | Male | 30 | 25.3 | 3.81 | |
| *p<.05 (t= 2, df=58), **p<.01 (t= 2.66, df=58) | | | | | |

Table 2: Showing the summary of results of the Independent Sample t-test for difference between male and female adolescents on the composite score of spiritual intelligence.

| Variable | Groups | N | Mean | SD | t |
|------------------------|--------|----|-------|-------|------|
| Spiritual Intelligence | Female | 30 | 77.16 | 17.21 | 3.14 |
| | Male | 30 | 89.00 | 11.28 | |

**p<.01 (t=2.66, df=58)

As can be seen from Table 1, male scored significantly higher than female adolescents on each domain of spiritual intelligence namely Conscious State Expansion (t= 3.66, p< 0.01) Critical Existential Thinking (t= 2.05, p<0.01), Personal Meaning Production (t=2.18, p< .05) and Transcendental Awareness (t= 2.05, p< .05). Results suggests that male adolescents have more ability to contemplate the meaning and purpose of life, ability to enter in transcendental state of awareness, critical contemplation of metaphysical issues and ability to expand their consciousness to attain spiritual state in comparison to female adolescents.

Table 2 shows significant difference between male and fe-

male adolescents on the composite score of spiritual intelligence. The mean value indicates that male scored higher than female on composite spiritual intelligence score. This will help them in setting their goals and motives. It could also help them to use their spiritual potentialities to solve the crisis of adolescence as a period by using their transpersonal vision of meaning of life, generosity and to expand their vision of self from the immediate ego selves to their real potentials for spiritual growth. Sisk and Torrance (2001) suggest certain qualities of spiritual intelligence which are: integrity, self-awareness, creative-reasoning, wisdom, self-awareness, and raising the question 'why'. Perhaps these qualities help to the male adolescents to raise their level of SQ.

Conclusion and Implication

Significant difference was found between male and female adolescents on domains and on composite score of spiritual intelligence. Assessing spiritual intelligence as one of the strength within both male and female adolescents would be more useful in creating a productive and satisfactory life.

The period of adolescence is the carving stage of personality. Every child posses the quality of being spiritual. Socializing agencies such as parents at home and educators in schools may contribute to develop spiritual qualities among children and adolescents by correcting their attitude and, behaviour at large. We are living in a fast growing society where values and morality needed to preserved among children and adolescence, to keep their spiritual potentialities intact then only we can understand our intelligence of soul, which is the most promising "spiritual intelligence".

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