

Emotional Intelligence and Spiritual Health among Adults

Deepti Hooda, Nov Rattan Sharma, and Amrita Yadava

M. D. University, Rohtak.

The current study examined the relationship between spiritual domain of health and Emotional intelligence (EI) in a sample of 300 adults. Broadly speaking having meaning and direction in life are the indicators of Spiritual health. Spiritual health was assessed by a Spiritual health scale, whereas Emotional intelligence (EI) was assessed by an Emotional Intelligence Scale which provides scores on five factors i.e. appraisal of negative emotions, appraisal of positive emotions, interpersonal conflict and difficulties, interpersonal skills and flexibility and emotional facilitation and goal orientedness. A Correlational analysis showed significant positive association between Spiritual health and the two components of Emotional intelligence (appraisal of positive emotions and emotional facilitation and goal orientedness) and negatively correlated with one of the Emotional intelligence factor i.e. interpersonal conflict and difficulties. Further, Step-wise regression analysis revealed that out of five, two factors of Emotional intelligence, emotional facilitation and goal orientedness; and interpersonal conflict and difficulties significantly predicted Spiritual Health.

Keywords: Spiritual health, Emotional intelligence

The concept of health is generally defined as a holistic, multi-dimensional phenomenon that includes not only physical, but also emotional, intellectual, occupational, social, and spiritual components (Allen & Yarian, 1981; Eberst, 1984; Greenberg, 1985; Hoyman, 1962; Ram, 1988). Osman and Russell (1979) ushered health professionals along the spiritual health path with the statement, "... the time now has come to accept the spiritual as an important aspect of individual and corporate life and a legitimate dimension of wellbeing." Thus, health is a positive, multidimensional state that involves different domains like physical health, psychological health, social health, spiritual health. Spirituality is having meaning and direction in life. It involves development of positive morals, ethics and values. Being spiritually healthy helps the individual to demonstrate love, hope and a sense of caring for oneself and others too. Spiritual health is an important component of an

individual's well being and an integral aspect of the holistic health philosophy. In simple words, Spiritual health can be defined as finding meaning, seeking peace, and having faith in the process of life. It encompasses a belief in higher reality, a Great Spirit or God and includes attributes such as dedication, devotion, unconditional love, forgiveness, patience, compassion, hope, faith.

Individuals differ not only in their physical characteristics but also in their psychological makeup such as personality, memory, intelligence. Among these emotional intelligence has been found to be associated with a range of outcomes which in a broad sense can be regarded as relating to quality of life. Emotional intelligence refers to the abilities used to process information about one's own emotions and the emotions of others. Emotional intelligence can be defined as the ability to perceive emotion, integrate emotion, to facilitate thought, understand emotion and to regulate emotions to promote

personal growth. In recent research emotional intelligence has been conceptualized in two distinct ways or models – as ability model, which describes emotional intelligence as a set of abilities (Mayer & Salovey, 1997) and other as mixed models which describe emotional intelligence as a set of abilities and personality traits (Bar-on, 1997; Goleman, 1995, 1998).

The intelligent use of the emotions is considered essential for one's physical and psychological adaptation (Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, Turvey & Palfai, 1995). Researchers have examined the ability of intrapersonal and interpersonal competencies, skills and facilitators in influencing one's performance, physical health, psychological health, self-actualization and subjective well-being (Bar-On 2004, 2003, 2001; Bar-On, Handley & Fund, 2005; Krivoy, Weyl Ben-Arush, Bar-On, 2000). The role of emotional intelligence factors in predicting happiness is supported by the findings of Extremera and Fernandez-Berrocal (2006) when all the EI components (Attention, clarity and repair) significantly predict 20% of individual's mental health (happiness, anxiety and depression). Repair and clarity positively, and Emotional Attention negatively predict happiness. Similarly, Furuhan and Petrides (2003) reported that trait emotional intelligence accounted for over 50% of total variance in happiness. The authors in earlier studies (2008, 2009) have reported that various factors of social Intelligence and emotional intelligence significantly predict different components of Positive health (Happiness, Satisfaction with life and Optimism).

But there is a paucity of studies that focus on relationship between emotional intelligence and spiritual component of health. Thus, the present study was conducted to examine association between Emotional intelligence and Spiritual health in adults.

Method

Sample:

A sample of 300 adults (both males and females) of various professions having a mean age of 40.45 years was selected from Chandigarh, Delhi and different cities of Haryana (Rohtak, Bhiwani, Faridabad and Hissar). It was especially ascertained that the respondents had not undergone any major and significant life change during the preceding two months.

Tools:

Emotional intelligence scale: To measure the construct of EI, a version of Emotional intelligence scale suitable for Indian workplace, prepared by Bhattacharya, Dutta and Mandal (2004) was used. It consist of 40 items which were to be answered on a 5- point rating scale ranging from never true to always true. The scale is divided into five factors, the items in factor I indicate about 'appraisal of negative emotions' while items in factor II indicate about 'appraisal of positive emotions'. Interpersonal conflict and difficulties' are reflected in the item structure of factor III. Factor IV has items related to 'interpersonal skills and flexibility' and lastly Factor V to 'emotional facilitation and goal orientedness'. Factor I and II measure appraisal of negative and positive emotions in self-referential manner. Whereas, appraisal of self in interpersonal context was measured through items clustered in Factor III and Factor IV. In this scale 20 items are positive and 20 are negative. Scoring weights were 5,4,3,2,1 for negative items and 1,2,3,4,5 for positive items. The total score may range from 40 to 200. A high score indicates high emotional intelligence. The psychometric indices of the scale are satisfactory.

Spiritual health scale: Spiritual health scale is a sub-scale of life style and habits questionnaire by Nevid, Rathus and Rubenstein (1998). The questionnaire

examines life style and habits with respect to various dimensions of health and related health concerns, such as spiritual health, environmental health social health, exercise and physical fitness. Sub scale of Spiritual health scale consists of only 8 items and the respondents were asked to answer each item using 4-point scale ranging from never to always. Possible obtained scores range from 8 to 32 (0 = never, 1 = sometimes, 3 = usually, 4 = always).

Procedure:

After ascertaining that the subject has not undergone any major and significant life change during the preceding two months, the subject was oriented about the nature of task, general instructions were given. After giving the general instructions, the selected tools were administered one by one in a sequence, so that effect of order and fatigue may be minimized. It was ensured that subjects have understood the method of reply and has responded to all and each of the items. Data of all the subjects was collected by applying the same procedure and were scored as per the scoring patterns prescribed by their authors and/or manuals. The obtained data were subjected to statistical analysis using SPSS software.

Results and Discussion

The correlation matrix has been presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Coefficient of correlations between various factors of Emotional intelligence and Spiritual health.

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Spiritual Health</i>
EI-1-appraisal of negative emotions	-.11
EI-2-appraisal of positive emotions	.26**
EI-3-interpersonal conflicts and difficulties	-.13*
EI-4-interpersonal skills and flexibility	.03
EI-5-emotional facilitation and goal orientedness	.32**

**p<.01, *p<.05

A positive and significant correlation between EI-2-appraisal of positive emotions

and Spiritual health ($r = .26$ $p < .01$) implies that individuals having ability to sense the feelings of others, pay complements to deserving people, enjoy the work and the challenges of life, take decisions and carry innovative ideas possess good Spiritual health.

Spiritual health is negatively correlated with EI-3-interpersonal conflicts and difficulties ($r = -.13$, $p < .05$). Interpersonal conflicts and difficulties factor deals with the appraisal of self in context of interpersonal conflicts and difficulties. Individuals high on this factor do not get frightened when situation change drastically or feel strained with reorganization. Such people are able to maintain balance between work and family affairs. Subjects scoring low on this factor feel that their performance at work is affected by family problems. They become nervous and anxious when others form different opinions than theirs. A negative correlation implies that individuals scoring low on this factor of Emotional intelligence are Spiritually healthy. This may be because of the tendency to indulge more in spiritually health related habits when one is nervous and anxious during times of crisis and reorganization, both at work and family levels.

EI-5-emotional facilitation and goal orientendness is positively correlated with Spiritual health ($r = .32$, $p < .01$). A high score on emotional facilitation and goal orientendness indicates confidence in ones ability and ability to differentiate and compare feelings; and ability to make positive emotions last longer. Their critical comments are pointed towards the behavior and not to people. Thus, a positive significant relationship indicates that individuals high on emotional facilitation and goal orientendness tend to be more Spiritually healthy.

The coefficient of correlation between EI-appraisal of negative emotions and Spiritual health is found to be non-significant($r = -.11$, $p.>0.05$). Spiritual health was also found to

Table 2: Predictors of Spiritual health as shown by step wise multiple regression analysis

Predictors	Multiple R	R Square	R Square Change	B	F	p<
1. EI (emotional facilitation and goal orientedness)	.32	.10	.10	.33	33.96	.01
2. EI (interpersonal conflicts and difficulties)	.34	.12	.02	-.15	19.96	.01

be non-significantly correlated with EI-4- interpersonal skills and flexibility ($r = .03$, $p > .05$). In sum, it can be said that Spiritual health is positively associated with appraisal of positive emotions, and emotional facilitation and goal orientedness; and negatively with interpersonal conflicts and difficulties.

Further, stepwise regression was employed to find a sub set of Emotional Intelligence factors that account for maximum proportion of the variance in spiritual health and to eliminate those that do not make additional contribution to the variables already in the equation. In the present study, there were a total of five predictor variables (Emotional Intelligence factors) and one Criterion variable (Spiritual health).

Regression analysis on spiritual health scores indicate that two predictor variables meet the criteria, as shown in the Table-2. The most significant predictor came out to be EI-emotional facilitation and goal orientedness with multiple R equal to .32 and R^2 equal to .10 ($F = 33.96$, $p < .01$). This implies that Emotional facilitation and goal orientedness accounts for 10% of variance in Spiritual health. EI-3-Interpersonal conflicts and difficulties entered the equation at the next step and increased the multiple R to .34. The $R^2 = .12$ ($F = 19.96$, $p < .01$) indicates that Interpersonal conflicts and difficulties along with Emotional facilitation and goal orientedness account for 12% variance in spiritual health and only 2% variance (R^2 change = .02) when considered alone. The direction of influence for Emotional facilitation and goal orientedness is positive whereas for interpersonal conflicts and difficulties it is

negative. This implies that high emotional facilitation and goal orientedness; and low interpersonal conflicts and difficulties predicted significant enhancement in Spiritual health.

From the above discussion it can be inferred that various factors of Emotional intelligence significantly predict Spiritual health. Implication of the research not only lies in recognizing the importance of emotional intelligence in the Spiritual domain of health but also in designing possible intervention to enhance Emotional Intelligence and in turn to improve Spiritual Health.

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Deepti Hooda, Lecturer Dept. of Psychology, M. D. University, Rohtak.

Nov Rattan Sharma, PhD, Professor, Dept. of Psychology, M. D. University, Rohtak.

Amrita Yadava, PhD, Professor, Dept. of Psychology, M. D. University, Rohtak.

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Editor

Dr. H.L. Kaila

Head (Psychology), Dept. of PG Studies & Research,
6th floor, S.N.D.T. Women's University, Churchgate,
Mumbai-400020,

Mobile: 093220 06518. E-mail: kailahl@hotmail.com