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The Relationship Between Spiritual Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence with Life Satisfaction Among Birjand Gifted Female High School Students

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Abstract

This research determines the relationship between Spiritual Intelligence (SI) and Emotional Intelligence (EI) with Life Satisfaction (LS) among gifted female high school students in Birjand. For this purpose, 123 students were selected considering the Simple Sampling Method. The results revealed that there is generally no meaningful relation between SI and LS, but a meaningful relation between EI and LS does exist. The results of regression analysis showed that "Moral Virtue" in SI and "Appraisal & Expression of Emotion" and "Regulation of Emotion" in EI are meaningful predictors for LS. Also SI together with EI have a meaningful relationship with LS.

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1. Introduction

The divine system of creation is an exceptional system in which human beings have physical, mental, and emotional differences. Among these human beings, there are both feeble minded as well as talented people. The latter is mentally higher than the others and are called gifted people. According to Baum (1986), "a gifted person is someone who shows, or has the potential of showing an exceptional level of performance in one or more areas of expression". The modern study of giftedness relates to the psychology of individual differences. In the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries, the psychological constructs of intelligence, creativity, and motivation provided the foundation for understanding giftedness (Robinson & Clinkenbeard, 2008). Gifted students are children and youth who show high performance capabilities in areas such as intellect, creativity, art, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools in order to fully develop such capabilities (Feidler, 1999). Talented students are inventive, curious, and inquisitive. They show

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a tendency to challenge and complex situations and engage in problem solving that is insightful and creative (Rosado et al., 2008).

Gifted children need to train their personal talent if they are to maximize their potential and build satisfying lives. They have both the potential to select difficult goals for their lives – and for long and arduous career paths that could lie ahead of them – and multiple talents which need sophisticated skills for managing competitive priorities and goals. They need to develop personal talent in order to fulfill their potential and find happiness in their adult lives (Monks & Wagner, 2002). Life Satisfaction has been defined as “an individual’s subjective evaluation of the degree to which his or her most important needs, goals, and wishes have been fulfilled” (Frisch et al., 1992).

Various factors such as education, family life, personality, genetics, economical condition, and social relations can affect Life Satisfaction. On the other hand, intelligence is a variable that can have a significant effect on LS. Thus, we have embarked on this research to study the relation between Spiritual Intelligence (SI) and Emotional Intelligence (EI) on Life Satisfaction (LS).

Emotions are internal events that coordinate many psychological subsystems – including physiological responses, cognitions, and conscious awareness. Emotions typically arise in response to a person's changing relationships (Mayer et al., 2000). EI (or Emotional Intelligence) is the ability “to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions in order to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions” (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). They have further defined EI in a 1997 study of theirs as a set of abilities to process emotional information accurately and effectively, including the ability to perceive, assimilate, understand and manage emotions highlighting the importance of emotional information and the use of reasoning well with that information. Moreover, Ahuja (2011) cites the employees who can better understand themselves and others and be able to better manage their feelings and respond according to the situation will undoubtedly perform better in their jobs; and according to this author, this capability of an individual can be called EI. Whereas Yadav (2011) believes EI is someone's ability to acquire and apply knowledge from his/her emotions and the emotions of others in order to be more successful and lead a more fulfilling life; meanwhile people with a higher EI are better performers than those with lower ones. There is indeed substantial evidence for the positive, life-enhancing aspects of EI, with positive associations of the same being found with happiness, life satisfaction, psychological health, and social network quality and size (Austin et al., 2005; Day et al., 2005; Furnham & Petrides, 2003). Rani in a 2012 study defines an individual's EI as an indicator of how he or she perceives, understands and regulates emotions. In addition, according to Abdullah (2012), an individual with high EI has the ability to deal with people and situations with a positive attitude towards all aspects of life and has the ability to command respect by building relationships. Based upon Varatharaj & Vasantha (2012), the relationship between personal and professional life can be achieved through EI and that it is required to maintain a balance between private and professional life. EI is essential for the accomplishment of day-to-day objectives of life, which are a challenge to everyone.

Another variable that is considered in this research is Spiritual Intelligence (SI). According to Amram and Dryer (2007), EI not only defines a set of abilities that draw on emotional resources but it also involves a set of abilities that draws on spiritual resources. Spirituality is a form of intelligence that predicts functioning and adaptation, as demonstrated by correlations of spirituality, with improved health or well-being (Emmons, 2000a; Emmons, 2000b). SI can be defined as the ability to create meaning based on deep understanding of existential questions, and awareness of and the ability to use multiple levels of consciousness in problem solving (Vaughan, 2002). Another definition has been presented by Wolman (2001) who defines SI as "the human capacity to address the 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". In addition, according to Srivastava & Misra (2012), SI assists people in any context (corporate, community or family) to develop their spiritual awareness, capacity and intelligence, and also to use that intelligence to be more effective as an individual, and to expand their capacity to make a greater contribution to the endeavors of others. Furthermore, based on Abdullah's study of 2012, SI integrates all the dimensions of human life and guides them to live a meaningful life. SI is the ability to find meaning, purpose and value in our lives, connecting our actions and lives to a wider, richer meaning-giving context (Alex & Ajawani, 2011). According to Hosseini et al. (2010), "spirituality 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". In a 2011

research, Suan Chin et al. state, "SI is the set of abilities that individuals use to apply, manifest and embody spiritual resources, values and qualities in ways that enhance their daily functioning and well-being".

2. Objectives

The main objective of this study is to determine the relationship between Spiritual Intelligence (SI) and Emotional Intelligence (EI) on the one hand and Life Satisfaction (LS) among gifted female high school students in Birjand, Iran on the other. The secondary objectives are to determine the relationship between SI and LS and also to specify the relation of EI and LS among gifted female high school students.

3. Framework of the Study

The followings are the three hypotheses that have been analyzed in this paper:

1. There is a relation between SI and LS among gifted female high school students.
2. There is a relation between EI and LS among gifted female high school students.
3. SI and EI play a simultaneous role in predicting LS in gifted female high school students.

In addition, SI and EI are independent variables and have been considered as predictor variables, and LS has been taken into account as a dependent (criterion) variable. Also the gender (female students) has been utilized as the control variable in our study.

4. Methodology

This research has been carried out based on a Correlation Method among 123 gifted female high school students in Birjand, Iran.

4.1. Sampling Method and Respondents

The sample size was defined based upon the Morgan Table. The total number of students under study was 260 and 123 samples were selected according to the above mentioned table. In addition, the Simple Random Method was also considered for sampling.

4.2. Instruments and Measures

For evaluating the research variables, three questionnaires relating to LS (MSLSS presented by Huebner, 2001), EI (SSEIT offered by Schutte et al., 1998), and SI (studied by Badie et al., 2011), have been used as discussed below:

4.2.1. Life Satisfaction Questionnaire

For analyzing the students' Life Satisfaction, a questionnaire named Multi-dimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS) presented by Huebner (2001) has been utilized. The questionnaire contains 40 questions and five dimensions including Family (7 questions), Friends (9 questions), School (8 questions), Living Environment (9 questions), and Self (7 questions). For evaluating the reliability of the questionnaire, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was utilized. The coefficient for the whole test is 0.079 and for the components of Family, Friends, School, Living Environment, and Self are 0.83, 0.58, 0.80, 0.33, and 0.80, respectively.

4.2.2. Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire

For analyzing the students' Emotional Intelligence, the Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test called SSEIT (Schutte et al., 1998) has been implemented. The questionnaire contains 33 questions and four components including Emotional Perception, Utilizing Emotions, Managing Self-Relevant Emotions, and Managing Others'

Emotions which Khosro Javid (2002) has normalized to three components of the Iranian society – containing Appraisal & Expression of Emotion (13 questions), Regulation of Emotions (10 questions), and Utilization of Emotions (10 questions). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient has been used for evaluation of reliability of the questionnaire. The coefficient for the whole test is 0.79 and the components of Appraisal & Expression of Emotions, Regulation of Emotion, and Utilization of Emotion standard at 0.62, 0.53, and 0.58, respectively.

4.2.3. *Spiritual Intelligence Questionnaire*

For analyzing the students' Spiritual Intelligence, the Spiritual Intelligence Questionnaire by an Iranian researcher (Badie et al., 2011) has been utilized. The questionnaire contains 42 questions and four components including Beliefs (12 questions), Problem-Encountering Ability (14 questions), Moral Virtue (9 questions), and Self-Conscious

(7 questions). For evaluating the reliability of the questionnaire, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient has been used. The coefficient for the whole test is 0.69 and the components of Beliefs, Problem-Encountering Ability, Moral Virtue, and Self-Conscious are 0.58, 0.62, 0.72, and 0.64, respectively.

5. Statistical Analysis

After the data was accumulated and processed by SPSS software, the research hypotheses were analyzed using both the descriptive statistical as well as the inferential statistical method. In addition, Mean and Standard Deviation have been applied in descriptive statistics and also, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient and Regression Analysis have been utilized for both data analysis and evaluation of the hypotheses in inferential statistics.

6. Results

6.1. *Relation between SI and LS*

For analyzing the relation between SI and LS, Correlation Coefficient has been utilized; the coefficients have been exhibited in the Table 1. Based on the correlation coefficient (0.220), there's a meaningful relation between the component "Beliefs" in SI, and the component "Living Environment" in LS. There is also a meaningful relation between the component "Moral Virtue" in SI, and the components "Family" and "Friends" in LS so that the correlation coefficient for the component "Moral Virtue" and "Family" is 0.276 and the coefficient for the component "Moral Virtue" and "Friends" is 0.201. It means that those who have more Moral Virtue have better relations with their Family and Friends.

6.2. *Relation between EI and LS*

The analysis of the Correlation Coefficient showed that there's a meaningful relationship between the component "Appraisal & Expression of Emotion" in EI, and the components "Family", "Friends", and "School" in LS. There's also a meaningful relation between the component "Regulation of Emotion" in EI, and the components "Family" and "Living Environment" in LS. In addition, there's a meaningful relation between the component "Utilization of Emotion" in EI, and the components "Family" and "Living Environment" in LS. The results of the Correlation Coefficients between the components of SI, EI, and LS are shown in Table 1. As seen in Table 1, the correlation coefficient for the component "Appraisal & Expression of Emotion" and the components "Family", "Friends", and "School" is 0.303, 0.447, and 0.314, respectively. In addition, the above mentioned coefficient for the component "Regulation of Emotion" and the components "Family" and "Living Environment" is 0.359 and 0.298, respectively. On the other hand, the above-mentioned coefficient for the component "Utilization of Emotion" and the components "Family" and "Living Environment" is 0.238 and 0.219, respectively.

Table 1. Correlation Coefficients Matrix for the components of SI, EI, and LS

| Variables and Components | 1. B | 2. PEA | 3. MV | 4. SC | 5. AEE | 6. RE | 7. UE | 8. F | 9. Fr | 10. S | 11. LE |
|--|----------|--------|----------|--------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|--------|
| SI | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Beliefs (B) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Problem-Encountering Ability (PEA) | 0.079 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Moral Virtue (MV) | 0.388 ** | 0.161 | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Self-Conscious (SC) | 0.436 ** | 0.027 | 0.374 ** | | | | | | | | |
| EI | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Appraisal & Expression of Emotion (AEE) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. Regulation of Emotion (RE) | | | | | 0.222 ** | | | | | | |
| 7. Utilization of Emotion (UE) | | | | | 0.389 ** | 0.254 ** | | | | | |
| LS | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8. Family (F) | 0.077 | -0.053 | 0.276 ** | 0.029 | 0.303 ** | 0.359 ** | 0.005 | | | | |
| 9. Friends (Fr) | 0.140 | 0.103 | 0.201 * | -0.080 | 0.447 ** | 0.107 | 0.238 ** | 0.504 ** | | | |
| 10. School (S) | -0.022 | -0.109 | -0.009 | 0.180 | 0.314 ** | 0.157 | -0.054 | 0.445 ** | 0.343 ** | | |
| 11. Living Environment (LE) | 0.220 * | 0.037 | 0.115 | 0.84 | 0.034 | 0.298 ** | 0.219 * | 0.172 | 0.325 ** | 0.111 | |
| 12. Self | 0.056 | -0.177 | 0.037 | -0.126 | 0.74 | -0.165 | -0.175 | 0.156 | 0.246 ** | 0.539 ** | 0.032 |

** Correlation Coefficient is meaningful at the level of 0.01

* Correlation Coefficient is meaningful at the level of 0.05

6.3. The simultaneous role of SI and EI in predicting LS

Multi-Stage Regression Analysis has been used for proving the simultaneous role of SI and EI in predicting LS. In addition, Step-By-Step Method has been utilized for processing the variables. In this analysis, LS has been considered as a criterion variable and the two components of "Appraisal & Expression of Emotion" and "Regulation of Emotion" in EI and the component "Moral Virtue" in SI have been taken into account as predictor variables in the regression equation.

Based upon the Step-By-Step Method and in the first step, the amounts for "Appraisal & Expression of Emotion" are $\beta=0.33$, $t=3.88$, and $P<0.01$. In the second step, and due to entering the component "Moral Virtue" to the regression equation, the amounts for "Appraisal & Expression of Emotion" are $\beta=0.35$, $t=4.14$, and $P<0.01$ and also the amounts for the component "Moral Virtue" are $\beta=0.19$, $t=2.29$, and $P<0.05$. In the third step, and because of entering the component "regulation of Emotion", the amounts for "Appraisal and Expression of Emotion" are $\beta=0.30$, $t=3.56$, and $P<0.01$ and the amounts for Moral Virtue are $\beta=0.20$, $t=2.39$, and $P<0.01$; and also for the component "Regulation of Emotion", the amounts are $\beta=0.19$, $t=2.29$, and $P<0.05$. Based on the amount of β , the component "Appraisal & Expression of Emotion" plays a more important role in LS.

7. Discussion and Conclusion

Based upon the Correlation Coefficients presented in Table 1 in our research, we can conclude that the EI components have more impact on LS than the SI components. This made us conclude there is no positive and meaningful relation between SI (in general) and LS in our study. On the other hand, the results of a 2006 study by Perrone et al. showed that spirituality impacted on the work, marriage, parenting, and life satisfaction of gifted adults. Another research by Kelley & Miller (2007) indicates that spirituality and religiousness have generally reported positive correlations between internal characteristics and well-being including life satisfaction. Hence, it seems that the difference between our research and the aforesaid findings originates from individual, cultural, social

and economical strata differences as well as a difference in the type of school and values.

Some researchers confirm our study in the field of the relation between EI and LS. For example, according to Takšić and Mohorić (2006), EI skills and competence are important in reaching and maintaining LS and positive outcomes. Another research which approves our findings is the study by Wong and Chau (2001) in Hong Kong. Their results indicated that EI is positively related to LS, and to performance in moral, social and intellectual development. In addition, Ghorbanshiroudi et al. (2011) have shown that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction. The results of regression analysis in a study by Naderi et al. (2010) also revealed that spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence were significant predictive variables concerning life satisfaction.

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