

# Spiritual Intelligence and Life Satisfaction among Married and Unmarried Females

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## Abstract

The present research was performed to survey a relationship between spiritual intelligence and life satisfaction in two groups, married and unmarried females in the city of Esfahan, Iran. A total of 202 females were selected by the simple random sampling method to participate in this study. It used the King's Spiritual Intelligence Inventory and Philip Carter's Life Satisfaction Inventory to measure the variables. The research was designed according to the correlational method. For statistical analysis of data, it used the Pearson's correlation method, multivariate regression and independent t-test. The results of this study showed a meaningful relation between life satisfaction and spiritual intelligence. There was also a relation between life satisfaction in the two groups of married and unmarried females, however there was no difference in terms of spiritual intelligence in these two groups. The results of regression analysis have shown that spiritual intelligence is predictive of life satisfaction. Further, findings indicated that the rate of life satisfaction in married females is more than in unmarried females.

## Keywords

Females, Life Satisfaction, Married Females, Spiritual Intelligence

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## 1. Introduction

Scientists believe that neither the intelligence quotient nor social intelligence can adequately explain the complexity of intelligence and vast richness of the human soul. Computers have high classic intelligence for which programs can operate without mistakes. Animals enjoy high emotional intelligence and know how to respond accurately to situations. However, neither computers nor animals understand the reasons for performing their roles, situations or how to function differently and more efficiently.

We can perceive behavioral models and rules by two types of thought processes (intelligent quotient and emotional intelligence). Nevertheless, through the third thought process (spiritual intelligence) we create situations and rules. Spiritual intelligence makes possible to perform creatively and wisely the legislation [1]. A recent scientific description of the human brain, takes into consideration three types of constructs, mental, emotional and spiritual. When we use our brains for thought, this process does not only include the brain and intelligent quotient, but also feelings or emotional intelligence as well as spirituality, values, hopes and meaningful-

ness, or spiritual intelligence. Spiritual intelligence refers to orientation in life and the ability to improve all cruelties and hatreds [2]. In the light of attention to spirituality, an established concept in psychological studies is spiritual intelligence. As emotional intelligence differs from emotion, spiritual intelligence is not the same as spirituality. Spiritual intelligence integrates the constructs of spirituality and intelligence into a new construct. Spirituality is connected to seeking and experiencing sacred elements, meaningfulness, high levels of alertness, transcendence and utmost human potential. Spiritual intelligence requires abilities which are obtained from spiritual subjects and predicts the function and individual conformity for development of valuable results. In general, spiritual intelligence differs from spirituality and spiritual experiences like the expression of monotheism or spiritual beliefs, such as believing in God [3]. Spiritual intelligence is a framework for identification and organization of skills and abilities required for adaptive use of spirituality (Emmons, 1999). It is a collection of abilities obtained from spiritual sources.

Nasel [4] believes that spiritual intelligence consists of abilities that we can recognize our other spiritual abilities and resources, and resolve existential and practical subjects. Spiritual intelligence assists with problem solving and the promotion of an individual's capacity for decision making. Thus, spiritual intelligence is one of the abilities that differentiates humans from other creatures. Sisk [5] describes spiritual intelligence as a deep self-awareness in which the individual becomes increasingly informed about the dimension of self not only as a body, but rather as a body, mind and soul. He states that when we employ spiritual intelligence, we reach a point in which the mind accelerates required data processes.

With due attention to components such as the ability to use spiritual resources for solving problems [6] we can claim that their application in daily life increases an individual's flexibility. On this basis, many believe spiritual intelligence has significant role in existential problem solving and seeking meaning and goals in everyday actions and life events [4] [7]-[11].

The results of a study by Akbarizadeh *et al.* [12] show that spiritual intelligence has a meaningful and positive connection with components such as general health. The study added that among demographical features (age, gender, workplace, marital status, and type of academic degree) only the workplace has shown a meaningful, positive relation with the spiritual intelligence. This research indicated that promotion of spiritual intelligence and reinforcement of tenacity as a personality trait can help the promotion of nurses' general health.

Another study performed by Haditabar *et al.* [13] determined that instruction in spiritual intelligence influenced the octopod dimension of life quality (physical function, limitation of role in connection with physical health, role limitation in relation to emotional problems, vivacity, emotional wellbeing, social function, pain, and general health) in wives of handicapped veterans. Deikman [14] also refers to the effect of spiritual intelligence on mental health. Feelings of well-being or life satisfaction are important mental features that healthy individuals should enjoy. Satisfaction with life is a reliable, inclusive concept which reflects the feeling and general viewpoint of a society towards the world in which they live [15]. Seligman [16] regards life satisfaction to be a reflection of balance between an individual's desires and his/her present situation. In other words, no matter how much the gap between an individual's level of expectation and his/her objective is increased, there will be a decrease in satisfaction (Zaki, 1386).

For some, satisfaction with life is defined as future hope, whereas future hope is one of the consequences of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with life, such that when a person is completely satisfied with their life, they become more hopeful about the future. As a whole, satisfaction with life is the feeling of prosperity because the individual finds meaning and satisfaction in life, from the past to the present with hope of a desirable life in the future. Yang (2002) has reported a meaningful relation between the rate of an individual's combativeness and decreased satisfaction with life. Numerous studies have shown a widespread connection between satisfaction with life and numerous psychological behaviors and states that included depression, self-esteem, and hope (Arnidul, 2007). The findings of Losoncz [17] have shown that students who enjoy a higher level of satisfaction in life have greater feelings of welfare and happiness.

Satisfaction with life is one of the efficient factors of human promotion and evolution. This issue is particularly important amongst women. The results have shown a meaningful relation between spiritual intelligence and life satisfaction, as well as between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction. Spiritual and emotional intelligence variables are predictors of life satisfaction [18]. Fabricatore *et al.* [19] have found that spirituality influences general satisfaction with life. Personal spirituality is a reliable predictor of increased satisfaction with life. Starks and Hughey [20] in a survey of the relation between spirituality and life satisfaction in African American women have shown that women who had higher religious towards spirituality enjoyed meaningful

correlations with satisfaction in life. Spirituality was a variable that played a role in life satisfaction in middle aged African women despite their age, income and education levels. The results of a study by Okulicz-Kozaryn [21] have also shown that being religious was connected to higher satisfaction with life.

With due attention to the aforementioned studies and the importance of satisfaction with life and recognition of factors related to this satisfaction, this research sought to determine if a connection between spiritual intelligence and life satisfaction existed in two groups, unmarried and married females. Spiritual intelligence was defined based on individuals' adjustment abilities that consequently influenced satisfaction with life. We have additionally sought to determine if there was a significant difference in two groups, university and theological students concerning spiritual intelligence and satisfaction with life.

## 2. Materials and Methods

### 2.1. Research Method

This was a correlational research study that intended to determine if there was a connection between spiritual intelligence and satisfaction with life in two groups of females, unmarried and married.

### 2.2. Statistical Population and Research Sample

This study enrolled a total of 202 females, 101 married and 101 unmarried who were residents of Esfahan, Iran. Participants were chosen by the simple random sampling method.

### 2.3. Measurement Tools

This research used two questionnaires, the Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (SISRI) and The Life Orientation Test (LOT-R), to assess spiritual intelligence and satisfaction with life. Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory was developed by King. There are 24 items measured in a five-degree Likert scale. In 2007, a study of 619 students of Terent University in Canada determined that the SISRI had a Cronbach's alpha value of 95% and reliability by the split half method of 84%. Another study that used the factor analysis method resulted in Cronbach's alpha and standardized alpha values of 92%. Raqib *et al.* (1387) reported a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the questionnaire at 89%. In their study, the validity coefficient of the spiritual intelligence inventory through retest in 70 participants over a two-week interval was calculated at 67%. Life Orientation Test consists of 25 questions. It was developed by Carter and translated by Karami into Farsi. The reliability of the LOT-R according to Cronbach's alpha is 78% (Psychometrics Publications, 1388).

## 3. Results

Descriptive indices of life satisfaction and spiritual intelligence according to marital status are shown in **Table 1**. As seen in **Table 1**, the mean of age for unmarried participants was 22.13 years; for married participants, it was 27.79 years. The majority of participants ( $n = 98$ ) had a B.A. degree whereas 28 had a theological education.

There was a statistically significant correlation between life satisfaction and spiritual intelligence ( $p \leq 0.01$ ; **Table 2**) which confirmed the hypothesis, "There is a connection between life satisfaction and spiritual intelligence". It concluded that with increased spiritual intelligence, there was increased life satisfaction. This relation was also observed in unmarried (8.06) compared to married females (16.81).

As shown in **Table 3**, the t-test result for life satisfaction was  $-2.454$ , which was statistically significant. Therefore, the hypothesis, "there is a difference in life satisfaction between the two groups, married and unmarried females" was confirmed at the 0.05 level of significance. According to the means of both groups, life satisfaction in married females was significantly more than unmarried females. Additionally, results of the table shows comparison of married and unmarried female based on spiritual question ( $p = 0.280$ ). Hence, the hypothesis, "There is a difference in spiritual intelligence between the two groups, married and unmarried females" was rejected. It concluded that no meaningful difference existed between married and unmarried females concerning spiritual intelligence.

The hypothesis, "There is a difference in the two groups of theological and university education" showed a t-test value of  $-1.006$ , which was not statistically significant. Hence, no significant difference existed in the rate of life satisfaction between the two groups of theological and university educated females.

**Table 1.** Mean and standard deviation of life satisfaction and spiritual intelligence according to marital status.

Variable	Marriage	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Kurtosis	Skewness
Life Satisfaction	Unmarried	101	27.17	6.9	0	49	2.355	0.727
	Married	101	29.3	5.33	14	42	0.186	0.027
	Total	202	28.23	6.24	0	49	2.142	0.601
Spiritual Intelligence	Unmarried	102	67.07	13.35	0	94	5.031	1.421
	Married	101	69.17	14.24	35	95	0.243	0.550
	Total	203	68.11	13.8	0	95	2.089	0.917

**Table 2.** Correlation coefficient among research components.

Research Variables	Girls (n = 101)			Women (n = 101)			Total (n = 202)		
	r	p	Effect size	r	p	Effect size	r	p	Effect size
Relation of life satisfaction and spiritual intelligence	0.284	**0.004	8.06	0.410	**0.001	16.81	0.353	**0.001	12.46

**Table 3.** Independent t-test results between research components.

Research variables	Life Satisfaction			Spiritual Intelligence		
	T	df	p	T	df	p
Marriage Status	-2.454	200	0.015	-1.084	201	0.280
Education Status	-1.006	200	0.316	-1.465	201	0.144

According to **Table 3**, the t-test rate of  $-1.465$  was not statistically significant for the hypothesis, "There is a difference in the two groups, theological and university educated, concerning spiritual intelligence". Therefore this hypothesis was rejected. There was no meaningful difference among the groups with theological and university education, in terms of the rate of spiritual intelligence.

The correlation between the component of spiritual intelligence on one part and life satisfaction on the other was determined to be  $R = 0.353$ . If this coefficient is squared, it equals  $0.125$ . According to calculations, there was a 12.5% variance or individual differences in spiritual intelligence related to variance or individual differences in life satisfaction, which was statistically significant ( $p = 0.001$ ). The hypothesis, "Spiritual intelligence is a predictor of life satisfaction" was confirmed at the 0.01 level of significance. The correlation between spiritual intelligence and life satisfaction in married females equaled  $0.284$ . If this coefficient is squared, the result will be  $0.081$ . There was an 8.1% variance or individual differences in spiritual intelligence related to the variance or individual differences in life satisfaction amongst women which was statistically significant ( $p = 0.004$ ).

Finally, the correlation between spiritual intelligence and life satisfaction in unmarried females equaled  $0.407$ . If this coefficient is squared, it will equal to  $0.166$  which showed that 16.6% of variance or individual differences in spiritual intelligence were related to the variance or individual differences in life satisfaction. This correlation was statistically significant ( $p = 0.001$ ).

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

As previously mentioned, this study researched the relationship between spiritual intelligence and life satisfaction among two groups, married and unmarried female residents of Esfahan, Iran. Results of this study showed a significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and life satisfaction. Increased spiritual intelligence resulted in increased life satisfaction which was congruent with the findings of Naderi and Roushani [18], Fabrikator *et al.* [19], and Akbarizadeh *et al.* [12].

According to the results, there were significant differences in the rate of satisfaction with life between married and unmarried females. With due attention to the means of both groups, it observed that married females had meaningfully more life satisfaction compared with unmarried females. Hence, this result has confirmed that being married has caused increased happiness and peace.

The present results have also shown that university and theological students do not have meaningful differences in terms of spiritual intelligence, however, in general spiritual issues or practical religious commitments

among theological students are more significant.

We observed that spiritual intelligence predicted life satisfaction among married and unmarried females, which agreed with studies by Naderi and Roushani [18], Fabricatore *et al.* [19], and Starks and Hughey [20].

In general, numerous factors can either directly, indirectly, positively or negatively influence life satisfaction in married females. Individuals that had high scores for spiritual intelligence go beyond the limit of body and material, and experience a high alertness and use problem solving resources. The ethical transcendental characteristics such as humility, forgiveness, gratitude, pity and remission are more significant among these people. They have a positive viewpoint towards the world and by possessing superior ethical traits, and have more satisfaction in their lives. The rate of spiritual intelligence can play a fundamental role in improving different aspects of life, in particular, the rate of an individual's satisfaction with life. Therefore, we can use spiritual intelligence components to increase our life satisfaction.

Limitations of this study included the research population; we did not have access to married and unmarried females from the entire city of Esfahan. The deficiency of required recourses related to the subject of research that is we did not have sources for the referral of some of our research findings. We recommend that researchers study the effects of spiritual intelligence on other aspects of life such as marital and job satisfaction.

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