

## **Spiritual Intelligence and Quality of Life among High and Low Performing Managers**

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### **Abstract**

*The present study was an attempt to explore the relationship of Spiritual intelligence with the quality of life among high and low performing managers of established existing commercial concerns. The correlation design was used to see the relationship of between the variables among high and low performing managers followed by t-test to explore the difference between high and low performing managers on these variables using standardized tools to get the observations of the participants on their spiritual intelligence and quality of life having reliable and valid psychometric properties. The result showed the significant and positive relationship between the spiritual intelligence and quality of life among high and low performing managers, however, high performing managers outperform the low performing managers in terms of their spiritual intelligence and as well on their quality of life.*

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Stress has become a common feature and a precursor to many health problems in a rapidly changing industrial environment. The technique to develop transcendental awareness such as transcendental meditation has been found effective in lowering physiological and psychological indicators of stress (Schneider, et al, 1995). Further transcendental awareness, helps the person to overcome personal limitation and enhances the concern for others. This will result in a positive change in a person's perspective towards others, thus enhances richness in all gamut's of life. Huang (2000) reported that self-transcendence was positively correlated with personal growth and positive relation with others.

Dent, Higgins, and Wharff (2005) thought that there has been an expanding interest in the incorporation and use of spirituality to organizational performance. In an investigation, Jurkiewicz and Giacalone (2004) recommended a positive connection between spirituality and performance at the workplace moderated through greater motivation, commitment, and adaptability, and flexibility towards autorotative changes and organizational change. Other authors, such as Neck and Milliman (1994) have argued that spirituality in the workplace can bind employees to the company and enhance job performance. Aburdene, (2005) argued that beyond emotional intelligence development, the application of spirituality and spiritual principles to the critical issue of retaining the high performing employees will result in improved employee tenure, increased employee motivation and enthusiasm, and greater work productivity.

It can further be argued that individuals sometimes might be forced to join a job, because of financial reasons. These jobs can become more and more taxing and demanding on their physical, psychological, and emotional resources as well as on the effectiveness of the organization. In such a situation, if a person is emotionally intelligent he will be able to establish a good interpersonal relationship with people at his workplace and will be emotionally stable, but he will not be able to perform at his best until and unless he can derive meaning and purpose from his job. This need for purpose and meaning in life can be adequately addressed by spiritual intelligence which can enhance and sustain his performance and job satisfaction which further helps in enhancing the person's physical and psychological health along with social relationships and in turn quality of life.

Moreover, cut-throat competition in the job market may sometimes force the individual to join a job for the sake of making a living. These jobs can become more and more taxing and demanding on their physical, psychological, and emotional resources as well as on the effectiveness of the organization. In such a situation, if a person is spiritually intelligent he/she will be able to derive meaning and purpose out of his job besides, good interpersonal relationship with people at his workplace and will be emotionally stable and consequently enhance and sustain his/her physical and psychological health along with social relationship and ultimately the quality of life. Therefore, the role of spiritual intelligence becomes crucial in organizational setup and hence need importance.

Therefore, the present study was designed to explore the relationship of spiritual intelligence with the quality of life of high and low performing managers in commercial setups with the following objectives:

- To study the direction and magnitude of the relationship of spiritual intelligence with the quality of life of high and low performing managers.

- To explore the differences between high and low performing managers on their spiritual intelligence and quality of life.

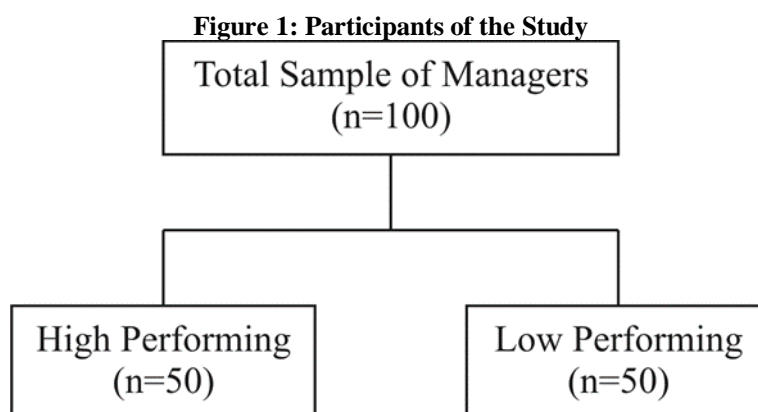
## I. Methodology:

Design:

In the present study, correlation design was used to explore the relationship of spiritual intelligence with the quality of life among high and low performers followed by a t-test.

Participants:

The study comprises 100 managers in total having 7- 10 years of experience with an MBA as a minimum qualification and who have at least three layers of subordination working under them. The participants were selected based on performance rating as high and low given by the respective organizations with the assurance of keeping their details confidential. Finally 50 high and 50 low performing managers were included in the study.



Tool Used:

The following standardized scale was applied in the present study:

1. To assess the spiritual intelligence of the participants Spiritual Intelligence Self Report Inventory (SISRI-24), a 24 items self-report measure was used. This measure is based upon the model of spiritual intelligence given by King (2008). There are four dimensions of spiritual intelligence viz. Critical Existential Thinking, Personal Meaning Production, Transcendental Awareness, and Conscious State Extension as per this model.
2. To measure the quality of life of managers the World Health Organization Quality of Life – BREF (WHOQOL- BREF), was used in the study. This is a self-report measure of the quality of life having four domains of quality of life comprising 26 items.

## II. Result And Discussion

The result of correlation analysis revealed that the overall spiritual intelligence is positively and significantly correlated with the overall quality of life ( $r=.59$   $p<.01$ ), and its sub-factors viz physical health ( $r=.46$ ,  $p<.01$ ), psychological health ( $r=.46$ ,  $p<.01$ ), social relationship ( $r=.54$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and the environment ( $r=.29$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Whereas the correlation of the sub-factors of spiritual intelligence i.e., critical existential thinking ( $r=.52$   $p<.01$ ), personal meaning production ( $r=.37$   $p<.05$ ), transcendental awareness ( $r=.50$   $p<.01$ ), and conscious state expansion ( $r=.38$   $p<.01$ ) are also positively and significantly correlated with the overall quality of life among high performing managers (See Table 1).

Correspondingly, in the case of low performing managers, correlations of overall spiritual intelligence are positively and significantly correlated with the overall quality of life ( $r=.47$   $p<.01$ ), and its sub-factors viz physical health ( $r=.36$ ,  $p<.01$ ), psychological health ( $r=.39$ ,  $p<.01$ ), social relationship ( $r=.40$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and the environment ( $r=.34$ ,  $p<.05$ ). While the correlation of the sub-factors of spiritual

**Table 1. Correlation values of Spiritual intelligence and Quality of life among High Performing Managers.**

VARIABLES		Spiritual Intelligence					Quality of Life				
		Critical Existential Thinking	Personal Meaning Production	Transcendental Awareness	Conscious State Expansion	Overall Spiritual Intelligence	Physical	Psychological Health	Social relationships	Environment	Overall Quality of Life
Spiritual Intelligence	Critical Existential Thinking	1	.64**	.34*	.40**	.76**	.32*	.52**	.46**	.26	.52**
	Personal Meaning Production		1	.33*	.59**	.80**	.26	.41**	.35*	.06	.37**
	Transcendental Awareness			1	.26	.75**	.41**	.26	.51**	.31*	.50**
	Conscious State Expansion				1	.67**	.41**	.28*	.23	.21	.38**
	Overall Spiritual Intelligence					1	.46**	.46**	.54**	.29*	.59**
Quality of life	Physical						1	.43**	.41**	.42**	.78**
	Psychological Health							1	.53**	.22	.74**
	Social relationships								1	.38**	.78**
	Environment									1	.67**
	Overall Quality of Life										1

\* .05 level of significance

\*\* .01 level of significance

**Table 2. Correlation Values of Spiritual intelligence and Quality of life among Low Performing Managers.**

VARIABLES		Spiritual Intelligence					Quality of Life				
		Critical Existential Thinking	Personal Meaning Production	Transcendental Awareness	Conscious State Expansion	Overall Spiritual Intelligence	Physical	Psychological Health	Social relationships	Environment	Overall Quality of Life
Spiritual Intelligence	Critical Existential Thinking	1	.37**	.36*	.23	.63**	.34*	.27	.34*	.19	.38**
	Personal Meaning Production		1	.33*	.43**	.72**	.35*	.26	.50**	.26	.47**
	Transcendental Awareness			1	.50**	.76**	.20	.28*	.18	.21	.30*
	Conscious State Expansion				1	.76**	.24	.22	.29*	.28*	.35*
	Overall Spiritual Intelligence					1	.36*	.39**	.40**	.34*	.47**
Quality of life	Physical						1	.49**	.39**	.57**	.80**
	Psychological Health							1	.37**	.38**	.73**
	Social relationships								1	.27	.70**
	Environment									1	.76**
	Overall Quality of Life										1

\* .05 level of significance

\*\* .01 level of significance

**Table 3.: Spiritual Intelligence and Quality of Life among High and Low Performing Managers**

Main Variable	Variables Sub Variable	High Performing Managers		Low Performing managers		't' value
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	
Spiritual Intelligence	Critical Existential Thinking	17.88	2.88	16.20	2.71	3.00**
	Personal Meaning Production	16.06	2.85	14.94	2.56	2.07*
	Transcendental Awareness	20.20	4.13	17.62	2.40	3.82**
	Conscious State Expansion	14.34	2.11	13.62	2.59	1.52
	Overall Spiritual Intelligence	68.36	8.82	62.62	7.77	3.45**
Quality of Life	Physical Health	63.04	9.73	62.14	9.93	.46
	Psychological	69.14	8.81	58.96	10.63	5.21**
	Social Relationship	94.86	8.82	86.50	12.67	3.83**
	Environment	67.56	8.48	58.94	13.03	3.92**
	Overall Quality of life	294.60	26.61	266.54	34.42	4.56**

\* .05 level of significance

\*\* .01 level of sign

intelligence i.e., critical existential thinking ( $r=.38$   $p<.01$ ), personal meaning production ( $r=.47$   $p<.01$ ), transcendental awareness ( $r=.30$   $p<.05$ ), and conscious state expansion ( $r=.35$   $p<.05$ ) are also positively and significantly correlated with the overall quality of life among low performing managers (See Table 2). It is evident that spiritual intelligence and its sub-factors are significantly and positively correlated with quality of life.

However, the result of the t-test showed (See Table 3) the significant difference between the high and low performing managers on their overall spiritual intelligence ( $t = 3.45$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and on their scores of its sub-factors i.e., critical existential thinking ( $t = 3.00$ ,  $p<.01$ ), personal meaning production ( $t= 2.07$ ,  $p<.01$ ), transcendental awareness ( $t=3.82$ ,  $p<.01$ ), except conscious state expansion ( $t= 1.52$ ,  $p>.05$ ). Here again, the mean scores of high performing were on the higher side than the scores of the low performing managers on these variables i.e., overall spiritual intelligence ( $M=68.36/M=66.62$ ) and its sub-factors, critical existential thinking ( $M=17.88/ M=16.20$ ), personal meaning production ( $M=16.06/M=14.94$ ), transcendental awareness ( $M=20.20/ M=17.62$ ) and conscious state expansion ( $M=14.34/13.62$ ).

Correspondingly, the significant difference was also observed in their overall quality of life ( $t=4.56$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and its sub-factors, psychological health ( $t= 5.21$ ,  $p<.01$ ), social relationship ( $t=3.83$ ,  $p<.01$ ), environment ( $t = 3.92$ ,  $p<.01$ ). However no significant difference was observed on its sub- factor i.e., physical health ( $t = .46$ ,  $p>.05$ ). The mean scores of high performing managers were also higher than the scores of low performing managers on these variables i.e., overall quality of life ( $M=294.60/M=266.54$ ) and its sub-factors, physical health ( $M=63.04/M=62.14$ ), psychological health ( $M=69.14/M=58.96$ ), social relationship ( $M=94.86/M=86.50$ ), Environment ( $M=67.56/M=58.94$ ).

The result of the correlation clearly revealed the significant and positive relationship of spiritual intelligence with the quality of life among high and low performing managers. Further, the result of the t-test showed a significant difference between overall spiritual intelligence along with its subfactors and as well on the overall quality of life and its subfactors between high and low performing managers. Besides, the high performing managers showed the higher mean scores of high performing managers than the low performing managers both in their overall emotional intelligence along with its sub-factors and as well as on their overall quality of life and its subfactors i.e., high performing managers outperform the low performing managers on their spiritual intelligence and as well on their quality of life, thus, confirmed the significant and positive relationship of spiritual intelligence with the quality of life.

The results of the present study corroborate with the results of earlier work done in the area directly and indirectly, though research is lacking and needs to explore more in the field.

Spirituality has been found positively associated with better physical health and longer life (Elmer, MacDonald, and Friedman, 2003; and Seaward, 1995). Spirituality has been reported as a critical component of health-related adaptability (Miller and Thoresen, 2003; and Jones, 1991). Emmons (2000b) revealed that spiritually-oriented persons tend to respond in a better way when facing injury and they can handle trauma in a better way. In another study, Piedmont, (2004) revealed that spirituality was positively correlated with substance abuse recovery. It can further be argued a higher level of spiritual intelligence will affect risky healthy behaviour i.e. excessive smoking and alcohol intake during a crisis, by providing a meaningful solution to the problems.

Spiritual wellbeing has been associated with a more active cognitive coping style and lower psychological distress in cancer patients (Ben-Arye, et al, 2006: Brady, Peterman, Fitchett, and Cella, 1999). Spiritual-based coping strategies have been related to the higher quality of life in a person suffering from spinal cord injuries (Matheis, et. al., 2006) and high blood pressure (Simony, Martone and Kerwin, 2002). All these findings indicate that while facing critical health conditions spiritual resources helps the person in healthy coping hence are instrumental in enhancing a person's quality of life by positively affecting his physical health.

Spiritual intelligence has also been positively related to good psychological health. George Larson, Koenig & McCullough (2000) found a positive relationship between the existence of life purpose and satisfaction in a person's life. It can be argued that people having higher spiritual intelligence tend to have a life purpose which is an indicator of good psychological health, as depression and suicidal thoughts are often the results of a loss of purpose in life. A positive correlation was found between spiritual well being and general self-efficacy in employees of 100 fortune companies (Trotts, 1996). Fournier (1998) in a study of suicide survivors reported that spiritual well-being was highly valuable in stress reduction and adaptability among them. Mascaro and Rosen (2005) reported that personal meaning, correlated positively with hope and negatively with depression and neuroticism. They asserted that higher spiritual intelligence enhances the person's ability to construct personal meaning in all physical and mental experiences which acts as a buffer between stress and depression. Ellermann and Reed (2001) also found a negative correlation between self-transcendence and depression among middle aged adults. Cahn and Polich (2006) observed that an altered state of consciousness induced through meditation results in the reduction of stress by relaxing the mind.

Further, researchers have linked spiritual intelligence with good interpersonal and social relationships. Wigglesworth (2002) argued that spiritual intelligence in its real sense might be one of the most important contributing factors in enhancing the quality of social relationships of a person. King (2008) has opined that people with higher spiritual intelligence can perceive the non-material aspects of self, other and physical things around them, i.e. transcendental awareness. It can be argued that and will help a person to overcome discrimination and biases based on the narrow boundaries of race, caste, color, social & economic status, nationalities, and regionalism. Further, the feeling of interconnectedness with others reduces the negative feeling of anger, hostility, and jealousy towards others and thus becomes instrumental in reducing interpersonal conflicts. Spiritual intelligence enhances the capacity of a person to find meaning and purpose in every aspect of life, thus he will be able to find true meaning in all personal and professional relationships which will enrich the relationships. Thus spiritual intelligence is positively related to the social relationship and it reduces the biases, discriminations, and conflicts in the social relationship by providing a feeling of interconnectedness, holistic perception, and better personal meaning hence positively related to social relationship.

A higher level of spiritual intelligence will enhance a person's ability to find meaning and purpose in life which will ultimately lead to higher performance (Amram, 2007; Willbur, 2006). The feeling of interconnectedness will lower the biases and negative emotions towards other people in organizations and will enhance the quality of the relationship between the managers and the productive environment at the workplace. The better quality of the relationship will in turn provide the much-needed psychological support while dealing with the stressful situations hence, lowering the impact of stressful situations on a person's psychological and physical health.

Hence, It is clear from the above discussions that spiritual intelligence in terms of its sub-factors, critical existential thinking, personal meaning production, transcendental awareness, and conscious state expansion is positively and significantly associated with the Quality of Life in terms of its sub-factors, physical health, psychological health, and social relationship and there is a significant difference between high and low performers in terms of these variables. Hence confirms the results of the present study which reveals the strongly positive and significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and quality of life.

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