

A Secondary Data Analysis of Spiritual Intelligence, Altruism, and Mental Health

Bhise S. A.¹ and Bedarkar P. C.²

Research Scholar, Dr. B. P. H. E. Society's Ahmednagar College, Ahmednagar¹

Prof.& Head, Dept. of Psychology, Dr. B. P. H. E. Society's Ahmednagar College, Ahmednagar²

Abstract: *The relationship among spiritual intelligence, altruism, and mental health was analyzed in adolescents using secondary data sources. Spiritual intelligence helps to develop emotional strength, a cheerful disposition, and moral values in young people. And these qualities promote altruism. These qualities make them show empathy and selflessness. Thus, doing altruism helps to create good mental health by providing psychological satisfaction. A very high correlation has been reported by several past studies between spiritual intelligence, altruism, and mental health. The tendency to do altruism creates social commitment and helps to increase the good mental health of the individual. In short, it can be said that spiritual intelligence builds the foundation, the tendency to do altruism acts as a bridge, and good mental health is the result. Several studies have shown that incorporating Spiritual intelligence in education can improve individual and community mental health, and more research is needed to develop effective policies.*

Objective: To explore the connection between Spiritual intelligence, Altruism, and Mental health among adolescents.

Keywords: Spiritual Intelligence, Altruism and Mental Health

I. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is an important stage in life during which many emotional, social, and psychological changes occur. During this time, young people form their values, identities, and relationships, which will shape their future well-being. Good mental health has been described as a state supported by spiritual intelligence and altruism, where meaning is found in life, calmness is maintained, and proper behaviour is followed in daily living. Spiritual intelligence is also not associated with religion but with mindfulness, self-development, and a sense of connection to a power greater than ourselves.

People with high spiritual intelligence care about others, act with kindness, and make decisions based on the right values. As a result, they help others selflessly. Such help improves mental health by reducing stress, anxiety, and depression. Helping others increases happiness, builds good relationships, and gives life purpose.

Researchers Wagner (2022) and Hurlock (2022) have shown that adolescence is influenced not only by biology and psychology, but also by spirituality. Studies suggest that spiritual intelligence increases altruism and strengthens emotional resilience, making it important for adolescent mental health. SI improves relationships, enhances problem-solving skills, reduces stress, and enhances overall well-being. Psychotherapy, yoga, meditation, and mindfulness are used to develop spiritual intelligence.

According to Stiliya(2022) training in spiritual intelligence is essential for students, employees, and professionals to cope with challenges, especially during crises such as pandemics.

In this study, the relationship among spiritual intelligence, altruism, and mental health in adolescents has been carefully investigated to understand how spiritual awareness influences selfless behavior and contributes to emotional well-being during a critical developmental stage.



Operational definitions of the variables:

Spiritual Intelligence:

“Spiritual intelligence is the ability to understand and apply spiritual awareness and values and apply them in daily life”. It helps individuals achieve self-realization, develop meaningful relationships, and gain new perspectives on life. According to Wolman (2022) "Spiritual intelligence is a human capacity about the meaning of life, and to simultaneously experience the seamless between each of us and the world in which we live"(p.615).

Researchers have recognized various aspects of Spiritual intelligence. Amram and Dryer (2024) outline five essential elements: Consciousness, Transcendence, Grace, Meaning, and Truth. These factors influence how individuals view themselves and their environment in a spiritually conscious manner.

Some adopt a more pragmatic perspective; Noble (Chettri & Vimala, 2024) regards Spiritual intelligence as an inherent skill that promotes psychological development and healing, whereas McpaMullen(Chettri&Vimala, 2024)perceives it as wisdom focused on "being" instead of "doing".

Spiritual intelligence is divided into three parts by Negi and Khanna (2017):

1. Self-awareness—awareness of oneself—understanding one’s own values, purpose, and gratitude.
2. Cultivating relationships with others that practice kindness, compassion, and forgiveness.
3. Universal awareness—developing intuition and recognizing the bigger picture of life.

Spiritual intelligence can be cultivated through reflection, mindfulness, and ethical judgment. It plays an important role in emotional balance, resilience, and social harmony.

Altruism:

Many scholars have attempted to define altruism. Bryan and Test (2018) defined altruism as an act that involves personal sacrifice and is not intended to obtain any social or material benefit. Midlarsky(2018)expanded on the above definition and defined altruism as a type of helping Behaviour that involves some personal cost and does not involve any personal gain. Macaulay and Berkowitz (1970) conceptualized it as Behaviour that is intended to benefit another person without expecting any external reward. Cohen (2018) considered altruism to be a fundamental tendency of human behaviour. Millan (2003) defined altruism as a voluntary act intended to help others without expecting any external reward.

Robinson and Curry (2018) defined altruism as a genuine expression of caring and selflessness, as well as helping without expecting any kind of reward.

Mental Health:

Mental health has been defined by Gupta and Kumar (2010) as the ability of an individual to maintain emotional balance, to perceive reality accurately, and to function harmoniously in the environment. Mental health has been described by Bhatia (1982) as the ability to achieve a balance of emotions, desires, aspirations, and ideals in one's daily life, which includes the ability to face and accept the realities of life. It has been noted by Cook (2007) that mental health problems can result in students being forced to drop out of school or fail, consider or commit suicide, and engage in risky behaviours that may cause self-harm, disability, or death.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews the existing research on spiritual intelligence, altruism, and their links to mental health. It highlights findings from various studies conducted on adolescents, young adults, and professionals.

Spiritual intelligence and Altruism:

A positive association with altruism and willingness to communicate cross-culturally was reported by Clark (2015) through spiritual intelligence. A greater tendency to help others was noted among people with spiritual intelligence by Clark et al. (2015). A study on 300 high school students was conducted by Mandal and Mehra (2017), where altruism and emotional intelligence were positively related. It was highlighted in the same study that girls were found to be more altruistic than boys, without gender differences in emotional intelligence. It was indicated that students whose mothers



were working showed lower levels of altruism and emotional intelligence. A study involving 105 young individuals was conducted by Deora (2023), showing a positive relationship between spiritual intelligence and social competence. It was further observed that spiritual intelligence among young adults helped improve emotional awareness and social skills that supported altruistic behaviour.

Hassan et al. (2022) studied how altruism and spirituality affect job satisfaction in social welfare workers. A study of 200 employees found that altruism was the biggest factor in satisfaction (Chettri & Vimala, 2024).

Spiritual intelligence and Mental Health:

A significant impact on adolescent and young adult mental health has been highlighted by several studies through spiritual intelligence. Adolescents with spiritual intelligence were described by Thakur (2022) as resilient, empathetic, and morally grounded individuals. Mental health was improved and stress was managed through these qualities among adolescent individuals. Three hundred postgraduate students were examined by Pant and Srivastava (Chettri & Vimala, 2024). A positive relationship with mental health was observed between spiritual intelligence and individuals in their study. No variation in gender or education was reported in the results of the same research.

One hundred adolescents (50 boys, 50 girls) were evaluated by Thakur (2022) using SISRI-24 and WEMWBS tools. Students with higher spiritual intelligence were shown to have better mental health in those results. A strong connection between spiritual intelligence and mental health of 100 teachers in Delhi/NCR was observed by Roy (2020). Teachers with spiritual intelligence were reported to handle stress, anxiety, and job issues more effectively. A positive link between spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence, and mental health in 250 students in Gillangharb was observed by (Heydari, 2015).

According to regression analysis, 29% of mental health was influenced by emotional and spiritual intelligence together. Among all the measured variables, spiritual intelligence was considered the most influential factor overall. A significant association between spiritual intelligence, mental health, and quality of life was reported by Pant (2014) in a student-based study. Mental health and total life quality were enhanced through spiritual intelligence, as reported by this study (Chettri & Vimala, 2024).

A meaningful role of spiritual intelligence in mental and emotional intelligence was supported by several recent studies. An indirect effect through emotional intelligence, not a direct one, was noted by Hassan (2013) (Chettri & Vimala, 2024). A group of 150 adults aged 30–40 was studied by Patnaik (2015) to examine mental health and gender connection. Better emotional intelligence and mental well-being were found in individuals with spiritual intelligence (Patnaik, 2015). Mental health, inner character, and overall life quality were improved by prayer, meditation, and spiritual methods (Karimipour, 2015).

Personal wellness, caring behavior, and kindness were improved through spiritual intelligence as mentioned in the same study (Karimipour, 2015). In 2022, sixty-seven studies were published on spiritual intelligence and mental health interaction. Improvements in resilience, social traits, and emotional strength were noted in these documented studies. On the other hand, weak spiritual intelligence was associated with stress, depression, burnout, and anxiety. Preventive training in spiritual intelligence was suggested to enhance mental health protection. WHO has started official talks to include spiritual intelligence in health definitions (Pinto, 2024). Importance of spiritual intelligence was found to reach beyond individuals and affect social well-being and public mental health.

Altruism and Mental Health:

Sharma (2020) studied altruism among 300 college students and found no gender differences except in the commerce stream.

Clark (2015) and Hassan et al. (2022) found that altruism helps in creating good feelings and better mental health in adolescents and professionals. In Arora's (2022) study, emotional intelligence was linked to altruism, but altruism was not directly correlated with mental health (Chettri & Vimala, 2024).

Altruism is the act of selflessly caring for others. It is related to social intelligence and is known to improve mental health, especially in adolescents, by creating a sense of belonging. Spiritual intelligence is important for mental



health. Research by Thakur (2022) showed that there was a positive association between spiritual intelligence and mental health among Indian adolescents (Thakur et al., 2022).

Sharma and Zahoor (2024) showed how altruism improves mental health by reducing stress and burnout in healthcare workers. Overall, altruism and spiritual intelligence improve mental health and are important factors in increasing well-being, which in turn reduces stress (Sharma, 2024).

III. CONCLUSION

Research shows that higher spiritual intelligence is linked to greater altruism and better mental health, with lower levels of anxiety, depression, and stress.

Suggestions:

More qualitative research is needed across diverse populations.

Programs like Art of Living's Happiness Program show practical ways to apply spiritual intelligence and altruism.

Adding spiritual intelligence-based interventions in education, especially healthcare, can strengthen future mental health cost-effectively.

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