

Quality of Life as Afunction of Spiritual Intelligence

Prof. Sharmila Dhote,

Asst. Professor Department of Psychology

Introduction

Since the dawn of humanity, across the life-span i.e. from birth to death, man is adjusting to life. Adjustment is the essence of leading a peaceful and contended life. In the 21st century, globalisation has revolutionised the world and impacted all aspects of life, thereby increasing the complexities of life.

An individual's belief system is a reflection of the quest for survival/existence or living. Some rely on materialistic possessions to bring happiness or respectability, whereas others are inclined towards newer learning and awakening and rely on spirituality. However, a contended life can only be achieved by striking a balance between materialism and spirituality.

Intelligence

The beginning of intelligence theory goes back to Plato and Socrates who reasoned that intelligence would always organize things in the best possible way. Darwin and Galton added that human intelligence is evolutionary and contributed to the degree of success people have in life. Different psychologists like James Cattell, Alfred Binet, Lewis Terman, David Wechsler, Charles Spearman, Louis Thurston, Donald Hebb, Guilford, and Howard Gardner have formulated various definitions of intelligence. "Today, the nature of human intelligence is considered one of the most controversial and highly debatable areas of psychological theory and research" (King, 2008).

A summary of the definitions reflect that human intelligence is an evolutionary and developmental capacity that is qualitative and of multiple kinds used for adaption to the environment through assimilation and accommodation. It gives humans the analytical,

creative, and practical abilities to live successfully by solving problems, creating products, and delivering outcomes within a specific culture.

Till the mid-1990s, the much talked concepts in psychology were IQ, and EQ. Rational intelligence (IQ) is logical, problem-solving intelligence. One of the most popular measures are the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales. Earlier, it was taken as a sign-post of people's ability. However, today it no longer holds true. Brewer, Mark, Dr. (2008) endorses that people who successfully tackle the big issues of life are not necessarily blessed with significant mental aptitude. They possess something more than sheer intellect.

Goleman, Daniel (1998) referred to emotional intelligence (EQ) as "the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well ourselves and in our relationships". A comprehensive theory of emotional intelligence was proposed in 1990 by two psychologists, Peter Salovey, at Yale, and John Mayer, defining emotional intelligence in terms of being able to monitor and regulate one's own and others' feelings, and to use feelings to guide thought and action.

Spiritual intelligence

By the end of the 1990s, advances in psychology and neuroscience identified Spiritual Intelligence (SQ) as a further dimension of intelligence that is even more significant i. e. Intelligence of the 21st century.

Before defining spiritual intelligence, it is important to establish what it is not and define a few key terms. Spiritual Intelligence is not spirituality or religion, nor is spirituality synonymous with religion. Religion is characterized by a class system that delineates the spiritual leaders and followers of the doctrine (Hildebrant, 2011), it is focused on the rituals and beliefs with regard to the sacred within institutional organizations (Armam, 2009), and is defined by a specific set of beliefs and practices, usually based on a sacred text, and represented by a community of people (Wigglesworth, 2012).

Many people are "spiritual" without being "religious" in that they do not participate in organized religion, while others are "religious" without being "spiritual" in that they participate in the necessary rituals and creeds but their ethics, morals and day-to-day living do not match their professed beliefs. (Delaney, 2002).

Spiritual Intelligence is an ability of an individual to act purposefully, to think about the sacred or divine force and to deal effectively with his/her environment through his/her religious faith and practises. This newest intelligence or Spiritual Quotient comes from the Latin word 'Spiritus' which means 'the vitalising principle of an organism', coined by Danah Zohar and Ian Marshall in 2000. According to them, this new intelligence gives us access to a deep meaning, fundamental values and a sense of abiding purpose in our lives and the role that the values and purpose plays in our lives, strategies and thinking processes.

Wigglesworth, Cindy (2012) defines spiritual intelligence as "the ability to behave with wisdom and compassion, while maintaining inner and outer peace, regardless of the situation". SQ is the central and most fundamental of all the intelligences, because it becomes the source of guidance for others, being an integrating intelligence, linking our rational and emotional intelligences. In simple terms, it can be stated that a man with high SQ not only responds appropriately in a particular situation or circumstance, but he also analyses as to why he is in that situation and how can better that situation. High SQ enables a person to operate beyond the boundaries.

Brewer, Mark, Dr. (2008) states that "the spiritual intelligence is available to everyone- yet only a handful of people ever take advantage of it.

SQ and the Brain

The empirical foundation of SQ is in neuron biology. It has been significantly proven that the unifying feeling originates in neuron oscillations in the temporal lobe. Further, the scientific and neuropsychological evidence for SQ has been put forth by identifying a God-spot or a God quotient (GQ) in the human brain. (Persingers M, 1996) and (Ramchandran, V.S 1990) Neurologically SQ is distinct from IQ and EQ. Whereas IQ and EQ are localized in opposite hemispheres, SQ is associated with hemispheric synchronization and whole-brain activation. The capability for SQ is hard-wired in the brain, but conscious intention is required to activate it. Bowell, Richard A. (2005)

Working of IQ, EQ and SQ

Although the human brain is designed to synchronise the working of all the Qs, Each Q has its own strength and functions separately. Thus, there are many combinations with

varying degrees.eg... While one person can be high in IQ but low in EQ and SQ, another may be high in EQ but low in IQ and SQ.

Development of Intelligence

Among the three types of Intelligence, rational intelligence is inborn, whereas EQ and SQ need to be developed through training. Any Intelligence is strongly co-related with age, but there is nothing guaranteed specifically of EQ and SQ development. Individuals inherently possess the ability to enhance their EQ and SQ with age but it has to be supplemented with the requisite efforts.

In most cases, development of EQ and SQ occurs simultaneously. A certain amount of EQ is necessary for SQ to develop, and SQ also in turn, serves as catalyst for further development of EQ. Thus, a virtuous cycle is formed. . Individuals with high SQ are able to lead a more fulfilled life, finding deeper meaning and purpose of their lives. They operate from positivism, put in their best efforts, derive joy in helping others and thereby improve the society by using a higher dimension of intelligence. Since they are able to employ their IQ and EQ better, they are creative, adding value to own as well as others' lives.

Spirituality

There exists a strong misconception that pursuing the path of spirituality, involved denouncing the material world, including near and dear ones and moving far away on to mountains and jungles to engage in a rigorous routine of prayer and meditation. But this is far from the truth. Spirituality is defined in a number of different ways. Robert Emmons (2009) says it "is the personal expression of ultimate concern". Wigglesworth (2012) defines it as "the innate human need to be connected to something larger than ourselves, something we consider to be divine or of exceptional nobility". Miller defines spirituality as "an individual's personal, subjective beliefs and experiences about a power greater than themselves, and about what is sacred to him/herself, which assumes that reality is not limited to the material, sensory world" (Delaney, 2002).

Spiritual Values: the Journey from Spirituality to SI

There are certain salient spiritual values like compassion, humility, forgiveness, gratitude, etc. If a person adopts and practises these spiritual values, transition can be made to higher consciousness of personal living and other spheres, leading to development of spiritual intelligence. Buzan, Tony (2001) and Switzer, Bob (2011) emphasise that certain spiritual values are manifested in the behaviour of people who develop their SQ, in varying degrees.

Religion and Spirituality

Wigglesworth, Cindy (2012), defines religion as “a specific set of beliefs and practices, usually based on sacred text, and represented by a community of people”. There may or may not be a positive correlation between SQ and religion. Some people may high on SQ through following a religious beliefs and practices, others may be high on SQ being atheists. Contrarily, many people, though religious, are low on SQ. Draper, Brian. (2009) believes that “overly religious people are not always the most spiritual.”

Zohar, Danah (2000) professes that “conventional religion is an externally imposed set of rules and beliefs. It is inherited from priests and prophets and holy books, or absorbed through the family and tradition. SQ is an internal, innate ability of the human brain and psyche, drawing its deepest resources from the heart of the universe itself. Spiritual intelligence is the soul’s intelligence. It is the intelligence with which we heal ourselves and with which we make ourselves whole.

SQ is not culture-dependent or value- dependent. SQ is prior to all specific value and to any given culture. It is prior to any form of religious expression that it might take. SQ makes religion possible (perhaps even necessary), but SQ does not depend upon religion”.

Richard A. (2005) has drawn a distinction among the three Qs stating that “IQ is the intelligence that seeks to understand the “what”, EQ is the intelligence that seeks to understand the “how”, and SQ is the intelligence that seeks to understand the “why” of things”.

Quality of Life (QOL)

It has previously been argued that due to the subjective nature of an individual's 'quality of life', this is a difficult concept to measure and to define, but that in general terms it may be viewed as a multidimensional concept emphasizing the self-perceptions of an individual's current state of mind (Bonomi, Patrick, Bushnell, & Martin, 2000).

The concept of quality of life broadly encompasses how an individual measures the 'goodness' of multiple aspects of their life. These evaluations include one's emotional reactions to life occurrences, disposition, sense of life fulfillment and satisfaction, and satisfaction with work and personal relationships (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999).

In psychological literature, the term quality of life and general wellbeing are used synonymously. So, QoL refers to the general well-being of individuals and societies. The term is used in a wide range of contexts. Quality of life should not be confused with the concept of standard of living, which is based primarily on income. Instead, standard indicators of the quality of life include not only wealth and employment, but also the built environment, physical and mental health, education, recreation and leisure time, and social belonging.

The definition of QoL poses a challenge. One could explore various domains that could be absorbed in the overall definition of this construct. That would necessitate to view quality of life as a comprehensive concept consisting of a number of social, environmental, psychological and physical values.

Quality of life can be defined as to the extent certain desirable factors are attained or retained. These include such factors as well-being, interpersonal relations, opportunity for personal growth and development, ability to exercise human rights, self-determination and healthy participation in society. Enhancement of quality of life is particularly important for those who suffer from chronic disease or developmental or physical disability.

Quality of Life and Religion

The relationship between religion and quality of life cannot be defied, especially in a country like India, where religion is a way of life. Religion is the essence of life following which a

person becomes mentally satisfied and faces the demands of life in a relatively positive way (Joshi & Shukla, 2004). It is a common fact that when a person follows the religious paraphernalia, he finds himself mentally satisfied and it results in terms of satisfaction and peace which is leading path of well-being.

Quality of Life (QOL) and Motivation

Human behavior is a result of motivation. In view of Maslow's theory of hierarchy of needs, it can be said that needs which have the greatest potency at any given time affect behavior. The subsequent fulfillment of these needs definitely will improve QoL.

QoL can be broadly categorized under two conditions namely, presence and/or absence of certain factors. eg; presence of sense of belongingness, positive attitude, group cohesiveness etc. and absence of conflicting relationships, negativism, mental/physical illness etc.

Methodology

Objective of study

The objective is to establish a relationship between SQ and QoL.

Rationale of study

To explore if QoL can be improved by enhancing SQ.

Hypothesis

SQ will positively relate to QoL.

Problem

Does spiritual intelligence play any role in the Quality of life experienced by working women?

Variables

- Dependent variable - Quality of life
- Independent variable - Spiritual Intelligence

Scope of the study

The scope of the study is confined to working women.

Sample

The sample constitutes 300 working women of the age range 25 to 45 from various organisations.

Table 1: Sample

Scales Tools

The questionnaires to scale SQ and QoL

Table 2

Questionnaire	SQ scale	QoL scale
Developed by	Husain, Akbar (2011)	Dubey, BL (2011)
Items	31	20
Scale	Likert (5 to 1)	Likert (5 to 1)
Reliability	.84 & .82	.58 & .87

LEVEL	WORKING WOMEN
Senior	35
Middle	196
Junior	79
Total	300

Aim of the study

The present study specifically focuses on the role of Spiritual intelligence on Quality of life.

Objectives of the study

- 1) To measure spiritual intelligence quotient and examine the extent to which it affects the stress levels of married college teachers.

- 2) To measure stress levels of college teachers and to find out whether it is significantly related to spiritual intelligence.

Procedure

The questionnaires were administered to the participants and responses quantified.

Statistical tools

Advanced Statistics were applied to the following data for analysis, given in Table 3:-.

Table 3

Parameter	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Age (Years)	300	25	45	35
QQ	300	54	92	87.2
SQ	300	72	124	90.4

Results and Discussion

Two findings are discussed below:

- (a) SQ and Age. Mostly, it was found that working women in higher age group had relatively higher SQ as compared to their younger counter parts. This fact has also been substantiated by Wigglesworth, Cindy (2012). It may be positively reasoned that with age, job requirements and rigours of life, the working women in the higher age bracket, are able to develop better EQ to deal with work complexities which supports development of SQ. Also, they begin to indulge in certain spiritual practices, leading to better SQ.
- (b) SQ and QoL. QoL was higher in most of the cases where SQ was high. It can be pragmatically discussed that working women with higher SQ view life in a broader perspective, not relating to physical comforts alone. They relate to the entire spectrum of human experience with the backdrop of pleasant and difficult moments.

Recommendations to Improve SQ

Since SQ positively impacts QoL, it is imperative that we live a fulfilling and satisfying life by enhancing SQ because that is the underpinning factor. Human brain is wired for SQ but it remains dormant and needs to be activated. It takes effort and time to develop SQ but it is worth the effort realizing its benefits. Some of the mechanisms to improve SQ areas follows:

(a) **Meditation and Relaxation techniques.**

Several techniques are available for meditation. One may choose that suits him the best. A duration of 20 minutes is considered to be optimal. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar asserts that meditation improves and balances physical, mental, emotional and spiritual spheres of a man. Also to mention, today's Yoga icon Baba Ramdev strongly recommends practising Yoga postures to de-stress oneself and boost health.

(b) **Prayers.**

For those who believe in God, prayer includes respect, love, pleading and faith. Prayer can be an effective coping mechanism. It assumes that we acknowledge that God is helping us and getting the task done. Prayer is an important tool of spiritual practice in the generic spiritual path of devotion. Prayer reduces worry and enhances contemplation.

(c) **Tools to Empower.**

One may choose any tool to enhance his SQ and QoL, for it will lead him to satisfying and purposeful life. Among others, Reiki is a simple and easy - to - learn technique for better life and pleasant experiences. Pranic healing is also a popular method of soothing the body for facilitating free flow of positive energy within the body, It helps create an attitude of positivism which underlies a richer quality of life.

(d) **Observance of Spiritual Values / Qualities.**

A dual approach may be of enormous benefit for spiritual seekers. Firstly, SQ may be enhanced by the techniques stated above and then apply them in day to day behaviour.

Secondly, Consciously practise the spiritual values / qualities in everyday life and increase the SQ, leading to a positive virtuous spiral.

Conclusion

Spiritual Intelligence is the intelligence of the 21st century. Human life is the greatest gift that the God or that Infinite Energy bestows upon us. We ought to respect and love it, making the most of it. We being spiritual beings going through human experience, are obliged to develop our spiritual intelligence (SQ), which will enable us to live the highest quality of life (QoL).

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