

Relationship between Spirituality, Religion and Spiritual Intelligence: Intelligence of the 21st century (A Comparative Analysis)

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Introduction:

For long, the world gave much importance to Intelligence Quotient. The higher the figure, the belief went, the greater the intelligence. This attitude is a legacy of the early 20th century when psychologists devised tests to measure intelligence. These tests primarily measured intellectual or rational intelligence (used to solve logical problems).

In mid-1990s, Daniel Goleman revealed findings in neuroscience and psychology that stressed the importance of Emotional Quotient (EQ). This makes us aware of our feelings and that of others. Goleman argued that EQ was a basic requirement for the use of IQ. If the areas of our brain that feel are damaged, our ability to think effectively is diminished.

In 2000, however, authors Dana Zohar and Ian Marshall introduced a new dimension to human intelligence namely, Spiritual Quotient (or SQ), the ultimate intelligence. This is the intelligence used to solve problems of meaning and value. “Is my job giving me the fulfillment I seek?” “Am I relating to the people in my life in a way that contributes to their happiness and mine?” Answers to these questions determine whether we will find happiness or not. IQ and EQ are inadequate in such issues.

IQ and EQ give way to spiritual intelligence, the ultimate intelligence that can add value and meaning to your life.

Definitions Of Spiritual Intelligence

Definitions of spiritual intelligence rely on the concept of spirituality as being distinct from religiosity.

Danah Zohar defined 12 principles underlying spiritual intelligence:

- Self-awareness: Knowing what I believe in and value, and what deeply motivates me.
- Spontaneity: Living in and being responsive to the moment.

Robert Emmons defines spiritual intelligence as “the adaptive use of spiritual information to facilitate everyday problem solving and goal attainment.”

Accordingly to **Frances Vaughan**, Spiritual intelligence is concerned with the inner life of mind and spirit and its relationship to being in the world.

Cindy Wigglesworth defines spiritual intelligence as “the ability to act with wisdom and compassion, while maintaining inner and outer peace, regardless of the circumstances.”^[11] She breaks down the competencies that comprise SQ into 21 skills, arranged into a four quadrant model similar to Daniel Goleman’s widely used model of emotional intelligence or EQ.

David B. King defines spiritual intelligence “as a set of adaptive mental capacities based on non-material and transcendent aspects of reality, specifically those that contribute to the awareness, integration, and adaptive application of the nonmaterial and transcendent aspects of one’s existence, leading to such outcomes as deep existential reflection, enhancement of meaning, recognition of a transcendent self, and mastery of spiritual states.”

King further proposes four core abilities or capacities of spiritual intelligence.

Vineeth V. Kumar and Manju Mehta have also researched the concept, extensively. Operationalizing the construct, they defined spiritual intelligence as “the capacity of an individual to possess a socially relevant purpose in life by understanding ‘self’ and having a

high degree of conscience, compassion and commitment to human values.”

Differentiating Spirituality and Religion

Definitions of Religion and Spirituality

Religion is defined as a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe, especially when considered as the creation of a superhuman agency or agencies, usually involving devotional and ritual observances, and often containing a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs. Religion is an important aspect of culture, and norms that govern family pattern variations are often affected by the socio-religious climate in a given society. Religious beliefs mould people’s attitudes and ways of behaviour. India is a land of bewildering diversity and a country which is a host to all the conceivable religions and ways of life— Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jain, Jews, Zoroastrians — some of which were born on this land and others were brought in by trade contracts and the successive political and cultural invasions. They all were assimilated by the people of India.

There are many theories about the relationship between religion and its impact on life from famous and outstanding theorizing in psychology. In this paper the author reviews some of these theories.

Freud’s Theory. Freud believed that religious beliefs and rituals rise up from childhood period fears and desires, particularly those related to Oedipus complex- Freud believed that paternal picture of God is the recreation of the same wise and powerful god in childhood period, and for the first time inspires fear and love to a religious individual, as well as, forms his/her attitude toward divinity.

Freud (1910) believed that psychologically “personal god” is nothing more than “the most high father” and the main reason of religiosity relates to long term distress of human’s childhood and his need for

help. More over Freud (1913) believed that, the root of any kind of religion rises for loving the father. Absolute resining to the childhood powerful father formed as introverted ego and exposes or extroverted as god leads individual's religious life (Wulff 1998 translated by Dehghani, 2007).

Ericson Eric Ericson (1987), says that religion as a social institute through the history has tried to meet human's "fundamental trust". He says that trust in childhood builds up faith capacity during adulthood. Faith as and a "life need" drives human to accept religion. For a religious person final conflict about integrity is a permanent crisis. This person is always elder than his playmate, parents and teachers or suddenly becomes elder than them and focuses earlier than his age on something that requires a long time of others to think about it or even understand a bit of it(Wulf 1998, translated by dehghani,2007).

Jung: Religious as an Ancient Model process

According to Jung archetypal are various religious symbols. Jung (1938) believed that religion is one of the oldest and the most popular effects of human mind. Jung says that religion is a perception which consists of observing and considering some dynamic factors "power" spirits, devils, laws, thoughts, and ideals.

Gordon Allport (1950) used "religious sense" term to describe and emphasize on individuality in religious experience. He says that "Religious sense is a comprehensive outlook that connects an individual with the entire world meaning fully". Allport used his theory i.e. "An individual's Internal and External Direction against Religion" to study the relationship between racial prejudices and religious direction either socially or psychologically (1987).

Allport's classification of religious direction is concerned as an original theory in religious psychology and is used by psychologist is an efficient theory in studying the cases in which religion has a main role.

Allport divided individuals according to their religion direction in two groups: individuals with internal and external direction. Allport believed that the formers internalize the religion and refer to it as end; while the latter have external direction and refer to religion as a means to an end (Allport and Rash)

Fromm (1960) defined religion as: “Any kind of mental and physical action shared by a group and which brings a clear frame work for direction and source for an individual”.

Fromm differentiates two types of religion:

Authoritarian religion: Here every body submitting before a dominant power and exchange their freedom, value and integrity with attachment sense protectorate. Those who have an authoritarian attribute the most magnificent personalities to God and unfortunately become weak, while God is an existence full of love, intellectual and justice.

Humanistic Religion: The end in humanistic religion is acquiring a great power not a great weakness. Virtue flourishes by itself not obedience. Fromm believes that religious experience due to unity with the whole and based on a personal attach meant to the world which surrounded by love and thought.

Spirituality is a concept whose definition is a bit more diffuse and with less agreement regarding its meaning.(Love & Talbot, 1999) synthesized a number of definitions of spirituality taken from the literature of theology, social science, and other helping fields (e.g., nursing, counselling, social work).

According to the synthesis, spirituality:is an internal process of seeking personal authenticity, genuineness, and wholeness as an aspect of identity development;

Comparing the Definitions

The main area of overlap is that in both religion and spirituality there is a concern for that which exists **beyond** the corporeal, rational, and

visible universe. Both attempt to provide a means for understanding or knowing that which lies beyond our physical, time-bound world. One aspect of the “beyond” is the notion of a supreme being. In religion, the being or being(s) is identified. In spirituality, there can be an openness to a supreme being, even perhaps a belief that something exists beyond what we can see, but also a tentativeness about just whom or what that is. A spiritually developed religious person may very well identify that entity as **God**. Whereas a spiritually developed nonreligious person may have no means (or no need for that matter) of defining that which lies beyond rational knowing. When discussing spirituality, the term **supernatural** is used explicitly in the sense of that which exists beyond the natural world. Issues of deity and divine power are issues of religion.

Other areas of apparent overlap actually differ in character. One such area is the issue of **action**. Both definitions have a focus in activity. However, in religion the action is embodied in **rituals, prayers**, and exercises, whereas each of the descriptors of spirituality includes words that connote action and movement, including **process, transcending**, developing, deriving, and exploring. Closely related to action is the **static-dynamic** aspect of the two concepts.

Sharon Parks the author of “Big Questions, Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Young Adults in their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith” (2000), proposes that **faith** is another word with multiple meanings, especially in the context of religion spirituality is the dynamic process of **faith development**, whereas religion provides adherents with **beliefs**

Additionally, both definitions make reference to external and internal dimensions. However, religion begins as, and is for the most part, an **external phenomenon**. Its primary concern is external to the visible world, it is centered on the existence of a Supreme Being or eternal principle, and includes an agreed upon set of beliefs and practices that are external to the individual. Religion can exist separate and apart

from the individual, not so for spirituality. Spirituality begins and is perpetually an **internal process**, though there is the moving outward from oneself through self-transcendence, connectedness to self and others, and relationship with that which lies beyond the known and knowable world. In a way, the inner world expands to include the outer world.

Parks views spirituality to be more of a **personal** rather than a **public search for meaning**, transcendence, wholeness, purpose, and “apprehension of spirit (or Spirit) as the animating essence at the core of life.” She describes spirituality as both immanent (within the individual) and transcendent (beyond the individual).

Moving beyond the Comparisons

In these two sets of definitions, one can also see the potential for great resonance, interaction, and overlap between these two concepts. Religion, with its beliefs, practices, rituals, prayers, and spiritual exercises, can be, and is for many people, a wonderful means through which one can explore one’s spirituality and develop spiritually. It provides a language, a context, and often a community through which an individual can pursue their spiritual journey.

The problem, of course, is that these definitions only tell a part of the story of religion and spirituality as lived reality. In so many instances, religions and people acting in the name of some religion have behaved in ways that are antithetical to the notions of genuineness, which are expressed in the definition of spirituality. Human history is stained with the blood of people oppressed, abused, and murdered in the name of some religion, its supreme being, or its doctrines. Not a single religion is exception to this reality. Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism have all condoned or otherwise supported barbaric, anti-spiritual actions. It seems to the author that this occurs in part when beliefs and practices, which may, have begun as spiritually grounded

exercises, mutate into dogma and doctrines. The dynamic spiritual aspect of the religion of early adherents is lost or repressed. Religion and spirituality have become disconnected.

Effects of differentiated notions of Religion and Spirituality

Differentiating between the notions of religion and spirituality have real consequences when one looks at the development of undergraduate students. For example, Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) found that most of the research done in the area of religious attitude change fell into two categories: general religiosity and religious activities. Most studies in the past 30 years have shown significant declines in religious attitudes, values, and behaviours. There are, however, changes in students, identified in the literature of the past 30 years not often associated with religion, but congruent with the propositions related to spirituality and spiritual development. These include a movement toward greater altruism, humanitarianism, and social conscience, more social, racial, ethnic, and political tolerance, greater support for the rights of individuals, and for gender equality, and being able to consider situations from beyond one's own perspective

In the earlier developmental stages, moral rules and religious teachings were interpreted literally. But if the stories are seen to contradict each other or if the teachings contradict life experience, literalism seems to break down. New teachers may be found, but sooner or later, interpreters are bound to differ. As students deal with tensions between ancient traditions and new ideas, conformity and questioning, guilt and freedom, self-interest and unselfishness, they slowly recognize the need to take responsibility for defining their own positions, to commit to beliefs that ring true to their deepest selves, while remaining open and tolerant.

Implications

What good is the study of SQ? Religious beliefs have often divided our nation and caused communal riots.

The first goal is to create a language that enables us to discuss these concepts without being limited to the language of any one faith tradition. The second goal is to create a competency-based language that helps people assess where they are and where they want to go in their own spiritual development. The third goal is that the faith-neutral language of competencies will make SQ acceptable for discussion in the workplace...the place where most of us spend most of our time. This will hopefully lead to support for individual and group SQ growth – creating more meaningful work, improved products and services, and ensuring responsible academic and corporate behaviour.

Whether one speaks of Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Parsis, Jains etc, all individuals are alike in their suffering, their hopes and their joys. They are all striving to reach the same goals: peace and love. Perhaps with a more neutral language for SQ one can see the commonality and work together towards getting there. Finally, the development of SQ will not only benefit individuals, it will also benefit their families, communities, and the companies they work for and ultimately the nation at large.

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