



The Spiritual Intelligence (SI) components from the perspective of Islam and West

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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with introduction of the West and Islamic perspective on Spiritual Intelligence (SI). After defining intelligence, different perspectives on SI are provided. Dimensions and characteristics of each of them and also the positive influence of SI on private and social life are discussed. And then the Islamic definition of SI is provided and the Islamic and West perspective on SI are compared. Also some of its properties and methods of strengthening are proposed. This paper also compare the Spirituality in new civilization and religious training, which is one of the basis of SI. And at end, differences between normal intelligence and spiritual intelligence, and also suggestions for its improvement are proposed.

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Introduction

At the present time, competition in the World are spread and the workforce become heterogeneous. Consistent with increasing speed of changes, the issues such as intelligence appeared more seriously. The term of intelligence is defined as utilization of internal capacity which has a major role in achieving the organizational goals. In this regard, studies on Spirituality are deeply tied with the concept of intelligence. And research in this area has become one of the challenging concepts in which many contemporary theorists defined intelligence in terms of spirituality (Nasel, 2009). The spirituality always has been considered by mankind. And it is considered as one of the core requirements. Some scholars believe that it embodies the highest levels of cognitive, moral, and emotional development and attempts to answer the questions of life. Spiritual intelligence as the infrastructure of individual beliefs, has an important role in many fields especially in mental health (sohrabi, 2006).

The attention to Spirituality and its role in solving life problems, making life valuable, and meaningfulness of human life was began from the time of James by writing the book "variety of spiritual experiences". James believed that Spirituality makes human life meaningful, so that it uses the logical behavior in order to following them in life. Human communication with others become a faith communication and has a positive attitude toward human themselves and others (sohrabi, 2006).

At the beginning of the year 2009, two Oxford professors Zohar and Marshal which have conducted some research on Physics, Philosophy, and Religion; have published a book entitled "Spiritual Intelligence: Emotional Intelligence" which introduced the Spiritual Intelligence to scientific world (Emmons, 2011). Spiritual intelligence is described as a set of

capabilities for use of religious and spiritual resources. Spirituality as a search for sacred elements, meaningfulness, consciousness, and transcendence and also the ability to use these concepts, can predicts a person's adaptability and lead to increasing welfare and adaptability (Amram, 2012).

Intelligence

The intelligence is an adaptive behavior in problem solving which has oriented in order to facilitate the applied goals and adaptive growth. Adaptive behavior reduce the similarity of the multiple goals which cause to internal conflict. This concept of intelligence is based on the proposition that necessitated achieving goals, providing strategies for overcoming obstacles, and solving problems (Emmons, 2011). Gardner (2008) believed that intelligence is a collection of strengths to solve the problems and creating new products which are valuable in a culture. In his view nine types of intelligence are: linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, physical-motion, individual intelligence (include internal and interpersonal intelligence) (Amram, 2012). The West analytical concept of intelligence is mostly cognitive and include processing of information while the East combined approach intelligence include the various components of performance and human experience, like knowledge, intuition and emotion (Nasel, 2009).

Totally, intelligence generally is the compatibility of the people with the environment and the ability of providing the ways of coping with the problems. The characteristics of the intelligent people are the ability to identify problems, proposed solutions for various issues, and explore effective ways of solving problems.

Spiritual Intelligence and its components in West

Edwards believed that having a high spiritual intelligence is different with having information about Spiritual Intelligence.

The distinction showed the distance between practical knowledge and theoretical knowledge. So having a broad knowledge about spiritual issues and their practices should not be considered as achieving SI through prayer and thinking. Although it can be said that to getting benefit of the spirituality, both theoretical and practical knowledge are needed. Although few research has been done in the field of SI development and experimental research is needed, but we can say that the talent intelligence in individuals is different and gradually evolved and formed by contracting with rich environment which stimulate the spiritual questions. It seems that age and gender affect the spiritual intelligence. Jung believed that in many cases the major changes take place in the unconscious after age of 35 which may affect the process of spiritual. Also, some researchers including Jung, believe that this transformation takes place women differently than men. According to definition, SI may be a cognitive-motivational phenomenon which introduces the adjustment skills and the resources which facilitate the achievement of the goal and solving problems (Sisk, 2001).

Spiritual Intelligence is the adaptive and functional performing of above factors in certain situations and life (Nasel, 2009). It seems that SI go beyond the relationship between a people's physical and cognitive with its surrounding environment and has entered into intuitive and transcendental perspective person to his life. This view includes all the events and experiences of a person which are influenced by an overall view. A person can take advantage of the intelligence for making framework reinterpretation of his experiences. This process can give greater meaning and personal value to events and experiences of the individual in terms of phenomenological. Spiritual intelligence is associated with inner life mind and soul. And include the relation with the world, deep understanding capacity, and questions, and insights towards multiple levels of vigilance. Self-awareness encompasses a creative development as life force. Spiritual intelligence is a form of consciousness and an ever growing awareness of matter, life, body, mind, soul and spirit. So SI is something more than individual mental ability and connects a person to his beyond and soul. In addition SI is beyond the normal psychological development. Hence self-awareness involves awareness of transcendent, other people, world and all creatures (Vegan, 2003).

Amram believe that SI encompasses the feel of meaningfulness, having goal in life, the feel of sacrosanctity in life, pair perception of material, and believe to improvement of world (Amram, 2012). The SI is used for solving problems related to the meaning of life and values. It brings to the mind some questions such as "Does my job promote me in my life?" or "whether I affect the happiness and calmness of people?" (Wigglesworth, 2010). In fact this kind of intelligence is mostly related to asking not answering, it means more questions are asked about life and surrounding (McMullen, 2003). It is notable that the serious questions such as "from where we were came?", "where is our destination?" and "what is the main goal of life?" are the aspects of SI. Santos believed that SI is related to the God. He define it as the ability of recognition of life principle (spiritual and nature rules) and establishing life based on them. He bring the following principles for SI:

1. Recognize and affirm the SI; it means the belief that we are spiritual creatures and the physical life (in this universe) is temporarily.
2. Recognize and credence a superior spiritual real (it means God).

3. If there is God and we are his creatures, a guidance book should be existed.

4. The necessity of knowing goal of life (something which evoke man) and accepting this point that from the perspective of heredity, some abilities have codes.

5. Knowing our status about God (the identity of a person is reflection of his perception about God).

6. Knowing the principles of life and accepting this fact that in order to have a prosperous life, our lifestyle and decisions must be align with these principles (Santos, 2006).

Emmons expressed some characteristics of SI as follow:

A) SI is a kind of ultimate intelligence which shows us the abstract and valuable issues and solves the problems related to them. It put our actions and behaviors in a wide context of meaningfulness and also compares one stage of our life with another from the perspective of meaningfulness (Zohar, 2009).

B) SI may be observed as following characters: honesty, compassion, paying attention to all levels of watchfulness, reciprocal sympathy, and the existence of a sense which implicate an important role in a wider world, spiritual and practical munificence and benevolence, consistency with nature and whole of essence, and being relax in privacy without having loneliness feel.

C) People, who have high spiritual intelligence, have capacity to excellence and tend to have a high awareness of consciousness. They have the capacity that assigned a part of their daily activities to spiritual practices and show virtues such as forgiveness, gratitude, humility, compassion and wisdom. Also, it can be said that SI facilitates understanding of religious issues and jurisprudential deduce. Spiritual Intelligence illuminates the mind and connects the human mind to underlying substrate of essence, and helps the individual to diagnose fact from fiction (sensory error).

In addition, spiritual intelligence can help people to understand of ethical issues and their value. This concept in different culture is proposed as love, wisdom, and service (Vegan, 2003). Some individual characteristics which are useful to utilize SI are including: wisdom, integrity (completeness), and caring (McMullen, 2003); having a holistic view, accuracy, flexibility, and having an open mind (Zohar, 2009). These features provide different methods to know through non-linguistic strategies and unreasonable method like dreams, intuition and mystical experience in order to achieve deeper levels of essence (Descolorires, 2000; quoted Nasel, 2009). Features which are required for spiritual intelligence, probably have twined with capabilities and other activities such as prayer, meditation, dreams, dream analysis, religious and spiritual beliefs and values, knowledge and skills to understand, interpretation of saint concepts, and the ability to have the upgrade states. For example, some old truths like "not torture other" which considered moral issues, may be discussed as a procedures for strengthening SI. Also the spiritual issue may include thinking about essence questions like life after death, searching for meaning and essence in life, interest in effective prayer and meditation, growing sense of purpose in life, growing relationship with himself, consistency with the supreme power and its role in your life (Nasel, 2009).

Friedman and McDonald after reviewing the various meanings of spirituality, expressed its major components as follow:

1. Focus on the final mean.
2. Awareness of multiple levels of consciousness and their development.
3. The belief in the sanctity of life.
4. Upgrading to a larger whole (Amram, 2012).

Nobel and Vegan believed that the eight components which imply the grown SI are:

Accuracy and precision, integrity, humility, kindness, generosity, tolerance, resistance and stability, and the desire to meet the needs of others (Nasel, 2009).

McMullen (2003) believed that Values such as courage, integrity, intuition and compassion are the component of spiritual intelligence. He also believed there are a relationship among intuition and spiritual intelligence and in contrast, the stress is counter-intuition. He noted that one of the ways of growing insight is relaxing. From the perspective of Mullen concerns is an increasing unsuccessful efforts which is due to delays in decision-making. Brouce Litchfield expressed the characteristics of SI as follow:

1. Knowing the difference.
2. Wonder, a sense of the sacredness and paranormal.
3. Wisdom.
4. Knowledge and foresight, ability to listen, to be quiet and listen to the voice of God.
5. Being calm at the time of confusion, contradiction and duality
6. Commitment, dedication and faith.

Spiritual Intelligence in Islam

Islam implicitly considered Spiritual Intelligence. For example the factors affecting SI in Islamic texts are virtue and piety along with daily exercise like thinking in creation, fasting, worship, reading the Quran and the honest thinking in its verses (Sohrabi, 2008). Quran has attributed to high moral intelligent people the trait of Ololalbab which implicate the people who have realized the true essence and blow over the veil of illusions. In general, the principles which are proposed in religion as fundamental, such as achieving unity behind the apparent multiplicity, finding answers about the origin of the universe, detecting spiritual patterns, and programing behavior based on them, are the key axes of SI. We can nurture religious people through growing spiritual intelligence. SI teaches people compassion, kindness, integrity, and reliance on significant differences (Salimi et al, 2007).

Spiritual Intelligence components in Islam

Islam culture implicitly considered Spiritual Intelligence. For example Jami (2002) enumerate the following components for SI based on the religious texts:

1. See the unity behind the apparent diversity.
2. Diagnosis and receiving spiritual messages of phenomena and events.
3. Ask and receive moral response about the source and origin of essence (Origin and Resurrection).
4. Detection of consistency of essence and interpersonal relationships on virtues of human justice.
5. Detection of virtue of growing from range of error to applying forgiveness in interpersonal relationships.
6. Identify spiritual patterns and regulate behavior based on moral model.
7. Recognizing the dignity and worth of individual and maintain and grow of this dignity.
8. Recognizing the spiritual growth process and adjust the internal and external factors in order to optimize this growth process.

9. Identifying the meaning of life, death and life events, death and purgatory, mental heaven and hell.

10. Understanding God's presence in ordinary life.

11. Understanding of art and natural beauty and develop a sense of appreciation and gratitude.

12. Having talent, passion, and mysticism in which the love is the origin of knowledge not reasoning and deduction.

13. Having a poetic intelligence which understand the meaning lies in a poem.

14. Spiritual intelligence leads to a deep understanding Quran and cause to better understand of people about words of the Prophets.

15. Spiritual Intelligence helps to understand the Scriptures Stories and infer the symbolic meaning of these stories.

16. Spiritual Intelligence that Quran attribute Ololalbab to its owners, leads to discovering the true essence by people and cross from allusions.

Although Islamic mystics have pointed to these components, but since these components are provide insight for human and increase the consistency with essence, so they can be considered as spiritual component. Factors affecting SI in Islamic texts include virtue and piety along with daily exercise like thinking in creation, fasting, worship, reading the Quran and the honest thinking in its verses, have a major role in reinforcement of SI.

Focus on SI leads to considering the following factors:

Understanding of the existence of God in life, understand the sublime messages which guide everyone internally and externally, sense of wonder at the sacred, a sense of humility for the majesty of God, ability to listen to the voice of God, being calm in the chaos, contradiction, and ambiguity, commitment, dedication, faith, wisely understanding word of God, consistency and understanding of God's commands, cognitive and emotional understanding of these commands, understanding of unity in diversity, understanding love among the defect of relationships, understand justice in practice, understand the essence in suffering, hardships and difficulties, and the ability to act independently. Some these capabilities like wisdom, creativity and compassion are consistent with increased spiritual awareness which has caused by religion. Similarly, the old facts like the Socrates's Golden Rule which states know yourself or the phrase of Hippocrates which says don't torture others, show the main characteristics of people which have strong SI. Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) and Mother Teresa are some prominent people which had such skills and in fact had high spiritual intelligence (Mc. Hawk, 2002, quotes Nasel, 2009).

Spirituality in modern civilization and Islamic teachings

Studying the prior civilizations and societies showed that at no time the need for moral and spiritual revolution was not felt like today. Today everyone acknowledges that the greatest crisis of society, especially in advanced industrial societies, is spiritual crisis. Modern Spirituality through providing different thinking, make some difference in the life of modern man. In the various branches of psychology, particularly physiological psychology, phenomena such as thinking, relaxation, joy and other concepts which modern spirituality have focused on them, have been studied. Modern Spirituality sought to create a new world religion and from this perspective play a major role in creating cloud world culture in line with completing of globalization. In the new spirituality the truth is not important, but efficiency is important. In this case, it is no matter which religion is more

complete and more accurate, but whichever that can quiet the people can be considered as his religion. So it can be said that religion and spirituality are different phenomena and the spiritual condition is not belonging to a specific religion. Thereby a man can be religious but not spiritual or he can be a spiritual man, but not religious (Rashad, 2008).

So this vision spread the spirituality minus God and devotion while spirituality and mysticism minus is a deceptive and misleading paradox which is the results of new spiritually oriented movements and new or modernist and secularist emerging mysticisms. Spirituality is based on original nature of the soul, unseen and justice. On the other hand people are looking for a religion which provide solution to the social problems more than spirituality (Hadavi, Dehshiri, 2004). The main characteristic of Islam is that it encompasses all growth factors in human "spiritual and material growth". Spiritual and mental life of people, has no meaning except in relation to God (Morality and spirituality in the perspective of Iran's leader, 2001). The most important thing which is considered by scholars in the contemporary world is the criticality of ethics and spirituality. It is so important that some scholars named the contemporary world as the freeze world in the aspects of values supernatural and human. In an era in which all sacred and the transcendent stop, the meaning is our time is the Dark Age (Navaie, 2005).

Ethics in the Quran is divided into three sections: Divine ethics, personal ethics, and social ethics (Ghafouri, 2008). Thereby it is worthy that factors and barriers of emergence of morality and spirituality were be recognized and reviewed practically and theoretical in order to preventing "dealing with moral hazard" from damages and decline. By this, the efficient context will be provided (Roudgar, 2008). Professor Bahram Ellahi introduced Islamic spirituality in terms of natural spirituality which is the most complete form of spirituality and provided a comprehensive classification of spirituality which are as follow:

A) Traditional spiritual: Spirituality that in the past mystics of all religions and faiths did it and still do. Traditional spirituality is one-dimensional and only refers to the divine passion. Strong force of divine love disrupts the balance between mind and body before appropriate time. These people often thinks that they are following the satisfaction of God, but without knowing or wanting, they follow self-satisfaction. This means that they constantly seeking pleasurable states such as ecstasy, rapture and power, or inner peace. This passion even if its motivation is the love of God, Common methods of traditional spirituality include: all kind of "ego", austerity (fasting, restrict yourself, seclusion, silence and meditation), and also some specific meditation.

B) Perverted spirituality: this type of spirituality often simulates the traditional spirituality, but its goal is self-satisfaction.

C) Innate spirituality: there is another form of spirituality which easily fits the scope of an ordinary life, and we can called it "innate spirituality". This type of spirituality which its goal is theology and anthropology, is the true Islamic spirituality. Due to alignment with the nature of modern man, it make a balance in him. It considers both dimensions include physically and spiritual (Elahi, 2008).

Table 2-7) the comparison of spirituality in new civilization and Islam

Spirituality in new civilization	Spirituality in Islam
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing different meditations such as relaxation, joy, etc. • It plans to make a universal religion. • The truth is not important, but the efficiency is important. • Each religion which calms a person can consider as his religion. • Religion and spirituality are different. • Developing spirituality minus God, meditation, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both providing spirituality and the solution for social problems. • Spirituality has to axes of ethics and mysticism. • Spirituality always related to moralization. • The Islamic spirituality introduces as innate spirituality which is the most complete one.

Spiritual intelligence and mental health

Various researches and studies have shown that there is a correlation between spirituality and life purpose; health and life satisfaction (Gorge et al, 2000), (Cass et al, 1991 and Chapel, 2000). For example Elmer et al, about the effects of spirituality on health, have founded that spirituality is associated with less disease and greater longevity. People who are spiritually oriented, have a better reaction to treatment in dealing with injury. And cope with the injury and illness more appropriately (Emmons, 2011) and their level of depression is less (McMullen, 2003). Also evidences suggested that spiritual exercises are the multiplier of knowledge and insight related to multiple levels of consciousness (meditation) and have a positive impact on performance.

Warner in his research showed that measuring attention and performance of cognitive flexibility test (meditation) and best meditate exercise, positively affects mental development. Carson R. et al, also showed that the T.M test in a period of two years, leads to improvement in IQ score, the ability to learn and reaction time in the experimental group (Amram, 2012).

The comparison of SI with other intelligence

Wigglesworth has proposed four kind of intelligence include: physical, cognitive, emotional, and spiritual intelligence. These are shown in figure 1. This model is based on the view that says children at first begin to control their body (the physical intelligence) then develop the conceptual and linguistic skills (IQ). This intelligence is related to the child's school activities. Emotional Intelligence is comes into the mind when people interested in expanding their relationship with others. At the end, spiritual intelligence is glaring when people seek the means of issues and ask questions like "whether this is all things?"

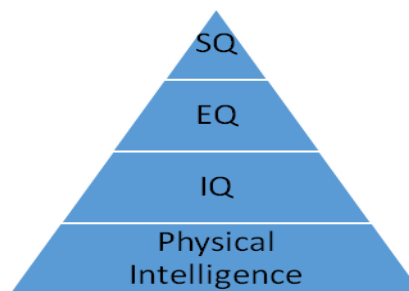


Figure 1) the relationship of different intelligence (Wigglesworth, 2010)

Mac Hawk believes SI is more related to intuition, insight and wisdom in comparison with secular education and non-realistic knowledge. Nonspecific nature and its holistic view and the use of symbolism by SI leads to developing perception of people. This helps to enrichment of relationships and improving of daily work. In addition, move toward self-actualization and spiritual growth are more related to SI than the need to self-control and adhere to regulations and customs. It seems that people who have integrated SI may have different lifestyles (Nasel, 2009). Litchfield expressed the resemblances of these intelligences (Gardner intelligences) as follow:

1-The overlap between all intelligences.

2-Different types of intelligences in people.

3-Growth of intelligences.

Litchfield has considered three differences among SI and other intelligences. He believed that SI:

1. Deals exclusively with others.

2. Encompasses all other levels (intelligences).

3. Its appraisal is more subjective.

The view of Mac Hawk (Nasel, 2009) about the differences among SI and general intelligence is shown in table 1.

Table 1) the comparison of SI and general intelligence (Mac Hawk, 2004)

Spiritual intelligence	General intelligence
Non-specific	Specific
Symbolic	Semantic
Unifying	Distinguishing
Open your own	Self-controller
Qualitative	Slightly
Spiritual	Material
Intuition	Reason

Suggestions

Studying the research background shows that psychologists passed an important step to separation of SI from other intelligences and show their differences. However, the future challenge for psychologists will be in the following areas. Their preparation is required for answering them. Some of these challenges include:

1. Cultural environment, family, coaches, teachers, friends, and the religion of people, to what extent have influenced the development of SI?

2. What are the effects of religious and spiritual experiences throughout the life, different challenges, and the identity in the formation of Spiritual Intelligence?

3. How can we provide the needed interventions for increase SI by using theories of spiritual intelligence, and measure the reliability and validity of them?

4. How can we examined the relation to spiritual intelligence with accurate understanding of religious texts, solving spiritual problems, and finding insight to find the moral dilemma?

5. How can we create an environment that led to the development of spiritual intelligence? (Like Quran, Mystical texts, etc.)

Conclusion

The concept of spiritual intelligence contains a kind of consistency and behavior of solving problem which includes the highest levels of development in various areas of cognitive, moral, emotional, interpersonal, etc. And assist individuals to harmony with surrounding phenomena and achieving internal and external integration. This Intelligence give people a holistic view about life and all experiences and events and enables him to do the reinterpretation of his experiences, and makes his cognition more depth. Person who has the basic principles of the religion (like achieving unity behind the apparent diversity, finding of answers about the origin of the universe, distinguishing spiritual patterns and adjust his behavior based on them) also encompasses the main axes of spiritual intelligence. It is notable that the strategies of SI (like meditation and consciousness) in different religions, especially the teachings of Islam have a great position.

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