

## The Role of Spiritual Intelligence in EGP Progress Test

Fatemeh Khoddamy Pour<sup>1\*</sup> & Mohammad Golshan<sup>2</sup>

1. Department of English, Maybod Branch, Islamic Azad University, Maybod, Yazd, Iran.

2. Department of English, Maybod Branch, Islamic Azad University, Maybod, Yazd, Iran.

Email: Mohammadgolshann@gmail.com

\*Corresponding Author's Email: Fatemeh.khoddamy@gmail.com

**Abstract** - The present paper investigated the relationship between spiritual intelligence (SI) and students' success in a general English course (EGP). The participants consisted of 109 students (93 males and 16 females) who were all studying general English in Azad University of Sirjan, Iran. They were first provided with spiritual intelligence self-report inventory (King 2008) and then a general English progress test (from the book Facts and Figures 1 by Patricia Ackert and Linda Lee Fourth edition). Data analysis was done using Kolmogorov-Smirnov, Spearman Correlation Coefficient, Leven test and T-test. The results confirmed that there seems to be no linear relationship between the two mentioned variables and likewise no difference between males and females. Discussion on the implication of this study towards spiritually research and learning of English language is provided.

**Keywords:** spiritual intelligence, general English, progress test, Kolmogorov-Smirnov, Spearman Correlation Coefficient, Leven test, T-test.

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

### 1.1 Spiritual Intelligence

The concept of spiritual intelligence was emerged in 1996 for the first time in the psychology literature and was developed in 1999 (Emmons, 1999). In view of primary researchers, spiritual intelligence is the adaptive use of spiritual information in order to facilitate daily problem solving and achievements (Sohrabi & Naseri, 2009). Spiritual intelligence is defined as the human ability to creatively plan questions about life and it helps young children's parents to affect the mental health of their children effectively. For instance, Mohammadyari (2012) showed that parents with a higher spiritual intelligence will bring up children with higher mental health and vice versa. In the definitions and patterns of each expert about spiritual intelligence it has been introduced as the intellectual ability, capacity, and resources of the various states. According to Emmons (2000), spiritual intelligence is the adaptive use of spiritual information to solve problems in daily life and achievements. He introduced five dimensions of spiritual intelligence namely excellency, capacity, physical material, the world and the transcendental aspects belonging to it. Also other features of spiritual intelligence can be considered as the ability to enter into states of spiritual consciousness, the ability to embellish activities and events, and relationships with a sense of the sacredness of life, the ability to use the intellectual resources to the problems of life and capacity to engage in virtuous behaviors (forgiveness, gratitude, humility and compassion).

Emmons (2001) further defines spiritual intelligence as the conformity application of spiritual information that aims to facilitate solving daily issues and attainment of goals. In

another definition, King (2008) believes that spiritual intelligence must be viewed as a collection of mental capacities based on unsubstantial and exalted aspects of life such as personal understanding, deep existential thinking, and expansion of meaning. In his opinion, spiritual intelligence comprises the four components of critical existential thinking, production of personal meaning, transcendental awareness, and expansion of conscious states. According to Bowell (2004) spiritual intelligence includes seven steps: awareness, meaning, evaluation, being centered, vision, projection, and mission. Spiritual intelligence as defined by Wiggleworth (2006) is the ability to behave with wisdom and clemency as long as internal and external peace is maintained by taking conditions into account (equanimity).

Spiritual intelligence also motivates individuals to ask creative questions about many things especially about spirituality in their lives. According to Zohar and Marshall (2000) intelligence belongs to our consciousness which is in close contact with reasoning and emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence controls our feelings and makes us think about our emotions or our inner selves. It motivates us to ask ourselves who is inside us who is doing all this thinking and feeling all these emotions. Pursuing emotional intelligence may help us understand the meaning of life and try to fill the emptiness we feel in our lives. Even children's curiosity about what adults call the metaphysical world is a good evidence that shows we humans naturally need spirituality and like to know more about it. Individuals who care about spirituality or have a high level of spiritual intelligence have more creative minds and are able to find better solutions when they face a problem. Neurological researches also support spiritual intelligence.

Spirituality is a form of intelligence that predicts functioning and adaptation, as demonstrated by correlations of spirituality, with improved health or well-being (Emmons, 2000a; Emmons, 2000b). SI can also be defined as the ability to create meaning based on deep understanding of existential questions, and awareness and the ability to use multiple levels of consciousness in problem solving (Vaughan, 2002). Another definition has been presented by Wolman (2001) who defines SI as "the human capacity to address the ultimate questions about the meaning of life, and to simultaneously experience the seamless connection between each of us and the world in which we live". In addition, according to Srivastava & Misra (2012), SI assists people in any context (corporation, community or family) to develop their spiritual awareness, capacity and intelligence, and also to use that intelligence to be more effective as an individual, and to expand their capacity to make a greater contribution to the endeavors of others. Furthermore, based on Abdullah's study of 2012, SI integrates all the dimensions of human life and guides them to live a meaningful life. SI is the ability to find meaning, purpose and value in our lives, connecting our actions and lives to a wider, richer meaning-giving context (Alex & Ajawani, 2011). According to Hosseini et al. (2010), "spirituality can be viewed as a form of intelligence because it predicts functioning and adaptation and offers capabilities that enable people to solve problems and attain goals". In a 2011 research, Suan Chin et al. stated, "SI is the set of abilities that individuals use to apply, manifest and embody spiritual resources, values and qualities in ways that enhances their daily functioning and well-being".

To sum up, as mentioned by all authors above spiritual intelligence is an inseparable part of us which can have positive effects on the quality of our lives. SI is an ability gifted to us which helps and motivates us to think about concepts beyond this material world and life. It motivates us to ask ourselves questions such as where we have come from, why we were

born, what we are supposed to do in this life and where we are going to go after this physical death. Such questions may awaken some people to search about the reason of their birth and the purpose for which they were born. People may start thinking about how they have lived all their lives and how high the quality of their lives has been. Usually those individuals who follow spirituality and feel wholeheartedly that they are connected to a more powerful source which never leaves them alone and is always protecting them, feel a great happiness and equanimity that push them toward a high quality life in which whenever they face a problem or a difficult situation, they can make the best decision without experiencing stress or nervousness. This equanimity helps them to do their best in whatever activity they do and achieve great results. All authors above support this more or less.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

The present study intends to determine if there is any relationship between spiritual intelligence and students' success in a general English progress test. Since spiritual intelligence centers around evaluating one's quality of life and progress, and if a student engages themselves in such evaluations, they will draw more success towards themselves, it is beneficial to investigate whether these two variables are related to each other or not.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Participants**

This research is going to focus on the relationship between spiritual intelligence and students' success in their general English progress test. The participants in this research were chosen randomly by cluster sampling and were all studying general English at Azad University of Sirjan, Iran. There were 109 participants in this study, of which, 93 are males and 16 are females.

### **2.2 Instruments**

Two data gathering instruments were used in this study. First is the Spiritual Intelligence Self-report Inventory (King 2008) and secondly, a Progress Test consisting of vocabulary and grammar questions from the book "Facts & Figures 1" by Patricia Ackert and Linda Lee (fourth edition) which they were studying as their general English course.

### **2.3 Procedure**

First of all the students were provided with the SI questionnaire based on Likert scale consisting of 24 questions. The students were supposed to read the items and choose their favorite option among five possibilities from I completely disagree to I completely agree. All the questionnaire items centered around spirituality and individuals' self-perception about it. After completing the SI questionnaire, they were provided with the progress test consisting of four parts, two grammar and two translation parts. To correct the SI papers all the options chosen were added up because the options were in the form of numbers from zero to four, the higher the score, the higher the level of the spiritual intelligence and also the progress test

papers were corrected like all tests with open-ended questions. And finally the two scores were compared with each other for each individual.

## 2.4 Data Analysis

To perform the correlation between the variables and to determine the difference between male and female students, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, Spearman correlation coefficient, Leven test and also T- test were applied. Data analysis was done by means of SPSS software SPSS version 16.0 (SPSS Inc., released 2007).

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the frequency, frequency percentage and the accumulative percentage of the participants' gender.

**Table 1. Group Statistics**

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Female	16	14.7%
Male	93	85.3%
Total	109	100%

To investigate the relationship between the two variables, first of all, normality of the variables must be tested. If the variables are normal, Pearson Correlation Coefficient can be applied otherwise if variables are not considered as normal, Spearman Correlation Coefficient will be used. To test normality of the variables Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used.

Table 2 illustrates the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. According to the obtained results SI variable is not a normal variable as its significant level is 0.000 and it is less than 0.05 whereas the EGP variable is a normal variable because its significant level is 0.200 and it is greater than 0.05. Therefore as one of the variables is not normal, Spearman Correlation Coefficient must be applied to test the correlation between the two variables.

**Table 2. One Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test**

Variables	Spiritual Intelligence (SI)	General English (EGP)
Number	109	109
Mean	18.54	58.73
Standard Deviation	2.51	12.43
Z statistics	0.280	0.064
Significant level	0.000	0.200

Table 3 shows the results of the Spearman Correlation Coefficient test between the two variables of SI and EGP. The obtained correlation coefficient is -0.023 ( $p = .815$ , n.s.) and hence it is greater than 0.05, it can be concluded that there is no linear relationship between SI and EGP among students of Azad University.

**Table 3. Spearman Correlation Coefficient test**

Correlation Statistics	Correlation Coefficient	Significant level	Number	Is there any relation?	Relation type
Spearman	-0.023	0.815	109	No relation	Negative

Table 4 illustrates the results obtained from comparison of SI means between males and females. Since the significant level obtained from Leven test is 0.046 and it is less than 0.05, it is confirmed that the variances are not equal. The significant level obtained from T-test is 0.157 and greater than 0.05, consequently it can be inferred that SI means are the same between males and females.

**Table 4. Comparison of SI Means between Males and Females**

	Leven test for equality of variances		T-test for equality of means				
	F	Significant	t	df	Significant	Mean differences	
Equality of variances	4.089	0.046	0.899	107	0.370	0.61	
Inequality of variances			1.441	41.307	0.157	0.61	

Table 5 shows the comparison of EGP means between males and females. Since the significance level obtained from the Leven test is 0.960 and it is greater than 0.05, it is confirmed that variances of the two groups are equal. Also the significant level obtained from the T-test which is 0.403 and greater than 0.05, it is concluded that EGP means are the same between males and females.

**Table 5. Comparison of EGP Means between Males and Females**

	Leven test for equality of variances		T-test for equality of means				
	F	Significant	t	df	Significant	Mean differences	
Equality of variances	0.003	0.960	0.839	28	0.403	-2.838	
Inequality of variances			0.818	20.095	0.423	-2.838	

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Human beings need to feel dependent on a powerful source by nature. Humans have always been searching for something to worship or pray through the history. First of all they thought the sun or the moon were their Gods. After all, they were preparing the daylight and nightlight for them. Over time humans changed their minds and thoughts the sun or the moon and even the stars cannot be their Gods, therefore they started thinking about making a figure by stone which could represent their true God. They made Gods in different shapes, big ones, small ones, taller, shorter and so on. Even they started building a house for their Gods, something similar to a temple. Years went by and little by little people understood their true God was not living in those stones.

Spirituality has always been with us and it doesn't matter where we are from we need to worship some creature as our God. Humans cannot stop thinking about this because it makes them feel good and relaxed, that feeling of security and relaxation humans gain by having a relation with God removes all the tension people face. Spirituality may have numerous positive effects on us and also people are seeking for this, being calm and happy at heart. None of the creatures living on earth feels the same. When an individual is calm and lives without any tension, surely it affects all aspects of their life. Their jobs, their education and even their relation with family and loved ones and vice versa, people with no spirituality usually lack relaxation and are mostly stressed out. Actually that is why the researcher thought there could be a relation between the two variables in this research. However, the results did not confirm the existence of such a relation between them.

As mentioned in details above, because of the likely positive effects spirituality may have on quality of our lives, the researcher decided to test the possible relation between spiritual intelligence and an English progress test among students studying general English at university. First of all Kolmogorov – Smirnov test was applied to test the normality of the two variables, based on the results that showed one of the variables was not normal the Spearman Correlation Coefficient was chosen to test the correlation between the variables and at last Leven test was applied to compare the variances and T-test was used to compare the means. The Spearman Correlation Coefficient results showed that there is no linear relation between the two considered variables and also the T-test results indicated that the both SI means and EGP means were the same between male and female students.

Since having a high level of spiritual intelligence can influence our daily life activities and also achievements positively, the researcher assumed there could be a relation between students' SI level and their academic achievement. However, in this case no relation was confirmed to be existing between the two variables. It is possible that in other settings the relation between these two variables be confirmed.

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