

## Spiritual Intelligence and Empathy among Old Age People

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### ABSTRACT

The present study is aimed to see the difference of spiritual intelligence and empathy among old age people. In total, 50 samples (25 females and 25 males) were taken from Patna district. Samples were taken by the purposive sampling method. The Spiritual Intelligence Scale developed by G. Amrinder, R. N. K. Chadda, and S. S. Verma, and Empathy Scale developed by C. C. Venkatesh Murthy were used for obtaining data. Current study showed that there are significant differences between males and females on spiritual quotient scale. There are no significant differences between males and females on empathy scale. There is negative correlation between spiritual intelligence and empathy in males.

**Keywords:** *Spiritual Intelligence, Empathy, Integrity, Knowledge*

### *Spiritual Intelligence*

When we start to define what is spiritual intelligence, first we need thing comes on our mind is "What is intelligence." Many psychologists defined intelligence on the basis of their knowledge and ideas. They described intelligence as the mental ability to acquire knowledge, thinking, solve problems, adapt to new situations. Spiritual intelligence is the upper level of intelligence. Zohar (1997) coined the term "Spiritual Intelligence." It is the intelligence with which we heal ourselves and we make ourselves whole integrity. Em Emmons (2000) defined "Spiritual intelligence is a framework for identifying and organizing skills and abilities needed for the adaptive use of spirituality." Wolman (2001) defined "Spiritual Intelligence is the human capacity to ask 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." Cindy Wigglesworth (2012) defined Spiritual Intelligence as "the ability to act with wisdom and compassion, while maintaining inner and outer peace regardless of the circumstances." Zohar and Marshall (2004) have given 12 principal of Spiritual Intelligence. Richard A. Howell (founder of Spiritual Intelligence training in his book) introduced the "7 steps of Spiritual Intelligence." Cindy Wigglesworth (2012) had discussed about 4 quadrants and 21 skills of Spiritual Intelligence.

So according these definitions, and Components Skills steps of Spiritual Intelligence we can say that Spiritual Intelligence is the mental ability which imparts personal growth and helps to understand the purpose of life in deep introspection and understanding of one's values and beliefs.

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### *Empathy*

In simple language we can say that empathy is the ability to understand other person's emotional experience, feelings, point of views, and problems. Fichtner (2003), Fichtner (2004) has given the term "Empathy" came from German word "Einfühlung" which means "feeling into." According to Lipps and Pramelt (2003) Einfühlung is the act of projecting oneself into the object of perception. In 1909 Titchner interpreted Lipps's notion of Einfühlung as empathy. In his book "A Beginner in Psychology (1915)" he wrote that "empathic ideas are psychologically interesting because they are converse of perception." According to Fesh (1993), empathy is the process of understanding a person's subjective experiences by vicariously sharing the experience while maintaining stance.

The American Psychiatric Association (APA) defines empathy as "awareness and understanding of others' feelings and thoughts." According to Halpern (2003) "Empathy is an acquired skill or an attitude of life, used to try to contact someone, to communicate and recognize other's experiences or feelings."

Daniel Goleman and Paul Ekman have identified three components of Empathy: Cognitive Empathy, which refers to the ability to understand other person's psychological state; Emotional Empathy, which refers to the ability to feel someone else's emotions; and Compassionate Empathy, which refers to the ability to understand and share someone else's emotions but without taking them on as your own emotions. Many psychologists have given theories of Empathy, Carl Rogers, Kohut's theory of Empathy, Hoffman's theory of Empathy, Batson's theory of Empathy. So overall we can say that empathy is the mental ability to understand other's emotions.

### *Objectives*

- To compare Spiritual Intelligence between female and male college old age people.
- To compare empathy between female and male old age people.
- To study the relation between Spiritual Intelligence and Empathy.

### *Hypothesis:*

- There are no correlation between males and females on the level of spiritual intelligence.
- There are no correlation between males and females on the level of Empathy.
- Spiritual intelligence and empathy will be positively correlated with each other.

## **METHODS**

This study has been conducted on 50 old age people (25 males and 25 females) from Patna district of Bihar. The participants have been selected through a purposive sampling method. The obtained data has been analyzed by using different statistical techniques like Mean, SD, and t ratio.

### *Tools:*

- Spiritual Quotient Scale: This scale was developed and standardized by Gurvinder Ahluwalia, N.K. Chadha, and S.S. Vohra. This scale was administered to 1400 adults in the age group (18-85). This test is reliable and valid.
- Empathy Scale: This scale was developed and standardized by C.N. Venkatapathy and C.G. Venkatesh Murthy. There were five dimensions in this scale, with 35 items, and this scale is for adults.

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- PDS (Personal Data Sheet): Prepared by the researcher and is used for collecting necessary information about the respondents.

### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

*Table-1 Difference between males and females on the level of spiritual intelligence*

	N	Mean	SD	t
<b>Males</b>	25	176.44	12.26	<b>3.12**</b>
<b>Females</b>	25	166.64	9.75	

*\*\* significant at 0.01 level*

The results show that male participants (Mean = 176.44, SD = 12.26) scored higher on spiritual intelligence compared to female participants (Mean = 166.64, SD = 9.75). The obtained t-value of 3.12 indicates a significant difference between males and females on the level of spiritual intelligence. This suggests that, within the sample, males possess significantly higher spiritual intelligence than females. This finding is in line with earlier research such as Nazam (2014), which also reported significant gender differences in spiritual intelligence.

*Table – 2 Difference between males and females on the level of empathy*

	N	Mean	SD	t
<b>Males</b>	25	88.72	5.71	<b>0.59NS</b>
<b>Females</b>	25	90.08	9.96	

*NS= not significant*

Table 2 shows the difference between males and females on the level of empathy. The findings indicate that females (Mean = 90.08, SD = 9.96) scored slightly higher on empathy than males (Mean = 88.72, SD = 5.71). However, the t-value of 0.59 is not significant, showing that the difference is statistically insignificant. Therefore, both males and females in the study exhibit similar levels of empathy, with no meaningful gender difference on this variable.

*Table – 3 Correlation between Spiritual Intelligence and Empathy*

Variable	Spiritual Intelligence	Empathy
<b>Males</b>	<b>-0.244</b>	<b>-0.244</b>
<b>Females</b>	<b>0.042</b>	<b>0.042</b>

Table 3 presents correlation between spiritual intelligence and empathy. The correlation analysis reveals that among males, the relationship between spiritual intelligence and empathy is negative ( $r = -0.244$ ), indicating that as spiritual intelligence increases, empathy tends to decrease slightly. In contrast, among females, the correlation is positive ( $r = 0.042$ ), suggesting a very small and weak positive relationship between spiritual intelligence and empathy. Both correlations, however, are very low, indicating no strong association between the two variables for either gender.

### CONCLUSION

1. Significant gender difference exists in spiritual intelligence, with males demonstrating higher spiritual intelligence than females.
2. No significant gender difference exists in empathy, suggesting that both males and females show similar empathy levels in old age.

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3. The relationship between spiritual intelligence and empathy is weak for both genders.

Among males, the correlation is negative, indicating an inverse relationship. Among females, the correlation is slightly positive, showing a negligible direct relationship.

The present study explored gender differences in spiritual intelligence and empathy among older adults, as well as the relationship between these two psychological constructs. The findings revealed a significant gender difference in spiritual intelligence, with males scoring higher than females, while no significant difference emerged in empathy levels between the two groups. The correlation analysis further indicated that spiritual intelligence and empathy are only weakly related, showing a slight negative association among males and a minimal positive association among females. Overall, the results suggest that although spiritual intelligence varies across gender in old age, empathy remains relatively stable, and the two constructs function largely independently. These insights contribute to a deeper understanding of emotional and spiritual functioning in later life and highlight the need for further research with larger and more diverse samples to examine these relationships more comprehensively.

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### ***Conflict of Interest***

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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