



The relationship between Spiritual Intelligence and Aggression among Young Adults of Ladakh

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ABSTRACT

The research aimed at finding out the relationship between spiritual intelligence and aggression among young adults (18-29 years) living in Ladakh, India. A total of 115 participants were taken by convenience sampling who answered a questionnaire based on four subcomponents of critical existential thinking (CET), personal meaning production (PMP), transcendental awareness (TA) and conscious state expansion (CSE), as well as aggression itself measured through Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (SISRI-24) and Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire (BPAQ). The study was carried out using multi-stage procedure where descrip-

tive statistics were used to describe central tendency and variability in scores on spiritual intelligence as well as aggression. Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated for relationships between sub-scales measuring spiritual intelligence and aggressive behavior while hierarchical multiple regressions analysis was employed to explore further relationship between variables under investigation. The findings revealed a statistically significant negative correlation between overall spiritual intelligence and aggression, indicating that higher spiritual intelligence scores are associated with lower aggression levels. Further analysis of spiritual intelligence subcomponents showed a negative correlation between CET and aggression, suggesting that critical reflection on life's meaning is linked to reduced aggression. However, no significant correlations were found for PMP, TA, or CSE. The study acknowledges limitations such as sample size and age range, highlighting the need for further research with larger and more diverse samples. Future studies could also explore additional factors influencing the relationship between Spiritual Intelligence and aggression.

Keywords: *Spiritual intelligence, Aggression, young adults, Ladakh, critical existential thinking*

INTRODUCTION

Ladakh is in the Indian Himalayas. It is famous for its rich spiritual heritage, perhaps in a peaceful landscape, perhaps by the monasteries surrounded by colorful prayer flags. The extent to which the current landscape is the birthplace of Indigenous peoples' rich cultural inheritance. The young Ladakhis find themselves up against a peculiar crossroads. Ladakhi youth inherits a legacy of peace from one side. Compassion, and connection to something beyond oneself. Each of these is intrinsic to the Ladakhi way of life; they weave through all

traditions, celebrations, daily interactions (Rabgyas, 2009). A Ladakhi Buddhist scholar, argues that Ladakh's religious ritual practices are on the decline. The result of trying to keep up with the very fast technological developments explains a shift that he believes is occurring globally. Before, these studies into the beliefs of the Ladakhi generation about mental health pathology began, the connection between culture adaptation, one of the major difficulties that most youth face, and negative mental health outcomes were only thought to exist in imaginary. A study by Ozer (2012) examines the popular notion that traditional value clashes with the borrowing of the new generation's value is attributed to an increase in cases like aggression and suicide.

Spiritual Intelligence

Emmons (2000) suggested spiritual intelligence may be thought of as going beyond traditional IQ types which only measure cognitive abilities required for survival while ignoring the search for meaning or purpose in life which is an important component of spiritual growth too. To this end he listed five main features: a) transcending oneself; b) reaching higher states of consciousness; c) integrating these experiences within our daily lives; d) using them when solving problems; e) living virtuous lives based on moral principles derived from religion or any other belief system one holds dear.

Religious beliefs are not the only things that Spiritual intelligence deals with, it goes deeper than them. It covers a wider range of human experience and brings into focus such values as commitment, integrity, and empathy towards others. For (King, 2008) spiritual intelligence has been described as a group of brainpowers linked to thinking that helps people become more aware, whole, and adept at using nonmaterial and eternal aspects of life. The Sub-Factors of the Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (SISRI-24) by King are:

(a) Critical Existential Thinking (CET): This fundamental dimension considers how humans respond to deep philosophical inquiries about meaning, intention and being. It goes beyond theoretical meditation and requires precise thinking methods aspires to have original answers or personal philosophies on life founded upon scientific understanding, as well as experiences that are varied.

(b) Personal Meaning Production (PMP): The focus on this core element involves human beings actively constructing meaning and purpose from their experiences, be it in the physical or mental realm. Importantly, PMP goes beyond mere discovery of meaning; it incorporates the ability to constructively work towards having a life aim.

(c) Transcendental Awareness (TA): The experiences that extend beyond materialism, such as interconnectedness or a “transcendent self,” fall under this category. For King (2008), transcendental awareness means a state where we experience a more diffused and encompassing reality while we are awake. humans are seen as possessing an ability to see transcendent parts in them, other people and their environment even during everyday states of consciousness.

(d) Conscious state expansion (CSE): This dimension concentrates specifically on the ability to deliberately enter and leave these higher levels of awareness at will. Various forms of meditation, prayer among others is often thought to help one develop this ability. These are called pure consciousness, cosmic consciousness, oneness, or unity, as they go beyond ordinary consciousness. Expanded or altered states of mind have a long history in religious and spiritual traditions.

Harati et al. (2022) investigated the relationship between spirituality and aggression in Iranian nurses during COVID-19 using a cross-sectional design. They recruited 200 nurses

from four hospitals and collected data on demographics, aggression levels (Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire), and spiritual well-being (Paloutzian & Ellison Spiritual Well-being Scale). Analysis revealed a significant negative correlation: nurses with higher spirituality reported lower aggression. Additionally, age and work experience played a role in aggression levels. The study suggests promoting spiritual care education among nurses to potentially reduce aggression.

Aggression

Aggression is the broad concept that refers to many types of actions which are meant to cause harm either physically or emotionally on another person. Aggression comes in various forms among people. In addition to physical pain, individuals may suffer from verbal attacks, social manipulation and even such indirect acts as destroying someone's property or spreading rumors (aggressions). This aggression can be instant and reactive; people act out their anger or desire for revenge immediately after being provoked (hostile aggression). On the contrary it may also be premeditated; one person deliberately plans how best he/she can defeat another individual in a game or any other competition (instrumental aggression). Moreover, aggression could be an automatic response pattern deeply rooted within us. We automatically fight back when our safety is threatened (automatic aggression). At personal level aggressive behavior leads not only to physical injuries but also emotional suffering and breakdown of relationships. On larger scale, however, this action disrupts peaceful coexistence among different groups within a region thereby hindering development efforts in that area.

Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory" emphasizes social interaction and observation as determiners of behavior. The concept of modelling is important in that individuals learn from observing what others do and the consequences they bear for behaviors, especially when discussing aggression in humans, because a young adult who sees another peer get something

through insults or even intimidation will come to believe that such acts have payoffs. In this way vicarious reinforcement helps the observer to develop comparative aggressive responses in future situations. Social Learning Theory also recognizes cognitive processes beyond mere imitation whereby an individual makes sense of observed violence within its social context.

Shaban and Kumar (2016) examined aggression levels and gender differences in young adults at Lovely Professional University, Punjab. They recruited 100 participants (50 males and 50 females) aged 18-25 and used the Aggression Scale to measure aggression over two months. Interestingly, the results showed that while females (30%) had slightly higher aggression levels than males (22%), this difference wasn't statistically significant. This challenges the traditional assumption of males being inherently more aggressive, suggesting that young adults of both genders might exhibit similar levels of aggression.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to examine the influence of Spiritual Intelligence on aggression among young adults of Ladakh” to equip them with skills of emotional intelligence, self-awareness improvement and empathy-building. Such research can further help in bringing about peaceful coexistence within communities; it can also promote conflict resolution and positive social interaction among people living in each area like Ladakh by recognizing how spiritualism helps control aggression. While spiritual intelligence has been widely studied alongside aggressive behaviors during recent times, this relationship remains relatively unexplored especially among individuals aged between 18-29 years residing in Ladakh region of India. Consequently, findings from this investigation might help policy makers develop programs that foster spirituality while discouraging violent conduct thus improving overall mental health for youths within Ladakh.

RESEARCH GAP

Despite an increase in interest about both spirituality and aggressiveness not much is known regarding their connection within unique cultural environments such as those found in Ladakh. No previous studies have ever looked at how having certain levels or dimensions of Spiritual Intelligence could affect aggressive tendencies displayed by young adults from Ladakh. The main concern here is whether having higher amounts of Spiritual Intelligence would act as a buffer against showing hostility among adolescents living in Ladakh.

METHODOLOGY**PURPOSE**

The study aimed to explore the relationship between spiritual intelligence and aggression among young adults of Ladakh.

HYPOTHESES

There will be a negative correlation between spiritual intelligence and aggression among young adults of Ladakh.

Sub-Hypothesis

- Increased Critical Existential Thinking (CET) among young adults in Ladakh is associated with decreased levels of aggression.
- Personal Meaning Production (PMP) Influences the Aggression among young adults of Ladakh.
- Among young adults in Ladakh, higher levels of Transcendental Awareness (TA) will be associated with lower levels of aggression.

- Conscious State Expansion (CSE) Affects the Aggression among young adults in Ladakh.

SAMPLE

Participants will include young adults aged 18-29 specifically, who were readily available in the Ladakh region and willing to participate. The ultimate compilation of data comprises 115 individuals.

MEASURE

The study employs two well-established scales to assess spiritual intelligence and aggression among young adults in Ladakh.

- ***Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (SISRI-24)***

The SISRI-24 is a 24-item self-report scale designed to measure spiritual intelligence across five dimensions; (a) Critical Existential Thinking (CET), (b) Personal Meaning Production (PMP), (c) Transcendental Awareness (TA), (d) Conscious State Expansion (CET). The SISRI-24” has shown strong reliability in many studies where Cronbach’s alpha ranged between .82-.92.

- ***Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire (BPAQ)***

The BPAQ is a 29-item self-report scale developed by Buss and Perry (1992) to measure aggression across four dimensions; (I) Physical Aggression, (II) Verbal Aggression, (III) Anger, (IV) Hostility. The BPAQ has shown high reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.74 – 0.91) and validity. Therefore, it can be used as one of the measures for evaluating aggressiveness in this research.

PROCEDURE

This study employed a convenience sampling method to recruit participants from the region of Ladakh. The questionnaires were filled through online google forms and the participants were provided with detailed instructions and obtained their informed consent along with their responses for further studies.

ANALYSIS OF DATA**Result****Table 1**

Descriptive Statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation)

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Critical Existential Thinking (CET)	15.62	4.465
Personal Meaning Production (PMP)	11.64	3.408
Transcendental Awareness (TA)	16.3	4.583
Conscious State Expansion (CSE)	9.54	4.029
Spiritual Intelligence (Total)	53.1	12.933
Physical Aggression (I)	22.85	5.392
Verbal Aggression (II)	18.81	4.497
Anger (III)	18.12	4.237
Hostility (IV)	22.34	6.033
Aggression (Total)	82.12	15.511

Table 2

Pearson's Correlation coefficient scores of Spiritual Intelligence and its sub- Factors along with Aggression

Variable	CET	PMP	TA	CSE	Spiritual Intelligence (Total)	Aggression
CET	1.000					
PMP	.523** (<.001)	1.000				
TA	.572** (<.001)	.570** (<.001)	1.000			
CSE	.378* (.014)	.759	.483** (<.001)	1.000		
Spiritual Intelligence (Total)	.383** (<.001)	.523** (<.001)	.840** (<.001)	.767** (<.001)	1.000	
Aggression (Total)	.229* (.014)	-.062 (.510)	.019 (.837)	.120 (.203)	.167** (.001)	1.000

DISCUSSION

The descriptive statistics (Table-1) offers valuable insights into the spiritual intelligence (SI) and aggression profiles of young adults in Ladakh. The average Spiritual Intelligence score (mean = 53.10) leans towards a moderate inclination towards spirituality, suggesting a general openness to and engagement with the deeper aspects of life. This finding aligns with potential cultural influences in Ladakh, where spiritual traditions may play a significant role in everyday life. However, the presence of a notable standard deviation (SD = 12.93) adds a crucial layer of nuance. This spread in the data indicates that individuals within the sample exhibit varying levels of Spiritual Intelligence. This highlights a critical area for further exploration.

The high mean scores for “Critical Existential Thinking (CET)” (mean = 15.62) and “Transcendental Awareness (TA)” (mean = 16.30) present a compelling insight into the sample of Ladakhi young adults. These scores suggest a shared focus on two key aspects of Spiritual Intelligence: grappling with life's meaning (CET) and experiencing a sense of interconnectedness with something larger than oneself (TA).

Conversely, slightly lower scores for “Personal Meaning Production (PMP)” (mean = 11.64) and “Conscious State Expansion (CSE)” (mean = 9.54). These lower mean scores suggest a notable variation in how individuals within the sample approach meaning-making and experience altered states of consciousness. This variability highlights several intriguing areas for future research.

Regarding aggression, the average score (mean = 82.12) suggests a moderate level within the sample. However, the standard deviation (SD = 15.51) highlights significant individual differences. Interestingly, physical aggression (mean = 22.85) appears slightly higher than verbal aggression (mean = 18.81) and anger (mean = 18.12). the comparable mean scores for hostility (22.34) and physical aggression deserve closer examination. This finding suggests

that some participants might harbor feelings of animosity (hostility) without necessarily translating them into overt physical aggression.

The mean score for spiritual intelligence is 53.10 with a standard deviation of 12.933. The mean score for aggression is 82.12 with a standard deviation of 15.511. Pearson correlations were conducted to examine the relationships between the spiritual intelligence sub-scales and aggression. A hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to further explore the relationship between Spiritual Intelligence and its sub-Factors with aggression.

Table-2 displays the correlation matrix exploring “the relationship between spiritual intelligence, its sub-scales “(critical existential thinking, personal meaning production, transcendental awareness, and conscious state expansion)”, and aggression”. The Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) between spiritual intelligence and aggression is -0.107, which is statistically significant at $p < 0.01$. The negative correlation coefficient value signifies an inverse relationship between spiritual intelligence and aggression. As spiritual intelligence increases, aggression tends to decrease, and vice versa. The correlation coefficient of -0.107 indicates a weak negative correlation between the two variables. Examining the sub-scales, "critical existential thinking (CET)" has a statistically significant negative correlation with aggression ($r = -0.229$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that higher levels of CET are associated with lower levels of aggression. “Personal meaning production (PMP)” and “transcendental awareness (TA)” do not exhibit statistically significant correlations with aggression. However, “conscious state expansion (CSE)” has a positive correlation with aggression ($r = 0.120$), although not statistically significant.

Furthermore, the sub-scales of spiritual intelligence demonstrate significant intercorrelations. CET has a strong negative correlation with spiritual intelligence ($r = -0.767$, $p < 0.01$), while PMP ($r = 0.759$, $p < 0.01$), TA ($r = 0.840$, $p < 0.01$), and CSE ($r = 0.763$, $p < 0.01$) exhibit strong positive correlations with spiritual intelligence. The sample size (N) for the analysis is

115, providing adequate statistical power to detect the observed correlations. It's important to note that while correlations indicate the strength and direction of relationships, they do not imply causation. The core hypothesis (H1) of this study proposed a negative correlation between spiritual intelligence and aggression among the young adults of Ladakh. Our findings supported this hypothesis, with a statistically significant negative correlation coefficient (-0.107 , $p\text{-value} = 0.0128$). This means that young adults in Ladakh who scored higher on the spiritual intelligence measure also tended to report lower levels of aggression. The correlation coefficient, in this case -0.107 , indicates the strength and direction of the linear relationship between spiritual intelligence and aggression. A negative coefficient, like the one we found, suggests that the two variables tend to move in opposite directions. This finding aligns with previous research (Nawa et al., 2019; Mohammadi et al., 2020).

The first sub-hypothesis focused on “Critical Existential Thinking (CET)”. The analysis revealed a statistically significant negative correlation between CET and aggression. This implies that young adults who engage in more critical reflection on their place in the world and the meaning of life tend to exhibit lower levels of aggression. The correlation coefficient between CET and aggression is -0.229 , indicating a weak negative correlation and the $p\text{-value}$ for CET is 0.014 , which is less than 0.05 , signifying a statistically significant correlation. This finding also aligns with previous research (Mohammadi et al. 2020).

The correlation between PMP and aggression was -0.062 indicating very weak negative correlation, and the $p\text{-value}$ (0.510) associated with this correlation coefficient indicated no meaningful relationship between a young adult's ability to find personal meaning in life and their aggression levels in this sample. This lack of significance could be attributed to limitations in the study design, such as sample size or the specific population studied.

The findings for “Transcendental Awareness (TA)” did not support the hypothesis. The correlation between TA and aggression was near-zero and not statistically significant. the value

of the unstandardized coefficient is 0.119, which is a very small number. This indicates that even if a young adult's TA score increases by one unit, the predicted change in their aggression score is minimal.

Finally, the analysis of “Conscious State Expansion (CSE)” provided partial support for the hypothesis. A weak negative correlation, marginally significant at the 10% level, was observed between CSE and aggression. the p-value (0.203) is less than 0.1 (10%). This suggests that the model might be explaining the data with some significance, but the evidence is weak. This suggests a potential association, where young adults with a greater capacity for conscious state expansion might exhibit slightly lower aggression levels.

CONCLUSION

The research investigated the connection between spiritual intelligence (SI) and aggression among young people in Ladakh, an area with unique cultural and religious practices. The findings indicated a strong “inverse correlation between spiritual intelligence and aggression levels in young adults from Ladakh”. Especially “critical existential thinking (CET)”, one of the sub-components of Spiritual Intelligence appeared related with reduced scores on aggression measures. These results can be very useful for researchers, practitioners and policy makers working within youth development programs in Ladakh region. They show that we need to study more about how spirituality interacts with different cultures and provokes or dampens aggressive behavior among different people at various ages. One should also consider cultural factors when dealing with aggressive behavior amongst young adults from Ladakh.

It is crucial that we invest in positive youth development programs especially in this region. However, such initiatives must consider local customs beliefs systems alongside socio emotional learning. This holistic approach equips individuals within necessary tools required

navigate life challenges assertive communication becomes an essential part success formula. The study has some limitations including small size used self-reporting only. Future research needs to address these issues adopt multi method design help understand better “the relationship between spiritual intelligence and aggression among young adults in Ladakh.”

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