



## Mindful Connections: Exploring the Relationship Between Meditation, Creativity, and Spiritual Intelligence in Young Adults

<sup>1</sup>**Kunal Arora**, (B.A – M.A) Clinical Psychology, Amity institute of psychology and Allied Science. Amity University. Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India

[0875kunal@gmail.com](mailto:0875kunal@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>**Dr. Anita Chauhan**, Amity institute of psychology and Allied Science. Amity University. Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India

[anitac@amity.edu](mailto:anitac@amity.edu)

**Abstract:** Growing scholarly attention has been drawn to the complex relationship among spiritual intelligence, creativity, and mindfulness, with new findings suggesting common emotional and cognitive processes. By examining these connections, the current study shows how particular aspects of mindfulness lead to increased spiritual intelligence and creativity. The results show that mindfulness, namely the aspects of non-judging (NJ) and non-reactivity (NR), has a favourable correlation with creativity, which aligns with previous research. The remarkable association between NJ and creativity highlights the relevance of open, non-evaluative awareness in promoting divergent thinking ( $r = 0.631$ ,  $p < .001$ ). According to current beliefs, creative ideation is fostered by a cognitive posture that is adaptable and accommodating. The study also finds that mindfulness and spiritual intelligence components, particularly Transcendental Awareness (TA) and Personal Meaning Production (PMP), have moderate to strong relationships. The significant correlation between NJ and TA ( $r = 0.468$ ,  $p < .001$ ) implies that transcendental insight may be enhanced by embracing one's inner experiences. NR was also connected to both CET and PMP, suggesting that mindfulness and spiritual cognition have complex relationships. Additionally, there were high positive associations between creativity and PMP ( $r = 0.639$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and TA ( $r = 0.452$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating that meaning-making and expanded awareness play a significant role in creative self-concept. Nevertheless, there were smaller correlations

between Critical Existential Thinking (CET) and Conscious State Expansion (CSE), suggesting that not all spiritual aspects directly encourage artistic expression. The results show that two critical cognitive-affective processes supporting both creative and spiritual abilities are non-judging and non-reactivity. Their functions are consistent with dual-process models of creativity, which emphasize the importance of both metacognitive control (Type 2) and openness (Type 1). Studies on neurocognition provide more evidence for the importance of these mindfulness practices in influencing the brain networks responsible for creativity and emotional control. The study has limitations despite its strong findings, such as its cross-sectional design that makes it impossible to conclude causality, its reliance on self-report instruments, and its homogeneous sample of young adults. To expand knowledge, future studies should use qualitative assessments, cultural comparisons, and experimental or longitudinal methodologies. These findings have important practical implications for therapy and education. Through creative expression, existential development may be facilitated, and mindfulness-based therapy may foster creativity and spiritual development. A potential framework for encouraging psychological resilience and purposeful self-examination in modern contexts is provided by this integrative paradigm.

**Keywords:** *Mindfulness, Creativity, Spiritual Intelligence, Young Adults*

## 1. Introduction

Exploring the relationship between spiritual intelligence, creativity, and mindfulness has gained popularity recently, especially among young individuals. The potential of meditation, a crucial mindfulness practice, to improve emotional control, cognitive function, and general well-being is becoming more widely acknowledged (Zeidan et al., 2010). Young adults are going through a crucial time in their psychological development, which includes identity formation and emotional development. It is crucial to comprehend how meditation can affect creativity and spiritual intelligence.

### *The Psychology Underpinnings of Meditation*

Although meditation, which is frequently linked to mindfulness exercises, has its origins in ancient spiritual traditions, it has recently attracted a lot of interest from psychologists. The two main categories are open-monitoring (OM) meditation and focused-attention (FA) meditation. FA meditation helps control attention and emotional reactions by focusing on a single thing or idea, whereas OM meditation involves nonjudgmental thought and sensation monitoring that fosters greater awareness and acceptance of the present moment (Zeidan et al., 2010). Cognitive flexibility, emotional control, and general mental

health have all been found to improve with both types of meditation (Davidson & Kabat-Zinn, 2003). According to a study, meditation also improves creativity, especially divergent thinking, which is the process of coming up with original ideas or solutions (Colzato et al., 2017). According to Posner and Rothbart (2007), the attentional control theory provides a framework for understanding the cognitive advantages of meditation. According to this hypothesis, meditation enhances cognitive functions like attention, which are essential for original problem-solving. According to Lippelt et al. (2014), the improved capacity for attention regulation is believed to assist divergent thinking abilities, which are critical to the creative process, by adding to the flexibility required for creative thinking.

### ***The Psychological Basis of Creativity***

Psychology has always been interested in creativity. Cognitive processes like divergent thinking and cognitive flexibility are frequently highlighted in theories of creativity (Guilford, 1950). The ability to come up with several answers to a particular problem is known as divergent thinking, and it is regarded as a crucial component of creativity (Guilford, 1950). According to recent studies, meditation—especially OM meditation—can improve divergent thinking, which makes it an effective strategy for increasing creativity (Colzato et al., 2017). The framework of cognitive flexibility, a crucial aspect of executive functions that enables the capacity for creativity and mindfulness, can be used to better understand the relationship between the two, to change one's perspective and strategy in response to evolving circumstances (Scott, 2018). Research has indicated that mindfulness techniques, such as meditation, increase cognitive flexibility, which boosts creativity (Müller et al., 2016).

#### ***1.1 Objectives***

To investigate the connection between young people's spiritual intelligence, creativity, and mindfulness, as well as how aspects of meditation and mindfulness practices contribute to the growth of spiritual intelligence and creative self-concept.

The study's objectives

- To evaluate how creativity and mindfulness are related
- To evaluate how spiritual intelligence and mindfulness are related.
- To evaluate how creativity and spiritual intelligence are related

#### ***1.2 Hypothesis***

Hypothesis 1: Creativity and mindfulness will have a favourable relationship.

Hypothesis 2: Aspects of mindfulness will correlate differently with elements of spiritual intelligence, with non-judgment and transcendental awareness and personal meaning production being more strongly correlated with non-reactivity and critical existential thinking, respectively.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 Sample Procedure**

Young adults (18–30 years old), mostly undergraduate and graduate students, made up the sample. Using purposive sampling, a sample size of 100 individuals was chosen. Fluency in English, being within the designated age range, and not having a serious psychological disorder or a current psychiatric diagnosis were all requirements for inclusion.

### **2.2 Locale of the study**

The study was conducted across universities and colleges in urban regions of *Delhi NCR* through both offline distribution and online platforms such as Google Forms and institutional mailing lists.

### **2.3 Variables of the study**

- Mindfulness (Measured using FFMQ-15)
- Creativity (Measured using SSCS)
- Spiritual Intelligence (Measured using

### **2.4 Tools**

- FFMQ-15, or the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (Baer et al., 2006): This tool, which is a condensed version of the original FFMQ, assesses mindfulness in five areas: describing, acting with awareness, observing, non-judging of inner experience, and non-reactivity to inner experience. A Likert scale is used to rate responses, which show how frequently people exhibit attentive attitudes and behaviours. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for subscales is between 0.75 and 0.87; shorter versions also have good overall reliability. established construct validity by associations with well-being, attentiveness, and emotional control.
- Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (SISRI-24) (King, 2008): This scale evaluates four aspects of spiritual intelligence: Conscious State Expansion, Transcendental Awareness, Personal Meaning Production, and Critical Existential Thinking. Respondents are asked to rate their agreement with statements that demonstrate higher-order spiritual and existential thinking. Total scale Cronbach's  $\alpha$  =

0.92; subscales vary from 0.78 to 0.87. Both exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis demonstrate the strong concept and convergent validity.

- The Short Scale of Creative Self (SSCS) (Karwowski et al., 2018): This instrument, which consists of two subscales—Creative Self-Efficacy (CSE) and Creative Personal Identity (CPI), assesses how much people believe they are creative and capable of producing creative results. In the study of young adults' creativity, it is a commonly used and reliable psychometric instrument. The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  value for creative self-efficacy is 0.89, while the  $\alpha$  value for creative personal identity is 0.87. Strong correlation with other measures of creativity and creative performance; good factorial validity.

### 2.5 Procedure

Following participants' informed consent, the surveys were distributed online using Google Forms and, when practical, on paper and pencil. First, participants received a packet of materials explaining the goal of the study and confidentiality protocols, along with brief instructions. About fifteen to twenty minutes were needed to finish. Anonymized data was safely preserved.

## 3. Results

*Table 1*

*Pearson Correlation Matrix Between Creativity, Mindfulness Facets (FFMQ-15), and Spiritual Intelligence Dimensions (SISRI-24)*

| Variable | 1.       | 2.      | 3.       | 4.     | 5. | 6. | 7.  | 8.  | 9. | 10. |
|----------|----------|---------|----------|--------|----|----|-----|-----|----|-----|
|          | Creative | Observe | Describe | Acting | NJ | NR | CET | PMP | TA | CSE |

1646

noteworthy aspect of inner experience (NJ) is its non-judgment, showed a significant positive association with creativity ( $r = 0.631$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating that people who accept their thoughts and feelings are more likely to have a creative self-concept. More varied thinking and an openness to new ideas may result from a decreased fear of failure and self-censorship.

A statistically significant positive association was also found between creativity and non-reactivity to inner experience (NR) ( $r = 0.445$ ,  $p < .001$ ); however, this relationship was not as strong as that of NJ. According to Moore and Malinowski (2009), this research suggests that cognitive flexibility—a necessary quality for innovative problem-solving—is improved by the capacity to observe internal sensations without automatically responding. Moreover, other three aspects of mindfulness, observing ( $r = 0.492$ ), describing ( $r = 0.420$ ), and acting with awareness ( $r = 0.441$ ), also demonstrated moderately positive correlations with creativity (all  $p < .001$ ), which supports the notion that the mindful disposition as a whole may promote an environment that is favourable to creativity by improving attention regulation and meta-awareness.

## 5. Conclusion

Academic interest in the relationship among spiritual intelligence, creativity, and mindfulness has grown a result of numerous studies that indicate intricate and subtle relationships. Understanding these concepts is made easier by the literature review on spiritual intelligence, creativity, mindfulness, and meditation, while the main conclusions of the current study offer crucial new information about the underlying processes that mediate these connections.

Sizable studies suggest that meditation enhances creativity, according to the literature. According to Capurso et al. (2015), open-monitoring (OM) meditation cultivates a flexible attitude, which in turn improves divergent thinking, a fundamental component of creativity. Müller and colleagues (2016) concur, stating that meditation enhances cognitive flexibility, a vital aspect of creative thinking, irrespective of style. These results are consistent with our research, especially the favourable relationship between creativity and mindfulness components like non-judging (NJ). The idea that a mindful disposition, which stresses the non-judgmental acceptance of inner events, can foster creativity is supported by the substantial association found between NJ and creativity ( $r = 0.631$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This supports Colzato et al. (2017)'s claim that open-monitoring meditation, a type of mindfulness exercise, particularly fosters divergent thinking, a crucial component of creativity.

The literature does, however, paint a nuanced picture, even though it largely supports the notion that mindfulness fosters creative thought. According to Lippelt et al. (2014), various meditation techniques have varying effects on cognitive control, indicating that the kind of meditation may have an impact on cognitive functions that support creativity. Accordingly, our study's results indicate that, while to differing degrees, characteristics like non-judging and non-reactivity (NR) are correlated with creativity. The findings of Berkovich-Ohana et al. (2017), who showed that long-term mindfulness practitioners exhibit greater cognitive flexibility—a quality essential for creative problem-solving—are in line with this facet-specific impact, where NJ has a larger association.

Though less obvious, the relationship between spiritual intelligence and mindfulness is just as fascinating. Delhi et al. (2017) proposed the notion of spiritual intelligence. includes elements such as personal meaning production (PMP) and transcendental awareness (TA), which support improved emotional and cognitive performance. The results of this study indicate that mindfulness, especially aspects such as Non-Judging (NJ) and Non-Reactivity (NR), has a moderate correlation with spiritual intelligence components, specifically Transcendental Awareness (TA) and Personal Meaning Production (PMP). The notion that a stronger connection with transcendent components of spiritual intelligence may be facilitated by accepting inner experiences without passing judgment is supported, for example, by the positive association between NJ and TA ( $r = 0.468$ ,  $p < .001$ ), which promotes increased spiritual awareness. This result is consistent with Travis's (2014) description of transcendental experiences in meditation, as there are certain complications in the relationship between spiritual intelligence and mindfulness, though. For instance, NR exhibits positive relationships with both PMP and CET, suggesting that certain mindfulness components may promote certain spiritual intelligence dimensions while stifling others, like CET. This is consistent with the complex findings of Esmaili et al. (2014), who note that the components of spiritual intelligence are varied and culturally contingent, implying that other aspects of mindfulness might interact with these components in different ways.

The results of this study further establish the link between spiritual intelligence and creativity. According to Bhawuk's (2018) spirituality-based theory of creativity, people who have a strong sense of personal meaning are likely to be more creative. This is supported by the significant positive correlation between creativity and Personal Meaning Production (PMP) ( $r = 0.639$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Transcendental Awareness (TA) and creativity also have a positive link ( $r = 0.452$ ,  $p < .001$ ), which implies that those with higher TA levels may be more sensitive to their creative potential. The findings of Corry et al. (2015), who emphasize

that spirituality can work as a resilience component, boosting creativity and helping with stress and trauma coping, are supported by this.

Nonetheless, the weak and non-significant relationship between creativity and Critical Existential Thinking (CET) raises doubts about the notion that creative people always ponder deeply on existential issues and implies that creative expression may not always be consistent with existential inquiry. Agnoli et al. (2018) showed that some types of mind-wandering, which are frequently linked to creativity, are more closely linked to impromptu thought creation than to existential pondering. This finding is in line with their findings both theoretically and empirically, the cognitive-affective mechanisms of mindfulness can be used to contextualize the increased significance of the non-judging of inner experience and non-reactivity to inner experience elements of mindfulness with both creativity and spiritual intelligence. Non-judging is the ability to examine one's thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations without assigning a positive or negative value to them. This openness facilitates emotional safety and cognitive flexibility, which are essential preconditions for creative inquiry and divergent thinking (Capurso et al., 2015; Müller et al., 2016). When evaluated as a self-concept, creativity is especially enhanced in settings where people feel psychologically secure enough to experiment with new concepts without worrying about internal criticism—a process that non-judging supports.

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