

*Original Article*

# The Study Relationship between Parenting Styles and Spiritual Intelligence

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study was to examine the relationship between parenting styles and spiritual intelligence among high-school students. Participants included 160 high-school students selected randomly from high schools of Bandar Abbas city. Multiple regression analysis was used to test research hypothesis. Data collecting tools of the research include questionnaire of spiritual intelligence and parenting styles questionnaire. Results showed that parenting styles can predict spiritual intelligence. Authoritative parenting style had a positive and significant relationship with spiritual intelligence but authoritarian and neglecting parenting styles had negative and significant relationship. Permissive parenting style had no significant relationship.

**Key words:** Parenting styles, spiritual intelligence, High-school students.

## INTRODUCTION

Human being has different abilities so that the relationship and impact of these characteristics and attributes have an important role in his overall performance and behavior. Without considering the relationship and impact of these factors, it would be difficult to understand and interpret behavior. Spiritual intelligence is one of man's characteristics. It is the result of the influence of emotional, environmental, parenting and attitudinal factors. This feature can also have an important impact on the quality of man's life, beliefs and attitude while facing daily problems. On the other hand, parents' behavior and their way of dealing with children have profound and long lasting influence in forming their beliefs and ideas towards the essence of God, the Almighty, and children's attitudes are affected by parents' training styles. parenting styles refer to a model of attitudes, behaviors, values and criteria which in interaction with children, parents express at the time of their request, response, control and guidance and children cause parents to take them into consideration or to be oblivious to them (Dixon, Graber, and Brooks-Gunn, 2008). Therefore, parents' behavior with children causes formation of their psychological and social character and commensurate to the level of freedom and control, parents are classified as authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and neglecting models parenting styles cause the individual's knowledge and insight to himself and phenomena of the world to increase through search and spiritual experience. Following, the individual involves in creating change and a deep understanding of layers of his personality and considers life as something meaningful and valuable or imagines life as something absurd, meaningless and aimless (King, 2008). Reflection on the state of philosophy of existence, creation, death and life is an indication of spiritual growth. It roots in early childhood education and development by parents. This behavior results in affecting life quality and parenting style (Fry, 2000). In addition to affecting the individual's character and overall attitude, this way of thinking will impact on the amount satisfaction and life quality (Nasel, 2004). Having a purposeful attitude towards life is rooted in religious thinking. This viewpoint is emanated from critical existential thinking, creating personal meaning and

transcendental consciousness. As a shield, it protects the individual against mental- psychological stresses, anxiety, tension and worries and increase man's health and overall performance (Mascaro and Rosen, 2005)

According to Amram's definition (2009), spiritual intelligence is a kind of ability that causes self-consciousness, self-control, profound understanding of meaning of life, purposefulness, increase in peace, the ability to communicate effectively with others and mental health. Spiritual intelligence is the consequence of the highest level of individual growth in the fields of cognition, meaning attainment, transcendental and moral communication (Vaughan, 2002). Therefore, spiritual intelligence can be an important factor in the individual's compatibility in vicissitude and improvement of quality of life.

One of the main requirements of this study is paying attention to the factors affecting adolescents' intellectual and mental ability and growth which are essential conditions for developing ideas and empowered individuals for the future of a society. Another necessity that is sensed in today's contemporary social-historical system understands the relationship between spiritual intelligence and parenting styles. It is intended to provide this important feature in adolescents through strengthening and helping to the growth and development of these factors, thereby, to provide adolescents' success rate in dealing with challenging situations, and to understand better the feeling of purposefulness in life and having the critical view towards the philosophy of being and life. The present research has investigated the relationship between spiritual intelligence and parenting styles among high school students in Bandar Abbas.

The aim of the present study is the relationship and the effect of parenting styles on spiritual intelligence, firmness of beliefs and ideas towards a transcendental being while facing problems. The necessity of this spiritual aspect is felt more than ever in the lives of modern students and adolescents. Making life personally meaningful is one of the components of spiritual intelligence. It results in improving life quality and reducing the intensifying signs of cognitive affairs while facing difficulties, frustration and mental and psychological concerns (Krauss, 2009). Understanding the factors is related to strengthening the beliefs and attitudes which help to improve life quality and ability to deal with inevitable daily events. It causes to provide this important feature in adolescents through strengthening and helping to the growth and development of these factors. So, the main hypothesis of this study is that there is a relationship between parenting styles and spiritual intelligence.

One of the factors having a significant influence on the growth and development of spiritual intelligence is the parenting styles; Family and culture are two influential factors in developing creativity, thinking, spiritual values and activating the high levels of spiritual intelligence such as meditation (King, 2008). Childhood is a golden opportunity for forming the layers of thought and high levels of spiritual intelligence and recognition of self-essence (Saidy, Hassan, Pertiwi, Fadzulahmm, Habibian, IsmiArif, and Krauss, 2009). If in childhood, in the field of enriching spiritual intelligence, proficient trainers are accompanied with a child and help him in understanding meaning and symbols, this factor can help children and adults both in the area of developing spiritual intelligence. The child can realize the secret of many stories, events and spiritual metaphors and find out great questions and answers of life (Vaughan, 2002). Though cognitive features and abilities may be affected by numerous factors over different stages, but one of the most influential factors is parents' parenting style. Parents' behavior in early childhood can have long lasting and permanent effect on understanding principles and realizing the philosophy of being, such as spiritual intelligence (Hoffman, 1992, according to Vaugan, 2002).

One of the most fundamental functions of the family is the development of children's character and improvement of their abilities and intelligence. The prevalent atmosphere in the family environment is one of the influential factors in developing spiritual recognition and intelligence. Intimate parents, who give their children the necessary freedom and help them in intellectual reasoning, lead them to develop their intellectual growth. They assist their children in finding the answers to the questions related to being and life. Consequently, such parents help the growth and development of thinking levels, intellectual growth and existentialist thinking (Elhageen, 2004). Parents, who themselves think and pray God and devote some time to communicate with the creator, provide a better background for children to develop spiritual feeling. Moreover, observing parents' behavior is mostly considered as a good model for children's behavior. In their studies based on the effect of parents' performance on children's cognitive and mental structural growth, Gunti and Buri (2008) realized that parents' performance has everlasting impact on children's thoughts, emotions, cognition and behavior. They also got to know that parents' behavior can be regarded as a referential structure influencing children and their evaluation of themselves and the external world.

## Materials and Methods

The statistical society of this research includes all high school male students in first up fourth grade of human sciences in Bandar Abbas. They are studying at high schools in this city in the academic year 2011-2012. The statistical sample included 160 of the above-mentioned students who were selected, from among all high school students from grade one to grade four, through multi stage random sampling. In this study, for evaluation of parenting styles, Shaffer's parenting styles of 77 items questionnaire (1991) has been used. It embodies 4 factors

including, authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and neglecting styles. The points in this questionnaire are graded in a range of 5 degrees from 1 to 5 (I really disagree to I really agree). This questionnaire has been designed on the base of children's interactions and experiences with parents and the kind of family relationship. It includes 2 aspects of affection and control, each of which embodies numerous parenting concepts. To determine 4 types of family environments, first the average of each aspect; that is, affection and control, is separately computed. Based on the scores obtained, 4 types of family environments were identified: little control and little affection (neglecting), too much control and too much affection (authoritative), little control and too much affection (permissiveness), little affection and too much control (authoritarian). This questionnaire the first time has been translated, edited and used in Shiraz by Naghashian (1980) on the base of Shaffer's works. Its final coefficient has been reported 0.87 by the creator. Naghashian (1980) has reported its final coefficient 0.87 by the use of half split method. In the present research, the final coefficient of the questionnaire has been calculated through Cronbach's alpha. In the study, the analytical method of confirmatory factor has been used to determine this instrument's validity. In the research, to evaluate spiritual intelligence, King's self-reporting questionnaire of spiritual intelligence was used. It has 24 items with 5 options each. The options are scored from 0 to 4 as the Likert Scale. There is not any proportion with my features=0, it does not match much with my conditions=1, it is partially true about me=2, it is consistent with my characteristics a lot, it is quite compatible with my features=4. It includes 4 factors such as existentialist critical thinking subscale, creating personal meaning, and transcendental awareness. The range of scores of self-reporting questionnaire of spiritual intelligence is from 0 to 96. A high score is the sign of high spiritual intelligence and a low score is the sign of low spiritual intelligence.

Through Cronbach's alpha method, the final coefficients of spiritual intelligence self-reporting questionnaire were obtained 0.92 for critical thinking, 0.78 for creating a personal meaning, 0.87 for transcendental awareness and 0.90 for expanding awareness by King (2008). In the present research, Cronbach's alpha and retest methods were used with an interval of one month for final calculation of this questionnaire. The questionnaire's validity was done through structural method by King (2008). It supported the underlying factors of and also reflected spiritual intelligence. In the present study, Cronbach's alpha method was used for final determination of this questionnaire, and the analytical method of exploratory and confirmatory factor for determining its validity.

## RESULTS

As it is observed in table no. 1, 4 variables related to parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, neglecting and permissive) have a meaningful relationship with high school students' spiritual intelligence. Through entry method, a meaningful pattern was obtained ( $n=153$  and  $3$ ,  $F=3.042$  and  $R=0.453$   $P<0.001$ ). This model justifies 0.20 % of variance ( $0.206$ =adjusted R square). Three variables are considered relatively good predictors of high school male students' spiritual intelligence. Authoritative, authoritarian and neglecting styles are respectively meaningful predictors.

**Table 1.** Relationship between spiritual intelligence and parenting styles

Variables Entered	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	DF	F	Sig.
authoritative parenting's styles	0.453	0.206	0.138	3.156	3.042	0.026
authoritarian parenting styles						
permissive parenting styles						
neglecting parenting styles						
Variables Entered	$\beta$	T	Sig t	partial	semi	
authoritative parenting's styles	0.42	12.61	0.000	0.313	0.300	
authoritarian parenting styles	-0.34	-3.17	0.024	-0.032	-0.042	
permissive parenting styles	-0.18	-1.55	0.638	-0.003	-0.004	
neglecting parenting styles	-0.29	-2.97	0.012	0.014	-0.031	

## DISCUSSION

The results achieved from data analysis imply that there is a meaningful relationship between parenting styles and high school male students' spiritual intelligence. According to table no. 1, the relation of authoritative parenting style with spiritual intelligence is 0.61. The results of this part of the research are consistent with Spota and Paulson researches (1996). In a study which was related to the parent-child relation, they concluded that the family texture has great impact on children's mental and intellectual growth and development and their sense of inquiry towards the internal and external world. According to table no. 1, the relation of authoritarian parenting style to spiritual intelligence is -0.32. The findings of this part are like the achievements of Tiller, Garrison, Block, Cramer and Tiller (2001). In a research, they realized that the children in authoritarian families are generally impatient and careless and they lack the ability to think

deeply. Inflexible and harsh parents cause children's intellectual and mental instability. They have pessimistic view towards the world. In addition to psychological and emotional stresses on children, this parenting style causes a negative impact on forming their beliefs and attitudes. Therefore, children who grow up in a family environment with imposed relations and without assertiveness do not have an opportunity for curiosity due to mental and emotional requirements dissatisfaction.

According to table no. 1, the relation of neglecting parenting style to spiritual intelligence is -0.28. Parents, who are neglecting to children's psychological and emotional needs, cause their children to have a sense of rejection and inadequacy and to conclude that they are worthless creatures and they lack positive characteristics. The findings in this part of the research are consistent with Gunti and Buri's research (2008). In their research, they concluded that neglecting children and forgetting them, due to life concerns, prevent the development of children's mental faculty and fertilization of their ideas and they will have a sense of aimlessness in life.

The findings in the table 1, showed that there is not a meaningful relation between permissive parenting style and children's spiritual intelligence. The findings in this section are partially like the achievements of Hosseini, Habibian, Krauss, and Aishah (2010) In a study, they concluded that close and intimate parent-child relations along with behavior control and raising responsible children lead to facilitating and strengthening children's mental faculty, and help them to engage in research for understanding and detecting self- internal and external world and find out a reasonable answer. Not dealing with problems has caused them to have a sense of wanting too much comfort and has prevented them from realizing purposefulness and critical thoughts.

Though formation of structures such as spiritual intelligence is related to individual differences and lots of factors, but the results of the study showed that one of the important and influential variables is parenting styles. The process of individuals' mental development happens over a relatively long period. One of the most important forming factors of individuals' mental approach towards the world is parenting styles.

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