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## Relationship between personality traits and spiritual intelligence among university students

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### Abstract

The present study examined the relationship between personality traits and spiritual intelligence among university students. In this correlation research, 205 students of University of Tehran were chosen using multiple cluster sampling. Then they completed personality traits questionnaire NO-FFI (Costa & McCrae, 1992) and spiritual intelligence scale (King, 2008). Data were analyzed using Pearson correlation coefficient by means of SPSS version 16. Findings show that there is a negative relation between Neuroticism and spiritual intelligence and positive relation between conscientiousness, agreeableness and extroversion accordingly. Openness had no relation with spiritual intelligence. Also synchronic regression shows that the three personality traits, / extroversion, conscientiousness and agreeableness explain 0/052 variance of spiritual intelligence simultaneously. According to the findings, personality traits are factors that have got a considerable role in people spiritual intelligence.

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*Keywords:* personality traits, spiritual intelligence, college students;

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### 1. Introduction

For a long time it has been a prevailing thought for psychologists that some people with specific personality traits are more intelligent than others, so have people perhaps. Describing introverts mental characteristics, Eysenck states that introverts are more intelligent than extroverts. In his point of view excellent expressiveness, great care in handling different affairs and conscientiousness are other introverts characteristics which are in accordance with high IQ. Also Yung describes introverts in terms of superior mental factors and elements. He gives superiority to introverts and extroverts in comparison with neurotics in terms of intelligence, self-confidence and concentration. While intelligence and personality have been considered as two partially different constructs in individual differences in other studies, so many studies have come to the conclusion that some predictable relations can be made between these two constructs (Ackermann and Heggestad, 1997; Austin et al, 2002; Collis and Messick, 2001).

Various studies have found significant differences between openness to experience and general intelligence (Austin et al, 2002; Kyllonen, 1997, and Moutafi, Furnham & Crump, 2003). Also some studies found direct relation

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between extroversion and intelligence (Austin et al, 2002). However, some studies found a negative relation between Extroversion and intelligence (Furnham et al, 1998; Moutafi et al, 2003). Also some investigations showed a significant negative relation between Neuroticism and intelligence (Ackermann and Heggstad,1997; ; Kyllonen, 1997; Moutafi et al,2003).In other inquiries researchers have surveyed relation between different types of intelligence with personality traits which turned out to have a significant relation between fluid intelligence and openness to experience (Chamorro et al, 2005).

Also some studies have shown a significant positive relation between emotional intelligence with extroversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness, while a significant negative relation with neuroticism (Dawda & Hart, 2000; Davies et al, 1998; Newsome, Day & Catano, 2000; Palmer et al, 2002).While we have many inquiries done on relation between different types of intelligence with personality, there is no investigation in spiritual subject. So the current study aims at investigating relation between personality traits and spiritual intelligence.

**2. Method**

In this correlation research, 205 students of University of Tehran were chosen using multiple cluster sampling.

We used NEO-FFI (Costa & McCrae, 1992) to assess personality traits. Validity coefficient of scale retest turned out to be between 0/75 - 0/83 within 3 months (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Garousi Farshi (1998) reported reliability of neurosis, extroversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness 0/86, 0/73, 0/56, 0/68, 0/87, respectively. Self-report scale for spiritual intelligence was made by King (2008). Its Cronbach’s Alpha turned out to be 0/95 and its validity 0/84 through halving. Data were analyzed through applying Pearson correlation coefficient and linear stepwise regression analysis model.

**3. Results**

Data were analyzed through applying Pearson correlation coefficient and linear stepwise regression analysis model.

Table 1 Correlation Matrix between personality traits and attitude toward spiritual intelligence

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Neuroticism	-					
2. Extroversion	-0/15	-				
3. Openness	0/24**	-0/9	-			
4. Agreeableness	-0/40**	0/39**	0/07	-		
5. Conscientiousness	-0/22*	0/39**	-0/02	0/36**	-	
6.Spiritual intelligence	0/40**	-0/43**	-0/05	-0/51**	-0/62**	-

\*= p<0/05    \*\*= p<0/01

Table 1 shows that the highest level of correlation belongs to conscientiousness and spiritual intelligence ( P<0/01, r= -0/62), also there is a significant relation between extroverts personality traits( P<0/01, r= -0/43), neurosis ( P<0/01, r= 0/40), agreeableness( P<0/01, r= -0/51), while there is no significant relation with openness to experience. Stepwise regression analysis was used in order to predict and explain the variance of spiritual intelligence(table2).

Table 2 summary of spontaneous regression for spiritual intelligence by personality treat

	B	β	t	p	R <sup>2</sup>	F	P
Constant	142/18	-	5/51	0/001			
Extroversion	-1/20	-0/28	2/10	0/04			
Agreeableness	-1/29	-0/30	2/36	0/02	0/52	9/64	0/001
Conscientiousness	-1/68	-0/39	-3/42	0/001			

Table 2 shows that among all variables mentioned, only extroversion ( $P < 0/05$ ,  $B = -1/20$ ), agreeableness ( $P < 0/05$ ,  $B = 1/29$ ), conscientiousness ( $P < 0/01$ ,  $B = -1/68$ ), explain 0/52 variance of spiritual intelligence.

#### 4. Discussion

Predicting changes in spiritual intelligence is possible only through extroversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness. In other words, among the five personality traits, just these three can explain 0/52 variance of spiritual intelligence. But the other two, Neuroticism and openness to experience are not able to explain any of the variance. This result is in line with the studies related to general intelligence and emotional intelligence. But there is no exclusive research studying personality traits and spiritual intelligence. Also there is no research done on prediction of spiritual intelligence variance exclusively from personality traits, while literature of this relation and prediction is available for general intelligence and especially emotional intelligence (Austin, Saklofske and Egan, 2005; Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Dada & Hart, 2000; Diener & Lucas, 2000; Besharat, 2007) which are in accordance with the current study. Of course it is worth mentioning that not only other studies have considered a role for extroversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness (Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Dada & Hart, 2000; Besharat, 2007), but also the other two personality traits has got the same role in predicting intelligence variable.

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