

Emotional and Spiritual Intelligence of the Middle Aged in Coping Midlife

Smitha J Thundiparampil

Abstract

This study on the middle aged was carried out with a view to implement an empowerment programme for the middle-aged people to promote an active aging. The transition of middle age consists of important components like leaving the middle adulthood, crossing the line of retirement (for working people) and entering the late adulthood. The sample size was 500 middle aged parents of children who were studying in the residential colleges of Kannur district. Majority of the sample (54.8%) had an average and above emotional intelligence levels and only less than two percent of them had low emotional intelligence. Majority of the samples (65.4%) possessed an average level of spiritual intelligences and around 21.4 percent of the samples had low levels of spiritual intelligence. Out of the 500 samples, majority (65.2%) had less than medium resilient level of coping ability. Moderate degree positive correlations existed between emotional intelligence and coping ability (significant at 0.01 level) and low degree negative correlation between the spiritual intelligence with the coping ability (significant at 0.05 level). The present study also revealed that low level negative correlation existed between the spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence in general among the middle-aged parents whose children were studying in residential institutes.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, Spiritual intelligence, Middle aged, Coping ability

Mid-life transitions is the period of changes in the life of a middle aged with an impact in one's identity changes with resistance, avoidance, distractions, negotiation etc. Nearly 60 percent of people surveyed across the world have negative views and attitude towards the aged (WHO Report (Ganesh Kumar et al, 2014; Benny 2016) and every middle-aged person need to prepare themselves to face their different stages of life transition to lead successful or positive aging. In the era when the elderly are considered as the vulnerable group, once empowered middle aged can have a great role in achieving the vision of the National Policy on Older Persons by the Government of India. The assessment on emotional and spiritual intelligence in coping midlife transition can give an outlook on the resilience capacity of the middle aged during their midlife transition. So, the preventive geriatric nursing service in the form of empowerment to achieve the vision of our country in a cost-effective way. The aim was to work out a plan for psychological resiliency for the middle aged to cope up with the transition to help them lead an active aging; to find out the levels of the variables and whether any relationship exists among the middle-aged people's self-reported spiritual intelligence and emotional in-

telligence with their coping ability.

Objectives

The study was carried out to:

- Assess the emotional intelligence, the spiritual intelligence and the coping status of the middle aged.
- Find out the relationship between the (a) emotional and (b) spiritual intelligence and the coping status of the middle aged during midlife transition.
- Find out the relationship between the spiritual intelligence and the emotional intelligence of the middle aged during midlife transition.

Need for the study

The elderly people are considered as the vulnerable group and; the preparation in the form of empowering the people from early middle aged has a great role in achieving the vision of the National Policy on Older Persons by the Government of India. An estimated 90 million aged above 60 years will reach to 301 million (21.3% of entire population) by 2050 (Kiran, 2018; Nagpal, 2018). Midlife transitions is the period when the changes take place in the life with an impact on one's identity changes with resistance, avoidance, distractions, negotiation etc. Spiritual intelligence is a higher dimension of intelligence that activates the qualities and capabilities of the authentic self (or the soul), in the form of wisdom, compassion, integrity,

The author is Research Scholar, Department of Nursing, Mansarovar Global University, Bhopal (MP). Guide: Ratnachhaya Singh, Dean, Faculty of Nursing Sciences, Mansarovar Global University, Bhopal (MP). Co Guide: Christy JT, Chief Medical Officer, District Hospital Idukki (Kerala).

joy, love, creativity, and peace. It results in a sense of deeper meaning and purpose, combined with improvements in a wide range of important life skills and work skills. The emotional intelligence consists of self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, emotional stability, managing relationships, integrity, sociability, warmth and optimism of the leader which reflect into their followers (Gujral, 2016). The assessment on emotional and spiritual intelligence in coping midlife transition emphasise the need for empowerment of the middle aged in coping their life transitions. No such proactive studies have been attempted in these selected variables among the middle aged to enable the nursing policy makers, nurse educators and community nurse practitioners to take an appropriate decision to improve the emotional and spiritual intelligence of middle aged in coping ability during their life transitions.

Review of Literature

Emotional Intelligence is the knowledge of oneself and others and how do they interact with others, adjust with their environment and realise the social demands (Shajan, 2020). Sharma (2009) suggested that the family members and the work organiser have to take immediate measures to provide adequate training for developing emotional and spiritual intelligences as well as life satisfaction for a well-adjusted life.

Gujral (2016) stated that the emotional Intelligence consists of self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, emotional stability, managing relationships, integrity, sociability, warmth and optimism of the leader reflected in their followers. The spirituality means the values, attitudes and behaviours with reflecting compassion, vision, hope, commitment, satisfaction and happiness to motivate others. He concluded that the people with high level of emotional intelligence positively apply social skills to influence others, create strong relationships with clients and employees and they are the effective motivators for their followers by controlling their emotions and understanding their weaknesses.

A descriptive survey by Ghosh (2016) revealed that the secondary school teachers had moderate level of work place spiritual intelligence. There was no significant difference in workplace spiritual intelligence of secondary school teachers in relation to their gender and religion. The study concluded that the spiritual intelligence of teachers provides an active, unity and meaningful development of soul which help them think profoundly about essential subjects in solving their daily problems. The spiritual intelligence could be developed with a high degree of self-awareness, flexibility, dealing with pains and getting inspired with imaginations and values. The study noted that the work place spirituality involves a sense of wholeness, connectedness at work with deeper values and its efficiency depends on the level of spiritual intelligence.

Another correlation study on the relationship among 150 adults, both male and female adults aged 30-40 years by Dash & Patnaik (2015) underlined that the people with high spiritual intelligence have high emotional intelligence and better mental health. The study revealed that there was a significant main effect of spiritual intelligence on emotional intelligence and mental health and the persons with higher in spiritual intelligence were emotionally more intelligent and mentally healthier.

Ravikumar & Damodaran (2014) assessed the relationship among emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence and psychological resilience of corporate executives in India. It was revealed that emotional intelligence was positively and significantly correlated with spiritual intelligence (0.842) and psychological resilience of corporate executives (0.783). Spiritual intelligence was positively and significantly correlated with emotional intelligence (0.842) and psychological resilience (0.792) of corporate executives. Psychological resilience was positively and significantly correlated with emotional intelligence (0.783) and spiritual intelligence (0.792). There were positive and significant relationships among emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence and psychological resilience of corporate executives.

Singh & Sinha (2013) examined the impact of spiritual intelligence on quality of life among the 303 executives serving in government organisations and revealed that spiritual intelligence (SI is the ultimate intelligence necessary for effective functioning of IQ and EQ. SQ allows the human beings to be creative, to change the rules and to alter situations by giving the ability to discriminate. Employing SQ enables them to differentiate between rights and not right in the daily situations of life including their working environment by listening to inner voice. They recommended that SQ can be improved by including prayers, meditation, selecting the right tools to empower and consciously practise the spiritual values and qualities in everyday life, which will lead them to a better quality of life.

Joy (2011) conducted a study to find out the effectiveness of the experiential learning programme in enhancing the EI and SI by conducting study among BEd student-teachers by using the experiential learning mode. It was revealed that the enhancement programmes for EI and SI were effective for the development of emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence of the sampled BEd student teachers.

The challenging trends of increase in the number of demographic composition and proportion of people over 65 years of age has grown in recent years which affects the formal and informal social support systems in the community. Overall, the review of related studies helped the investigator to understand the different aspects of emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence and how their coping is influenced by those aspects

in their life transition. The present study attempted to analyse the need for empowerment on spiritual and emotional intelligence of the middle aged in coping with their transition of life.

Methodology

The quantitative research approach with descriptive study design using survey method was used to assess the level of emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence and coping ability of the samples by using the standard tool. This design allowed the researcher to find out the relationship between the selected demographic factors and that of the variables of interest. The target population was the middle-aged parents whose children were staying in the eight residential educational institutions in Kannur district of Kerala State; the accessible population size was 500. The study was approved by the institutional research department committee of the university and formal permission was obtained from the concerned institute. The study process was explained to the participants and consent was obtained before the data collection.

Tools Used in the Study

The tool consists of four sections.

Section A: Demographic data prepared was based on the review of previous study. The remaining three sections are available in standard form and the permission to use those three tools with conversion into local language was received from its original authors electronically.

Section B: The Self-Report Inventory for Spiritual Intelligence developed by King D in 2008 was used to measure the behaviours, thought and mental characteristics. It consisted of total 24 items with score range from 0 – 96. There are four Factors/Subscales in this tool.

I. Critical Existential Thinking (CET): Seven items are at 1, 3, 5, 9, 13, 17, and 21 and the range was from 0 - 28.

II. Personal Meaning Production (PMP): Five items are at 7, 11, 15, 19, and 23 and these ranged from 0 – 20.

III. Transcendental Awareness (TA): There are seven items at 2, 6, 10, 14, 18, 20, and 22 and the range was from 0 - 28.

IV. Conscious State Expansion (CSE): In this category item numbers 4, 8, 12, 16, and 24 are considered and the scores ranged from 0 – 20.

Reverse Coding: Item no. 6 (response must be scored in reverse order and the high scores will be representing as higher levels of spiritually intelligent person.

Scoring pattern for the Section B:

Very low level: < 1

Low level: 1-24
Medium level: 24-48
High level: 48-72
Very High: 72-96

Section C: EI-quiz (Mind Tools, developed by famous psychologist Daniel Golemanin 2019) - In this quiz, 15 statements are presented and responders are asked to answer as to how they really are, rather than how they think they should be. Score range is from 15 – 75.

There are five Factors/Subscales in this tool with scores ranging from 3- 15 each.

Questions on Self-Awareness are 1, 8 and 11 in the standard tool.

Questions on Self – Regulation is 2, 4 and 7 in the standard tool.

Questions on Motivations are 6, 10 and 12 in the standard tool.

Questions on Empathy are 3, 13 and 15 and in the standard tool.

Questions on Social Skills are 5, 9 and 14 in the standard tool.

Scoring pattern for the Section C:

Table 1: Description of demographic data (N= 500)

Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Age	Above 50 yrs	403	80.6
	Below 50 yrs	97	19.4
Marital status	Married	472	94.4
	Divorced	19	3.8
	Widow	9	1.8
Type of family	Nuclear family	340	68
	Joint family	107	21.4
	Micro nuclear family	53	10.6
Working status	Employed	231	46.2
	Unemployed	257	51.4
	Retired	12	2.4
Educational status	Schooling	194	38.8
	College	224	44.8
	Professional	82	16.4
Health status	No treatment	309	61.8
	On treatment	191	38.2
Support of parents	Yes	394	78.8
	No	106	21.2
Support from siblings	Yes	478	95.6
	No	22	4.4
Gender	Male	145	29
	Female	355	71

Very low level: 0-16

Low level: 16-31

Average level: 31-46

High level: 46-61

Very High: 61-75

Section D: It is on Brief Resilient Coping Scale developed by Sinclaire and Wallston in 2004 and the scores range from 4-20. There are two sub divisions.

Problem-Based Coping with question 1 & 4 in the standard tool and Emotion-Based Questions 2 & 3 in the standard tool. The scores ranged from 2-10 each.

Scoring pattern for the Section D:

Very low-level copers: 0-4 points

Low Resilient copers: 4-13 points

Medium Resilient copers: 13-16 points

High Resilient copers: 17-20 points

Results

Out of the sample majority of them aged above 50 years and around 3.8 percent (N=19) samples were divorcees and 1.8 percent (N=9) was widowers. Majority (68%) of the sample stayed in nuclear family and 10.6 percent (N=53) in number staying alone as micro nuclear family (Table 1). Majority of them had their parents and their siblings supported their life and also helped data collection.

Fig 1 depicts that the majority of the middle-aged people (54.8%) had average level of emotional intelligence and only less than two percent of the samples (N=33) had low level of emotional intelligence. Majority of the samples (60%) scored average level of self-regulations component of emotional intelligence. Only less than seven percent of the samples had low level of self-regulations components of emotional intelligence. Majority (64%) of the samples had average level and 14.8 percent of the sample had low level of motivation components of emotional intelligence. Majority of the middle aged people (58.2%) were with average level of empathy and only less than 3.6 percent of the samples had low level of empathy component of emotional intelligence. Majority of the samples possessed average level of social relationship skills and 9.2 percent of the samples had low level of social skill relationship component of emotional intelligence.

Majority of the samples (65.4%) were having average level of spiritual intelligences and 21.4 percent of the samples possess low levels

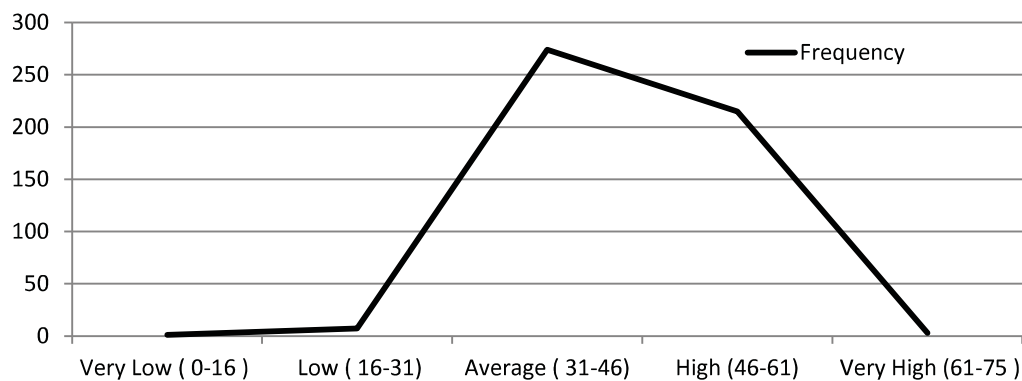


Fig. 1: Levels of emotional intelligence of the middle aged.

of spiritual intelligence (Table 2, Fig 2). The level of critical existential thinking (CET) of the middle aged revealed that the majority of the samples (48.2%) had above average level and only less than 9.2 percent samples had low level. Majority (53.2%) of them possessed average level of personal meaning production (PMP) component of spiritual intelligence and only less than 8.8 percent of them sample were having low level status of the same. Majority (53.4%) of the samples had an average level of transcendental awareness (TA) component of spiritual intelligence and only less than 2.2 percent of the sample had low level of TA component of spiritual intelligence. Further, 51.4 percent of them had an average level of conscious state expansion (CSE) component of spiritual intelligence and only 7.2 percent of the samples had low level status of conscious state expansion.

Out of the 500 sample, majority (65.2%) of the middle-aged people whose children are studying in Kannur district had less than medium resilient level of coping ability (Fig 3). Majority (90%) of them had less than average level of problem based coping ability and 56.6 percent of them possessed average level of emotion-based coping ability. Around 14.2 percent of the samples had low level of emotion-based coping ability.

The relationships between the variables were determined by using the Carl Pearson Correlation Coefficient formula. In our study, moderate degree positive correlation existed between emotional intelligence and coping ability. The correlation between the spiritual intelligence and coping ability of the middle aged was significant at 0.05 level.

There was low level negative correlation between

Table 2: Correlation between emotional and spiritual intelligence with the coping ability (N=500)

Variables	Coping ability		Problems-based coping ability		Emotion-based coping ability	
	R	P	R	P	R	p
Emotional intelligence	0.415*	0.000	0.142**	0.001	0.098*	0.028
Spiritual intelligence	-0.095	0.034	0.004	0.929	0.013	0.772

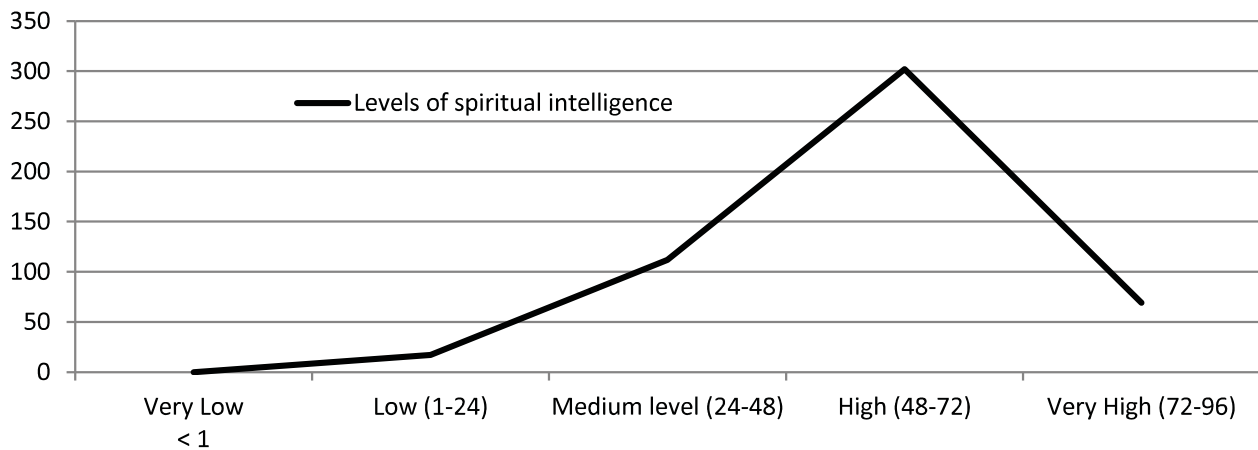


Fig 2: Line graph of the levels of spiritual intelligence.

the spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence in general among the middle-aged parents whose children were studying in the residential institute. But a low-level positive correlation existed between the components of conscious state of expansion, Transcendental awareness, Critical existing thinking and Personal meaning production with the emotional intelligence in general.

Discussion

Emotional intelligence builds relationship within themselves and their surroundings by helping and serving others (Gujral, 2016). The relationship between the spiritual intelligence and the coping status revealed that there was low degree negative correlation (significant at 0.05 level). Ravikumar & Damodaran, (2014) revealed that spiritual intelligence played an important role in generating citizenship behaviour and concluded that there was positive and significant relationship among emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence and psychological resilience of corporate executives in India; this study supported the present study. The spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence in general revealed that there was low level negative correlation only between them (Table 3). The findings of the present study, even though weak, was

statistically significant and established that there was a significant relationship between the emotional intelligence of the middle aged parents whose children were studying in residential institutes of Kannur, with that of their spiritual intelligence. These variables need to be included in the empowerment programme from early middle age onwards as a preventive measure for geriatric nursing services (Benny, 2016). There should also be facilities for promoting, preparing and planning for future ageing for improvement in quality of life, well-being, and independence (Sharma 2019; Joy, 2011) who supported the need for an empowerment programme of early middle aged as a preventive geriatric service. Singh & Sinha (2013) recommended that SQ can be improved by including prayers, meditation and select tools to empower and consciously practise spiritual values and qualities in everyday life which will lead them to have a positive life.

Nursing Implications

The community health nurses should give due emphasis on preventive geriatric services in the forms of empowerment for educating the masses as counsellor or an educator on overcoming the stress of middle-aged from their early middle age onwards. The middle aged can be emotionally and spiritually



Fig 3: Line graph on the level of coping status of the middle aged.

Table 3: Correlation between emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence

	Variables / R values	Emotional intelligence	Self-awareness	Self-regulations	Motivation	Empathy	Social relationship skills
1	Spiritual Intelligence	-0.052	0.013	-0.014	0.034	-0.045	-0.059
2	CET	0.068	0.367	0.019	0.342	.063	0.037
3	PMP	0.177	0.116	0.029	0.022	0.208	-0.007
4	TA	0.114	0.433	0.017	0.341	0.134	0.065
5	CSE	0.060	-0.031	0.134	-0.010	0.028	-0.028

empowered by culturally oriented, cost effective methods to improve their coping skills. The nurse administrators should identify the needs of the middle-aged people in community with respect to their age, sex, type of family, occupation, health condition, family and educational status with that of their emotional and spiritual intelligence and coping ability and develop a public awareness campaign on improving the resiliency during their midlife transition period. A cost effective and culturally oriented empowerment programme for middle aged on SI, EI and they can be arranged to improve their emotional, spiritual and coping ability changes in the community and society within this. A similar study can be duplicated among the middle-aged people in the different communities of Kannur district and other districts or even at the national level to generalise the findings.

Recommendations

Inclusion of emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence and coping ability are known to boost the skill to cope with the middle-aged midlife transition-related issues. As per this study, further theoretical research be done in this area to build up a comprehensive, culturally oriented, cost effective empowerment programme. A comparative study can be carried out on people by focussing on working and un-employed, gender difference, age differences and educational background on the impact of empowerment programme on emotional, spiritual and coping ability of the middle aged. Similarly, the awareness on the same including the rights of the elderly can be arranged in the schools, colleges and universities curricula so that the youngsters will be conscious about their responsibilities towards the elderly.

Conclusion

This study was conducted to assess the level of emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence and coping ability of the middle-aged people. Spiritually and emotionally intelligent people can feel the sense of self, empathy, kindness, intuition, motivation, awareness, social skills, forgiveness, reconciliation, dedication within themselves. If one person possesses emotional and spiritual intelligence, they could face their midlife transitions in a balanced way to certain extent and have a great role in achieving the vision of the National

Policy of the Government of India to promote the concept of active and healthy ageing.

Acknowledgment:

The authors are grateful to all the participants for their willingness and cooperation during the study

period.

References

1. Anwar MA, Gani AMO. The effects of spiritual intelligence and its dimensions on organizational citizenship behaviour. *Journal of Indust Enging & Management* 2015; 8(4): 1162-78. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3926/jiem.1451>
2. Benny S. Retirement time planning. *Nurses of India* 2016; 17(2): 10-12
3. Dash M, Patnaik P. Relationship among mental health, emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence in male and female adults. *Journal of Culture, Society and Development* 2015; January; 14, ISSN 2422-8400. <http://www.researchgate.net/publications/309454328>
4. Ghosh S. Status of workplace, spiritual Intelligence among secondary school teachers. *Intern Journ Sci Res* 2016; ISSN: 2319-7064
5. Gujral HK. Spirituality and emotional intelligence: Determinants of effective leadership. *Intern Jour of Management & Business Studies* 2016; 6(3) July-Sept; 2016 ISSN: 2230-9519 (Online) ISSN: 2231-2463
6. Joy ST. Enhancement of Emotional Intelligence and Spiritual intelligence among Bed Student's Teachers, PhD dissertation, 2011; The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda
7. Kiran P. Elderly in India. *Health Action* 2018 July; 31(7): 2-5
8. Mane AB. Ageing in India: Some social challenges to elderly care. *Journal of Gerontology & Geriatric Res* 2016; 5:2. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4172/2167-7182.1000e136>
9. Nagpal AS Geriatric health care in India. *Health Action* 2018; 31(7): 8-9
10. Ravikumar T, Damodaran V. Research and development relationship among emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence and psychological resilience of corporate executives in India. *Indian Journal of Applied Res* 2014; 4(8), August, ISSN - 2249-555X
11. Shajan S. Psychological well-being of the elderly population and associated factors: A systemic review. *Nightingale Nursing Time* Feb 2020; 15(11): 47-50
12. Sharma SA. Co-relational study of adjustment among professional and non-professional working women with respect to psychological variable. *Intern Jour of Recent Technol & Engg (IJRTE)* ISSN: 2277-3878, 2019: Volume 8, Issue- 1C2
13. Singh MP, Sinha J. Impact of spiritual intelligence on quality of life. *Intern Jour Scientific & Research Publications* May 2013; 3(5): ISSN 2250-3153