

# A STUDY ON SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE ITS IMPACT ON ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

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## ABSTRACT

*Ethics, a moral principle of human beings is highly associated with the regular activities in the current scenario. Philosophers have defined the term ethics in various dimensions and many of their concepts were accepted and were followed by millions of people. New religions and faiths emerged by the influences of the preaching by such philosophers. Hence ethics and spirituality are interrelated in many aspects that guide the human race towards goodness and eternity. This article briefs the relationship of spiritual intelligence, a concept which has been discussed in recent years, with the ethical behaviour of people in the society.*

**Keywords:** Spiritual Intelligence, Ethical Behaviour, Spirituality, God Spot

## INTRODUCTION

Ethics is the essence of human values which can also be defined the human character that insists on moral attitudes. Ethics is always considered to be the standard principles and norms to be followed to lead a perfect life. It is also considered as an inducing factor that drives an individual to be positive that guides him to take decisions in that is good to him and the society. Many philosophers and educationalists describe ethics as the capability of distinguishing good and bad and thus following the good and right things. In general, ethics is the set of moral principles or moral values that is practised by an individual as his character within himself and in the group.

Philosopher of different ages in history formulated many theories and concepts about ethics on basis of their perception as well as with the reference to their previous theories. Philosophers like Socrates, Aristotle, Plato belonging to the period of BC, authors who promoted Utilitarianism like Jeremy Bentham, Immanuel Kant who formed the Kantian theory, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels are some of the well-known philosophers who projected ethics as an inevitable and the most required concept of the human behaviour.

The philosophies of the scholars about ethics are classified based on their nature and approaches. The theories based on deontology instruct the responsibility of an individual while he or she is in a position to take decisions. In this circumstance, the decision should favour the rules which are set up as the code. Similarly, the decisions and activities must be based on the responsibility and obligations to which the individual is engaged. Kant Theory of Ethics supports the Deontology theories because Kant stated that the ethics are nothing but to follow the rules to accomplish the duties. Unlike Deontology, Utilitarianism believes in the maximum benefit for maximum people. In other words, less harm to minimum people. The decisions or actions must be beneficial to the maximum and it is considered to ethical according to the Utilitarian theory. Epicurus, an ancient Greek Philosopher was considered to the predecessor of current utilitarianism supporters. Utilitarian theories concentrate on the happiness of the group than an individual. But Scholars of Ancient Greece like Aristotle and Plato preaches the concepts of virtue that is based on individual characteristics. The philosophers who support virtue as ethics stated that the moral and good characteristics of the individuals are virtue and implementing the virtue in the environment is the ethical practice. Ethical Relativism theory which speaks about the norms of the culture of a particular region or ethnicity to be ethical, have been rejected by the majority of the ethicists. The ethicist argues that many immoral norms of different cultures could not be considered as ethical behaviour universally. Thus, the concepts of ethics have been explained in different manner by different arguments in different period of time. But generally, people have the thoughts that ethics are the moral values and that differentiated good from bad and it also considered as the habit of following the good things which is accepted universally.

Before a decade, the term spiritual intelligence was not been much familiar but in recent years it seems to be an emerging concept and highly related with the fields like psychology, management and philosophy. In spite of the name which indicates religious consciousness, spiritual intelligence has been defined and understood as a psychological term that denotes the character of an individual. Danah Zohar, in the year 1997 first utilized or introduced the term spiritual intelligence in her work named “rewiring the corporate brain”. There is no constant definition for spirituality which could not be accepted or denied at any circumstances. It can be considered as

the feel, sense or thoughts that initiate the behaviour of the human beings. Psychologists and Scientists have mentioned that there is a particular part in the brain which induces the sense of spirituality that leads an individual to be adopting himself to a faith or to be religious. But a research conducted by the University of Missouri in the year 2012 concluded that the thoughts of spirituality has not originated from one particular part, but it is developing from many parts of the Brain. Danah Zohar, who coined the term spiritual intelligence, coordinates the concepts of Intelligence quotient and emotional intelligence with spiritual intelligence. The emotional intelligence, which is the capability of understanding and managing the individual's own emotions are related with the spiritual intelligence. She also stated that the spiritual intelligence is the knowledge of self and the ability to understand and solve the problems. There are different definitions which portrays spiritual intelligence as a spiritual concept, in contrast to the arguments favouring it as a psychological term. But in common, spiritual intelligence is considered to be a moral initiation which is seen as factor that predicts, questions and searching solution or alternative paths for problems in an ethical manner.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Joseph and Lakshmi (2012) in their paper on "Spiritual Intelligence at Work" describes the relationship of spiritual intelligence with ethical behaviour in the studies. They have stated that spiritual intelligence initiates the ethical behaviour and the personalities like responsibilities, self-problem solving, decision making and other inter personal qualities of the employees in the work place.

King (2008) in his research on the topic "Rethinking claims of spiritual intelligence" mentioned that spiritual intelligence is a set of psychological capabilities that helps an individual to attain the self-recognition and to enable the deep thinking. He also instructed four components of spiritual intelligence namely Critical Existential Thinking, Personal Meaning Production, Transcendental Awareness and Conscious State Expansion

Emmons (1999) in his work on "The psychology of ultimate concerns" defined spiritual intelligence as a structure that is helpful for identifying the traits and capabilities which tends an individual to attain spiritual consciousness. The author further stated that the spiritual intelligence helps the individual to predict the problems and it also tends the individual to solve those issues in the ways of spirituality.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- 1) To study the existence of spiritual intelligence as an ability of human beings
- 2) To relate the spiritual intelligence with the ethical behaviour of human beings

### **SPIRITUALITY AND ETHICS**

India is a place for various religious faiths that normally leads to the spiritual behaviour among the people. The followers of different religions were taught to be spiritual and to be in goodness by the teachings in their faith. Hence it is to be accepted that all the religions have the concepts of goodness and it preaches the essence of truth, spirituality and eternity. The concept of goodness can be highly related to the moral values and ethical behaviour by the human beings. All religious concepts are highly associated with the values like love, affection, truth, honesty, justice, equality etc. These are the key result areas when the human beings are functioning in an ethical manner. Hence spirituality and ethical behaviour are related in their characteristics and their area of implementation. When people are spiritually initiated, their activities will be based on the values, which were framed as the ethics in our culture. That is the why the Spiritual behaviour of an individual always coincides with the ethical behaviour and the set of rules to be followed in the society. Many countries framed their constitution based on the religious books and preaching of the prophets, philosophers and religious scholars.

As discussed earlier, the relativism ethics is based on the rules or culture that is followed within a particular geographical region. The customs which are constituted as laws were followed as ethical codes in many nations. Those customs emerged in the past, based on the religious beliefs of the people of a particular race or ethnicity. In ancient ages, the religious people were respected and considered to be more influential in the kingdom, similar or higher than the king. In such scenario, the preaching of those religious people was made as the laws in those kingdoms which were also considered as the code of ethics. In recent scenario, many ethical codes were under discussions by the scholars, researchers and the atheists who question the origin of such codes. India, a secular state, framed its constitution based the International Bill of Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which were commonly accepted by many nations of the world. The constitution strictly follows the rule that no discrimination to be found in the society, working environment, service organisations and in the educational institutions. It is also followed as an ethics in many organisations. Non-discrimination cannot be implied only through laws. It has to be inserted in the minds of the human beings as a spiritual thought, which would convert the human being to abide with law, thinking that it is his/ her spiritual duty or responsibility. Hence the sense of spirituality is considered to be an influential factor for being ethical and goodness. Researches were carried out by many psychologists to prove the existence of spiritual intelligence and its relationship and influence on ethical behaviour.

## **EXISTENCE OF SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE**

The argument about the existence of the term God Spot and its related researches were going on after the term spiritual intelligence is being discussed an approach in management. Some researchers argue that the sense of spirituality or spiritual intelligence occurs in human beings due to the existence of a God Spot, a region in brain. Some researchers partially support this argument by stating that spirituality exists in the brain as a neural basis of emotions or self. Many researches are carried out throughout the world to prove or disprove the existence of god spot as a part of human brain. In contrast, other group argues that there is no god spot in the brain that initiates or controls the sense of spirituality. Spiritual Intelligence is influenced by the factors and circumstances that prevail in the individual's environment. Some researchers stated that it is a form of biological trait or a type of personality trait that commonly exists among the human beings. Hence, the concept of spiritual intelligence has not been approved or recognised globally, the intention to prove its existence made the researchers, neurologists, psychologists and other people who are associated with religion and humanities to continue the researches scientifically.

## **RELATIONSHIP OF SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE WITH ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR**

In organisations, the code of ethics was framed based on the activities that involves organisation commitments, punctuality, loyalty, integrity, respect towards others, fairness, caring etc. Such principles show the effectiveness of an individual or an employee, as an ethical personality in an organisation. Researchers observed the activities of the employees those who are potential to be ethical and committed to responsibilities, are being spiritual and in their work place (Joseph and Lakshmi, 2012). The people those are found be spiritual and led by moral values are not affected with negative attitudes and pessimism like ego, anger etc (Mitroff & Denton, 1999). Moreover, spiritual intelligence is helpful in the transformation or implementation of the current management and ethical theories into action. The employees in the organisation with the sense of spirituality were found to be adaptable to the environment with the power of tolerance and they were able to help their colleagues and sub ordinates to overcome the difficulties. They were also able to build a valued relationship in their workplace with the influence of their spiritual intelligence (Burke, 2006). Sedigheh Tootian Esfahani and Ali Najafi (2015) attempted a research on the relationship between spiritual intelligence and professional ethics in which the employees of service sectors are involved. The four components of SI King (2008) namely, Critical Existential Thinking, Personal Meaning Production, Transcendental Awareness and Conscious State Expansion were taken for consideration in their research. The researchers concluded that when there is an increase in the components of the spiritual intelligence, the employees were found to be enhanced with professional ethics and moral values.

## **CONCLUSION**

The concepts like morality, values, ethics, spirituality and other principles associated with human behaviour were found to be slowly fading among the individuals in current scenario. Every individual has the capability to build a potential value and personality in his/her self, which would be favourable to him and his fellow people. The act of following the above-mentioned principles will create a sense, which can be named as spirituality. People who never believe in spirituality and faith could name it as morality, goodness or in some other terms. The studies and the researches also prove that a person who is having a high sense of spirituality will behave as an ethical personality in the society and in his working environment. They would able to define the ethics as their behaviour which were initiated by their thoughts. So even if the concepts of spirituality are not yet widely accepted, the values of ethics were understood and accepted by the human race globally.

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