

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE INCREASES THE SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL EMPLOYEES

*(Kecerdasan Emosi Meningkatkan Kecerdasan Rohani Pekerja Organisasi)*

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to investigate the link between intelligence (including self-management, social awareness and relationship management) and spiritual intelligence within an organizational body in Malaysia. A group of 100 participants completed a questionnaire for the study. The analysis was conducted using SmartPLS software to examine the questionnaire responses and test the research hypotheses. The results revealed a positive and significant correlation between self-management, social awareness and relationship management in emotional intelligence and employees' spiritual intelligence. These findings highlight the role of emotional intelligence components, specifically self-management, social awareness and relationship management in shaping employees' spiritual intelligence. This study contributes to enhancing practitioners' understanding of how emotional intelligence can elevate

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employee's spiritual well-being. It offers perspectives on enhancing employees' emotional control abilities to boost their development for long-term sustainability. Moreover, it provides insights for crafting strategies to navigate challenges effectively.

**Keywords:** Emotional intelligence; self-management; social awareness; relationship management; spiritual intelligence

### ABSTRAK

*Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji hubungan antara kecerdasan emosi (termasuk pengurusan diri, kesedaran sosial, dan pengurusan perhubungan) dan kecerdasan rohani di sebuah badan organisasi di Malaysia. Sekumpulan 100 responden telah melengkapkan soal selidik untuk kajian ini. Analisis dijalankan menggunakan perisian SmartPLS untuk meneliti jawapan soal selidik dan menguji hipotesis kajian. Hasilnya menunjukkan korelasi yang positif dan signifikan antara pengurusan diri, kesedaran sosial, dan pengurusan perhubungan dalam kecerdasan emosi terhadap kecerdasan rohani pekerja. Penemuan ini menyerlahkan peranan komponen kecerdasan emosi khususnya pengurusan diri, kesedaran sosial dan pengurusan perhubungan dalam membentuk kecerdasan rohani pekerja. Sumbangan kajian ini dapat meningkatkan pemahaman pengamal tentang bagaimana kecerdasan emosi dapat meningkatkan kesejahteraan rohani pekerja. Ia menawarkan perspektif untuk meningkatkan kebolehan kawalan emosi pekerja untuk meningkatkan pembangunan mereka untuk kemampuan jangka panjang. Selain itu, ia memberikan cerapan untuk merangka strategi untuk mengharungi cabaran dengan berkesan.*

**Kata kunci:** Kecerdasan emosi; pengurusan diri; kesedaran sosial; pengurusan perhubungan; kecerdasan rohani

### INTRODUCTION

In today's dynamic and competitive work environment, companies are starting to recognize the influence of intelligence on the happiness and overall performance of their employees. Spiritual intelligence, which involves using resources to solve problems, make decisions and exhibit conduct, has gained acknowledgment from researchers and experts in the field. Embracing intelligence into organizational culture offers several advantages, including improved problem-solving abilities, enhanced decision-making skills and the promotion of ethical behavior. Moreover, it fosters an understanding of oneself and others while instilling a sense of purpose in one's job. When organizations integrate intelligence practices into their culture, employees are more likely to experience increased job satisfaction, engagement and

overall well-being. Furthermore, it can play a role in promoting decision-making and compassionate leadership within companies. According to Zohar and Marshall (2000), spiritual intelligence serves as the cornerstone for intellectual intelligence to function efficiently.

When effectively utilized, spiritual intelligence can bring about positive outcomes for organizations. To begin with, embracing intelligence in the workplace fosters a sense of community and belonging among employees (Datta 2021). By encouraging individuals to delve into their values and beliefs, organizations create an environment where diverse perspectives are valued and embraced. Additionally, integrating intelligence practices results in increased job satisfaction and engagement levels (Datta 2021). When individuals perceive alignment between their values and the objectives of the organization, they find greater purpose in their work. This newfound purpose ignites motivation, leading to increased commitment and productivity (Torabi & Nadali 2016). Furthermore, spiritual intelligence can enhance relationships within organizations (Kotze et al. 2022). Employees with heightened levels of spiritual intelligence exhibit traits like empathy, compassion and emotional resilience (Kumar & Jyothirmai 2020). These attributes contribute to communication dynamics, effective conflict resolution skills and improved teamwork overall. By nurturing intelligence among employees through practices such as mindfulness training or opportunities for self-reflection, organizations can establish a culture that positively impacts emotions in the workplace (Abdul Latiff 2021).

In recent years, there has been a growing focus on the significance of emotional intelligence (EQ) and its connection to spiritual intelligence within organizational settings. EQ pertains to our capacity to understand our emotions, recognize the emotions of others, manage emotions effectively, motivate ourselves and navigate relationships with others. In organizational contexts, EQ includes skills such as empathy, self-awareness and clear communication, along with the ability to cultivate positive workplace connections. By integrating emotional intelligence with spiritual intelligence, organizations can adopt a comprehensive approach to leadership and employee growth. This integration can enhance teamwork, facilitate conflict resolution and contribute to organizational achievement. The combination of EQ and spiritual intelligence holds importance in leadership development and organizational progress as it enhances employee well-being, team dynamics and cultivates a positive work environment.

Therefore, fostering awareness among staff members enables companies to establish a workplace that enhances wellness and emotional well-being. Employees with an understanding of EQ are more inclined to experience positive emotions such as happiness, appreciation and empathy (Naseer et al. 2020). They often find meaning in

their roles and exhibit a stronger connection to their organization's goals. Moreover, spiritual intelligence can enhance relationships within the workplace, encouraging empathy and mutual understanding among colleagues, which in turn boosts communication and teamwork (Tehubijuluw 2014). To enhance employee's emotional well-being through intelligence practices, organizations can introduce activities such as mindfulness training sessions, meditation workshops, or seminars on leadership based on values (Slutsky et al. 2019). These activities offer opportunities for introspection and personal development, thereby nurturing the growth of EQ among employees and building a workforce that is emotionally resilient (Rappel 2017).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE RELATIONSHIP WITH SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE**

The significance of EQ in influencing human behavior is aligned with the concepts put forth by Daniel Goleman in his renowned book "Emotional Intelligence", drawing from Salovey and Mayers model to explore how EQ correlates with one's lifestyle. Thus, EQ can be defined as an individual's capacity to regulate their emotions, guiding their actions and thoughts in a manner that enhances personal effectiveness (Salovey & Mayer 1990). Goleman's model (2002) comprises four aspects: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. Essentially, EQ encompasses an individual's skill in handling their own emotions (managers) and those of others (employees), while also fostering interactions that contribute towards establishing meaningful human connections conducive to achieving organizational objectives and efficiency (Cooper & Sawaf 1997; McGarvey 1997).

The theories put forward are backed by real world studies conducted by researchers. For instance, a study carried out by Njotoprajitno et al. (2020) involving 100 lecturers at universities in Indonesia supports these recommendations. Another study by Achmad et al. (2019) focused on 50 employees of Bank of BTN Shariah in Malang. Additionally, research conducted by Chaima & Hachana (2018) on 54 university staff members in Tunisia further illustrates the interconnectedness and mutual reinforcement of intelligence and spiritual intelligence. These studies indicate that emotional intelligence, which is linked to qualities such as humility, forgiveness and gratitude, can indeed enhance employee's spiritual intelligence, leading to a more harmonious and productive work environment.

Many research projects have been carried out focusing on various aspects of intelligence when examining the effect of spiritual intelligence. This study specifically delves into three elements of emotional intelligence: self-management, social

awareness and relationship management, in relation to spiritual intelligence. As a result, this investigation gives rise to the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Emotional intelligence in self-management has a positive and significant influence on spiritual intelligence.

Hypothesis 2: Emotional intelligence in social awareness has a positive and significant influence on spiritual intelligence.

Hypothesis 3: Emotional intelligence in relationship management has a positive and significant influence on spiritual intelligence.

The conceptual framework is built based on theoretical foundations and empirical studies, as illustrated in Figure 1.

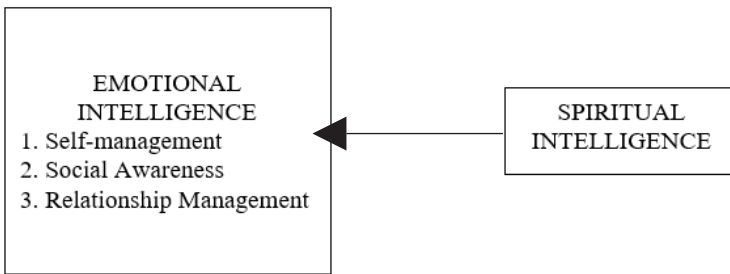


FIGURE 1 Conceptual Framework

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

This research project was carried out at a government agency, which had chosen to remain anonymous. The agency granted the authority to organize and distribute questionnaires, in alignment with the goals and objectives of the study. The distribution of these surveys varied in terms of format, timing, function and resources utilized. This survey method and a cross sectional research design were employed to ensure data collection without bias, following the recommendations of Sekaran and Bougie (2016). Initially, questionnaires were developed based on existing literature related to emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence.

## **RESEARCH SAMPLE**

In this research, 150 questionnaires were randomly distributed to participants within the agency. Out of these, the researcher received 100 completed questionnaires, representing a response rate of 66.6%.

## **RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

The survey used in this research is divided into four sections. Emotional intelligence, which consists of 17 items, was borrowed from a study by Noorajamsha Nasrin & Azizan H Morshidi (2018). Spiritual intelligence, which includes 16 items adapted from a study conducted by Siti Zunariah in 2013. A 5-point Likert scale was employed to assess the items ranging from (1) “disagree” to (5) “strongly agree.” Demographic factors such as gender, age, education level, job title, marital status, department and unit membership, years of service, work location and income were also included in the survey.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

We analyzed survey questionnaire responses using SmartPLS as it offers scores that cater to small sample sizes, non-normal data and evaluates intricate research frameworks (Hair, Hult, Ringle & Sarstedt 2016; Henseler, Ringle and Sinkovics 2009). The research includes assessing structural measurements.

## **FINDINGS**

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents are male (67%), aged between 25 to 34 years old (45%) with certificate and diploma education (37%). The majority are working in the implementation group (77%), married (80.0%), have permanent employment (98%), have a working period of 5-14 years (5%), work in the eastern zone (34.0%) and have income ranging from below RM1500 to RM2999 (42%).

## **CORRELATION ANALYSIS**

Table 2 shows that the weights assigned to all factors are above 0.70. The average variance extracted (AVE) for each factor exceeds 0.50, as noted by Barclay, Higgins & Thompson (1995) and Henseler, Ringle & Sinkovic (2009). This indicates that

the requirement for convergent validity analysis has been satisfied. Additionally, the composite reliability values for all factors surpass 0.80, according to Nunally & Bernstein (1994), demonstrating consistency in the measurement scale.

TABLE 2 Results of Convergent Validity Analysis

Construct	No. Item	Factor Loading	AVE	Composite reliability
Self-management	5	0.738-0.855	0.606	0.885
Social awareness	6	0.759-0.861	0.680	0.927
Relationship management	6	0.783-0.875	0.695	0.932
Spiritual intelligence	16	0.720-0.817	0.583	0.957

Table 3 indicates that the Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) correlation values for all constructs are below 0.90 and the confidence interval values for all constructs (as indicated in parentheses) are under 1 (Hair et al. 2017). As noted by Henseler et al. (2009), this demonstrates that the construct satisfies the requirements of validity analysis.

TABLE 3 Results of Discriminant Validity Analysis

	Spiritual Intelligence	Social Awareness	Self-management
Social Awareness	0.756		
Self-management	0.755	0.865	
Relationship Management	0.772	0.868	0.809

Note: Values in parentheses are confidence interval values at 5% and 95%

Table 4 indicates that the average scores for all categories fall between 4.0600 and 4.1061, suggesting that most participants perceive self-management, social awareness, relationship management and spiritual intelligence at levels ranging from high (4) to the highest (7). Moreover, the variance inflation factor values for these categories are below 5.0, indicating that collinearity issues are not present in the data analysis (Hair et al. 2017).

TABLE 4 Variance Inflation Factor Results and Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance Inflation Factor
			Spiritual Intelligence
Self-management	4.0600	0.55011	
Social Awareness	4.0750	0.52404	2.703
Relationship Management	4.0618	0.54077	3.546
Spiritual Intelligence	4.1061	0.53374	2.994

### HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Table 5 reveals that factoring intelligence into the analysis explains 60.3% of the variation in intelligence. The R<sup>2</sup> value for intelligence exceeds 0.26 (Cohen 1992) indicating an impact of this model. The examination of research hypotheses yields three results: firstly, a positive and significant correlation between SM and SI ( $\beta=0.061$ ;  $t=3.970$ ) supports H1. Secondly, a positive and significant correlation between SA and SI ( $\beta=0.074$ ;  $t=3.334$ ) supports H2. Thirdly, the association between RM and SI is significantly correlated with PP ( $\beta=0.073$ ;  $t=4.882$ ), supporting H3. Overall, these findings validate the role of SM, SA and RM on SI, as depicted in Table 5.

TABLE 5 Hypothesis Test 1, 2 and 3

Hypothesis	Standardize Beta ( $\beta$ )	T-Statistic	R <sup>2</sup>	Decision
H1: SM $\square$ SI	0.061	3.970	0.603	Support
H2: SA $\square$ SI	0.074	3.334		Support
H3: RM $\square$ SI	0.073	4.882		Support

Note: Significant \*value > 1.96 (two-tailed test)

SM: Self-management

SA: Social Awareness

RM: Relationship Management

SI: Spiritual Intelligence

### DISCUSSION

This research confirms that emotional intelligence, including self-management, social awareness and relationship management, has an effect on spiritual intelligence in the organization studied. The implications of this study can be categorized into three areas:



theory, strength of research methodology and practical application for professionals. Regarding theory, this finding is in line with previous studies conducted by Goleman (2002) and Amram (2008), which suggest that the inclusion of emotional, social and spiritual elements enables individuals to recognize their own emotions and those of others. This capability allows them to make wise decisions and master three domains, as noted by Mustaffa et al. (2010): first, individuals can manage negative emotions. For example, one exhibits patience in the face of life's challenges faced in life and a belief in surrendering to a higher power. Second, they can recognize other people's emotions. For example, a person will respect the views, feelings and understand the differences in backgrounds that influence certain behaviors and attitudes. Third, they can cultivate good relationships with people. For example, an individual can preserve and maintain existing relationships and easily establish new relationships with others. Furthermore, in terms of the robustness of the research methodology used, the data collection process involving literature on intelligence, spiritual intelligence and survey questionnaires has met the standards set for validity and reliability analysis. This ensures that the findings are accurate and reliable.

In order to ensure that the organization guided achieves its vision, mission and targeted goals, certain suggestions for improvement need to be given priority in maintaining spirituality among each employee. Firstly, there needs to be a streamlined emphasis on spiritual awareness in every employee. Organizational leaders should cultivate this spiritual importance so that employees always remember that work is a form of worship that requires trust and responsibility. Neglecting this emphasis can lead to employees struggling to control their emotions effectively. Secondly, addressing the lack of skilled workers. This is because leaders must serve as compasses or guides without limitations to employees or followers. Such a situation can leave leaders vulnerable to internal burnout because their tasks involve delving into the internal lives of others, not solely focusing on personal performance. Inner exhaustion can occur as concerns and love cannot be delegated. Thirdly, maintaining manners at work. Courtesy plays an important position in determining an individual stature and character, especially in human interactions and relationships. These manners are interrelated with spirituality where good manners and gentleness are key to mutual benefit. As stated in Ali-'Imran, quoted in Aid bin Abdullah Al-Qarni (2011), "Then it is because of God's mercy that you are gentle with them. If you are harsh and rude, they will stay away from you." In terms of leadership, the words of the Prophet "if all matters are left to non-members, then wait for its destruction" (HR. al-Bukhari). The cultivation of good manners can give birth to individuals who exhibit behavior that is highly regarded and respected by people. Therefore, organizational values are shaped by spirituality, religion, customs and surrounding manners. From a managerial point of view, the results of this study can serve as a tool to evaluate how employees' emotional intelligence can affect their spiritual intelligence in the daily work environment.

Based on the results of the study, it is proven that emotional intelligence factors can affect intelligence. Emotions play a role in an individual's ability to manage their own feelings and the feelings of others while fostering positive interactions to enhance human relationships and increase employees' spiritual intelligence. To improve the robustness of this research, future studies need to take into account the following; first, collect data from organizations to observe both similarities and differences in outcomes; the second focuses on variables in detail; and third explore additional factors that contribute to spiritual intelligence.

## **CONCLUSION**

In summary, the research results emphasize a positive link between self-management, social awareness and relationship management with spiritual intelligence in the specific organizational context under study. The data indicate that individuals who demonstrate self-control abilities, an awareness of social nuances and adept relationship management skills contribute positively to nurturing and advancing spiritual intelligence within the organization. This suggests that encouraging and supporting these skill sets among staff members can create an environment conducive to enhancing collaboration, employee welfare and overall organizational achievements. As businesses increasingly value employee growth, incorporating practices related to self-management, social awareness and relationship management could prove beneficial for nurturing intelligence and fostering a cohesive organizational ethos. Further exploration through research and practical initiatives in this realm can enhance our insights and assist organizations in implementing strategies to leverage the advantages of intelligence for sustained organizational longevity and prosperity.

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