

# The Relationship between Resilience, Psychological Hardiness, Spiritual Intelligence, and Development of the Moral Judgement of the Female Students

Kobra Darvishzadeh<sup>1</sup> & Zahra Dasht Bozorgi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> MA Student of Psychology, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

<sup>2</sup> Department of Psychology, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

Correspondence: Zahra Dasht Bozorgi, Department of Psychology, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz Branch, Ahvaz, Iran. Postal Code: 61349-37333. Tel: 98-61-1334-8420. E-mail: zahradb2000@yahoo.com

Received: November 17, 2015 Accepted: January 15, 2016 Online Published: February 23, 2016

doi:10.5539/ass.v12n3p170

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ass.v12n3p170>

## Abstract

This study aims to determine the relationship between resilience, psychological hardiness, spiritual intelligence, and development of the moral judgment of the female students in 2014. The research sample included 200 female high school students of District 2, Ahvaz-Iran in educational year of 2014-15 that were selected using the available sampling method. In this paper, for measuring the resilience, psychological hardiness, and spiritual intelligence, resilience scale, Ahvaz Hardiness questionnaire, and moral judgment questionnaire were used, respectively. For data analysis, in addition to the descriptive statistics, inferential statistical such as Pearson's correlation coefficient and multivariate regression analysis using the simultaneous method was used. Data analysis showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between the psychological hardiness, spiritual intelligence, and growth of the moral judgment. Moreover, results of the regression analysis showed that predictor variables are effective in clarifying the 0.41 of the variance of the spiritual intelligence development of the students.

**Keywords:** resilience, psychological hardiness, spiritual intelligence, development of the moral judgment

## 1. Introduction

Ethics and moral education in all societies has long been regarded by the prophets, philosophers, thinkers, teachers and parents. Modern man should inevitably consider the moral values due to the crisis of human identity and moral values. One feature of the transcendental manifestations of the education is students' moral development (Najarzadehgan, 2009). One of the variables affecting the moral development is the positive resilience. Resilience is the capacity to cope with, overcome, and even become stronger by experiencing the problems or damages. There are two restrictions in the process of resiliency: 1) People encounter the significant threats or serious difficulties; 2) Despite the difficulties and problems, people achieve positive adaptation and progress (Lathar et al., 2000). Rutter (1999) defines resilience as the interaction between risk factors and protective factors. Risk factors may be defined as any conditions or events that lead to the adverse outcomes, however, poor social - economic conditions, extensive social damages, or divorced parents are usually known as the risk factors. In addition, protective factors may be referred as any event or circumstance that protects people from the harms, however, some protective factors include the personality attributes, family factors, and social support commonly known as protective factors (Yogurt & Reed, 2002).

The issues of spirituality and spiritual evolution of man have been increasingly regarded by the psychologists and mental health professionals in the past few decades. So that the World Health Organization considers the physical, mental, social and spiritual aspects as some existential aspects of the human beings and deals with the fourth dimension, namely the spiritual aspect in human growth and development (World Health Organization, 2005). Studies show that spirituality may substantially affect the well-being of the people (Zohar & Marshall, 2000; Vaughan, 2002; Young & Koopsen, 2005; King, 2007). Hoseini et al. (2010) state that spirituality may be considered as a form of intelligence, because it can predict the performance and adaptability of the individuals and equips people with abilities and skills in order to solve the problems and achieve their goals. Psychological concept of spirituality is extended when spirituality is regarded as a form of intelligence. Over the recent years,

the spiritual intelligence as one of the factors affecting the mental health and improvement of the lifestyle has been dealt with in a wide range of the studies (Hassan & Shabani, 2013).

Stivenz (1966) introduced the spiritual intelligence and then Emmons (2000) developed it. Spiritual intelligence helps people to consider the consequences of their actions, define their goals and borders, and live a meaningful life (Constantin, 2013). Amram and Dryer (2008) define spiritual intelligence as enriching quality of daily performance and health. In other words, spiritual intelligence is beyond a person's mental ability (Vaughan, 2002).

Vaughan (2002) believes that spiritual intelligence is related to the internal and external life of the people, and includes the capacity for deep understanding of the existential issues and insight into the multiple levels of consciousness. Self-awareness provides a context of the being of life force of the creative development. Spiritual intelligence is manifested in the form of consciousness and is permanently developed in the form of the material, life, body, soul, and spirit. Therefore, spiritual intelligence is beyond the mental abilities of the people and relates them to the world beyond the individual life, namely the spiritual life. Moreover, spiritual intelligence is beyond the conventional psychological growth. Therefore, self-awareness includes awareness of the relationship with a transcendental existence, other people, earth and all creatures.

According to King (2007) and spiritual intelligence as one of the individual abilities helps people to adapt to the new situations and thus, it is involved in mental health. According to King (2008), there is a strong relationship between spirituality, well-being, psychology, and compatibility. It seems that spiritual intelligence goes beyond the cognitive and physical relationships with the environment, and enters the intuitive and transcendent world of individual life. This view includes all individual events and experiences that are affected by a general viewpoint. Spiritual intelligence helps people to organize and re-interpret the experiences, meanings and personal values (Nasel, 2004).

Hardiness includes a set of characteristics can help people to resist against the stressful events. This personality variable consists of three interrelated components: commitment, control, and defiance. People with hardiness signs are more committed to what they are doing and try to achieve their goals (commitment), they also feel that they can control the circumstances (control) and consider the life changes as the challenges and opportunities for growth and development rather than limitations and threats (defiance) (Kobasa & Maddi, 1994). Since the main feature of the people with hardiness signs is the resistance to the life pressures, Solomon & Neriya (2003), Maddi and Khoshaba (2002) showed that people with more hardiness signs regard the stressful situation less threatening and more manageable, they use coping skills more effectively and use management skills in stressful situations, and act with higher cognitive focus. Inzlicht et al., (2006) demonstrated that hardiness components using the more adaptive strategies such as problem-focused strategies and increased perceived ability to cope with the stresses increase the mental health.

Azizollah et al., (2013) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence and academic achievement of the students. The results showed a significant positive correlation between the spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence. The results also showed that spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence simultaneously could predict the academic achievement. Another study conducted by Garima Gupta (2012) showed a significant positive correlation between intellectual intelligence and emotional intelligence as the independent variables with self-efficiency and self-regulation as the dependent variables. The results of a study by Ebrahimi et al., (2012) suggest a significant positive relationship between spiritual intelligence and mental health and resiliency in the students. Amrai et al., (2011) examined the relationship between the spiritual intelligence and personality traits of students. The results showed a significant negative relationship between spiritual intelligence and personality trait of the neuroticism. The results also showed a significant positive relationship between spiritual intelligence and personality traits including the conscientiousness, adjustment, and extraversion. There was no significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and personality trait of the openness.

Literature review and existing theories imply that resilience and psychological hardiness and spiritual intelligence are of the factors affect the mental health of the people, however, no study was found that covers all three variables for predicting the students' moral judgment. Thus, the present study aimed to investigate the relationship between the resilience, hardiness, spiritual intelligence, and development of moral judgment of the female students.

## 2. Method

### 2.1 Statistical Population, Sample, and Sampling

This is a descriptive cross-sectional study. The statistical population consisted of all female high school students of District 2, Ahvaz-Iran in the educational year of 2014-15. The research sample consisted of 200 female students who were selected using the Kerjesi & Morgen (1970) table and available sampling method. The following tools were used to collect data.

### 2.2 Research Tools

#### 2.2.1 Resilience Scale

This scale has 25 items that are scored on a Likert scale from zero (never) to four (always). The total score is 0 – 100. The higher scores indicate the higher rate of individual resilience. There is a relationship between the increased resilience scale score and higher rate of the improvement as time passes. That is the increased score of the resilience scale results in the clinical development and decreased score of the resilience scale results in the lack or low rate of the clinical development. Resilience scale has the unique psychological features and may distinguish between resilient and non-resilient people. It shows that resilience is changeable and may be improved with the treatment or dramatically increased (Arab-Zadeh, 2008). Arab-Zadeh (2008) used the Cronbach's alpha and composition in order to determine the reliability of the Connor-Davidson's resilience scale that was 0.85 and 0.80, respectively.

#### 2.2.2 Ahwaz Hardiness Questionnaire

This questionnaire was developed and validated by Kiamarsi et al. (1998) in order to provide a measurement scale of psychological hardiness in Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz. This scale has 27 items that are scored on a four-point Likert scale from zero (never) to three (often) with a score ranging from 0 to 3 (never 0, often 3). The score range of this questionnaire is 0 - 81. Obtaining a high score in this questionnaire shows the higher rate of psychological hardiness. The validity of this test was evaluated by the concurrent validity using three scale criteria of generalized anxiety, Maslow's depression, and self-actualization questionnaire. Obtained coefficients were 0.65, 0.67, and 0.62, respectively; all of the coefficients were significant at  $P < 0.001$ . The concurrent validity was also calculated with the psychological hardiness construct and the obtained result was satisfactory. In the present study, Cronbach's alpha internal consistency of the scale was calculated 0.75.

#### 2.2.3 Spiritual Intelligence Questionnaire

This test was normalized in 2008 by Abdollahzadeh et al. on the students of Payame Noor University. The preliminary questionnaire of 30 questions was developed by the test developers, and was carried out on 30 students. The test reliability using the Cronbach's alpha in the preliminary stage was 0.87. In analyzing the questions using the Loop method, question no.12 was removed, and the final questionnaire was set at 29 words. Questions are scored from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) and score range is 29 -145. Haghshenas et al. (2010) calculated the questionnaire reliability using Cronbach's alpha as 0.89. In this study, using Cronbach's alpha, reliability spiritual intelligence was calculated as 0.91.

#### 2.2.4 Moral Development Test of the Adolescents and Youth

Moral development test of the adolescents and youth was developed by Lotfabadi et al. (2001). The questions are based on six moral issues, and there are three fiction questions for each category. These six moral categories include environmental ethics, self-care morality or personal ethics, ethics in family relationships, social ethics, human ethics, and spiritual (or transcendental) ethics.

The first factor is human nature. The second factor is the ability to distinguish between goodness and badness, ugliness and beauty. The third factor affecting the moral development is the motivations, emotions, and human sympathy in connection with the character and identity of the people and giving or not-giving priority to the ethical values compared with other values. The fourth factor influencing the moral development is thinking development and wisdom. The way by which people argue or think about the individual behaviors that are related to the moral issues and the rate of wisdom (namely, philosophical and logical system and the dominant way of thinking) play a decisive role in people's responses to the moral issues. The fifth factor includes the objective experiences and moral behaviors. The ways people behave in certain situations determine the moral or immoral aspects of that kind of behaviors. For example, by analyzing the reasons and grounds and the way adolescents and youth react to protect the environment in a certain situation, one of the moral or immoral aspects of their personality can be studied. The sixth factor is the social, cultural, and educational environment. The way people develop is the result of the permanent and dynamic interaction between the internal and external factors.

In this study, the reliability test of moral development of adolescents and youth was obtained using the Cronbach's alpha as 0.82.

In order to analyze data, SPSS-18 was used and results were reported in the form of descriptive and inferential statistics. In order to measure the correlation between the research variables Pearson's correlation test was used and in order to predict the contribution of the predictor variables in predicting the variance of the students' development of moral judgment, the stepwise multivariate linear regression was used.

### 3. Findings

Descriptive results of the study on 200 female students in the average age of 17-23 are here presented. Descriptive results of mean and standard deviation of the research variables are reported in Table 1.

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of the research variables

Variables		M	SD
Total score of resilience		89.23	15.03
Total score of psychological hardiness		42.55	11.16
Psychological hardiness	Commitment	14.64	4.45
	Defiance	14.41	4.2
	Control	13.49	4.6
Total score of spiritual intelligence		107.92	16.82
Spiritual intelligence	Understanding and connecting with the source of life	47.61	7.61
	Spiritual life	60.31	10.53
Total score of the development of the moral judgement		167.86	19.47

In order to verify the data normality, the Kolmogorov - Smirnov's one sample test was used, the results showed that data are normally distributed. Accordingly, in order to examine the relationship between variables, Pearson's correlation test was used.

Table 2. Pearson correlation coefficients of the predictor variables with the variable of the development of the moral judgement

Predictor variable		Correlation coefficient	Sig.
Total score of resilience		**0.17	0.005
Total score of psychological hardiness		**0.595	0.001
Psychological hardiness	Commitment	**0.502	0.001
	Defiance	**0.557	0.001
	Control	**0.546	0.001
Total score of spiritual intelligence		**0.513	0.001
Spiritual intelligence	Understanding and connecting with the source of life	**0.435	0.001
	Spiritual life	**0.504	0.001

Pearson's correlation results of the resiliency, psychological hardiness and spiritual intelligence implies that all of these variables show a positive and significant correlation with the variable of development of moral judgment of the female students at the error level of  $p < 0.001$ .

In order to determine the contribution of the predictor variables in explaining the variance of the students' development of moral judgment, the stepwise regression analysis was used. As shown in Table 3, according to the results of the stepwise regression analysis, the psychological hardiness and spiritual intelligence as the

predictive variables were the best predictors of the development of the moral judgement. Multiple correlation coefficient for the linear combination of the predictive variables was  $MR=0.624$  and  $RS=0.412$  that are significant at  $P<0.001$  and these two variables can explain in two steps 0.41 of the variance of female students' development of the moral judgment.

Table 3. Results of multivariate regression analysis of the variables of resilience, psychological hardiness, spiritual intelligence, and development of the moral judgment using the stepwise method

Statistical index Predictor variables	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F (Frequency) P (probability)	Regression Coefficients ( $\beta$ ) and (B)	
				1	2
1- psychological hardiness	0.595	0.354	F=146.77 p<0.001	B= 1.03 $\beta$ = 0.595 t= 12.11 p= 0.001	-
1- psychological hardiness 2- spiritual intelligence	0.624	0.412	F=84.36 p<0.001	B= 0.785 $\beta$ = 0.450 t= 7.36 p= 0.001	0.27= B $\beta$ = 0.233 t= 3.81 p= 0.001

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between resilience, psychological hardiness, spiritual intelligence, and moral judgment development of the female students in Ahwaz. The results showed a significant relationship between the resilience and development of the moral judgment. The results of this study is consistent with Hatami and Aghababaei (2002), Jafari et al., (2002), Besharat (2007), Akbar-Zadeh (2012), Ajayebi and Wilson (2005), Freiburg et al. (2003), Buonanno (2004), Tagyd and Frederickson (2004) and Carl and Chsyvn (2004) are in line. Studies show that resilient people interpret positively the negative emotions. For example, Freiburg et al. (2003) believe that the resilient people can control themselves, show the adapted social behaviors, empathy with others and self-concept; they are optimistic and or manage their daily duties.

With regard to the relationship between resiliency and development of moral judgment, it can be argued that the resiliency includes some features such as responsibility, thinking before acting, postponing the desire fulfillment, observing the rules and norms, organizing and prioritizing the tasks. Self- control may be explained as the ability to plan, organize, and fulfil the tasks. Responsibility controls the impulse and people can manage themselves effectively in stressful situations, and experiences the mental balance and can discover creative solutions using their thinking power.

Other results showed that a significant relationship between psychological hardiness with its components (commitment, control and defiance) and the development of moral judgment. This finding is consistent with the results of the Maddi (2013), Sandvik et al. (2013), Allred and Smith (1989) and Williams and Vybh (1992). This can be argued that people with higher signs of psychological hardiness show the higher rate of the adaptive behaviors and lower rate of maladaptive behaviors and use the hygienic tips effectively and positively (Williams & Vybh, 1992). Hardiness provides a special insight into the way people deal with various issues affecting the life.

Results also showed a significant relationship between the spiritual intelligence with its components (understanding and connecting with the source of life and spiritual life) with the development of moral judgment. This is consistent with the results of the Kurtines et al. (2014), Malti & Ongley (2014), Sadipour (2013), the Mousavi moghadam et al., (2015) and Rustam Vghly et al., (2015). This is argued that understanding and connecting with the source of life helps people to review their behaviors. In other words, in this way they can live a meaningful life. As Zohar and Marshall (2000) stated, it helps people to extend their activities based on their goals. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between understanding and connecting with the source of life and the development of moral judgment.

The results of the stepwise regression analysis showed that the psychological hardiness and spiritual intelligence as the predictive variables, could explain the 0.41 of variance of the female students' development of moral

judgment. Accordingly, it can be concluded that there is a relationship between the development of moral judgment of the female students with psychological hardiness, spiritual intelligence, and resilience. This study was conducted on a limited sample of female students of Ahwaz. Therefore, the results should be cautiously generalized. It is also recommended to conduct further studies on the male students and other groups such as university students. One of other limitations of the present study is to use a self-report questionnaire. Thus, it is recommended to use interview in future studies. Predicting the development of the moral judgment of the female students based on the positive psychology approach with variables of spiritual intelligence, psychological resilience and hardiness is one of the main issues in this study that distinguishes this study from the previous studies.

### Acknowledgements

We are grateful to all who assisted us in conducting this study.

**Ethical Approval:** The research departments were assured of the confidentiality of the results of the questionnaires.

**Conflict of Interest:** No conflict of interest and no conflict in arbitration process have been reported.

### References

- Abdollahzadeh, H., Bagherpoor, M., Mehrabi, S., & Lotfi, M. (2009). *Spiritual intelligence*. Translated and compiled: Psychometrics Publications.
- Akbarizadeh, F., Hajivandi, A., Bagheri, F., & Hatami, H. (2012). Relationship between nurses' spiritual intelligence with hardiness and general health. *Journal of Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences (J Kermanshah Univ Med Sci)*, 15(6), 12-19.
- Allred, K. D., & Smith, T. H. (1989). The hardy personality: cognitive and physiological responses to evaluative threat. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 50, 257-266. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037//0022-3514.56.2.257>
- Amram, Y., & Dryer, C. (2005). *The Development and integrated spiritual Intelligence Scale (ISIS) 2005*. Palo Alto, CA: Institute of Transpersonal Psychology Working. Retrieved from [www.geocities.com](http://www.geocities.com).
- Besharat, M. A. (2000). Resilience, vulnerability, and mental health. *Journal of psychological sciences*, 12, 373-383.
- Constantin, B. V. R. (2013). The Imperative of Addressing the Contemporary Crisis of Economics with Spiritual Intelligence. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 6, 19-24. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2212-5671\(13\)00108-1](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2212-5671(13)00108-1)
- Emmons, R. A. (2000). Spirituality and intelligence: Problems and prospects. *The international journal for the psychology of religion*, 10(1), 57-64. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/S15327582IJPR1001\\_6](http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/S15327582IJPR1001_6)
- Gupta, G. (2012). Spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence in relation to self-efficacy and self-regulation among college students. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Interdisciplinary Research*, 1(2), 60-69.
- Hatami, J., & Aghababaei, N. (2002). The role of the individuals and situations in moral judgement, *Marefate akhlaghe bahar*, 17, 73-88.
- Hosseini, M., Elias, H., Krauss, S. E., & Aishah, S. (2010). A review study on spiritual intelligence, adolescence and spiritual intelligence, factors that may contribute to individual differences in spiritual intelligence, and the related theories. *International Journal of Psychological Studies*, 2(2), 179-188. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ijps.v2n2p179>
- Jafari, E., Hajloo, N., Faghani, R., & Khazan, K. (2012). The relationship between spiritual well-being, hardiness, and mental health in the elderly. *J Res in Behav Sci*, 10(6), 431-40.
- Kiamarsi, A., Najariyan, B., & Mehrabizadeh Honarmand, M. (2008). Development and scale validation for measuring the psychological hardiness. *Journal of Psychology*, 2(3), 15-21.
- King, D. B. (2007). Rethinking claims of spiritual intelligence: a Definition. *Model, and Measure, Trent University (Canada)*, p. 223.
- King, D. B. (2008). *Rethinking claims of spiritual intelligence: A definition, model, and measure*. ProQuest.
- Kobasa, S. C., Maddi, S. R., & Kahn, S. (1982). Hardiness and health: a prospective study. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 42(1), 168. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.42.1.168>
- Kurtines, W. M., Gewirtz, J., & Lamb, J. L. (2014). *Handbook of Moral Behavior and Development: Volume 1:*

*Theory*. Psychology Press.

- Lotfabadi, H. (2002). Criticizing the moral development theories of Piaget and Kohlberg, and Bandura and providing a new model for research on moral development of the students in Iran. *Educational innovations*, 4(11), 64-104.
- Maddi, S. (2013). Personal Hardiness as the Basis for Resilience. In *Hardiness* (pp. 7-17). Springer Netherlands. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-5222-1\\_2](http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-5222-1_2)
- Malti, T., & Ongley, S. F. (2014). The development of moral emotions and moral reasoning. *Handbook of moral development*, 2. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4324/9780203581957.ch8>
- Mousavi Moghadam, R., Hori, S., Omidi, A., & Zahirikhah, N. (2015). Relationship between THE spiritual intelligence, self-control and defense mechanisms in the third grade female students of the high school. *Journal of Medical Sciences of Islamic Azad University*, 25(1), 59-64.
- Nasel, D. D. (2004). Spiritual Orientation in Relation to Spiritual Intelligence: A Consideration of Traditional Christianity and New Age. *Individualistic Spirituality*.
- Rostami, A. (2008). Relationship between job burnout, mental health and sex control and resilience of the teachers in primary schools. *Iran Occupational Health Journal*, 3&4(5), 75- 68.
- Sadipour, S. (2003). *Thesis on relationship between the spiritual intelligence, mental health and moral judgment in the first grade female students of high school in District 5*. Tehran. Allameh University.
- Sandvik, A. M., Bartone, P. T., Hystad, S. W., Phillips, T. M., Thayer, J. F., & Johnsen, B. H. (2013). Psychological hardiness predicts neuroimmunological responses to stress. *Psychology, health & medicine*, 18(6), 705-713. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2014.08.009>
- Vaughan, F. (2002). What is spiritual intelligence?. *Journal of humanistic psychology*, 42(2), 16-33. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0022167802422003>
- Wilson G. D. (1976). Health practices and Hardiness as mediators in the stress illness relationship. *Health psychology*, 5, 425-438.
- World Health Organization. (2005). promoting mental health: concepts, emerging evidence, practice: summary report. In *Promoting mental health: concepts, emerging evidence, practice: summary report*. WHO.
- Young, C., & Koopsen, C. (2005). *Spirituality, Health, and Healing*. Sudbury.

### Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>).