

## **Analysing the Relationship between Tourism and Spirituality: Toward a Framework**

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### **Abstract**

Search for and gaining the meaning in life and attaining the perfection had been the primordial motive of human creation. The main reason for manifesting vacuum feelings in human is the crisis of lack of spirituality. Nowadays, human beings are seeking to mean of life and are searching for something more than materiality; because with the modern and advanced technology, the dissatisfaction with life and the sense of daily routine motivates him to discover the cause and the way out of the crisis. Understanding the meaning of life and obtaining satisfaction requires the use of spiritual intelligence and will not be achieved through rational and emotional intelligence solely. In this article, we studied the various dimensions of spiritual intelligence and presented the best model for spiritual intelligence. Then, according to the literature, the impact of tourism on the human was also studied. The results of the content analysis indicate that tourism and travel are effective factors in enhancing the components of spiritual intelligence and, as a result, the promotion of spiritual intelligence, and consequently they will increase the perception of spirituality in life.

**Keywords:** Spiritual intelligence, Spirituality, Tourism

## **Introduction**

In modern era, in the conditions of technological advancement and modern life, the importance and necessity of the topic of spirituality and spiritual intelligence is felt in different ways. The World Health Organization recently defined human beings as biological, psychological, social, and spiritual exist. Therefore, attention to the spiritual dimension of man is one of the important issues of today, especially from the viewpoint of experts from the World Health Organization. In addition, the modern world has led to the reappearance of spiritual desires and the search for nothing more than material in the daily lives of individuals (West, 2005), because man with many hours of work and its unwanted effects, faces with psychological problems such as anxiety, identity crisis, feeling of self-Alienation and depression. Attention to spiritual intelligence that is necessary for spiritual understanding and materialization is an indispensable necessity. Therefore, the recognition and investigation of ways to strengthen spiritual intelligence in order to understand more meaning in the life of today's world is emphasized. In this context, we can expect tourism to be used as a tool for inducing meaning into life, finding identity and spiritual growth (Ambroz, et al, 2011). The purpose of this paper is to investigate the impact of tourism on spiritual intelligence components in promoting spirituality from the duct.

For this purpose, after reviewing various components of spiritual intelligence from different researchers' point of view, a model will be considered for carrying out the analysis; and will analyse the qualitative content of the tourism impact on the improvement of the dimensions of the model and thus the promotion of spiritual intelligence.

## **2. Theoretical literature**

### **2.1. Spirituality and spiritual intelligence**

Spirituality is one of the inner needs of the human being, which some scholars consider to be the highest levels of cognitive, moral and emotional development (Ghana, et al., 2012). Despite the growing emphasis on the spiritual dimension of human development, scientists have not yet provided a single definition of the integrity of spirituality.

Spirituality is a way of being and experiencing, which is created by understanding immaterial dimensions (Elkins, et al., 1988); and an emotion that leads to the consistency of the individual with the world (Tacey, 2003). Vaughan has defined spirituality as the constant effort of mankind to respond to the questions of life (Vaughan, 1993). To understand the meaning of life and to solve value problems, can not only use rational and emotional intelligence, but should use intelligence beyond conventional intelligence, which is expressed in terms of the concept of spiritual intelligence (Zarei Matin, et al., 2011). Therefore, in order to benefit from spirituality, a kind of intelligence called Spiritual Intelligence is necessary in People (Sisk & Torrance, 2001).

The concept of spiritual intelligence in the academic literature of psychology was first introduced by Stevens in 1996 and then by Emmons in 1999 (Sohrabi, 2008). Emmons sees spiritual intelligence as the ability to apply spirituality and experience of meaning for effective adaptation and action in life (Emmons, 1999). Hurt and Koplín argue that spiritual intelligence increases the power of flexibility and self-awareness of a person, creating more tolerance and patience in the face of difficulties and difficulties. In fact, spiritual intelligence is a capacity for inspiration, and by use of intuition and a holistic approach to the universe, it seeks to answer the fundamental questions of life (Hurst & Koplín, 2005). Spiritual intelligence as the basis of individual beliefs plays an important role in various fields, including promoting mental health of a person (Ghana, et al., 2012) and leads to better adaptation of the individual to his daily life environment (Sohrabi, 2008). In 2000, Zohar and Marshal introduced Spiritual Intelligence as a factor that could lead to personal growth and transformation and enhance individual mental capacity, and believe that understanding spirituality that results from spiritual intelligence will make life richer and makes it more meaningful (Zohar & Marshal, 2000). Delaney also regards spirituality as the spiritual intelligence of the individual, and believes that spirituality is a concept beyond religion and spiritual intelligence creates a multidimensional sense in person that leads to idealism, qualitative and a different attitude toward

phenomena and life (Delaney, 2002). In general, spiritual intelligence is a broad concept, which, in most definitions given by various scholars, has been emphasized on its impact on understanding meaning and going beyond materiality, Understanding the universe and consequently, create a Purposefulness life (Emmons, 1999; Zohar & Marshal, 2000; Amram, 2007; King, 2008).

## 2.2. The components of spiritual intelligence in different models

Spiritual intelligence is a combination of intelligence and spirituality. While spirituality is associated with the search for experience of holy elements, high-alertness, transcendence, and meaning, spiritual intelligence requires the ability to use these spiritual subjects to adapt and act effectively and produce valuable products and effects (Zarei Matin et al., 2011). Spiritual Intelligence (SQ) Unlike physical intelligence (PQ), which there is in all living organisms, general intelligence (IQ) which computers also have, and emotional intelligence (EQ) that exists in excellent mammals (Fig. 1), is just human-specific and it is the most basic type of intelligence (Kadkhoda and Jahani, 2010: 6).

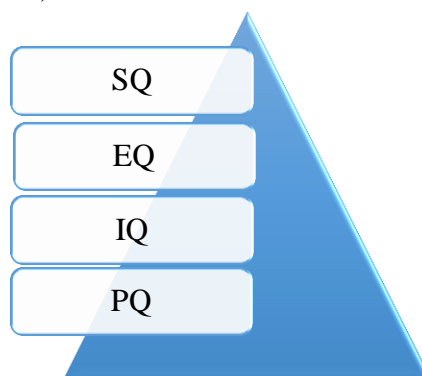


Fig. 1. A simple model for 4 types of intelligence (Wigglesworth, 2002-2011)

The components of spiritual intelligence have been introduced in the course of a survey conducted in different years: Zohar and Marshal in 2000 presented a dimension to spiritual intelligence that is: service,

education, perception, personal change, friendship and fraternity, leadership and support, being centered (worthy of attention, worthiness) (Zohar & Marshal, 2000).

according to Sisk, the spiritual intelligence model includes 5 components of inner knowledge (understanding with creatures), deep perception, unity with nature and the world, the ability to solve the problem (answering questions in relation to the universe) and the desire to achieve the truth (Sisk & Torrance, 2001). In 2007, Amram described the dimensions of spiritual intelligence as follows: awareness and alertness, grace and forgiveness, purposefulness and meaningfulness, excellence and value, honesty and truthfulness, self-confidence and friendship with oneself, inner guidance (Amram, 2007: 3).

King introduced four components for spiritual intelligence (King, 2008: 150) and presented the following model (Bagheshahi, et al, 2014):

- *Critical thinking*: The concept of thinking in truths, being, time, death, life, and in general the existential world;
- *Personal purposefulness*: achieving aims and conceptualizes mental and physical experiences;
- *Transcendental consciousness*: the ability to understand the transcendental and valuable aspects of yourself and others;
- *Developing the quality of knowledge and awareness*: The ability to understand the high level of knowledge and awareness about the universe;

In general, researchers have cited many aspects of spiritual intelligence and presented several models, although some components are overlapping. Table 1 shows several research components in seven categories.

Table 1. Categorization of spiritual intelligence components

	First category	Second category	Third category	Fourth category	Fifth category	Sixth category	Seventh category
Zohar & Marshall, 2000	Promotion	Perception	Being centered	.....	.....	Friendship and brotherhood, leadership and support	Personal change
Sisk & Torrance, 2001	.....	Deep perception	.....	Acceptance and love of truth	Ability to solving problems	Integrating with nature and the universe	Internal knowledge
Amram, 2007: 3	Purposefulness and meaningfulness	Awareness and consciousness	Excellence and value, self-confidence and friendship with oneself	Honesty and truth-finding	Inner guidance	Grace and forgiveness	
King, 2008: 150	Personal Purposefulness	Transcendental consciousness	.....	Critical thinking	.....	.....	Development of consciousness

### 2.3. Tourism and its impact on the individual

Tourism is not merely a mixture of commercial activity, but is the ideological expression of history, nature and tradition; a statement that has the power to recreate culture and nature according to its needs (Bronze: 125: 2006). Today, people need to travel for improvement, health, material and spiritual well-being and personal development. In simple terms, modern tourists need to have a journey that leads to their personality development and to deepen their experiences and heals their spiritual and spiritual senses (Ambroz & Ovsenik, 2011). In addition, tourism is a rational need to meeting the material and natural demands of humans to create social understanding and solidarity throughout the world (Sahabi and Moradi, 2011). Travel is the most important way to get inside things and gain intuition and experience, and a way to understand the problems of today's world and find solutions for many challenges (Vesajoki, 2002: 50, 51, 54). A traveler on the journey is seeking to discover and excellence in the soul or seeking a spiritual

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connection with nature and the surrounding environment to understand the existence (West, 2005). In general, tourism leads to the promotion of personality and identity, and enhances ethical approaches to solving existing problems (Vesajoki, 2002: 95). Graburn (1989, p22) argues that tourism is functionally and symbolically equivalent to other institutions that human beings use to improve and Giving meaning to their lives. In a study entitled "Tourism, a holy journey", Sharply and Sandaram conclude that in all types of tourism there is a series of spiritual desires that arise from travel experiences, which leads to the advancement of spirituality and spiritual emotions in one person" (Sharply & Sundaram, 2005). Vukonic (Vukonic, 1996, p162) sees travel as an opportunity to identify and cultivate the spiritual needs of an individual. In the Islamic culture, the tour in the world is a particular importance and is considered to be a praiseworthy tradition. Surfing the earth, meeting nature and familiarizing with different cultures, will lead human being to more knowledge about the God and the universe (Fallahi, 2010: 37). Tourism has beneficial effects on people's beliefs and leads to a better attitude towards life (Irimias and Gabor, 2013). The journey leads to inciting questions in the context of their ideas, assumptions, and attitudes, and forcing them to think (Vesajoki, 2002: 58). As a result, balances unrealistic and stereotype patterns of people and reflect the inner realities of a community by creating direct interactions with other people and cultures, and making the change easier (Sahabi & Moradi, 2011). Tourism helps people to see the environment around them as a whole and understand other people (Vesajoki, 2002: 51). Tourism reduces the cultural contradictions between the host society and the source and by raising the capacity of tolerance for people of different cultures; changes ethnocentrism and racism to cultural relativism (Sahabi & Moradi, 2011) and leads to the contact and the proximity of people towards each other. In fact, the reality that we have to live in contact with nature and its human beings, makes easier to perceive, comprehension and understanding in relation to the customs and perceptions of other cultures, and teaches tourists how to distinguish between differences Identify of themselves and others as an existential value (Sahabi & Moradi, 2011). After traveling,

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the individual's modes and perceptions can be changed in relation to oneself, people, places, and environment (Sahabi & Moradi, 2011).

The effects that travel can have on a person is extracted from the text and listed below:

- Achieving the essence and inside of things
- Earning the intuition
- Gaining experience
- Understanding the problems of today's world
- Finding the solution of many challenges
- Earning insight and intuition
- Self-discovery
- Communication with nature and the surrounding environment to understand the existence
- Promoting Personality and Identity
- Knowing the Creator
- Recognition of existence
- Influence on beliefs
- A better attitude to life
- Inciting question about previous attitudes
- Thinking
- Changing interacting with other people
- Better understanding of people
- Increasing the tolerance capacity
- Reducing contradictions
- The proximity of people towards each other
- Perceive, comprehension and mutual understanding
- Learning
- Understanding Existential Values



### **3. Methodology**

The present research is a fundamental-theoretical research using documentary and library studies. It explores the nature of phenomena and the relationships between variables, principles, rules, and constructing or testing theories and helps to develop scientific boundaries. Fundamental research can be theoretical or experimental. The fundamental-theoretical research uses the methods of rational and analogical reasoning and is based on library studies, while empirical fundamental research uses inductive reasoning methods and is based on field methods (Hafez Nia, 2006: 232).

The method of this research is qualitative analysis method. In qualitative analysis, the basis and criterion is, in particular, Wisdom, Logic, Thinking and Arguing; That is, the researcher should use the intellect, reason and thought to analyze the documents and information, and discover the truth and reality to comment on the hypotheses (Hafez Nia, 2006: 232). Qualitative content analysis can be considered as a research method for subjective content interpretation of textual data through systematic classification processes, or designing known patterns. Qualitative content analysis allows researchers to interpret the originality and truth of the data mentally, but in a scientific way. The objectivity of the results is guaranteed by the existence of a systematic process (Iman and Noshadi, 2011). In order to classify similar concepts, the Delphi method has been used among related professionals who have been selected with snowball techniques.

### **4. Findings**

Using the Delphi method (multiple rounds), among 10 psychology experts selected by snowball technique, the components mentioned by various researchers which have been extracted from the literature of spiritual intelligence and have the same concept, are classified in seven categories and the interpretation and conceptualization of the components are taken in Table 2.

Table 2. Interpretation of Spiritual Intelligence Components (researchers)

Interpretation of the 1 <sup>st</sup> components	Interpretation of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> components	Interpretation of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> components	Interpretation of the 4 <sup>th</sup> components	Interpretation of the 5 <sup>th</sup> components	Interpretation of the 6 <sup>th</sup> components	Interpretation of the 7 <sup>th</sup> components
Spiritual intelligence leads to meaningful life, having a goal and path, and in fact the expansion and promotion of the individual.	Spiritual intelligence helps one to understand deeply and to be precise in the concepts of what he sees.	Spiritual intelligence leads to a sense of self-esteem and worthiness.	Spiritual intelligence leads to enhancement of the curiosity and motivation of the individual in acquiring the facts of science.	Spiritual intelligence leads to the ability to find answers to individual questions.	Spiritual intelligence leads to friendship, cooperation, and the desire to understand and tolerate others by the individual.	Spiritual intelligence extends the knowledge of the person and enables the perception of the truth by the individual.
Meaningfulness and purposefulness	deep perception	Excellence and value	Thinking for the truth	Recognizing the truth	Perceive and friendship	Changing to development

Source: authors

Based on the combination of components of existing models in literature, which are mentioned by various researchers, and the conceptualization of spiritual intelligence components, the best model that represents the components of spiritual intelligence is presented.

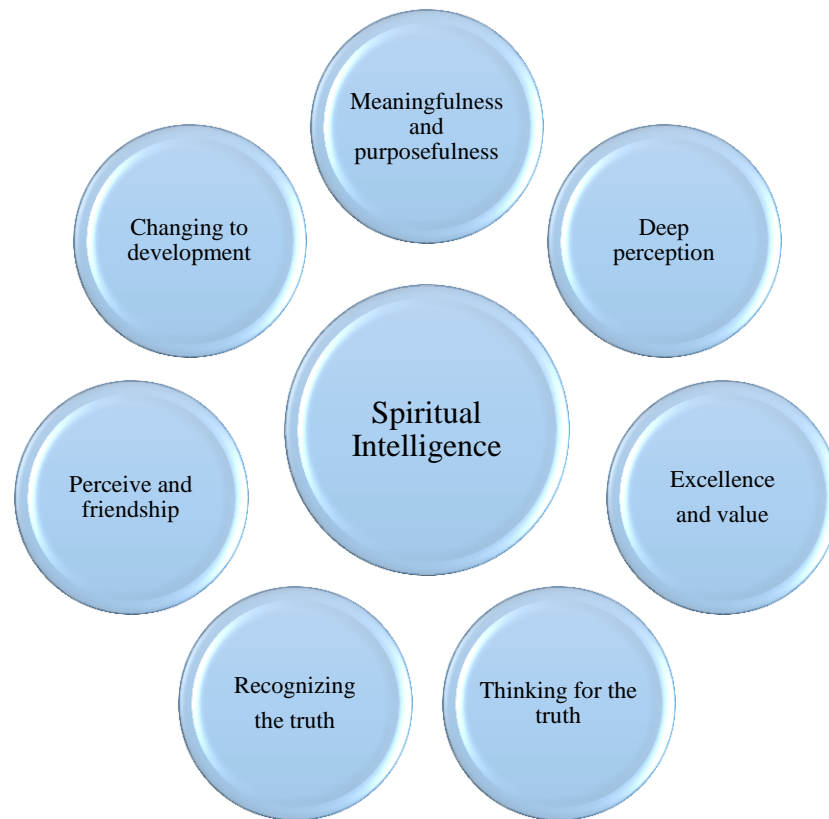


Fig. 2. Spiritual Model (Source: authors)

Based on the researches carried out by various scholars, tourism has significant concepts for the majority of people, and can be form the great deal of people's life (Franklin & Crang, 2001; MacCannell, 1973; Uriely, 2005). Tourism not only is a physical concept, but also includes a set of spiritual experiences (McIntosh & Mansfeld, 2006; Smith, 2003). Travelling is not merely a pointless issue. Travelling causes people to be rich in experience and conceptual matters and apart them from routine. Nowadays, scholars identify travelling more than just a physical experience. The aforementioned experience can be spiritual which involves altruism, personal interests, cognitive, and changes in life, simultaneously (Wilson & Harris, 2006). Tourists are contributors

in this process. They colour their experiences with personal perspective and deem themselves in a vast life (Selby, 2004). Number of researches showed that tourism can be a considerable help for people to find the true meaning and purpose of the life and assist them with imposing the value (Cohen, 1979; McIntosh & Mansfeld, 2006; Uriely, 2005; Wilson & Harris, 2006). It seems special travelling is a tool in order to get people favorable experiences which their results will be shown in their life. Moreover, it develops their capability. People generally are attracted to valuable and treasured sites where they seem themselves as a small part in the universe. Solid evidences regarding the fact that wildlife, desert, suburb, environmental and historical attraction consist numerous spiritual elements (Fredrickson & Anderson, 1999; Hull, et al, 2001; Schmidt, 2005).

In the table below, using the Delphi method (the return questionnaire in a multiple steps), among the 12 tourism experts selected using snowball techniques, the variables mentioned in the tourism texts and literature, which have the same meaning, are in the first columns to Seventh.

Table 3. Categorization of tourism effects on individuals

First category	Second category	Third category	Fourth category	Fifth category	Sixth category	Seventh category
A better attitude towards life	Achieving the essence and inside of things	Understanding Existential Values	Inciting question about previous attitudes	Knowing the Creator	Interacting with other people	Gaining experience
	Earning the intuition	Promoting Personality and Identity	Thinking	Recognition of existence	Increasing the tolerance capacity	Learning
	Communication with nature and the surrounding environment to understand the existence			Self-discovery	Reducing contradictions	Influence on beliefs
	Understanding the problems of today's world			Finding the solution of many challenges	The proximity of people towards each other	Changing
	Better understanding of people				Perceive, comprehension and mutual	

					understanding	
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Source: authors

The conceptualization of the extracted variables from the tourism literature according to the components of spiritual intelligence was carried out as shown in table 4.

Table 4. Components of spiritual intelligence

Earning experience and change	Understanding and reducing contrasts	Recognition and exploration	Thinking and questioning	Promoting personality and Identity	Deep perception	A better attitude towards life
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## 5. Results and discussion

Due to the changes in modern life and its relevant problems, today's people are seeking comfort and peace more than past. Also, they look for the meaning of the life. The true meaning and concept of the life will not be within reach without trying to understand the spiritual ideas.

The current study aims to assess the effect of tourism on the spiritual intelligence. In the first phase with studying different researches in the case of spiritual intelligence, finding components and after imposing the experts' idea in merging component, seven components in the represented spiritual model are introduced. With having the model and components of the spiritual intelligence, and in the second phase of this study; by investigating the aforementioned components in the tourism literature, travelling is known as a tool, which is able to directly cover different aspects of humans' spiritual intelligence. The components, which resulted from the tourism literature, is classified and matched with the experts' panel. This match and adaptation is demonstrated the fact that travelling leads to forming and elevating spiritual intelligence in people, thus it furthers the spiritual understanding of people.

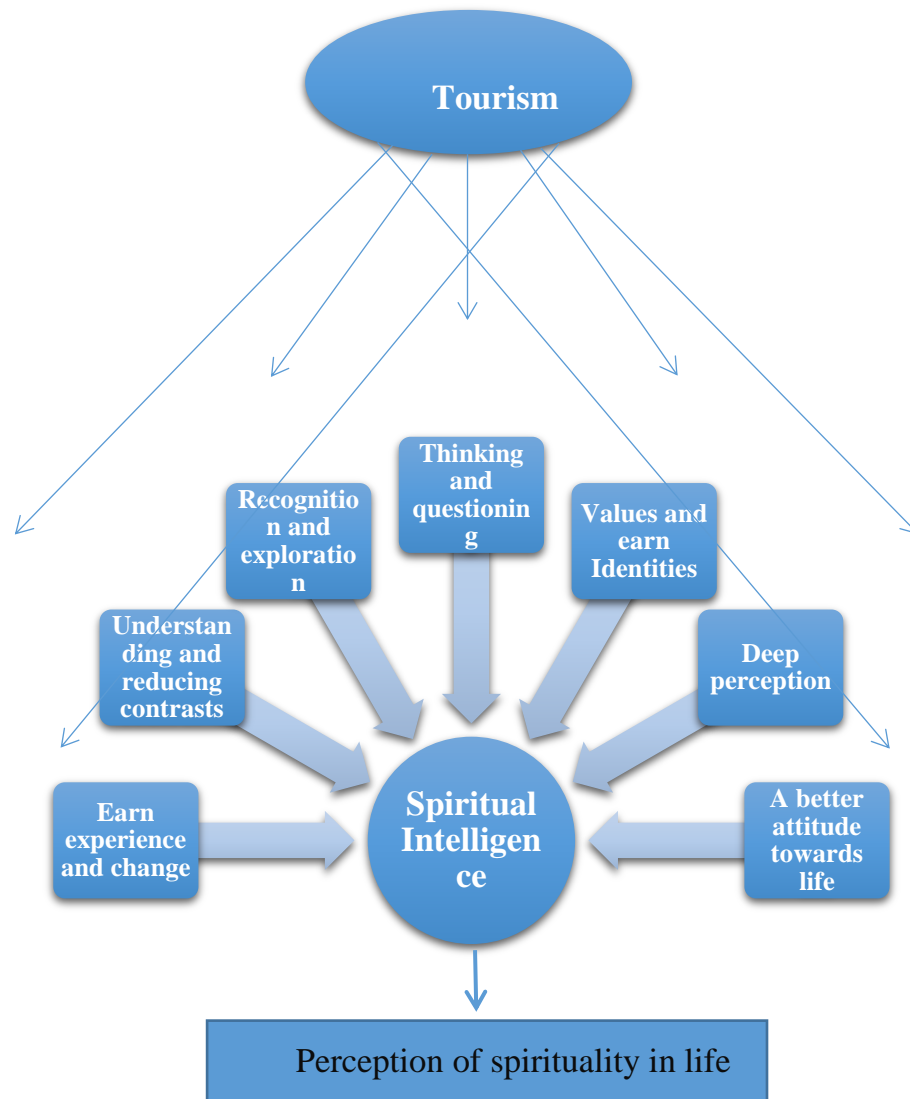


Fig. 3. Conceptual model of research derived from the literature  
(Source: authors)

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