



## DEPRESSION AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN RELATION TO SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS

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*The present study aims to investigate depression among adolescents with spiritual intelligence and mindfulness. The study was conducted on 500 adolescents studying in government and private schools/colleges in Karnataka. The sample of 500 adolescents was drawn from five randomly selected districts in Karnataka. The Spiritual Intelligence Scale (SIS-MK) by Misra (2014) [Misra \(2014\)](#), the Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) by [Brown and Rayan \(2003\)](#) and the Mental Depression Scale by [Dubey \(2006\)](#) were used for data collection. The results reveal that there is a significant and negative relationship between depression and spiritual intelligence. A significant and negative relationship also exists between depression and mindfulness. The results further indicate that the conjoint effect of spiritual intelligence and mindfulness on depression among adolescents is higher than their individual effects. Spiritual intelligence and mindfulness would contribute towards the prediction of depression of adolescents both independently and conjointly.*

**KEYWORDS:** Depression, Spiritual Intelligence, Mindfulness

### INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a critical developmental period characterized by biological, cognitive, and psychosocial changes in young people. This is a stage in one's life that presents opportunities for positive psychosocial growth and healthy life choices and conversely, the potential for the development of psychological difficulties and engagement in precarious behaviours ([Crockett & Petersen](#),

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1993). Though mental, emotional, and behavioural challenges may emerge during adolescence (Kazdin, 1993), many if not most, young people negotiate this life stage without serious difficulty (Loh & Wragg, 2004). The World Health Organization (2004) conceptualized mental health as separate from mental ill-health and defined the concept as a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and able to contribute to his or her own community (WHO, 2007).

In this span of adolescent period, it has been generally seen that they suffer from mental, emotional and behavioural problems, which are very painful and costly to both youngsters and their family members. These problems not only disrupt a child's ability to function socially, academically and emotionally but also affect the person as well as his or her family, school, community and the larger society. This has resulted in poor performance, particularly in the studies, and due to the failures, students' feel stress, tension, depression and anxiety. Results of public examinations or some important examinations push some even to end their life, if it is not as they expect. They are not able to accept the defeat and get depressed. These have been a growing phenomenon. Depressed individuals are usually hopeless in their life, they see their future as miserable, their communication is poor, they are minimally active in social life and are usually unhappy about their life. In addition to other aspects of human life like biological, psychological, social and, World Health Organization recognizes a fourth dimension as spiritual dimension which is required for human development and growth. As psychologists and psychoanalysts realize, spirituality is understood not only as an integral part of mental health but an essential part of the procedure of treatment of mental disorders (J. Elkins, 1999).

Spiritual intelligence is the ability to act with wisdom and compassion, while maintaining inner and outer peace, regardless of the circumstances. Spiritual intelligence is the way we assign meaning and feel connected to the power of larger than ourselves (Subramaniam & Panchanatham, 2015). Spiritual intelligence expands one's capacity to understand others at the deepest level. Zohar and Marshall (2004) defined Spiritual intelligence as the intelligence with which we solve problems of meaning, place our actions in a broader context, and decide that one course of action is more meaningful than another (Subramaniam & Panchanatham, 2014).

A spiritual intelligent person would naturally possess a state of mindfulness. A study conducted by Salmabadi, Khamesan, Usefynezhad, and Sheikhipoor (2016) explained that by increasing the mindfulness one can increase moral spiritual while leading to rising people resiliency. Mindfulness means being aware of what you are doing while you are doing it. Mindfulness

involves the effort to attend, non-judgmentally, to present-moment experience and sustain this attention over time, with the aim of cultivating stable, non-reactive, present-moment awareness. According to Jon Kabat-Zinn (2003), mindfulness is simple awareness of the present moment. It is the practice of paying careful attention to what is happening in the now, whether it is a sight, sound, taste, or smell, and a sensation in the body, thought or emotion. Studies have shown that the term mindfulness is rooted in Buddhist philosophy (Nhat, Ho, Vo, & M, 1999); and its key element is the attempt to focus on the present moment experience while maintaining an open, non-judgemental attitude (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007). Research on mindfulness explains that meditation is an attitude and a method for reducing personal suffering and developing insight, compassion, and wisdom (Silananda & Heinze, 1990). Empirical data reveal that in contemporary psychology, mindfulness is seen as a means of increasing awareness and responding optimally to mental processes that contribute to emotional distress and maladaptive behaviour (Bishop et al., 2004). Mindfulness and meditation are not synonymous. Moreover, mindfulness consists of formal meditation exercises (e.g., paying attention to the body, lying on the ground, or walking slowly with a sense of awareness of one's surroundings) as well as informal exercises (e.g., paying full attention to what one is doing or experiencing at a certain moment) (Alberts & Hülshager, 2015).

There are several studies documented here on spiritual intelligence and stress. For instance, a study done by Rani, Ghani and Ahmad (2013) studied the impact of spiritual intelligence in reducing job stress of three lecturers ranging 30-37 years in ages and between 5-9 years in teaching experience. The respondents were interviewed using open ended, face to face interviews. The data was analysed using qualitative methodology and reported. The results showed that each lecturer experienced a deep meaningful feeling when practice their own way of spirituality that can overcome their stressful feeling at work in Malaysia University. Similar results were reported by Mazdarni and Ghasemain (2012) on the relationship between spiritual intelligence and stress who found a significant inverse relationship between spiritual intelligence and stress of teachers. The study was conducted on 120 elementary, middle and high school teachers in Bandargaz, Iran. Shabani and Hassan (2014) also found that students with high SI have Low mental health problem scale and sub-scales (somatic symptoms, anxiety, social dysfunction and depression). Whereas Nemati, Habibi, Vargahan, Mohamadloo, and Ghanbari (2017) studied the role of mindfulness and spiritual intelligence in students' mental health of undergraduate and medicine students of 393 female and male students. The result reveals the negative correlation of mental health with mindfulness and spiritual intelligence and a positive correlation between mindfulness and dimensions of spiritual intelligence. Doryanizadeh, Akbarzadeh, and

Bagherinezhad (2017) assessed the Relationship between Spiritual Health and Depression in Nursing and Midwifery Students of Estahban Islamic Azad University. This is a descriptive-correlational study performed on 78 nursing and midwifery students of Estahban Islamic Azad University in 2017. Researchers found that spiritual intelligence is negatively related with depression. However, a study conducted by Datt, Pande, and Singh (2015) found that spiritual intelligence is partially negatively and partially positively correlated with stress among prospective teachers.

Researchers have shown that the spiritual intelligence is the necessity of adaptation of the life and people with high spiritual intelligence have higher tolerance against any stressful events Smith (2004). M. Elkins and Cavendish (2004) also suggested that the spiritual intelligence can make the man look at his or her problems in a flexible way and struggling for solving the problems and tolerating the life hard times more efficient manner. This issue is also coming true in terms of the depression.

The review of studies related to depression, spiritual intelligence and mindfulness show that these variables have been studied mostly in western countries while a very few studies have been carried out in Asia. Taking this into consideration, the present study is an attempt to quantify the same especially in Indian set up. Hence, this gap of knowledge inspired the investigator to study on depression among adolescents in relation to spiritual intelligence and mindfulness in the state of Karnataka.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Following are the objectives of the study:

1. To find out the relationship between depression and spiritual intelligence among adolescents
2. To find out the relationship between depression and mindfulness among adolescents
3. To find out the conjoint effect of spiritual intelligence and mindfulness on depression among adolescents.

## HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Following are the hypotheses of the study:

1. There is significant relationship between depression and spiritual intelligence among adolescents

2. There is significant relationship between depression and mindfulness among adolescents
3. The conjoint effect of spiritual intelligence and mindfulness on depression among adolescents is higher than their individual effects.

## SAMPLE FOR THE STUDY

For the present study, descriptive survey method was employed on a sample of 500 adolescents selected from government and self-financed/ private schools and colleges in state of Karnataka. Multistage randomization technique (Three Stage) was followed at the district, school/ college and adolescent level. The sample of 500 adolescents was drawn from five randomly selected districts i.e., Shivamogga, Davanagere, Dharwad, Bangalore Urban and Chikkamagaluru out of 31 districts of the state of Karnataka.

## TOOLS USED

The following tools were used in the study:

1. Spiritual Intelligence Scale (SIS-MK) by [Misra \(2014\)](#).
2. Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) by [Brown and Rayan \(2003\)](#).
3. Mental Depression Scale by [Dubey \(2006\)](#).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It can be seen from Table 1 that the coefficient of correlation between depression and spiritual intelligence came out to be -0.44 which is negative and significant at 0.01 level of confidence. The values of correlation are significant and negative, meaning thereby, that, higher the spiritual intelligence lower will be the level of depression. Therefore, Hypothesis 1, "There is significant relationship between depression and spiritual intelligence among adolescents" stands accepted. It may be due to the fact that people who have spiritual tendencies respond better to situations when they deal with the damages, and they manage positions of pressure in a better way and their depression is lower ([Dokht, Arezou, Ashtiani, & Taghizadeh, 2013](#); [Jamshidi, Fadaei, Ghorbani, & Farhoush, 2018](#)). Spiritual intelligence can be used as a coping strategy to manage depressive symptoms ([Roy, Saya, Ulaganeethi, Jayaram, & Kumar, 2021](#)).

The values of coefficient of correlation between depression and mindfulness came out to be -0.60 which is negative and significant at 0.01 level

**Table 1**  
**Coefficient of Correlation Between the Variables.**

Category	Variables	N	r
Adolescents	Depression and Spiritual Intelligence	500	-0.44**
	Depression and Mindfulness	500	-0.60**

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

of significance. It implies that there is significant and negative relationship between depression and mindfulness. Therefore Hypothesis 2, ‘There is significant relationship between depression and mindfulness among adolescents’ stands accepted. Findings are in line with study conducted by [Janssen, Heerkens, Kuijer, van der Heijden, and Engels \(2018\)](#) who examined the effects of two types of group-based mindfulness interventions i.e., Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) on employees’ mental health and found that MBSR and MBCT are helpful in reducing levels of emotional exhaustion (a dimension of burnout), stress, psychological distress, depression, anxiety, and occupational stress.

**Regression For Predictive Efficiency**

Results in Table 2 shows that the effect of spiritual intelligence on depression among adolescents was found significant at .01 level ( $F(1, 498)=117.22$ ). The computed value of  $R^2$  of spiritual intelligence and depression among adolescents ( $YX_1$ ) is 0.191 which indicates that the contribution of spiritual intelligence on depression among adolescents is 19.1%. The depression among adolescents can be predicted with the equation  $\text{depression} = 35.46 - 0.16 \times \text{Spiritual intelligence}$  i.e., for every unit of increase in spiritual intelligence, depression among adolescents decreases by 0.16 times.

**Table 2**  
**The Conjoint Effect Of Spiritual Intelligence And Mindfulness On Depression Among Adolescents.**

Variable	R	R <sup>2</sup>	% Variance	F	Regression Equation
$YX_1$	0.437	0.191	19.1	117.22**	$Y = 35.46 - 0.16X_1$
$YX_2$	0.599	0.358	35.8	278.13**	$Y = 30.35 - 0.32X_2$
$YX_1X_2$	0.647	0.418	41.8	178.84**	$Y = 42.45 - 0.10X_1 - 0.28X_2$

\*\*Sig at 0.01 level Y-Depression,  $X_1$  -Spiritual Intelligence,  $X_2$  - Mindfulness

The effect of mindfulness on depression among adolescents was found significant at .01 level ( $F(1, 498)=278.13$ ). The computed value of  $R^2$  of mindfulness and depression among adolescents ( $YX_2$ ) is 0.358 (Table 2) which indicates that the contribution of mindfulness on depression among adolescents is 35.8%. The depression among adolescents can be predicted with the equation  $\text{depression} = 30.35 - 0.32 \times \text{mindfulness}$  i.e., for every unit of increase in mindfulness, depression among adolescents decrease by 0.32 times. The conjoint effect of both spiritual intelligence and mindfulness on depression among adolescents was found significant at 0.01 level of significance ( $F(2,497)=178.84$ ). The computed value of  $R^2$  of depression with spiritual intelligence and mindfulness ( $Y_1X_1X_2$ ) is 0.418 which indicates the contribution of spiritual intelligence and mindfulness on depression among adolescents is 41.8%.

As percentage variance of variables of spiritual intelligence and mindfulness conjointly (41.8) on depression among adolescents shows increase in its value from spiritual intelligence (%age variance=19.1) and mindfulness (%age variance=35.8), it indicates that the conjoint effect of spiritual intelligence and mindfulness on depression among adolescents is higher than that of spiritual intelligence and mindfulness separately. The depression among adolescents can be predicted with the equation

$$\text{Depression} = 42.45 - 0.10 \times \text{Spiritual Intelligence} - 0.28 \times \text{Mindfulness}$$

Hence, Hypothesis 3 i.e., "The conjoint effect of spiritual intelligence and mindfulness on depression among adolescents is higher than their individual effects" stands accepted.

## CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, the current study reveals that there is a significant and negative relationship between depression and spiritual intelligence. A significant and negative relationship was also found between depression and mindfulness. The results of the study further indicate that the conjoint effect of spiritual intelligence and mindfulness on depression among adolescents is higher than their individual effects. Spiritual intelligence and mindfulness would contribute towards the prediction of depression of adolescents both independently as well as conjointly.

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