Spirituality exists in the heart and the mind of men and women everywhere, with in religious traditions and independently of tradition. The aim of the present research was to study the spiritual intelligence of elderly people. For this purpose 200 senior citizens were selected from different living status i.e. living with family (N=100) and living in old age homes (N=100). Findings revealed that no significant difference was found between seniors citizens living with family & living in old age homes regarding overall spiritual-intelligence. Whereas, results indicated significant differences at many domains of spiritual intelligence such as, GOD and religiosity, soul, self awareness, interpersonal relations, spirituality in leadership, helping behaviour, flexibility, ability to use and overcome suffering, ability to transcendent pain and being spiritually intelligent about death.

**Keywords**: Ageing/Senior citizens, spiritual intelligence (SQ), living status.
in the Indian Context than ever before.

A higher level of intelligence power distinguishes human beings from other animals on this planet. It has been the favourite subject of research for psychologists. In the 20th century, they created IQ tests to define and measure intelligence power of an individual. But, it proved inadequate for measuring the wide spectrum of intelligence. In the 21st century, they are saying that ultimate intelligence is spiritual intelligence.

Human beings are spiritual in nature. Spirituality is a natural state for all of us. A problem arises when we don’t take our spirituality seriously. It is a life or death issue. A person can be physically alive but spiritually dead. Are we human beings on a spiritual journey? Our life depends upon our finding the answer.

Zohar and Marshall (2000) created the term spiritual intelligence. The term derived from the latin word ‘Wind or breath’. This is literally a wind that is blowing through us, the principle that makes us alive and humane.

Spiritual Intelligence, Zohar (2000) said, “is our access to and use of meaning, vision and value in the way that we think and the decision that we make”. It is the intelligence that makes us whole, that gives us our integrity. It is the soul’s intelligence, the intelligence of deep self, that with which we ask fundamental questions and with which we reframe our answers.

Spiritual Intelligence is where we begin to open up to our spirit’s journey and to quest for a greater understanding of life. It is where we seek for find higher purpose and a greater sense of self. It is where we become wise by accessing our natural bright light of wisdom.

Spiritual intelligence is concerned with the inner life of mind and spirit and its relationship to being in the world. It implies a capacity for a deep understanding of existential questions and insight into multiple levels of consciousness. It is more than individual mental ability. In addition to self-awareness, it implies awareness of our relationship to the transcendent, to each other, to the earth & all beings.

Spiritual intelligence opens the heart, illuminates the mind, and inspires the soul, connecting the individual human psyche to the underlying ground of being. It can be developed with practice and can help a person to distinguish reality from illusion. It may be expressed in any culture as love, wisdom and service. It is related to emotional intelligence in so far as spiritual practice includes developing intrapersonal and interpersonal sensitivity.

As we all know very few studies have been conducted to find out the spiritual intelligence especially for senior citizens. Senior citizens after reaching 60 years of age, experienced less continuity in life, more dissatisfaction, more social isolation, neglected, less cared and useless, and these feelings are more commonly found among senior citizens living alone or without family; Where as Spiritual Intelligence (Conscious Pursuits, 2003) is “The ability to act with wisdom and compassion while maintaining inner and outer peace, regardless of the circumstances”. So, it can be said that SQ can make a great contribution to elderly for their better living conditions. Therefore, it was found out much and much effort has been needed to conduct research studies on older people to explain their spiritual intelligence.

The purpose of the present study is to examine whether senior citizens living with family and living in old age homes differ significantly in respect of their spiritual intelligence.

Method

Sample

The sample consisted of an equal number of senior citizens living with family and living in old age homes i.e. 100 each of both sexes. The sample of senior citizens living with family
drawn from different families of Jaipur and Sriganganagar (Raj.) like wise the sample of senior citizens living in old age homes was drawn from the old age homes such as Shri Ram Vradh Ashram, Chaksu, Jaipur, Anubhav of Helpage India, Vivek Vradh Ashram Sriganganager. The mean age of the aged persons was 69.4 years.

**Tools**

Salahkaar spiritual Quotient test (SQi-t)TM (2003), developed by Daftuar, Dasgupta and Manghrani for measuring spiritual intelligence was used. The test contains 15 dimensions and 99 items of spiritual intelligence named: God and religiosity, Soul, Self awareness, Spiritual practices, life style values, Gender and caste equality, Fate and Karma, Interpersonal relations, Divinity in love, Spirituality in leadership, Helping behaviour, Flexibility, Ability to use and over come suffering, Ability to transcend pain & Being spiritually intelligent about death.

The test was tried twice on two different types of samples. On a four-point Likert-type scale the reliability values on the sample of adults normal population ranged from .63 to .91. In the second tryout on a sample of industrial managers the reliability values ranged from .346 to .91. The reliability values for the total scale was found .91 in both attempts. Face validity and content validity were established.

**Procedure**

The respondents of the two groups were approached individually at their residents and old age homes. The objectives of the study were explained to them. After establishing workable rapport test was administered on them. Instructions were imparted with the help of standardized directions.

**Results**

On the basis of source acquaintances with the subject and objectives it was hypothesised, that SQ would significantly differ in senior citizens of different living status i.e. living with family and living in old age homes. t-test was computed to compare overall spiritual intelligence and its domain i.e. God and religiosity, Soul, Self awareness, Spiritual practices, life style values, Gender and caste equality, Fate and Karma, Interpersonal relations, Divinity in love, Spirituality in leadership, Helping behaviour, Flexibility, Ability to use and over come suffering, Ability to transcend pain and Being spiritually intelligent about death. Table 1 provides Mean, SD and t values of the scores on 15 dimensions of spiritual intelligence and overall intelligence.

Table 1 shows that the Mean score of overall spiritual intelligence of senior citizens living with family is 288.04 whereas Mean score of spiritual intelligence living in old age homes is 289.28, which shows that the difference between the two groups was not significant.

Table 1 further depicts the significant differences between two groups on God and religiosity. Soul, Interpersonal Relations, Spirituality in leadership, helping behaviour, Flexibility, Ability to use and overcome suffering domains of spiritual intelligence reveal that senior citizens living in old age homes scored higher on these dimensions.

On the other hand, results table also connotes a significant difference in self-awareness and ability to transcend pains of the senior citizens living in family and old age homes, thus, the results obtained indicated that senior citizens living in the family shows higher level of self-awareness and ability to transcend pains in comparison to senior citizens living in old age homes.

Further no significant difference was observed between these two groups of older people on spiritual practices, life style values, Gender and Caste equality, Fate and Karma and Divinity in love.

**Discussion**

In the traditional Buddhist culture, old age
is conceived as one of the stages of human
development cohere in a person attain
maturity, wisdom, an economic and social
stability with social recognition leading to the
most final stage, which is expected to be of
spiritual salvation.

Spiritual intelligence is the most essential
to our well-being (Zohar & Marshall, 2000). SQ
puts our individual lives into large context. It
provides meaning and purpose to life and
allows us to create new possibilities.

The present investigation indicates that no
significant difference is found between senior
citizens living with family and living in old age
homes regarding over all spiritual intelligence.

Many people think that spirituality and
religion are same. Religion and spirituality exists
together but as Troycross (1998) wrote “Every
one has a spiritual component, but not
everyone is religious”. Results suggests that
senior citizens living with family are less
religious than senior citizens living in old age
homes. Seniors citizens living in old age homes
scored high on God and Religion domain of
spiritual intelligence.

Religion includes specific beliefs and
practices, where spirituality is far broader
(Effersole & Hess, 1988) Religion is our
response to what GOD has done. Religion is
not about spirituality. All spirituality is religious;
but not all religion is spiritual. God is not
religion. Religion is a practical response to God
and therefore God can’t be religious. Religiosity
as well as productive engagement in work
does play a pivotal role in individual’s daily life
(Jain, & Sharma, 2004). Religious beliefs of
older people also seem to be producing an
impact on the perception of safety. Religious
participation is positively associated with both
the quantity and the quality of social
relationship (Ellison & George, 1994). It can
be said that senior citizens living in old age
homes keep themselves busy by engaging
them in spiritual practices.

As individuals get older they have less
control over their social relationships, including
the ability to maintain contact with friends.
Moreover relocation of the elderly to institution
results in a disruption of existing social
networks (Chadha et al. 1993) and new
neighbours and friends rarely provide the
same feelings of security as old ones (Khalish,
1975).

The soul is actually the vessel for the
integration of all that we are Stir the place where
we discover our essential self, and our access
to creation where passion and vision lie waiting
for us. (Solera Green). Senior citizens living in
old age homes scored high on ‘soul’ domain of
spiritual intelligence.

This study indicated that senior citizens
living with family have been found to have more
self awareness than senior citizens living in old
age homes. When we talk about self-
awareness, senior citizens living with family are
busy in their social and religious activities. They
have established strong social relation as
compared to senior citizens living in old age
homes. The friends and social circle motivate
them to follow up daily activities enthusiastically
and take care of health, nutrition and exercise.
Also they shoulder social and religious
responsibilities willingly, plan and implement
efficiently which give them social recognition,
appreciation, satisfaction, keeping them
psychologically healthy.

A number of socio-epidemiological
investigations, both in the Western nations
as well as in India (Miller et al, 1976; Line et al,
blzaer, 1982, Broadhard et al, 1982; Ram
Chandran and Sarda Menon, 1982, Kushara
& Chopra, 1996; Guatam & Pant, 1997) have
consistently found the role of various factors
like poor social support, isolation be reavement
and widow hood, unanticipated retirement,
economic deprivation and unemployment, low
social class, poor living conditions and stressful
life events in precipitating, maintaining or
exacerbating depressive disorders among senior citizens. All of these losses may affect self esteem, confidence, connectedness. In such a chain of events, the hopelessness and helplessness of depression may not be far behind.

Whereas spiritual intelligence, the capacity to find meaning and purpose in life, understand and nourish our relationship to the Divine define and follow a moral-ethical path and practice loving kindness, can help the aged person to overcome from the monotonous & lonely life and despair may replace sense of purpose.

Implications

1. Aged people are distinctly more happy and satisfied by living in the family. Every effort should, therefore, be made to encourage their stay with their families.

2. It is important to begin to defuse the stereotype attitude about ageing process that hold elders back, and to promote the concept of ‘old age’ as a stage of development with its own unique challenges.

3. Spiritual intelligence is an experienced and informed ability that gives us access to immediate knowledge and higher wisdom, and helps us achieve excellence in life. Counselling session should arrange for elderly to develop spiritual intelligence.

Table 1: Mean, SD and t-values for spiritual intelligence of senior citizens living with family (n = 100) and living in old age homes (n = 100).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t-values</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>God and Religiosity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>33.98</td>
<td>6.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAH</td>
<td>35.99</td>
<td>6.14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soul</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>10.62</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>OAH</td>
<td>11.71</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>-2.667*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>17.98</td>
<td>6.34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAH</td>
<td>15.20</td>
<td>6.27</td>
<td>3.116*</td>
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<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>27.93</td>
<td>8.27</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAH</td>
<td>27.82</td>
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<td>0.99</td>
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<td>Life Style Values</td>
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<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>31.66</td>
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<td>OAH</td>
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<td>7.14</td>
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<td>-1.527</td>
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Interpersonal Relations

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Divinity in love

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<td>11.70</td>
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<td>11.38</td>
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Spirituality in leadership

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<td>24.26</td>
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<td>20.49</td>
<td>7.46</td>
<td>20.49</td>
<td>7.46</td>
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Helping behaviour

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<th>FL</th>
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<td>9.46</td>
<td>2.146</td>
<td>10.09</td>
<td>1.979</td>
</tr>
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</table>

FL - Senior Citizens living with family
OAH - Senior Citizens living in old age homes
* Significant at 0.05 level

**References**


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1938-1995

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Award for Year 2005

Prof. G.P. Thakur and Prof K.V. Kaliappan, judges for this award have selected the paper entitled “Effect of psychological interventions in enhancing mental toughness dimensions of sports persons” by E. Bhambri, P.K. Dhillon, and S.P. Sahni (Vol.31, No. 1-2,63-68 , 2005).