



Spiritual Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence, and Altruism among Roman Catholic Emerging Adults

Meagan Karen Fernandes and Ovida Earlen Dsouza

Master's Student and Assistant Professor, Carmel College of Arts, Science and Commerce for
Women Nuvem Goa meaganfdes0909@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to examine the relationship between Spiritual Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence, and Altruism among Roman Catholic Emerging adults in Goa, while also exploring differences based on gender and employment status. The study adopted a correlational and comparative research design. A sample of 185 Roman Catholic emerging adults aged between 18 and 29 years was selected. The tools used in the study were Roqan Spiritual Intelligence Test (RSIT) developed by Zainuddin and Ahmed (2010), the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS-HPD) developed by Hyde, Pethe, and Dhar (2002), and the Self-Report Altruism Scale developed by Rushton et al. (1981) and adapted by Khanna, Singh, and Rushton (1993). The data were statistically analysed using Pearson's Product-Moment correlation to examine relationships among variables, while independent samples t-tests were employed to assess differences across gender and employment status. The results revealed a moderate positive relationship between Spiritual Intelligence and Altruism. Similarly, a moderate positive relationship was found between Emotional Intelligence and Altruism. About gender differences, no significant differences were found in Spiritual Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence, or Altruism. While no significant differences were observed in Spiritual Intelligence and Altruism with reference to employment status, a significant difference was found in Emotional Intelligence between employed and unemployed participants.

Keywords: Spiritual intelligence, Emotional intelligence, Altruism

Introduction

In today's fast-paced world, people are often focused on achieving personal desires. In this process, concern for others who need help is overlooked, especially when there is no immediate personal benefit. Emerging adulthood is a developmental phase characterized by identity exploration, emotional instability, increased self-focus and gradual assumption of adult roles (Arnett, 2000,2004). During this stage, individuals develop their values, moral beliefs,



and life goals, which guide their behaviour in adulthood. Emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in shaping social interactions, moral decision-making and responding to the needs of others.

Within the Roman Catholic tradition, altruism is emphasized through teachings that promote love, compassion, humility, service, sacrifice, and care for the marginalized. However, Roman Catholic emerging adults are also influenced by modern societal pressures such as materialism, excessive use of technology, academic stress and changing values. These influences may create conflicts between traditional spiritual values and modern lifestyles, making it essential to explore how emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence contribute to altruism in this population.

Spiritual intelligence can be defined as the ability to address and solve problems of Meaning and value; the intelligence with which we can place our actions and our lives in a wider, richer, meaning-giving context; the intelligence with which we can assess that, one course of Action or one life-path is more meaningful than another (Zohar & Marshall, 1999).

According to Salovey and Mayer (1990), emotional intelligence is "The ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions. Charbonneau and Nichol (2002) found that individuals with higher emotional intelligence demonstrate significantly greater prosocial behavior. Such individuals are often seen as more altruistic, kind, and consistently helpful toward others.

Altruism is helping others without expecting anything in return. The word "altruism," was first used in the nineteenth century by Auguste Comte. Altruism, according to Comte, implies the elimination of selfish desire and of egocentrism, as well as leading a life devoted to the well-being of others. Rushton (1976) argued that the extent to which individuals display altruistic behaviour, as well as the motives behind it, is largely shaped by their social learning experiences.

Review of Literature

Chettri and Vimala (2024) examined the relationship between spiritual intelligence and altruistic behavior in 155 young adults. Using the SISRI-24 and SRAS scales, they found a significant moderate positive correlation between spiritual intelligence and altruism ($r = 0.398$,



$p < 0.001$). Regression analysis showed that spiritual intelligence significantly predicted altruism, explaining 15.8% of its variance ($F = 28.732$, $p < 0.001$).

Arora (2022) studied the relationship between emotional intelligence, altruistic behaviour, and psychological well-being among 150 adults. The findings showed a significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and altruistic behaviour ($r = 0.334$, $p < 0.01$). The study concluded that higher emotional intelligence is associated with greater altruistic behaviour, while altruistic behaviour and psychological well-being are not significantly related.

Mandal and Mehera (2017) examined the relationship between altruism and emotional intelligence among 300 higher secondary students. The study found that children of non-working mothers scored significantly higher in both altruism and emotional intelligence than children of working mothers. Girls were also found to be more altruistic than boys, though no significant gender difference was observed in emotional intelligence. Correlation analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between altruism and emotional intelligence ($r = .620$, $p < .01$), and regression analysis showed that emotional intelligence significantly predicts altruistic behavior.

Objectives

1. To explore the relationship between Spiritual intelligence and altruism among Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.
2. To examine the relationship between Emotional intelligence and Altruism among Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.
3. To study gender differences in Spiritual Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence and Altruism among Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.
4. To study the difference in Spiritual Intelligence, Emotional intelligence and altruism between Employed and Unemployed Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.

Hypotheses

H_{a1}: There will be a significant relationship between Spiritual intelligence and Altruism among Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.

H_{a2}: There will be a significant relationship between Emotional intelligence and Altruism among Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.



H_{a3}: There will be a significant gender difference in Spiritual Intelligence among Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.

H_{a4}: There will be a significant gender difference in Emotional Intelligence among Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.

H_{a5}: There will be a significant gender difference in Altruism among Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.

H_{a6}: There will be a significant difference in Spiritual Intelligence between Employed and Unemployed Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.

H_{a7}: There will be a significant difference in Emotional Intelligence between Employed and Unemployed Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.

H_{a8}: There will be a significant difference in Altruism between Employed and Unemployed Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.

Variables

Spiritual Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence, and Altruism

Research Method

Tools of Measurement

The tools used in the study were Roqan Spiritual Intelligence Test (RSIT) developed by Zainuddin and Ahmed (2010), the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS-HPD) developed by Hyde, Pethe, and Dhar (2002), and the Self-Report Altruism Scale developed by Rushton et al. (1981) and adapted by Khanna, Singh, and Rushton (1993).

Sample

The study sample included 185 Roman Catholic emerging adults from Goa. They were required to belong to the Roman Catholic denomination, be between 18 and 29 years of age. To enhance diversity within the sample, participants were recruited across gender that is, males and females and employment status.

Data Collection

The sample was selected using purposive sampling and convenience sampling techniques, which ensured that it included Roman Catholic emerging adults, which was the inclusion criterion for the study. The data were collected by administering standardized scales and questionnaires via Google Forms, with consent obtained from participants.

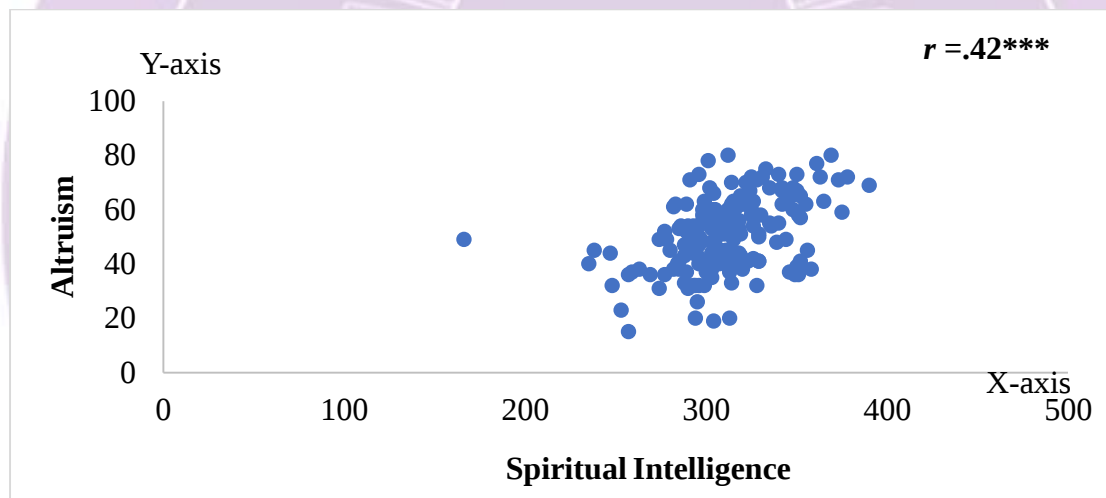
Data Processing

After data collection, the valid responses were coded and entered into MS Excel for initial organization. Following this, the data was transferred to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for further statistical analysis. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation was used to examine the relationships among spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence, and altruism. Independent Samples *t*-tests were used to compare differences across gender and employment.

Results and Discussion

H_{a1}: There will be a significant relationship between Spiritual intelligence and Altruism among Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.

Figure 1.1 Relationship between Spiritual Intelligence and Altruism among Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.

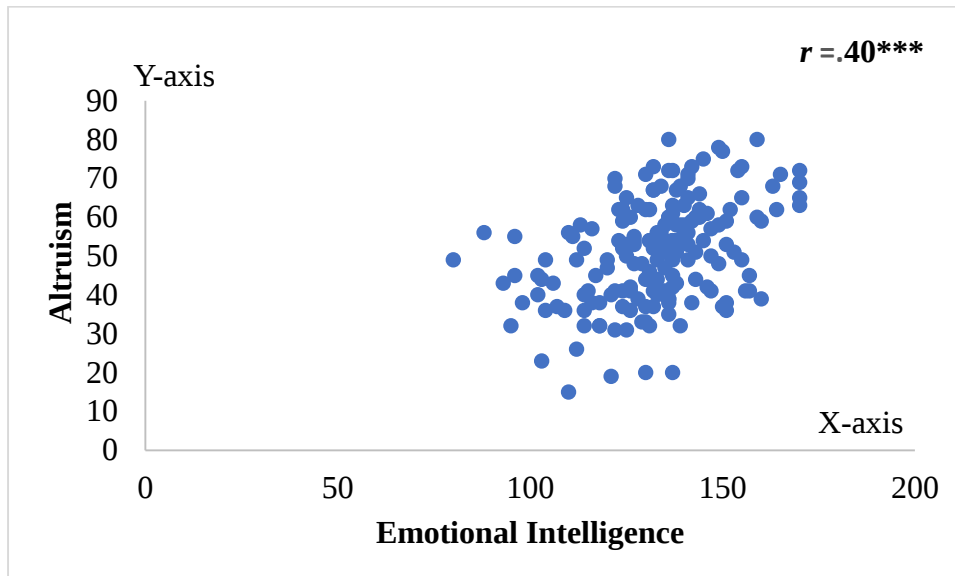


*** $p < 0.001$

A moderate positive correlation between the two variables Spiritual intelligence and Altruism, $r(183) = .42$, $p = .001$ was found in the present findings. A study by Chettri and Vimala (2024) found a significant positive correlation between spiritual intelligence and altruism as well.

H_{a2}: There will be a significant relationship between Emotional intelligence and Altruism among Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.

Figure 1.2 Relationship between Emotional intelligence and Altruism among Roman Catholic Emerging adults in Goa.



*** $p < .001$.

The correlation analysis revealed a moderate positive correlation between the two variables, $r(183) = .40$, $p = .001$. Supporting the current findings, Arora (2022) revealed a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and altruism.

H_{a3}: There will be a significant gender difference in Spiritual Intelligence among Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.

Table 1.1 Descriptive and Inferential Statistics of Spiritual intelligence with respect to Gender

	Gender	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	Sig	df
Spiritual intelligence	Males	89	310	25.8	0.33	0.739	183
	Females	96	312	31.4			

The results indicated that there was no significant difference in Spiritual intelligence between Males and Females $t(183) = 0.33$, $p = 0.739$. A study by Šilingienė & Škėrienė (2015) revealed male leaders showed higher overall levels of spiritual intelligence than females contradicting the current findings.

H_{a4}: There will be a significant gender difference in Emotional Intelligence among Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.



Table 1.2 Descriptive and Inferential Statistics of Emotional intelligence with respect to Gender

	Gender	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	Sig	df
Emotional Intelligence	Males	89	133	16.4	0.18	0.854	183
	Females	96	132	16.4			

The results highlight that there was no significant difference in Emotional intelligence between Males and females, $t(183) = 0.18, p = 0.854$. In contrast, Ajmal et al. (2017) revealed a significant gender difference in emotional intelligence.

H_{a5}: There will be a significant gender difference in Altruism among Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.

Table 1.3 Descriptive and Inferential Statistics of Altruism with respect to Gender

	Gender	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	Sig	df
Altruism	Males	89	49.61	12.632	1.395	.165	183
	Females	96	52.27	13.287			

The results indicate that there was no significant difference in Altruism between Males and Females $t(183) = 1.395, p = .165$. A study by Jeya Bala et al. (2021) revealed a significant gender difference in Altruism diverging from the current study findings.

H_{a6}: There will be a significant difference in Spiritual Intelligence between Employed and Unemployed Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.

Table 1.4 Descriptive and Inferential Statistics of Spiritual Intelligence with respect to Employment Status.

	Employment Status	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	Sig	df
Spiritual Intelligence	Employed	84	314	26.2	1.20	0.232	183
	Unemployed	101	319	30.7			



The *t*-test results indicate that there was no significant difference in Spiritual Intelligence between Males and Females $t(183) = 1.20, p = 0.232$. Aanchal and Sahai (2023) discovered a significant difference in spiritual intelligence between working and non-working women differing from the present study.

Ha7: There will be a significant difference in Emotional Intelligence between employed and Unemployed Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.

Table 1.5 Descriptive and Inferential Statistics of Emotional Intelligence with respect to Employment Status

	Employment Status	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	Sig	df
Emotional Intelligence	Employed	84	136	14.8	3.00	0.003	183
	Unemployed	101	131	16.9			

The results revealed that there was no significant difference in Altruism between Males and Females $t(183) = 3.00, p = 0.003$. Syed & Shah (2024) found a significant difference in emotional intelligence between employed and unemployed students, indicating that unemployed students had higher emotional intelligence than employed students. This supports the current findings.

Ha8: There will be a significant difference in Altruism between Employed and Unemployed Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa.

Table 4.1.6 Descriptive and Inferential Statistics of Altruism with respect to Employment Status.

	Employment Status	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	Sig	df
Altruism	Employed	84	51.39	13.62	.384	.701	183
	Unemployed	101	50.65	12.53			



The *t*-test results indicated that there was no significant difference in Altruism between Employed and Unemployed Roman Catholic Emerging Adults. $t(183) = .384, p = .701$. Individuals who are actively involved in religious communities often report higher levels of helping behavior because religious teachings emphasize compassion, charity, and service. As a result, both employed and unemployed participants may already exhibit relatively high levels of altruism, leaving little variation between groups.

Discussion

This study examined the relationship between Spiritual Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence, and Altruism among Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa. The findings revealed moderate positive relationships between both Spiritual Intelligence and Altruism, and Emotional Intelligence and Altruism. Possible explanations for these relationships can be that spiritual intelligence promotes empathy, compassion, and moral awareness, which encourage helping behaviors. Additionally, Roman Catholic teachings emphasize love, charity, and service, which may further encourage altruistic behavior among spiritually oriented individuals (Saroglou, 2013). Furthermore, Emotional intelligence includes abilities such as identifying emotions, understanding feelings, and managing emotional reactions (Goleman, 1995). When people can recognize when someone else is sad, stressed, or struggling, they may feel more empathy and willing to help. Empathy is closely linked to altruistic behavior because when individuals understand another person's feelings, they are more motivated to support or assist them (Batson, 1991).

No significant gender differences were found in Spiritual Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence, or Altruism. Reasons for these can include that the participants may have been exposed to similar religious teachings, church practices, and community values of Roman Catholic teachings such as love, moral responsibility, and service to others. Whereas changing social expectations regarding emotional expression with modern social and cultural changes increasingly encouraging both genders to acknowledge and express emotions in healthy ways. In contemporary social environments, both genders are increasingly encouraged to participate in helping behaviors and community activities. Prosocial behaviors such as helping, volunteering, and cooperation are influenced by social learning and cultural norms rather than gender alone (Eisenberg, Fabes, & Spinrad, 2006).



The study found no significant employment status differences in Spiritual Intelligence and Altruism. Employment during emerging adulthood is often transitional with many still completing education, searching for jobs, or exploring career paths. Because employment at this stage may not yet be a stable part of identity, it may not significantly influence deeper aspects of personal development such as spirituality (Arnett, 2000). Periods of unemployment may encourage reflection while employment may provide a sense of responsibility and purpose. Helping actions are largely influenced by empathy, perceived need, and immediate social contexts rather than structural factors such as occupation (Eisenberg, Fabes, & Spinrad, 2006). A significant difference was found in Emotional Intelligence between employed and unemployed participants. A reason for this difference could be the sense of stability and purpose that comes with being employed. In contrast, those who are unemployed, especially job seekers, may experience stress, uncertainty, or doubt about their future.

Limitations

The study was limited to Roman Catholic emerging adults in Goa, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to other age groups, religions, and cultural contexts.

Implications

The findings suggest that fostering spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence may enhance altruistic behaviour among emerging adults. Educational institutions, churches, and community organizations can promote these qualities through retreats, workshops, volunteering opportunities, and empathy-building activities. The results also highlight the importance of emotional awareness and interpersonal skills training in promoting prosocial behaviour. Future research should include more diverse populations and examine additional factors influencing altruism, such as personality, family environment, and religious involvement.

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