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The Relationship between Adolescents' Emotional and Spiritual Intelligence

Emil LAZĂR[1]

Abstract

The human personality presupposes the existence of common constitutive factors, which are allowing a description and classification unit in this view of human beings that define the personality of each human subject in hand [2] the basic characteristics remain relatively constant over time and independent of context and place in which the person acts. It can easily notice that most of the papers fail attention about spiritual intelligence considering no more than a syncretistic approach and vision. Literature dealing with emotional intelligence includes numerous empirical evidence related to "meetings" between the emotional and social functioning and school environment. This paper aims is to answer the interrogation related to the relationship between emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence in adolescent's high school, pursuing educational and other aspects influenced by the consequences of this relationship (behaviours, school adjustment).

Keywords: intelligences; emotional intelligence; spiritual intelligence; adolescents.

1. Introduction

Each person built his unique perspective on reality; this becomes a particular frame of meaning and action. In confrontation with daily reality, the human being relies on personal theories, validated by his own experience, makes assumptions and predictions that tries to validate them through implementation (George Kelly, 1955, personal construct theory) [1].

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From another perspective, an objective one, personality presupposes *the existence of common constituent factors,* allowing a uniform description and clarification, from this point of view and that define the personality of each human subject in particular/ in part (R. B. Cattel, 1971, the basic features, relatively constant over time and independent of the context and place where the person acts) [2].

Personal experiences and assumptions, validate trough implementation, are belonging to each person and to existence of common factors of human personality and these are realities found. These realities can be considered the premises of a theoretical and interesting research approach.

Why is this theme useful? The practical-applicable perspective of this approach and the treating of the this work theme is useful because: it completes the psycho-educational reality through promoting some dimensions, present but ignored/ less analysed (school adjustment comprises individualities within some social realities), the student relates to the others by defining his own self, affectivity and spirituality, understood as an awareness of what you are, completing each other (the affect, feeling are „mirrors" of self-awareness). To know these (inner) conditionings helps educational practice, offers means and methods for optimal integration and adaptation of students at school environment.

2. Problem Statement

Starting from these *premises,* treating of the theme has both a *scientific impulse, and a practical reason:* from a scientific perspective is sought the answer to the question related to the relationship between socio-emotional intelligence and the spiritual one, their contribution to school adaptation of the adolescents, and practical reason is concerned with the benefits of putting in relationship these three concepts/dimensions of personality or behavioural for the school environment at high school level.

Although in the area of human cognitive research the human intelligence picture have been completed with scientific data related to *spiritual intelligence*, ever since 1997, this concept has not yet been the subject of psychological assessments. Even more so in the Romanian space lack these psychological and theological assessments.

On the other hand, this would be particularly necessary, whereas it can be easily noticed that most of the works concerned with *spiritual intelligence* only succeed a *syncretistic approach and vision*. There is also a risk that such an approach presupposes: (namely) transforming this dimension into a "*spiritual experience* fully corporatized, completely translated in a

neurophysiological language. This way, however, there could be outlined the premises of a materialist spirituality, even atheist, circumscribing the whole process of man's spiritual evolution, using neurophysiological resources and mechanisms" [3].

3. Research Questions/Aims of the research

The research aims analysing the relationship between emotional and spiritual intelligence at teenagers. Emotional intelligence has been nuanced from a social perspective, socio-affectivity among teens being approached as a manifestation of emotional intelligence. This is, in personal opinion, the level at which happen the encounter and correlation with the spiritual intelligence at teenagers. As dimensions of personality they have convergence and differences. Social context brings them together, proving their co-existence. At the age of adolescence, as a time of development and growth of the human being, they are manifest, coexisting.

The research aim is to shows the relationship between adolescents' emotional and spiritual intelligence.

Therefore, the research aim is to validate the following assumptions:

1. To what extent socio/emotional maturity and strategies of education and training/development influence school adaptation of the adolescents who follow Humanities classes (specialization in social sciences and philology), Real (mathematics-informatics specialization) and Technical (technical specialization)?
2. To what extent the spiritual intelligence quotient/spiritual IQ and its educational value influence the degree of school adaptation of the adolescents, according to the residential area and the specialization studied in high school?
3. To what extent the high level of social and emotional intelligence (ISEA) associated to the specific methodological and curriculum spectrum becomes a prerequisite for the manifestations of spiritual intelligence (IS) in formal and/or nonformal educational space?
4. If the level of socio/emotional maturity is high, in connection with a high degree of spiritual intelligence, then school adaptation and integration will optimally be achieved at the level of school behaviour.

4. Research Methods

In order to be highlighted, to show their usefulness and educational value, their relational dynamic has been studied by reference to the concept

of "school adjustment". Mediation effects were observed in the two constructs (socio-affective maturity and the level of spiritual intelligence) on school adjustment. The values of these effects, the differences, are influenced by the type of educational profile studied by students and by the residence environment.

The overall conclusion is that spiritual intelligence is based on socio-emotional maturity of the teenager. Residential environmental influences (and family) show significant contributions to this relationship.

The research methods are: questionnaire survey to assess the level of emotional maturity (The Friedmann Emotional Maturity Scale), questionnaire survey to assess the level of spiritual intelligence (Questionnaire for identifying the level of spiritual intelligence [4] and Ioan Neacşu [5]), Questionnaire to assess personal comfort during school time and adaptation to school environment D. Goleman [6]), analysis of school documents and Focus-group method (students, teachers, high school graduates).

5. Findings

For working hypothesis no. 1- To what extent socio/emotional maturity and strategies of education and training/development influence school adaptation of the adolescents who follow Humanities classes (specialization in social sciences and philology), Real (mathematics-informatics specialization) and Technical (technical specialization)? - the different values (high for some profile at the level of ninth grade, low for others at the level of tenth grade, constant for teens belonging to a type of residential environment), for profiles/ specialties, classes of students, kind of socio-emotional maturity have correlated with different levels of school adjustment. The mediation part was played by specializations. Education and training/ development strategies have influenced in less significant values.

Within the working hypothesis no. 2 - To what extent the spiritual intelligence quotient/spiritual IQ and its educational value influences the degree of school adaptation of the adolescents, according to the residential area and the specialization studied in high school? - the coefficient of spiritual intelligence shows average and high values for certain profiles/ specializations, a significant association with the biological factor "age", an even more significant with "the area of residence". The influence of spiritual intelligence is obvious in relation with school adjustment, but not in a direct relationship, but mediated by profile/ specialization and area of residence.

With the mediation of methodological and curricular spectrum (with all its aspects and definitions) and correct understanding of the educational form, socio-emotional intelligence is a prerequisite (strong premise) for high, definite, specific conducts of spiritual intelligence (working hypothesis no. 3 - To what extent the high level of social and emotional intelligence (ISEA) associated to the specific methodological and curriculum spectrum becomes a prerequisite for the manifestations of spiritual intelligence (IS) in formal and/or nonformal educational space?).

School environment is perceived as a "good place", where students can find the state of personal comfort (personal comfort condition), where they evolve, where they develop, when, alongside with socio-emotional maturity is placed a high spiritual intelligence (working hypothesis no. 4 - If the level of socio/emotional maturity is high, in connection with a high degree of spiritual intelligence, then school adaptation and integration will optimally be achieved at the level of school behaviour).

School integration and adaptation, school engagement, school aptitude (ability), school success (results and personal development) are the dimensions with which the two related variables may correlate.

There might be observed another kind of convergences:

- Residential environment (of middle school graduation and of studying the classes of high school) correlates with emotional maturity, statistically significant, while its intensity is stronger in terms of spiritual intelligence.
- The studied profile positively correlates with spiritual intelligence and with emotional maturity too.
- Within the conducted research it has been noticed that emotional intelligence has shown consistent associations with both area of residence and the profile studied by students, who, in their turn, have been associated with school adjustment and with the coefficient of spiritual intelligence.
- We may notice the impact of emotional maturity on school adjustment through spiritual intelligence and other variables that contribute to the integration and adaptation of adolescents in school context.

The limits of the research

The established limits of the research are in connection with:

- The role of the research (its purpose/ objectives): the desire to validate the research hypotheses for a critical/ necessary problem, belonging to formal and informal educational field, obvious from the perspective of the human personality at the age of adolescence;

- The research process/ research methodology: related/ interrelated activities which involved the specification, measurement and collection of data, the interpretation and communication of the information: yet unexplored field of research, emotional intelligence [7] and the spiritual one [8] are multidimensional constructs (as well as the concept of school adjustment/ adaptation), however within the quantitative processing that were conducted to test hypotheses have been taken into account global scores by which these constructs have been effective, doubts/ conceptual confusions (spirituality is confused with religiosity, psychic with faith), lack of verification tools (the questionnaire compiled by Fr. Vaughan is empirically applied to teenagers in high school [4]), the cross-cutting nature of the research (the variables were measured simultaneously), the display area of the conclusions is limited by the occasioned context by the category within which the research is conducted;
- The use of research results: optional character, descriptive character, explanatory and not instrumental character, remaining at the level of premises and openings towards more complex research and with more extensive representativeness;
- Time limits: short period (two months) for pretesting and implementation of the questionnaires;
- Functional and space limits (factual): students from two schools, two classes (the ninth and tenth grade), three profiles and four education specializations, residence environments and different gender.

The given impact of the research results (presumed/expected, achieved)

The presumed/ expected impact is estimated at the level of direct beneficiaries (students), under aspects of efficiency, authenticity, integration, increased confidence and satisfaction (introspection), awareness of the spiritual-existential reality and of the benefits of these processes.

In terms of impact achieved, the research highlighted, from the students' perspective, the complex reality of the teenagers personality, the dynamism of the relationship between socio-emotional intelligence and the spiritual one, their implications in the context of school integration and adaptation of high school adolescents, the prerequisites for future analysis/ research arising from the co-existence/ synergy between the two psycho-emotional skills in the field of school results.

Multiplier effects, possibilities for further research:

- Psycho-pedagogical implications: the research, through its findings and conclusions, provides a strengthening of presumed conceptions when

structuring the assumptions. The interrelationship between emotional intelligence and the spiritual one is real and also their implications/ benefits concerning school adaptation of adolescents in high school.

- Educational perspectives: promoting spiritual intelligence reality when setting up educational plans for various high school specializations (social sciences), guidance and counselling may be based on the research findings related to the influence of rural environment on increased maturity of the students (with given explanations).
- Transdisciplinary approaches: many disciplines may include dimensions, aspects, levels of spiritual intelligence when treating the specific curricula contents; the religion discipline has an opportunity of exploration and attractiveness by developing ways of spiritual-existential deepening.

6. Discussions

There are many discussions about these two types of intelligence: emotional and spiritual. The research shows, in equal measure, emotional intelligence, its facets (such as emotional maturity, socio-affectivity) contributes to school success (school commitment, adaptation in the context of school activities, increasing emotional bonding with school, by engaging in positive activities and interpersonal behaviours), to positive academic results for teen students. The studied specializations included in the education framework must be designed based on the awareness of this reality, of the holistic approach of the student. High school, the schooling period corresponding to adolescence, has to form/ develop emotional intelligence at students. Their school success depends on the emotional maturity.

The spiritual intelligence development synergistically completes the adolescents' emotional development during high school. It has an individual/ personal contribution, aims the person's consciousness, the awareness and understanding of what happens to the adolescent and defines him in relation with himself and with the others. It has social valences.

On the socio-affective support, the spiritual conduct refines the adolescent's axiology: he feels, believes, understands and knows how to choose, overcomes anxiety, has vision, his future is safer and the decisions are accordingly. At interpersonal level, he will know how to properly deal with the relationships with the others, to discern between what brings added value and what relation is bankrupt, he will get involved or he will stay alone, he will be socially successful or will depend on others.

He will be with him, will know how to validate his choices and be aware of his limits. He'll have consciousness. He'll be aware of his own

consciousness. This way, spiritual intelligence can contribute to the formation/ development of a complete student, he himself/she herself being the decider of his/her own educational path.

The awareness of self-esteem, building up a high self-esteem of adolescents in school (to which, we believe spiritual intelligence has a considerable contribution), mediates school achievement, educational path, guides them educationally and professionally.

7. Conclusions

The research conducted on the sample of adolescents pursued the relationship between spiritual and emotional intelligence at teenagers. One of the merits of the research consists of the fact that it has also taken into account factual variables, whose mediations bring nuances in the relationship between socio-affectivity and spiritual intelligence of the teens in the school context: the environment, the studied specialization influences the relationship between the two. When we talk about residential environment, is interesting to notice the relationship between the time spent besides parents and spiritual intelligence at teenagers, but also the influence/ impact that a program of forming/ development of spiritual intelligence would have on school integration/ adaptation, on their achievements/ their school progress.

Should this educational program be specific to an educational branch/ profile or be transverse, present in the high school curriculum frameworks? How would it be evaluated and in what form of the results? How could they be certified?

It can be put under analysis the relationship between spiritual intelligence and adolescents' behaviours in school in the specific circumstances of the educational route. Could school behaviours be mediated by spiritual intelligence?

How does it look the dynamics of longitudinal relationship between emotional intelligence and the spiritual one, at teenagers, outside educational context, this being a dimension of the aspect of the social inter-personal relations?

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