

Role of Psychological Capital and Authoritative Parenting in the Relationship of Spiritual Intelligence and Identity Development of Adolescents

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Abstract

The present study investigates the role of authoritative parenting as a moderator and psychological capital as a mediating factor in the relationship between spiritual intelligence and adolescents' identity development. Through transcendence, self-awareness, and meaning-making, it investigates how adolescent spiritual intelligence affects the development of their identity. Additionally, the study explores whether psychological capital such as optimism, hope, resilience, and self-efficacy improves this association. The study also investigates the ways in which authoritative parenting that is defined by compassion, responsiveness, and equitable control influences these pathways. There were two phases of the study. To test the hypotheses, a pilot study with 100 participants was conducted in Phase 1, and then the main study with 300 adolescents (119 girls and 181 boys) was conducted. In a cross-sectional approach, standardized questionnaires assessing identity development, psychological capital, spiritual intelligence, and authoritative parenting were employed. Using SPSS Process Macro (Hayes, 2022), correlational, mediation, and moderation analyses were performed to assess the hypotheses. The findings showed that there was a positive correlation between each of the variables. Furthermore, psychological capital played a substantial mediating role in the link between spiritual intelligence and identity development. Authoritative parenting further moderates the relationship. These findings emphasize the significance of developing adolescents' psychological resources along with supportive parenting approaches, with implications for educational programs, parental guidance, and developmental assistance.

Keywords: spiritual intelligence, psychological capital, identity development, authoritative parenting.

Various social, emotional, and psychological changes occur during adolescence, which is an important time for growth. Spiritual intelligence can have significant effects on an adolescent's identity formation and psychological capital during this period. Psychological capital which comprises resilience, optimism, hope, and self-efficacy is necessary for overcoming challenges. One of the most important aspects of adolescent growth is identity development.

According to Zohar & Marshall (1999), spiritual intelligence is the deep self or soul intelligence that offers integrity and completeness, allowing people to pose basic questions and reframe their answers. King (2008) defined spiritual intelligence as a collection of adaptable mental skills based on transcendental facets of reality that result in self-transcendence, personal purpose, deep existential contemplation, and spiritual state mastery. Spiritual intelligence places more emphasis on meaning-making, moral behavior, and consciousness development than religion, which is linked to doctrines and rituals (King & DeCicco, 2009). More recently, Nasel (2024) distinguished spiritual intelligence from emotional and cognitive intelligence by defining it as the capacity to use spiritual resources to basic and practical problems.

Research from a variety of cultural contexts demonstrates that college students and adolescents with greater levels of spiritual intelligence are better able to cope with stress and obstacles in life (Liu et al., 2021). According to recent studies, spiritual intelligence lowers stress, burnout, and depression and is highly correlated with resilience, well-being, identity clarity, and moral decision-making (Abbaszadeh, et al., 2022; Shahzad & Rana, 2023).

According to Avolio, Luthans and Youssef (2007), psychological capital is a higher-order positive psychological construct that emerged from positive psychology and positive organizational behavior. It includes four state-like capacities: optimism, resilience, hope, and self-efficacy. The four fundamental components of the HERO model describe PsyCap: Resilience is the capacity to recover and grow from failure, hardship, or setbacks; efficacy is the assurance that one can muster the will and resources necessary to achieve.

People who are self-efficacious are more likely to see a stressor as an opportunity rather than a difficulty, which helps them lessen the negative effects of stress on life satisfaction (Burger & Samuel, 2017; König & Hajek, 2019). Hope (keeping moving forward and forging new paths when challenges appear), and Optimism (having a positive attributional attitude about current and future achievements).

According to Baumrind (1966), authoritative parenting is defined by a well-rounded strategy that combines warmth, responsiveness, and emotional support with fair discipline, clear expectations, and development of autonomy. A child-centered approach with high standards combined with constructive support and direction is known as authoritative parenting (Purdy & Popan, 2024). Children raised by authoritative parents are more self-

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assured, responsible, and capable of self-control (Masud et al., 2019; Morris et al., 2007).

These children are better at handling unpleasant emotions, which improves their emotional health and social results. Authoritative parents make their children see that they can accomplish things on their own by promoting independence, which boosts their self-esteem. Additionally, according to Pong et al. (2010), these children typically perform well in school and prosper intellectually.

According to Erikson's (1963) fifth stage of psychosocial development, adolescents attempt to establish a solid and cohesive sense of self at this crucial time, which roughly corresponds to the ages of 13 and 19. People who have effectively handled developmental problems in the past come into adolescence with a foundation of self-assurance, a feeling of family belonging, and a developing capacity for independence and self-efficacy. They have the capacity to take initiative, acknowledge their own abilities, and see projects through to completion. Identity development is the process by which people integrate commitment and investigation across several facets of their lives to create a cohesive and genuine sense of who they are (Luyckx, et al., 2006; Crocetti, Rubini, & Meeus, 2008). Adolescents create meaning through biographical experiences, everyday interactions, and social contexts, according to narrative identity research (McLean & Pasupathi, 2012; Galliher et al., 2017).

Erikson described adolescence as a stage centered on the conflict of identity versus role confusion, where young people attempt to bring together their values, beliefs, and aspirations into a clearer sense of who they are. When this process goes well, it leads to a stable identity, but when it does not, adolescents may feel uncertain or fragmented in how they see themselves (Erikson, 1968; Rorije et al., 2023). In this context, spiritual intelligence can provide a foundation for reflection and meaning-making, helping adolescents approach questions about purpose and direction in life. Psychological capital qualities like hope, resilience, and optimism further supports this process by turning insight into action and enabling young people to persist through challenges. Parenting also plays an important role: an authoritative style, which balances warmth with guidance and autonomy, creates a setting where adolescents are encouraged to explore while still feeling supported. Taken together, these factors offer a way of understanding how adolescents can successfully navigate the identity stage, reducing the risk of role confusion and building a more coherent sense of self (Herdiansyah et al., 2024).

Rational for the Study

With an emphasis on the moderating role of authoritative parenting and the mediating role of psychological capital, the present study investigated the relationship between spiritual intelligence and adolescent identity formation. This research highlights positive psychological resources, such as psychological capital and spiritual intelligence, that support healthy identity development during adolescence. The findings also illustrate how authoritative parenting can strengthen these connections, potentially helping adolescents feel more confident and less uncertain about their sense of self. Furthermore, by addressing the knowledge gap in Pakistan regarding the role of spiritual intelligence and psychological capital in adolescent development, this study contributes to the existing literature and offers practical guidance for parents, educators, and policymakers on promoting resilience and fostering a positive self-concept in youth.

Hypotheses

1. Spiritual intelligence will be positively related to identity development in adolescents.

2. Spiritual intelligence will be positively related to psychological capital in adolescents.
3. Spiritual intelligence will be positively related to authoritative parenting in adolescents.
4. Spiritual intelligence will predict healthy identity in adolescents.
5. Authoritative parenting will positively predict healthy identity development in adolescents
6. Authoritative parenting will moderate the relationship between spiritual intelligence and identity development in such a way that it strengthens their relationship.

Methodology

Research Design

The research design was cross-sectional survey. The design of the study was quantitative. The study was consisting of two stages. First, the researcher conducted pilot study of 100 participants both male and female to check the reliability of scale and to check whether people understand the wordings of the scale or not. Secondly, after checking the reliability of scale through SPSS the main study was conducted with a 300 participants.

Sample

The target sample for study was the adolescents through purposive convenience Sampling. The sample consisted of 300 participants (N = 300) aged between 13 and 19 years (M = 17.14, SD = 1.47). The sample comprised 40% boys (n = 119) and 60% girls (n = 181). Most participants (65%, n = 195) were raised in nuclear families, while the remaining 35% (n = 105) belonged to joint family households. Participants were required to understand the English language and could participate from any location within Pakistan. The inclusion criteria specified that participants must be between 13 and 19 years of age and proficient in English. Participants with reading or writing difficulties, disabilities, or chronic illnesses were excluded from the study.

Instruments

Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (SISRI-24)

Spiritual intelligence was assessed using the Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (SISRI-24; King, 2008). This 24-item test evaluates the capacity to transition between levels of consciousness, knowledge of transcendent characteristics, and life purpose. A Likert scale of five points is used to score responses (from 0 being totally true of me to 4 being not true at all). With reliabilities ranging from .78 to .91 and an overall split-half reliability of .90, the SISRI-24 has proven to have high psychometric qualities (King & DeCicco, 2009).

Compound Psychological Capital Scale (CPC-12)

The 12-item Compound Psychological Capital Scale (CPC-12; Luthans, 2007) was used to measure psychological capital. A 6-point Likert scale is used to score the items (from 1 being strongly disagree to 6 being strongly agree). With subscale alphas ranging from .72 to .85 and an overall reliability of .84, the scale has demonstrated good reliability.

Dimensions of Identity Development Scale (DIDS)

The 25-item Dimensions of Identity Development Scale (DIDS; Luyckx et al., 2008) evaluates important facets of adolescent identity development. A 5-point Likert scale is used to score the items (1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree). The measure has been verified in a variety of cultural contexts and has shown strong reliability, with Cronbach's alphas ranging from .79 to .86.

Procedure

Necessary permission was secured from relevant institutional authorities to recruit study participants on behalf of the National Institute of Psychology. After obtaining formal authorization, potential participants were directly contacted. Then the researcher

approached students at different schools and colleges physically. The physical form is given to different students instructions were given to fill the form. The researcher explained the nature, purpose, and scope of the study to participants, and informed consent was provided for both parents of the participants and for the participants on the first page of the form; those whose parents accepted the participation of their children and also the adolescents by self would move to the next section, the research questionnaire booklet.

Ethical Consideration

The study's goals and objectives were neither fabricated nor deceitful. The informed consent was provided with accurate information. Their identities were not requested in order to respect the participants' right to remain anonymous. The volunteers and the researcher did not have any relationship. Participants received respectful treatment, and their anonymity and privacy were protected. To achieve the study goals, data was gathered utilizing the Compound Psychological Questionnaire, Spiritual Intelligence Self Report Inventory, and Dimensions of Identity Development Scale

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for the Scale used in the Main Study (N=300)

Scales	K	α	M	SD	Range		Skew	Kurt
					Potential	Actual		
Spiritual Intelligence Self Report Inventory	24	.73	66.38	13.37	24-96	32-96	-.18	-.73
Authoritative Parenting (both)	10	.73	37.14	5.47	10-50	20-49	-.52	-.26
Authoritative Parenting (Father)	10	.74	37.53	5.47	10-50	24-49	-.51	-.25
Authoritative Parenting (Mother)	12	.71	46.95	5.55	12-60	31-59	-.55	.23
Compound Psychological Capital	25	.70	96.12	9.45	25-125	67-121	-.31	-.04
Dimensions of Identity Development	20	.73	75.70	10.20	20-100	48-96	-.47	-.34

Note. M = Mean, SD= Standard Deviation, k=number of items, skew=skewness, kurt=kurtosis

A preliminary analysis was conducted to examine the properties of the variables and assess their suitability for inferential statistics (see table 1). The assumption of normality was met, as the skewness and kurtosis values ranged between +2

and -2. Means and standard deviations were computed, and Cronbach's alpha values confirmed that all scales demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency for the study sample.

Table 2
Correlation of Main Study Variables (N=300).

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Spiritual Intelligence	-					
2 Authoritative Parenting	.45**	-				
3 Authoritative Parenting (Father)	.49**	.89**	-			
4 Authoritative Parenting (Mother)	.33**	.90**	.62**	-		
5 Psychological Capital	.42**	.45**	.53**	.47**	-	
6 Identity Development	.27**	.39**	.34**	.37**	.50**	-

Note. *p<.05. **p<.01

Table 2 shows that the majority of the bivariate correlations between the research variables were small to moderate but in the predicted direction. Relationships between spiritual intelligence and identity development ($r = .27, p = .01$)

and psychological capital ($r = .42, p = .01$) are significantly positive. Identity development and psychological capital had a positive correlation ($r = .39, p = .000$).

Table 3
Regression analysis for the effect of Identity Development (N=300).

Predictors	Model 1	Model 2	95%CI	
	β	β	LL	UL
Gender	-.20	-.13	-10.09	-1.25
Adolescents Age	.03	-.05	-2.76	1.26
Adolescents Education	-.05	-.02	-6.78	4.74
Father Age	.23	.12	-.08	.72
Mother Age	-.00	-.04	-.56	.36
Father Education	-.06	.02	-6.98	5.05
Mother Education	-.03	.02	-5.56	3.67
Family system	.05	-.08	-.73	6.66
Spiritual Intelligence		.05	-.09	.30
Authoritative Parenting		.77**	2.62	.74
Authoritative Parenting (Father)		.38**	.52	2.46
Authoritative Parenting (Mother)		.06	-.78	1.30
Psychological Capital		.64**	1.94	2.66
R ²	.10	.31		
F	3.87	10.91		
ΔR^2		3.87		
ΔF		.10		

Note. CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit.

Table 3 demonstrates that gender is the only significant predictor of the dependent variable in Model 1. The results indicate that demographics and other control variables account for 10% of the variance in the dependent variable ($R^2 = .10$). The overall model is statistically significant, as indicated by the F statistic ($F = 3.87$).

Model 2 introduces the study variables spiritual intelligence, authoritative parenting (Mother and Father combined) and psychological capital while controlling for the demographic variables from Model 1. The inclusion of these predictors

accounts for an additional 9% of the variance ($\Delta R^2 = .09$), representing a statistically significant improvement in model fit ($\Delta F = 3.81$).

In Model 2, gender remained a significant predictor, showing a negative link with identity development, while age was not significant. Spiritual intelligence and maternal authoritative parenting did not predict identity development either. However, overall authoritative parenting and psychological capital were significant. Interestingly, higher overall authoritative parenting and psychological capital related to higher identity development.

Table 4
Mediation Analysis with the Mediating Effects of Psychological Capital on the Relationship between Spiritual Intelligence and Identity Development (N=300).

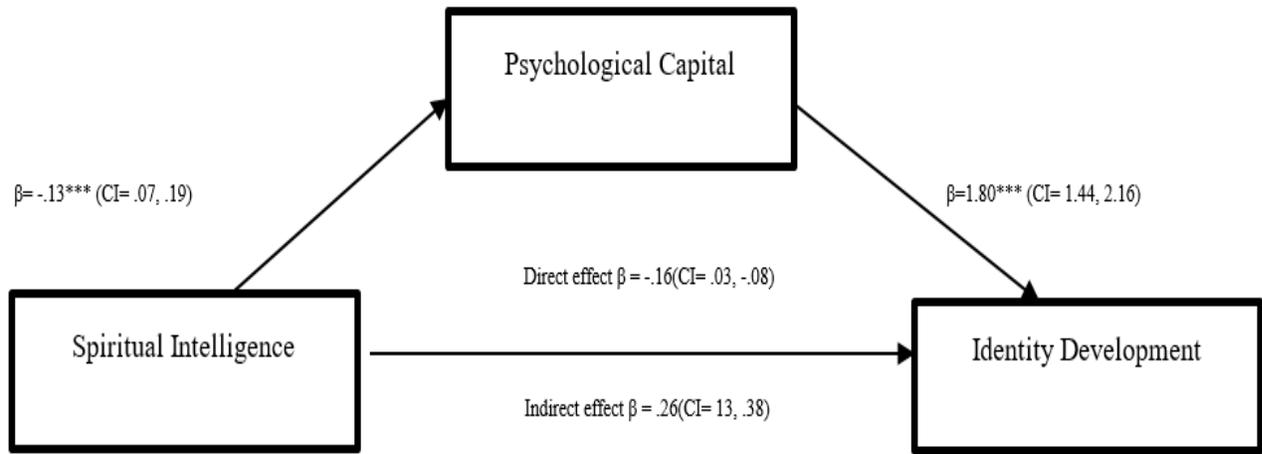
Predictors	β	95%CI	
		LL	UL
Constant	7.33	-32.20	46.85
Spiritual Intelligence	.16	-.35	.03
Psychological Capital	1.80**	1.44	2.16
R ²	.32		
F	13.93		
ΔR^2	.23		
ΔF	10.43		

Note. CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit.

Gender substantially predicted identity development in Model 1 (Table 4), with females scoring higher than males ($\beta = -7.02$, 95% CI $-11.86, -2.19$). The following demographic factors were not significant: age, education, parents age and education, and family system. When spiritual intelligence and psychological capital were added to Model 2, gender continued to be significant

while demographics remained non-significant. Spiritual intelligence had no direct influence ($\beta = .16$, 95% CI $-.35, .03$), while psychological capital was a strong positive predictor ($\beta = 1.80$, 95% CI $1.44, 2.16$). Model 2 significantly outperformed demographics alone in explaining 32% of the variation ($R^2 = .32$, $F = 13.93$).

Figure 1
Mediating Role of Psychological Capital between Spiritual Intelligence and Identity Development.



The mediation analysis (Figure 3) shows that spiritual intelligence positively predicts psychological capital (path a: $\beta = .13$, 95% CI .07, .19), which in turn strongly predicts identity development (path b: $\beta = 1.95$, 95% CI 1.59, 2.30). The direct effect of spiritual intelligence on identity development (path c': β

$= -.19$, 95% CI $-.38, .00$) was non-significant, whereas the indirect effect via psychological capital was significant ($\beta = .26$, 95% CI .13, .40). These results indicate full mediation, suggesting that spiritual intelligence influences identity development primarily through its positive impact on psychological capital.

Table 5
Moderating Role of Authoritative parenting by both parents in Predicting Identity Development from Spiritual Intelligence (N = 300)

Predictors	β	95%CI	
		LL	UL
Constant	172.48	71.14	273.84
Spiritual Intelligence	-1.45**	-2.91	.02
Authoritative Parenting(both)	-1.70**	-2.97	-.04
SI X AP	.02***	.00	.04
R ²	.12		
F	3.89**		
ΔR^2	.02		

Note. CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit.

Table 5 shows that in Model 1, gender significantly predicted identity development ($\beta = -9.66$, 95% CI $-15.14, -4.19$), with females scoring higher than males, while all other demographics were non-significant. Model 1 explained 12% of the variance ($R^2 = .12$, $F = 3.89$).

In Model 2, after adding spiritual intelligence, authoritative parenting, and their interaction, gender remained significant,

while demographics stayed non-significant. Spiritual intelligence ($\beta = -1.45$, 95% CI $-2.91, -.02$) and authoritative parenting ($\beta = -1.70$, 95% CI $-2.97, -.04$) were both significant negative predictors, and their interaction was significant and positive ($\beta = .02$, 95% CI .00, .04). Model 2 explained 32% of the variance ($R^2 = .32$, $F = 13.93$), a 20% increase over Model 1, indicating that the inclusion of spiritual intelligence, authoritative parenting, and their interaction substantially improved predictive power.

Figure 2

Mod Graph showing Interaction of Authoritative Parenting by both for the Relationship between Spiritual Intelligence and Identity Development

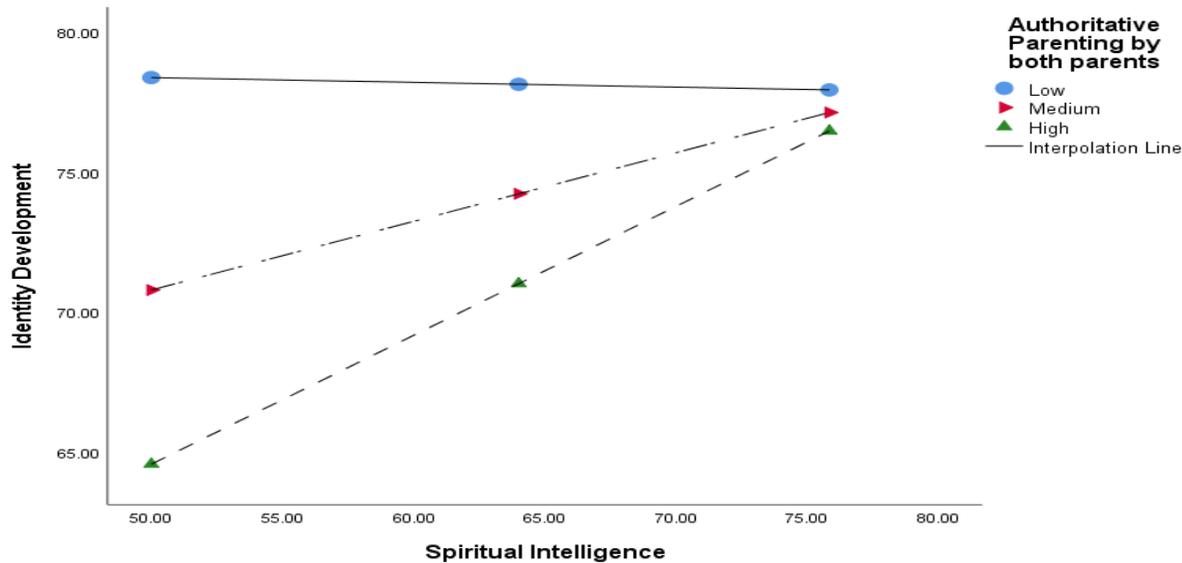


Figure 4 illustrates a significant interaction between spiritual intelligence and authoritative parenting in predicting identity development. When authoritative parenting is low, the relationship between spiritual intelligence and identity development is weak or slightly negative. At medium and high levels of authoritative parenting, the relationship becomes increasingly positive, with the steepest slope observed under high parental support. This indicates that authoritative parenting strengthens the positive effect of spiritual intelligence on identity development, with the greatest benefits for adolescents perceiving their parents as highly authoritative.

Discussion

Examining the connection between spiritual intelligence and identity development, this study focused on the moderating influence of authoritative parenting and the mediating effect of psychological capital. Evaluating the effects of authoritative parenting on the relationship between spiritual intelligence and identity formation was the main goal.

The data fulfilled the requirements for inferential testing, according to preliminary assessments, ensuring the validity and consistency of the study findings. Significantly positive correlations between identity development, psychological capital, spiritual intelligence and authoritative parenting were found using correlation analysis. These findings are consistent with previous studies showing that more spiritual intelligence in adolescents is associated with greater transcendence, self-awareness, and meaning-making skills, all of which support adaptive developmental outcomes (King & DeCicco, 2009; Liu et al., 2021). Psychological capital, which is defined by optimism, resilience, hope and self-efficacy, was also positively associated with adolescent's ability to develop a cohesive sense of who they are.

The results also show that spiritual intelligence uses psychological capital to impact identity development. Higher spiritually intelligent adolescents seem to have more robust psychological resources, which support identity definition,

commitment, and exploration. This mediating pathway demonstrates how internal strengths help adolescents better manage the difficulties of identity formation while also acting as a stress buffer. These findings align with positive psychology viewpoints that highlight psychological capital contribution to motivation, tenacity, and adaptive coping (Luthans et al., 2007).

The moderating influence of authoritative parenting on the relationship between spiritual intelligence and identity formation is another significant contribution of this study. Spiritual intelligence and identity outcomes were more strongly correlated among adolescents who reported having parents that were warm, encouraging, and supportive of their autonomy. This result is consistent with earlier research showing that authoritative parenting increases the developmental advantages of adolescents psychological resources by fostering independence, self-regulation, and confidence (Masud et al., 2019; Purdy & Popan, 2024). Adolescents who experience authoritative parenting may be able to convert their psychological strengths and spiritual insights into strong identity convictions by receiving the social and emotional support they need.

The present findings are also consistent with several international studies that have examined identity development within positive psychological and contextual frameworks. For instance, King and DeCicco (2009), in a North American adolescent sample, reported that higher spiritual intelligence facilitated identity exploration and meaning construction, supporting the current study's emphasis on spiritual intelligence as a foundational internal resource. Similarly, a large scale study by Liu et al. (2021) conducted in China found that adolescents with higher psychological capital demonstrated stronger identity coherence and emotional regulation, reinforcing the mediating role of psychological capital observed in the present research. Furthermore, European research by Purdy and Popan (2024) highlighted that authoritative parenting amplified the positive effects of adolescents' internal strengths on identity-related outcomes, aligning closely with the moderating influence identified in this study. Collectively, these cross-cultural findings suggest that the interplay between spiritual intelligence,

psychological capital, and authoritative parenting operates as a robust and culturally transferable mechanism in adolescent identity development.

Limitations and Suggestions

There are several limitations on the study. First, because its cross-sectional design does not account for changes in development over time, it restricts causal interpretations.

To investigate the relationships between spiritual intelligence, psychological capital, and parenting styles at various adolescent phases, longitudinal research might be helpful. Second, the use of self-report measures increases the risk of response bias; behavioral evaluations or multi-informant data may be used in future research. Lastly, the study only included English-speaking Pakistani adolescents, which would restrict the findings' applicability to other countries with different parenting practices and spiritual beliefs.

Implications

The study's conclusions have important implications for adolescent development and family dynamics. First, by emphasizing the critical role that spiritual intelligence plays in promoting identity development through the mediating influence of psychological capital, this study adds to the body of current knowledge. Furthermore, the findings highlight how important it is to support psychological resources in adolescents, such as optimism, hope, and resilience, which may be developed by focused school and community initiatives.

The study also emphasizes the importance of authoritative parenting, which fosters a supportive atmosphere for adolescents' identity development while boosting the benefits of spiritual intelligence. Furthermore, the fact that parenting circumstances can change the impact of spiritual intelligence and psychological capital provides useful direction for Pakistani parental education and counseling initiatives. Lastly, the results indicate that supportive parenting techniques combined with interventions aimed at enhancing psychological and spiritual intelligence can be beneficial for programs promoting juvenile growth and wellbeing.

Conclusion

This research shows that spiritual intelligence plays an important role in how adolescents shape their sense of identity. When supported by psychological capital, it gives them strength to face challenges and grow in a positive direction. At the same time, having authoritative parents makes this process even stronger, as their guidance and support provide balance during this critical stage of life. These findings remind us that both inner resources and family support matter in helping adolescents build a confident and healthy identity.

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