



## Awakening Individual's Change Commitment: The Role of Emotional and Spiritual Intelligences in Health Sector of Pakistan

Afsheen Fatima<sup>1\*</sup>, Dr. Rabia Imran<sup>2</sup>, Ali Ahmed Khan<sup>3</sup> Hammad Ahmed Khan<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Lecturer, University Institute of Management Sciences (UIMS), PMAS-AAUR, & PhD. Scholar, Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, Institute of Science and Technology (SZABIST), Islamabad, Pakistan

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Management and Marketing, College of Commerce and Business Administration, Dhofar University, Oman

<sup>3</sup>Senior Lecturer, Sarhad University, Pakistan

<sup>4</sup>PhD Scholar, Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, Institute of Science and Technology (SZABIST), Islamabad, Pakistan

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### ABSTRACT

The study conceptualizes creativity as a mediator, which mediates the relation between individual intellects (emotional and spiritual) and change commitment. It further explores the relationships among individual intellects, creativity and change commitment. Purposive sampling technique was used by selecting 401 respondents who were employees of health sector of Pakistan. The results reveal positive and significant relationships among the individual intellects, creativity and change commitment. Moreover, creativity partially mediates in the relationship between individual intellects and change commitment. Future research recommendations and implications of results are discussed.

**KEYWORDS:** Emotional Intelligence, Spiritual Intelligence, Change Commitment, Creativity

### 1. INTRODUCTION

During any organizational change, employees are the direct recipients. While perceiving change, they consider a number of factors, which then affect their decision [1]. The continuous increase in frequency and difficulty of change in place where employees work want staff to cope with change without disturbance whereas, the circumstances along with human nature results in several different responses. The employees may resist or support the change. Support for change is the most desired outcome and can only be derived by increasing committed to change, which predicts behavioral support for change better than organizational commitment [2,3].

Past literature proposes that one may learn to lead and navigate change by using different types of intelligences like business, political, spiritual and emotional [4]. Emotional intelligence in particular, assists individuals during tough conditions by making them perform to their optimum level [5]. Spirituality on the other hand, can be of great help in boosting productivity at individual as well organizational level [6]. Spiritual Intelligence is conceivably the utmost form of intelligence a person may carry. The current transition from traditional working practices to the latest ones, the spiritual intelligence might be helpful in developing change commitment.

The present study proposes and tests a model that delineates antecedents of change commitment by incorporating spiritual and emotional intelligences. While making decisions for coping with change; managers must keep in mind employees' likely reactions. The present research maintains that creativity plays a contextual role i.e. individuals having intellects along with skill of creativity are in a better situation to cope with the change. The research objectives of current study were exploring the impacts of individual intellects (emotional and spiritual intelligences) on the change commitment and to examine the mediating effect of creativity in the relationships of emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence with the change commitment.

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

One needs to learn and practice the effective use of change management theories, models and approaches. Nevertheless, to better understand and learn how to manage the organizational workforce during organizational change, one may seek the antecedents that lead individuals' change commitment. The change may bring several benefits and or costs to individuals. This cost-benefit analysis shapes employees' behavior towards the change that further leads to their overall response towards the change [7]. The important elements present in the literature facilitating the change process for individuals include their involvement in the change process, organizational

\*Corresponding Author: Afsheen Fatima, Lecturer, University Institute of Management Sciences (UIMS), PMAS-AAUR, & PhD. Scholar, Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, Institute of Science and Technology (SZABIST), Islamabad, Pakistan. E mail: afsheen@uaar.edu.pk

support, and training [8,9,10]. These factors may also assist individuals in building their commitment towards the change.

Herscovitch and Meyer [2] first explored change commitment construct on the basis of the actual three-component model of organizational commitment presented by [11]. Individual's change commitment refers to a person's positive attitude towards the firm's change initiatives. According to Herscovitch and Meyer [2] "change commitment is a force (mind-set) that binds an individual to a course of action deemed necessary for the successful implementation of a change initiative". Managers should attempt to obtain the change commitment of the employees as it has been considered an important factor during the change process [12]. There are three factors of change commitment i.e. affective commitment, normative commitment and continuous commitment. Affective change commitment implies to the wish to underpin the change; normative change commitment implies to an obligation to support the change, while continuous change commitment refers to the recognition of cost associated with resisting the change [2].

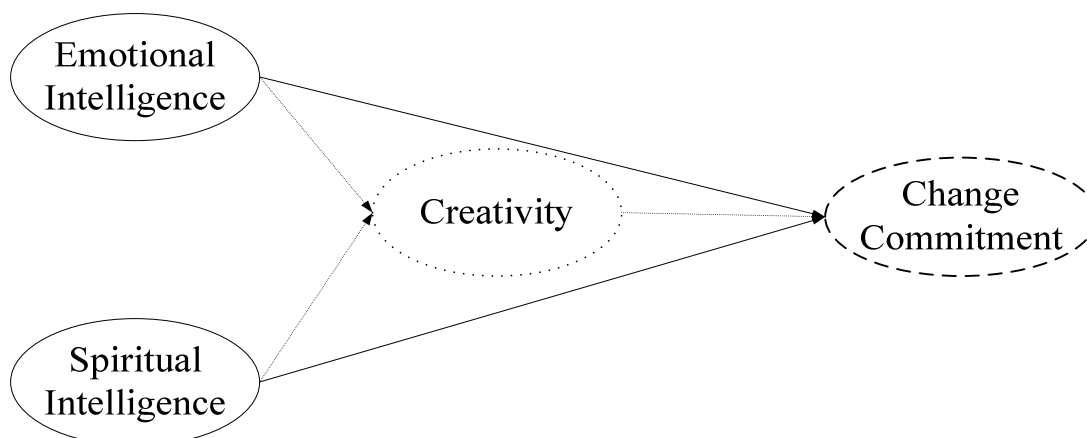
For developing change commitment, emotional intelligence has been included as one of its predictor in the present study. It has been researched that understanding and recognition of emotions is important for management of self and other people [13]. Emotional intelligence refers to "the understanding, using and regulating of emotions, in self and others" [14]. This is an important construct especially when individuals pass through a change process. Since long this construct has been under discussion that whether to include it or not, as an intelligence construct [15,16]. The relation of emotional intelligence and improved productivity is intriguingly attractive to firms, especially service providing firms. It was stated that success depends on how a person handles the emotions of their self and those of others rather than how intelligent they were in context of cognitive intelligence [17]. Howard [18] suggests that individuals high in emotional intelligence have greater affect on the success of intentional change. The present study maintains that this intention is build upon the change commitment that further motivates people to support the change. Such people remain hopeful and flexible, even when go through difficulties or problems.

At workplaces individuals undertake extra-role behaviors job i.e. spirituality. The notion of spirituality in the workplace has attracted a considerable amount of attention in the last decade. Previous studies found out that spirituality plays a beneficial role in organizations [19]. Spirituality helps organizations and employees in understanding their work and experiencing it in a totally different way [20]. The 'deeper' an individual's spiritual experience the greater the benefits to them in managing their career and the organizations [21]. The popular literature on spirituality has flourished [22]. According to Richard [23], "everyone has spiritual intelligence and that recognizing and working with it is important for a person's total well-being". Several researchers argued that workplace spirituality issues have been getting focus and it has been observed that workplace spirituality programs bring several positive outcomes to the employees including improved health and psychological wellbeing, employee commitment, improved performance, less absenteeism and turnover [24, 25]. Spiritual intelligence refers to "The intelligence with which we address and solve problems of meaning and value, with which we can place our actions and our lives in a wider, richer, meaning-giving context" [19]. Present study maintains that spiritual intelligence assists individuals to build change commitment to organizational change by understating that organizational success is just their own success.

Creativity has been identified as a mediator in the present study. This construct refers to an ability to generate something that is novel and valuable [26]. Theory states that every person is different in coping with change, innovation, making decision and finding solutions to problems[27]. Present study maintains that individuals' intellects play significant part in triggering their creativity which in turn effect change commitment. However, not much empirical research is there to examine the presence of this connection.

## 2.1 Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

According to [28] a model symbolizes a system. Therefore, a model based on acknowledged variables was formulated comprising four variables namely, emotional intelligence (EI), spiritual intelligence (SI), creativity ©, and change commitment (CC).



**Hypotheses**

- H<sub>1</sub>: Higher the emotional intelligence, higher would be the individual’s change commitment.
- H<sub>2</sub>: Higher the spiritual intelligence, higher would be the individual’s change commitment.
- H<sub>3</sub>: Emotional intelligence is significantly positively associated with creativity.
- H<sub>4</sub>: Spiritual intelligence is significantly and positively associated with creativity.
- H<sub>5</sub>: Creativity is significantly and positively associated with the individual’s change commitment.
- H<sub>6</sub>: Creativity mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and the individual’s change commitment.
- H<sub>7</sub>: Creativity mediates the relationship between spiritual intelligence and the individual’s change commitment.

**3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**3.1 Participants and Procedures**

Field study was conducted in the Pakistani health sector. Human Resource Department was contacted to take permission before participants could be reached, after taking prior permission, from their respective Human Resource Department. Staff was made sure that researcher would not disturb or get involved in the tasks that are carried out by the staff on daily basis and the duration would not exceed more than 15 to 20 minutes. Data were collected from the employees of these organizations located at the twin cities of Pakistan. Total number of questionnaires that were given to staff, 455 were returned. Those Questionnaires which had more than 25% blanks were voided [29], left with 401 effective questionnaires.

**3.2 Measures**

Data were collected through five developed scales using a five-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 =strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Spiritual intelligence measured using a three items scale of Amram and Dryer [30]. These items were measured. Emotional intelligence was measured by a scale developed by [14] and was evaluated using 11 items. Change Commitment scale developed by [2] was used. This scale consists of 11 items. Creativity was assessed through three items proposed by [31].

**4. RESULTS**

**Table-I**  
Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix for all the variables (N=401)

	Variables	No. of items	Mean	I	II	III	IV
<b>I</b>	Change commitment	14	3.65	(0.712)			
<b>II</b>	Emotional Intelligence	10	3.54	0.477**	(0.829)		
<b>III</b>	Spiritual Intelligence	12	3.57	0.529**	0.655**	(0.831)	
<b>IV</b>	Creativity	3	3.41	0.418**	0.519**	0.579**	(0.656)

P<.001

Above table indicates that all variables have reliability values (in parenthesis) higher than 0.70, except creativity i.e. 0.656. However, [32] suggested 0.64 to 0.85 as an acceptable range. Moreover, mean values range from 3.41 of change commitment to 3.65 for emotional intelligence. Table 1 also shows that all the variables are positively and significantly related. Change commitment is positively and significantly related with emotional intelligence ( $r=0.477$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), spiritual intelligence ( $r=0.529$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), and creativity ( $r=0.418$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Emotional intelligence is positively and significantly related with Spiritual Intelligence ( $r=0.655$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and creativity ( $r=0.519$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Spiritual Intelligence is positively and significantly related with creativity ( $r=0.579$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

### Testing for Mediation

Keeping in mind the recommendations of [33], mediation analysis was carried out. To be eligible to be a mediator a variable must satisfy the following conditions according to Baron and Kenny ; a) Independent variable must be related to dependent variable; b) independent variable must be related to the mediator; c) mediator must be related to the dependent variable and finally; d) when independent variable and the mediator are included, the direct relationship between independent variable and the dependent variable should become significantly smaller (partial mediation) or non-significant (full mediation). First three conditions were satisfied as per the correlation results. For the fourth condition, regression analysis was conducted.

**Table-II**  
*Regression analysis for Mediation of Creativity (N=401)*

Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t
Model 1	(constant)	1.351	0.157		8.593*
	Emotional Intelligence	0.208	0.050	0.228	4.129*
	Spiritual Intelligence	0.368	0.053	0.380	6.892*
Model 2	(constant)	1.319	0.157		8.410*
	Emotional Intelligence	0.180	0.052	0.197	3.495*
	Spiritual Intelligence	0.317	0.057	0.327	5.552*
	Creativity	0.089	0.037	0.126	2.416*
<b>R<sup>2</sup> change = 0.04</b>					
<b>F=62.135,DF=(3,397),P&lt;0.001</b>					

\* $p<0.001$

Table 2 presents the results of the analysis between emotional and spiritual intelligences and change commitment while including creativity as mediator. Value of  $R^2$  change = 0.040 represents 4% minor effect was observed in the relation due to creativity. Beta weight reduced from 0.228 to 0.197 and was statistically significant for emotional intelligence showing partial mediation. Moreover, in case of spiritual intelligence, beta weight reduced from 0.380 to 0.327, and was statistically significant showing partial mediation [33].

## 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Aim of this study was to check the impact of individuals' intellects i.e. emotional and spiritual intelligences and creativity on change commitment; and to investigate the mediating role of creativity in fostering the relationship between emotional and spiritual intelligence and change commitment.

First hypothesis anticipated a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and change commitment. This hypothesis was substantiated as emotional Intelligence was significantly and positively related to change commitment. Emotionally intelligent individuals regulate and use their emotions accurately, thus they utilize emotions for their own and their organizations' advantage. Channeling, these emotions in the correct direction, may lead individuals to develop positive attitudes toward change initiatives taken by management, and that positive attitude is actually called the change commitment or individual commitment to organizational change [2]. This is another important contribution of the present study, as there is lack of evidence on this particular relationship in the extant literature. Second hypothesis anticipated a positive relationship between spiritual Intelligence and change commitment. This hypothesis was substantiated as spiritual Intelligence had a significant and positive relationship with change commitment. The empirical evidence supported the fact that spiritually intelligent individuals attempt to assist their organization through their commitment towards organizational changes.

Third hypothesis anticipated a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity. This hypothesis was substantiated as emotional intelligence was significantly and positively related to creativity.

Emotionally intelligent people use their intelligence in finding new and creative ideas. As creativity is a construct which refers to an ability to generate something that is novel and valuable [26]. Fourth hypothesis anticipated a positive relationship between spiritual Intelligence and creativity. This hypothesis was substantiated as spiritual Intelligence was significantly and positively related with creativity. There is very little research on the relationship of these two variables. Spiritually intelligent employees make efforts to find meaningfulness in their work using creativity. Fifth hypothesis anticipated a positive and significant relationship between creativity and change commitment. This hypothesis was also supported. This finding is yet another significant contribution of the present research as creativity has been studied with different types of commitments like organizational commitment and job commitment [34]. However, this research is the first of kind to the best of the researchers' knowledge, exploring creativity as a determinant of change commitment. Coming up with new and novel ideas motivates individuals to understand the importance of the change. Therefore, creative individuals may assist their management in the change implementation process. The present research confirms that creative individuals tend to perform their role in an efficient manner during change.

Sixth and seventh hypotheses anticipated that creativity mediates the relationships between (i) emotional intelligence and change commitment, and (i) spiritual intelligence and change commitment. The results provide partial support for the hypotheses. In existing literature, however, there is rare evidence of creativity as a mediator in the aforementioned relationships. Present study examined these relationships and found creativity partially mediating between emotional and spiritual intelligences and change commitment.

The current research has a substantial contribution to the body of existing knowledge in the field of emotional and spiritual intelligences, and change commitment by providing support for the mediating role of creativity in relation between the individual intellects (emotional and spiritual intelligences) and change commitment.

### **5.1 Limitations and Future Research**

One of the limitations of present study is its cross-sectional design. Therefore, in future the best way to analyze these relationships is to conduct a longitudinal research design. This study used non-probability sampling technique, which is making its generalizability limited. Present research used one-dimensional measures of all the constructs of study and should be viewed as a first step for future research that would be extended to employ different facets of these constructs for in-depth understanding. For future research, it is suggested to advance this study by examining other types of intellects e.g. political, competitive, business etc. Present research may be replicated on other populations as it was conducted on individuals working in Pakistani health sector organizations.

### **5.2 Practical Implications**

This paper provides an empirical analysis of the relationship among emotional and spiritual Intelligences, creativity and change commitment. The results of this research urge the importance of individual intellects in improving their creativity and change related skills. This study suggests that training program emphasizing these individuals' intellect i.e. emotional and spiritual is advisable. This study has direct implication for preparing employees for any change that an organization introduces through triggering their commitment with that particular change. The managers must give importance to their employees' emotional and spiritual needs. Which in result is expected to make employees' committed with organizational change.

When attempting to develop change commitment of employees, managers must consider the link between their intelligences and creativity. Under certain conditions (e.g. creativity) emotionally and spiritually intelligent people are assumed to be more committed to change than other people. Organizations must train their employees for emotional and spiritual Intelligence skills as well as technical skills side by side. Organizations should be enlightened and well aware of the importance of individual intellects for change commitment.

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