


# Bibliometric Review of Spiritual Intelligence: Trends and Applications in Education and Personal Growth

Loso Judijanto  
IPOSS Jakarta

Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Article history:</b></p> <p>Received Mar, 2025 Revised Mar, 2025 Accepted Mar, 2025</p> <hr/> <p><b>Keywords:</b></p> <p>Bibliometric Analysis Emotional Intelligence Leadership Psychological Well-Being Spiritual Intelligence</p>	<p>Spiritual intelligence (SI) has emerged as a significant area of research, spanning disciplines such as psychology, education, leadership, and organizational behavior. This study conducts a bibliometric analysis of SI research using data from Scopus and visualization tools such as VOSviewer to identify key trends, influential authors, and thematic developments. The findings reveal that SI is closely linked to psychological well-being, resilience, emotional intelligence, and ethical leadership, highlighting its interdisciplinary nature. Early research (2018–2019) primarily focused on mental health and personal development, whereas recent studies (2021–2022) have explored SI in leadership, organizational commitment, and artificial intelligence. The analysis also shows regional research hubs, with Iran, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Western countries playing central roles in SI studies. Despite its increasing academic recognition, SI research faces challenges in standardized measurement, integration into education and professional settings, and cross-cultural applicability. Future research should focus on developing reliable assessment tools, expanding SI's role in leadership and AI ethics, and conducting comparative cultural studies. This study contributes to the growing body of SI literature by mapping its evolution, applications, and emerging research directions.</p> <p><i>This is an open access article under the <a href="#">CC BY-SA</a> license.</i></p> <div></div>
<p><b>Corresponding Author:</b></p> <p>Name: Loso Judijanto Institution: IPOSS Jakarta Email: <a href="mailto:losojudijantobumn@gmail.com">losojudijantobumn@gmail.com</a></p>	

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of spiritual intelligence (SI) has garnered considerable interest in both academic and practical spheres, particularly in relation to its potential applications in education and personal growth. Zohar and Marshall first introduced the term "spiritual intelligence" as the intelligence with which individuals address and solve problems of meaning and value [1]. They posit that SI enables one to place one's actions and

experiences in a wider, richer, meaning-giving context, thus enhancing personal and professional development. The pertinence of SI in educational settings is evident as it integrates emotional, social, and ethical dimensions that are critical for holistic human development [2].

The rapid expansion of literature on spiritual intelligence across various disciplines underscores its multidimensional utility and appeal. Studies have linked SI with improved mental health, enhanced creativity,

leadership effectiveness, and resilience in facing life's adversities [3]. In educational contexts specifically, spiritual intelligence is viewed as a catalyst for fostering deep thinking, moral integrity, and a sense of purpose among learners [4]. Furthermore, educators are increasingly acknowledging the role of SI in nurturing global citizenship and empathy, which are essential in today's interconnected world [5].

Despite its recognized importance, the application of spiritual intelligence in educational curricula and personal development programs remains sporadic and somewhat underexplored. This is particularly relevant in how SI is measured, developed, and integrated within existing educational frameworks. The scholarly work done in this field is vast and spans various methodologies, including qualitative studies, quantitative analyses, and mixed-method approaches. This diversity, while beneficial, also presents challenges in terms of coherence and the operationalization of SI within educational practices [6].

A bibliometric analysis provides a systematic way to review and synthesize the extensive literature on spiritual intelligence. By mapping out the key trends, major themes, and gaps in the existing research, a bibliometric review can offer valuable insights into how SI has evolved as a field of study and its practical implications. This is especially useful for educators, psychologists, and policymakers interested in integrating more holistic approaches into learning and personal development environments. The relevance of spiritual intelligence today can also be contextualized within the broader shifts in educational paradigms from traditional rote learning to more comprehensive frameworks that include emotional and spiritual education. This shift recognizes the necessity of addressing the spiritual aspect of students' lives, which profoundly influences their learning outcomes, personal satisfaction, and overall well-being [7].

Despite the growing body of research advocating for the integration of spiritual intelligence in education and personal

development, there remains a lack of comprehensive, systematic studies that aggregate these findings to present a clear, academic portrayal of the field. The current literature is fragmented and varies greatly in terms of definitions, scopes, and methodologies, making it difficult for practitioners to apply SI concepts effectively in educational settings. This gap highlights the need for a bibliometric analysis that not only reviews the existing literature but also identifies the predominant trends, challenges, and future directions of SI research. The objective of this study is to conduct a comprehensive bibliometric review of the literature on spiritual intelligence, with a specific focus on its trends and applications in education and personal growth.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 *Defining Spiritual Intelligence*

The concept of spiritual intelligence (SI) has been conceptualized in various ways across the psychological and educational literature. [8] initially described SI as the ability to use spiritual information to enhance daily functioning and to facilitate problem-solving by drawing on spiritual resources. [9] expanded on this by defining SI as the adaptive use of spiritual information to facilitate everyday problem solving and goal attainment. These definitions underline SI's role in enhancing personal and professional growth by integrating spiritual resources to navigate life's challenges.

### 2.2 *Measurement and Models of Spiritual Intelligence*

The measurement of SI has been a focal point of research, leading to the development of various scales and models. [10] introduced the Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (SISRI), which includes components such as critical existential thinking, personal meaning production, transcendental awareness, and conscious state expansion. These components are intended to measure the practical aspects of SI as they apply to personal

development and adaptive behavior. [11] model further identifies seven dimensions of SI, including consciousness, grace, meaning, transcendence, truth, and inner-directedness, each contributing to a holistic understanding of how SI influences human behavior.

### 2.3 *Spiritual Intelligence in Education*

The application of SI in educational settings focuses on its potential to enhance learning experiences and outcomes. [12] argued that SI could foster a deeper understanding of self and others, enhancing social and emotional learning in schools. This is supported by research suggesting that SI is linked to increased empathy, ethical decision-making, and resilience among students [13]. Moreover, educators are exploring how SI can be integrated into curricula to promote holistic education approaches that address not only intellectual and physical growth but also spiritual well-being.

### 2.4 *Challenges in Integrating SI into Education*

Despite its potential benefits, the integration of SI into educational systems faces several challenges. One significant barrier is the lack of a unified definition and understanding of what constitutes SI, which complicates its inclusion in standardized curricula [14]. Furthermore, the subjective nature of spiritual experiences can make it difficult to develop universally applicable educational methods or assessments. There is also ongoing debate regarding the separation of spiritual education from religious instruction, which is a sensitive issue in public schooling systems [15].

### 2.5 *Spiritual Intelligence and Personal Growth*

In the realm of personal development, SI has been associated with greater self-awareness, personal fulfillment, and improved mental health. [16] notes that individuals with high levels of SI tend to exhibit advanced personal coping strategies and a better overall sense of well-being. This is particularly relevant in therapeutic settings where SI principles are used to enhance self-understanding and recovery processes [17]. The correlation between SI and life satisfaction suggests that SI could play a crucial role in psychological resilience and the ability to thrive in various life circumstances.

## 3. Method

The methodological framework for this bibliometric review is specifically designed to analyze the literature on spiritual intelligence (SI) with a focus on education and personal growth. The review exclusively utilizes the Scopus database to gather relevant articles published from 2000 to 2025. The search strategy involved key terms such as "spiritual intelligence", "education", and "personal growth" to ensure a targeted collection of scholarly works. Only English language, peer-reviewed articles were included to maintain the rigor of the analysis. Following the data collection, VOSviewer software was employed for bibliometric mapping, facilitating the identification and visualization of key authors, fundamental papers, and thematic trends within the SI domain.

## 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Results

#### a. Keyword Co-Occurrence Network Visualization

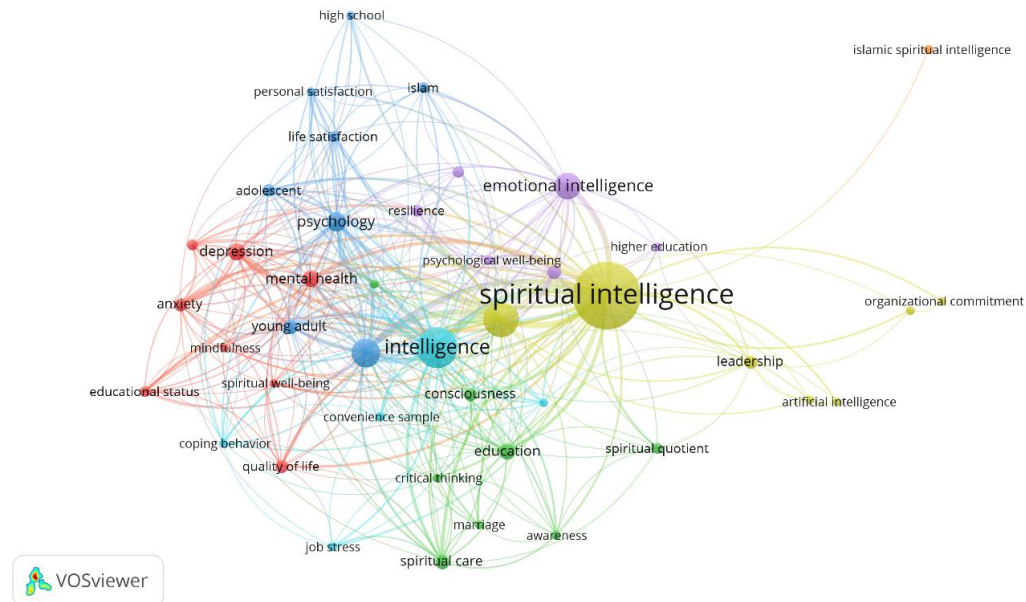


Figure 1. Network Visualization

Source: Data Analysis, 2025

The bibliometric visualization of "spiritual intelligence" research presents an interconnected network of key themes and topics derived from Scopus-indexed publications. The central and most prominent node, "spiritual intelligence," highlights its significance as the core research focus, with multiple links to associated concepts. The size of this node indicates a high frequency of occurrence in the dataset, suggesting that it serves as the primary subject around which other discussions revolve. The clustering of terms and their connectivity further illustrate the interdisciplinary nature of spiritual intelligence, integrating elements from psychology, education, leadership, and well-being.

A major cluster (green) focuses on the educational aspects of spiritual intelligence, with terms such

as "education," "critical thinking," "awareness," and "spiritual quotient." This cluster underscores the increasing academic interest in integrating spiritual intelligence into learning processes, emphasizing its role in fostering holistic education. The presence of "higher education" and "job stress" suggests that research has explored how spiritual intelligence contributes to student development, decision-making, and stress management in educational institutions. Additionally, terms such as "spiritual care" and "consciousness" indicate an extension into personal and professional development.

Another significant cluster (blue) links "spiritual intelligence" to "psychology" and "mental health," incorporating terms such as "resilience," "psychological well-being," and "quality of life." This suggests a strong correlation between

spiritual intelligence and mental health outcomes, particularly in managing stress, anxiety, and depression. The connection to "mindfulness" highlights an overlap between SI and contemporary psychological practices aimed at improving emotional stability and cognitive flexibility. This aligns with the growing body of research suggesting that individuals with higher levels of spiritual intelligence exhibit better coping mechanisms and personal satisfaction.

The yellow cluster appears to focus on professional and leadership-related themes, with terms such as "leadership," "organizational commitment," and "artificial intelligence." The connection between spiritual intelligence and leadership suggests that SI is increasingly recognized as a valuable trait in professional settings, influencing ethical decision-making, employee

engagement, and organizational success. The presence of "artificial intelligence" in this cluster may indicate emerging discussions on how SI principles can inform ethical considerations in AI development or leadership in tech-driven industries.

The red cluster reveals a focus on mental health challenges such as "depression," "anxiety," and "coping behavior," reinforcing the critical role of spiritual intelligence in emotional resilience and psychological well-being. The presence of terms related to "young adult," "adolescent," and "educational status" suggests that much of the research is concerned with younger populations, particularly in school and university settings. This highlights the potential of SI interventions in supporting mental health and personal growth among students.

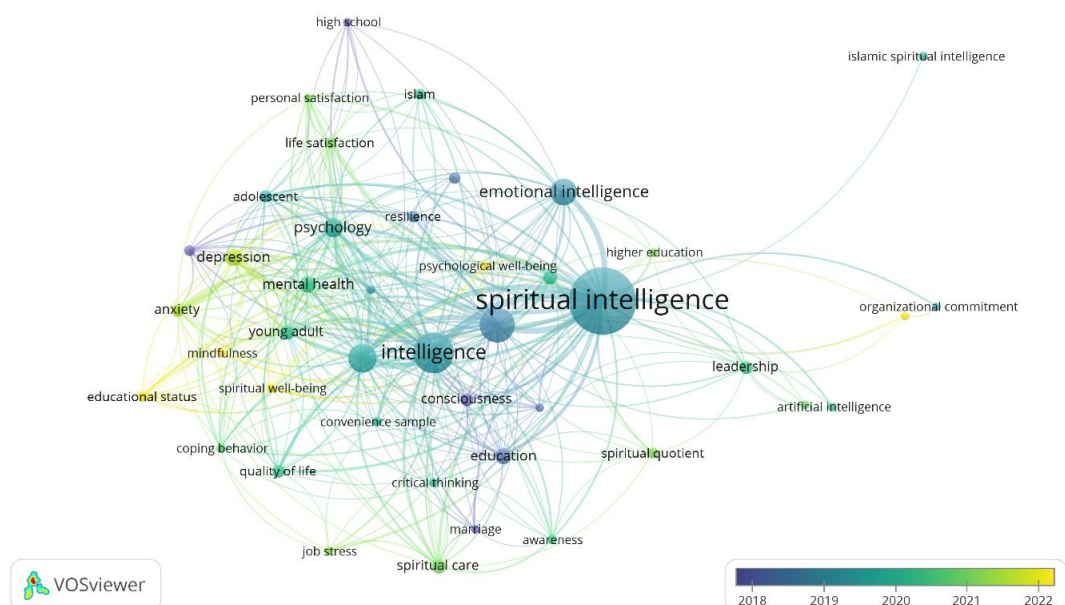


Figure 2. Overlay Visualization

Source: Data Analysis, 2025

The bibliometric visualization provides insights into the evolution of research on spiritual intelligence (SI) over time, as

indicated by the color gradient ranging from purple (2018) to yellow (2022). The central node, "spiritual intelligence," remains the most

prominent, signifying its role as the primary research focus. Closely associated terms such as "intelligence," "psychology," "education," and "emotional intelligence" highlight the interdisciplinary nature of SI, encompassing mental well-being, cognitive development, and ethical decision-making. The network structure suggests strong interconnections between SI and psychological well-being, supporting its relevance in fostering personal growth and resilience.

A noticeable trend in the temporal distribution of keywords indicates that earlier research (2018-2019) focused on psychology, mental health, depression, and anxiety (seen in purple and blue hues), emphasizing the role of SI in psychological resilience and emotional regulation. In contrast, more recent studies (2021-2022),

represented in green and yellow, have explored leadership, artificial intelligence, organizational commitment, and spiritual quotient, reflecting a shift toward professional and organizational applications of SI. This suggests that while initial research focused on individual well-being, newer studies are increasingly examining SI's relevance in workplaces and educational institutions, particularly in leadership and decision-making. The emergence of terms such as "Islamic spiritual intelligence" and "artificial intelligence" in more recent years (yellow nodes) signifies expanding research domains. The inclusion of religious perspectives on SI indicates growing interest in cultural and faith-based interpretations, while the connection to artificial intelligence suggests potential ethical considerations and applications of SI in technology.

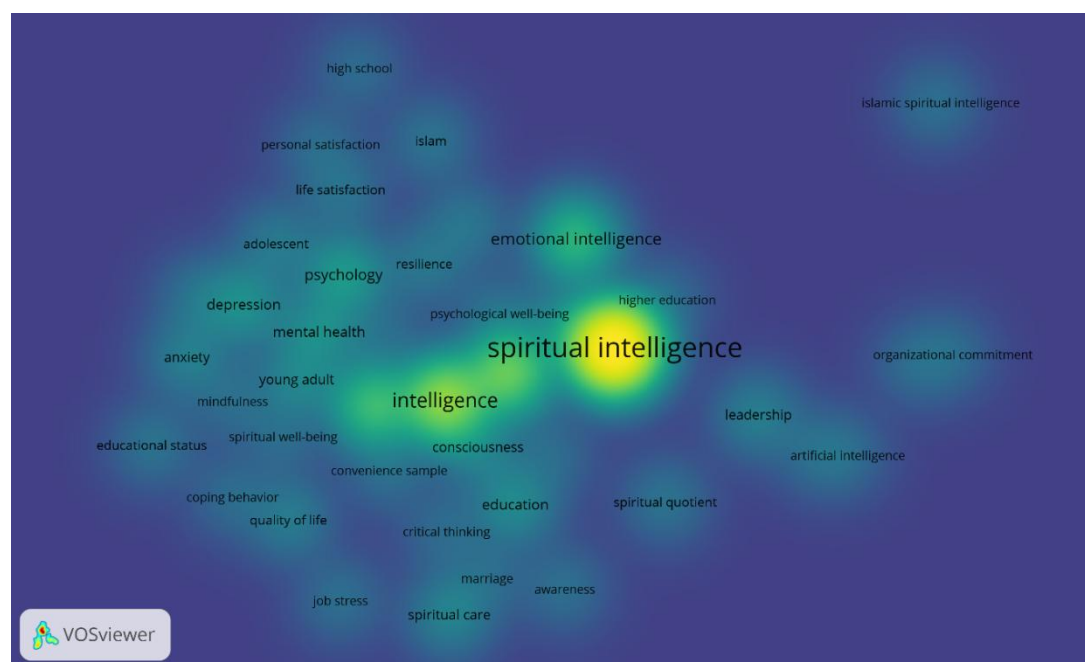


Figure 3. Density Visualization

Source: Data Analysis, 2025

The heatmap visualization highlights the intensity of research focus on different themes related to spiritual intelligence (SI). The bright

yellow area around "spiritual intelligence" signifies that it is the most frequently occurring term in the dataset, indicating its central role in

the literature. Closely associated terms such as "intelligence," "psychology," "emotional intelligence," and "education" also exhibit significant research activity, as shown by the green and yellow hues. This suggests that SI is primarily studied in connection with cognitive and psychological domains, particularly in fostering well-being, resilience, and educational development. The psychological aspects of SI, including "mental health," "anxiety," "depression," and "psychological well-being," appear as moderately active research areas, confirming SI's relevance in emotional regulation and mental well-being studies.

Less intense but still notable areas of research, depicted in blue-green, include "leadership,"

"organizational commitment," and "artificial intelligence," suggesting emerging discussions on the application of SI in professional and technological contexts. The presence of "Islamic spiritual intelligence" in an isolated bright spot indicates growing interest in cultural and religious perspectives on SI. Similarly, terms like "spiritual quotient," "consciousness," and "spiritual care" suggest ongoing exploration of SI's role in personal development and ethical decision-making. The heatmap confirms that while the psychological and educational dimensions of SI dominate current research, professional, technological, and cultural aspects are gradually gaining traction as significant areas for future studies.

Table 1. Most Cited Article

Citations	Author and Year	Title
1933	[18]	Learning in Adulthood: A Comprehensive Guide
1073	[19]	Curriculum: Foundations, Principles, and Issues
1066	[20]	The age of spiritual machines: when computers exceed human intelligence
1009	[21]	The Psychology of Ultimate Concerns: Motivation and Spirituality in Personality
752	[22]	Comprehensive Multicultural Education: Theory and Practice
733	[23]	Is Spirituality an Intelligence? Motivation, Cognition, and the Psychology of Ultimate Concern
635	[2]	Sq - Spiritual Intelligence: The Ultimate Intelligence
483	[20]	The Age of Spiritual Machines: When Computers Exceed Human Intelligence
375	[24]	Democracy in Education
375	[25]	Spiritual Capital: Wealth We Can Live By

Source: Scopus, 2025



## b. Co-Authorship Network

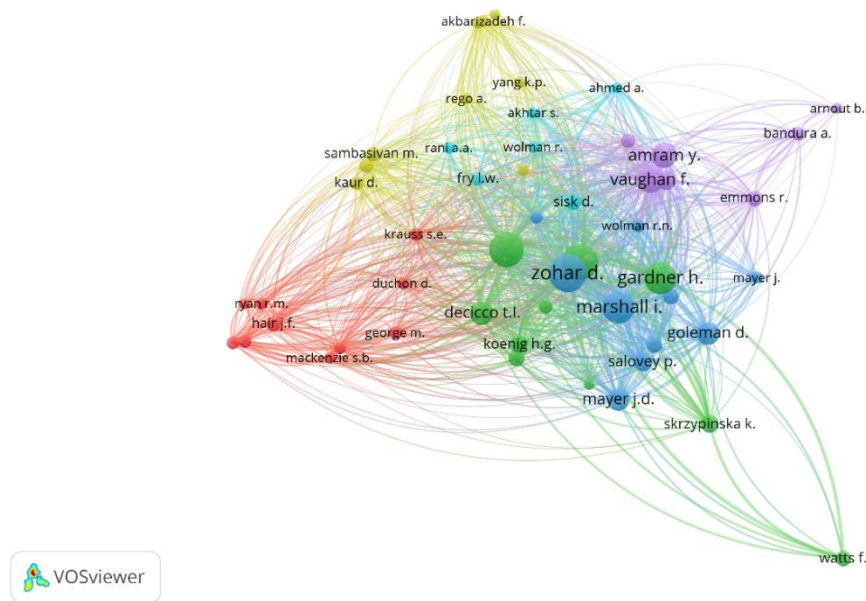


Figure 4. Author Visualization  
Source: Data Analysis, 2025

The VOSviewer network visualization displays the co-authorship and citation relationships among researchers in the field of spiritual intelligence. The central and most prominent nodes belong to Zohar D., Gardner H., and Marshall I., indicating that these authors are among the most influential in the domain, frequently cited and forming the intellectual core of SI research. The network is divided into several clusters, each representing different research perspectives and contributions. The blue cluster, which includes Goleman D., Mayer J., and Salovey P., appears to be linked to emotional intelligence, suggesting an

intersection between emotional and spiritual intelligence research. The red cluster, led by Ryan R.M. and Haidt J., seems to focus on psychological well-being, ethics, and personal development in relation to SI. The yellow and green clusters include researchers such as Akbarizadeh F. and Rego A., indicating regional or applied perspectives on SI, particularly in leadership and organizational behavior. The purple cluster, featuring Amram Y. and Vaughan F., suggests work related to transpersonal psychology and broader philosophical interpretations of SI.



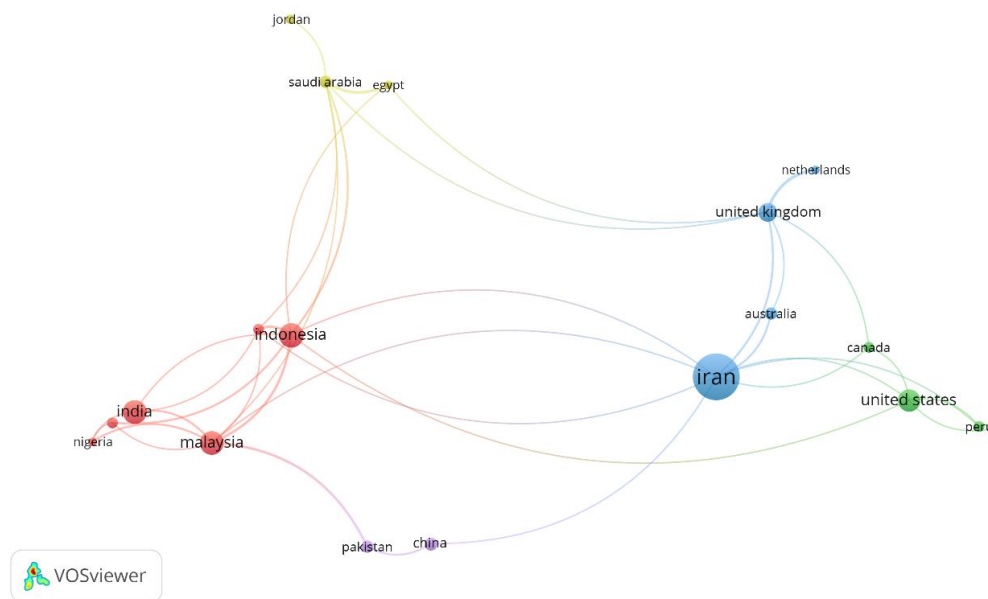


Figure 5. Country Visualization

Source: Data Analysis, 2025

The VOSviewer network visualization illustrates country-level collaboration in spiritual intelligence research, with Iran emerging as the most prominent node, indicating its central role in this academic field. Strong connections link Iran to countries such as the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, and Australia, suggesting significant international research collaboration, particularly with Western nations. The red cluster, dominated by Malaysia, Indonesia, and India, indicates strong regional collaboration in Southeast Asia and South Asia, often linked to cultural and religious perspectives on spiritual intelligence. Additionally, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan show connections with both Indonesia and Iran, suggesting shared interests in Islamic spiritual intelligence. The green cluster, led by the United States and Peru, represents another stream of collaboration, possibly focusing on psychological and leadership applications of SI. This visualization highlights the global nature of spiritual intelligence

research, with distinct regional research hubs forming around Iran, Southeast Asia, and Western countries.

#### 4.2 Discussion

##### a. The Evolution of Spiritual Intelligence Research

The bibliometric analysis of spiritual intelligence (SI) research indicates a significant evolution in the field, with increasing interest from scholars worldwide. The concept of SI, initially introduced by [25] has expanded beyond philosophical discussions to encompass psychological, educational, and leadership dimensions. The VOSviewer network visualizations highlight key themes, influential authors, and country-based collaborations that shape the landscape of SI research. The centrality of "spiritual intelligence" in the bibliometric maps underscores its importance, while connections with terms such as "emotional intelligence," "psychological well-being," and "education" reflect the interdisciplinary nature of this research domain.

Over time, SI has gained recognition as an essential component of holistic human development. Initially, studies focused primarily on defining SI and exploring its conceptual framework, but recent research has shifted towards practical applications in education, mental health, and professional settings. This transition is evident in the temporal visualization, which shows that earlier studies (2018–2019) predominantly explored SI in relation to psychological well-being, depression, anxiety, and mindfulness, whereas recent studies (2021–2022) emphasize leadership, organizational commitment, and artificial intelligence. This trend suggests a growing interest in applying SI in professional and technological contexts, broadening its scope beyond personal development.

#### **b. Key Research Themes and Their Implications**

The thematic analysis of the network visualization highlights four major research clusters: psychological and mental health aspects, educational applications, leadership and organizational behavior, and cultural/spiritual perspectives. Each of these themes represents a unique but interconnected aspect of SI research.

##### **1. Psychological and Mental Health Aspects**

The connection between SI and psychological well-being is one of the most well-established research areas. Terms such as "resilience," "anxiety," "depression," and "quality of life" frequently appear in the bibliometric network, indicating that SI is closely associated with mental health. Researchers such as [8], [21] have emphasized SI's role in enhancing coping mechanisms, reducing stress, and promoting emotional balance. SI

enables individuals to find meaning in adversity, develop self-awareness, and foster inner resilience, making it a valuable psychological resource in contemporary mental health discourse. The presence of terms like "mindfulness" and "spiritual well-being" further reinforces the notion that SI complements existing psychological interventions. Mindfulness-based therapies, commonly used in clinical psychology, share similarities with SI in promoting self-reflection and present-moment awareness. This suggests that integrating SI into therapeutic practices could enhance holistic mental health approaches. Additionally, the bibliometric analysis suggests a rising interest in young adult and adolescent mental health, highlighting the importance of SI in youth resilience and personal development.

##### **2. Educational Applications**

The second significant research cluster revolves around education and learning outcomes. Terms such as "education," "critical thinking," "spiritual quotient," and "awareness" suggest that SI is increasingly being explored as a tool for enhancing educational experiences. Scholars argue that SI fosters deep thinking, ethical reasoning, and personal integrity, which are essential for modern education [26]. The inclusion of "higher education" in the bibliometric analysis indicates that universities are also recognizing the value of SI in curriculum design, particularly in disciplines related to ethics, leadership, and psychology. One of the key challenges in integrating SI into education is

measurement and assessment. Unlike traditional intelligence (IQ) or emotional intelligence (EQ), which have standardized testing methods, SI remains difficult to quantify. Various models, such as [27] Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (SISRI) and [17] Seven Dimensions of Spiritual Intelligence, attempt to address this issue, but a universally accepted framework is still lacking. Future research should focus on developing reliable assessment tools that can be used to evaluate SI's impact on academic performance, ethical decision-making, and student well-being.

### 3. Leadership and Organizational Behavior

The connection between SI and leadership is a relatively recent but rapidly expanding area of research. The presence of terms like "leadership," "organizational commitment," and "artificial intelligence" suggests that scholars are exploring how SI influences workplace behavior, ethical leadership, and decision-making. Studies by [28], [29] indicate that leaders with high SI demonstrate greater empathy, ethical integrity, and resilience, contributing to positive organizational cultures. Additionally, the link between SI and artificial intelligence (AI) raises interesting discussions about the role of ethics in technology-driven workplaces. As AI becomes more integrated into decision-making processes, there is a need for ethical frameworks that incorporate SI principles, ensuring that AI-driven systems align with human values and moral reasoning. This emerging intersection between SI

and AI highlights a potential avenue for future research in ethical AI development, leadership training, and digital transformation.

### 4. Cultural and Spiritual Perspectives

The bibliometric analysis also reveals regional differences in SI research, as seen in the country collaboration visualization. Iran emerges as a central hub, with strong research connections to the United Kingdom, United States, Malaysia, and Indonesia. The presence of "Islamic spiritual intelligence" suggests that some studies focus on culturally specific interpretations of SI, particularly in Islamic and Eastern traditions. This indicates that SI is not a one-size-fits-all concept but is influenced by religious, philosophical, and cultural backgrounds. The Southeast Asian and Middle Eastern clusters highlight the role of spirituality in shaping leadership, education, and mental health interventions. In contrast, Western research hubs (United States, United Kingdom, Canada) focus more on psychological and professional applications of SI. This divergence suggests that while SI is a global research topic, its interpretation and implementation vary based on cultural context. Future research should explore cross-cultural comparisons to develop a more inclusive, universally applicable framework for SI.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The bibliometric analysis of spiritual intelligence research confirms its multidisciplinary nature, encompassing psychology, education, leadership, and

cultural studies. While significant progress has been made in understanding SI's role in mental health, learning, and professional ethics, measurement challenges, cultural variations, and integration into mainstream practices remain key obstacles. The

emergence of SI in leadership, AI, and cross-cultural studies indicates promising future research directions. By addressing these gaps, SI can play a transformative role in shaping holistic education, ethical leadership, and mental well-being in the modern world.

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