

## **SPIRITUALITY: FOR CHILDREN'S HEALTH-CARE, PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT**

**Ms.D.M.Pallavi Manohar**

Ph. D Research Scholar, CREST, Bengaluru, Karnataka

**Dr.Shivani**

Associate Professor and Ph.D Research Guide  
Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation, CREST, Bengaluru, Karnataka

### **Abstract**

*This is a conceptual paper based on fundamental research. Objective is to examine if support from available Spiritual systems can be utilized for upgrading children's health-care, protection and development. Findings: (1) By definition, Spirituality as Science-based construct involves investigation of processes that create belonging, wholeness, connectedness, openness etcetera. But as Yogic-based construct, it deals with positive utilization of "the power which flows from the original repository and has the capacity, in the form of knots". (2) Thus, Spirituality has proven to augment physical, mental, emotional and social health, protection and development. (3) Also, it has very advanced theory on child conception and human-body composition. (4) Since Science has proven that 0-6 years is when children's brain develops maximum with neural circuits and informational foundations, its best to train parental care-connect through Spirituality, for developing children's consciousness and capacities at this age itself. (5) Spirituality can also be integrated with any establishment easily since its a universal synthesiser capable of blending with any personality and hence, must partner training at all stages of development. Recommendations: Since vast amount of ground work has already been done by Spiritual giants (especially by Indian Gurus) through their multinational NGOs, much research is warranted, a) to capture effects of nonlinear education by their spiritual organisations; b) to evolve Spirituality as a distinct construct separated from Religion for operationalisation through scientific establishments and c) to functionalise collaborations between networks of all other available Spiritual resources for harnessing benefits of totality in children's health-care, protection and development.*

**Keywords:** Spirituality, Religion, Science, Spirit, Spiritual Gurus, Leaders, Organization, NGO, WHO, UNO, Health care, Protection, Development, Linear, Nonlinear, Education, Training, Prenatal, Postnatal, Childhood, Children, Parents, Physical health, Mental health, Emotional health, Social health, Psychology, Neuroscience, Economics, Social Sciences.

### **Introduction**

Globally, there has been a shift in scientific perceptions on what is the composition of a human being. Sciences have come to embrace the fact that the human is not only a physico-mental being but is a psycho-spiritual entity. It is fast becoming accepted that the human system composes of not only the physical body but the invisible entwining subtle and causal frames enshrining and impacting it (Manohar DM & Shivani, 2016). While the advances being made in scientific laboratory has begun to understand and absorb Spiritual dimensions of the human, the reality is far from it (Prest et al., 1999; Neely & Minford, 2008 and Vogel, 2013). This is where the struggle lies. Mainstream health-care and developmental systems that are in practice are actually based on the frozen outlook that a human is body, mind and emotions. This results in loss of enormous amount of authentic data and resources for impacting healing and growth. Hence, this paper exposes a worldview that it is – The Human Spirit, which constructs, feeds and holds both the visible and invisible body systems together.

This article discusses importance of scientific Spiritual training (distinct from religion) for cherishing children's psyche, deriving perspectives from Scientific and Spiritual

dimensions for areas of health-care, protection and development. Data for this paper has been culled from both physical and electronic library resources. One common line of thought that runs throughout the paper is that Spirituality (separate from Religion), albeit not much researched, is yet, the answer for alleviating pain, enriching connectedness and harnessing inner potential in children. It touches fleetingly on future prospects of research, keeping in mind the work of Spiritual Masters who have been engineering the content of what it means to be human.

### **Objective, Relevance and Methodology**

Objective of this paper is to examine if support of available Spiritual systems can be utilized for upgrading Children's health-care, protection and developmental processes.

In the era where WHO has included Spirituality as a primary component of its Health definition (Dhar, 2012) and UNO has set the targets for Sustainable Development on Earth (Khan, 2015), it is but necessary to study and understand Spiritual dimension because all engagements in health-care, protection or development must be based on this foundation. In a world being torn apart with strife

born from inadequacies and confronting limitations, children are the worst hit, being the weakest link. Where human race is striving to not only overcome its animal tendencies but attain its divine aspirations of being "Homo Spiritualis" (Grochmal, 2016), the seeding must be done long before children become adults, which alone equips sufficiently for resolving challenges and securing the future of mankind. Since the quality and quantity of work to be accomplished is humongous and studies across the world are increasingly showing that Spirituality is definitely an indispensable positive influence for wellbeing (Cornah, 2006), it is but natural to study how to capitalise on these available Spiritual resources especially because India is the land of Spirituality and the hub of Spiritual movements since times immemorial.

This is a conceptual paper based on fundamental research. Sources of data include published articles, studies and other works of investigators across the world, whose findings have been established through various authenticated research methodologies. Also, electronic library resources have been relied upon extensively.

### Defining Spirituality

Spirituality is a newly emerging dimension in scientific community. As a construct, it has been considered as an inseparable sub part of religion or separated from religion or read in conjunction with religion (Hill & Kenneth, 2003). Historically, for the first time in 1984, Committee of "The California State Psychological Association (CSPA) Task Force on Spirituality and Psychotherapy" formulated the following definition of Spirituality to facilitate the conducting of investigations into this domain: "It has been said that spirituality is the "courage to look within and to trust." What is seen and what is trusted appears to be a deep sense of belonging, of wholeness, of connectedness, and of openness to the infinite." (Shafranske & Gorsuch, 1984). Thus, as a science-based construct although definition on Spirituality has been revisited, reviewed and redefined many times over since then, the basics of what it is as a science has not changed. It remains as a construct of individualised experience of 'going within' and the benefits that ensue from this process of "going within". However, it means much more than this in the perception of Spiritual Yogis of India.

As a Yogic-based construct "Spirituality is a science concerning the power which flows from the original repository and has the capacity, in the form of knots, both of creating and destroying. The sages of India have used the power of creation for the reformation of humanity" (Ram Chandra, 2014). While the science-based Spirituality

is capable of harnessing benefits through the method of practice, Yogi-based Spirituality is capable of instilling capacities by opening or closing up knots in the faculties of human existence. However, this talent remains secretly in the domain of Yogis.

Hence, while science-based Spirituality is being investigated, Yogi-based Spirituality is hardly researched. Since, a future can lie in the potential that a Yogi can unleash, science must learn to acknowledge these Yogi-based factors and observe their work on their followers or masses, which can yield another dimension of reality that goes beyond science. This also holds the possibility of acceleration in conscious evolution for health and protection to be developed by masses. Hence, to train in Spirituality would mean arriving at mastery of powers for positive manifestations in life.

Recently, all the studies conducted across the globe on Spirituality were reviewed and their findings reevaluated. This report has clearly established that numerous studies have revealed that Spirituality yields not only good physical health, but creates robust mental, emotional and social health. It has been producing phenomenal results in the areas of coping and recovery. It is also beneficially affecting mortality, morbidity and prevention rates of diseases significantly (Cornah, 2006). Latest in trend is that Spirituality is harvesting fantastic business results, contributing tremendously to sustainable development of communities globally. This was established in a cross continental study conducted on paradigm of unity espoused by Focolare movement (Grochmal, 2016). Thus, although Spirituality is a result oriented developmental force (Manohar DM & Shivani, 2017), much seriousness is not being invested in either research or implementation through this construct.

But the problem lies in the way Spirituality is entwined with Religion, which is known to create denominational differences. In spite of these hurdles, in the latest developments, UNHCR has begun to include and rely on these agencies under the heading of Faith-based organizations, after finding and building a common platform between all, for overall care and concern of humanity. Therefore, Spirituality could mean - a NGO relying on some philosophy, Religious organisation or an Organisation with some form of inter-faith or umbrella Spirituality (UNHCR, 2012 and Goodall, 2015).

Despite this broad definition of Spirituality, it is a clear stand being taken in this paper that Spirituality as a construct must stand outside Religion to enable it to be universally embraced by individuals and organisations of

every background, religious or otherwise. This stand is supported by findings of reports on researches conducted in the field of Spirituality that says that if Spirituality is associated with Religion, it can have negative repercussions due to elements of religious postulates that can instil shame, guilt, fear, domination, fanaticism etcetera (Cornah, 2006). Also, scientific establishments may find it impossible to include it for their members who may resist due to personal allegiances of different faiths.

### **Spirituality in Early Years for Ensuring total Health-Care**

Advances in neurosciences (Lenroot & Giedd, 2006) especially through paediatric structural neuroimaging have provided hardcore physiological evidence in anatomical researches that 90% of brain development is completed by the time a child is 5 years of age although development of white and grey matter continues well into the 3rd decade. Although parental genes give the first stock of resources to a child, it is proven that epigenetic (factors internal to body) and environmental forces provide for continuous genetic mutations in the human.

It has been witnessed (Heckman, 2006) that the body has an innate capacity especially in children to develop, change and mutate easily with any stimuli automatically. The child's consciousness can be sculpted by setting it inside any mould effortlessly. However, although this process occurs in adulthood too (through neuroplasticity), it becomes subject to pre-defined patterns of conditioning, absorbed during early (0-6) years and hence, further absorption or adaptation to influences may get limited by available levels of immunity and exercise of mental-will in adults. Another aspect of physiology is that, normally, immunological system enables the being to grow out of impacts. Only when the impact is way too high, it results in pathology. Hence, in children, if the impacts cause too much of an overload due to abuse, it may cause detrimental development in brain, neural circuits and overall capacity itself. In adults, extended periods of stress or violence without giving time for respite, recovery and sustenance, may lead to complete deterioration and breakdown. In this context, Spirituality as a dimension must be plumbed for care-training modules, for deployment.

Although children are extremely vulnerable in their formative years, good news is that they are biologically at the most robust period to learn and survive impacts if accurate caring and training is provided to nourish their "Spirits" at this stage. Past studies in "neurobiology of Spirituality" have opined that "spirituality can have both

positive and negative effects on physical health, mental health and coping." This is because it depends on type of Spiritual forces that are employed to impact. Most studies have been conducted on meditation practices by adults in various Spiritual systems like Yoga, Tibetan meditation, Tantric Yoga, Kundalini Yoga, and Yoga-Nidra which employed active concentration, passive observation or relaxation practices. However, independent individuals not associated with any system also have been observed to some extent in some studies. Generally, Spiritual practices have been found to produce positive results when adults go through guided systems of Spiritual practice. In these studies, neuroanatomical, neurochemical changes were clearly evident causing neuroplasticity by cognitive learning through pre-established neuro-circuits (Mohandas, 2008). Hence, positive optimization of neural and brain activity is possible by Spirituality. But more research is necessary to establish this fact with greater depth for posterior genetics.

Yet, it has to be noted that Spiritual practices for children must necessarily be different from adults, considering the extremely sensitive phase of their inner body instruments. However, keeping this edge in mind that Spirituality is impacting brain, neural circuits and neuroplasticity, it is but natural to want to seed good things at this young age (during 0-6 years). Hence, parental-care training for indirectly impacting children for effective feeling-thought patterns, behaviours and self-management during early years of life is indispensable to harvest strong, resourceful, self-sufficient and harmonious human race. It is more so to enable them for sky-high sustainable development goals that are facing them in their future years, while Earth is continuously threatened by a depletion of its natural resources.

Training parents and care-takers who interact with children in various institutions and capacities is one aspect. Another is to see how Yogi-based Spiritual systems have structured programs and are directly influencing children because this is another important sector, which is hardly researched. One such pilot project study was conducted (Karmarkar, Ravi, Vaidya, & Bhise, 2018) in Abu Dhabi, on Spiritual intervention provided to children by Heartfulness Institute, which otherwise is a provider of free Spiritual training services ([www.heartfulness.org](http://www.heartfulness.org)) for people above 15 years of age, across the world from its Yogic-based expertise of transmission through its living Master. This study included children from 3rd-8th standard classes, who were exposed to 5-minute relaxation exercise along with quiet time at

school and home on a daily basis in a 10-week program. The results showed that there was “significant change in the Attention Span” of the trained children’s group.

Decades of researches in neurosciences, developmental psychology and economics have revealed that children receiving balanced trainings in both cognitive (involving problem solving, rational faculties) and noncognitive skill-sets (involving faculties of inspiration, motivation, perseverance, tenacity) during prenatal to early years, develop into successful human beings (Heckman, 2006). It has been proved that early neural pathways formed during initial learnings form the basis for later conditions, learnings and development. Most acute learnings of these early years arise in emotionality, intuitive knowing, imagination, linguistic, social, cognitive and adaptive capacities. All these are inter dependent and can be affected by training. In spite of these surmounting evidences, at both policy and practice level, educational and training investments for skill formations are huge not in pre-school age but only during later years of schooling, college and career. This is especially so when it comes to classes of children from various disadvantaged backgrounds. Hence, not tapping into the youngest minds at their ripest heights (that spans between prenatal to preschooling years) has become a way of life. This is the root of all the problems not only in Children’s health-care but in protection and developmental systems of our societies.

It is at these tender years that Spirituality must be introduced in life because “Spirituality nurtures not only physical health but equips people with skills of coping, learning, growing and exhibiting abundant connectivity with meaningful personal missions on Earth” (Manohar DM & Shivani, Jul 2017). Yet, scientific theories have predominantly ignored this vital aspect of Spirituality especially in taking care of these formative years. Also, training through Spiritual dimension has not been accepted in formal scientific establishments. What passes for Spirituality in most of the childhood training is derived from dogma, rituals or religious prescriptions and proscriptions. Requirement is for types of training that are based on the perception that a child is whole and complete in itself. This feature is present in Spirituality (Cole, 2011).

Spirituality recognises that a Child is essentially a ‘Spirit’ with innate knowing capacities. It merely facilitates the unfolding of this faculty unlike the domineering framework of western education that tends to impose with authoritarian overtones. It is fast being acknowledged in many corners of the world that the view and practices that

flow from this scientific mechanised education disconnects children, stunting their abilities of self-protection and growth. From day-one, it builds incompleteness and self-doubt, fostering competitive comparison for survival and downplaying self-expression. Challenge is to know how to break out of these moulds and arrive at training capacities that nurture the being as a whole, which imbibe a life style of values, purpose and skills - that broaden the inner vision and interconnects with the whole (Cole, 2011). This is where Spiritual Organizations especially can support, if partnered effectively because instilling ‘capacities’ is the functional business of Spirituality because it is said, “if a trainer in Spirituality exerts his will to mould the mind of the trainee, it will yield excellent results.” (Ram Chandra, 2014, 442).

### **Use of Spirituality in Protection of Children**

In studies, “interpersonal trauma” has been researched on life spans ranging from childhood to adulthood. Findings show that “survivors of child abuse, sexual violence, intimate partner violence, community violence, and war”, have decreased psychological distress due to the influence of “spirituality, positive religious coping and faith-based approaches”. These approaches included interventions through “engagement in behaviours”, “endorsement of beliefs” and support of “faith communities”. Hence, in clinical psychology, it has been advocated “to attend to the faith traditions and beliefs of persons confronting the potential devastation of traumatic events” (Bryant-Davis & Wong, 2013). But it has also been evidenced that abuse by fathers in childhood has had the opposite influence, of distancing from Religiosity. Hence, nonreligious Spirituality is adopted because God is viewed as ‘The Father’ in traditional contexts (Bierman, 2005).

Thus, due to experiences of maltreatment, abuse or violence in childhood history, adults can become enhanced or damaged in Spiritual development due to personal conclusions (Ryan, 1998). Question is how to heal damaged identities or personalities either in childhood or adulthood through Spirituality? Froma Walsh’s book, “Spiritual resources in family therapy” is the earliest work on this subject that is a ground breaking masterpiece even today. It has extensively explored the ways and means of utilizing and deploying whatever Spiritual resources are available between therapists and clients in psychotherapeutic healing setups. It has effectively bridged “the gap between spirituality and therapy” (Holleman, 2000).

To implement correct training through Spirituality, we need to know how children learn. Behavioural (stimuli-

response based psychoanalytical) scientists tend to believe that optimum development in children occurs when the parent shows rewarding responses to agreeable conduct and punishment to disagreeable ones. It is like training a dog. Cognitive scientists opine that development in children is advanced by enabling problem solving skills or discovery methods because children learn by making a world in their mind; first with small word meanings; then connecting with other words or experiences; later on with invisible theorising by connecting small concepts together and then building on top of these with more and more complex ones gradually. But Humanistic scientists hold that children learn through emotions of what they like and dislike. So it is the emotional quotient that needs to be trained without which, children lag behind in physical, mental and sociological health (World Book, 1989, E15). Albeit differences of opinion within 'Learning theories' of behavioural modification, cognitive or humanistic psychology, they unite on one platform.

All concur that there is a need for abilities to be systematically trained (especially in childhood) to enable sculpting of existence by understanding and connecting to own self. It is said that the blueprint for the patterns are laid during 0-6 years of age, which repeats itself to manifest the life sequences thereafter, by firing of neural activity along known pathways in the neural circuits. Hence, this is considered as one of the most decisive and acute mentoring stages of life (Heckman, Jun 2006). This is said to be instrumental in constructing the rest of life events by laws of hierarchical growth of conceptualization and 'attraction of likes' (meaning - one building on top of another - like creating like).

Hence, for example, it is said that if a child is treated with respect by grownups and taught to respect its own self and others, it grows up to be a human who is automatically talented in the field of respect, who knows how to respect and elicit respect from the world (Patel, 2015). In the grounding of such a psychology, not only the physical, mental and emotional health is assured to be robust but a child's self protection system is guaranteed in its very pattern. In this context, Spirituality plays an indispensable role by breeding such a ground for sensitivity and care. An adult can effectively help by perceiving the sacred 'Spirit' in the child. Caring, teaching and development involve transitioning the 'learning child' to a 'masterful child' at every turn, stage by stage. Therefore, this is the next in evolution facing mankind, to learn to nurture the Spirit of the child and deliver an effective human to the race.

### **Samples from Spiritual Dimension: for Children's Development**

There is a clear cut demarcation between Scientific, Religious and Spiritual dimension regarding perspectives on zygotic stage of development. According to science, a child is a product of bio-matter and energy derived from parental genetics. In Religion, it is a Soul descending to fulfil a Divine plan and hence, fixated by birth-chart with coordinates of time and place of birth. But in Spirituality, it is the epitome of the intentional field of the couple during intercourse and conception. It is said that quality of the Soul that descends on Earth plane directly corresponds to the quotient of intentional-purity present in the parents at the time of conception (Patel, 2015). Hence, it is these paradigms that inform and determine quality of prenatal culturing and postnatal caring, consciously or unconsciously.

Perceptions on human body are another area of differences. While scientific theories are an 'evidence-based' range of concepts on physico-chemico-psychologies struggling to rationalise nonphysical phenomena like spontaneity, awareness, consciousness, attention, inspiration, revelation etcetera states and conditions in human (Garnett, 2008), religions are a 'belief-based' range on concept of God and life-goal of human (Partridge, 2007). In contrast, Spirituality is a result-experiencing range that is fast becoming distinct from religion and standing on its own in scientific realm, to reveal vehicular structures of human body, mind and spirit. It targets to impact, upgrade and optimize inner human potential at each level of the body system. (Woodburn & Berge, 2011; Patel, 2015).

In this aspect, Spirituality is distinguishable by how this construct establishes its a-priori facts and operates from evidential-intuition with an integrated approach towards physical, subtle and causal bodies of the human being. But science neither knows nor admits to the existence of this advanced knowledge on constitution of subtle and causal bodies in mainstream education, practice, training or development. In spite of this shortcoming, science has included Ayurveda and Acupuncture within its body of knowledge (as CAM - complementary and alternate medicine), which are invariably based on the philosophy of subtle bodies of human (Manohar DM & Shivani, 2016). This approach is causing a dichotomy. On one hand, it accepts the existence of subtle bodies because of healing techniques being used to cure but fails to accept the training of the same to prevent diseases.

Prevention is possible only by understanding what the stages of development are and how to implement right training at right stage. There are different models on development, which explain developmental stages from physico-psycho-social perspectives. Institutional policies and practices adhere to one or more of these various models to take care of development. It has been observed that Spirituality has the unique feature of being a universal synthesizer. Hence, it has the capacity for cutting across all cultures and personality types (Piedmont & Leach, 2002). Thus it can blend with any level of perception and contribute in every stage of development. Thus, Spirituality can be mobilised at every step in every set-up.

Models of development - popularly used to understand extent of development have been:-

(A) Erikson's model (1950, 1968, 1982), which is based on Identity Development Theory, where development is seen as occurring through 8 stages. It is said a human being learns about 'Hope' when it battles between trust and mistrust between the age of 0-1½ years; familiarises itself with 'Will' at 1½-3 years when it battles against shame with autonomy; comes to know of 'Purpose' between 3-5 years by battling against guilt with initiative; grasps meaning of 'Competence' during 5-12 years when it battles inferiority with industry; learns about 'Fidelity' during 12-18 years by building identity to battle role-confusion; builds 'Love' during its 18-40 years using intimacy to battle isolation; builds with 'Caring' at 40-65 years battling stagnation with generativity and builds 'Wisdom' at 65+ years of age by battling against despair to arrive at ego-integrity (McLeod, 2013).

(B) Marcia's model (1966, 1980) is based on Identity Status Theory that describes 4 stages of developmental processes in adolescents, in relation to commitment for ideology of values and goals. Throughout adulthood these characteristics are displayed due to lessons learnt or not during adolescence. People do change when they make a conscious effort to understand where they are and exercise choices. Beings are considered as 'Diffused' when they are neither committed to any set of values and goal-standards nor explore alternative systems. They are classified as 'Foreclosed' when they are highly committed to a particular system without having explored; as 'Moratorium' when capable of thoughtful exploration of all alternatives and as 'Achieved' when they arrive at being committed after having evaluated their explorations (Goldstein, 2010).

(C) Fowler's model (1981) is based on Faith Development Theory that identifies 6 stages in which,

focus evolves in relation to authority. In infancy, tendency is to lean towards imaginative fantasy (in 2-7 years). In early schooling age, children can easily see in God, an authority and model themselves. In adolescence, development is by learning about adherence to community. Youth develop by exercising self-power in them. They mature by perceiving God in a cosmic flow of life or light within in mid-life and ripen through transcendental devotional faith of not one's making in mature elderly stage of life. (Fowler, Fall 2004).

(D) Poll and Smith model (2003) is based on Spiritual Identity Development that can be made to occur through 4 stages in psychotherapy: 1. while automatically connecting with all without awareness of any separation in infancy, 2. while awakening to separation and its pain, 3. while recognising means to reconnect and 4. while connecting with others along with a fully evolved identity of self (Poll & Smith, 2003).

(E) Positive Youth Development Field model (Pittman 1996; Lerner 2004; Almerigi, Theokas and Lerner 2005) is based on strength-based approach to include Spirituality in adolescent development. It cultivates 5 strengths (Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, Caring-compassion) for tracking adolescents to deliver 6th strength - Contribution (Goldstein, 2010).

Spirituality can be included to blossom developmental stages in each of these models. However, some Spiritual stalwarts have pioneered transformation by establishing their own linear schooling education to build 'attention-consciousness' in children. Here, they perceive a child as a complete being waiting to flower in its potential and facilitate by providing fertile environments that foster gentleness, inward-attention, sensitivity, mutual respect, trust and inclusiveness (Krishnamurti, 2002). This trend is being taken up by modern educational industry that is catching up with congruence that Spirituality is a component that can augment wholesome learning and development in children (Karmarkar, Ravi, Vaidya, & Bhise, 2018).

Current trend is endorsing that along with intelligence and emotional quotient, the soul or Spiritual quotient must be tended too. The heart and soul must be cultivated along with the academic dimension. It has also been acknowledged that traditional educational practices "stomp on the souls" of children and hence, "soul-filling" education must come in to transform learning and teaching experiences (Van Bockern, Win 2006). In scientific research, studies have begun to trickle in, on the results of impacting Children's development through Spirituality. "A

cross country longitudinal study on 13-15 year olds has revealed that Spirituality brought overall wellbeing and better performance in youngsters (Pandya, 2017).” (Manohar DM & Shivani, Oct 2017). Another study on adolescents has revealed that Spirituality is one factor that cuts across and influences all types of identities and personalities. It revealed that adolescents predominantly have the need for Spirituality when dealing in relationships with others (Goldstein, 2010).

The latest trend is in the way the Spiritual Leaders hailing from various Spiritual traditions have started operationalizing transformation on masses of population across the globe through their nonlinear Spiritual trainings, courses and workshops developed and deployed from their Spiritual Organizations. Since children and young people form a significant part of their target audience, they are deploying nonlinear educational content with suitable alterations to suit different age groups. Examples may be found through the official websites of these Spiritual Organizations like Children’s Training Programs of Art of Living Foundation, Brahma Kumaris Foundation, Heartfulness Institute, Isha Foundation etcetera. Also, books, magazines and other forms of literature are published from these organizations carrying educational content that reach out to heal, train and develop target audiences far and wide like “The Heartfulness Way – Heart-Based Meditations for Spiritual Transformation” (Patel & Pollock, The Heartfulness Way, 2018), which is a best selling book from Heartfulness Institute, that includes (among other things) instructions for a 5 minute relaxation program designed for both children and adults (Patel & Pollock, The Heartfulness Way, 2018, 89).

The point is that many such initiatives have been mobilised worldwide by Indian-based multinational Spiritual NGOs to raise consciousness in individuals. Yet, not much studies have been done to capture data on their results. However, research community has begun to conduct studies on trainings from these fields of Spiritual forces. One such example is a study that was conducted on children and young people ranging from 13-23 years of age who had received “System of Spiritual and Human Values Education” (SSE) from Sri Sathya Sai organization through nonlinear educational components comprising of “Yoga, silent-sitting, meditation, stories, group devotional singing and group activities”. It has revealed that participants who were exposed to this type of training for a period of 1-12 years had developed “clarity of career and life goals, improvements in character such as discipline, calming mind and concentration, values in life, self-less

service to community, relation building, self control, self regulation, better impersonal relations and good leadership qualities” as a result of these trainings (Nanduri & Madhavan, 2016).

### Findings and Conclusion

In children, scientific evidence is showing that 90% of brain development along with its neural circuits is completed between 0-6 years of age. Hence, in these formative years itself, it is recommended for parents and institutions to invest maximum care for training children’s consciousness to nourish their physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual planes because what transpires in childhood from moment of conception becomes a foundational blue print upon which, children would build on, in later years. Since children can’t be directly trained when in womb or in infancy, it is recommended for parents and caretakers to be trained systematically to impact children’s consciousness indirectly. This must start from the period of conception until delivery, as prenatal stage of training and continue all through infancy till child is 6 years of age, to assist developmental stages. It is recommended that Spirituality also must be introduced in children and practiced by those around them in these very early stages of life because children absorb everything they come in contact with. Since Spirituality by its very definition ushers in belonging, wholesomeness, connectedness and openness to the infinite, it essentially fosters self-control, intentional creativity and positivity. So, it is considered as a good energy to surround our children with.

This is necessary for all caretakers of children because studies have established that Spirituality not only upgrades health but in-builds a wholesome consciousness such that it does not invite or allow for harm to be caused. In a study “A 10-session manualized group treatment was developed to increase perception of sacredness in various domains of daily life” and administered to a test group of patients to see if enhanced perceptions of sacred dimensions can yield therapeutic benefits for people suffering from social anxiety. It was clearly established: “Enhanced sense of sacredness appeared useful in broadening attentional focus, interrupting dysfunctional thought patterns, and generating behaviors incompatible with social anxiety. Focusing on sacredness instead of symptoms allowed participants to form supportive interpersonal relationships within the group, providing a corrective experience of social interaction.” Thus Spirituality can be an insurance against social anxiety in adults and children alike (McCorkle et al, 2005).

Also, Spiritual connectedness repels negativity at every level, such that a child is protected from within no matter what happens to it from outside. It safeguards by cushioning the consciousness against adverse effects of maltreatment, abuse or violence even if any should occur. Also, its easy to build capacities through Spirituality in their young age. What is built into inner software in these formative years, stays with the individual for the rest of life as automatised skill-sets. If Spirituality is a science for effective utilization of powers, to train in Spirituality would mean, arriving at mastery of powers for positive manifestations in life. From this perspective, Spirituality is an indispensable tool, which can equip children with skills, abilities, capacities and faculties to engineer solutions and deliver mankind from peril.

In Spirituality, concept of child-care begins from even before its birth because it is postulated that the quality of Soul that descends on Earth depends on the intentional purity of parents at the time of conception. Hence, it is far more advanced than birth-chart based religions or sciences that view a zygote as mere bio-matter and energy. Coming from this level of understanding on Life-source in children, Spirituality is far more equipped than religion or science to train human beings. Predominant strength of this construct is conceptualization on structural composition of human. It treats human as made up of 3 bodies - physical, subtle and causal, which need to be trained for optimum benefit. In contrast, religion focuses on 'what is God and life goal of human'. In this, as each differs bitterly from the other, unity of perception becomes impossible through religion.

In Science, body is merely a psychophysical or nonphysical psychology. Spirit is not acknowledged. So, many phenomena of consciousness go unaddressed under these restricting conditions. Not understanding this, all mainstream health-care and developmental processes at policy and practice levels are based on such limited scientific foundations. This is the root cause of problems. However, good news is that even if establishments are operating from such pre-existing models of development in their framework, they can still incorporate Spirituality in their functions because Spirituality (not Religion) is having capacity to blend and synthesize with any perception or stage of development in individuals and contribute to all personality types across all cultures. Hence, its recommended for establishments to openly embrace Spirituality since it has already proved to yield rich positive results in various dimensions of health and wellbeing.

Another finding of this paper is that notwithstanding the pace at which Science or establishments are embracing Spirituality, the trends are showing that Spiritual Leaders with their multinational Spiritual Organizations (especially in India) have started operationalizing transformation of consciousness on masses by deployment through their independent trainings, designed for both children and adults across the globe. Studies have started to capture effects of this type of nonlinear education. However, much research is warranted on the vast amount of ground work already being laid by them before their working modules can be systematically deployed with universal acceptance.

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