

The Relationship Between IQ, EQ, and SQ with The Learning Success of Elementary School Children: A Comprehensive Literature Analysis

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Abstract

The success of learning in elementary schools requires the integration of intellectual intelligence (IQ), emotional intelligence (EQ), and spiritual intelligence (SQ). IQ forms the foundation of cognitive abilities in students, but without support from EQ and SQ, this potential cannot develop optimally. EQ plays a crucial role in managing emotions and social interactions, while SQ supports character building and moral values. The combination of these three intelligences leads to more stable and sustainable learning outcomes. In this context, the ideal elementary education model should integrate IQ, EQ, and SQ into the learning process and character education. This will help students develop holistically, not only academically but also socially and emotionally, preparing them to face life challenges. Therefore, schools and teachers play an important role in implementing this approach to create more effective and meaningful education.

Keywords: *intellectual intelligence, emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, elementary education, intelligence integration.*

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Introduction

The success of learning among elementary school students is a fundamental issue in the field of education, particularly as educational institutions are increasingly expected to prepare learners who are capable of facing the complexities of contemporary societal developments. In the context of modern education, learning success is no longer narrowly defined as mere academic achievement; rather, it is understood as a comprehensive process encompassing cognitive, emotional, social, moral, and spiritual competencies. This paradigm shift has become increasingly relevant in the era of globalization, characterized by rapid technological advancement and growing demands for character development as a foundation for students' life readiness (Septian & Abdul Wachid, 2021). As the initial stage in the formation of thinking abilities and behavioral patterns, elementary education plays a strategic role

in fostering holistic intelligence. Therefore, examining psychological factors that influence learning success—such as intellectual intelligence (IQ), emotional intelligence (EQ), and spiritual intelligence (SQ)—has become increasingly important for in-depth analysis.

Intellectual intelligence (IQ) has long been considered a primary predictor of academic success because it relates to logical reasoning, analytical thinking, and verbal comprehension. Numerous studies indicate that IQ is positively associated with academic achievement, particularly in tasks that require reasoning and logical processing. However, educational psychology research over the past two decades has emphasized that IQ is not the sole determinant of learning success. Children with high IQ scores do not necessarily demonstrate optimal performance if they lack emotional regulation and social adaptability (Özdemir Cihan & Dilekmen, 2024). This finding highlights that learning success results from the interaction between cognitive and non-cognitive dimensions.

In line with this perspective, emotional intelligence (EQ) has received increasing attention because it plays a crucial role in managing emotions, facilitating social interaction, coping with academic stress, and fostering learning motivation. EQ is particularly relevant for elementary school students who are still in a dynamic stage of emotional development. Recent studies indicate that emotional intelligence can be enhanced through appropriate training and learning experiences (Özdemir Cihan & Dilekmen, 2024), whereas uncontrolled use of digital devices may negatively affect students' emotional intelligence (Latifah et al., 2024). Furthermore, teachers play a strategic role in developing students' EQ through supportive learning strategies and experiential learning approaches (Sholihin et al., 2021). Consequently, EQ represents an integral component of successful learning among elementary school students.

In addition to IQ and EQ, spiritual intelligence (SQ) is increasingly recognized as an important factor supporting learning success. SQ refers to the capacity to find meaning, uphold moral values, develop life purpose, demonstrate empathy, and achieve inner balance. In the context of elementary education, spiritual intelligence is closely related to students' moral and character development (Murwati, 2024). Other studies reveal that SQ directly contributes to improving the social attitudes of elementary school students, thereby supporting harmonious learning environments (Nugroho et al., 2022). SQ can also be cultivated through prophetic educational approaches and the habituation of moral values that encourage reflective, disciplined, and ethically responsible individuals (Septian & Abdul Wachid, 2021).

Research examining the relationship between IQ, EQ, and SQ indicates that these three forms of intelligence simultaneously influence learning success. IQ provides the foundation for rational thinking, EQ regulates emotional dynamics and social relationships, while SQ offers value orientation and meaning within the learning process. However, research findings regarding the relative dominance of each component remain varied. Some studies suggest that EQ plays a more prominent role

among elementary school students, while SQ functions as a mediating factor in the development of personality and learning motivation (Nugroho et al., 2022; Murwati, 2024). These diverse findings highlight the need for a comprehensive literature review to map the relationships among these intelligences more systematically.

The selection of the 2020–2025 period is particularly relevant, as this timeframe has been marked by substantial transformations in the education system due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The shift toward online learning, blended learning, and technology-based instruction has significantly affected children's cognitive, emotional, and spiritual development. Challenges such as academic stress, social isolation, and digital fatigue have also influenced the dynamics of IQ, EQ, and SQ in the learning process (Latifah et al., 2024). Therefore, a literature review focusing on this period is essential to provide an updated understanding of how these forms of intelligence contribute to learning success.

A comprehensive literature review was selected as the research method to systematically analyze empirical and theoretical findings regarding the relationship between IQ, EQ, SQ, and the learning outcomes of elementary school students. By utilizing reputable sources such as ERIC, Google Scholar, and national repositories, this study aims to provide an in-depth mapping of existing research while identifying potential research gaps. Academically, this review contributes to updating the understanding of the roles of these three intelligences in learning success. Practically, the findings may serve as a reference for teachers in designing learning strategies that integrate cognitive, emotional, and spiritual aspects in a balanced manner. Ultimately, this article is expected to contribute to educational theory, practice, and policy in fostering students who are holistically intelligent and prepared to face the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Research Method

The research process begins with Determining the Focus of the Review, which involves identifying the research problem to be addressed. Next, the following stage is Searching for Scholarly Sources, where the researcher seeks relevant references from books and scholarly journals related to the theories of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligence. Afterward, in the Selecting Sources stage, the sources found are selected based on their relevance and the authority of the authors. Conducting In-Depth Reading is the next crucial step to understand the content of each source, followed by Compiling Summaries and Theoretical Integration, which forms the framework for the discussion in the article.

This study employed a literature review method focusing on the exploration, analysis, and synthesis of theories related to intellectual intelligence (IQ), emotional intelligence (EQ), spiritual intelligence (SQ), and factors influencing learning success among elementary school students. A literature review was chosen because it enables a comprehensive understanding of the main concepts utilized in the study without the need for direct empirical data collection. According to Sugiyono (2019), a literature

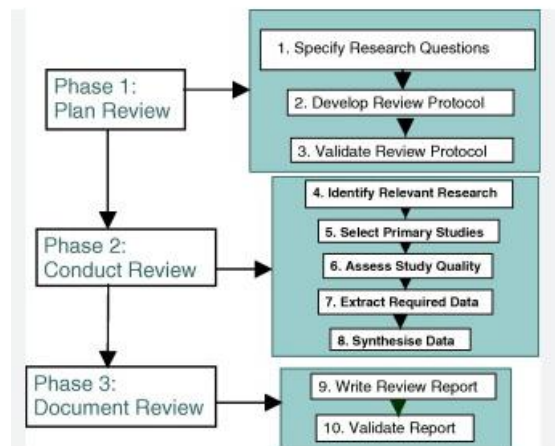
review is a research method that utilizes scientific sources to obtain a comprehensive overview of research variables, making it particularly relevant for studies aimed at deepening conceptual understanding and mapping relationships among variables.

The literature review procedure in this study followed the stages proposed by Creswell (2018): (1) determining the focus of the review based on the research problem; (2) searching for scientific sources such as key books related to educational psychology, child development, and intelligence theories; (3) selecting sources based on their relevance and the authority of the authors; (4) conducting an in-depth reading to identify core theoretical concepts; and (5) compiling summaries, analyses, and theoretical integration within the discussion framework of the study. The reviewed sources mainly consisted of educational psychology books that have become widely recognized academic references in the fields of cognitive, socio-emotional, and spiritual development of children.

Data analysis was conducted using content analysis techniques, which involved identifying the main ideas from each piece of literature and grouping them into broader thematic categories. According to Arikunto (2018), content analysis is a technique used to examine meanings and messages within documents or texts in order to generate scientific interpretations. This technique was applied to understand how IQ, EQ, and SQ interact in supporting the learning success of elementary school students from a theoretical perspective.

The validity of the review was ensured through source triangulation, which involved comparing the perspectives of several scholars to confirm the consistency and accuracy of theoretical interpretations. For instance, theories of intellectual intelligence refer to the classical perspective introduced by Binet and further developed by cognitive psychology scholars such as Woolfolk (2016). Meanwhile, the concept of emotional intelligence is derived from Goleman's (2015) framework, and spiritual intelligence is based on the model proposed by Zohar and Marshall (2007). This triangulation approach is essential to minimize interpretative bias and strengthen the theoretical foundation of the study.

Through this structured literature review approach, the study is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the roles of IQ, EQ, and SQ in the learning success of elementary school students. This approach also establishes a solid foundation for analyzing the relationships among these variables and identifying research gaps that may be addressed in future studies.



Pic 1. Diagram of the Research Stages

Result and Discussion

1. Overview of the Reviewed Literature

Based on the analysis of twenty selected studies, a clear trend emerges in contemporary elementary education research emphasizing the importance of a holistic approach to student development. Recent studies no longer focus solely on cognitive development as the primary predictor of academic success. Instead, they increasingly integrate emotional, spiritual, social, and even adversity quotient (AQ) as essential components in fostering students' comprehensive growth.

For instance, the study by Saputra et al. (2025) highlights the influence of spiritual intelligence (SQ), emotional intelligence (EQ), and self-compassion on students' academic performance. Meanwhile, Hafni et al. (2023) broaden this perspective by emphasizing character education that balances IQ, EQ, and SQ within the elementary school context. Other findings also demonstrate that EQ significantly contributes to Indonesian language learning skills (Syamsuriyanti et al., 2023), while SQ plays an integral role in the development of prophetic character among elementary school students (Septian & Wachid, 2021).

Overall, the reviewed literature provides strong evidence that effective learning requires the integration of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions rather than emphasizing a single domain.

Table 1. Summary of Research Findings in the Reviewed Studies

N o	Indicator / Focus	Researcher	Year	Method	Key Findings
1	Influence of SQ, EQ, and self-compassion on academic performance	Saputra et al.	2025	Quantitative correlational	SQ, EQ, and self-compassion significantly influence elementary students' academic performance
2	Development of children's spiritual intelligence	Septian & Wachid	2021	Conceptual / literature study	Spiritual intelligence can be developed through prophetic habits and character education

N o	Indicator / Focus	Researcher	Year	Method	Key Findings
3	Relationship between emotional intelligence and Indonesian language learning outcomes	Syamsuriyanti et al.	2023	Quantitative	EQ shows a significant relationship with Indonesian language learning outcomes
4	Balance of IQ, EQ, and SQ in character education	Hafni et al.	2023	Literature / descriptive	Optimal character development requires balanced IQ, EQ, and SQ
5	Improving EQ and SQ for student character development	Zaenudin & Nugraha	2025	Literature	EQ and SQ play major roles in shaping positive student character
6	Role of parents and teachers in developing IQ and EQ	Salamah & Thohir	2022	Qualitative descriptive	Parent–teacher collaboration is crucial in stimulating students' IQ and EQ
7	Relationship between IQ and learning outcomes	Ali & Alvionita	2024	Quantitative	IQ significantly correlates with elementary students' learning outcomes
8	Relevance of EQ and SQ to character education	Fauziatun & Misbah	2020	Literature review	EQ and SQ serve as foundational elements in character development
9	Influence of EQ and SQ on Islamic education learning achievement	Ramadani et al.	2024	Quantitative	EQ and SQ significantly affect students' achievement in Islamic education
10	Decision support system based on IQ, EQ, and SQ	Fadhilah et al.	2022	System / algorithm	IQ, EQ, and SQ can be used as parameters in determining educational pathways
11	Student management based on IQ, EQ, AQ, and SQ	Nurmela et al.	2024	Literature	School management should stimulate multiple intelligences
12	Trilogy of intelligence (IQ, EQ, SQ) and revelation values	Suaebah & Aderus	2025	Philosophical analysis	IQ, EQ, and SQ are aligned with spiritual values as fundamental human potential
13	Relationship between IQ, EQ, and physical education learning outcomes	Rosyada & Darmawan	2025	Quantitative	IQ and EQ significantly correlate with physical education learning outcomes
14	Influence of SQ, EQ, and self-compassion on academic performance	Saputra et al.	2025	Quantitative correlational	Academic performance significantly influenced by SQ, EQ, and self-compassion

N o	Indicator / Focus	Researcher	Year	Method	Key Findings
15	Influence of multiple intelligences on professionalism	Salsabila	2025	Quantitative	IQ, EQ, SQ, and social intelligence significantly affect professionalism
16	Character education as a foundation for excellence	Subarkah	2025	Literature	Character excellence emerges through the integration of IQ, EQ, and SQ
17	Inclusive education and social–emotional intelligence	Maki	2024	Qualitative dissertation	Inclusive education strengthens social and emotional intelligence of students with disabilities
18	Character management to enhance spiritual intelligence	Suhifatullah	2024	Literature	Character-based educational management improves students' SQ
19	Human intelligence from psychological and Qur'anic perspectives	Irwan & Pramana	2025	Literature	IQ, EQ, and SQ are fundamental human potentials
20	Influence of EQ and SQ on students' moral behavior	Murwati	2024	Quantitative	EQ and SQ significantly influence students' moral behavior

2. The Role of Intellectual Intelligence (IQ) in Elementary Students' Learning Success

Intellectual intelligence (IQ), as an indicator of students' cognitive capacity, has long been considered a primary determinant of learning outcomes, particularly in core subjects such as mathematics, science, and language. The literature analysis indicates that IQ contributes significantly to conceptual understanding, logical reasoning, learning speed, and the processing of academic information.

The study conducted by Ali and Alvionita (2024) demonstrates a direct relationship between IQ and elementary students' learning outcomes, particularly in mastering abstract concepts that require analytical abilities. Similarly, Rosyada and Darmawan (2025) report that IQ influences achievement in physical education through students' capacity for tactical thinking and comprehension of instructional directions.

However, recent literature suggests that IQ should not be regarded as the sole determinant of academic success. Salamah and Thohir (2022) found that IQ development must be accompanied by emotional intelligence to ensure optimal cognitive functioning. When cognitive ability is not supported by emotional regulation, students tend to experience academic stress, decreased motivation, and difficulties maintaining learning consistency. Therefore, while IQ remains a fundamental component of cognitive achievement, its effectiveness is strongly influenced by students' emotional stability and spiritual awareness.

3. Emotional Intelligence (EQ) and Its Relationship with Learning Outcomes and Character Development

Emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in creating a supportive learning environment. EQ includes the ability to manage emotions, demonstrate empathy, maintain motivation, interact socially, and cope with stress.

Based on the reviewed literature, EQ strongly influences the learning success of elementary school students. Syamsuriyanti et al. (2023) found that EQ positively correlates with Indonesian language learning outcomes. Students with strong emotional regulation tend to show greater concentration, confidence, and participation in classroom discussions.

Zaenudin and Nugraha (2025) emphasize that EQ, together with SQ, forms the ethical and moral character of students. Similarly, Ramadani et al. (2024) demonstrate that EQ significantly affects achievement in Islamic religious education. These findings indicate that EQ not only supports social interaction but also strengthens moral and spiritual values in the learning process.

Furthermore, EQ contributes to the development of intrinsic motivation, enabling students to learn independently without relying solely on external rewards or punishments. Without emotional intelligence, intellectual potential cannot be fully realized.

4. The Role of Spiritual Intelligence (SQ) in Meaningful Learning and Character Formation

Spiritual intelligence has gained increasing attention in educational research because it relates to moral awareness, self-reflection, and the search for meaning in life. The reviewed studies highlight that SQ plays an important role in shaping students' behavior and learning motivation.

Saputra et al. (2025) show that SQ influences students' academic performance through self-compassion and inner stability. Students with higher spiritual intelligence tend to demonstrate greater patience, persistence, and resilience when facing academic challenges.

Septian and Wachid (2021) further explain that a prophetic educational approach can enhance students' religiosity, discipline, and learning motivation. SQ contributes not only to the affective domain but also to the development of strong character traits such as honesty, responsibility, and empathy.

Suhifatullah (2024) also reports that character education based on spiritual values significantly improves students' spiritual intelligence, leading to positive behavioral changes within the school environment.

5. Integration of IQ, EQ, and SQ in Elementary Students' Learning Success

The literature analysis indicates that IQ, EQ, and SQ operate interdependently rather than independently in supporting learning success. IQ provides logical thinking and conceptual understanding, EQ ensures emotional regulation and social interaction, and SQ offers moral orientation and intrinsic meaning in the learning process.

When these three dimensions are developed simultaneously, they produce students who excel both academically and personally.

Table 2. Relationship Between IQ, EQ, and SQ in Learning Success

Component	Primary Role	Contribution to Learning	Supporting Sources
IQ	Cognitive capacity, logical reasoning, information processing	Concept comprehension, critical thinking, problem solving	Ali & Alvionita (2024); Rosyada & Darmawan (2025)
EQ	Emotion regulation, empathy, social interaction	Learning focus, motivation, communication, collaboration	Syamsuriyanti et al. (2023); Ramadani et al. (2024)
SQ	Life meaning, moral values, spiritual stability	Positive behavior, discipline, perseverance, self-compassion	Saputra et al. (2025); Septian & Wachid (2021)
Integration	Synergy of cognition, emotion, and spirituality	Holistic academic success and character development	Hafni et al. (2023); Suaebah & Aderus (2025)

6. Overall Synthesis

Overall, the analysis indicates that learning success among elementary school students is not solely determined by intellectual intelligence. Instead, it results from the integration of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligence.

IQ provides the cognitive foundation necessary for logical thinking, analysis, and problem solving. However, these abilities cannot function optimally without emotional and spiritual support. EQ enables students to manage emotions, collaborate effectively, and overcome learning challenges, while SQ strengthens character, moral values, and life purpose.

Students with strong emotional intelligence tend to be more resilient when facing academic obstacles, maintaining motivation and focus during the learning process. Similarly, students with well-developed spiritual intelligence often possess a deeper sense of purpose and commitment toward their educational goals. Therefore, IQ, EQ, and SQ should not be viewed as separate constructs but rather as complementary dimensions that collectively support holistic student development.

Conclusion

The learning success of elementary school students is not solely dependent on intellectual intelligence (IQ) but also requires the integration of emotional intelligence (EQ) and spiritual intelligence (SQ). IQ provides the cognitive foundation necessary for logical thinking and problem-solving; however, these abilities cannot function optimally without emotional regulation and spiritual guidance. EQ enables students to manage emotions, interact socially, and cope with academic challenges, while SQ strengthens character formation, moral values, and a deeper sense of purpose in education. The reinforcement of character through SQ and emotional regulation through EQ ultimately supports cognitive performance and academic achievement. Therefore, contemporary elementary education should adopt a holistic educational model that integrates IQ, EQ, and SQ into learning processes, classroom management, and character education. This integration ensures that students develop not only cognitively but also socially, emotionally, and spiritually, preparing them to face life challenges beyond formal education.

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