

## **Spirituality Profile of Creative Individuals**

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**Abstract:** *The current research study investigates the pattern of spirituality in creative individuals. The total sample size is 180 out of which 30 are innovators in the field of science and technology, 50 are visual artists, 50 performing artists, and 50 corporate executives which constitute the comparative group. The sample were matched in terms of sex (only males were included) and culture (Assamese). Attempts were made to include all the prominent creative individuals reputed in their respective field. Standard Progressive Matrices developed by Raven and Spirituality Questionnaire developed by Hardt, Sonja Schultz et al, (2012) were the tools used. Mean, Standard Deviation, One way ANOVA, followed by Tuckey Test were the statistical measures adopted in the study. In addition discriminant analysis has been worked out to strengthen the predictive validity of the obtained data. Spirituality has been studied in terms of four dimensions viz., Belief in God, Search for meaning, Mindfulness and Feeling of security. The total spirituality scores reveal significant difference between the innovators, visual artist, performing artist and comparative group (corporate executives). Innovators had a significantly high score on spirituality compared to all other groups and the comparative group scored significantly low. Regarding Belief in God innovators scored significantly high while visual artists scored significantly low. On Search for meaning, mindfulness and feeling of security significantly high scores were obtained by Visual Artists, Innovators and Performing artists in that order while the comparative group scored the lowest. Finally discriminant analysis has been worked out between the variables Belief in God, Search for Meaning, Mindfulness and Feeling of security. Results showed that search for meaning (.904) is the dependent measure which has the most discriminating power between the creative and comparative group..*

**Keywords:** *Creative, Belief In God, Feeling of Security, Mindfulness, Predictive Validity, Spirituality*

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### **I. Introduction**

Creativity is the greatest resource of humankind; however the development in the domain of creativity is unthinkable and unimaginable in the absence of creative people differing from the general human being in certain aspects of their personality and behaviour. These are people who with their unique thinking orientation and personality traits have worked wonders in the domains of innovation, performing art, visual art etc. This generates an urge among researchers to unfurl the personality characteristics of such individuals. The present study delves into the spirituality aspect of creative individuals.

The concept of spirituality can be understood in terms of three dimensions: First, spirituality is considered as a search for meaning in life. It is described as one of the “primary motivational force” (**Victor Frankl, 1964**). Secondly, spirituality helps in cultivating a relationship to mystery. In the process of finding a meaning in life the individuals recognize that there is a depth dimension to the world beyond its surface appearance. Thirdly, spirituality is about transformation which enables the individual to strive for personal growth. Spirituality and creativity go hand in hand. The creative person view things beyond the physical dimensions through his inner eye. The inner self is usually the spiritual self, it is our authentic self and creative self. Creativity is not rooted in the brain but it is in the soul. Thus a spiritual person is not only capable of thinking outside the box but dig down deep into his inner self that helps him connect with a higher wisdom. The relationship between creativity and spirituality can also be understood by linking them with openness to experience; a trait unique to creative personalities (**Saroglou & Vassilis, 2002**).

Creativity is thus an ideology, a pathway to spirituality. Creating is analogous to meditating in action. Creation provides an opportunity to interact with the soul and the product (creative act) is the manifestation of the soul. A probe into the physiology tells us that our brain has two parts: the left side rule over logic and reason and the right over the creative. The right side also allows the individual to connect with their soul through contemplating myth, scripture and other spiritual practices. Many personalities throughout history like Van Gough were known for their spirituality. Emily Dickinson attended church regularly although was not conventional in her faith. She communicated deeply with her inner self. Creative people are known for their clear and focused mind (mindfulness). Many creative personalities have turned to meditation as a medium for tapping their creative mind. Mindfulness techniques have been linked with improved memory and focus, better emotional well-being, reduced stress and anxiety and improved mental clarity, all of these leads to creative

thought. The concept of mindfulness, advocated by Buddhism refers to increase awareness of one's actions, words and thoughts (Ellwood & McGraw, 2002). This awareness paves the way for the recognition of creative thoughts when they actually occur. Encouragement for practicing mindfulness and learning to accept impermanence may stimulate development of creative skills.

That creative people are more spiritual than religious can be illustrated with a study conducted by Dreher (2013) which parsed out religious practices like going to church, reading scriptures and praying from transcendent or spiritual beliefs and found that the transcendent belief alone negatively predicted self control and conscientiousness (traits negatively associated with less creative people) but were positively related with openness to new experience. Spirituality is a positive construct which is related to well-being. Most of the research in creativity has tried relating creative personality with negative traits like mental illness, dishonesty, inflated ego, atheists etc. Only a few studies have tried to uncover positive aspect of personality a creative person is bestowed with such as spirituality. In the Indian Scenario research on understanding the association between spirituality and creativity is scanty. Therefore, the present study tries to focus on understanding the spirituality profile of creative personalities.

## **1.2 Objective:**

The objective of the present study is to analyse the spirituality profile of creative persons.

## **1.3 Hypotheses:**

Consistent with the above objective the following hypotheses were proposed:

1. There will be no significant difference in the spirituality among innovators, visual artists, performing artists and comparative group.
2. The four groups will not differ significantly in terms of belief in God.
3. There will be no significant difference between the four groups in terms of search for meaning.
4. No significant difference will exist between the four groups in terms of mindfulness.
5. Significant different will not exist between the groups in terms of feeling of security.

## **II. Participants**

In the present study 180, male, Assamese participants from different areas of Assam were included. Out of this 180 participants, 30 were innovators (in the field of science and technology), 50 were visual artists, 50 performing artists and, 50 corporate executives which constitutes the comparative group. The age range for all the participants were 30-80, this age range was selected because creative enrichment is considered to be at its peak during this time (Lehman 1953). The mode of sampling adopted was purposive sampling because creative personnel who were reputed in their respective fields were only included. The innovators were national award winners, they had their own patents. In the field of visual art and performing art personalities who are reputed, represented the state at national and international levels were included.

## **2.1 Measures:**

This research was conducted around two tools:

- 1. Standard Progressive Matrices:** The Standard Progressive Matrices was developed by Raven's (1996) which consist of 60 problems divided into five sets (A, B, C, D and E) each of 12 problems each. The five sets provide five opportunities to grasp the method of thought required to solve the problems and five progressive assessments of the person's capacity for intellectual assessment. These problems are arranged in an increasing order of difficulty. The SPM has a good internal consistency with split half reliability coefficients exceeding .90 and having a modal value of .91. Evidence from factor-analytic research suggests that while SPM is a good measure of general intellectual ability although not a pure g estimate. This test has been used for the purpose of screening the subjects in terms of their intellectual levels.
- 2. Spirituality Questionnaire:** The spirituality questionnaire was developed by Jochen Hardt, Sonja Schultz et al, (2012) is a self administered questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of 20 statements dealing with attitudes, opinions and feelings regarding the topic of spirituality. This questionnaire consists of four sub-scales consisting of 5 items each which are outlined below:
  - i) Belief in God
  - ii) Search for meaning
  - iii) Mindfulness
  - iv) Feeling of security

The sub-scales have good reliabilities ( $.78 \leq \text{Cronbachs } \alpha \leq .97$ ) and medium positive inter-correlations ( $.26 \leq r \leq .52$ ). The authors further believe that the questionnaire represents a valid instrument to assess the four core dimensions of spirituality. It has a high face value.

## 2.2 Inclusion in Sample

After collecting the names and addresses of the reputed creative personnel's and corporate, each subjects were contacted through telephone and appointment were sought from each of them. The researcher introduced herself. The purpose of the study was presented and an overview was given. At the time of test informed consent was taken. The investigator collected data from each subject personally over one session.

### 2.2.1 Exclusion criteria:

Subjects were initially screened for their intellectual ability using Raven Progressive Matrices. The subjects who scored below average in this test were not included in the sample.

**2.3 Method:** Descriptive research involves collecting data in order to test the hypotheses or answer concerning the current status of the subject of the study. Descriptive data are typically collected through a questionnaire, interview or observation. Thus the current research will adopt a descriptive method undergoing the procedure of (1) Selecting sample of a population, 2) Collecting information through standardized questionnaires, 3) synthesizing findings based on the collected data in order to gauge the spiritualistic profile of the innovators, visual artists, performing artists and comparative group i.e. the corporate executives.

**2.4 Analysis:** Analyses of data involve the process of extracting, compiling and modeling raw data for obtaining constructive information. In the present research, the data were analysed under two phases, in the first phase Mean and SD for each of the four groups on each variable was computed. In the second phase to test whether each group differed significantly from the other groups in each of the variables, One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was carried out. Finally Discriminant Analysis was worked out to find the most discriminating variable between the creative groups (Innovators, visual artists, performing artists) and comparative group (corporate executives).

## III. Result And Discussion

In order to test the proposed hypotheses, the collected data were subjected to descriptive and inferential statistics. The discussion aims at examining the spirituality profile of creative personnel.

Table 1 indicates the mean and SD values of Innovators, Visual Artists, Performing Artists and Comparative Group on each of the sub-scales which are Belief in God, Search for meaning, Mindfulness and Feeling of security along with the total spirituality scores.

**Table 1: Showing the Mean and SD values for the total spirituality score and the four sub-scales of spirituality:**

Groups Variables	Innovators		Visual Artists		Performing Artists		Comparative Group	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Belief in God	16.43	4.710	13.10	5.618	14.84	5.347	15.18	3.468
Search for meaning	18.37	3.518	19.00	1.309	18.10	2.468	12.68	3.956
Mindfulness	18.70	3.164	17.86	2.843	16.76	2.638	13.86	3.523
Feeling of Security	15.80	5.359	16.14	4.262	16.20	3.670	13.46	3.512
Total Spirituality Score	69.30	12.306	66.10	9.898	65.90	9.381	55.18	10.665

**Table 2: Results showing the F values obtained from One –Way Analysis Of Variance (ANOVA) showing the significance of groups on spirituality sub-scales.**

Variables	F
Belief in God	3.263 *
Search for meaning	48.518 **
Mindfulness	21.103 **
Feeling of security	4.949 **
Total	15.703 **

\*p< 0.05, \*\*< 0.01

**Table 3: Post Hoc Tuckey Test**

<b>Dependent Variable</b>	<b>(I)Main Group</b>	<b>(J)Main Group</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>
Spirituality	Innovators	Visual Artists	3.200
		Performing Artists	3.400
		Corporate Executives	14.120 *
	Visual Artist	Innovators	-3.200
		Performing Artist	0.200
		Corporate Executives	10.920*
	Performing Artist	Innovators	-3.400
		Visual Artist	-2.00
		Corporate Executives	10.720*
	Corporate Executives	Innovators	-14.120*
		Visual Artists	-10.720*
		Performing Artist	-10.920*
Belief in God	Innovators	Visual Artists	3.333 (*)
		Performing Artists	1.593
		Corporate Executives	1.253
	Visual Artists	Innovators	-3.333 (*)
		Performing Artists	-1.740
		Corporate Executives	-2.080
	Performing Artists	Innovators	-1.593
		Visual Artists	1.740
		Corporate Executives	-.340
	Corporate Executives	Innovators	-1.253
		Visual Artists	2.080
		Performing Artists	.340
Search for Meaning	Innovators	Visual Artists	-.633
		Performing Artists	.267
		Corporate Executives	5.687 (*)
	Visual Artists	Innovators	.633
		Performing Artists	.900
		Corporate Executives	6.320 (*)
	Performing Artists	Innovators	-.267
		Visual Artists	-.900
		Corporate Executives	5.420 (*)
	Corporate Executives	Innovators	-5.687 (*)
		Visual Artists	-6.320 (*)
		Performing Artists	-5.420 (*)
Mindfulness	Innovators	Visual Artists	.840
		Performing Artists	1.940 (*)
		Corporate Executives	4.840 (*)
	Visual Artists	Innovators	-.840
		Performing Artists	1.100 (*)
		Corporate Executives	4.000(*)
	Performing Artists	Innovators	-1.940 (*)
		Visual Artists	-1.1 (*)
		Corporate Executives	2.900( *)
	Corporate Executives	Innovators	-4.840 (*)

		Visual Artists	-4.000 (*)
		Performing Artists	-2.900 ( *)
Feeling of Security	Innovators	Visual Artists	-.340
		Performing Artists	-.400
		Corporate Executives	2.340
	Performing Artists	Innovators	.400
		Visual Artists	.060
		Corporate Executives	2.740 (*)
	Visual Artists	Innovators	.340
		Performing Artists	-.060
		Corporate Executives	2.680(*)
	Corporate Executives	Innovators	-2.340
		Visual Artists	-2.680(*)
		Performing Artists	-2.740(*)

As is evident from table 2, the F value (15.703) between the four groups has been found to be significant. Again from table 1 it is seen that innovators have the highest mean value followed by visual artists, performing artists and comparative group having the lowest mean value, thus it can be asserted that innovators have a significantly higher spirituality score and comparative group (corporate executives) have a significantly lower spirituality score. Further from table 3 (Post hoc analysis) it is seen that the mean of each creative group significantly differed from the mean of the comparative group, but no significant mean differences were found between the innovators, visual artists and performing artists. The present findings have been supported by studies indicating a clear association between creativity and spirituality (**Saroglou & Vassilis, 2002**). Thus the first hypothesis which states that there will be no significant difference between innovators, visual artists, performing artists and corporate executive's stands rejected.

Supportive data from table 2 indicates that the difference between these groups is significant at 5 % level only. Hence the hypothesis which states that there will be no significant difference between innovators, visual artists, performing artists and corporate executives in Belief in God stands rejected at 5% level. Table 3 (Tuckey Test) shows that significant difference exists only between innovators and visual artists. Thus innovators had a significantly higher score i.e. having a mean value of 16.43 and the visual artists had scored significantly low (mean value is 13.10). The findings of our study however runs contrary to the findings of **Feist (1993)** who carried out his study on eminent scientist and found them to be less involved in religious practices like going to church, reading religious books etc.. In a study carried out by **Amitai Shenhav, David Rand and Joshnua Greene (2011)** showed that people who rely on their intuitive thinking are more likely to believe in God. However additional research has shown that analytical thinking reduced their tendency to belief in God. (**Gervais and Norenzayan, 2011**). A creative genius understands that creative ideas do not often stem from the conscious mind but from deep within the unconscious recesses of their intuitive mind. However, their conception of God is somewhat different from that of the general population as most of the creative geniuses usually perceive God as a higher power, or energy within the universe that aids in the stimulation of their creative capacity. Hence the third hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between the innovators, visual artists, performing artists and, comparative group is rejected. It must be noted that the difference is significant only at  $\alpha = 5\%$  and at lower critical value it is not significant.

For search for meaning the F value (48.518) has been found to be significant at both alpha levels. Post hoc analysis through Tuckey test (Table 3) further clarifies that all the three creative groups (innovators, visual artists, performing artists) significantly differ from the corporate executives in terms of search for meaning but no difference has been found to exist between the innovators, visual artists and performing artists. The visual artists scored significantly high while the corporate executives scored significantly low on this sub-scale. Search for meaning is a concept which is strongly tied to the notion of spirituality according to **Victor Frankl (1964)**. Thus the third hypothesis indicating a significant difference between the innovators, visual artists, performing artists and corporate executives is also rejected.

In terms of mindfulness innovators scored significantly high scores while the corporate executives scored the lowest. However supportive data from table 4 indicates that innovators significantly differed from the performing artists and corporate executives, further significant difference were also found between visual artists and performing artists, but all the three creative groups significantly differed from the corporate executives. The

F value which is 21.203 has been found to be significant and thus the hypothesis is rejected and it can be asserted that significant difference exists between innovators, visual artists, performing artists and corporate executives in mindfulness. The findings of our study are in tune with past research which states that creative people are known for their mindfulness. The increased awareness of one's thought, words and actions facilitates recognition of creative thoughts i.e. light the creative spark and cherish it (Ellwood & McGraw, 2002). However, performing artists had a significantly low score as compared to the innovators and visual artists one possible reason for this could be that performing artists keep practicing their art form and at one point of time this skills become automatic which demands less attention and focus. On the other side innovators and visual artists needs to have a clear and focused mind, as they are required to create something which is entirely new. The low score of the performing artists may be further explained with the help of a study which states the "mindful individuals may be less affected by immediate rewards". In case of performing artist they receive regular appreciation and reinforcement from the audiences which could be another reason for their less mindfulness.

Finally in terms of feeling of security it is seen that performing artists have a significantly high score while the corporate executives score lowest. The reason for this could be that performing artists always performs in the midst of audiences and the love and affection they receive in turn from their fans give them a sense of being accepted and this leads to a sense of security. They know that they have gift for an art form; a skill which will always remain with them. This is another reason which probably increases their sense of security as compared to corporate executives whose jobs are unpredictable and they are at the mercy of their organizations and the economy. The F value (4.949) indicates a significant difference among the four groups; hence the fifth hypothesis is also rejected. This difference is mainly due to significant difference that exists between visual artists, performing artists and corporate executives.

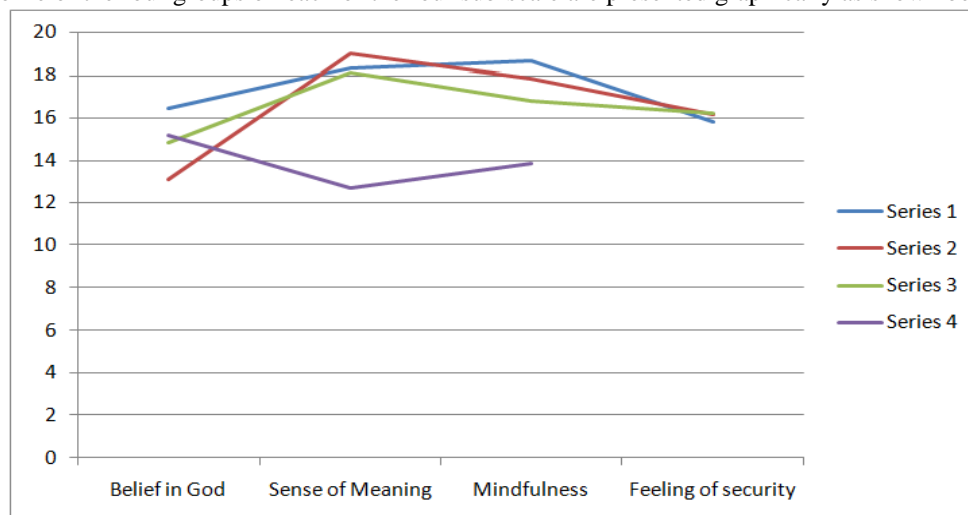
**Table 4: Showing the discriminant functions of the four sub-scales between the creative's (N=130) and Comparative Group (N=50)**

Variables	Functions
Search for Meaning	.904
Mindfulness	.553
Feeling of Security	.291
Belief in God	-.059

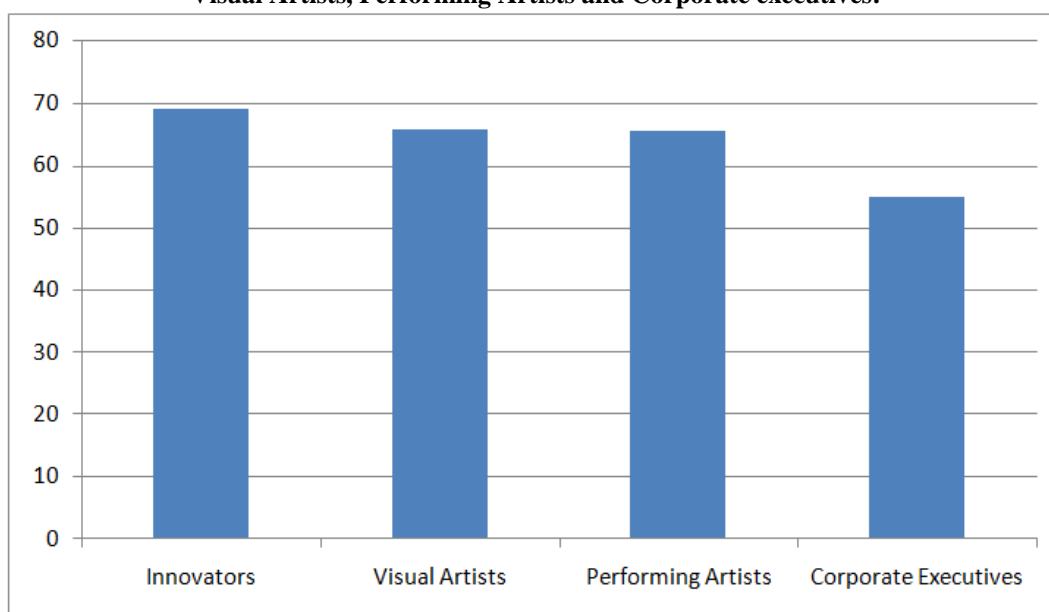
The discriminant function is a phase of analysis which examines the function of the relative variables in discriminating between the groups of creative individuals (innovators, visual artist, performing artists) and comparative group (corporate executives). Here, for the interpretation purposes the ranking of dependent measures are made in terms of relative discriminative power. The discriminant functions involve examining the signs and magnitude of the standardized discriminant weight (sometimes referred to as discriminant coefficient). The obtained results indicate that Search for Meaning in life has the highest discriminating weight (.904) followed by Mindfulness (.553), Security (.291) and Belief in God having the least discriminant weigh (-.059). Thus it can be inferred that Search for meaning in life is the dependent measure which can discriminate the most between the creative and comparative group on spirituality.

**Figure 1: Overall Profile of the Subjects**

Overall profile of the four groups on each of the four sub-scale are presented graphically as shown below:



**Figure 2: Graphical representation of the total score of spirituality of the four groups viz., Innovators, Visual Artists, Performing Artists and Corporate executives:**



#### **IV. Conclusion**

In conclusion it may be stated that the present study generated some support for the relationship between spirituality and creativity. Results of this research reveal that the creative personnel's score high on spirituality as a whole then the comparative group. The research also indicates that Innovators scored significantly high in terms of Belief in God and visual artist scored the lowest. In the remaining sub-scales viz., search for meaning, mindfulness and feeling of security Visual artists, Innovators and Performing artists scored significantly high in all the of them while comparative group scored significantly low in each of the above sub scales. However, the study succeeds in giving a clear profile of every group in each dimension of spirituality.

One limitation which stands out is that only males were included in the study. It will be of more value if the sample includes a female group also.

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