



# A Review of “Spiritual Intelligence and Spiritual Care in Nursing Practice”: A Bibliometric Analysis

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**Abstract:** This review critically examines the article "Spiritual Intelligence and Spiritual Care in Nursing Practice: A Bibliometric Review" published in the Indian Journal of Palliative Care (2024) by Stiliya et al. The original study employs a bibliometric analysis of 461 publications (2014-2024) indexed in Scopus to explore trends, key contributors, and thematic developments in the field of spiritual intelligence (SI) and spiritual care in nursing. Using MS Excel and VOS viewer, the authors report a consistent growth of research since 2015, identify influential authors and journals, and highlight the increasing integration of SI into nursing education and practice. This review recognizes the article's contribution in mapping the evolving landscape of SI research and its relevance for holistic, patient-centered care. At the same time, it underscores certain limitations, including the reliance on a single database and exclusion of non-English studies, which may restrict the generalizability of findings. By reflecting on the strengths and gaps of this bibliometric review, the present paper emphasizes the need for future studies on measurable tools for SI, cross-cultural perspectives, and curriculum integration in nursing education. Such efforts can deepen the understanding of SI as a professional competency and enhance the quality of holistic nursing care.

**Index Terms** - Article review, Spiritual intelligence, Nursing, Bibliometric analysis, Spiritual care.

## Introduction

Spiritual intelligence (SI) has emerged as a vital dimension of holistic nursing practice, complementing emotional and intellectual intelligence in addressing the spiritual and existential needs of patients. With the growing emphasis on patient-centred care, resilience, and well-being, SI is increasingly recognized as an essential competency for nurses, particularly in high-stress environments such as palliative and critical care. Research in this domain has expanded in recent years, reflecting a global interest in how SI can influence professional satisfaction, coping mechanisms, and quality of care delivery.

The article "Spiritual Intelligence and Spiritual Care in Nursing Practice: A Bibliometric Review" by Stiliya, Antony, and Joseph (2024), published in the Indian Journal of Palliative Care, offers a

comprehensive bibliometric analysis of literature published between 2014 and 2024. By analyzing 461 Scopus-indexed studies, the authors map publication trends, identify influential authors, journals, and countries, and highlight the increasing integration of SI and spiritual care into nursing research and education.

This review aims to critically evaluate the contributions of the bibliometric study, acknowledge its strengths in synthesizing the current knowledge landscape, and discuss its limitations and implications for future research. Through this process, the review seeks to underline the significance of spiritual intelligence as an evolving field in nursing and its potential to enrich education, professional development, and holistic patient care.

### **Aim of the Study**

The primary aim of the study by Stiliya, Antony, and Joseph (2024) was to conduct a bibliometric analysis of published literature on spiritual intelligence and spiritual care in nursing and healthcare practice. Specifically, the authors sought to identify publication trends, influential authors, prominent journals, and collaborative networks in this field, while also highlighting research gaps and suggesting directions for future investigations.

### **Methodology**

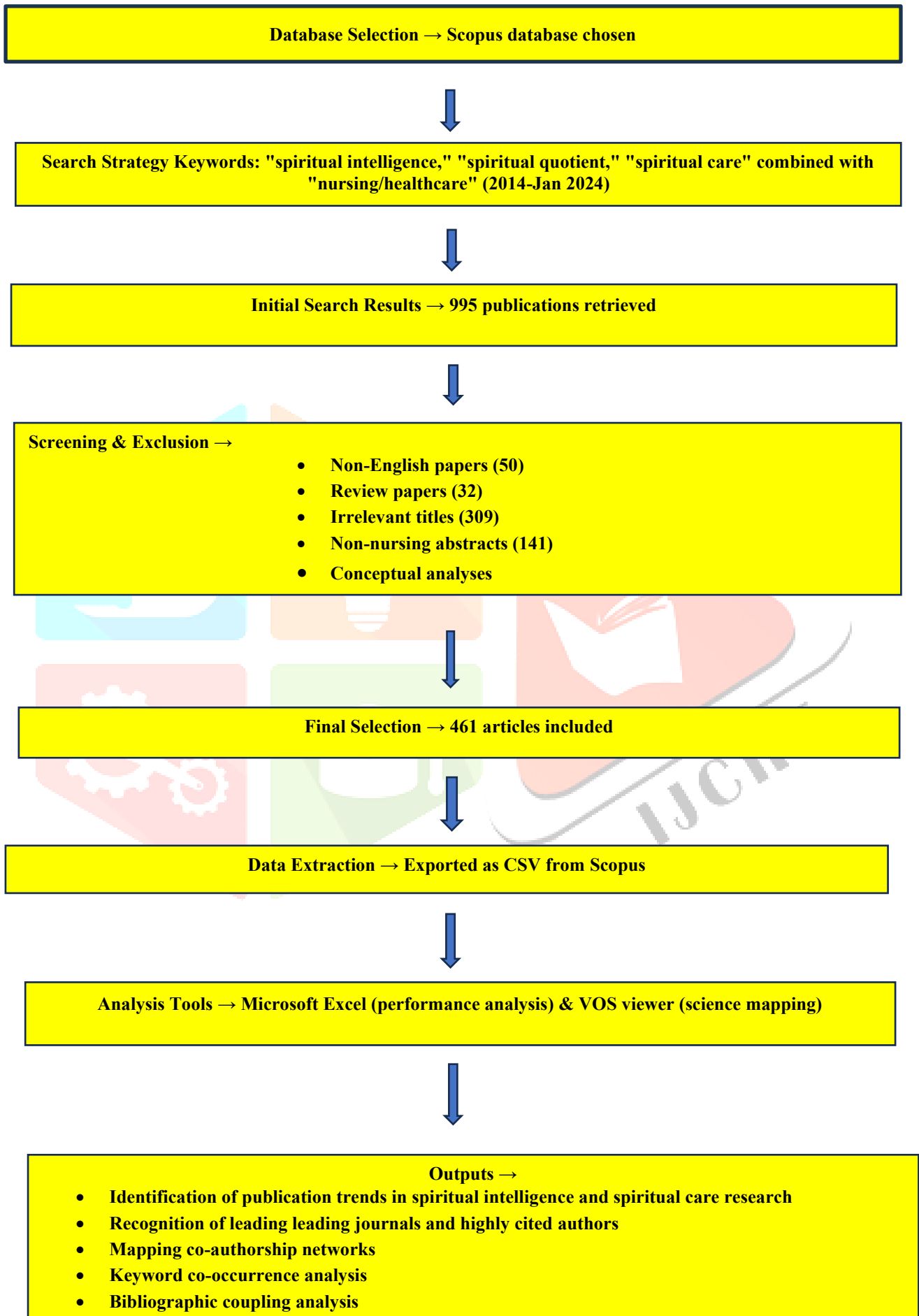
The authors employed a bibliometric research approach to map and analyses the scientific literature on spiritual intelligence (SI), spiritual quotient, and spiritual care in nursing and healthcare practice. The Scopus database was searched for publications between 2014 and January 2024 using relevant keywords such as "spiritual intelligence," "spiritual quotient," "spiritual care," "nursing," and "healthcare."

The initial search yielded 995 publications, which were screened to exclude non-English papers, review articles, conceptual analyses, and those unrelated to SI or nursing. After this rigorous filtering process, 461 articles were selected for bibliometric analysis.

The data were exported into CSV format and analyzed using Microsoft Excel for performance analysis (publication trends, top journals, most cited studies, and publishers) and VOS viewer software (version 1.6.20) for science mapping (co-authorship networks, keyword co-occurrence, bibliographic coupling of authors and countries).

This methodology enabled the authors to examine both the quantitative growth of publications and the collaborative patterns shaping the field, thereby identifying knowledge gaps and research direction

## Methodological Framework of the Study



## Summary of Findings

The bibliometric analysis by Stiliya et al. (2024) examined 461 articles on spiritual intelligence (SI), spiritual quotient, and spiritual care in nursing and healthcare published between 2014-2024. The findings revealed:

- **Growth in Research:** A marked increase in SI-related publications was observed after 2015, indicating its rising importance in nursing research.
- **Top Cited Studies:** Highly cited works focused on nurses' perceptions of spirituality, spiritual care competencies, and patients' spiritual needs in palliative and end-of-life care.
- **Leading Journals:** The Journal of Religion and Health, Journal of Christian Nursing, Journal of Holistic Nursing, and Nurse Education Today emerged as leading sources publishing on SI.
- **Influential Authors:** Key contributors included Wilfred McSherry, Trove Giske, Elizabeth Johnston Taylor, Fiona Timmins, Silvia Caldeira, and Linda Ross.
- **Global Contributions:** The United States and Iran were found to have the strongest research collaborations and highest publication outputs, followed by Turkey, the UK, and Australia.
- **Keyword Trends:** Frequently used keywords were spiritual care, spirituality, nurses, nursing education, palliative care, and healthcare, reflecting the central themes.
- **Research Gaps:** Despite the growing output, areas such as the measurability of SI, integration of SI in nursing curricula, and cultural perspectives remain underexplored.

## Interpretation and Discussion

The findings of Stiliya et al. (2024) highlight the increasing significance of spiritual intelligence (SI) and spiritual care in nursing scholarship, aligning with the broader shift toward holistic and patient-centered care. The consistent growth of SI-related publications since 2015 suggests that healthcare systems are recognizing the importance of addressing not only physical and emotional, but also spiritual dimensions of health.

A key strength of the study lies in its use of bibliometric analysis, which provides a comprehensive overview of research productivity, influential authors, and collaboration networks. This method allows the identification of knowledge gaps and guides future research directions. For instance, the strong presence of authors such as McSherry, Giske, and Taylor indicates the emergence of central thought leaders in the field. Similarly, the prominence of journals like Journal of Religion and Health and Nurse Education Today suggests that SI is being explored both in clinical practice and in nursing education contexts.

The study also sheds light on regional trends: the United States emphasizes educational tools and competencies, while Iran and Turkey focus more on integrating SI within cultural and religious frameworks. This diversity points to the need for context-specific strategies when implementing spiritual care globally. However, the dominance of certain countries also reflects unequal global representation, with underdeveloped nations contributing minimally. This gap limits the generalizability of the findings.

Despite its contributions, the study has limitations. Restricting data to the Scopus database and English-language publications may have excluded valuable research, particularly from non-English-speaking countries where spirituality is deeply embedded in healthcare practices. Additionally, bibliometric analysis, while useful for mapping trends, does not provide in-depth insights into the quality or effectiveness of interventions involving SI.

From a nursing practice perspective, the study reinforces the urgent need to integrate SI and spiritual care into curricula, training, and clinical guidelines. Enhancing nurses' spiritual intelligence could foster resilience, reduce burnout, and improve patient outcomes, especially in high-stress areas such as palliative care and critical care. Future studies should move from mapping existing literature to conducting intervention-based research, testing how SI education and training influence clinical practice and patient well-being.

### **Conclusion**

The bibliometric review by Stiliya et al. (2024) demonstrates that spiritual intelligence (SI) and spiritual care are gaining increasing attention in nursing scholarship, reflecting their relevance to holistic patient care and nurse well-being. By analyzing 461 articles over a decade, the study effectively mapped key contributors, leading journals, and global research collaborations, confirming SI as an emerging area of interest within healthcare.

The review underscores both progress and gaps. While the steady growth of SI research highlights its recognized importance, limitations remain in terms of measurement tools, integration into curricula, and cross-cultural applicability. Restricting the analysis to English-language and Scopus-indexed studies further narrows the scope of evidence. Despite these limitations, the findings provide valuable directions for nursing educators, practitioners, and policymakers.

Overall, the study emphasizes that strengthening SI among nurses is not only beneficial for professional resilience and coping with ethical dilemmas but also essential for enhancing patient outcomes, satisfaction, and holistic well-being. Future research should focus on developing validated SI assessment tools, designing context-specific training interventions, and expanding global collaborations to ensure SI becomes an integral part of nursing practice and education.

### **Reference**

Stiliya, J. K., Antony, J. M., & Joseph, J. (2024). Spiritual intelligence and spiritual care in nursing practice: A bibliometric review. *Indian Journal of Palliative Care*, 30(4), 304–314. <https://doi.org/10.25259/IJPC-155 2024>