



A Conceptual Exploration: Importance of Spiritual Intelligence among Prospective Teachers

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Abstract: *The present research paper undertakes a comprehensive examination of the relevance of spiritual intelligence in prospective teachers within the contemporary educational context. The study elucidates that amidst the evolving demands of teaching and training, spiritual intelligence is not merely a means of personal growth but has emerged as a significant professional attribute. In today's technological era, it is evident that the thought patterns and working styles of teachers have undergone a profound transformation, diverging considerably from traditional practices. Rapid development, technological advancement, and competitive pressures have also altered the teacher–student relationship, distancing it from the ideals emphasized in ancient knowledge traditions.*

This paper seeks to emphasize the importance of spiritual intelligence in prospective teachers, enabling the cultivation of humanistic and ethical values such as love, compassion, empathy, and meaning and purpose, discipline. Consequently, spiritual intelligence contributes to enhancing the quality of teacher education and renders the teaching–learning process more meaningful and holistic. The study asserts that alongside cognitive and emotional competencies, the integration of spiritual intelligence in prospective teachers is essential for fostering education that is value-oriented, humane, and comprehensive.

Key word: *Spiritual Intelligence, Prospective Teachers, Value Education.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

The contemporary era, often described as the age of digital technology and innovation, has rendered the educational landscape increasingly complex, multidimensional, and fraught with diverse challenges. While technological progress has undeniably provided new directions and opportunities for teaching and learning, it has simultaneously intensified issues such as stress, emotional insensitivity, heightened competition, and moral as well as social dilemmas. Within such a context, the role of the teacher cannot be confined merely to the transmission of subject knowledge. Rather, the modern educational environment demands educators who are emotionally balanced, ethically sound, value-oriented, and sensitive to the holistic needs of learners. Such teachers are expected to impart not only disciplinary knowledge but also life perspectives and human values, thereby contributing to the comprehensive development of students.

Since students spend a significant portion of their time with teachers, the behavioural qualities, personality traits, and inner virtues of teachers play a decisive role in shaping learners' academic performance, socio-emotional development, and holistic personality formation. Teachers, therefore, hold a pivotal position in the progress of society, as they transform innocent children into responsible citizens through knowledge and education. These citizens, in turn, contribute to the development of a progressive nation. Ancient Indian culture has also emphasized the importance of teachers, yet in the present age, the bond between teacher and student has weakened and continues to change. A major reason for this decline is the gradual erosion of human values among teachers, many of whom increasingly perceive teaching merely as a profession rather than a moral responsibility.



Contemporary teacher education programs, such as B.Ed. and other training frameworks, primarily emphasize intellectual and skill development, focusing narrowly on pedagogical competencies. The dimensions of emotional, spiritual, and inner development of teachers are often neglected. This necessitates a re-evaluation of the utility and indispensability of spiritual intelligence in teacher education. Integrating spiritual intelligence into training programs can cultivate qualities such as love, compassion, empathy, self-awareness, and interpersonal connectedness among prospective teachers. These values, once nurtured, can be transmitted to future generations as a legacy of humanistic and ethical virtues.

Spiritual intelligence is regarded as the highest dimension of human intellect, providing individuals with meaning-making capacity, value consciousness, self-awareness, and emotional equilibrium. It serves as a bridge between rational intelligence and emotional intelligence, enabling individuals to establish balance in their personal and professional lives. If prospective teachers are imparted education in spiritual intelligence, they can develop self-regulation, ethical decision-making abilities, and a positive outlook. These attributes empower them to connect empathetically with students and to create inclusive, secure, and inspiring learning environments.

The purpose of this conceptual study is to highlight the necessity of spiritual intelligence for prospective teachers, to explain its components and impacts, and to argue for its integration into teacher education curricula and training methodologies. This study contends that spiritual intelligence is an essential, multidimensional professional competence that enhances the quality of modern teacher education and makes the teaching–learning process more value-based, humane, and inclusive.

2. What is Spiritual Intelligence?

Spiritual intelligence is the highest dimension of human intellect. It establishes harmony between the mind and the soul, which is manifested in one's external behaviour and actions. Spiritual intelligence is the capacity to act wisely and compassionately in order to maintain both inner and outer balance. The meaning of spiritual intelligence should not be confined merely to religious sentiment. Rather, it is an intrinsic capacity of the human mind, soul, and intellect. It is the intelligence that helps us seek answers to fundamental questions such as: What are we? Why are we here? What is the purpose of our life? What are our ideals and values? Spiritual intelligence provides proper direction to our cognitive and emotional faculties. As a result, we are able to use our talents to enrich our own lives as well as the lives of others. Spiritual intelligence is the spiritual capacity to live in the present moment with self-knowledge, self-awareness, equanimity, a sense of belonging, humility, and compassion. It expands our ability to embrace diversity and inclusion, while simultaneously awakening the spirit of service within us.

3. Conceptual understanding of Spiritual Intelligence:

The concept of spiritual intelligence was first introduced by Danah Zohar in 1997, in her influential book 'Rewiring the Corporate Brain'. Zohar argued that human integrity and wholeness are not merely products of rational or emotional faculties, but are deeply rooted in a higher dimension of intelligence that transcends conventional cognitive boundaries. Spiritual intelligence, in her view, represents the profound wisdom of the self. It enables individuals to re-examine their reactions, to reflect critically on their assumptions, and to engage with fundamental existential questions.

Zohar and Marshall (2000)

In their seminal work *Spiritual Intelligence: The Ultimate Intelligence* (2000), Danah Zohar and Ian Marshall articulated the concept of spiritual intelligence (SQ) as the highest form of human intelligence. They defined it as the capacity through which individuals address problems of meaning and value, thereby rendering life and work more purposeful. According to them, spiritual intelligence assists in choosing the most noble path in life. They argued that both IQ (Intellectual Quotient) and EQ (Emotional Quotient) can function effectively only when grounded in SQ, which serves as their fundamental prerequisite. SQ enables individuals to adapt creatively to rules and circumstances.

Zohar and Marshall identified several distinctive features of spiritual intelligence:

1. **Heightened self-awareness** – The ability to recognize one's beliefs, motivations, and values, and to understand the self.
2. **Vision and value-driven orientation**–Being guided by foresight and higher principles.



3. **Respect for diversity** – Acknowledging and valuing differences among people.
4. **Sense of wholeness** – Perceiving interconnectedness and coherence within society and the broader order.
5. **Compassion and harmony** –Fostering coexistence and mutual respect.
6. **Independence of thought** –Ability to think autonomously beyond dependency.
7. **Capacity for fundamental questioning** –Ability to asking question ‘what’ and ‘why’
8. **Creativity in constructing new perspectives** – Developing innovative frameworks of understanding.

Frances Vaughan (2002)

Frances Vaughan emphasized that spiritual intelligence pertains to the emotional and cognitive aspects of inner life and their interrelationships. It provides deep insight into existential and ontological questions, facilitating an understanding of multiple levels of consciousness. Vaughan argued that spiritual intelligence also entails awareness of human biological evolution, which she described not merely as a random process but as an intellectual one. It contributes to personal growth, the ignition of the brain, and the inspiration of the soul. Vaughan further suggested that spiritual intelligence can be cultivated through daily practice.

She outlined three broad domains:

1. **Presence** – Self-awareness, awareness of others, relational awareness, and authenticity.
2. **Emotional transformation** – Replacing judgment with compassion, anger with forgiveness, and recognizing empathy.
3. **Motivation** – Fostering inner peace, generating knowledge, and achieving liberation from bondage.

In conclusion we can say spiritual intelligence emerges as a multidimensional construct that integrates self-awareness, ethical orientation, compassion, creativity, and resilience. It is regarded as the “ultimate intelligence,” harmonizing intellectual and emotional faculties while guiding individuals toward meaning, purpose, and moral responsibility.

4. Role of a teacher in modern classroom:

- **Making bridge between socio-emotional competence:**

A teacher plays a vital role in developing socio-emotional competence among learners. When a teacher integrates values such as empathy, self-control, compassion, love and optimism into their teaching, they establish a connection with students not only at the cognitive level but also at the emotional level. For a teacher, it is essential to be intellectually enriched as well as emotionally strong, so that a supportive environment can be created as a foundation for growth of the students.

- **Role-modelling positive behaviours:**

For students, teachers are their role models. Learners tend to emulate their teachers; therefore, a teacher must demonstrate positive qualities such as respect, patience, and fairness in their conduct. When a teacher exhibits such virtues in behaviour, students will certainly strive to follow and internalize them.

- **Creating inclusive learning environments:**

The major responsibility of a teacher extends beyond the mere transmission of knowledge or the exchange of information. It encompasses the creation of an inclusive classroom environment in which both typical and exceptional learners are afforded equitable opportunities to acquire knowledge, free from any form of deprivation or discrimination. The cultivation of spiritual intelligence fosters in teachers essential humanistic qualities such as love, compassion, and altruism, thereby enabling them to honour diversity and to recognize the unique identity of each student without bias. Such an approach ensures that learners experience a sense of safety, belonging, and motivation within the educational setting.

- **Managing classroom stress and conflicts:**

Teachers encounter numerous challenges on a daily basis and are often required to assume the role of mediator in order to resolve tensions and conflicts that arise within the classroom environment. Spiritual intelligence serves to integrate both cognitive and emotional dimensions of intelligence, thereby enabling individuals to make balanced and judicious decisions in life. The cultivation of spiritual intelligence among prospective teachers holds the potential to equip them



with the capacity to address stressful circumstances and classroom challenges in a more composed, equitable, and effective manner in the future.

- **Promoting holistic development in learners:**

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes the holistic development of students. Holistic development refers not only to the intellectual growth of children but also to their social, moral, and emotional advancement. Within the teaching–learning process, a teacher integrates academic knowledge with life skills, creativity, and ethical reflection, thereby providing an education that transcends mere cognitive acquisition. Such an approach ensures that, alongside intellectual development, students also attain moral and character formation, fostering their growth as responsible and well-rounded individuals.

5. Why Do Prospective Teachers Needs Spiritual Intelligence?

Teaching is not merely concerned with the transmission of bookish knowledge; rather, it is fundamentally about shaping the life of the child. In this process, the teacher occupies a pivotal position, guiding learners in how to think, comprehend, and establish meaningful connections with others. From this perspective, the integration of spiritual intelligence into teacher education becomes profoundly significant. Spiritual intelligence assists prospective teachers in achieving balance within both their professional responsibilities and personal lives. Furthermore, it enables them to cultivate a classroom environment that is safe, equitable, and compassionate, thereby ensuring the holistic development of all students.

- **Enhancing Self-Awareness and Reflective Practice**

Among the key dimensions of spiritual intelligence, self-awareness occupies a particularly significant place. Self-awareness refers to the knowledge and understanding of oneself. In today’s technologically driven and fast-paced world, many teachers tend to perceive their professional responsibilities primarily in terms of competition. In doing so, they often lose sight of the deeper meaning of being a teacher and the true essence of the role of a mentor. They become increasingly unaware of the expectations and responsibilities inherent in their vocation. By integrating spiritual intelligence into teacher education, prospective teachers can gain clarity regarding the authentic expectations associated with their role. This integration enables them to recognize not only the professional demands of teaching but also its moral and humanistic dimensions, thereby preparing them to become reflective practitioners and ethically grounded educators. Self-awareness is the key element of effective teaching. A teacher who understands their own strengths, weaknesses, beliefs, and emotional responses can easily manage classroom challenges. Without self-awareness, teachers may unconsciously project biases or react impulsively, which can negatively affect students. It impact the relationship between teacher and students. Students have to face difficulty to share there problems with teachers.

- **Strengthening Emotional Regulation and Stress Management”**

Spiritual intelligence assists prospective teachers in becoming emotionally enriched, enabling them to regulate and appropriately channel their emotions within the classroom. It further supports the balance between cognition and emotion, allowing teachers to remain composed in stressful situations and to make well-reasoned, reflective decisions. It is often observed that many teachers struggle to maintain control over their cognitive processes and emotional responses, which results in manifestations such as anger, stress, and irritability. These tendencies, in turn, exert a negative influence on students and hinder the creation of a supportive learning environment.

- **Fostering Empathy and Compassion**

Empathy and compassion are profoundly significant qualities for a teacher, as they enable the establishment of meaningful adjustment and harmony with students in the classroom. A teacher is not merely a transmitter of knowledge but also a guide who shapes the personality and character of learners. Through their values, principles, and virtues, a teacher can influence the direction in which a student’s personality develops. When a teacher embodies empathy and compassion, they are able to understand the challenges faced by students and provide appropriate support as needed. Spiritual intelligence further assists teacher trainees in cultivating these dispositions of empathy and compassion, thereby enriching their professional and personal growth. In contemporary education, one of the foremost challenges



for teachers is to foster emotional connectedness with children and to create an inclusive classroom environment where every child perceives others as equals. Such inclusivity can only be achieved when teachers themselves nurture emotional bonds with their students, thereby laying the foundation for holistic and equitable learning.

➤ **Promoting Ethical and Value-Based Teaching**

A teacher play a important role in fostering value based and ethical education to their students by serving as a moral role model , and creating inclusive classroom environment. Teacher cultivate values such as honesty, curtesy, fairness and responsibility through their action, communication and decision making into students. Ultimately purpose of a teacher to make their student not only intellectual by their logical ability also make them emotionally strong and spiritually intelligent.

➤ **Enhancing Teacher–Student Positive Connectedness:**

The present era is characterized by digital technology, and with its integration into education, the traditional relationship between teachers and learners has undergone a profound transformation. This shift has, in many instances, led to an increase in incidents of violence and misconduct between teachers and students, largely because the emotional bond that once connected them has diminished. Contemporary teachers often perceive teaching merely as a profession, showing little concern for the personal difficulties faced by their students. Consequently, learners themselves experience hesitation and discomfort in sharing their problems with teachers.

Spiritual intelligence plays a crucial role in addressing this gap by fostering qualities such as love, compassion, empathy, and mutual connectedness among teacher trainees. These attributes enable future educators to understand their students on an emotional level and to provide meaningful support in resolving their challenges. Incorporating spiritual intelligence into teacher education programs can thus contribute to the development of educators who are capable of establishing positive, emotionally resonant, and psychologically supportive relationships with their learners. In doing so, teaching transcends its professional boundaries and becomes a holistic practice that nurtures both intellectual and emotional growth.

6. Study shows the significance of Spiritual Intelligence in Prospective Teachers:

To ascertain the importance of Spiritual Intelligence among prospective teachers, various national and international studies were reviewed, yielding the following results-

Arthur/Year	Study	Key Finding
2020/Ananya Ghosh Roy	Impact of Spiritual Intelligence on Mental Health of Pre-Service Teachers	The study found a strong positive correlation between spiritual intelligence and mental health among pre-service teachers. Respondents also highlighted stress, anxiety, and fear stemming from family and work-related issues.
2021/ KM Sheema	Evaluative Study of Spiritual Intelligence Among Prospective Teachers	Prospective teachers with high spiritual quotient were more optimistic, emotionally stable and ready to face professional challenges.
2021/Zuraini Idris, Ku Suhaila Ku Johari	Relationship between Personality Trait and Spiritual Intelligence among Trainee Teachers at the Institute of Teacher Education Malaysia	The findings indicate that the personality traits of extraversion and openness exhibit a significant positive correlation with spiritual intelligence among trainee teachers. In contrast, the traits of acceptance , awareness , and emotional stability demonstrate no statistically significant relationship with spiritual intelligence within this population.
2022/ Subrata Sen	Spiritual Intelligence of B.Ed. Trainee-Teachers and Its Dynamic Relation with	The study found that B.Ed. trainee teachers showed medium levels of spiritual intelligence, which was positively related to extraversion, openness, and agreeableness, but negatively



	Their Big Five Personality Traits	related to neuroticism. No gender or subject differences were noted, though rural trainees had higher SI than urban ones.
2023/ chowdhury	Piku Teacher Education and Spiritual Intelligence	The study highlights that spiritual intelligence in teacher education is essential for fostering harmony and synergy in society. It emphasizes the crucial role of teacher educators in shaping future citizens beyond mere scientific and technological advancement.
2024/ Ayla Wajahat	Spiritual Intelligence in Education Exploring the Impact of Teachers' Spiritual Intelligence on Student Satisfaction in Higher Education Using Dyad Analysis	The study found that teachers' spiritual intelligence positively impacts student satisfaction, leading to better learning outcomes and academic performance. It also helps foster self-motivation, self-control, and reduced stress in fast-paced educational settings.
2025 / Jemy Jose Mathew	Exploring the link between Spiritual Intelligence and Emotional Maturity among B.Ed. Students: Implications for Teacher Education	The study found a positive relationship between spiritual intelligence and emotional maturity among B.Ed. students. It also revealed that while some students showed high levels of both, a notable proportion exhibited low levels, highlighting the need for holistic teacher education that fosters resilience, empathy, and cultural sensitivity.

Across multiple studies (2020–2025), spiritual intelligence (SI) has consistently been shown to play a vital role in the personal and professional development of prospective teachers. Study shows that Spiritual intelligence helps in fostering following aspects

- Emotional stability
- Mental Health
- Job Satisfaction
- Personality development
- Societal Harmony

7. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS:

In today's rapidly changing society, new challenges are constantly emerging. The role of a teacher is not limited to imparting subject knowledge but extends far beyond that. Today's teachers are expected to act as guides and nurturers of moral, social, psychological, and character development. Spiritual intelligence is not an additional aspect of teachers' personal and professional growth but an essential component. Various studies have shown that a high level of spiritual intelligence enhances mental health, emotional maturity, optimism, and resilience, enabling teachers to better cope with stress, anxiety, and professional challenges. It is also associated with positive personality traits such as extraversion, openness to experience, and cooperation.

Furthermore, teachers with higher spiritual intelligence improve student satisfaction, learning outcomes, and inclusive classroom environments. They encourage empathy, cultural sensitivity, and the ability to make ethical decisions. In light of the present study, it is evident that in today's changing educational environment, the relationship between teachers and learners has also transformed. Teachers are becoming emotionally detached, resulting in an increase in violent incidents. In such a scenario, if spiritual intelligence is incorporated into teacher education, future teachers can develop human values and principles such as love, compassion, altruism, kindness, and discipline, which they can then pass on to future generations. The inclusion of spiritual intelligence in teacher education is essential to promote harmony and cooperation in society, ensuring that future citizens are enriched not only with technical knowledge but also with values of compassion, connectedness, and holistic well-being. Thus, spiritual intelligence enables prospective teachers to become effective educators and ideal citizens.



8. The Implications of this study:

For Students:

Students will learn in classrooms that are respectful, empathetic, and trustworthy, but not only in ways that will support their academic success, but in ways that will foster their personal development. as individuals.

For Teachers:

Teacher will be less stressed, more connected to their purpose, and having higher job satisfaction.

For Society:

Teachers who are spiritually conscious will foster responsible citizens, and a better society. The outcome will be a society that is harmonious and peaceful.

For policy makers:

By embedding reflective and Human-centered approaches, education policy can contribute to building citizens who are resilient, empathetic, and capable of addressing complex societal challenges. This aligns education with national goals of harmony, innovation, and sustainable development. Policy makers have the opportunity to shift education from mechanical delivery toward holistic, Human-centered growth, ensuring that future generations are not only knowledgeable but also compassionate, reflective, and socially responsible.

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