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Need of Spiritual Intelligence in Teaching-Learning Process

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ABSTRACT

Education seeks to develop the innate capacities of the individuals. It is a potential tool for creating awareness among people and enabling them to lead a happy and peaceful life. It cultivates social, moral and spiritual values among individuals. Spiritual intelligence is often described as the ability to access deeper meanings, values and purposes in life; and to apply these insights in a wise and compassionate way. It is associated with the inner life of people. It helps to connect the 'self' with 'spirit'. Several research studies revealed that teachers' knowledge of spiritual intelligence influences their teaching effectiveness.

Keywords: Spiritual intelligence, teacher effectiveness, purpose of life, soul, transcendent

INTRODUCTION

Education is the tool through which our cultural values can be preserved and transmitted to the upcoming generations and may liberate the masses from the clutches of ignorance and prejudices. It makes them aware of their fundamental rights and responsibilities towards their family, society and also towards the nation at large. Education is an effective means of social reconstruction. It helps to increase the productivity, achieve national and emotional integration; and accelerate the process of modernization.

Education seeks to develop the innate capacities of the individuals. It is a potential tool for creating awareness among people and enabling them to lead a happy and peaceful life. Providing universal access to quality education is the key to India's continued ascent and leadership on the global stage in terms of economic growth, social justice and equality, scientific advancement; and cultural preservation. Universal high-quality education is the best way forward for developing and maximizing our country's rich talents and resources for the good of the individual, the society, the country and the world. The Government of India has taken an initiative to revamp the existing system; and to provide universal access to quality education on the foundational pillars of access, equity, quality, affordability and accountability in education with the introduction of National Education Policy (NEP) -2020 in the country. The Policy envisions an education system rooted in Indian ethos that contributes directly to transform India sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society by providing high-quality education to all; and thereby making India a global knowledge superpower **(MHRD, 2020).**

Education cannot be delimited to a particular age, stage or span of life, but it is a continuous process and encompasses all the inspiration and stimuli which act upon an individual during his transit from cradle to the grave. At every moment, the interaction with the environment gives him a new experience; and it will not be wrong to say that life is education and education is life. Education cultivates social, moral and spiritual values among people **(Report of the Indian Education Commission, 1964-66).** The educational system of any country must produce young men and women of character and ability, who are committed to national service and development; and who contribute something positive for the well-being of the society.

Spirituality: Meaning And Nature

Spirituality is a complex and multidimensional concept, as its perceptions and experiences are shaped by various cognitive, social, emotional, cultural and behavioral factors. Spirituality can be understood as a search for the meaning and purpose of life, understanding nature and the universe; and transcending the egocentric perspective. From the larger community to the life of an ordinary man, spirituality, as a human quest to connect to higher forms of reality, is

evident everywhere. According to **Mohr (2006),** spirituality is a person's experience of or belief in a power apart from his or her own existence".

Astrow et. al. (2001) defined 'spirituality' as search for transcendent meaning which can be expressed in religious practice or expressed exclusively in their relationship to nature, music, the arts, a set of philosophical beliefs. In the words of **Murray and Zentner (1989),** 'spirituality' is a quality that goes beyond religious affiliation that strives for inspiration, reverence, awe, meaning and purpose, even in those who do not believe in God. The spiritual dimension tries to be in harmony with the universe, strives for answers about the infinite, and comes essentially into focus in times of emotional stress, physical (and mental) illness, loss, bereavement and death".

Spirituality exists wherever we struggle with the issue of how our lives fit into the greater cosmic scheme of things. This is true even when our questions never give way to specific answers or give rise to specific practices such as prayer or meditation. We encounter spiritual issues every time we wonder where the universe comes from, why we are here, or what happens when we die. We also become spiritual when we become moved by values such as beauty, love, or creativity that seem to reveal a meaning or power beyond our visible world. An idea or practice is "spiritual" when it reveals our personal desire to establish a felt relationship with the deepest meanings or powers governing life.

The Concept Of 'Spiritual Intelligence'

The term and concept of spiritual intelligence emerged when spirituality is integrated with intelligence **(Emmons, 2000; Noble, 2000; Vaughan, 2002; Zohar and Marshall, 2000).** The two classical concepts of 'spirituality' and 'intelligence' are well blended in a single modern concept, viz., ***spiritual intelligence (SI)***. Spirituality refers to the search for the sacred and experiencing it, the ultimate meaning, higher consciousness and transcendence; whereas spiritual intelligence (SI) emphasizes the potentials that use such themes and predicts the functioning and the adaptive use of spirituality **(Emmons, 2000).** According to **Sisk (2002),** 'spiritual intelligence' is "a deep self-awareness in which one becomes more and more aware of the dimensions of self, not simply as a body, but as a mind-body and spirit".

Spiritual intelligence is the expression of inner spiritual qualities through our thinking, deeds, and points of view. It is our capacity to acquire an accurate and deep understanding of multiple levels of awareness. Spiritual intelligence enlarges our ability to understand others at the inmost level. **Richard A. Bowell (2004)** explores the concept of spiritual intelligence as a way to discover the "why" behind our actions, rather than just the "what" or "how". His work emphasizes the importance of awareness, meaning, and purpose in life. Bowell's framework suggests that spiritual intelligence involves understanding oneself in relation to the world, developing a sense of meaning and pursuing a mission aligned with one's values.

Wolman (2001) defined spiritual intelligence as .the human capacity to ask ultimate questions about the meaning of life, and to simultaneously experience the seamless connection between each of us and the world in which we live. He further looks at 'Spiritual Intelligence' as the ground on which morality stands and adds that it is applied in making moral choices and solving moral problems.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that ***spiritual intelligence enables a person to be more purposeful, have better adaptation to the environment and better understanding of life situations. This ability enables a person to have more adaptability in difficult situations and crises, helps to solve problems of life in a better way and leads life in a more synchronized and integrated way, which further leads to higher life satisfaction.***

Principles Of Spiritual Intelligence

The following are some of the important principles of Spiritual Intelligence that can be followed by individuals in their own lives.

(i) **Self-awareness:** You should have a clear understanding of what is important for you, what you are willing to live for; and even what you would be willing to die for;
(ii) **Spontaneity:** You should abandon prejudices, expectations and problems from the past to act genuinely in the present and tak full responsibility for your actions**;**
(iii) **Alignment with values and purpose:** One should live and act according to one's own fundamental principles and convictions;
(iv) **Holistic thinking:** It involves recognizing and appreciating the connections between all things and people, feeling integrated into this network of interdependence;
(v) **Compassion:** You not only accept, but also seek to truly understand the feelings and perspectives of others;
(vi) **Valuing diversity:** It is better to recognize and celebrate individual differences between people;
(vii) **Independence of judgment:** You trust your own perceptions and values more than outside opinions, even if it means being unpopular;
(viii) **Humility:** You should be willing to recognize when your opinions or understandings are wrong and consider alternative points of view.

(ix) **Search for meaning:** You develop constant questioning over the meaning and reason behind things, even if the answers are not obvious or easy;
(x) **Reassessment capacity:** You should cultivate the habit of being able to step back and examine a situation more broadly before reacting impulsively without any hesitation;
(xi) **Resilience:** You should try to find opportunities for growth and learning amidst adversity, mistakes and unexpected challenges; and
(xii) **Sense of purpose:** You should feel a deep need to contribute to the well-being of every individual in the society; and make a positive difference in the world.

Measures To Develop 'Spiritual Intelligence' Among Individuals

In a world increasingly focused on materialism and technology, the importance of spiritual intelligence has been gaining prominence. It is the ultimate intelligence that can help us compassionately climb the ladder of success. It plays a fundamental role in the well-being and quality of life. It helps us find meaning and purpose in life, deal with challenges and adversities; cultivate healthy relationships and live more authentically and fully. Developing spiritual intelligence is an ongoing process that involves various practices and skills. Hence, one should necessarily develop spiritual intelligence for one's own success in life.

The following are some of the measures suggested by the experts to develop spiritual intelligence among individuals.

According to **Sternberg, (1997),** there are essentially seven ways to enhance/develop spiritual intelligence. They include:

(i) Think about your goals, desires and wants to bring your life into perspective and balance, and identify your values.
(ii) Take responsibility for your goals, desires and wants
(iii) Develop a sense of community by letting more people into your life.
(iv) Access your inner processes and use visualization to see your goals, desires and wants fulfilled; and experience the emotion connected with this fulfillment.
(v) Integrate your personal and universal vision and recognize your connectedness to others, to nature, to the world and to the universe.
(vi) Focus on love and compassion
(vii) When chance knocks at your door, let it in and take advantage of coincidences.

Zohar & Marshall (2000) proposed seven practical steps to develop better Spiritual Quotient (SQ). These steps include:
(i) Become aware of '*where I am now'*.
(ii) Feel strongly that '*I want to change'*
(iii) Reflect on '*what my own centre is'* and '*what my deepest motivations are*'
(iv) Discover and dissolve obstacles.
(v) Explore many possibilities to go forward.
(vi) Commit '*myself'* to a path.
(vii) Remain aware that there are many paths.

Spiritual Intelligence and The Teaching-Learning Process

Spiritual intelligence is a component associated with every aspect of human life that helps individuals know the purpose of their living in this world; and understand the inner self. It is an essential part of our education system, where students are trained in moral and spiritual values. Teachers' understanding of their own spiritual values may increase the tendency to behave towards students in ethical and caring ways and to view issues of equity and social justice more positively. Teacher effectiveness always plays an important role in the teaching-learning process. An effective teacher encourages the students to create an image of his/her own. He/she understands their problems and helps them. The teacher has the ability to make any subject interesting and controls the class by being fair. A teacher becomes more effective when his actions are not simply based on intuition; but on careful analysis, reflection and planning. Being role models, teachers can mould their students with good character and better values.

Teacher Effectiveness: Meaning and Nature

Effective teaching can be understood as a purposeful activity carried out in a skillful way by a teacher having specialized knowledge in the subject area. It is the ability of a teacher to foster positive and measurable learning outcomes in their students through a combination of strong subject matter knowledge, pedagogical skills and effective classroom management and communication. It facilitates learning and impacts positively students' academic, social and emotional development. It encompasses a wide range of qualities, practices, and behaviors that contribute to create a productive and supportive learning environment.

Dunkin (1997) stated that "Teacher Effectiveness is a matter of the degree to which a teacher achieves the desired effects upon students". Teacher Effectiveness, in its narrowest sense, refers to a teacher's ability to improve student learning as measured by student gains on standardized achievement tests. Although this is one important aspect of teaching ability, it is not a comprehensive and robust view of teacher effectiveness. It is viewed by several psychologists and educationists that teachers should possess certain qualities to make their teaching more effective and interesting.

Qualities of an Effective Teacher

The following are some of the important qualities of an effective teacher in the teaching-learning process.

- Effective teachers have high expectations for all students and help students learn, as measured by value-added or other test-based growth measures, or by alternative measures.
- Effective teachers contribute to positive academic, attitudinal and social outcomes for students such as regular attendance, on-time promotion to the next grade, on-time graduation, self-efficacy and co-operative behavior.
- Effective teachers use diverse resources to plan and structure engaging learning opportunities; monitor student progress formatively; adapting instruction as needed; and evaluate learning using multiple sources of evidence.
- Effective teachers contribute to the development of classrooms and schools that value diversity and civic-mindedness.
- Effective teachers collaborate with other teachers, administrators, parents and educational professionals to ensure student success.
- Effective teachers take into account the diverse needs of the learners; and provide instruction in such a manner that it should suit to the requirements of each and every child.
- Effective teachers genuinely care for students, understand challenges, create a sense of belongingness and value the students' voice.

From the above discussion, it is understood that an effective teacher is one who helps in the development of basic skills, understanding level, appropriate study habits, good work culture, favorable attitudes, value orientation and judgment as well as adequate personal adjustment to the students.

Relationship between Spiritual Intelligence and Teacher Effectiveness

In the teaching-learning process, the relationship between Spiritual Intelligence and Teacher Effectiveness is significant, as spiritual intelligence is correlated with higher effectiveness in teaching. Several research studies showed that spiritual intelligence positively relates to teacher effectiveness by enhancing self-awareness, empathy, resilience and purpose, leading to better student engagement, holistic teaching, ethical guidance; and reduces stress. Spiritually intelligent teachers find deeper meaning in their work, act as compassionate role models and foster critical thinking skills among their students, creating a more connected and effective learning environment.

Teachers with high spiritual intelligence are more likely to be effective in their roles, as they possess the ability to maintain inner balance, resolve conflicts ethically and inspire students towards meaningful goals. This effectiveness is crucial for fostering a positive educational environment and achieving educational objectives.

Review of Related Studies

The researchers carried out a review of the research studies conducted earlier by the other researchers on Spiritual Intelligence and Teacher Effectiveness; and a brief summary of the same is provided in the following paragraphs.

Nandan Kumar Thakur et al. (2024) conducted a study on spiritual intelligence among school going students. The study was conducted on 160 school students of Ranchi district selected by 2 x 2 stratified random sampling. The factors of stratification were gender (Boys and Girls) and education (class 10 and class 12) from Ranchi district. The main objectives were: (i) To measure the impact of gender on spiritual intelligence. (ii) To measure the impact of education on spiritual intelligence. The impact of gender and education on spiritual intelligence was measured by spiritual intelligence scale. Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test were applied for analysis of data. The results revealed that no gender difference was found on spiritual intelligence. However, the education of students has a positive significant influence on spiritual intelligence. The students of class 10 had higher spiritual intelligence as compare to the students of class 12.

Sapna Sharma & Sudha Sharma (2024) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between teacher effectiveness and spiritual intelligence of secondary school teachers. A descriptive survey method was used for the research purpose. A sample of 200 male and female secondary school teachers working in Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh was selected using random sampling method. The Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory developed by King (2008) was used to collect data for this study. Teachers of government and public schools are evaluated by their superiors. The study found a significant positive relationship between teacher effectiveness and mental intelligence when public school teachers rated themselves or their principals. The study also showed that gender does not affect spiritual intelligence and teacher effectiveness. However, the group with high spiritual intelligence shows higher teaching effectiveness than the group with low spiritual intelligence. The study also revealed that spiritual intelligence

was not affected by educational experience of teachers. High school teachers with different levels of education differ significantly in their spiritual intelligence.

Kumud Kumari (2023) conducted a study to find out spiritual intelligence among Post-graduate College students. A total of 80 students (40 male and 40 female) were selected using non- probability purposive sampling technique. The age range of all the subjects was between 19-24 years. All the subjects were assessed on the Spiritual Intelligence Self Report Inventory (SISRI- 24) to analyze the spiritual intelligence of both the groups of students. Descriptive analysis of the data was done to obtain Mean and Standard Deviation. Independent sample t-test was used to find out the significant difference between the performance of boys and girls on different spiritual dimensions.

The findings of the study revealed that there is no significant difference between male and female students on Conscious State Expansion, Critical Existential Thinking, Personal Meaning Production and Transcendental Awareness of Spiritual Intelligence.

Johal, S.K. & Singh, S.P. (2016) conducted a study on "Teacher Effectiveness of secondary school teachers in relation to their spiritual intelligence". The study's goals are: (i) To determine how government and public secondary school teachers' levels of teacher effectiveness and spiritual intelligence relate to each other; (ii) To compare the teacher effectiveness of groups with high and low spiritual intelligence; (iii) To determine whether gender has any impact on teacher effectiveness as well as spiritual intelligence of secondary school teachers. The data were collected using Teacher Effectiveness Scale by Umme Kulsum (2009) and the Spiritual Quotient Scale by Koradia, Singhal and Narand (2008).

When government school teachers evaluated themselves or were evaluated by their heads, the results revealed a substantial positive relationship between Teacher Effectiveness and Spiritual Intelligence. When public school teachers assessed themselves, a strong positive association was discovered; but no relationship was discovered when the teachers were appraised by their heads. The study also revealed that gender and the kind of school have no bearing on spiritual intelligence or teacher effectiveness. However, compared to the Low Spiritual Intelligence Group, the High Spiritual Intelligence Group has exhibited greater Teaching Effectiveness.

Ronald H. Heck (2009) conducted a study on "Teacher effectiveness and student achievement: Investigating a multilevel cross-classified model". The study revealed that effectivenss of successful teachers is releated to student achievement in reading and math. The study further revealed that collective teacher effectiveness, as an organizational property of the school, was positively associated with the achievement levels of students. The study also revealed that the stability of the school's teaching staff and the quality of its academic organization and teaching processes were positively related to the achievement levels.

Rationale of the Study

Spiritual intelligence (SI) is often described as the ability to apply deeper meaning, values, compassion; and a sense of purpose to life and work. For teachers, it can significantly enhance effectiveness in several ways. Teachers face pressure, workload and classroom challenges. SI helps them manage emotions, maintain inner peace and stay resilient under stress. It allows teachers to connect lessons to deeper life purposes, not just academic outcomes.

Researches done on spiritual intelligence and teacher effectiveness show the importance of spiritual intelligence in educational settings; and the influence of spiritual intelligence on teachers' effectiveness **(George & Visvam, 2013).** Teachers with a high level of spiritual intelligence understand students' feelings better, support them and equip them with a better control over their emotions **(Rani & Chahal 2017);** and develop in them critical and creative thinking skills **(George & Visvam, 2013).**

Argument for integrating spiritual dimension to teacher education becomes stronger in the light of the central theme of National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education **(NCFTE, 2009)**, which reads on its cover page as, ***'NCFTE 2009: Towards making a professional and humane teacher'***. Being 'humane' denotes an emphasis on humanistic values and concerns which are an inseparable part of being spiritual. It further adds that learning has to be viewed as a search for meaning out of personal experiences. **Collinson (1999)**, in this context, calls for a new definition of teaching, which includes one's perception of himself/herself as a "***spiritual being***"; and enhances his/her ability to reflect critically on his/her own performance.

Spiritually intelligent teachers make thoughtful, balanced decisions considering fairness and long-term growth. By linking knowledge to values, ethics, and real-life relevance, teachers motivate students intrinsically. Teachers with high Spiritual Intelligence create classrooms where every student feels valued and respected. Teachers, who are spiritually intelligent, become more attentive towards the well-being of their students. The teachers should have a positive attitude and right perceptions towards spiritual intelligence. They should grow spiritually. In this context, the investigators thought it relevant to conduct a study on the perceptions of secondary school teachers towards spiritual intelligence in relation to Teacher Effectiveness. The present study is an attempt in this direction.

CONCLUSION

'Gender', 'professional qualification', 'type of family' and 'religion' have no influence on the perceptions of teachers towards Spiritual Intelligence. However, 'teaching experience' and 'school management' have a positive significant influence on the perceptions of teachers towards Spiritual Intelligence.

(i) 'Gender', 'professional qualification', 'type of family' and 'religion' have no influence on the perceptions of teachers towards Teacher Effectiveness. However, 'teaching experience' and 'school management' have a positive significant influence on the perceptions of teachers towards Teacher Effectiveness.
(ii) There is positive relationship between Spiritual Intelligence and Teacher Effectiveness of secondary school teachers.

It is concluded that teachers with higher levels of spiritual intelligence perceived higher towards Teacher Effectiveness; and vice versa.

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