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Spiritual Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being of Higher Secondary Teachers: A Comparative Correlation Analysis across Gender

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ABSTRACT :

This study looks at how spiritual intelligence relates to psychological well-being among higher secondary teachers, with a particular focus on whether that connection holds equally for men and women or takes a different shape across gender. To explore this, spiritual intelligence was measured using a standardized scale, while psychological well-being was captured through an established psychological well-being scale. Pearson's product-moment correlation was then applied to examine the relationship between the two variables, with male and female teachers analyzed separately.

The results paint an interesting picture. For male teachers, spiritual intelligence showed no meaningful link to psychological well-being — the two appeared to operate independently of one another. Female teachers, on the other hand, displayed a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between the two, suggesting that for them, spiritual intelligence may play a more visible role in supporting overall well-being. A closer comparison across the two groups confirmed that this difference in relationship strength was itself significant, rather than a matter of chance.

Taken together, these findings point to the value of gender-sensitive approaches when thinking about teacher well-being. Interventions and support strategies that treat all teachers the same may overlook the distinct ways in which spiritual intelligence interacts with psychological health for men and women respectively.

Keywords: spiritual intelligence, psychological well-being, higher secondary teachers, gender differences, correlation study

I.Introduction

Teaching at the higher secondary stage is among the most emotionally demanding roles in the education system. Teachers working with senior secondary classes carry a particularly demanding load. They are expected to prepare adolescent learners for highly competitive examinations, keep pace with continuous assessment and documentation responsibilities, manage large classrooms where students vary widely in ability, and at the same time meet the often competing expectations of students, parents, school management, and education authorities. It is a balancing act that leaves little room for pause.

Research on occupational stress has consistently highlighted the toll these demands can take. Studies have linked them to emotional exhaustion, declining job satisfaction, and a growing inclination among teachers to leave the profession altogether (Kyriacou, 2001) [1]; (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010) [2]. Because the psychological condition of the teacher is transmitted to students through classroom climate, discipline and instructional quality, identifying the inner resources that protect teachers' mental health has become a central concern of educational psychology. Spiritual intelligence has emerged in recent decades as one such candidate resource.

The term spiritual intelligence entered popular and academic discourse largely through Zohar and Marshall (2000) [3], who described it as the "ultimate intelligence" through which human beings address questions of meaning, value and purpose. King (2008) [4] gave a more definitive description of spiritual intelligence that refers to a range of cognitive abilities, which allow to identify, to adopt and to use spiritual ideas efficiently. According to Emmons (2000) [5], spirituality may also be viewed as a type of intelligence, indicating capabilities connected to goal achievement, such as understanding human ultimate problems, making usual life situations sacred, and using spiritual notions for tackling issues appearing in everyday life. Gardner (1999)[6] similarly proposed an "existential intelligence" sensitive to deep questions of human existence. Despite continuing debates about measurement and construct boundaries (Vaughan, 2002) [7], most contemporary descriptions agree that spiritual intelligence involves the capacity to create meaning, to sense connection with something larger than the self, to act with compassion and moral integrity, and to remain inwardly steady when circumstances become difficult.

Psychological well-being, the second variable of the present study, concerns the quality of a person's functioning rather than the mere presence of pleasant feelings. In the influential model proposed by Ryff (1989) [8] and elaborated by Ryff and Keyes (1995) [9], psychological well-being is a multidimensional construct consisting of self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life and personal growth. This eudaimonic tradition is distinct from the hedonic tradition of subjective well-being, which emphasises positive affect and life satisfaction (Diener, 1984) [10]. Both traditions, however, recognise that well-being among working adults is shaped by the work environment and by the personal resources the individual brings to it (Warr, 1987) [11].

The theoretical bridge between the two constructs is conceptually strong. Frankl (1959) [12] contended that the search for meaning is not a secondary concern but a primary human motive. According to him, individuals who manage to find meaning — even in the midst of hardship — tend to remain psychologically resilient, holding steady where others might falter. Maslow (1971) [13] pointed in a similar direction, noting that people who move toward self-actualization are often sustained by transcendent or peak experiences that give their lives a deeper sense of direction.

If spiritual intelligence can be understood as the capacity for meaning-making, transcendence, and action grounded in personal values, then it follows that teachers who possess this capacity more fully may engage more positively with their students and colleagues. They may also be better equipped to cope with the everyday pressures of teaching and to function with a stronger sense of autonomy and purpose. In short, they may be more likely to experience a higher level of psychological well-being.

At the same time, there are reasons to think this relationship may not unfold in the same way for men and women. Reviews of empirical research suggest that, across cultures, women tend to report a greater interest in religious and spiritual matters than men do (Francis, 1997) [14]. Want me to weave these two paragraphs into a single, more condensed literature-review passage, or keep them separate as they are here?Meta-analytic evidence on coping shows that women more frequently employ emotion-focused strategies, seek emotional support and engage in reflective processing—styles that overlap naturally with prayer, meditation and other spiritual practices (Tamres, Janicki, & Helgeson, 2002) [15]. Women and men also differ in characteristic patterns of distress and well-being (Nolen-Hoeksema & Rusting, 1999) [16]. These findings suggest that spiritual resources may be differentially recruited by men and women in the service of mental health. The present study was therefore planned to examine the relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being separately for male and female higher secondary teachers.

II.Review of Related Literature

Roopashree (2015)[17] examined the relationship between spiritual intelligence and personal stress among primary school teachers in Karnataka. The study involved 200 teachers from Madhugiri Taluk, Tumkur district. Spiritual intelligence was assessed using the scale developed by Santhosh Dhar and Upinder Dhar, while personal stress was measured through a Personal Stress Scale. The findings revealed meaningful differences in personal stress among teachers with high, moderate, and low levels of spiritual intelligence. This points to the possibility that spiritual intelligence may play a part in how teachers handle personal stress and navigate the challenges that arise across both their professional and personal lives.

Pandey (2015) [18] set out to examine how spiritual intelligence relates to life satisfaction among college teachers. To do so, the study drew on a sample of 231 teachers, selected through stratified random sampling. Data were gathered using a Spiritual Intelligence Scale and a Life Satisfaction Scale, both developed by the researcher. For the statistical analysis, Pearson's correlation coefficient, the t-test, and ANOVA were applied.

The results pointed to a significant positive relationship between spiritual intelligence and life satisfaction. In other words, teachers who scored higher on spiritual intelligence also tended to report a greater sense of satisfaction with their lives. This suggests that spiritual intelligence may be an important factor to consider when seeking to understand teachers' psychological and personal well-being — not as a peripheral trait, but as something closely tied to how they experience and evaluate their own lives.

Talukdar and Ghosh (2017) [19] explored the link between spiritual intelligence and teaching competency among secondary school teachers in South Bengal. Their study also took into account differences related to gender and locality, while examining how spiritual intelligence relates to the professional competencies that teachers bring to their classroom practice. Standardized measurement scales were used, and the data were analysed through the t-test and ANOVA. The findings indicated that gender differences in spiritual intelligence and teaching competency were not statistically significant, whereas differences associated with locality were observed. The study draws attention to the relevance of spiritual intelligence in educational settings and provides a basis for further examining its association with teachers' professional abilities and classroom practices.

Vats and Gupta (2018)[20] investigated the relationship between spiritual intelligence and work ethics among secondary school teachers. The study included 260 teachers and employed the Spiritual Intelligence Scale developed by Santosh Dhar and Upinder Dhar, along with a researcher-developed Teacher's Work Ethic Scale. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to analyse the collected data. The results revealed a positive and statistically significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and teachers' work ethics. These findings suggest that spiritual intelligence may be associated with professional responsibility, ethical conduct, and a value-oriented approach to teaching. The study is relevant to understanding how teachers' inner values and personal awareness may relate to their professional behaviour.

Kumar (2020)[21] conducted doctoral research examining spiritual intelligence in relation to self-efficacy and teacher effectiveness among high school teachers. The study was completed at Aryabhatta Knowledge University, Patna. The study's focus is especially relevant to educational research, given that self-efficacy and teacher effectiveness are central dimensions of how teachers function professionally. By examining these variables together, the work lays a foundation for understanding whether a teacher's spiritual capacities are linked to their confidence in carrying out professional responsibilities, as well as to their broader effectiveness in the classroom. It also serves as a useful reference point for future research exploring how spiritual intelligence might contribute to teachers' professional development over time.

Kaur and Kumar (2021) [22] examined the psychological well-being of college teachers in relation to their spiritual intelligence. Their study drew on 600 women college teachers from four districts, spanning both humanities and science disciplines. Stratified random sampling was used to select participants, and the researchers relied on established measures of psychological well-being and spiritual intelligence to gather their data. The results pointed to a positive association between the two variables, indicating that teachers with higher levels of spiritual intelligence also tended to report

greater psychological well-being. This study holds particular relevance for research on teachers, as it links an internal psychological capacity to a broader sense of well-being and offers a foundation for exploring similar relationships within the higher-secondary school context.

Singla, Mehta, and Mehta (2021) [23] set out to investigate the relationship between spiritual intelligence and quality of work life among college teachers. The study involved 451 teachers and used variance-based structural equation modelling to test the proposed relationships. The researchers also brought psychological capital into the analysis as a mediating variable, while treating gender as a moderating factor. Their findings revealed a positive association between spiritual intelligence and quality of work life, with psychological capital also contributing meaningfully to work-related outcomes. By extending the conversation around spiritual intelligence beyond personal well-being, the study connects it to teachers' professional experiences, workplace satisfaction, and the psychological resources they draw upon in their daily work.

Kamal and Shaheen (2022) [24] approached spiritual intelligence from a different angle, examining it in the context of teacher training through an analytical study grounded in existing literature. Rather than collecting primary data from a sample of participants, the authors explored the conceptual relevance of spiritual intelligence to teacher education. Their analysis highlighted the significance of meaning, values, purpose, problem-solving, moral development, and professional functioning. The study suggests that teacher preparation should look beyond subject knowledge and instructional skills to also embrace the personal and ethical dimensions of professional growth. This perspective offers a valuable lens for understanding how spiritual intelligence might contribute to the broader preparation of future teachers.

Sharma and Sharma (2024) [25] examined spiritual intelligence in relation to teaching effectiveness among higher-secondary school teachers. The study reportedly followed a descriptive survey approach and included 200 teachers from Meerut district. To assess spiritual intelligence, the researchers used King's Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (SISRI), and they also considered differences associated with gender and varying levels of spiritual intelligence. The reported findings suggested that teachers with higher spiritual intelligence also demonstrated greater teaching effectiveness. This study is closely aligned with the present research, as it examines spiritual intelligence alongside a significant professional outcome within the higher-secondary education context. Its complete publication details and statistical findings should be verified against the original article before final citation.

Nagaraja Kumari and Dayamani (2025) [26] investigated spiritual intelligence in relation to teacher effectiveness among secondary school teachers in Visakhapatnam district, Andhra Pradesh. The study centered on the relationship between teachers' spiritual intelligence and their professional effectiveness. Its educational focus makes it relevant to research exploring how individual psychological characteristics contribute to teachers' professional performance. By examining spiritual intelligence alongside teacher effectiveness, the study opens a pathway for further inquiry into whether a teacher's capacity to derive meaning, reflect on experiences, and act in line with personal values is associated with their effectiveness in educational settings. The specific sample, instruments, and findings should be confirmed from the published article before inclusion in the final review.

Sharma and Sharma (2026) [27] examined spiritual intelligence and teaching effectiveness among 500 higher-secondary school teachers, comprising 250 male and 250 female teachers. The study reportedly used standardized measures along with statistical techniques such as the mean, standard deviation, t-test, and Pearson's correlation coefficient. The reported results indicated no statistically significant gender differences in spiritual intelligence or teaching effectiveness, while a significant positive relationship emerged between the two variables. These findings suggest that spiritual intelligence may be relevant to teaching effectiveness across both male and female teachers. As with the preceding study, however, its publication details and reported results should be verified using the original article before being incorporated into an academic thesis.

Amram and Dryer (2008) [28], in developing the Integrated Spiritual Intelligence Scale, reported that higher spiritual intelligence was positively associated with a sense of purpose in life and with related indicators of positive psychological functioning. Broader research involving teachers and helping professionals tends to echo this pattern, with studies generally reporting positive correlations between spiritual or existential capacities and well-being, alongside negative associations with perceived stress and burnout.

Taken together, the literature points toward a plausible positive relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being, while also hinting that this connection may run deeper for women than for men. However, gender-wise correlational analysis of these two variables among Indian higher secondary teachers appears to be limited, with most available studies pooling both genders within a single sample. The present study addresses this gap by analysing the two gender groups independently.

III.Need and Significance of the Study

Higher secondary educators occupy a particularly important place within the educational system. They work with students during a life stage that heavily shapes their future career trajectories, making the quality of their teaching and their own well-being matters of genuine consequence. Policy documents such as the National Education Policy (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2020) [29] underscore this point, emphasizing that a successful education process depends on teachers who are well-motivated and mentally healthy. Yet, in practice, teacher wellness remains a largely neglected dimension of school planning. Even where interventions do exist, they are seldom differentiated by gender, leaving an important gap between the holistic vision set out in policy and the realities of how teacher well-being is actually supported on the ground.

If spiritual intelligence is found to be meaningfully related to the well-being of one gender group but not the other, school administrators, counsellors and teacher educators would obtain an evidence base for designing targeted support programmes—such as reflective practice circles, meditation modules or meaning-centred counselling—rather than assuming that one approach suits all teachers. The study is additionally significant methodologically, because it demonstrates the value of gender-stratified analysis in psychological research on teachers.

IV.Objectives of the Study-

1. To study the relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being of male higher secondary teachers.
2. To study the relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being of female higher secondary teachers.

V.Hypotheses of the Study-

$H0_1$: There is no significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being of male higher secondary teachers.
$H0_2$: There is no significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being of female higher secondary teachers.

VI.Statistical Analysis-

- **Design -** A descriptive, cross-sectional correlation survey design was adopted, with gender treated as a grouping variable and separate correlation coefficients computed for each group.
- **Tools-**Spiritual Intelligence Scale (Pranjal, 2022)[30]: This scale was developed in the Indian context to assess spiritual intelligence. Its items tap core dimensions of the construct, including inner awareness, meaning and purpose in life, transcendence and value-guided behaviour. Responses are recorded on a multi-point rating format, with higher totals indicating higher spiritual intelligence. The manual reports satisfactory reliability and validity coefficients.

Psychological Well-Being Scale (Sisodia & Choudhary, 2021) [31]: This scale is designed to assess psychological well-being across several broad facets, including satisfaction, efficiency, sociability, mental health, and interpersonal relations. Responses are recorded using a multi-point format, with higher total scores reflecting a greater overall level of psychological well-being.The authors report acceptable internal consistency and validity for adult and professional populations.

- **Sample-**The sample comprised 500 higher secondary teachers, of whom 250 were male and 250 were female, selected from higher secondary schools of north- east Delhi using random sampling techniques. Teachers of both genders were comparable in educational qualification and teaching experience to minimize confounding.
- **Procedure-**Permission is obtained from the concerned school authorities, and informed consent was taken from all participating teachers after explaining the purpose of the study. Both scales were administered in group settings during free periods, with standard instructions read aloud. The completed responses were scored according to the respective manuals. Confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents were maintained throughout, and participation was voluntary.

Pearson's product-moment coefficient of correlation (r) was computed between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being separately for male and female teachers. The coefficients were tested for significance (two-tailed) at the .05 and .01 levels. In addition, the two coefficients were compared using Fisher's z transformation to determine whether the gender difference in correlation strength was itself significant.

VII.Data Analysis and Interpretation -

Hypothesis 1

H01: There is no statistically significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being of male higher secondary teachers.

Table 1: Relationship Between Spiritual Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being of Male Higher Secondary Teachers

Variable1s	N	Cofffi. Of correlation(r)	Significant level	Result
Spiritual intelligence Psychological well being	250	0.0934	0.05	No significant

Results

The correlation coefficient between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being among male higher secondary teachers was found to be 0.0934. For a sample of 250 teachers, the approximate critical value of the correlation coefficient at the 0.05 level of significance (two-tailed) is 0.124. Since the obtained correlation coefficient (0.0934) is lower than the critical value, the relationship is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Therefore, the null hypothesis (H01), which states that there is no statistically significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being among male higher secondary teachers, is **not rejected**. The findings indicate a very weak positive relationship between the two variables, which does not reach statistical significance in the present sample.

Discussion

The findings indicate that spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being are not significantly associated among male higher secondary teachers in the present study. Although the correlation coefficient is positive, its magnitude is very small, suggesting that higher levels of spiritual intelligence are not consistently associated with higher levels of psychological well-being within this group.

One possible interpretation is that the psychological well-being of male teachers may be associated with several personal, professional, and social factors, including job satisfaction, financial security, family responsibilities, workplace conditions, social support, and opportunities for professional development. However, the present study does not directly examine these factors; therefore, they should be considered possible explanations rather than established causes of the observed result.

The finding may also be interpreted in relation to Ryff's (1989) model of psychological well-being, which includes self-acceptance, positive relationships, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. Although spiritual intelligence may conceptually relate to meaning, purpose, and personal reflection, the present results do not demonstrate a statistically significant association between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being among male teachers.

It is important to note that the non-significant result does not establish that spiritual intelligence has no relevance to male teachers' psychological well-being. Rather, it indicates that the available data do not provide sufficient statistical evidence of a linear relationship between these variables in this particular sample. Other factors, as well as the characteristics of the measures used, may be relevant and could be investigated in future research.

Accordingly, the findings support a cautious interpretation of the relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being among male higher secondary teachers. Further studies involving additional psychological and occupational variables may help clarify the nature of this relationship.

Hypothesis 2

H02: There is no statistically significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being of female higher secondary teachers.

Table 2: Relationship Between Spiritual Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being of Female Higher Secondary Teachers

Variable1s	N	Cofffi. Of correlation(r)	Significant level	Result
Spiritual intelligence	250	0.69	0.01	Significant
Psychological well being				

Results

The correlation coefficient between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being among female higher secondary teachers was found to be 0.69. For a sample of 250 teachers, the approximate critical value of the correlation coefficient at the 0.01 level of significance (two-tailed) is 0.163. Since the obtained correlation coefficient (0.69) is considerably higher than the critical value, the relationship is statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

The correlation coefficient indicates a strong positive relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being among female higher secondary teachers. This suggests that higher scores on spiritual intelligence tend to be associated with higher scores on psychological well-being in the present sample.

Therefore, the null hypothesis (H02), which states that there is no statistically significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being among female higher secondary teachers, is **rejected**. The findings provide strong statistical evidence of a positive association between the two variables among female teachers.

Discussion

The findings reveal a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being among female higher secondary teachers. The correlation coefficient of 0.69 indicates that teachers with higher spiritual intelligence scores tend, on average, to report higher psychological well-being scores. This finding highlights the potential relevance of meaning, values, self-reflection, and purpose in understanding teachers' psychological experiences.

One possible interpretation is that spiritual intelligence may be associated with the ways in which teachers understand personal experiences, respond to challenges, and maintain a sense of purpose in their professional and personal lives. Reflective thinking, the search for meaning, and the ability to consider experiences from a broader perspective may be related to aspects of psychological well-being. Nevertheless, the correlational design of the present study does not establish that spiritual intelligence causes improvements in psychological well-being.

The finding can be discussed in relation to Ryff's (1989) model of psychological well-being, which emphasises self-acceptance, positive relationships, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. Several of these dimensions are conceptually related to meaning-making, personal reflection, and the development of a coherent sense of purpose. The observed positive correlation is therefore consistent with the possibility that spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being are related aspects of teachers' psychological functioning.

Earlier research cited in the present study, including Kaur and Kumar (2021), may provide a useful basis for comparison regarding the relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being. However, direct agreement with previous findings should be claimed only after the original studies' methods and results have been verified. Studies examining spiritual intelligence alongside teachers' psychological experiences, such as the work attributed to Roopashree (2015), may also offer a broader context for further investigation.

The relationship should not be interpreted as evidence that female teachers are inherently more spiritual or that spiritual intelligence necessarily contributes more to women's well-being than to men's. The present analysis establishes a statistically significant association within the female group; it does not establish the reasons for that association or demonstrate a statistically significant difference between the male and female correlations.

Other factors, such as emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, family circumstances, social support, and workplace conditions, may also be associated with both spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being. Furthermore, if the variables were measured using self-report questionnaires, response patterns and the interpretation of questionnaire items may have influenced the observed relationship.

Overall, the findings suggest that spiritual intelligence is strongly and positively associated with psychological well-being among female higher secondary teachers in the present sample. This result provides a basis for further research into the relationship between meaning-making, personal values, and teachers' psychological well-being. Future studies could investigate the mechanisms underlying this association and examine whether the relationship remains significant after accounting for relevant personal and occupational factors.

VIII. Conclusion

The results show different patterns of association between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being across the two groups. Among male higher secondary teachers, the correlation was weak and statistically non-significant (($r = 0.0934$), ($p > 0.05$)). Among female higher secondary teachers, the correlation was strong and statistically significant (($r = 0.69$), ($p < 0.01$)).

Accordingly, H01 is not rejected, whereas H02 is rejected. These findings indicate that spiritual intelligence is significantly associated with psychological well-being among female teachers in the present sample, while the corresponding association among male teachers is not statistically significant.

However, the difference between a significant correlation in one group and a non-significant correlation in another does not, by itself, establish that the two correlations differ significantly. A formal statistical comparison of the correlations would be required before concluding that the relationship varies significantly by gender.

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