



The Role of Spiritual Intelligence in Character Building among Higher Secondary Students

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Abstract:

This research aimed to explore the role of spiritual intelligence in character building among higher secondary students. A sample of 50 students, comprising 25 males and 25 females aged between 16 to 18 years, was selected using random sampling from various higher secondary schools. Data were collected using two standardized tools: the **Spiritual Intelligence Scale**, which measures dimensions such as self-awareness, compassion, meaning-making, and transcendence, and the **Character-Building Scale**, which evaluates students' ethical values, behavior, and sense of responsibility. Descriptive statistics were used to calculate the mean and standard deviation of spiritual intelligence scores for male and female students. A **t-test** was applied to determine whether significant differences exist between the spiritual intelligence levels of male and female students. Additionally, correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between spiritual intelligence and character building. The study adhered to ethical research guidelines, ensuring participant confidentiality and obtaining informed consent. The findings provided valuable insights into how spiritual intelligence contributes to character development and highlighted the presence of gender differences in spiritual intelligence levels among higher secondary students. These results emphasize the importance of nurturing spiritual intelligence to promote holistic character development in educational settings.

Keywords: Spiritual, Student, Health, Relationship, Character.

Introduction:

In the contemporary world, the role of education extends far beyond academic achievement and the acquisition of knowledge. Education is a holistic process that shapes students' personality, behavior, values, and character, ultimately influencing their future contributions to society. Among the various dimensions of human development nurtured through education, character building stands as a crucial component, particularly during adolescence, a period marked by identity formation, value acquisition, and ethical dilemmas. Higher secondary students, typically between the ages of 15 to 18, are at a critical stage in their personal and moral development. Their character formation during this period not only impacts their future lives but also shapes the ethical fabric of the society they will contribute to as adults. In this context, the concept of spiritual intelligence has gained significant attention as a vital factor influencing character building. Spiritual intelligence refers to the ability to apply spiritual principles and awareness in everyday life, encompassing self-awareness, compassion, integrity, and a sense of purpose. It goes beyond religious affiliation, focusing instead on the deeper sense of meaning, interconnectedness, and values that guide individuals toward ethical and purposeful living. This introduction explores the role of spiritual

intelligence in character building among higher secondary students, highlighting its importance, dimensions, and potential impact on holistic development.

Spiritual intelligence, as a concept, gained prominence in the early 21st century, with researchers such as Danah Zohar and Ian Marshall (2000) introducing the term and defining it as the intelligence with which individuals address and solve problems of meaning and value. Unlike intellectual intelligence (IQ) and emotional intelligence (EQ), which focus on cognitive abilities and emotional regulation respectively, spiritual intelligence (SQ) enables individuals to access deeper meaning, develop inner peace, and cultivate ethical behavior. For higher secondary students, who are in the process of discovering their identity, values, and purpose in life, the development of spiritual intelligence provides a strong foundation for ethical decision-making, moral clarity, and personal integrity. At this critical stage, students frequently encounter situations requiring moral reasoning, empathy, and self-reflection. Spiritual intelligence empowers them with the tools to navigate these challenges with wisdom, compassion, and a strong sense of right and wrong.

Character building among higher secondary students is a dynamic process that encompasses the development of positive traits such as honesty,

responsibility, respect, empathy, and resilience. These attributes form the ethical core of an individual's personality and influence their behavior in social, academic, and personal spheres. Character building is not a passive process; rather, it is actively shaped by environmental factors, peer influence, educational experiences, and personal introspection. In this regard, spiritual intelligence plays a transformative role by encouraging students to engage in deeper self-reflection, ethical analysis, and value-based decision-making. Through spiritual intelligence, students develop the ability to question their motivations, assess the ethical implications of their actions, and align their behavior with higher moral principles. This internal compass, guided by spiritual intelligence, fosters a sense of accountability and personal responsibility, essential components of strong character.

The dimensions of spiritual intelligence—self-awareness, compassion, wisdom, transcendence, and inner peace—directly contribute to character building. Self-awareness, the foundational component of spiritual intelligence, allows students to understand their strengths, weaknesses, values, and aspirations. This self-knowledge forms the basis for personal growth and ethical behavior, as students become aware of the impact of their actions on themselves and others.

Compassion, another critical dimension, nurtures empathy and kindness, encouraging students to treat others with respect, fairness, and understanding. Compassion fosters a sense of interconnectedness, helping students recognize that their actions influence not only their own lives but also the well-being of others. This awareness fosters social responsibility, cooperation, and ethical leadership.

Wisdom, derived from introspection and ethical reasoning, helps students make thoughtful decisions, balancing personal interests with ethical considerations.

Through wisdom, students learn to evaluate situations from multiple perspectives, anticipate consequences, and prioritize values such as honesty, justice, and respect. Wisdom, rooted in spiritual intelligence, serves as a guide for navigating moral dilemmas and making ethical choices even when faced with peer pressure or societal challenges. Transcendence, the ability to look beyond immediate concerns and understand life from a broader perspective, helps students develop resilience, optimism, and a sense of purpose. This broader perspective fosters humility, gratitude, and a sense of meaning, which serve as anchors during difficult times, enabling students to persevere with integrity and purpose.

Inner peace, another dimension of spiritual intelligence, helps students manage stress, anxiety, and emotional turmoil. Adolescence is often marked

by emotional upheaval, academic pressure, and identity confusion. Spiritual intelligence, by fostering inner peace and emotional balance, helps students develop self-control, patience, and emotional resilience. This inner calm allows students to respond to challenges with composure, think before acting, and resolve conflicts peacefully, all of which contribute to positive character formation.

The school environment plays a crucial role in nurturing both spiritual intelligence and character development among higher secondary students. Schools that emphasize value-based education, ethical discourse, and reflective practices create fertile ground for the growth of spiritual intelligence. Activities such as mindfulness exercises, ethical debates, service learning, and reflective writing encourage students to explore their values, examine ethical dilemmas, and develop a deeper understanding of themselves and others. Teachers, as role models, also play a critical role in fostering spiritual intelligence by demonstrating ethical behavior, compassion, and integrity in their interactions with students. By creating a culture of respect, empathy, and ethical reflection, schools can cultivate an environment where spiritual intelligence thrives, ultimately enhancing character development.

The impact of spiritual intelligence on character building extends beyond individual behavior to influence social relationships, academic success, and overall well-being. Spiritually intelligent students tend to exhibit higher levels of empathy, cooperation, and ethical leadership, contributing to a positive school climate. They are more likely to resolve conflicts peacefully, respect diversity, and contribute to community welfare, thereby enhancing social harmony. Moreover, spiritual intelligence has been linked to enhanced psychological well-being, as students with strong spiritual intelligence experience lower levels of stress, anxiety, and depression.

This emotional balance supports academic success, as students are better able to focus, manage time effectively, and approach challenges with confidence and resilience.

In a rapidly changing world characterized by ethical ambiguity, social polarization, and environmental crises, the development of spiritual intelligence among higher secondary students becomes even more crucial. It equips them with the ethical compass, emotional resilience, and sense of purpose needed to navigate complex social, ethical, and personal challenges. By integrating spiritual intelligence into character education programs, schools can nurture a generation of ethically grounded, compassionate, and socially responsible individuals capable of contributing positively to society.

Review of Literature

Das, Samit & Mishra, Bapi. (2024). Spiritual Intelligence is an ability to conceptual the basic essences of individual self that will be helpful to develop an effective awareness or self-smartness. Mental health is health indicator specifies effective implication of cognitive as well as affective smartness in respect to adjust in the always changing environment. Emotional health is a state of an individual personality which specifies a desirable of emotional response against the changing. Emotional health is a health parameter specifies an adjusted behavioural pattern in respect to deal with own emotion. In this study, investigator has intended to find out the relationship between spiritual intelligence and emotional health of higher secondary students. In this purpose, a quantitative approach has been followed to describe the reality regarding the relationship. At the end of the study, investigator has found that spiritual intelligence and emotional health is related to each other significantly in respect to the gender as well as locality parameter of analytical approach.

Raheja, Shivani et al., (2024) Spiritual Intelligence (SI), often quoted as Spiritual Quotient (SQ) by some, means becoming aware of (realising) and expressing one's innate spiritual qualities (love, peace, bliss, and purity) through cognitive thinking, attitude, and behaviour. Once we are aware of the true purpose of our being in the universe, our spiritual qualities help us in drawing spiritual strength to remain stable in all situations (Emotional Intelligence), be neutral towards negativity, truly understand others, and be at peace with not just one's own self but with others and the world at large. When Spiritual Intelligence is applied in the workplace setting, it helps in aligning personal values with a clear sense of purpose, enhancing our power to accept change and adapt to newer perspectives in life. Purpose: The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between spiritual intelligence, happiness and academic achievement among the students of University of Delhi. In this paper, an attempt has been made to understand the predominant factors strengthening spiritual intelligence and to critically evaluate the relationship between students' spiritual intelligence, happiness, and academic achievement. Research methodology: Responses of 240 students at the undergraduate level from different colleges under the University of Delhi were studied to find out their level of spiritual intelligence, happiness and academic intelligence. Oxford Happiness Questionnaire, SISRI-24 Spiritual Intelligence Measurement Scale of D. King, and a self-designed Questionnaire known as Academic Achievement Assessment Tool for assessing the Academic Intelligence of the students were used by the authors as the data gathering tools. The results indicate that

the Spiritual Intelligence and Happiness of the students are positively and significantly related to one another on both an overall basis and also in the case of males and females specifically at 1% significance level. However, this association was found to be more prominent for female students. The study offers future directions and implications for higher education practitioners. It also suggests that Spiritual Intelligence would be beneficial for the students as it increases their psychological well-being and for the betterment of the global society as a whole.

Rosadi, Kemas. (2023). The purpose of this study was to determine; (1) the direct effect of emotional and spiritual intelligence on the school culture of SMA Negeri 1 Jambi. (2) the direct effect of emotional and spiritual intelligence on strengthening student character. (3) the direct effect of work culture on strengthening student character. (4) the indirect effect of emotional and spiritual intelligence on strengthening student character through school culture. This research method uses a survey method with a quantitative approach using path analysis. The population in this study were 179 Jambi State High School students while the sample was 129 teachers. Data were collected through distributing questionnaires. This study concluded; (1) there is a positive and significant direct effect of emotional and spiritual intelligence on school culture. (2) there is a positive and significant direct effect of emotional and spiritual intelligence on strengthening student character. (3) there is a positive and significant direct effect of work culture on strengthening student character. (4) there is an indirect effect of emotional and spiritual intelligence on strengthening student character through school culture. This means that the higher the implementation of emotional and spiritual intelligence and work culture, the higher the strengthening of student character.

Suhifatullah, Muhamad et al., (2021) Education is an effort to foster student character. Purpose Want to know the character education management strategy in increasing the spiritual intelligence of students. The research method used qualitative instruments, namely (1). Focus (2). Observation and interviews (4) Data analysis collection. Conclusion: (1). Environmental observations at three schools have conducted a SWOT analysis (2). Formulation of a strategy regarding the vision and mission, based on the values of faith (3). Strategy implementation with intra and ecurricular based programs (4). Strategy evaluation serves to monitor learning (5). The learning strategy management process is very conducive.

Research Methodology

This research was conducted to explore the role of spiritual intelligence in character building among higher secondary students. A sample of 50

students was selected through random sampling from various higher secondary schools. The sample consisted of 25 male and 25 female students, aged between 16 to 18 years. Data were collected using two standardized tools: the Spiritual Intelligence Scale, which measures aspects such as self-awareness, compassion, meaning-making, and transcendence, and the Character Building Scale, which assesses students' ethical values, behavior, and sense of responsibility. The data analysis involved descriptive statistics to understand the mean and standard deviation of spiritual intelligence scores for male and female students. To assess

whether there was a significant difference between the spiritual intelligence levels of male and female students, a t-test was applied. Furthermore, correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between spiritual intelligence and character building. The study was conducted following ethical guidelines, ensuring confidentiality and informed consent from all participants. The statistical analysis and interpretation provided insights into how spiritual intelligence contributes to character development and whether gender differences exist in spiritual intelligence levels among higher secondary students.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:
Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1: Gender of the respondents

Particular	Frequency	Percentage%
Male	25	50%
Female	25	50%
Total	50	100

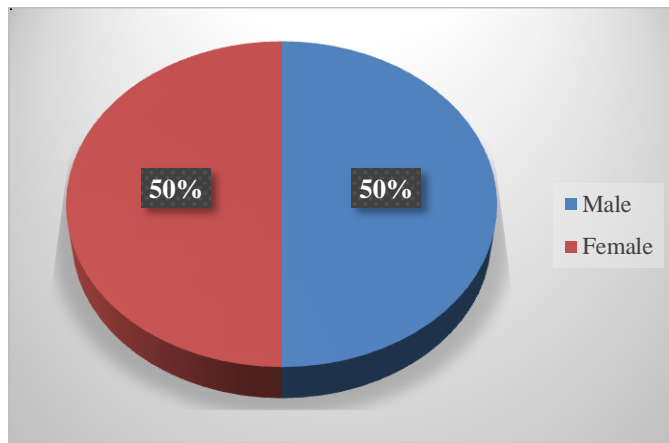


Figure 1: Gender of the respondents

Out of the total 50 respondents, an equal number of males and females participated in the survey. Specifically, 25 respondents were male, accounting for 50% of the total sample, while the remaining 25

respondents were female, also representing 50% of the total. This equal gender representation ensures a balanced perspective from both male and female participants in the study.

Table 2: Age of the respondents

Particular	Frequency	Percentage%
16 years	15	30%
17 years	20	40%
18 years	15	30%
Total	50	100

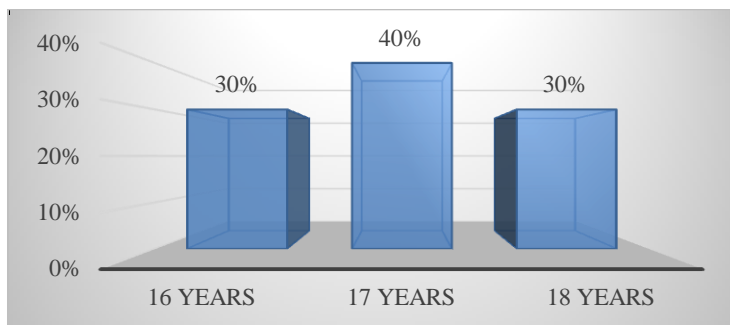


Figure 2: Age of the respondents

Table 2 presents the age distribution of the respondents. Among the 50 respondents, 15 individuals, representing 30% of the total, were 16 years old. The majority of the respondents, 20 individuals or 40%, were 17 years old. The

remaining 15 respondents, also comprising 30% of the total, were 18 years old. This indicates that the sample includes a fairly balanced representation of respondents across the three age groups, with a slight majority being 17 years old.

Table 3: Religion of the respondents

Particular	Frequency	Percentage%
Hindu	30	60%
Muslim	10	20%
Christian	5	10%
Others	5	10%
Total	50	100

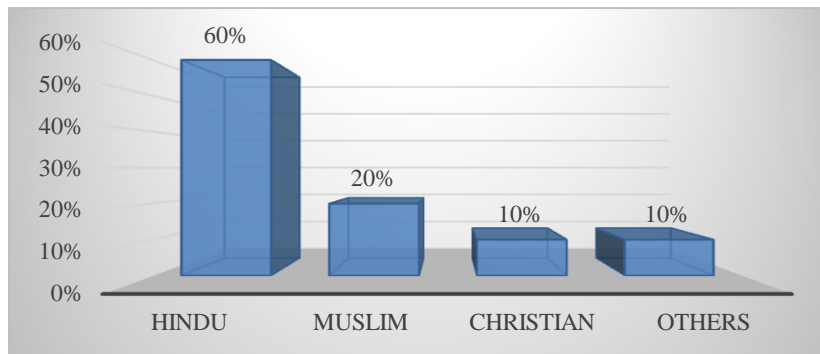


Figure 3: Religion of the respondents

Table 3 shows the religious affiliation of the respondents. The majority of the respondents, 30 individuals or 60%, identified as Hindu. This was followed by 10 respondents, representing 20% of the sample, who identified as Muslim. Additionally, 5 respondents, accounting for 10%, identified as

Christian, while the remaining 5 respondents, also comprising 10%, belonged to other religions. This indicates that the sample is predominantly Hindu, with some representation from other religious groups.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics

Gender	Sample Size (n)	Mean SI Score	SD (Standard Deviation)
Male	25	72.5	8.3
Female	25	78.2	7.6

Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics of the respondents based on gender. Among the 25 male respondents, the mean Social Intelligence (SI) score was 72.5, with a standard deviation of 8.3, indicating some variation in their scores. In comparison, the 25 female respondents had a higher

mean SI score of 78.2, with a slightly lower standard deviation of 7.6, suggesting that their scores were somewhat more consistent. Overall, the data indicates that female respondents, on average, demonstrated higher social intelligence compared to their male counterparts.

Table 5: t-test Results

Group Comparison	t-value	p-value	Significant (at 0.05)
Male vs Female	2.37	0.021	Yes

Table 5 presents the results of the t-test conducted to compare the social intelligence scores between male and female respondents. The t-value was found to be 2.37, with a corresponding p-value of 0.021. Since the p-value is less than the significance level of

0.05, the result is statistically significant. This indicates that there is a significant difference in social intelligence scores between male and female respondents, with females scoring higher on average than males.

Table 6: Relationship between Spiritual Intelligence and Character Building

Correlation Between	r- value	p-value	Significant
Spiritual Intelligence & Character Building	0.68	0.0001	Yes

Table 6 presents the relationship between spiritual intelligence and character building among the respondents. The correlation coefficient (r-value) was found to be 0.68, indicating a strong positive

relationship between the two variables. The p-value of 0.0001 shows that this correlation is statistically significant. This suggests that higher levels of

spiritual intelligence are associated with higher levels of character building among the respondents.

Conclusion:

Spiritual intelligence plays a vital role in shaping the character of higher secondary students by fostering self-awareness, compassion, ethical decision-making, and a sense of purpose. It equips students with the inner strength to navigate moral challenges, build positive relationships, and contribute meaningfully to society. By integrating spiritual intelligence into education, schools can nurture responsible, empathetic, and morally upright individuals who are not only academically successful but also socially and emotionally balanced. Ultimately, cultivating spiritual intelligence helps create a generation of ethical leaders and compassionate citizens, essential for building a just and harmonious society.

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