

## A Study of Spiritual Intelligence among Graduate Students

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### ABSTRACT

The major aim of the study was to find out spiritual intelligence among graduate students. A total of 60 students; 30 males and 30 female students 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 dimension. 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 Self Report Inventory (SISRI-24). The study concluded that there is no gender difference on spiritual intelligence.

**Keywords:** *Spiritual Intelligence, Graduate Students*

Today the field of psychology has shown the tendency towards the spiritual dimensions and wide horizons for extended research has spread that can reflect the profound influence of spiritual forces on the human body and mind and makes clear the importance of spiritual intelligence. Spiritual approaches to health and sciences, for researchers and mental health professionals have recently been emphasized. Some research studies have paid to the effect of spirituality on the overall health of the individuals. Mental health professionals have recognized the power of spiritual intelligence, some of which are defined as capacity to feel, understand and present the highest part of themselves, others and the world around.

Spirituality is derived from the Latin word "Spirare" meaning to breathe. Spirituality is inherent aspect of human nature and essence of our existence so it draws attention of many theorists as the source of all thoughts, feelings, values and behavior.

### **Spiritual Intelligence (SQ)**

According to Webster's dictionary the word "Spirit" defines as "the animating or vital principle: that which gives life to the physical organism in contrast to its material elements: the breath of

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life". Wigglesworth et al., (2012) defines spiritual intelligence as "the ability to behave with wisdom and compassion, while maintaining inner and outer peace, regardless of the situation".

Emmons (1999) based on Gardner's definition of intelligence tried to pose spirituality in the framework of intelligence. After the introduction of multiple intelligences by Gardner, the concept of spiritual intelligence comes to exist. For the first time in the psychology academic literature the concept of spiritual intelligence was raised by Stevens in 1996 and then in 1999 by Emmons.

Vaughan (2002) stated that the spiritual intelligence is the consequence of the highest level of individual growth in the fields of cognition, meaning attainment, transcendental and moral communication. Zhohar and Marshal (2000) believe that spiritual intelligence facilitates association between cause and emotion, as well as, body and mind and builds a supportive force for growth and rising. It provides an active, unity, and meaningful centre for soul to help people think profoundly about essential subjects and try to solve their daily problems. King (2008) defines SQ as "a set of mental capacities which contribute to the awareness, integration, and adaptive application of the nonmaterial and transcendent aspects of one's existence, leading to such outcomes as deep existential reflection, enhancement of meaning, recognition of a transcendent self, and mastery of spiritual states". The model comprises the following four components-

- **Critical Existential Thinking (CET)** – the capacity to critically contemplate meaning, purpose, and other existential or metaphysical issues (e.g., reality, the universe, space, time, death). Also, the capacity to contemplate non-existential issues from an existential perspective; such as moral problem solving - the ability to resolve ethical dilemmas through the application of critical thinking in conjunction with awareness of one's own moral convictions and spiritual beliefs.
- **Personal Meaning Production (PMP)** – the ability to construct personal meaning and purpose in all physical and mental experiences, including the capacity to create and master a life purpose. May include a sense of higher purpose, or reason for existence, associated with a personal belief in or sense of the sacred or divine.
- **Transcendental Awareness (TA)** – the capacity to perceive transcendent dimensions of the self (e.g., a transcendent self), of others, and of the physical world (e.g., non-materialism, interconnectedness) during the normal, waking state of consciousness. Also, the ability to sense a spiritual dimension of life. Self realization achieved through self-awareness & reflection. The ability to perceive beyond the physical senses - intuition, gut-feeling, inner knowing.
- **Conscious State Expansion (CSE)** – the ability to enter spiritual states of consciousness (e.g., pure consciousness, cosmic consciousness, oneness) at one's own discretion; often through deliberate practice (e.g., prayer, meditation, relaxation, or rhythmic physical activity).

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Gupta (2012) investigated a study on the relationship between spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence with self efficacy and self regulation among college students. The findings revealed that spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence were positively and significantly correlated with self efficacy and self regulation. The significant difference was found between male and female students of emotional intelligence, self efficacy and self regulation. It was also found that male students were better in spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence as compared to female students.

Nelms (2005) conducted a study on "The relationship between spirituality and the health of college students in a university setting". Undergraduate students enrolled in Personal Health and Wellness classes at the University of Tennessee, USA were selected to participate in this study. The sample size was 221. The researcher used a self-developed, reliable and valid instrument, viz., the Spirituality Scale (SS) and College Student Appraisal of Risks Survey (The CARS) to measure spirituality; and health of college students. The relationship between the self-reported level of spirituality and the health status of college students was found out. This study seems significant as it is an important step toward understanding the role of spirituality in the various dimensions of health among young adults.

Nazam (2014) conducted a study on gender difference on spiritual intelligence among adolescents. The aim of the research was to measure spiritual intelligence among adolescents studying in two schools of Aligarh city. For this purpose, Spiritual Intelligence Self Report Inventory (SISRI-24) developed by D. King (2008) was administered to the sample of 60 adolescents. Of these, 30 were male and 30 were female students. The main findings were as follows: Significant difference were found between the two groups, on subscales, namely, Personal Meaning Production (PMP), Transcendental Awareness (TA) and Conscious State Expansion (CSE), Critical Existential Thinking (CET) and composite scores on spiritual intelligence.

Pant and Srivastava (2014) initiated the study on the "Effect of spiritual intelligence on mental health and quality of life among college students". The study was conducted on 50 Under Graduate and Post Graduate college students in Haridwar, Uttarakhand. The aim of the study was to examine the level of spiritual intelligence, mental health and quality of life the findings of the study revealed that spiritual intelligence and mental health are correlated significantly; there is a significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and quality of life.

Jafari et al (2014), conducted a research entitled " Comparison of relation between body image and spiritual intelligence among male and female students". The purpose of this research was to analyze the relation between body image and spiritual intelligence in Iranian male and female students. The sample includes 376 students at Islamic Azad University. The tools include Fisher's body image test and spiritual intelligent SSI-29 questionnaire. The data were analyzed

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by t test, Pearson correlation and Fisher's Z test. The relation between spiritual intelligence and Reliance on Internal Core with body image is significant in both genders ( $p \leq 0.05$ ). The results show that Understanding and Communication with the Source of Existence in women is higher than men. However, the relation between Understanding and Communication with the Source of Existence with body image in male is significant ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) while it is not significant in female students. There are no significant difference between females' and males' scores in body image and spiritual intelligence.

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Aim**

The aim of the present study was to study the spiritual intelligence among male and female graduate students.

#### **Objectives**

- To study and compare male and female graduate students on different dimension of spiritual intelligence.

#### **Hypothesis**

1. There is no significant difference between male and female graduate students on different dimensions of spiritual intelligence.

- a) There is no significant difference between male and female graduate students on conscious state expansion.
- b) There is no significant difference between male and female graduate students on critical existential thinking.
- c) There is no significant difference between male and female graduate students on personal meaning production.
- d) There is no significant difference between male and female graduate students on transcendental awareness.

2. There is no significant difference between male and female graduate students on composite score of spiritual intelligence.

#### **Sample**

Total sample of 60 subjects were taken for this study. The sample comprises of 30 male and 30 female graduate students. The age range of the subjects were between 19 - 25 years. In this study non probability purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample from the population. Data was collected from Jaipur city.

#### **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria were as follows:**

##### **Inclusion Criteria:-**

- Healthy subjects in the age range of 19 - 25 years.
- Both male and female subjects were included in the study.
- Subjects who were cooperative.

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### Exclusion criteria:-

- Subjects who were below or above 19 and 25 years of age.
- Subjects with some major physical, organic and psychiatric illness
- Subjects who were illiterate and had poor understanding of basic English.
- Subjects unwilling to participate in the study.

### Tools

- **Socio demographic datasheet** was prepared by the investigator for collecting information about Name, Age, Sex, and Education.
- **Informed consent form:** Informed consent was taken from all the subjects included in the study. The subjects were assured about the confidentiality of their responses.
- **Spiritual Intelligence Self Report Inventory** -Spiritual Intelligence Self Report Inventory (SISRI-24) developed by King (2008) was used to measure spiritual intelligence.

### Procedure

All the subjects were selected following the inclusion-exclusion criteria and informed consent was taken to participate in the present study. Spiritual intelligence self-report inventory were administered on all subjects.

### Research Design

It is a comparative study between two independent groups; namely male and female graduate students.

### Statistical Analysis

All statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS software version 16. Descriptive analyses of the data were done to obtain mean, standard deviation. Independent samples t-tests were used to find the significant difference between male and female graduate students on different dimensions of spiritual intelligence.

## RESULTS

*Table 1: Socio-demographic Details of male and female graduate students*

Variable	Male Students		Female students	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Age(n=30)	19.63	1.35	20.63	1.40
Yrs of Education(n=30)	13.86	0.81	13.96	0.76

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic details of male and female graduate students. It shows the Mean and Standard Deviation of male and female graduate students on general characteristics including age, number of years of education. The descriptive analysis revealed that the Mean age of male students was  $19.63 \pm 1.35$  and female students were  $20.63 \pm 1.40$ . It also shows the Mean and S.D of male and female students of educational years was  $13.86 \pm 0.81$  and  $13.96 \pm 0.76$  respectively.

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*Table 2 : Comparison of male and female graduate students on different dimensions of spiritual intelligence*

S. No	Spiritual Dimensions	Intelligence	Male students(n=30)	Female Students(n=30)	t-test
			Mean ± S.D.	Mean ± S.D.	
1	Conscious State Expansion (CST)		12.46(2.97)	11.46(4.28)	1.0
2	Critical Existential Thinking (CET)		15.96(4.50)	15.60(4.76)	.30
3	Personal Meaning Production (PMP)		13.96(2.93)	13.23(3.30)	.90
4	Transcendental Awareness (TA).		17.63(2.84)	18.06(4.26)	.46

Table 2 shows the comparison of mean scores of male and female graduate students on different dimensions of spiritual intelligence. As can be seen from this table, there is no significant difference between male and female students on conscious state expansion, critical existential thinking, personal meaning production and transcendental awareness.

*Table 3: Comparison of male and female graduate students on spiritual intelligence*

Variable	Male Students (n=30)		Female students (n=30)		t-test
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
<b>Spiritual Intelligence</b>	60.03	9.06	58.36	14.52	0.53

Table 4 shows the comparison of mean scores of male and female graduate students on composite score of spiritual intelligence. As can be seen from this table, there is no significant difference between male and female students on composite score of spiritual intelligence.

## **DISCUSSION**

The aim of the present research was to study and compare the spiritual intelligence among male and female graduate students.

Hypothesis 1 (a). There is no significant difference between male and female graduate students on conscious state expansion.

Conscious state expansion measures the ability to enter spiritual states of consciousness at one's own discretion; often through deliberate practice (e.g., prayer, meditation, relaxation, or rhythmic physical activity). According to our hypothesis there is no significant difference between male and female graduate students on conscious state expansion. Results showed that

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there is no significant difference (t - value of 1.0 not significant at 0.00 level of significance) between male and female graduate students on conscious state expansion. Therefore, it accept our hypothesis. This indicate that there has been no difference among male and female students on their ability to enter the spiritual state of consciousness or higher.

Hypothesis 1 (b). There is no significant difference between male and female graduate students on critical existential thinking.

Critical existential thinking measures the capacity to critically contemplate meaning, purpose, and other existential or metaphysical issues (e.g., reality, the universe, space, time, death). Also, the capacity to contemplate non-existential issues from an existential perspective; such as moral problem solving - the ability to resolve ethical dilemmas through the application of critical thinking in conjunction with awareness of one's own moral convictions and spiritual beliefs. According to our hypothesis there is no significant difference between male and female graduate students on critical existential thinking. Results showed that there is no significant difference (t - value of 0.30 not significant at 0.00 level of significance) between male and female graduate students on critical existential thinking. Therefore, it accept our hypothesis. This indicate that there has been no difference among male and female students on their capacity to critically contemplate meaning, purpose and other metaphysical issues like reality, time, death. This also shows that male and female students are similar in their ability to create meaning based on deep understanding of existential questions like moral problem solving in their life.

Hypothesis 1 (c). There is no significant difference between male and female graduate students on personal meaning production.

Personal meaning production refers to the ability to construct personal meaning and purpose in all physical and mental experiences, including the capacity to create and master a life purpose. According to our hypothesis there is no significant difference between male and female graduate students on personal meaning production. Results showed that there is no significant difference (t - value of 0.90 not significant at 0.00 level of significance) between male and female graduate students on personal meaning production. Therefore, it accept our hypothesis. This indicate that there has been no difference among male and female students on their ability to construct personal meaning and purpose in all physical and mental experiences of their life and this also includes that they both showed similar the capacity to create and master their life purpose.

Hypothesis 1 (d) There is no significant difference between male and female graduate students on transcendental awareness.

Transcendental Awareness assess the capacity to perceive transcendent dimensions of the self (e.g., a transcendent self), of others, and of the physical world (e.g., non-materialism, interconnectedness) during the normal, waking state of consciousness. Also, it measures the

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ability to sense a spiritual dimension of life. According to our hypothesis there is no significant difference between male and female graduate students on transcendental awareness. Results showed that there is no significant difference ( $t$  - value of 0.46 not significant at 0.00 level of significance) between male and female graduate students on transcendental awareness. Therefore, it accept our hypothesis. This indicates that there has been no difference among male and female students on their ability to understand one's relationship with a higher power, all the creatures, man and the environment. As compared to the findings of the present study, Nazam (2014) found that there was a significant difference between male and female students on all subscales, namely, Personal Meaning Production (PMP), Transcendental Awareness (TA) and Conscious State Expansion (CSE), Critical Existential Thinking (CET).

2. There is no significant difference between male and female graduate students on composite score of spiritual intelligence

Results from table 3 showed that there is no significant difference ( $t$  - value of 0.53 not significant at 0.00 level of significance) between male and female graduate students on overall spiritual intelligence score. Therefore, it accept our hypothesis. This indicate that there has been no difference among male and female students on their ability to behave with wisdom and compassion, while maintaining inner and outer peace, regardless of the situation. Jafari et al., (2014), also found in their study that there are no significant difference between females and males scores in spiritual intelligence. However, there are some studies which found that there is significant difference between male and female on spiritual intelligence, a study done by Gupta (2012) on the relationship between spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence with self efficacy and self regulation among college students found that there is a significant difference was found between male and female students of spiritual intelligence. It was also found that male students were better in spiritual intelligence as compared to female students. Nazam (2014) also found that there was a significant difference between male and female students on composite score of spiritual intelligence.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of the present study revealed that there is no difference between male and female graduate students on their level of spiritual intelligence.

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