Spiritual Intelligence of the Trainee Teachers in Kolkata

The Influence of Gender, Academic Stream, and Family Structure

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Abstract

This study examined the Spiritual Intelligence (SI) of trainee teachers in Kolkata District, West Bengal, focusing on the influence of gender, family structure, and academic stream. A standardised Spiritual Intelligence Scale was administered to a sample of 110 trainee teachers (74 females, 36 males) from various teacher training institutions. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Mann Whitney U test and Kruskal Wallis test via MS Excel 2019 and SPSS version 25. Results revealed that 67.3 per cent of participants demonstrated an average level of SI. A statistically significant gender difference was found, with males scoring higher on SI ($p < 0.05$). No significant differences emerged based on family structure or academic stream ($p > 0.05$). These findings suggest that while gender influences SI, family background and academic specialisation do not. The study contributes to understanding SI in teacher education and highlights the importance of gender-sensitive approaches in fostering spiritual development in teacher training programmes.

Keywords: Spiritual Intelligence, Gender, Academic Stream, Family Structure, Trainee Teachers

Introduction

Spiritual Intelligence (SI) is an emerging domain within cognitive and educational sciences, defined as the capacity to engage with profound existential questions and navigate life experiences with insight, compassion, and inner clarity (Ronel, 2008). According to Zohar and Marshall (2000), SI enables individuals to address issues of meaning and value, helping them view life within broader, enriching contexts. It supports

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personal growth and authentic living by accessing inner wisdom (Mansouri *et al.*, 2016).

For trainee teachers pursuing B.Ed. and M.Ed. degrees in Kolkata District, SI holds special relevance. These future educators develop not only professional skills but also moral and psychological growth, crucial for shaping future generations. India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 advocates holistic learner development, emphasising values, ethics, and emotional well-being alongside academics. SI aligns with these goals by fostering reflective, compassionate, and resilient educators.

The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) stresses preparing teachers who are academically competent and socio-emotionally attuned. SI equips trainee teachers to connect deeply with students, resolve conflicts empathetically, and cultivate inclusive, value-rich environments.

Philosophical perspectives reinforce SI's relevance — Krishnamurti (1969) highlights self-understanding as a spiritual journey foundational to SI, while Osho (2001) emphasises meditation and present-moment awareness. Western views, such as Hegel's Dialectics (1821), suggest spiritual growth involves synthesising consciousness toward higher self-realisation.

Psychological theories complement these views. Gardner's (2000) Multiple Intelligences include intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences related to SI. Emmons (2000) conceptualises SI as adaptive mental capacities rooted in transcendent dimensions. King *et al.* (2009) identify core SI components — critical existential thinking, personal meaning production, transcendental awareness, and conscious state expansion — qualities that enhance emotional resilience and ethical grounding that is critical for teacher education.

This study investigates SI among trainee teachers in Kolkata, by examining gender, academic stream (Science, Social Science, Language), and family structure (nuclear or joint). Prior research suggests gender differences in moral reasoning (Gilligan, 1982), epistemological differences by academic discipline (Nussbaum, 2010), and family influences on spiritual development (Bronfenbrenner, 1981).

Despite growing interest and policy emphasis on holistic education, there is a gap in research on how demographic and academic variables affect SI among Indian trainee teachers, especially in Kolkata. This study aims to address the gap, integrating Eastern and Western philosophies with psychological models to inform teacher education practice and policy.

Need and Significance

With India's education system moving towards holistic development under NEP 2020, fostering spiritual intelligence in teachers has become essential. SI promotes empathy, ethical reasoning, and self-awareness — qualities crucial for nurturing balanced, value-oriented learners. However, SI remains underexplored in Indian teacher education, particularly regarding the demographic and academic influences.

This research fills this gap by examining SI in trainee teachers from culturally diverse and educationally dynamic Kolkata District. Insights from this study will inform the design of teacher education curricula about the integration of SI, to align the preparation with NEP's holistic aims. Ultimately, cultivating spiritually intelligent educators, capable of creating compassionate, inclusive, and ethical learning environments is imperative for building a resilient and value-driven education system in India.

Technical Definitions of Key Terms

- **Spiritual Intelligence (SI):** The capacity to apply spiritual values and knowledge in daily life, enabling meaningful functioning, compassionate action, and purposeful existence (Zohar and Marshall, 2000; Emmons, 2000).
- **Trainee Teachers:** Individuals enrolled in pre-service teacher education programmes (B.Ed. and M.Ed.) acquiring the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to become educators.
- **Gender:** Biological sex category (male or female) used to examine SI variation.
- **Academic Stream:** The area of academic specialisation pursued, categorised as Science, Social Science, or Language.
- **Family Structure:** The household type where the trainee resides, classified as nuclear (parents and children) or joint (extended family living together).

Research Questions

1. What is the level of spiritual intelligence among trainee teachers in Kolkata?
2. Does spiritual intelligence differ significantly between male and female trainee teachers?
3. Is there a significant difference in spiritual intelligence between trainee teachers from nuclear and joint families?
4. Does any academic stream (Science, Social Science, Language) influence the spiritual intelligence of trainee teachers?

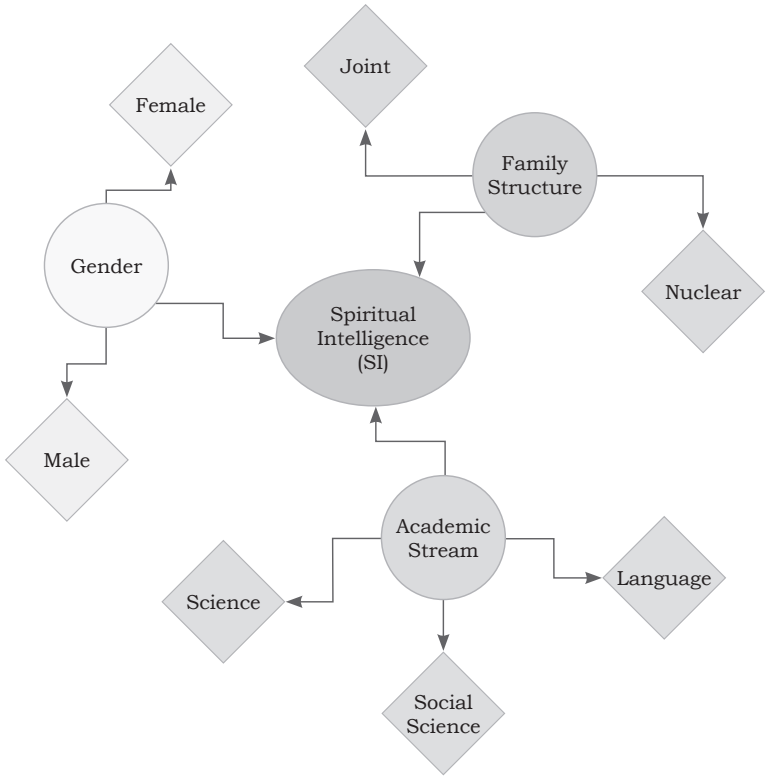

Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

Objectives of the Study

O1. To assess the level of spiritual intelligence among trainee teachers in Kolkata

O2. To examine differences in spiritual intelligence between male and female trainee teachers in Kolkata.

O3. To investigate differences in spiritual intelligence between trainee teachers from joint and nuclear families in Kolkata.

O4. To analyse differences in spiritual intelligence among trainee teachers from Science, Social Science, and Language streams in Kolkata.

Hypotheses of the Study

All hypotheses are stated in the null form:

H_{01}: There is no significant difference in spiritual intelligence between male and female trainee teachers in Kolkata.

H_{02}: There is no significant difference in spiritual intelligence between trainee teachers from joint and nuclear families in Kolkata.

H_{03}: There is no significant

difference in spiritual intelligence among trainee teachers from Science, Social Science, and Language streams in Kolkata.

Delimitation

This study is geographically confined to Kolkata District, West Bengal, and focuses exclusively on trainee teachers enrolled in B.Ed. and M.Ed. programmes. It excludes participants from other academic courses. The study concentrates on three academic streams: Science, Social Science, and Language, omitting others. Data collection was conducted within a fixed period from August to December 2024. Methodologically, the research adopts a quantitative descriptive survey design and is based on a specific theoretical model of spiritual intelligence, without incorporating alternative frameworks or longitudinal approaches.

Variables

1. **Categorical (Independent) Variables:**
   - Gender: Male and Female
   - Family Structure: Joint and Nuclear
   - Academic Stream: Science, Social Science, and Language
2. **Dependent Variable:**
   - Spiritual Intelligence

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative descriptive survey design, suitable for examining existing patterns and group differences without manipulating variables. The design facilitated the investigation of demographic influences — gender, academic stream, and family structure — on spiritual intelligence among trainee teachers in a natural educational setting. It provided a systematic framework for data collection and analysis, ensuring objectivity and generalisability within the target population.

Population and Sampling Strategy

The population comprised of B.Ed. and M.Ed. trainee teachers enrolled in various teacher education institutions in and around Kolkata District, West Bengal. To ensure representativeness, three teacher training colleges were selected using simple random sampling from a recognised institutional list. Within these institutions, participants were chosen via convenience sampling based on classroom availability during data collection. This hybrid sampling approach — random at the institutional level and convenient at the participant level — balanced methodological rigor with practical feasibility.

The final sample included 110 trainee teachers: 74 females and 36 males; 27 from the Science stream, 46 from Social Science, and 37 from Language; and 89 from nuclear families and 21 from joint families.

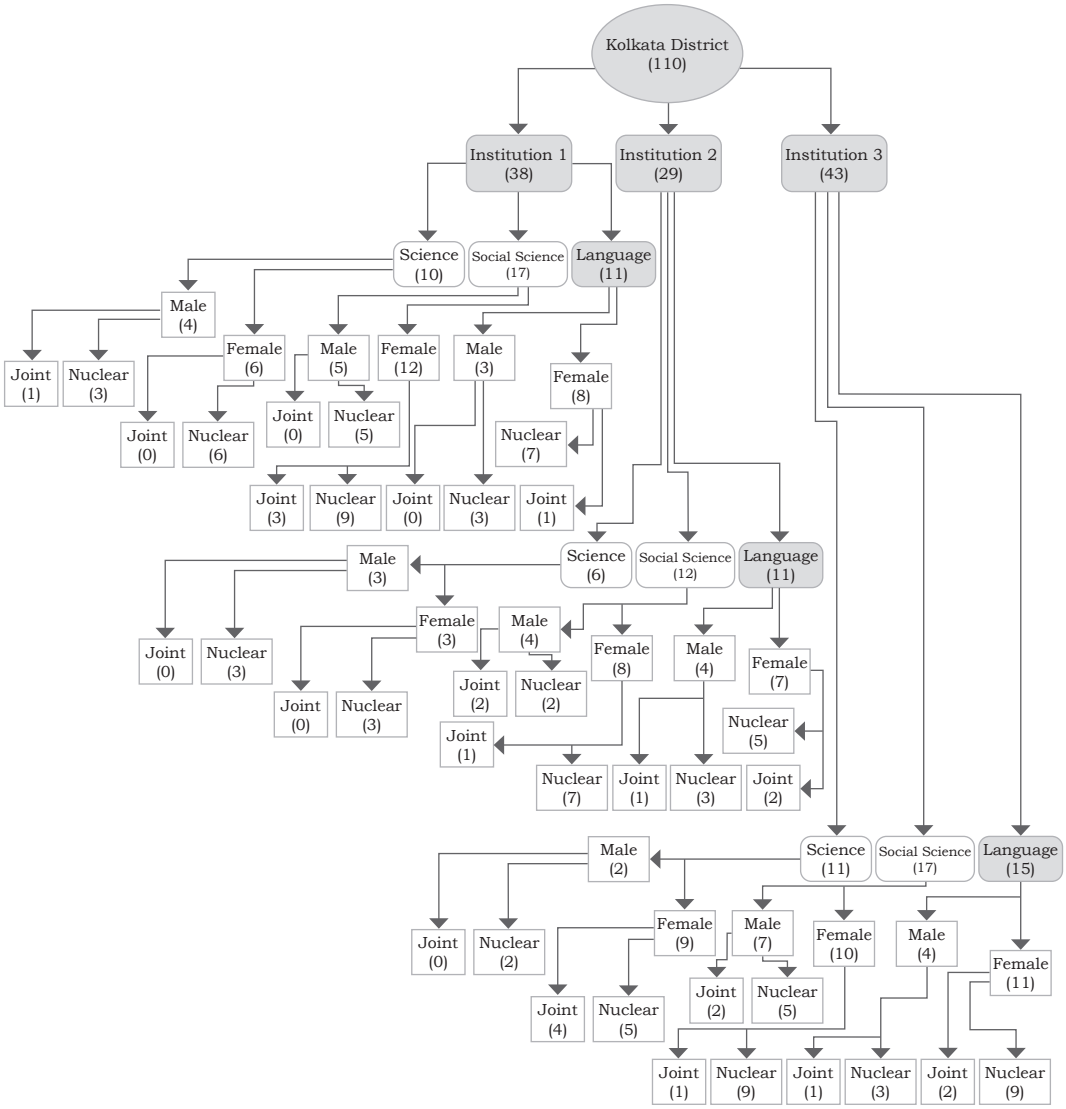

Fig. 2: Flow Chart of Sampling Design

Instruments Used

Student Information Schedule

A structured schedule was designed by the researcher to gather essential demographic information, including age, gender, academic stream, and family structure. This tool helped in categorising participants for statistical comparisons.

Spiritual Intelligence Scale (Self-Developed and Standardised)

The main instrument used to assess spiritual intelligence was a self-developed 40-item scale,

designed based on the conceptual frameworks of Emmons (2000)and Zohar (2004). The scale measured eight core dimensions of spiritual intelligence, with five items dedicated to each dimension. These dimensions included, Awareness, Critical Thinking, Transcendentalism, Compassion, Virtuousness, Positive Outlook, Solitude, and Solution Questing. Each item was rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). Negatively worded items were scored in reverse to maintain consistency in overall interpretation.

To ensure content validity, the instrument was reviewed by a panel of three experts, two from the field of Education and one Principal of a teacher training college. Based on their expert suggestions, several items were refined for clarity, relevance, and theoretical alignment. The scale was then pilot-tested on a sample of 100 participants, and the data were analysed for internal consistency. The instrument yielded Cronbach's alpha of 0.80, indicating a high level of reliability and making it suitable for large-scale administration in the main study.

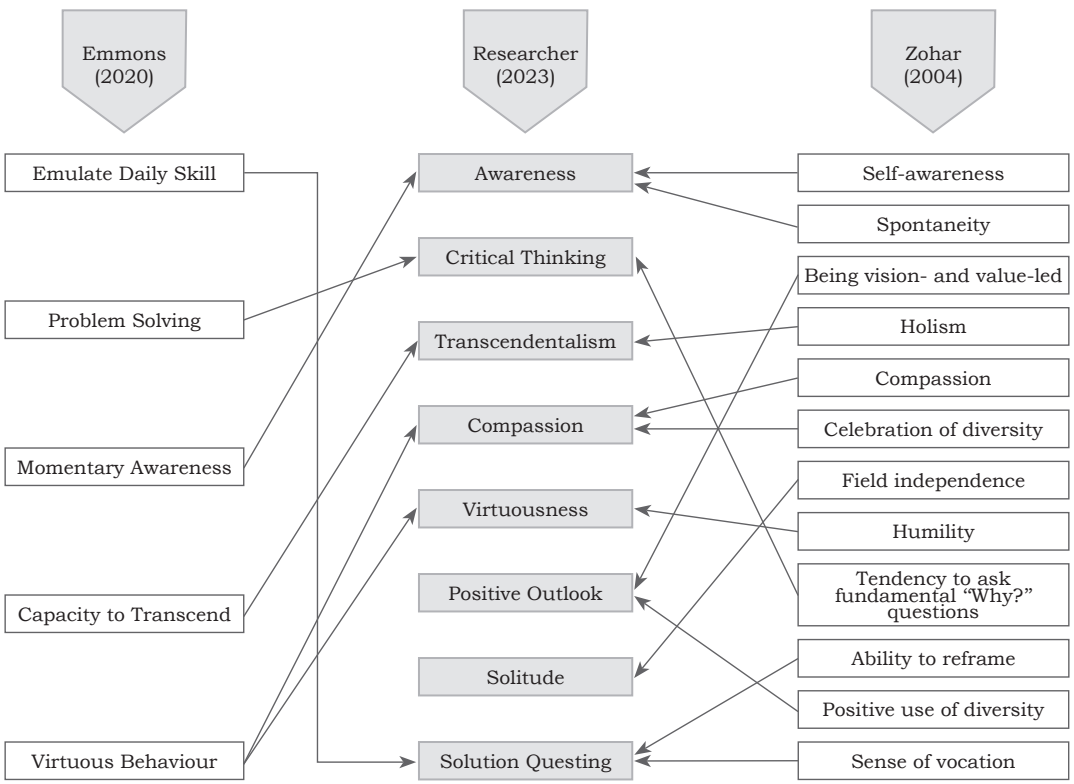

Fig. 3: Theoretical Framework of Spiritual Intelligence Scale

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected over a five-month period from August to December, 2024. Prior permission was obtained from the authorities of the selected teacher training colleges. On the scheduled day of data collection, participants were briefed about the study's purpose, assured of the confidentiality of their responses, and asked for informed consent. The administration of the instruments was carried out in a controlled classroom environment, under the direct supervision of the researcher. This ensured uniform instructions and minimised the risk of response bias.

Data Analysis Techniques

After the data were collected, they were coded and entered into MS Excel 2019 and subsequently analysed using IBM SPSS version 25. Descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis, were computed to understand the basic characteristics and distribution of the data. To test for normality, both the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) and Shapiro-Wilk (S-W) tests were conducted, and results indicated a non-normal distribution of the spiritual intelligence scores. As a result, non-parametric statistical tests were applied. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare SI levels based on gender and family structure, and the Kruskal–Wallis H test was used to assess differences among the three academic streams. These statistical techniques ensured a robust and valid analysis aligned with the study's objectives.

Table 1
Basic Nature of All Data (Spiritual Intelligence)

Descriptive Statistics (SI)							
	Number	**Range (R)**	**Min.**	**Max.**	**Sum**	**Average (M)**	
	Output	Output	Output	Output	Output	Output	Std. Error
Spiritual Intelligence	110	55	120	175	16036	145.78	1.166
Valid (N list-wise)	110						
	SD (Std. Deviation)	**Variance (V)**	**Sk**		**Ku**		
	Output	Output	Output	Std. Error	Output	Std. Error	
Spiritual Intelligence	12.234	149.677	0.278	0.230	–0.684	0.457	
Valid (N list-wise)	110						

Result and Interpretation

This section presents the results from the analysis of spiritual intelligence among the trainee teachers in Kolkata District, West Bengal. The study examines differences in spiritual intelligence based on gender, family structure, and academic stream. The findings are discussed in relation to the hypotheses, linking the empirical results with the theoretical framework.

Interpretation of Table 1

The statistical analysis (Table 1) of the spiritual intelligence (SI) scores among the surveyed trainee teachers reveals several important insights. The total number of trainee teachers surveyed is 110, providing a solid foundation for the statistical analysis. The range of SI scores is 55, with the lowest recorded score being 120 and the highest score being 175, reflecting a broad spectrum of spiritual intelligence levels among the trainee teachers. The average SI score is approximately 145.78, indicating the typical level of spiritual intelligence within this group. The standard deviation of 12.234 suggests a moderate spread of scores around the mean, confirming that there is diversity in the SI levels, though the majority of teachers' scores are relatively close to the average. The variance of 149.677 further quantifies this spread.

In terms of distribution, the skewness of 0.278 indicates a slight positive skew, meaning that there are more trainee teachers with SI scores below the mean than those significantly above it. This is supported by the kurtosis value of –0.684, which suggests a platykurtic distribution, meaning the data is flatter and has fewer outliers than a normal distribution. These statistical characteristics indicate that while some trainee teachers exhibit high levels of spiritual intelligence, the majority have scores closer to the average, with fewer teachers achieving exceptionally high SI scores.

Overall, the data paints a picture of a moderately high level of spiritual intelligence among the surveyed trainee teachers, with a tendency for scores to cluster around the mean. This variability in scores and the general distribution can inform educational strategies and guide further research into the factors that influence spiritual intelligence in academic settings.

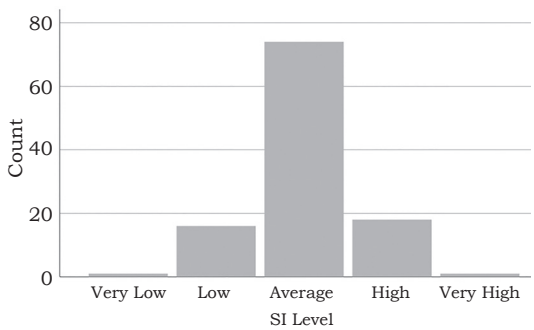

Fig. 4. Visual Representation of SI Level

Table 2
Level of Spiritual Intelligence among Trainee Teachers

Z-Score Range	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
$Z < -2$	Very Low	1	0.9
$-2 \leq Z < -1$	Low	16	14.5
$-1 \leq Z \leq 1$	Average	74	67.3
$1 < Z \leq 2$	High	18	16.4
$Z > 2$	Very High	1	0.9
Total		**110**	**100.0**

Interpretation of Table 2

The distribution of Spiritual Intelligence (SI) levels (Table 2) among the trainee teachers, categorised by Z-scores, reveals that the majority of participants fall within the average category (67.3%), indicating that most have a moderate level of spiritual intelligence relative to the group. A smaller percentage of trainee teachers are classified as having High SI (16.4%) and Low SI (14.5%), showing some variability in the dataset. Only one participant each was found in the Very Low and Very High categories (0.9% each), suggesting that extremely low or high spiritual intelligence levels are rare in this group. Overall, the distribution suggests a relatively centralised trend around the average, with limited dispersion towards the extremes.

Interpretation of Table 3

The tests of normality for Spiritual Intelligence are conducted using the K-S and S-W tests (Table 3). For the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, the statistic is 0.103 with 110 df, and the p-value is 0.006, indicating that the data significantly deviates from a

Table 3
Normality Test for Spiritual Intelligence

	Kolmogorov and Smirnov (K-S) Testa			Shapiro and Wilk's (S-W) Test		
	Statistic (Output)	**Degree of Freedom**	**Significance Value**	**Output**	**Degree of Freedom**	**Significance Value**
Spiritual Intelligence	0.103	110	0.006	0.976	110	0.048
a. Significance level using Lilliefors modification						

normal distribution. For the Shapiro-Wilk test, the statistic is 0.976 with 110 df, and the p-value is 0.048, which also suggests that the data is not normally distributed at the 0.05 significance level.

Both tests suggest that the Spiritual Intelligence scores do not follow a normal distribution, as their p-values are less than the critical value of 0.05.

Hypotheses Testing

As the normality tests (K-S and S-W) (Table 3) have revealed that the data for Spiritual Intelligence is not normally distributed, non-parametric testing has been applied (Ahad *et al.*, 2011). Specifically, the Mann-Whitney U (M-W U) test and Kruskal–Wallis H (K-W H) test has been used (McKight and Najab, 2010) to examine the differences in Spiritual Intelligence across gender, academic stream, and family structure. Each hypothesis has been tested accordingly to determine the statistical significance of group differences.

Interpretation of Table 4

The M-W U test has been applied (Table 4) to examine gender-based differences in spiritual intelligence among trainee teachers. The result reveals a statistically significant difference (U = 946.000, p = 0.014) [Table 4.2], indicating that male trainee teachers (Mean Rank = 66.22) [Table 4.1] scored significantly higher in spiritual intelligence than their female counterparts (Mean Rank = 50.28).

Analysis of H_{01}

Table 4
Results of the Mann-Whitney U Test Examining Gender-based Variations

Table 4.1
Ranks

Gender	Number	Rank of Mean	Ranks Sum
Female	74	50.28	3721.00
Male	36	66.22	2384.00
Total	110		

Table 4.2
Test Statistics

	Spiritual Intelligence
Statistics of Mann-Whitney U (M-W U)	946.000
Statistics of Wilcoxon W	3721.000
Z-Value	–2.460
Asymptotic significance (two-tailed)	0.014
Gender as the grouping factor	

Analysis of H_{02}

Table 5
Mann-Whitney U Test for Family Structure Differences in Spiritual Intelligence among Trainee Teachers

Table 5.1
Ranks

	Family Structure	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Spiritual Intelligence	Nuclear Family	89	55.34	4925.00
	Joint family	21	56.19	1180.00
	Total	110		

Table 5.2
Test Statistics

	Spiritual Intelligence
Statistics of Mann-Whitney U (M-W U)	920.000
Statistics of Wilcoxon W	4925.000
Z Value	−0.110
Asymptotic significance (two-tailed)	0.912
Family Structure as the grouping factor	

Interpretation of Table 5

The M-W Utest compared the spiritual intelligence scores between trainee teachers from nuclear and joint families(Table 5). The results showed a Mann-Whitney U value of 920.000 with a Z-score of −0.110 and a significance level (p-value) of 0.912 (Table 5.1). The mean ranks for nuclear and joint families were 55.34 and 56.19, respectively(Table 5.2). These values indicate a minimal difference in ranks between the two groups, and the high p-value suggests that the observed difference is not statistically significant. The distribution of spiritual intelligence scores across both family types appears to be nearly the same.

Analysis of H_{03}

Table 6
Kruskal-Wallis Test Results for Spiritual Intelligence by Academic Stream

Table 6.1
Ranks

	Academic Stream	N	Mean Rank
Spiritual_Intelligence	Social science	46	51.29
	Language	37	60.64
	Science	27	55.63
	Total	110	

Table 6.2
Test Statistics

	Spiritual Intelligence
Kruskal-Wallis H	1.761
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	0.415
Grouping Variable: Academic Stream	

Interpretation of Table 6

The Kruskal-Wallis (Table 6) test was conducted to examine whether there were significant differences in spiritual intelligence scores across the three academic streams: Social Science, Language, and Science. The results showed that the mean rank (Table 6.1) for spiritual intelligence was highest in the Language stream (60.64), followed by the Science stream (55.63) and the Social Science stream (51.29). However, the Kruskal-Wallis H value is 1.761, with 2 degrees of freedom, and the Asymptotic Significance (p-value) was 0.415 (Table 6.2), which is greater than the commonly used significance level of 0.05. This indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in spiritual intelligence between the students from the three different academic streams. Therefore, while there are variations in the mean ranks, these differences are not significant enough to conclude that the academic stream has an impact on spiritual intelligence levels among the trainee teachers.

Table 7
Recap of Findings

Hypothesis/ Objective	Test	Result	Interpretation
O1	Descriptive Statistics and Z-Score Categorisation	Majority in Average (67.3%)	Most trainee teachers fall within the average range of spiritual intelligence.
H_{01}	Mann-Whitney U Test	U = 946.000, p = 0.014	There is a significant difference in spiritual intelligence between male and female trainee teachers. Males scored higher.
H_{02}	Mann-Whitney U Test	U = 920.000, p = 0.912	No significant difference in spiritual intelligence based on family structure (nuclear vs. joint families).
H_{03} Kruskal-Wallis Test		H = 1.761, p = 0.415	No significant difference in spiritual intelligence across the three academic streams (Social Science, Language, and Science).

Discussion

The findings of this study provide meaningful insights into the factors influencing Spiritual Intelligence (SI) among trainee teachers in Kolkata District, West Bengal, particularly in relation to gender, family structure, and academic stream. By examining these variables, the study contributes empirical evidence to ongoing philosophical and educational discussions concerning the nature of intelligence and consciousness, especially within the context of teacher preparation.

Regarding gender, the study reveals a significant difference in SI levels, with male trainee teachers scoring higher than their female counterparts. This finding aligns with Gilligan's (1982) theory on gendered patterns of moral reasoning and is partially supported by Hoffman's (2000) research, which identifies emotional and empathetic development as key traits of SI across genders. Osho's (2001) philosophical perspective, which emphasises gender-specific pathways of spiritual growth, may also help explain this variation. While the results are consistent with Sen (2022), but contradict earlier studies by Ahangar and Khan, (2015) and Pant and Srivastava (2015), who found no significant gender-based differences. The socio-cultural context of Kolkata, where traditional gender roles may differentially shape emotional expression and self-reflection — could partly account for these disparities. For example, male trainee teachers may be socialised towards greater emotional independence or introspective practices, potentially contributing to higher SI scores.

In terms of family structure, the study finds no significant difference in SI between trainee teachers from nuclear and joint families. This challenges classical frameworks, such as Hegel's (1821) concept of ethical life, which posits the family as central to moral and spiritual development. In the current socio-cultural landscape, the influence of the traditional family unit may be waning, possibly due to globalisation, urbanisation, and growing individualism. As Bronfenbrenner (1981) one of the world's foremost developmental psychologists, laboratory studies of the child's behaviour, sacrifice too much in order to gain experimental control and analytic rigor. Laboratory observations, he argues, too often lead to "the science of the strange behaviour of children, in strange situations with strange adults, for the briefest possible periods of time." To understand the way children actually develop, Bronfenbrenner believes that it will be necessary to observe their behaviour in natural settings, while they are interacting with familiar adults over prolonged periods of time. This book offers an important blueprint for constructing such a new and ecologically valid psychology of development. The blueprint includes a complete

conceptual framework for analysing the layers of the environment that have a formative influence on the child. This framework is applied to a variety of settings in which children commonly develop, ranging from the pediatric ward to daycare, school, and various family configurations. The result is a rich set of hypotheses about the developmental consequences of various types of environments.

Where current research bears on these hypotheses, Bronfenbrenner marshals the data to show how an ecological theory can be tested. Where no relevant data exist, he suggests new and interesting ecological experiments that might be undertaken to resolve current unknowns. Bronfenbrenner's groundbreaking program for reform in developmental psychology is certain to be controversial. His argument flies in the face of standard psychological procedures and challenges psychology to become more relevant to the ways in which children actually develop. It is a challenge that Research psychology can ill afford to ignore. suggests, developmental influences are increasingly shifting toward peer groups, educational institutions, and media. These findings contrast with studies like Boyatzis *et al.* (2006), highlighting the need to re-evaluate how SI is cultivated in contemporary contexts and how teacher education programmes can address this shift.

Likewise, the absence of significant differences across academic streams (Science, Social Science, and Language) suggests that, SI is a universal construct that transcends disciplinary boundaries. This supports Krishnamurti's (1953) philosophy of holistic education and Emmons' (2000) conception of SI as a distinct and universally accessible form of intelligence. The result also contrasts with Gottfredson's (2003) work, which reported cognitive variation across academic domains, indicating that spiritual growth may be independent of subject specialisation. Consequently, all trainee teachers, regardless of their academic background — possess equal potential for developing SI. These findings support the call for integrating spiritual development across all streams within teacher education, positioning SI as a core element of teacher's identity and professionalism.

Importantly, the study reveals that the majority of trainee teachers fall within the average range of SI, indicating a balanced but improvable state of spiritual development. While this is encouraging, it also exposes a gap in educational practice — SI is not yet being systematically addressed in most teacher training programmes. Given the transformative role teachers play in shaping the values, ethics, and emotional well-being of future generations, integrating SI development into pre-service teacher education is not only desirable but essential. Future educators must be equipped not only with pedagogical

competence but also with the inner strength, empathy, and moral insight that spiritual intelligence cultivates.

Implications of the Findings

The findings of this study carry significant implications for teacher preparation and teacher education programmes, particularly in the context of the transformative vision outlined in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The NEP emphasises the holistic development of learners by integrating cognitive, emotional, ethical, and spiritual dimensions into the educational process. Within this framework, Spiritual Intelligence (SI) emerges as a critical competency for future educators, enabling them to create reflective, inclusive, and value-driven learning environments.

The observed gender differences in SI, with male trainee teachers scoring higher, indicate the need for gender-sensitive strategies in teacher education. Programmes should provide equitable opportunities for the development of emotional and spiritual competencies among all genders. Training modules could incorporate reflective practices, self-awareness exercises, and ethical reasoning frameworks that nurture spiritual development for both male and female trainees.

The finding that family structure and academic stream do not significantly influence SI suggests that spiritual intelligence is a universal potential, not bound by background or disciplinary orientation. This reinforces the importance of embedding SI-oriented practices across all academic streams in teacher education—positioning them as core components of professional preparation rather than peripheral additions.

In alignment with NEP 2020's focus on character formation, emotional well-being, and value-based education, this study advocates for the systematic integration of spiritual intelligence training into pre-service teacher education. Practical approaches for implementation may include:

- Dedicated courses or modules on spiritual and emotional development
- Mindfulness and meditation practices
- Community engagement and service-learning
- Case-based ethical discussions and storytelling

The development of SI supports NEP 2020's broader objective of preparing teachers who are empathetic, compassionate, and self-aware, and who are capable of guiding students not just academically, but also in their personal and ethical growth.

In essence, this study emphasises that teacher education institutions must recognise and cultivate spiritual intelligence as a foundational

element of teacher development. Doing so will not only fulfil the vision of NEP 2020 but also contribute to building a more humane, inclusive, and ethically grounded education system in India.

Limitation and Future Recommendation

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, it relies on self-reported measures, which are subject to biases such as social desirability and personal misinterpretation. Second, the sample is limited to trainee teachers from Kolkata District, West Bengal, potentially restricting the generalisability of findings to broader populations or different cultural contexts. Third, crucial factors such as socio-economic status, prior exposure to spiritual practices, or individual religiosity were not considered and may influence SI. Fourth, the cross-sectional design captures a snapshot in time and does not allow for an understanding of how SI develops longitudinally. Lastly, while the study identifies associations between demographic variables and SI, it does not explore the underlying psychological or socio-cultural mechanisms responsible for these patterns. Future studies should adopt mixed methods and longitudinal designs to provide deeper insight into how SI evolves and is shaped by contextual variables.

Conclusion

This study explored the Spiritual Intelligence (SI) among trainee teachers in Kolkata, revealing that while gender differences in SI exist — with male trainees scoring higher — family structure and academic stream have no significant impact. These findings suggest that spiritual development is increasingly shaped by the educational experiences rather than traditional social structures. The overall average SI levels observed, indicate the need for structured interventions within teacher education programmes. Embedding reflective practices, mindfulness, values education, and ethical reasoning into the curriculum can foster both personal and professional growth among future educators. The gender gap highlights the importance of gender-sensitive approaches that nurture SI across all identities, promoting empathy, self-awareness, and inner purpose in inclusive learning environments.

In conclusion, the study emphasises that integrating spiritual intelligence into teacher education is essential for developing educators, who see teaching not just as a profession, but as a moral and transformative vocation. Such integration can help build classrooms — and societies — that are compassionate, resilient, and values-driven.

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