

A Comparative study for Exploring Gender Differences in Spiritual Intelligence

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Abstract

Spirituality Intelligence (SI) plays a significant role in our overall health and well-being and fostering spiritual traits is considered important. Cultivating spiritual qualities is considered essential. SI is the ability to behave with compassion and wisdom while maintaining inner and outer peace regardless of the circumstances. In this study, researchers compared the levels of spiritual intelligence (SI) between adult females and males. There were the selection of 40 female and 40 male (total 80) participants using simple random sampling and these participants were administered on the King's Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (SISRI-24) created by David B. King (2008). The independent sample t-test method was employed to compare the groups' SI levels across various dimensions i.e. Critical Existential Thinking (CET), Personal Meaning Production (PMP), Transcendental Awareness (TA), and Conscious State Expansion (CSE). Results indicated no significant difference between female and male participants in terms of SI levels and its four sub-components (CET, PMP, TA, and CSE). This suggests that spirituality transcends gender boundaries, emphasizing a universal quest for understanding the ultimate being regardless of gender. It highlights the significance of individual awareness and deep connections nurtured through ongoing practices. This research may inspire further exploration into the realm of SI.

Keywords: *Personal Meaning Creation, Transcendental Awareness, Critical Existential Thinking Conscious State Expansion, Spiritual Intelligence and gender*

INTRODUCTION

IQ (intelligent quotient) is about thinking smart, EQ (emotional quotient) is about feeling and relating well, but SQ (Spiritual quotient) is about living with purpose, values, and a bigger sense of why we're here. Zohar, D. (2012) mentioned that back in the early 1900s, psychologists figured out how to measure intelligence, which led to a strong focus on IQ. Then, in the mid-1990s, Daniel Goleman brought attention to EQ (or emotional intelligence). He explained that even if you have a high IQ, you still need good EQ to use it properly — things like understanding your feelings, handling emotions, and getting along with people. Now, in our current century, research from psychology, brain science, anthropology, and other fields has built up enough proof to show there's a third kind: SQ, or spiritual intelligence. SQ is what makes us truly human — it's the deepest and most basic intelligence of all. (Unlike IQ, which even computers can have in some ways, and EQ, which animals like dolphins or chimps show to some degree, SQ is unique to people.) SQ is the part of us that helps us search for

meaning in life, create a vision for the future, and hold onto values that matter. It's what lets us dream big dreams and keep pushing toward them. It shapes what we believe in deep down, and those beliefs guide the choices we make and how we build our whole life.

It is considered that spirituality is a journey, in which, basically an individual experience exceptional human understanding of multiple experiences e.g., energy, integration, connectedness, transcendence, completeness, finding sense and purpose (Lalani, N. 2020). A wisdom of divine existence and higher awareness or consciousness is referred to be spiritual (Zohar, D. 2012). Spirituality is considered an essential component of a person's overall health and well-being because it enables to an individual to cope with existential crisis at various events throughout the lifespan. It aids in the healing process and functions as a crucial element. (Juškieñė, V., 2016). Significances of spirituality contain resilience, wellbeing, religiousness, spiritual and personal growth (Lalani, N. 2020).

Since 1997, Zohar coined the phrase spiritual intelligence (SI), and subsequently, scholars have been striving to elucidate its meaning (Skrzypińska, K., 2021). Definitions of spirituality are not universally accepted, therefore talks on SI should be exploratory rather than conclusive (Vaughan, F., 2002). The conceptual framework of spirituality has altered over the years (Pant, N. C., & Srivastava, S. C., 2015). SI operates autonomously and necessitates a distinct comprehension of the relationship between one's inner thoughts, consciousness, and spirituality in the context of external environment (Vaughan, F. (2002).

Spiritual intelligence is an inner ability that helps a person become more self-aware. It allows them to understand what is right and wrong, deal with challenges, and adapt more easily to different situations (Zohar, 2012). In psychology, SI refers to the pinnacle of intelligence following emotional quotient and intelligence quotient (Pant & Srivastava, 2019). SI acts as a method to investigate and foster our personal spirituality. When activated, this capacity has the potential to enable an individual to make significant contributions to the persons within community who depend on each other (Vasconcelos, A. F., 2020). SI plays positive role on mental health (Raina, G., & Jagriti. (2018), improves ethical decision making (Arsang-Jang, S. et al., 2020), healing (Juškieñė, V., 2016), professional practice, crisis management, problem solving skills (King, D. B., 2009), enhance performance & functioning of students' educational experiences (Ma, Q., & Wang, F., 2022), and reduces work related stress (Sharifnia, A. M. et al., 2022). SI has relationship with self-leadership and emotional intelligence (Samul, J. 2020). According to researches, those who have a higher propensity for spirituality are less likely to commit suicide and report feeling better and less depressed. (Bekelman et al. 2007; McClain et al. 2003). Even, personality traits play an important role in shaping a person's spiritual intelligence (Amrai, K. et al., 2011).

Achievement motivation has a substantial impact on SI (Siddiqui, 2013). SI correlates with positive outcomes of employee in workplace (Oyewunmi, A. E., et al., 2021). Spiritual intelligence (SI) has the ability to bring changes in individuals, societies, and cultures, which is why many researchers consider it the most important type of intelligence. Increasing SI helps people develop a positive outlook and achieve inner peace. This mental shift enhances self-motivation and self-control while assisting in lowering the high stress levels frequently brought on by the fast-paced nature of modern living. (Buzan, T., 2012).

There are four important components of SI. The following traits are required for spiritual development: (a) the ability to transcendence, (b) The ability to attain advanced levels of spiritual consciousness., (c) The ability to imbue everyday occurrences, interactions, and connections with a feeling of the sacred or divine., and (d) The capacity to utilize spiritual assets to tackle practical challenges (Emmons, R. A. ,2000). Multiple studies have indicated that there is no notable disparity in the level of SI based on gender (Pant, N. C. and Srivastava, S. C.

2019; Gupta, G., 2012 & Siddiqui Z. U., 2013) but there has been substantial difference in overall SI score. In contrast, Khan and Singh (2013) identified significant gender differences among female and male teachers regarding spirituality. Mishra and Vashist (2014) concluded that SI has a significant impact on the quality of life and success of adolescents in contemporary society. Cisheng et al. (2017) demonstrated that SI was strongly associated with increased identity development and emotional intelligence among both females and males. Therefore, Ghonchehpour et al. (2025) highlighted the importance of including spiritual intelligence (SI) in an updated definition of health by the WHO and also stressed that training in SI can play a key role in preventing health problems.

Methodology

Objectives

1. To measure the levels of spiritual intelligence between male and female students
2. To compare spiritual intelligence of male and female students.

Hypothesis

H₀ 1: There would be no significant difference in the level of SI between female and male.

H₀ 2: There would be no significant difference in the level of Critical Existential Thinking (CET) between female and male.

H₀ 3: There would be no significant difference in the level of Personal Meaning Production (PMP) between female and male.

H₀ 4: There would be no significant difference in the level of Transcendental Awareness (TA) between female and male.

H₀ 5: There would be no significant between the level of Conscious State Expansion (CSE) difference female and male.

Research design

The study employed a comparative study design among adults to assess and compare their level of SI and its four components **between male and female students**.

Sample

A total of 80 participants (40 males and 40 females) were taken for this study by simple random sampling method.

Measure

For assessing different components of SI, the King's Spiritual Intelligence Self Report Inventory (SISRI- 24) was used. It was developed by David King in 2008. The scale utilized a 5-point rating system and comprised 24 items divided into four subscales, covering critical existential thinking transcendental awareness, creating personal meaning, and expanding consciousness. Higher scores correspond to greater spiritual IQ. The total score is between 0 and 96. The SISRI-24 scale has high reliability with Cronbach's alpha around 0.92, indicating strong internal consistency.

Procedure

The questionnaire was administered to participants online. They were informed about the purpose of the study and assured that their responses would remain confidential.

Statistical Analysis

An independent samples t-test was employed to compare the level of SI between males and females.

Results and Discussion

Keeping in view the objectives and Hypothesis of the present study t-test has been used to draw inferences by comparing spiritual intelligence of male and female students.

$H_0 1$: There would be no significant difference in the level of SI between female and male.

Table 1: Comparison of the Level of SI between female and male.

GROUP	N	MEAN	S.D	SEM	T	SIGNIFICANCE
FEMALE	40	55.80	12.79	2.02	0.36	0.72
MALE	40	56.88	13.73	2.17		

$df = 78, p > 0.05$

On average, female students scored 55.80 in SI, while male students scored an average of 56.88. The difference in SI between females and males was examined using an independent samples t-test. Results indicated no significant difference between the SI of female (M= 55.80; SD=12.79) and male (M=56.88; SD=13.73) participants [$t(78) = 0.36, p=0.72$] (Table 1, Fig.1).

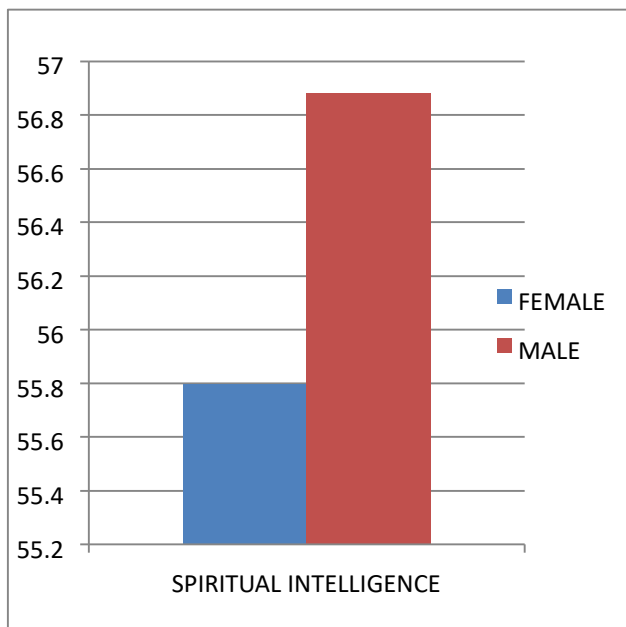


Figure 1: Graphical representation showing the comparison of SI scores of female and male

$H_0 2$: There would be no significant difference in the level of Critical Existential Thinking (CET) between female and male.

Table 2: Comparison of the Level of CET between female and male

GROUP	N	MEAN	S.D	SEM	T	SIGNIICANCE
FEMALE	40	89.14	18.07	6.83	0.11	0.92
MALE	40	88.14	17.03	6.44		

$df = 78, p > 0.05$

On average, female students scored 89.14 in Critical Existential Thinking, while male students scored an average of 88.14. The difference in Critical Existential Thinking between females and males was examined using an independent samples t-test. Results indicated no significant difference between the Critical Existential Thinking of female (M= 89.14; SD=18.07) and male (M=88.14; SD=17.03) participants [$t(78) = 0.11, p = 0.92$] (Table 2, Fig.2).

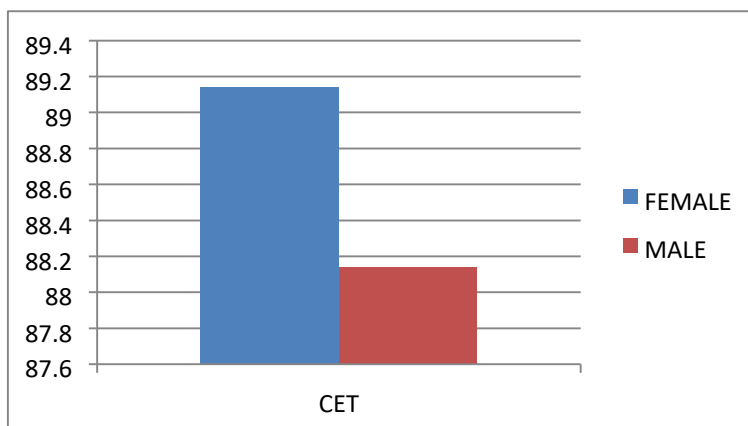


Figure 2: Graphical representation showing the comparison of Critical Existential Thinking scores of female and male participants

H₀ 3: There would be no significant difference in the level of Personal Meaning Production (PMP) between female and male.

Table 3: Comparison of the Level of PMP between female and male.

GROUP	N	MEAN	S.D	SEM	T	SIGNIFICANCE
FEMALE	40	96.40	5.41	2.42	0.91	0.39
MALE	40	100.20	7.60	3.40		

$df = 78, p > 0.05$

On average, female students scored 96.40 in Personal Meaning Production, while male students scored an average of 100.20. The difference in Personal Meaning Production between females and males was examined using an independent samples t-test. Results indicated no significant difference between the Personal Meaning Production of female (M= 96.40; SD=5.41) and male (M=100.20; SD=7.60) participants [$t(78) = 0.91, p=0.39$] (Table 3, Fig.3).

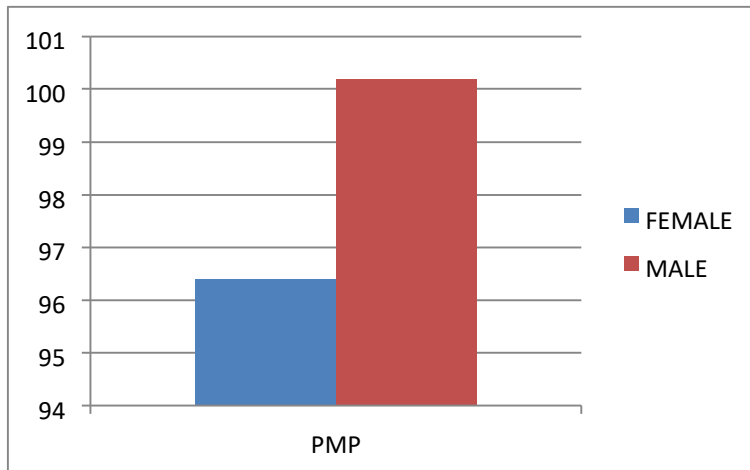


Figure 3: Graphical representation showing the comparison of PMP scores of female and male participants

H₀ 4: There would be no significant difference in the level of Transcendental Awareness (TA) between female and male.

Table 4: Comparison of the Level of TA between female and male.

GROUP	N	MEAN	S.D	SEM	T	SIGNIFICANCE
FEMALE	40	102.14	11.08	4.19	0.07	0.94
MALE	40	101.71	11.51	4.35		

$df = 78, p > 0.05$

On average, female students scored 102.14 in Transcendental Awareness, while male students scored an average of 101.71. The difference in Transcendental Awareness between females and males was examined using an independent samples t-test. Results indicated no significant difference between the Transcendental Awareness of female (M= 102.14; SD=11.08) and male (M=101.71; SD=11.51) participants [$t(78) = 0.07, p=0.94$] (Table 4, Fig.4).

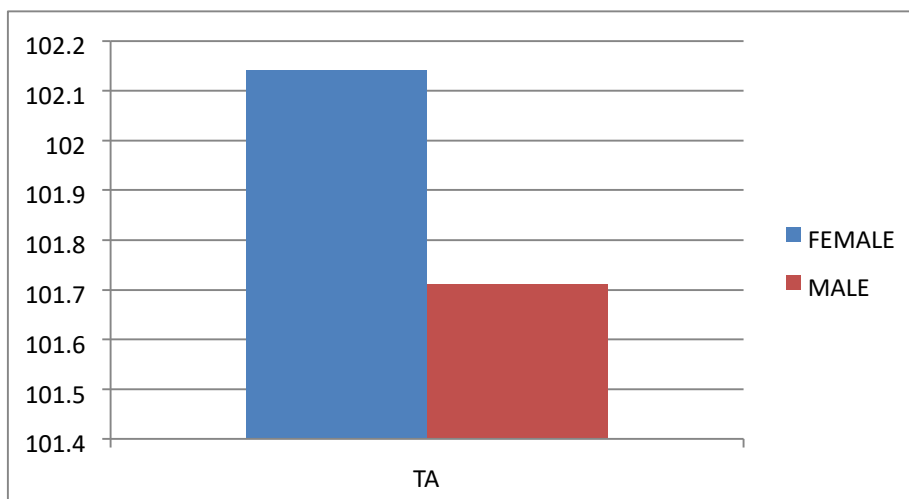


Figure 4: Graphical representation showing the comparison of TA scores of female and male participants

H₀ 5: There would be no significant difference in the level of Conscious State Expansion (CSE) between female and male.

Table 5: Comparison of the Level of CSE between female and male.

GROUP	N	MEAN	S.D	SEM	t	SIGNIFICANCE
FEMALE	40	82.20	5.72	2.56	1.35	0.21
MALE	40	89.00	9.67	4.32		

$df = 78, p > 0.05$

On average, female students scored 82.20 in Conscious State Expansion, while male students scored an average of 89.00. The difference in Conscious State Expansion between females and males was examined using an independent samples t-test. Results indicated no significant difference between the Conscious State Expansion of female (M= 82.20; SD=5.72) and male (M=89.00; SD=9.67) participants [$t(78) = 1.35, p=0.21$] (Table 5, Fig.5).

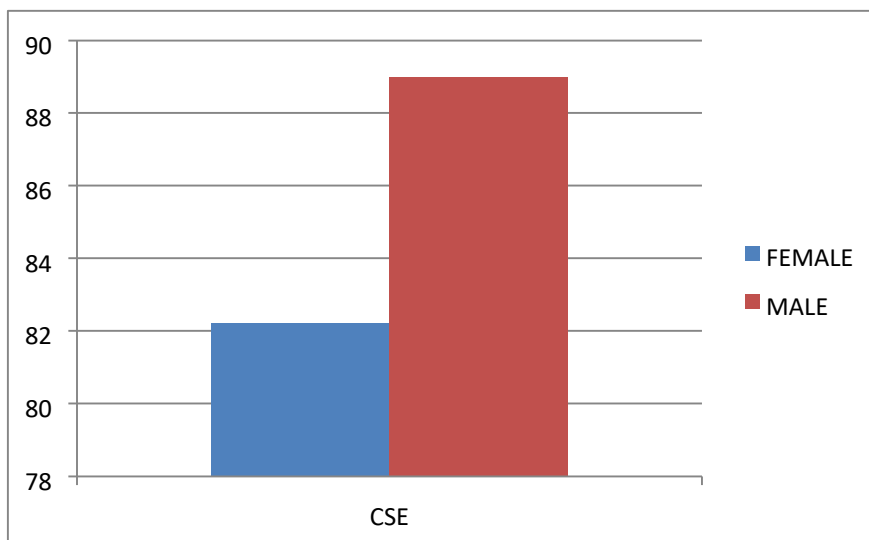


Figure 5: Graphical representation showing the comparison of CSE scores of female and male participants

Conclusion

Following the statistical analysis, it was determined that there was no significant difference observed in the level of SI and its four components based on gender. This conclusion finds support from various researchers (Pant, N. C. and Srivastava, S. C., 2019; Gupta, G., 2012; Siddiqui Z. U., 2013). The evolution of societal norms towards gender equality may elucidate the lack of gender-based disparities in SI. As a result, Tyagi, K., & Sharma, G. (2018) also noted shifts in beliefs and internal experiences across genders. Furthermore, spirituality transcends gender boundaries (Puhakka, K., 2001), signifying a universal quest for understanding the ultimate being devoid of gender bias. It underscores individual awareness, significance, and deep connections fostered through continual practices. Furthermore, Mohamad Hanefar, S. B., et al. (2025) highlight the need for long-term studies to understand how spiritual intelligence (SI) affects mental health and workplace behavior over time. They also suggest expanding research to include different cultures and social settings to better understand how SI is viewed and used around the world.

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