

Peace Perception and Spiritual Intelligence: A Correlational and Comparative Analysis among Higher Education Students

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ABSTRACT

Peace and spirituality are crucial components of human well-being. This study intends to advance knowledge in the growing field of research on the role of spirituality and peace in human endeavor. For the present study, data was collected from a sample of 112 students, age ranging from 20 to 31 pursuing under graduation and post-graduation in various colleges and universities of Arunachal Pradesh. The study variables were measured by standardized psychological tests namely, the Spiritual Intelligence Scale developed by Danah Zohar and Ian Marshall, 1999 and the Peace Perception Scale developed by Danaan Parry and Jeanne White, 1977. The convenience sampling method was used for the selection of the sample. The results were analysed using Pearson correlation coefficients and independent sample t-test. The findings reported that students' scores on peace perception and spiritual intelligence are significantly correlated ($r=0.57$, $p=0.01$). The findings also reported that gender, educational level, and meditation practice may not have a substantial impact on peace perception and spiritual intelligence. The study have implications for teaching peacebuilding and integrating spirituality into the curriculum, as well as for fostering peace among students. Limitations include the use of a convenience sample, and future research could use a more diverse sample to increase the external validity of the study.

Keywords: *Peace, Spirituality, well-being, Spiritual Intelligence Scale, Peace Perception Scale*

Within the intricate human experience, the interwoven connection of spirituality and psychological dimensions enrich the level of well-being within an individual. This research aims to explore the relationship between Peace Perception—a nuanced, subjective assessment of peace—and Spiritual Intelligence—a multifaceted concept of spiritual awareness, transcendental wisdom, and ethical comportment—among students at higher education levels. The conceptualization of Spiritual Intelligence, as formally initiated by Zohar and Marshall (2000), transcends conventional intelligence paradigms, embracing a profound understanding of existential truths, the quest for meaning, ethical decision-making, and the integration of spiritual values into daily life. Concurrently, Peace Perception extends beyond a mere absence of conflict, encompassing a multilayered

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and subjective comprehension of tranquillity, inner harmony, and a sense of serenity within oneself and the surrounding environment, as illustrated by Ruiz-Moral et al. (2013).

A review of empirical studies illuminates the associations between Spiritual Intelligence and various dimensions of human experience. Pant and Srivastava's study (2019) unearthed the symbiotic relationship between Spiritual Intelligence, resilience, and mental health among adolescents, unveiling the profound impact of spirituality on psychological well-being amid the turbulence of adolescence. Similarly, Estaji and Pourmostafa's investigation (2020) navigated the association of Spiritual Intelligence and happiness, unraveling the intricate pathways through which Spiritual Intelligence stimulates subjective well-being, with resilience acting as a mediating force among students. This study not only underscored the nuanced interplay between these constructs but also explains the mechanisms through which Spiritual Intelligence exerts its influence on emotional intelligence. Moreover, research within educational realms has unveiled implications of Spiritual Intelligence. Nasiri, Azadi, and Ahmadi (2019a) explored the impact of spiritual intelligence training on the happiness and stress levels of nursing students, while Nasiri, Azadi, and Ahmadi (2019b) traversed the domains of self-esteem, elucidating the linkage between Spiritual Intelligence and this vital facet of personal development within academic milieus. In a meta-analysis, Ma and Wang's synthesis (2022) of existing literature on Peace Perception and its correlates revealed factors influencing individuals' perceptions of peace. This meta-analysis expanded our comprehension of this construct in shaping an individual's Peace Perception. Additionally, Benevene et al.'s exploration (2020) into the well-being of adult students unfurled an expansive tapestry, highlighting the pivotal role played by academic motivation and coping strategies—an arena intricately interwoven with both Peace Perception and Spiritual Intelligence. Their study underscored the significance of fostering a conducive learning environment intertwined with these constructs to nurture holistic student well-being. Furthermore, the studies by Hedman and Nygren (2018), Hill and Pargament (2003), and Saroglou (2010) collectively emphasize the substantial impact of spirituality on different facets of human life. Hedman and Nygren highlighted a strong link between students' spiritual well-being and academic performance, emphasizing the pivotal role of finding meaning in life in shaping educational outcomes. Hill and Pargament's work advanced the understanding of spirituality's role in physical and mental health, offering a comprehensive framework for exploring these connections. Saroglou's meta-analysis revealed intriguing associations between religious beliefs and personality traits, illuminating how spirituality intertwines with an individual's psychological makeup. Together, these studies deepen our understanding of how spirituality influences academic success, mental and physical health, and shapes an individual's personality dimensions. They collectively highlight the multidimensional impact of spirituality across various aspects of human existence.

In culmination, building upon foundational works such as Vaughan's elucidation of Spiritual Intelligence (2002) and the seminal contributions of Zohar and Marshall (2001), this research seeks to contribute to the ever-evolving narrative by embarking on a transformative odyssey—exploring the relationship between Peace Perception and Spiritual Intelligence among adult learners. Through meticulous methodologies and established frameworks, this study aspires to unravel the intricate tapestry woven between these constructs, offering nuanced insights into the holistic dimensions of human experience within the intricate tapestry of educational settings.

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Objectives

- To find the status of Peace perception and Spiritual Intelligence among the students at higher educational levels.
- To explore the relationship between Peace perception and Spiritual Intelligence among the students at higher educational levels.
- To compare the level of Peace perception and Spiritual Intelligence in terms of gender, educational level, and meditation practice.

Hypothesis

- H₀1: There will be no correlation between Peace perception and Spiritual Intelligence.
- H₀2: There will no significant difference between male and female students in spiritual intelligence.
- H₀3: There will no significant difference between male and female students in Peace perception.
- H₀4: There will no significant difference between undergraduates and postgraduates students in spiritual intelligence.
- H₀5: There will no significant difference between undergraduates and postgraduates students in peace perception.
- H₀6: There will no significant difference between meditators and non-meditators in spiritual intelligence.
- H₀7: There will no significant difference between meditators and non-meditators in peace perception.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The study used a purposive sampling technique. The sample consists of 112 adult students comprising 52 males and 60 females with ages ranging from 20 to 31 years Pursuing under graduation and post-graduation in various colleges and universities of the state of Arunachal Pradesh.

Instruments

The following two tools were administered to the participants:

- **The Peace Perception Scale (PPS):** The PPS was developed by Danaan Parry and Jeanne White in 1977. The PPS consists of 10 questions and assesses attitudes towards peace in areas such as personal responsibility, the importance of understanding other cultures, the power of dialogue and nonviolence, and the ability to work together with others. The peace perception scale is a self-report questionnaire that can be completed online or on paper. It consists of 10 items that are rated on a five-point Likert scale, from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The total scores are calculated by summing the ratings for the corresponding items. The total score ranges from 10 to 50, with higher scores indicating higher levels of peace perception.
- **The Spiritual Intelligence Scale (SIS):** The SIS was developed by Danah Zohar and Ian Marshall in 1999. The scale is a self-report questionnaire and it consists of 21 questions and assesses four main dimensions of spiritual intelligence: personal meaning, transcendental awareness, conscious state expansion, and the ability to transcend the ego. Each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1

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(strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The total score ranges from 21 to 105, with higher scores indicating higher levels of spiritual intelligence.

Procedure

The data collection procedure involved administering a survey questionnaire to the participants. The survey questionnaire strived to measure the participants' peace perception and spiritual intelligence using two validated scales: the Peace Perception Scale developed by Danaan Parry and Jeanne White, and the Spiritual Intelligence Scale developed by Danah Zohar and Ian Marshall. The questionnaire also collected demographic information, such as age, gender, educational level, and subject's meditation routine. The questionnaires were administered both online and offline mode. The participants were informed about the purpose, procedure, and ethical aspects of the study, and were asked to provide their informed consent before completing the questionnaire.

The collected data were analysed using Python 3.13.0 for various descriptive and inferential statistics analysis like Pearson correlation for finding the correlation and independent sample t-test for comparing various groups based on gender, education level, or meditation practice.

RESULTS

Table 1: Frequencies and percentages of demographics

SN.	Demographic variable	N	Percentage
1	Gender	Male	46.42%
		female	53.58%
2	Education level	Graduation	50.90%
		Post Graduation	49.10%
3	Meditation status	Meditators	31.25%
		Non-Meditators	68.75%

Table 1 shows that the sample of the present study consists of 46.42% of male and 53.58% of female participants. They are almost in equal proportions. 50.90% of the participants are pursuing graduation and 49.10% of the participants are pursuing post-graduation. 31.25% of the participants are meditators and 68.75% of the participants are non-meditators.

Table 2: showing Pearson coefficient of Correlation between Spiritual intelligence and Peace perception

Variables	Spiritual intelligence	Peace perception
Spiritual Intelligence	-	0.57
Peace Perception	0.57	-

The results in table 2 showed that the correlation coefficient between Spiritual intelligence and Peace perception is 0.57, which indicates a moderate positive linear relationship. The obtained p-value is less than 0.01, which is very small and highly significant. This indicated rejection of the null hypothesis and there is a statistically moderately positive significant correlation between Spiritual intelligence and Peace perception.

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Table 3: Comparison of the values of Spiritual intelligence and Peace perception based on gender, education level and meditation practitioners.

Comparison	Variable	t-value	p-value
Male vs Female	Peace perception	0.44	0.66
	Spiritual intelligence	-1.09	0.28
Under Graduates vs post-graduate level	Peace perception	0.46	0.65
	Spiritual intelligence	-1.1	0.27
Meditators vs non-meditators	Peace perception	-0.09	0.93
	Spiritual intelligence	1.59	0.11

The results in table 3 showed that the obtained t value for male and female students were not significant for the variables peace perception and spiritual intelligence as the p-values were larger than the common significance level of 0.05. This leads to acceptance of null hypothesis H_{02} and H_{03} . The obtained t value for under graduates and post-graduate level students were also not significant for the variable peace perception and spiritual intelligence as the p-values were larger than the common significance level of 0.05. This leads to acceptance of null hypothesis H_{04} and H_{05} . The obtained t value for meditators vs non-meditators were not significant for the variable peace perception and spiritual intelligence as the p-values were larger than the common significance level of 0.05. This leads to acceptance of null hypothesis H_{06} and H_{07} .

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to look into the possible association between peace perception and spiritual intelligence and to compare the value of peace perception and spiritual intelligence based on demographic parameters such gender, education level, and meditation practices.

The findings of the correlation value revealed a significant moderate positive linear correlation between peace perception and spiritual intelligence. This highlights a meaningful relationship between both variables, stating that as one's spiritual intelligence grows, so does one's peace perception.

The findings from t-tests comparing mean values across different groups were intriguing. In terms of peace perception, the results revealed no significant variations in mean values across gender, education levels (under graduates vs post-graduate level), and between the meditators and non-meditators. These findings indicate that gender, educational level, and meditation practice may not have a significant effect on an individual's Peace perception. Similarly, for spiritual intelligence, the findings indicate that gender, educational level, and meditation practice may not have a significant effect on an individual's Spiritual intelligence. The major findings provide important insights into the interactions between peace perception and spiritual intelligence, and the role of the demographic variables on each of these. The size and content of our sample may have influenced the generalizability of our findings. Unexplored factors not included in this analysis may also be relevant in thoroughly understanding these constructs.

In conclusion, this study provides evidence that gender, educational level, and meditation practice may not have a substantial impact on peace perception or spiritual intelligence. The

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association between peace perception and spiritual intelligence, on the other hand, highlights a notable relationship deserving of future exploration.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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