

ABSTRACT

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Title	:	Study of Perceptions of Spirituality, Spiritual Intelligence and Spiritual Development held by Teacher Educators

The present study is a descriptive explorative study of teacher educators' perceptions of spirituality, spiritual intelligence and spiritual development. For the purpose of this study, using random sampling method, total of 5 DIETs (Delhi) and SCERT (Delhi) were selected as the sample units. This study was conducted on 100 teacher educators from whom data was collected using Demographic schedule, Self constructed questionnaire and Semi structured interview schedule/s. Objective wise analysis of the qualitative data was done by employing the technique of thematic analysis which yielded the following important findings.

- For almost one fourth of the participants, their religion was the manifestation of spirituality, for others it had more humanistic orientation which was reflected in their focus on value based living, feeling a sense of connection with others, having a meaningful life, righteous conduct and performing one's duties and responsibility. Across the sample, aspects of Indian culture in the form of valuing family and community bonding with a sense of respect and responsibility towards others, appreciating diversity and recognizing universality of spiritual power were also visible.
- On the aspect of the extent of recognizing oneself as spiritual, participants responses seem to be normally distributed with majority of them (56 %), perceiving themselves spiritual to some extent. On the higher continuum 26% and 9% identified with response category VI and V while on the lower continuum, the same stood out to be 8 % and 1 % respectively for category II and category I respectively.
- In spite of the marked diversity among the participants' perceptions of spirituality, spiritual intelligence and spiritual development, there was set of underlying commonalities (stated in earlier point) which were partly informed by the universal nature of spirituality and partly by their being associated with the field of education. These common aspects of a sense of meaning, purpose, values, inter connectedness and holistic perspective manifested in different forms across teacher educators' reflections pertaining to the core concepts of the study.
- Ironically the aspect of transcendence as related to non material aspects of existence in the form of it awareness and experiences seemed least identified dimensions in totality.
- Spiritual development as another core concept was perceived by participants primarily in capacity of being in the process of education as a means of human development. Process oriented aspects of spiritual development involving creation of opportunities and developing specific attributes and skills were the major highlights of the teacher educator' descriptions of spiritual development.

- Spirituality was described by 37 % teacher educators as necessary for the survival of the person in the present context. Particularly its role for stress management, restoring values and resolving conflicts were emphasized by around 20% to 30 % of teacher educators in each category. On aspect of personal wellbeing, spirituality was perceived by 38 % of teacher educators as an integral aspect therein and around 15 % believed in its positive role in providing a solid frame of reference in life which they saw as bringing change in their perspective.
- Spiritual practices formed some of the ways that participants considered as means of nurturing their spirituality in daily life. 57 teacher educators reported of being engaged in some or the other form of contemplative practices on temporary or regular basis. For 13 teacher educator, nurturing spirituality was through their religion and associated rituals, while 28 % believed in enhancing their knowledge of spirituality through various means including religious texts and internet sources. Experiencing humanistic connection with others and the daily acts involving expression of universal values were again assumed by approximately 40%-50 % of the teacher educators as the means of developing spirituality in each of the stated two categories. Around 10 % of the educators also considered spending time with nature and bringing authenticity and genuineness in life as important while practice of detachment from excessive material desires was also valued by 21 participants in this context.
- On a broader theme of integrating spirituality into education, with exception of 8 teacher educators, with their own reasons including growing unemployment, excessive work load, low academic standards etc, there seemed to be major agreement among participants that spiritual development has to be part of educational process. The responsibility of spiritual development was primarily attributed to parents (particularly mother) and home environment especially in initial years of upbringing, along with role of society by about 50 % of the participants identifying with each category. On similar lines, spirituality was regarded by majority of the teacher educators as helpful in discharging their professional roles effectively. With overwhelming 58 % believed that spirituality helps them in being better role model.
- On the aspect of significance of spirituality in being effective teacher educators, overwhelming 58% regarded it as important in becoming better role model while about one third assumed significance of spirituality in managing of multiple job responsibilities. On an important aspect of the study which focused upon participants' perception about learner's inclination towards their spiritual growth, 44 % of teacher educators believed that contemporary learners have very low spiritual inclination. While one third perceiving them as having moderate inclination and very few 12 % regarded present generation to be very smart, logical and like other areas, highly inclined towards deeper issues of life as well.
- Related to this, on the aspects of assessment of learners spiritual development, though 17 % felt that it has limited possibility, 42 teacher educators assumed their own spiritual development as a prerequisite while some also recognized that it can only be assessed qualitatively over a period of time. With specific focus upon existence of provisions for spiritual development in teacher education courses, only around one fourth of the teacher educators optimistically considered spiritual dimension being inherently rooted in the philosophical bases of teacher training profession, as practically reflected its content as well. Strongly disagreeing to this, 38 % of the participants found contemporary teacher education programs completely driven by tangible outcome with no practical provisions in this regard. 29 % assumed a middle position suggesting that there are only indirect provisions of spiritual development.