

## **A quest for excellence in higher education sector - Teacher's Perspective and The Role of Spiritual Quotient**

*Prof. Nivedita G Ekbote, Assistant Professor, P E S' Modern Institute of Business Management, Pune. E-mail id : niveditae@gmail.com*

---

---

### **Abstract**

The concept of 'excellence' is well established in many fields of activity, and the term is used frequently to refer to very good or outstanding performance. In higher education it means different things in different contexts. Educative practices and curriculum that dynamizes personal and systems transformation, holistic education is a must. Transpersonal practices of holistic education nurture levels of wholeness through personal transformation. Researching the views of holistic educators contributes to practical ideas and new psycho technologies for nourishing creativity in modern education.

Intelligence was perceived as a primary variable in explaining the needs, motivations and behaviour of individuals in society in general, and in an organisation specifically. A distinction was made between IQ (which has its roots in Newtonian physics), EQ (which enables an individual to adapt to changing circumstances) and SQ (a spiritual intelligence that helps an individual to recontextualise a situation towards a meaningful and holistic experience).

Academic excellence and emotional intelligence is required, but the spiritual quotient is what completes the teacher. Teachers can find a wealth of opportunities to extend their influence beyond their own classrooms to their teaching teams.

This paper focuses on the spiritual quotient and its relevance in teaching in achieving excellence at B-schools.

---

---

### **Introduction**

#### **Approaches to excellence**

Excellence may be equated with the reputation and standing of institutions, but much depends on the perception of student experience and the varying missions of institutions. There are numerous definitions suiting different purposes and different areas of quality assurance and stakeholders' involvement. The concept is vague enough to offer plentiful grounds for both theoretical and practical research.

Excellent teachers manage, develop and release the full potential of their students at an individual level. They promote fairness and equality and involve and empower their students. They care for, communicate, reward and recognise in a way that motivates students and builds commitment to using their skills and knowledge for the benefit of the society as a whole.

### **Excellence in teaching**

Excellence in teaching at B-schools can be achieved by

- i) Creating an engaging, motivating, and intellectually stimulating learning experience
- ii) Encouraging the spirit of critical analysis and creative innovation informed by current research.
- iii) Emphasizing the importance, relevance, and integration of theory and knowledge with professional practice to develop solutions to real world issues etc.

‘Teaching excellence’ is a contested concept. There are different definitions of what it means to be an ‘excellent’ teacher and these are located within a shifting social, economic and political context. Assessing the quality of teaching has been a long-standing issue for higher education. Excellence in teaching is determined by factors such as the inspirational nature of individual lecturers, the organisation of presentations, the interaction with students as participants and how well the information provided meets the learning objectives of the course. Excellence can be identified both in terms of student satisfaction and also in terms of the performance of students in assessment. There are differences between deep and surface learning. Excellent teaching may be seen as the efficient presentation of information which maximises the students’ opportunities to gain the highest marks from the course. Alternatively, excellence could be recognised as the stimulus for students to engage with the subject and to enhance their understanding and knowledge.

The ultimate goal of Education is all round development of pupil. All round development means ‘person must be physically fit, mentally balanced, emotionally strong, socially adjusted & spiritually uplifted’.

A strong foundation is the key to any successful organization. Your vision, your commitment, your purpose - all form the basis for an organisation. They are the all-important pillars, the most essential part of any building.

WHO (World Health organization) defines Health as ‘physical, social, mental & Spiritual well being’. It means that spiritual intelligence is closely related to Education & foundation of Education.

The Education in ancient times was Teacher centered, teacher has every right of education, student was keep aside. After that education got the psychological foundation so student

centered curriculum come in existence. But now a days the focus is on general abilities of the students. Along with those things spiritual intelligence is also important it must be introduced in curriculum.

### **Chanakya - the Spiritually Intelligent Management Guru**

“Education is the best friend. An educated person is respected everywhere. Education beats the beauty and the youth.” said the great Chanakya.

“Before you start some work, always ask yourself three questions - Why am I doing it, What the results might be and Will I be successful. Only when you think deeply and find satisfactory answers to these questions, go ahead. - Chanakya”

Chanakya, who lived in the 3rd Century BC, was the first **management and leadership guru** par excellence. He was one of the greatest figures of wisdom and knowledge in the Indian history. He was an Indian teacher, philosopher and royal advisor.

Chanakya in his book Arthashastra divided into three sections of *Leadership, Management and Training* and explained every concept well. He also suggested tips on various topics such as – organizing and conducting effective meetings, managing time, decision making, finance, strategy and responsibilities and lastly powers of a leader. And also he explained the business concept with seven pillars stating it in every step that leading them to people success.

### **What is Spiritual Quotient ? -**

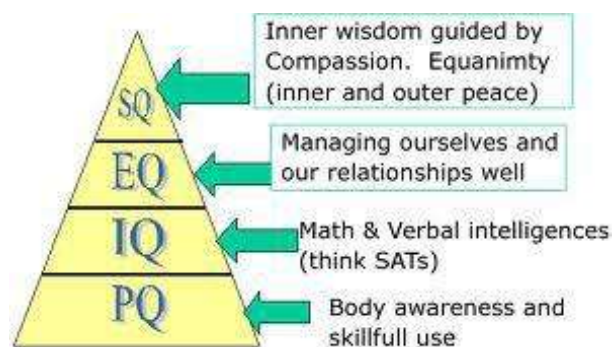
Intelligence Quotient (IQ) has been in existence for last 100 years and it has always been a measure to calculate one’s intelligence. But when it came to actual practice only IQ was not sufficient to run the businesses. In the mid-1990s psychologists carried out a lot of research on the right part of human brain (which is represents the emotional side of human brain) and they found out a new aspect of human intelligence as Emotional Intelligence (also known as Emotional Quotient-EQ).

Emotional Quotient (EQ) is as important as Intelligence Quotient(IQ). EQ gives awareness of our own and other people’s feelings. Experts say EQ is basic requirement for IQ. If the person is emotionally intelligent , he thinks effectively in every situation and that automatically contributes to better decision making. It still is not enough when the larger picture is concerned. Researchers have found out that IQ and EQ are not the whole human intelligence, there is more to it. Hence the “third Q” came into existence and that is “Spiritual Quotient- SQ”



Spiritual Quotient or spiritual intelligence is the latest buzz in global corporate scenario. Intelligence Quotient deals with the intelligence and solves logical problems while Emotional Quotient is related to our behaviour and allows us to judge the situation we are in and behave appropriately. Spiritual Quotient is a process of personal insight and allows us to ask whether we want to be in that situation or not.

**Spiritual intelligence** (SQ) is unfortunately often overlooked in training and development. SQ is not about religion, it is related to that part of the brain which allows us to hope and dream and visualize and to connect us to our purpose in life. It is the trigger in our intelligence which entices us to seek meaning and a greater good by differentiating between good and evil. SQ is the intelligence that makes us whole, that gives us out integrity. It is the soul's intelligence, the intelligence of the deep self. It is the intelligence with which we ask fundamental questions and with which we reframe our answers. It is our transformative intelligence.

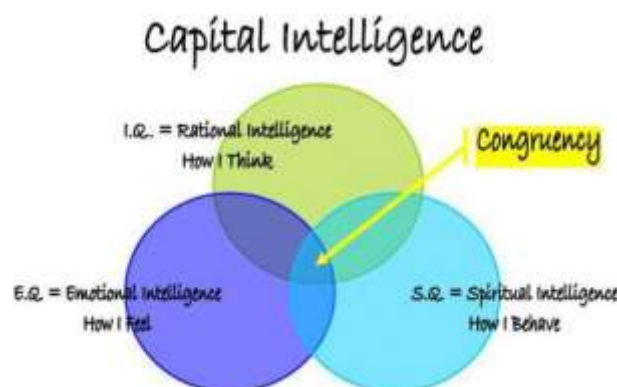


We think muscles are powerful because with them we can lift heavy weights. But it is not so because it is the tiny thread like structures called “neurons” that give power to muscles. The moment we disconnect the neurons in the brain from muscles, the muscles just can't function. These neurons actually bring the power from something still finer-the thoughts and perhaps something more fine. So the greatest power lies is within fine and not the coarse. ***SQ is that finer thing - the ultimate intelligence.***

Physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual are not four different compartments. Body is physical. Mind is intellectual. Heart is emotional. The mind should speak what the heart feels. And the body should do what the mind and heart say. Spirituality simply means all these three - the body (physical quotient), the mind (intellectual quotient), the heart (emotional quotient) are in sync with each other and there is absolutely no gap. This oneness is our true being. This is Spirituality. Spiritual Quotient means our Happiness Quotient. Spirituality is the index of our true happiness. Therefore, our Spiritual Quotient (SQ) is the sum of our Intellectual Quotient (IQ) and Emotional Quotient (EQ).

$$SQ = IQ + EQ$$

Human beings are different from animals and computers because of SQ. Animals can have EQ and Computers can have IQ but they can't have SQ. SQ is all about holistic approach to life: the wholesomeness, self-awareness, compassion, creativity, ability to think, ability to reason out etc; all of it put together. SQ equips us to look at and solve the problems of meaning and value and then we begin to direct our thoughts, actions and so, our lives towards wider and meaningful horizons. With SQ, we can distinguish more clearly the right from the wrong. It empowers us to compare various life paths. SQ is the foundation on which should lie our IQ and EQ.



### **Spirituality and Workplace -**

The recent researchers have begun to argue for the importance of exploring relationship between EQ/SQ to workplace performance. Recent research, for example, has shown a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace success. Similarly, it appears that spirituality is related to workplace performance or effectiveness.

Spirituality is about acknowledging that each individual (student/colleague) has a unique talent and spirit and that talent is to be valued to give rise to creativity. There is a need to allow students' spirits to be nourished and change the institute from merely being a place to exchange

bookish information to a place to enlighten students with the ultimate knowledge of their respective fields.

Teachers need to understand that if their students are happy, they will be more productive and creative which in turn will work as a win-win situation for both the teachers and the students. Educational institutes and subsequently the teachers need to be spirituality intelligent in order bring effectiveness and excellence in learning.

It is not exceptional that spirituality can affect the learning environment. In ancient times the Gurus used to practice spirituality in order to bring excellence in their teachings.

### **Spirituality for MBA students -**

The business leaders are convinced that business engagement with schools and colleges can deliver real and tangible benefits for all.

Premier business schools like Indian Institute of Managements (IIMs) are giving a renewed impetus to spirituality on the curriculum to equip their students to compete in a challenging business environment.

Recently, one of the premier B-school has started a course for first-year post graduate diploma in management (PGDM) students called 'Self Incorporated', which draws on insights from spiritual texts like the **Bhagavad Gita** and transfers them into a management context. One of the Business school has recently rolled out a compulsory credit course titled '**The Science of Spirituality**' as part of its executive MBA programme.

In coming days these schools will make this a compulsory course in its curriculum. These courses discuss the significance of the 'Spirituality Quotient' in management by drawing nuances from the Bhagavad Gita. "When the environment is uncertain you need wilderness skills, In a situation where one doesn't know where the economy is headed, whether one has a job or not, or if there is a pay cut lurking, one needs internal cohesion, external resilience, ability to deal with stress and an ability to operate beyond the ego," experts say. All these can be key lessons from spirituality.

Explaining the relevance of formalising spirituality into management literature in today's business context, Industry experts say, "In business, we tend to be ruthless and short-term. Some of these principles tell us to be long-term, all-encompassing and principle-based in our approach."

IIM has been for some years offering an elective course called '**Leadership Excellence - Insight from Indian Ethos**', in its flagship post graduate programme in management. The course talks about spirituality for leadership excellence, balancing spiritual and material dimensions

and coping with stress from within, among other things. The popularity of this course, which teaches leadership traits through spirituality, has hugely risen in recent times. One of the IIMs also offers two electives as part of its flagship Post Graduate Programme - 'Spirituality and Self-Development for Global Managers' and 'Embedded Leadership Excellence'. Both draw upon spirituality and relate it to a modern organisational context.

"The world today needs dharma and this is most urgently needed in the world of business and management. Management teaches you how to be smart; spirituality teaches you how to be wise".

### **SQ Should Not Be Confused with Religion -**

There is no correlation that religious people have to have high SQ or non-religious people have low SQ. After early 1990s, some research has been carried out by neuropsychologists and neurologists. They propagate existence of "God spot" in the human brain. This built-in spiritual center is located among neural connections in the temporal lobes of the brain. Taking scans using positron emission topography, it was found that these neural areas light up whenever the research subjects were drawn to the discussions on spiritual topics. However, "God spot" has nothing to do with proving the existence or non-existence of God.

Danah Zohar, a researcher in the field of Spirituality and Leadership offers a framework for fostering spiritually intelligent leadership by nurturing the following traits:

- **Self-awareness:** knowing what I believe in and value, and what deeply motivates me
- **Spontaneity:** living in and being responsive to the moment
- **Being vision- and value-led:** acting from principles and deep beliefs, and living accordingly
- **Holism:** seeing larger patterns, relationships, and connections; having a sense of belonging
- **Compassion:** having the quality of "feeling-with" and deep empathy
- **Celebration of diversity:** valuing other people for their differences, not despite them
- **Field independence:** standing against the crowd and having one's convictions
- **Humility:** having the sense of being a player in a larger drama, of one's true place in the world
- **Urge to ask fundamental 'Why?' questions:** need to understand things in depth, not just superficially
- **Ability to reframe:** to stand back from a situation or problem and see the bigger picture
- **Positive use of adversity:** Learning and growing from mistakes, setbacks, and suffering
- **Sense of vocation:** feeling called upon to serve, to give something back

## **Conclusion -**

Spiritually intelligent teacher is a need to the extent that its purpose is to enhance the spiritual quotient of future corporate leaders.

In life we face numerous situations when we get stressed or nervous due to petty reasons. For example: A student attempts suicide when he fails in examinations, employee gets upset when he is yelled at by his boss; teenagers get offended by their friends' comments, etc.

Why do we fail to understand that all this is not worth hurting our self? And this is exactly what you realize when a student becomes spiritually intelligent.

On conclusion, there is this beautiful message from Swami Vivekananda -- "Man making means a harmonious development of the body, mind and soul".

It is nothing being but spiritually intelligent.

## **References -**

1. [http://www.griffith.edu.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/120201/PrinciplesLandT.pdf](http://www.griffith.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/120201/PrinciplesLandT.pdf)
2. `E-book on IQ-EQ-SQ by Basic Foundation , [www.folknet.in](http://www.folknet.in)
3. `A New Approach to a Spiritual Business Organization and Employee Satisfaction by Lydia Guadalupe, Campuzano Sviatoslav and Steve Seteroff - Eastern Academy of Management
4. <http://spiritual-quotient.blogspot.in/>
5. `Economic Times article - Spirituality-Business-Environment-Bhagavad-Gita

