



The Role of Spiritual Intelligence in EFL Teachers' Pedagogical Success: An Explanatory Sequential Mixed-Methods Study in a Technology-Rich Context

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Abstract:

Background: Growing digitalization in education has renewed interest in human-centered capacities that support effective teaching in increasingly technology-rich learning environments. Among these, spiritual intelligence (SI) has attracted attention as a multidimensional construct associated with meaning-making, self-awareness, ethical sensitivity, and emotional regulation. However, limited empirical evidence exists regarding its relationship with pedagogical success among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers.

Aims: This study aimed to investigate the relationship between EFL teachers' spiritual intelligence and pedagogical success, examine the predictive contribution of SI dimensions, and explore how spiritual intelligence is reflected in teachers' professional practice.

Methods: A mixed-methods design was employed. Quantitative data were collected from 120 EFL teachers using validated measures of SI and pedagogical success and analyzed through descriptive statistics, correlation, and multiple regression analyses. Qualitative data were obtained through interviews, classroom observations, and syllabus analysis.

Results: The findings revealed a strong positive relationship between overall SI and pedagogical success. Transcendent self-realization emerged as the strongest predictor, followed by patience and spiritual experience. Qualitative findings indicated that teachers with higher levels of SI demonstrated stronger interpersonal relationships, greater emotional resilience, enhanced self-awareness, a stronger sense of purpose, and higher levels of professional commitment.

Conclusion: SI appears to be meaningfully associated with effective teaching and may represent an important personal resource for EFL educators. The study contributes to discussions of teacher effectiveness and holistic professional development while highlighting the continuing importance of human-centered capacities in contemporary educational environments.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; English as a Foreign Language; Ethical Education; Human-Centered Education; Spiritual Intelligence; Teacher Effectiveness

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and digital technologies into educational systems has reshaped pedagogical practices, teacher-learner interactions, and conceptions of effective teaching across disciplines, including English as a Foreign Language (EFL). While AI-driven tools promise efficiency, personalization, and expanded access to learning resources, scholars increasingly warn against reductive, technocentric approaches that marginalize human meaning-making, ethical judgment, and

professional agency (Isaei et al., 2025; Isaei & Barjesteh, 2025a; Zhang & Umeanowai, 2025).

In response, contemporary educational research has renewed attention to human-centered constructs that foreground values, purpose, and holistic development alongside cognitive performance.

Within this broader landscape, spiritual intelligence (SI) has attracted sustained yet controversial scholarly interest (Risdiyanto et al., 2026). Initially proposed as a form of intelligence concerned with meaning, transcendence, and ultimate concerns (Agrawal, 2025; Alshebami & others, 2023), SI has since been conceptualized as a capacity enabling individuals to integrate values, ethical awareness, and existential reflection into everyday functioning (Gardner, 1999). Proponents argue that SI supports adaptive judgment, moral sensitivity, and resilience in complex professional environments, including education (Alshebami & others, 2023; Tan, 2020). Critics, however, question its construct validity, overlap with personality and well-being measures, and susceptibility to scale contamination (Adilogullari et al., 2014).

Despite these debates, SI continues to be empirically examined in relation to psychological well-being, leadership effectiveness, emotional regulation, and ethical behavior across cultural and professional

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contexts (Dargahi & Veysi, 2021). In educational research, SI has been associated with reflective practice, value-based leadership, and holistic teaching orientations, suggesting potential relevance for teachers working in emotionally and ethically demanding environments. However, its role in language education, and EFL in particular, remains comparatively under-theorized and under-investigated, especially in relation to emerging AI-mediated pedagogies.

At the same time, EFL education is undergoing a profound transformation driven by conversational AI systems, adaptive learning platforms, and data-driven instructional tools (Isaee, 2026b). While these technologies can enhance engagement and learning efficiency, scholars emphasize that effective language education cannot be reduced to technical optimization alone. Language learning is inherently tied to identity, emotion, intercultural meaning, and ethical communication (Azamatova et al., 2023). Consequently, recent work has called for pedagogical frameworks that balance technological innovation with care, empathy, and professional judgment (Barjesteh et al., 2026).

Against this backdrop, the present study examines spiritual intelligence as a human-centered teacher characteristic that may contribute to effective EFL teaching in contemporary educational settings. Although artificial intelligence and digital technologies are increasingly influencing instructional environments, the primary focus of this study is not AI integration itself, but rather the personal capacities that may help teachers navigate complex pedagogical demands. In this regard, spiritual intelligence has been proposed as a meaning-oriented and reflective resource that supports ethical awareness, emotional regulation, resilience, and professional purpose. Despite growing scholarly interest

in spiritual intelligence across psychological, organizational, and educational domains, empirical evidence regarding the relationship between spiritual intelligence and pedagogical success among EFL teachers remains limited, particularly within contemporary technology-rich educational environments. Existing studies have largely examined SI in relation to well-being, leadership, critical thinking, and professional functioning, while comparatively little attention has been devoted to understanding how different dimensions of SI relate to teachers' pedagogical effectiveness. Moreover, the mechanisms through which spiritual intelligence may contribute to successful teaching remain insufficiently explored within language education research.

To address this gap, the present study investigates the overall level of spiritual intelligence among EFL teachers, examines its relationship with pedagogical success, and explores the predictive contribution of individual SI dimensions. By focusing on spiritual intelligence as a potentially meaningful professional resource, the study seeks to contribute empirical evidence to ongoing discussions regarding teacher effectiveness, holistic professional development, and the continuing importance of human-centered capacities in increasingly technology-rich educational environments.

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework underpinning the study. Drawing on multidimensional conceptualizations of spiritual intelligence, the framework proposes that the dimensions of transcendent self-realization, spiritual experience, patience, and forgiveness contribute to pedagogical success through their influence on teachers' reflective capacity, emotional regulation, ethical awareness, and sense of professional purpose.

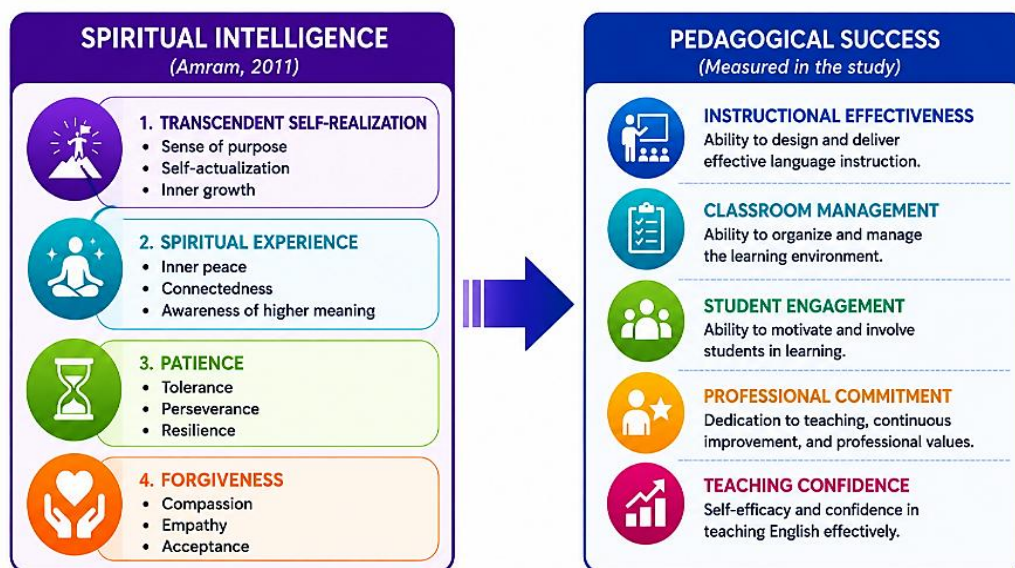


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework guiding this study is grounded in multidimensional perspectives on spiritual intelligence, which conceptualize SI as a set of interrelated capacities involving self-transcendence, meaning-making, reflective awareness, and ethical sensitivity. Based on this perspective, the study proposes that the dimensions of transcendent self-realization, spiritual experience, patience, and forgiveness are positively associated with pedagogical success among EFL teachers. The framework, therefore, positions spiritual intelligence as the independent construct and pedagogical success as the outcome variable examined in the study.

Accordingly, the study is guided by the following research questions:

RQ1. What is the overall level of spiritual intelligence among EFL teachers in the investigated context?

RQ2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between EFL teachers' spiritual intelligence and pedagogical success?

RQ3. To what extent do the dimensions of spiritual intelligence predict variance in pedagogical success among EFL teachers?

RQ4. How do EFL teachers describe and interpret the influence of spiritual intelligence on their pedagogical practices within contemporary educational contexts?

Furthermore, Conceptualization and Ongoing Debate Around Spiritual Intelligence. The concept of SI has its roots in broader discussions on the nature and scope of human intelligence that extend beyond purely cognitive or analytical capacities. Early theoretical contributions framed SI as an intelligence concerned with meaning-making, transcendence, and the capacity to engage with existential questions that shape human motivation and behavior. From this perspective, SI was positioned as a functional capacity enabling individuals to integrate values, purpose, and ethical awareness into everyday decision-making, particularly in complex and uncertain contexts.

Subsequent scholarship sought to systematize the construct by proposing multidimensional models and measurement instruments. Notably, scholars articulated seven interrelated dimensions of SI grounded in cross-cultural and ecumenical inquiry, emphasizing consciousness, grace, meaning, transcendence, and truth. Similarly, [Amram \(2022\)](#) introduced the Integrated Spiritual Intelligence Scale (ISIS) as an attempt to operationalize SI for empirical research. These models contributed to expanding SI research across organizational, educational, and psychological domains ([Anwar et al., 2020](#)).

Despite its growing visibility, SI has remained a contested construct. Critics have raised fundamental concerns regarding whether SI satisfies established criteria for intelligence, particularly in relation to cognitive specificity, empirical separability, and predictive validity. [Gardner \(1999\)](#), for example, argued that many SI measures overlap substantially with personality traits, emotional intelligence, and indicators

of psychological well-being, thereby challenging claims of construct distinctiveness. More recently, concerns about scale contamination (where measures of spirituality inadvertently include mental health or social functioning indicators) have intensified scrutiny of SI research findings ([Tan, 2020](#)).

Contemporary scholarship has responded to these critiques by advocating for a more cautious and reflexive use of SI in empirical research. Rather than asserting SI as a standalone intelligence, some scholars conceptualize it as a meaning-oriented human capacity that interacts dynamically with emotional, moral, and cognitive processes ([Agrawal, 2025](#); [Lai & Lee, 2024](#); [Zhai et al., 2024](#)). From this perspective, SI is valued less for its classificatory status and more for its explanatory potential in understanding how individuals navigate ethical complexity, purpose, and professional responsibility. This reframing has particular relevance for educational contexts, where teaching involves continuous value-laden judgment rather than purely technical execution.

Empirical research on SI has documented associations with a range of psychological and professional outcomes, although findings must be interpreted in light of ongoing measurement debates. In psychological and health-related studies, SI has been linked to enhanced emotional regulation, mindfulness, and subjective well-being, particularly under conditions of stress and uncertainty ([Huang et al., 2023](#); [Tan, 2020](#)). These findings suggest that SI-related capacities may support adaptive coping and resilience, though scholars caution against conflating spiritual resources with mental health indicators ([Azamatova et al., 2023](#)).

Within educational and organizational research, SI has been examined as a factor contributing to ethical leadership, reflective practice, and value-based decision-making. Studies involving educators and academic leaders indicate that higher levels of SI are associated with greater sensitivity to learners' needs, principled professional conduct, and a commitment to holistic development rather than narrow performance outcomes ([Alshebami & others, 2023](#); [Isaee & Barjesteh, 2025b](#)). In language education contexts, these qualities are particularly salient given the emotional, intercultural, and identity-related dimensions of language learning ([Dargahi & Veysi, 2021](#)).

However, the literature also reflects substantial variability in conceptual definitions, research designs, and instruments, limiting cross-study comparability. Recent methodological reviews emphasize the importance of transparent construct positioning, careful interpretation of correlational findings, and explicit acknowledgment of SI's theoretical boundaries ([Tan, 2020](#)). Rather than undermining the relevance of SI, such critiques underscore the need for empirically grounded studies that situate SI within specific professional contexts (such as EFL teaching) while avoiding overgeneralized claims.

Artificial Intelligence in EFL Education: Opportunities, Risks, and Ethical Concerns. Parallel to debates on SI, EFL education has experienced a rapid transformation through the adoption of AI-driven technologies, including conversational agents, adaptive feedback systems, and data-informed instructional tools. Recent reviews document growing evidence that AI applications can enhance learner engagement, vocabulary development, and personalized learning pathways when integrated thoughtfully into language instruction (Isaee & Barjesteh, 2026a, 2026c). From a pedagogical perspective, AI has been framed as a potential mediator that supports learning processes rather than an authoritative replacement for teachers (Manoocherzadeh et al., 2025).

At the same time, scholars caution that uncritical adoption of AI risks narrowing educational goals to efficiency, measurability, and short-term outcomes. Ethical concerns include algorithmic bias, diminished teacher autonomy, and the erosion of relational and affective dimensions of teaching. In language education specifically, researchers emphasize that communicative competence involves intercultural sensitivity, empathy, humor, and ethical awareness—dimensions that cannot be fully captured by automated systems (Crompton & Burke, 2023; Klemettilä, 2025).

As a result, recent scholarship advocates for human-centered and responsible AI frameworks in education, positioning technology as a tool that must remain subordinate to pedagogical judgment and ethical reflection (Isaee et al., 2025). These discussions resonate strongly with calls for pedagogies grounded in care, empathy, and professional responsibility, particularly in EFL contexts where teacher–student relationships play a critical role in motivation and engagement (Isaee, 2026a).

Positioning Spiritual Intelligence within Human-Centered and Ethical EFL Pedagogy. Integrating the above strands, spiritual intelligence may be understood as a human-centered capacity that complements technological innovation in EFL education. Rather than competing with AI-based tools, SI-oriented dispositions (such as ethical awareness, reflective meaning-making, and sensitivity to learners' emotional and cultural realities) may enable teachers to navigate AI-mediated environments more responsibly. From this standpoint, SI supports pedagogical judgment in contexts where technical solutions alone are insufficient (Isaee & Barjesteh, 2025a). Recent work on loving pedagogy and empathetic teaching further reinforces the relevance of SI-related constructs in language education. Studies suggest that teacher care, moral commitment, and emotional presence contribute meaningfully to learner motivation and reduced anxiety, particularly in foreign language classrooms (Risdiyanto et al., 2025). Situating SI within this broader ethical-affective framework allows for a more nuanced interpretation that avoids

overstated claims while recognizing its potential pedagogical value.

Accordingly, the present study conceptualizes spiritual intelligence not as a definitive or isolated intelligence, but as a meaning-oriented resource that may shape how EFL teachers engage with learners, instructional challenges, and emerging technologies. By empirically examining SI within this carefully bounded framework, the study aims to contribute to ongoing debates while aligning with contemporary calls for ethical, reflective, and humanizing approaches to language education in AI-enhanced contexts.

2. MATERIAL AND METHOD

2.1 Research Design

The study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. In the first phase, quantitative data were collected from 120 EFL teachers using standardized questionnaires measuring spiritual intelligence and pedagogical success. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, and multiple regression analyses were conducted to address the first three research questions. In the second phase, qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and syllabus analysis to explore how spiritual intelligence was reflected in teachers' pedagogical practices and to provide explanatory depth for the quantitative findings. The qualitative phase primarily addressed the fourth research question. Integration of quantitative and qualitative findings occurred during the interpretation stage, where qualitative themes were used to explain and contextualize the statistical relationships identified in the quantitative analyses.

2.1.1 Mixed-Methods Integration

The study followed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods procedure in which the quantitative findings directly informed the design and implementation of the qualitative phase. Following the analysis of the questionnaire data, participants were categorized according to their overall spiritual intelligence scores. Teachers representing relatively high and relatively low levels of spiritual intelligence were purposively selected for participation in the qualitative phase to facilitate deeper exploration of the quantitative patterns.

The quantitative results also informed the development of the qualitative data collection protocols. Specifically, the significant relationships identified between spiritual intelligence dimensions and pedagogical success guided the formulation of interview questions, classroom observation criteria, and syllabus-analysis categories. Particular attention was devoted to dimensions that demonstrated stronger statistical associations with

pedagogical success, including transcendent self-realization, patience, and spiritual experience.

Integration occurred at three stages. First, the quantitative findings informed participant selection and qualitative instrument development (connecting stage). Second, qualitative data were analyzed to explain and elaborate the statistical relationships observed in the quantitative phase (building stage). Third, the findings from both phases were merged during interpretation through a process of triangulation, whereby interview data, classroom observations, syllabus analyses, and quantitative results were compared to identify areas of convergence, complementarity, and divergence.

This integration strategy enabled the qualitative findings to provide explanatory depth for the quantitative results, thereby offering a more comprehensive understanding of how spiritual intelligence is reflected in EFL teachers' pedagogical practices and professional experiences.

2.2 Participants and Context

The participants of the study consisted of EFL teachers working in formal instructional settings within the targeted educational context. Teachers were recruited using a non-probability convenience sampling strategy, a common approach in educational research where access to participants is institutionally bounded. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed of the study's academic purpose before data collection. The sample included teachers with diverse teaching experience levels and academic backgrounds, reflecting the heterogeneous nature of contemporary EFL teaching contexts. Such diversity was considered advantageous for capturing variability in spiritual intelligence and pedagogical orientations, while acknowledging that the sampling strategy limits the generalizability of the findings beyond the investigated population.

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the participants. The sample consisted of 120 EFL teachers with diverse educational backgrounds, varying levels of teaching experience, and institutional affiliations. This diversity was considered advantageous for capturing variation in both spiritual intelligence and pedagogical success.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 120)

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	52	43.3
	Female	68	56.7
Age	20–29	24	20.0
	30–39	42	35.0
	40–49	34	28.3
	50 and above	20	16.7
	1–5 years	28	23.3
Teaching Experience	6–10 years	36	30.0
	11–15 years	31	25.8
	More than 15 years	25	20.9
Highest Qualification	BA	22	18.3
	MA	71	59.2
	PhD	27	22.5
Institution Type	Language Institute	46	38.3
	School	34	28.3
	University	40	33.4

Note. Percentages may not total exactly 100 due to rounding.

For the qualitative phase, 20 teachers were purposively selected from the quantitative sample based on their spiritual intelligence scores. To facilitate explanatory comparison, participants were chosen to represent relatively high and relatively low levels of spiritual intelligence as identified through the quantitative analyses. This sampling strategy is consistent with explanatory sequential mixed-methods designs, in which qualitative participants are selected based on quantitative results to provide deeper insight into emerging statistical patterns. Of the 20 participants, 10 represented higher spiritual intelligence profiles, and 10 represented lower spiritual intelligence profiles.

2.3 Instruments

2.3.1 Spiritual Intelligence for Language Teaching Scale (SILTS)

Spiritual intelligence was measured using the Spiritual Intelligence for Language Teaching Scale (SILTS), a multidimensional self-report instrument developed by the researchers to assess spiritually grounded dispositions relevant to English language teaching. The scale was designed to capture dimensions of spiritual intelligence theoretically linked to effective pedagogical practice, teacher well-being, and professional meaning-making in language education contexts.

The development of the instrument was informed by contemporary theoretical and empirical literature on spiritual intelligence, teacher development, meaning-oriented cognition, ethical awareness, emotional regulation, and reflective professional practice. An initial pool of items was generated following a comprehensive review of the literature and consultation with specialists in language education, educational psychology, and teacher development.

The final version of the SILTS consisted of 40 items distributed across five dimensions: (a) Transcendent Self-Realization (8 items), (b) Spiritual Experience and Awareness (8 items), (c) Patience and Emotional Regulation (8 items), (d) Forgiveness and Compassion (8 items), and (e) Ethical and Value-Oriented Practice (8 items). Participants responded to each item using a six-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 6 (Strongly Agree). Higher scores indicated higher levels of spiritual intelligence in language teaching contexts.

Preliminary reliability analyses demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency for the overall scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = .92$). Reliability estimates for the five subscales were also acceptable: Transcendent Self-Realization ($\alpha = .88$), Spiritual Experience and Awareness ($\alpha = .90$), Patience and Emotional Regulation ($\alpha = .86$), Forgiveness and Compassion ($\alpha = .84$), and Ethical and Value-Oriented Practice ($\alpha = .89$).

Examples of SILTS items include: "I view my teaching as part of a larger purpose beyond classroom instruction" (Transcendent Self-Realization), "I reflect on the deeper meaning of my experiences as a teacher" (Spiritual Experience and Awareness), "I remain calm and patient when facing instructional challenges" (Patience and Emotional Regulation), and "I can forgive students' mistakes while maintaining supportive relationships" (Forgiveness and Compassion). These items illustrate the meaning-oriented, reflective, and interpersonal dimensions represented within the scale.

2.3.2 Pedagogical Success Measure

Pedagogical success was assessed using a self-report measure designed to evaluate teachers' perceptions of instructional effectiveness, classroom management, learner engagement, professional commitment, and interpersonal competence. The instrument consisted of 25 items rated on a six-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 6 (Strongly Agree), with higher scores reflecting higher levels of perceived pedagogical success. The measure demonstrated satisfactory reliability in the pilot phase (Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$), indicating strong internal consistency among the items.

Pedagogical success was assessed using a standardized self-report measure designed to evaluate teachers' effectiveness in language teaching contexts. The instrument assessed multiple dimensions of successful teaching, including instructional effectiveness,

classroom management, learner engagement, interpersonal competence, and professional commitment. Participants responded to the items using a Likert-type scale, with higher scores indicating higher levels of perceived pedagogical success.

The instrument was selected because it captures widely recognized characteristics of effective language teaching identified in the language education literature. Previous research has provided evidence supporting its reliability and validity across diverse EFL and ESL contexts. Before the main study, the measure was piloted with a sample of EFL teachers to assess its psychometric adequacy and contextual suitability. The pilot results indicated strong internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$), supporting the reliability of the instrument for use in the present study. Consistent with these findings, reliability analyses conducted on the main study data further demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency across the scale.

Given the multidimensional nature of teaching effectiveness, pedagogical success was conceptualized as a broad professional construct encompassing instructional, interpersonal, and classroom-management competencies rather than as a single isolated skill.

2.3.3 Pilot Testing and Content Validation

Before the main study, the preliminary version of the Spiritual Intelligence for Language Teaching Scale (SILTS) underwent a multistage validation process. First, content validity was established through expert review. A panel of eight specialists in applied linguistics, educational psychology, and teacher education evaluated the relevance, clarity, representativeness, and wording of each item. Based on their recommendations, several items were revised, reworded, or refined to improve conceptual accuracy and contextual appropriateness.

Second, face validity was assessed through feedback obtained from a small group of EFL teachers who evaluated the comprehensibility, clarity, and practical relevance of the items. Participants reported that the statements were understandable and appropriately reflected experiences associated with language teaching.

Third, a pilot study involving 60 EFL teachers was conducted to examine the psychometric properties of the instrument. Item-total correlations exceeded the recommended threshold of .30, indicating satisfactory item functioning. The overall reliability coefficient demonstrated strong internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .92$), while the subscale reliability coefficients ranged from .84 to .90. These findings provided preliminary evidence supporting the reliability and construct coherence of the instrument.

Taken together, the expert evaluation, face-validity assessment, pilot testing results, and reliability analyses provided preliminary evidence supporting the content

validity, face validity, and internal consistency of the SILTS prior to its administration in the main study.

2.4 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was conducted in two sequential phases consistent with the explanatory sequential mixed-methods design adopted in this study. The quantitative phase preceded the qualitative phase and informed subsequent participant selection and qualitative data collection procedures.

During the quantitative phase, data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed electronically to EFL teachers. The online format facilitated access to participants across diverse institutional settings while ensuring anonymity, convenience, and ease of response. Before completing the questionnaire, participants were provided with an informed consent statement outlining the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, confidentiality assurances, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty.

Following completion and analysis of the quantitative data, qualitative data were collected from 20 purposively selected participants representing relatively high and relatively low levels of spiritual intelligence. Participant selection was informed by the quantitative findings and aimed to provide deeper insight into the statistical patterns identified during the first phase of the study.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all 20 participants. Each interview lasted approximately 20–30 minutes and explored teachers' perceptions of the relationship between spiritual intelligence and pedagogical practice, including instructional decision-making, teacher–student relationships, emotional regulation, professional values, professional challenges, and classroom experiences.

In addition, 20 classroom observations were conducted, with each participating teacher observed during one instructional session. Observation notes were recorded using a structured observation protocol developed from the quantitative findings and relevant literature on spiritual intelligence and teacher effectiveness. Particular attention was given to classroom interaction patterns, learner engagement, emotional responsiveness, instructional flexibility, and evidence of learner-centered teaching practices.

To further enhance data triangulation, 20 course syllabi prepared by participating teachers were collected and analyzed. The syllabus analysis focused on instructional objectives, learner-centered practices, assessment approaches, evidence of reflective pedagogy, and the integration of professional and ethical values within course planning.

The use of interviews, classroom observations, and syllabus analyses enabled methodological triangulation and provided multiple sources of evidence regarding the ways spiritual intelligence was reflected in teachers' professional practices. Qualitative data collection was

undertaken primarily to explain, elaborate, and contextualize the quantitative findings.

All participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty. No identifying information was collected, and all data were stored securely and used solely for academic research purposes.

2.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis proceeded in accordance with the explanatory sequential mixed-methods design adopted in the study. Quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed separately and subsequently integrated during interpretation to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between spiritual intelligence and pedagogical success.

2.5.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data obtained from the Spiritual Intelligence for Language Teaching Scale (SILTS) and the Pedagogical Success Measure were analyzed using standard statistical procedures appropriate for correlational research. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were calculated to determine the overall levels of spiritual intelligence and pedagogical success among participants, addressing the first research question.

To examine the relationship between spiritual intelligence and pedagogical success (RQ2), Pearson product–moment correlation analyses were conducted. Subsequently, multiple linear regression analyses were performed to determine the extent to which the dimensions of spiritual intelligence predicted variance in pedagogical success (RQ3). Before conducting inferential analyses, assumptions of normality, linearity, independence, homoscedasticity, and multicollinearity were examined to ensure the suitability of the data for parametric statistical procedures.

2.5.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Following completion of the quantitative phase, qualitative data were collected from 20 purposively selected participants representing relatively high and relatively low levels of spiritual intelligence. Semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and syllabus analyses were conducted to explore how spiritual intelligence was reflected in teachers' professional experiences and pedagogical practices.

Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Interview transcripts, observation notes, and syllabus documents were read repeatedly to achieve familiarity with the data. Initial codes were generated and subsequently grouped into broader categories based on conceptual similarity. Through an iterative process of comparison and refinement, recurring themes were identified that captured participants' perceptions, experiences, and instructional practices. To enhance credibility, evidence from interviews, observations, and syllabus analyses was compared across data sources through methodological triangulation.

2.5.3 Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Integration occurred at the connecting, building, and interpretation stages of the research process. First, quantitative findings informed the selection of participants for the qualitative phase, with 20 teachers purposively chosen based on their spiritual intelligence profiles. Second, the statistical results guided the development of interview questions, observation criteria, and syllabus-analysis categories, particularly focusing on dimensions that demonstrated significant relationships with pedagogical success. Finally, findings from both phases were merged during interpretation through triangulation, whereby qualitative themes were used to explain, elaborate, and contextualize the statistical patterns identified in the quantitative analyses. This integration enabled a deeper understanding of how spiritual intelligence may influence pedagogical success in EFL teaching contexts.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles guiding educational research were observed throughout the study. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained, and confidentiality of responses was ensured. The study involved no deception, and participants were not exposed to any form of physical or psychological risk.

In addition, ethical reflexivity was exercised in relation to the measurement and interpretation of spiritual intelligence. Acknowledging ongoing debates regarding the conceptual boundaries of SI, the study refrains from essentializing spiritual intelligence or attributing normative judgments to participants based on their scores. Findings are interpreted cautiously, with attention to contextual and theoretical limitations.

2.7 Methodological Limitations

Several methodological limitations should be acknowledged. First, the use of self-report measures may be subject to social desirability bias. Second, the convenience sampling strategy restricts the

generalizability of the findings. Third, given contested definitions and measurement challenges associated with spiritual intelligence, results should be interpreted as indicative rather than conclusive.

These limitations are not viewed as undermining the study's contribution but rather as situating its findings within a transparent and critically informed empirical framework, consistent with recent methodological recommendations in SI research.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

The section reports the findings of the study in two phases. First, results from the quantitative analyses are presented to address the research questions concerning levels of spiritual intelligence (SI) and its relationship with pedagogical success. Second, qualitative findings derived from interviews, classroom observations, and syllabus analysis are reported to illuminate the factors underlying teachers' pedagogical success and to complement the quantitative patterns.

3.1.1 Quantitative Results

3.1.1.1 Descriptive Statistics of Spiritual Intelligence and Pedagogical Success (RQ1)

To address the overall profile of the participants, descriptive statistics were calculated for teachers' spiritual intelligence (SIQ), its four subscales, and pedagogical success (CSTQ). Given the unequal number of items across the questionnaires and subscales, raw scores were converted into scaled mean scores to ensure comparability. Specifically, SIQ scores were transformed to a 4-point scale, whereas CSTQ scores were transformed to a 5-point scale. Table 2 summarizes the descriptive statistics for SIQ and CSTQ, including the mean, standard deviation, and scaled mean values.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Spiritual Intelligence (SIQ) and Pedagogical Success (CSTQ)

Measure		M	SD	Scaled Mean
SIQ (Total)	120	273.11	37.0	2.92
Transcendent Self-Realization	120	149.12	25.1	2.53
Spiritual Experience	120	54.22	8.98	2.79
Forgiveness	120	22.18	3.91	3.02
Patience	120	52.41	8.98	3.14
CSTQ	120	189.41	25.4	4.04

As shown in Table 2, the mean total SIQ score ($M = 273.11$) exceeded the theoretical midpoint of the scale, indicating that the participating EFL teachers generally reported relatively high levels of spiritual intelligence. Similarly, the mean pedagogical success score ($M = 189.41$) was well above the scale midpoint, suggesting that the teachers were broadly perceived as pedagogically effective by their students.

At the subscale level, notable differences emerged. Among the four SI dimensions, Patience recorded the highest scaled mean (3.14), followed by Forgiveness (3.02), Spiritual Experience (2.79), and Transcendent Self-Realization (2.53). This pattern suggests that teachers more strongly endorsed affective and self-regulatory aspects of SI than existential or transcendental dimensions. To visually depict these relative differences, the distribution of SI subscale means is illustrated in Figure 2

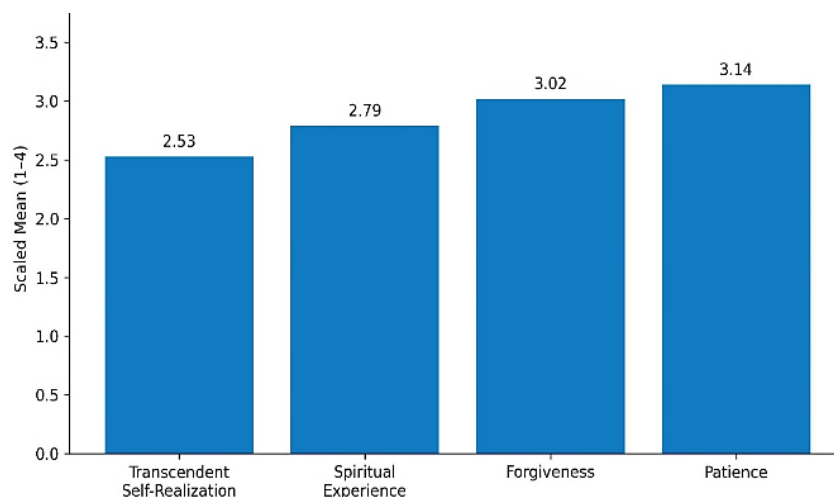


Figure 2. Profile of EFL Teachers' Spiritual Intelligence Dimensions

Figure 2 highlights the prominence of patience as a defining characteristic of the participants' spiritual intelligence profile, reflecting teachers' perceived capacity for tolerance, endurance, and emotional stability in instructional contexts.

3.1.1.2 Relationship Between Spiritual Intelligence and Pedagogical Success (RQ2)

The second research question examined whether EFL teachers' spiritual intelligence is associated with their pedagogical success. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed between CSTQ scores and both the total SIQ score and its four subscales. The correlation results are presented in Table 3, along with coefficients of determination (r^2), which indicate the proportion of shared variance between variables.

Table 3. Correlations Between Spiritual Intelligence (SI) and Pedagogical Success

SI Dimension	CSTQ (r)	r^2
Transcendent Self-Realization	.65**	.45
Spiritual Experience	.40**	.18
Patience	.45**	.22
Forgiveness	.31*	.11
Total SI	.72**	.54

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

As shown in Table 3, total spiritual intelligence demonstrated a strong, positive, and statistically significant correlation with pedagogical success ($r = .72$, $p < .01$). This finding indicates a substantial association between the two constructs, with approximately 52% of their variance being shared. However, because both

variables were measured through self-report instruments administered during the same period, the relationship should be interpreted as correlational rather than causal.

These relationships are visually summarized in Figure 3, which facilitates comparison across SI dimensions.

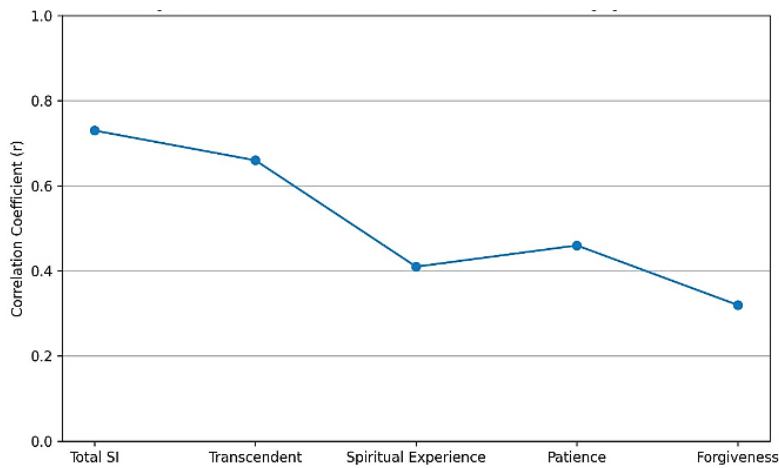


Figure 3. Strength of Association Between Spiritual Intelligence Dimensions and Pedagogical Success

As depicted in Figure 3, the overall strength of association varies across dimensions, underscoring the particularly influential role of existential and self-transcendent aspects of SI in shaping effective pedagogical performance.

3.1.1.3 Predictive Contribution of Spiritual Intelligence Dimensions (RQ3)

The third research question explored whether the dimensions of spiritual intelligence could predict EFL teachers' pedagogical success. To address this question, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted using the four SI subscales as predictors and pedagogical success as the dependent variable. The overall model fit indices are reported in Table 3.

3.1.1.4 Preliminary Assumption Testing

Before conducting the correlation and regression analyses, the assumptions underlying parametric statistical procedures were examined. Inspection of skewness and kurtosis values indicated that the variables approximated normal distributions. In addition, multicollinearity diagnostics revealed no serious concerns among the predictor variables, with tolerance values exceeding the recommended threshold and variance inflation factor (VIF) values remaining within acceptable limits. These results suggested that the data were suitable for subsequent correlation and multiple regression analyses as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Multiple Regression Model Summary

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error
.729	.54	.531	16.11

As indicated in Table 4, the regression model accounted for a substantial proportion of variance in pedagogical success ($R^2 = .54$), suggesting that spiritual intelligence

dimensions are meaningfully associated with teacher effectiveness. The individual predictive contributions of each SI dimension are detailed in Table 5.

Table 5. Regression Coefficients Predicting Pedagogical Success

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p
Constant	57.79	11.74	—	4.94	.000
Transcendent Self-Realization	.479	.071	.529	7.79	.000
Spiritual Experience	.491	.169	.201	2.86	.005
Patience	.551	.166	.221	3.37	.002
Forgiveness	.039	.423	.007	.092	.931

Note. B = unstandardized coefficient; SE = standard error; β = standardized coefficient.

As shown in Table 5, Transcendent Self-Realization emerged as the strongest predictor of pedagogical success ($\beta = .529$, $p < .001$), followed by Patience ($\beta = .221$) and Spiritual Experience ($\beta = .201$). In contrast,

Forgiveness did not contribute significantly to the model when the other SI dimensions were controlled. These differential predictive effects are graphically illustrated in Figure 4.

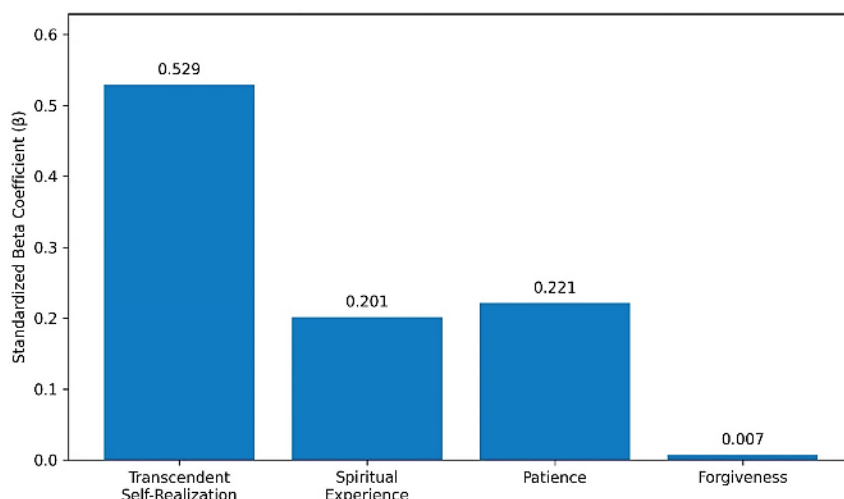


Figure 4. Predictive Power of Spiritual Intelligence Dimensions for Pedagogical Success

Figure 4 clearly demonstrates that existential meaning-making and self-transcendence play a central role in explaining pedagogical success, beyond purely interpersonal or affective traits.

3.1.2 Qualitative Results (RQ4)

Participants for the qualitative phase were purposively selected based on the quantitative results to represent teachers with relatively high and relatively low spiritual intelligence scores, thereby allowing for deeper exploration of the patterns identified in the statistical analyses. While the quantitative findings establish the strength and structure of the relationship between spiritual intelligence and pedagogical success, the qualitative phase sheds light on the lived experiences underlying these statistical patterns. Interviews, classroom observations, and syllabus analyses were conducted to explore how teachers with differing levels of SI conceptualized teaching and enacted their roles in practice.

Consistent with the quantitative results, teachers with higher levels of SI obtained substantially higher pedagogical success ratings ($M = 220$) than those with lower SI levels ($M = 117$). The qualitative analysis revealed several interrelated themes distinguishing these two groups.

3.1.2.1 Interview Findings

3.1.2.1.1 Interpersonal Relationships

Teachers with higher SI consistently emphasized the importance of building meaningful relationships with students. They demonstrated heightened sensitivity to learners' emotional states, such as anxiety, insecurity, and motivation, and viewed teaching as a nurturing rather than purely instructional role. Many attributed their compassion to personal life experiences, including

hardship and loss, which they believed enhanced their ability to empathize with students. In contrast, teachers with lower SI placed less emphasis on relational engagement and reported more frequent interpersonal tensions in the classroom. As one participant explained, *"I try to understand what my students are feeling before I focus on correcting their mistakes. When students feel respected, they become more willing to learn"* (Participant 7).

3.1.2.1.2 Stress and Anxiety Regulation

High-SI teachers reported greater emotional stability and confidence, particularly when encountering unfamiliar content or challenging learner groups. They described teaching as a manageable and meaningful activity rather than a source of persistent stress. Conversely, teachers with lower SI frequently expressed frustration, job-related anxiety, and emotional exhaustion, which they perceived as barriers to effective teaching. As one participant remarked, *"Even when I face a difficult class or an unexpected problem, I try not to panic. I remind myself that challenges are part of teaching and that staying calm helps both me and my students"* (Participant 11).

3.1.2.1.3 Courage and Risk-Taking

Teachers with higher SI described themselves as willing to experiment with new pedagogical approaches and to challenge conventional teaching norms. They viewed professional growth as requiring courage and a willingness to embrace uncertainty. In contrast, lower-SI teachers tended to favor routine methods and expressed reluctance to adopt innovative practices due to fear of failure. As one participant reflected, *"I do not believe good teaching comes from repeating the same methods every year. Sometimes I try new activities even when I am unsure of the outcome because taking risks is*

part of learning and professional growth” (Participant 8).

3.1.2.1.4 Consciousness and Self-Awareness

A strong sense of self-awareness characterized high-SI teachers, who openly acknowledged their instructional limitations and actively sought improvement. They described reflective practice as essential to pedagogical growth. Teachers with lower SI demonstrated less reflective engagement and were less inclined to critically evaluate their teaching practices. One teacher noted, *“I regularly evaluate my lessons and ask myself what could have been done differently. Reflection helps me become a better teacher”* (Participant 12).

3.1.2.1.5 Meaningfulness and Purpose

High-SI teachers frequently articulated a clear sense of purpose in their work, framing teaching as a meaningful and value-driven endeavor. They emphasized goal-setting, intentional lesson design, and fostering deep learning. In contrast, teachers with lower SI were more likely to describe teaching in instrumental or routine terms, with limited reference to broader educational goals. As another participant stated, *“Teaching is not only about language; it is about helping students become more confident and capable individuals”* (Participant 4).

3.1.2.1.6 Responsibility and Commitment

Teachers with higher SI strongly emphasized professional responsibility, punctuality, and ethical commitment.

They viewed responsibility as foundational to effective teaching and learner development. Lower-SI teachers mentioned responsibility less frequently and showed weaker alignment between stated goals and classroom practices. One teacher emphasized, *“I believe my students depend on me not only for language instruction but also for guidance and support. That responsibility motivates me to prepare carefully and remain committed to my work”* (Participant 5).

3.1.2.1.7 Creativity

Finally, creativity emerged as a distinguishing feature of high-SI teachers, who actively sought innovative ways to engage learners and adapt instructional materials. Teachers with lower SI tended to rely more heavily on prescribed textbooks and demonstrated limited flexibility in instructional design. One teacher commented, *“I enjoy adapting activities and creating new ways to engage learners because every class has different needs and interests”* (Participant 9).

Although clear differences emerged between teachers with relatively high and low levels of spiritual intelligence, the findings were not uniformly polarized. Several teachers with higher SI profiles reported experiencing professional frustration, institutional constraints, and occasional instructional uncertainty.

Likewise, some teachers with lower SI scores nevertheless demonstrated strong classroom management skills and a high level of commitment to student learning. These exceptions suggest that pedagogical success is influenced by multiple personal and contextual factors and should not be attributed solely to spiritual intelligence.

3.1.3 Classroom Observation and Syllabus Analysis

Classroom observations corroborated the interview findings. Teachers with higher SI demonstrated respectful interaction patterns, emotional composure, and learner-centered practices, including collaborative activities and constructive feedback. They were more punctual, more encouraging of student participation, and more tolerant of learner errors.

Syllabus analysis further revealed that high-SI teachers articulated clearer learning objectives, aligned short-term tasks with long-term goals, and incorporated elements promoting learner autonomy and personal growth. In contrast, syllabi prepared by lower-SI teachers were more rigid, instructor-centered, and less focused on learner empowerment or reflective engagement.

3.2 Discussion

The present study set out to examine the role of SI in EFL teachers’ pedagogical success through a mixed-methods design. By integrating quantitative and qualitative evidence, the findings offer a nuanced understanding of how spiritual intelligence functions not merely as a dispositional trait but as a meaning-oriented and practice-shaping capacity in language education. The discussion is structured around the research questions and situated within broader theoretical and empirical debates in spirituality, teacher effectiveness, and contemporary educational research. Although the observed association was substantial, the findings should be interpreted cautiously because the study employed a correlational design. Consequently, the results do not establish a causal relationship between spiritual intelligence and pedagogical success, but rather indicate that the two constructs are meaningfully related within the investigated context.

The first research question investigated whether EFL teachers’ spiritual intelligence is related to their pedagogical success. The results demonstrated a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between overall SI and pedagogical success, indicating that teachers with higher levels of spiritual intelligence were more likely to be perceived as effective by their students.

This finding lends empirical support to early theoretical arguments proposing spirituality as a form of intelligence linked to adaptive functioning and purposeful action (Gardner, 1999; Skrzypińska, 2021). It also aligns with more recent empirical syntheses

suggesting that SI contributes to emotional regulation, ethical sensitivity, and meaning-making—capacities that are particularly salient in teaching professions (Ajele et al., 2021; Amram, 2022). Within the EFL context, where emotional labor, intercultural sensitivity, and sustained motivation are central, such capacities appear to translate directly into pedagogical effectiveness.

Notably, the strength of the association observed in this study ($r = .72$) exceeds that reported in several prior investigations linking SI to professional or academic outcomes (Ajele et al., 2021; Anwar et al., 2020). This may be attributed to the relational and affective demands of language teaching, which amplify the pedagogical relevance of meaning-oriented and self-regulatory dimensions of intelligence. In this sense, the findings resonate with this argument that good education cannot be reduced to technical competence alone but requires ethical judgment, relational responsibility, and personal orientation toward purpose.

Beyond the overall association, the findings revealed meaningful variation across SI dimensions. Among the subscales, transcendent self-realization demonstrated the strongest correlation with pedagogical success, followed by patience and spiritual experience, while forgiveness showed a comparatively weaker relationship.

This pattern is theoretically significant. Transcendent self-realization reflects teachers' capacity to situate their professional actions within a broader framework of meaning, values, and existential purpose (Agrawal, 2025). The strong association between this dimension and pedagogical success suggests that teachers who perceive their work as purposeful and value-driven are more likely to engage learners effectively and sustain high-quality instructional practices. This finding extends prior work in language education, emphasizing the role of teacher vision, identity, and long-term motivational orientation (Barjesteh, Vijayaratnam, Isaee, et al., 2025). Patience also emerged as a salient correlate of pedagogical success, underscoring the importance of emotional regulation and tolerance in EFL classrooms. This aligns with research highlighting the affective challenges of language learning and the critical role of teacher calmness and emotional stability in reducing learner anxiety (Barjesteh, Vijayaratnam, Fatehi Rad, et al., 2025). In contrast, the weaker association observed for forgiveness suggests that while interpersonal grace may contribute to a positive classroom climate, it may operate more indirectly or contextually than other SI dimensions.

The second research question examined whether SI dimensions could predict pedagogical success. The regression analysis demonstrated that spiritual intelligence, as a multidimensional construct, accounted for a substantial proportion of variance in pedagogical success, with transcendent self-realization emerging as the strongest predictor.

This finding reinforces the conceptualization of SI as an action-guiding intelligence rather than a purely

reflective or affective disposition (Gardner, 1999). Teachers who possess a strong sense of existential orientation appear better equipped to navigate instructional challenges, maintain professional commitment, and make principled pedagogical decisions. Such results echo Isaee and Barjesteh's (2026b) argument that moral and meaning-oriented competence is essential for responsible professional practice, particularly in complex human-centered domains such as education.

Interestingly, forgiveness did not significantly predict pedagogical success when other SI dimensions were controlled. This result contributes to ongoing methodological debates regarding construct overlap and scale contamination in spirituality research (Ajele et al., 2021; Huang et al., 2023). It suggests that certain spiritually framed traits may be relationally valuable yet less central to performance outcomes when examined alongside existential and self-regulatory capacities.

The qualitative findings provide explanatory depth to the quantitative patterns by illustrating how spiritual intelligence is enacted in teachers' daily professional lives. Teachers with higher SI consistently demonstrated stronger interpersonal relationships, greater emotional resilience, increased pedagogical courage, heightened self-awareness, and a pronounced sense of purpose. These characteristics closely mirror Amram's (2022) multidimensional model of SI, and support the argument that spiritual intelligence operates through integrated cognitive, emotional, and ethical processes.

The emphasis on meaning and purpose among high-SI teachers is particularly noteworthy. These teachers framed teaching not merely as skill transmission but as a transformative and socially responsible endeavor. This orientation parallels the notion of intercultural citizenship and aligns with contemporary calls to humanize education in increasingly technologized learning environments (Alshebami & others, 2023; Tan, 2020). In contrast, teachers with lower SI reported higher levels of stress, reluctance to innovate, and a more instrumental view of teaching. These findings echo prior research linking limited reflective capacity and emotional dysregulation to professional burnout and reduced instructional effectiveness (Koenig & Carey, 2024).

Overall, the findings suggest that spiritual intelligence constitutes a meaningful personal resource that may support effective language teaching. The quantitative results demonstrated a strong relationship between SI and pedagogical success, while the qualitative findings provided insight into the processes through which spiritually intelligent teachers translate meaning, self-awareness, resilience, and ethical commitment into pedagogical practice. Taken together, the results support the view that teacher effectiveness extends beyond technical competence and encompasses deeper personal capacities that shape professional decision-making, classroom relationships, and instructional engagement. These findings have several implications for language education and contribute to broader discussions

regarding teacher development in contemporary educational contexts.

3.2.1 Implications

The findings of this study have several implications for teacher education, professional development, and educational practice. First, the strong association between spiritual intelligence and pedagogical success suggests that teacher effectiveness may be influenced not only by instructional knowledge and methodological expertise but also by teachers' meaning-oriented and reflective capacities. Teacher education programs may therefore benefit from incorporating opportunities for self-reflection, values exploration, and personal growth alongside traditional pedagogical training.

Second, the prominence of transcendent self-realization as a predictor of pedagogical success highlights the importance of helping teachers develop a clear sense of professional purpose. Professional development initiatives that encourage reflective practice, ethical awareness, and long-term professional vision may contribute to both teacher effectiveness and professional well-being.

Third, the qualitative findings suggest that emotionally resilient and purpose-driven teachers are better equipped to manage the interpersonal and affective demands of language teaching. Educational institutions may therefore consider creating supportive environments that foster teacher well-being, resilience, and professional meaning-making.

Finally, although AI-assisted teaching was not directly examined in the present study, the findings suggest that human-centered qualities such as empathy, ethical judgment, self-awareness, and purposeful engagement remain essential in increasingly technology-rich educational environments. These capacities may help teachers use emerging technologies in pedagogically responsible and learner-centered ways.

3.2.2 Research Contribution

This study contributes to the literature in several important ways. First, it extends existing research on spiritual intelligence by examining its relationship with pedagogical success within the EFL context, an area that has received comparatively limited empirical attention. The findings, therefore, provide new evidence regarding the relevance of SI in language education.

Second, the study advances theoretical understanding of spiritual intelligence by demonstrating that its dimensions contribute differently to pedagogical success. In particular, transcendent self-realization emerged as the strongest predictor, highlighting the importance of meaning-making and purpose-oriented self-awareness in effective teaching.

Third, the study contributes methodologically through its mixed-methods design. By combining quantitative analyses with qualitative interviews and classroom

observations, the research provides a more comprehensive understanding of both the outcomes and underlying mechanisms associated with spiritual intelligence.

Finally, the findings contribute to contemporary educational discourse by emphasizing the importance of human and value-based dimensions of teaching. In doing so, the study adds to ongoing discussions concerning the role of reflective, ethical, and meaning-oriented capacities in sustaining effective educational practice.

3.2.3 Limitation

Despite its contributions, the study has several limitations. First, the correlational nature of the research design prevents causal conclusions from being drawn regarding the relationship between spiritual intelligence and pedagogical success. Future studies employing longitudinal or experimental designs would be needed to establish causality.

Second, the quantitative data were collected primarily through questionnaire-based measures, creating the possibility of common-method variance. Additional sources of evidence could further strengthen the validity of the findings.

Third, the participants were drawn from a specific EFL educational context, which may limit the generalizability of the results to other educational systems, cultural settings, or disciplinary contexts.

Finally, although qualitative interviews and classroom observations enriched the findings, classroom observations were limited in scope and duration. Multiple observations across different instructional contexts could provide a more comprehensive picture of teachers' pedagogical practices.

3.2.4 Suggestion

Several avenues for future research emerge from the present study. First, longitudinal and intervention-based studies could investigate whether the development of spiritual intelligence leads to improvements in pedagogical success over time.

Second, future research may explore the relationships between spiritual intelligence and other teacher-related constructs, such as resilience, teacher identity, professional well-being, work engagement, burnout, and instructional innovation.

Third, comparative studies involving different educational levels, cultural contexts, and subject areas would help determine the extent to which the present findings can be generalized beyond EFL settings.

Finally, future investigations may examine how spiritual intelligence influences teachers' engagement with educational technologies and artificial intelligence. As digital tools become increasingly integrated into language education, understanding the interaction

between technological competence and human-centered capacities may provide valuable insights for both research and practice.

4. CONCLUSION

This study investigated the role of SI in EFL teachers' pedagogical success through a mixed-methods approach. By integrating quantitative findings with qualitative insights, the research provided a comprehensive understanding of how spiritual intelligence functions as a meaning-oriented, self-regulatory, and practice-shaping capacity in language education. The findings indicate that spiritual intelligence is meaningfully associated with effective teaching and may represent an important personal resource for EFL teachers working in complex educational environments.

The quantitative results revealed a strong and statistically significant relationship between overall spiritual intelligence and pedagogical success. Among the SI dimensions, transcendent self-realization emerged as the strongest correlate and predictor of pedagogical success, followed by patience and spiritual experience. These findings suggest that teachers who are able to situate their professional practices within broader frameworks of meaning, values, and self-awareness may be better positioned to foster effective learning environments and sustain professional effectiveness. Although forgiveness was positively associated with pedagogical success, it did not independently predict effectiveness when other SI dimensions were considered, indicating that different aspects of spiritual intelligence may contribute to teaching success in distinct ways.

The qualitative findings provided further insight into these relationships by illustrating how spiritually intelligent teachers enact their inner capacities in everyday professional practice. Teachers with higher levels of SI demonstrated stronger interpersonal relationships, greater emotional resilience, heightened self-awareness, stronger professional responsibility, and a more pronounced sense of purpose. These qualities were reflected in their classroom interactions, instructional decision-making, and approaches to course design. In contrast, teachers with lower levels of SI reported greater stress, relied more heavily on routine practices, and articulated fewer purpose-driven pedagogical goals.

Taken together, the findings suggest that pedagogical success involves more than methodological expertise or content knowledge alone. Effective language teaching appears to be supported by deeper personal capacities that enable teachers to remain reflective, purposeful, emotionally balanced, and responsive to learners' needs. The results, therefore, contribute to a growing body of research emphasizing the human and value-oriented dimensions of educational practice.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that spiritual intelligence is closely associated with pedagogical

success among EFL teachers. By illuminating both the measurable outcomes and lived experiences linked to SI, the research advances understanding of teacher effectiveness as a multidimensional construct that encompasses cognitive, emotional, ethical, and meaning-oriented dimensions. Recognizing and nurturing these capacities may contribute to more sustainable, responsive, and humane approaches to language education.

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6. AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

H.E. is the only author of this paper.

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