

## **CORRELATION BETWEEN SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF STUDENTS IN ISLAMIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to analyse the correlation between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being among students in Islamic educational institutions, as well as to identify the role of the educational environment in strengthening this relationship. The research method used a quantitative correlational approach with a cross-sectional design, involving 200 students selected through stratified random sampling. Data were collected using the Spiritual Intelligence Scale (adapted from SISRI-24) and the Psychological Well-being Scale (based on Ryff's model), and analysed using Pearson's correlation test and linear regression. The results of the study indicate a significant positive correlation between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being ( $r=0.62$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), with spiritual intelligence contributing 38.4% to the variation in psychological well-being. The dimensions of transcendental awareness and the ability to find meaning in life emerged as the strongest predictors. Qualitative analysis revealed that religious practices and an Islamic educational environment act as mediators in strengthening this relationship. These findings support Zohar and Marshall's theory of spiritual intelligence and Ryff's psychological well-being model, while also offering practical implications for the development of holistic educational programs in Islamic educational institutions.

**Keywords:** Spiritual intelligence, psychological well-being, Islamic education, correlation, positive psychology

### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis korelasi antara kecerdasan spiritual dan kesejahteraan psikologis siswa di lembaga pendidikan Islam, serta mengidentifikasi peran lingkungan pendidikan dalam memperkuat hubungan tersebut. Metode penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif korelasional dengan desain cross-sectional, melibatkan 200 siswa yang dipilih melalui teknik stratified random sampling. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan Skala Kecerdasan Spiritual (adaptasi dari SISRI-24) dan Skala Kesejahteraan Psikologis (berdasarkan model Ryff), kemudian dianalisis dengan uji korelasi Pearson dan regresi linear. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya korelasi positif yang signifikan antara kecerdasan spiritual dan kesejahteraan psikologis ( $r=0,62$ ;  $p<0,01$ ), dengan kecerdasan spiritual memberikan kontribusi sebesar 38,4% terhadap variasi kesejahteraan psikologis. Dimensi kesadaran transendental dan kemampuan menemukan makna hidup menjadi prediktor terkuat. Analisis kualitatif pendukung

*mengungkap bahwa praktik keagamaan dan lingkungan pendidikan Islam berperan sebagai mediator dalam memperkuat hubungan ini. Temuan ini mendukung teori Zohar dan Marshall tentang kecerdasan spiritual serta model kesejahteraan psikologis Ryff, sekaligus menawarkan implikasi praktis bagi pengembangan program pendidikan holistik di lembaga pendidikan Islam.*

**Kata kunci:** Kecerdasan spiritual, kesejahteraan psikologis, pendidikan Islam, korelasi, psikologi positif

## INTRODUCTION

Islamic education aims not only to develop students' cognitive and affective aspects, but also emphasises character building and psychological well-being based on spiritual values. In this context, spiritual intelligence is considered an important factor influencing students' psychological well-being. Spiritual intelligence refers to an individual's ability to understand the meaning of life, face challenges with patience, and develop harmonious relationships with oneself, others, and God (Zohar, 2012). Meanwhile, psychological well-being encompasses an individual's ability to accept oneself, have a purpose in life, and feel happiness and satisfaction (Ryff, 1989). In an Islamic educational environment, where religious values are the foundation of learning, the relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being is relevant to study. The theory underlying this study is Zohar's theory of spiritual intelligence (2012), which states that spiritual intelligence enables individuals to think holistically, find meaning in every experience, and develop resilience in the face of adversity.

Meanwhile, Ryff's (1989) theory of psychological well-being explains that psychological well-being consists of six dimensions: self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, autonomy, mastery of the environment, purpose in life, and personal growth. These two theories are interrelated because spiritual intelligence can serve as a source of meaning that strengthens the dimensions of psychological well-being, especially in a religious context. Previously, there have been several studies examining the relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being. First, research by Amram & Dryer (2008) found that individuals with high levels of spiritual intelligence tend to have better psychological well-being. Second, a study conducted by Joshanloo & Daemi (2015) showed that spiritual values are positively correlated with happiness and life satisfaction. Third, research in Indonesia by Domili (2021) revealed that boarding school students with high spiritual intelligence have lower stress levels. Fourth, research by Saragih et al. (2021) found that intensive religious practices improve the psychological well-being of Muslim adolescents. Fifth, a study by King & DeCicco (2009) showed that spiritual intelligence acts as a mediator between religiosity and mental well-being.

However, this study has several differences from previous studies. First, this study focuses on students in Islamic educational institutions, who have different characteristics from the general population or students in secular schools. Second, this study does not only look at direct correlations but also explores how Islamic values taught in educational institutions influence the relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological

well-being. Third, previous studies were mostly conducted in Western countries, while this study was conducted in Indonesia with a different socio-cultural context. Fourth, this study used instruments that had been adapted to Islamic values to measure spiritual intelligence, unlike previous studies that used general measuring instruments. Fifth, this study also considers moderating variables such as social support and school environment, which have not been extensively explored in previous studies. The novelty of this study lies in its contextual approach to the relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being in an Islamic educational setting. This study also develops an integrative model that combines positive psychology perspectives with Islamic values, thereby contributing theoretically and practically to the development of character-based education. In addition, this study uses mixed methods that combine quantitative surveys with in-depth interviews to gain a more holistic understanding.

The objectives of this study are to: (1) examine the correlation between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being of students in Islamic educational institutions, (2) analyze the role of Islamic values in strengthening this relationship, (3) identify other factors that influence students' psychological well-being, and (4) provide recommendations for the development of educational programs that support students' mental well-being based on spirituality. The urgency of this research lies in the importance of understanding the factors that support students' psychological well-being, especially in the modern era where the mental challenges of adolescents are increasingly complex. The results of this study can be used as a reference for Islamic educational institutions to design a curriculum that not only emphasizes academic achievement but also the development of spiritual intelligence and mental health. In addition, the findings of this study can contribute to the literature on Islamic psychology and character education, which is still limited in Indonesia. Thus, this study is expected to have a positive impact on the development of holistic education policies that are oriented toward student well-being.

## **METHOD**

This study uses a quantitative correlational approach to examine the relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being among students in Islamic educational institutions. The research design is cross-sectional, where data is collected at a specific point in time to analyse the correlation between variables. The population in this study consists of secondary school students in Islamic educational institutions (such as Madrasah Aliyah or pesantren), with a sample of 200 students selected through stratified random sampling to ensure gender and grade representation. Data collection was conducted using two main instruments: (1) The Spiritual Intelligence Scale adapted from the Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (SISRI-24) by King et al. (2012), modified to align with Islamic values, covering the dimensions of transcendental awareness, meaning of life, and ability to cope with suffering; (2) The Psychological Well-being Scale based on Ryff's model (1989), which measures self-acceptance, autonomy, and life purpose. This instrument uses a 1-5 Likert scale and has been validated

for content validity by Islamic psychologists and for reliability through Cronbach's Alpha test ( $\alpha > 0.70$ ).

Data analysis was conducted using Pearson's correlation test to measure the strength of the relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being, as well as simple linear regression analysis to determine the extent to which spiritual intelligence predicts psychological well-being (Djaali, 2021). Data normality was tested using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, while homoscedasticity was assessed to ensure variance consistency. This study also involved semi-structured interviews with 10 participants (teachers and students) as supporting data to deepen the interpretation of quantitative findings. The limitations of this study include potential response bias due to the use of self-report scales and limited generalizability to specific Islamic educational contexts. However, these findings are expected to provide a basis for the development of spirituality-based interventions in Islamic schools.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Based on data analysis conducted on 200 students in Islamic educational institutions, this study found that there is a significant positive correlation between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being ( $r = 0.62$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). This indicates that the higher the level of spiritual intelligence among students, the higher their psychological well-being. A simple linear regression test also revealed that spiritual intelligence contributes 38.4% ( $R^2 = 0.384$ ) to the variation in psychological well-being, indicating that other factors beyond spiritual intelligence also play a role in influencing student well-being. In more detail, the dimensions of spiritual intelligence most strongly correlated with psychological well-being were transcendental awareness ( $r = 0.58$ ) and the ability to find meaning in life ( $r = 0.55$ ), while the self-acceptance dimension (from the psychological well-being scale) showed the strongest relationship with spiritual intelligence ( $r = 0.60$ ). These findings align with Zohar & Marshall's (2000) theory, which states that spiritual intelligence helps individuals understand existential meaning, thereby promoting self-acceptance and psychological resilience. Additionally, qualitative analysis through interviews reinforced the quantitative findings. Most students reported that religious practices (such as prayer, recitation of the Quran, and Quranic study) helped them feel calmer and have a clear sense of purpose in life. A guidance counsellor also noted that students with good spiritual understanding tend to be more optimistic and better able to cope with academic stress.

## **DISCUSSION**

This study's findings reveal a significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being among students in Islamic educational institutions. Quantitative analysis shows a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.62$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ), with spiritual intelligence contributing 38.4% to the variation in psychological well-being. These findings reinforce Zohar and Marshall's (2000) theory of spiritual intelligence as a fundamental ability that enables individuals to connect with transcendental values and find meaning in life. In the context of Islamic education, this ability appears to develop through the internalization of

the values of tawhid and tawakkal, which function as psychological buffers against various academic and social pressures. Students with high levels of spiritual intelligence tend to exhibit better psychological well-being characteristics, particularly in the dimensions of self-acceptance and life purpose—two key aspects of the psychological well-being model (Ryff, 1989).

The Islamic educational environment plays a crucial role in strengthening the relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being. The findings of this study are in line with the results of a study by Ahmad et al. (2021), which showed that religious-based institutions provide a consistent value structure for the development of meaning in life. Unlike research in public schools by Joshanloo & Daemi (2015), Islamic educational environments with integrated support systems, including moral education, guidance from teachers, and regular religious practices create an ecosystem that promotes the transformation of spiritual intelligence into sustainable psychological well-being.

Qualitative data from interviews show how daily worship practices such as congregational prayer, recitation of the Qur'an, and collective remembrance of God help students develop better emotional regulation and psychological resilience. Among the various dimensions of spiritual intelligence, transcendental awareness emerges as the strongest predictor of psychological well-being. These findings support Emmons' (2000) theory on the central role of spiritual experiences in building mental resilience. Students who reported deep spiritual experiences, such as a sense of closeness to God (*taqarrub ilallah*) and contemplation of the signs of God's greatness (*tadabbur*), tended to exhibit higher levels of life satisfaction. This is consistent with the findings of King & DeCicco (2009), who positioned spirituality as an important mediator between religious practices and subjective happiness. In the Islamic context, this transcendental awareness is not only individual but also communal, developing through structured religious activities in the school environment.

The findings of this study have important implications for the development of Islamic character education. The integration of a spiritual approach based on *maqashid syariah* (the objectives of sharia) into the Islamic education curriculum appears to be an urgent need, not merely as a formal subject but as a holistic approach that permeates all learning activities. According to Akmalia et al. (2023), a holistic mentoring model that combines academic guidance with spiritual development can be an effective framework for improving students' psychological well-being. Practices such as daily *muhasabah* (structured self-reflection), religious peer counseling, and Islamic values-based mentoring programs can be developed as psycho-spiritual interventions in Islamic educational institutions. Such an approach is in line with the concept of *tarbiyah ruhiyah* in the Islamic educational tradition, which emphasizes a balance between intellectual, spiritual, and psychological development.

A deeper analysis of qualitative data reveals several psychological mechanisms that explain the relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being.

First, spiritual intelligence helps students develop a meaning framework that enables them to interpret life experiences, including difficulties and failures, in a more positive and constructive perspective. Second, spiritual practices such as patience and gratitude taught in Islam serve as effective emotion regulation strategies. Third, spiritual communities in schools provide important social support for adolescent identity development. These findings expand our understanding of how Islamic values taught in schools can serve as psychological capital for students.

This study also identified several supporting factors that strengthen the relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being. A school environment that supports the expression of spiritual values, the quality of teacher-student relationships, and consistency between the values taught at school and at home all play a reinforcing role. These findings support Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory, which emphasizes the importance of harmony between various environmental systems in individual development. In the context of Islamic education, harmony between the values of the school, family, and community creates an ecosystem conducive to the development of students' spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being.

Despite its important contributions, this study has several limitations. The use of a cross-sectional design limits the ability to draw causal conclusions between variables. Self-report measures are susceptible to social bias, particularly in a religiously conservative cultural context where respondents may be inclined to provide socially desirable responses. The generalizability of the findings is also limited to the population of students in specific Islamic educational institutions. Further research with a longitudinal design, a more diverse sample, and more comprehensive measurement methods (including physiological and behavioral measurements) would be valuable for deepening our understanding of the dynamics of these relationships. The practical implications of the research findings are significant for the development of educational policy. First, Islamic educational institutions should consider incorporating spiritual intelligence assessments as part of the initial mapping of student characteristics. Second, teacher development programs should include training on how to integrate spiritual development into daily learning processes. Third, collaboration between schools, families, and religious communities should be strengthened to create a coherent supportive ecosystem for students' holistic development.

At the theoretical level, this study contributes to the development of an integrative model linking positive psychology constructs with Islamic value frameworks. Findings on the specific mechanisms through which Islamic practices and values contribute to psychological well-being enrich the religious psychology literature, which has been dominated by Western perspectives. The model generated from this research can serve as a basis for the development of more culturally sensitive assessment instruments and interventions for Muslim populations. Overall, this research not only confirms the positive relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being among Muslim students but also reveals the complexity and richness of this relationship in the



context of Islamic education. These findings emphasise the importance of a holistic educational approach that focuses not only on academic achievement but also on the spiritual and psychological development of students. From a broader perspective, this research highlights the potential of spiritual values in the Islamic tradition as a resource for improving mental health and psychological well-being among young Muslims in this challenging modern era.

## CONCLUSION

This study successfully demonstrated a significant positive relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being among students in Islamic educational institutions. Quantitative analysis revealed that spiritual intelligence significantly contributes to students' psychological well-being, with transcendental awareness and the ability to find meaning in life emerging as the most influential dimensions. These findings reinforce Zohar and Marshall's (2000) theory on the role of spiritual intelligence in shaping the framework of life meaning, while also supporting Ryff's (1989) psychological well-being model, which emphasizes the importance of self-acceptance and life purpose. In the context of Islamic education, the values of tawhid (monotheism), tawakkal (trust in God), and daily worship practices function as psychological mechanisms that help students develop mental resilience and better emotional regulation.

The Islamic educational environment, with its unique characteristics, plays an important role as a catalyst in transforming spiritual potential into tangible psychological well-being. An integrated support system—including moral education, guidance from teachers, and structured religious activities—creates a conducive ecosystem for students' holistic development. Qualitative findings reveal that practices such as muhasabah, dzikir, and tadarus Al-Qur'an are not only valuable acts of worship but also function as coping strategies and sources of meaning in life for students. This aligns with the concept of Islamic education, which emphasizes balance between intellectual, spiritual, and emotional development.

This study has important implications for the development of a more holistic Islamic character education model. The integration of a spiritual approach based on maqashid syariah into the curriculum, the development of religious mentoring programs, and the optimisation of teachers' roles as spiritual guides are practical recommendations that can be implemented. At the policy level, these findings highlight the need to consider spiritual aspects in the design of education programs aimed at promoting students' psychological well-being. Despite its limitations in terms of generalizability and measurement methods, this study has successfully paved the way for further research on positive psychology from an Islamic perspective, while reaffirming the relevance of Islamic spiritual values as a psychological resource in the modern era.

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