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Academic Stress and Spiritual Well-Being in Riau

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to develop a profile of spiritual well-being and academic stress among students in high schools and universities and determine whether there is a relationship between academic stress and spiritual well-being among students in the Indragiri Hulu district of the province of Riau, Indonesia. The quantitative technique is used in this investigation. It was decided to employ a survey design for this investigation. 105 students were chosen to participate in the survey, with an 81 per cent response rate (n = 85). Academic stress was reported by 82 per cent of those who answered the survey questions (70 people). Additionally, according to the findings of this study, women suffer more stress than males, and students in college experience more stress than students in high school. Academic stress, on the other hand, is not significantly associated with gender or educational level. In contrast, the spiritual well-being of students is associated with just a slight link with the academic stress experienced by students.

Kata kunci:
Kesejahteraan spiritual;
Stres akademik

Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mencari profil kesejahteraan spiritual dan stres akademik pelajar di Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA) dan Perguruan Tinggi, serta mencari korelasi antara stres akademik dan kesejahteraan spiritual pelajar yang ada di kabupaten Indragiri Hulu, Provinsi Riau. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif. Disain yang digunakan pada penelitian ini adalah penelitian survey. Ada 105 pelajar yang terpilih menjadi responden, dengan respon sebesar 81% (n = 85). Jumlah responden yang mengalami stres akademik sebesar 82% (70 orang). Penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa wanita lebih banyak mengalami stres dibandingkan pria, pelajar yang berada di perguruan tinggi lebih banyak mengalami stres dibandingkan dengan pelajar yang berada di sekolah menengah. Namun, gender, tingkat pendidikan tidak signifikan memiliki korelasi dengan stres akademik, sedangkan kesejahteraan spiritual yang dimiliki pelajar memiliki korelasi yang lemah dengan stres akademik yang dialami pelajar.

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INTRODUCTION

After the second World War, the Covid-19 pandemic was the disaster that caught the world's attention the most (I. & P., 2020). The origin of Covid-19 itself is still a mystery, but epidemiologically it is thought to have occurred in a fish market in the city of Wuhan, Hubei Province, China(Susilo et al., 2020; Wang, Pan, Wan, Tan, Xu, H o, et al., 2020). This virus was only discovered in December 2019, on January 24, 2020, it spread to 13 countries and then more than 100 countries became infected (Fardin, 2020; Shereen, Khan, Kazmi, Bashir, & Siddique, 2020; Susilo et al., 2020; Wang, Pan, Wan, Tan, Xu, McIntyre, et al., 2020) According to the World Health Organization (WHO), this pandemic takes not only human lives but also creates economic and social problems for the community (Kowalczyk et al., 2020). In addition, the Covid-19 pandemic has put humans in psychological problems such as fear, anxiety, and suffering (Kowalczyk et al., 2020). Stress, depression, and anxiety in the Covid-19 pandemic have resulted in physical illnesses such as chills, muscle aches, coughs, dizziness, coryza (acute inflammation of the mucous membranes of the nasal cavity) and sore throat (Wang, Pan, Wan, Tan, Xu, Ho, et al., 2020).

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the results of research conducted by Taufik and Ifdil (2013) in public high schools in Padang were that 13.2% experienced high levels of academic stress, 71.8% experienced moderate levels of academic stress and 15% experienced low levels of stress. The COVID-19 pandemic also threatens the psychological condition of students. As a result of the change in the learning system, which was previously face-to-face, it has now been changed to a Distance Learning System (PJJ). Students who are in higher education also experience stress due to changes in the learning system (Livana, Mubin Mohammad Fatkhul & Basthomi, 2020). Of the 190 students studied, 79 experienced mild anxiety, 23 experienced mild stress, and 7 experienced mild depression (Hasanah, Ludiana, Immawati, & PH, 2020). In other countries such as the United States, of the 195 students studied, 71% or 138 people experienced increased stress and anxiety due to the Covid-19 pandemic (Son, Hegde, Smith, Wang, & Sasangohar, 2020). In Ethiopia, as many as 322 people studied, 21.2% experienced depression, 27.7% experienced anxiety and 32.5% experienced stress (Aylie, Mekonen, & Mekuria, 2020).

Harrington (2012) defines stress as a form of cognitive, affective, physiological, and behavioural reactions in humans due to situations that threaten them. Stress is a psychological condition with a long range that affects a person's psychological arousal, which leads to a negative mood, affects cognitive capacity, physical health and also affects a person's immune system (Matsumoto, 2009:524; S. Menaga, 2014). In other words, stress causes a change that occurs in the body and mind, contributes to psychological (mental health) and physiological (physical) disorders, which have an impact on the person's low quality of life (VandenBos, 2015:1036).

Academic stress is a combination of academic demands and individual adaptability (Wilks, 2008). Academic stress is a reaction to pressure from school or education (S. Menaga, 2014). Humans and the environment is a complex combination of stress (Lazarus & Cohen, 1977). Parents assume that learning will not bring their children to stressful conditions (Reddy, Menon, & Thattil, 2018). However, it is precisely stress that is vulnerable to adolescence because it is burdened by parents' wishes who want to learn values according to the expectations they have set. Stress brought on both the hope of receiving excellent scores and the dread of receiving poor grades (Pascoe, Hetrick, & Parker, 2019). It is also said by Fröjd et al. (2008) that depression experienced by students, often occurs due to low points on academic achievement or also the number of academic achievement points that decrease from previous academic achievements. Academic stress can be initiated by a feeling of failure to meet the expectations that are imposed so that it leads to conditions of stress and depression (Sarita & Sonia, 2015). This academic pressure will lead to tension in the face of career and future (Sarita & Sonia, 2015). This situation makes academic performance worse (Owens, Stevenson, Hadwin, & Norgate, 2012).

Adolescents who experience depression or anxiety in their academic performance caused by family factors or individual factors for an extended period can experience poor mental health in the future. At the ages of 13 and 15, when they were depressed, they were more likely to experience depression again between the ages of 36 and 53. In addition, students who have attempted suicide before have also attempted suicide or at least had suicidal ideation (Fergusson, Boden, & Horwood, 2007). Predictors of academic stress triggers can be academic pressure, satisfaction, locus of control and gender (Karaman, Lerma, Vela, & Watson, 2019). In addition to academic stress, a study conducted by Abdulghani, AlKanhal, Mahmoud, Ponnamperuma, & Alfaris (2011) found that physical problems correlate with stress levels.

Stress in high school and college students is also described by Pascoe et al. (2019) has negative impacts such as learning ability, academic performance, mental and physical health, sleep quality and quantity, use of illegal drugs, education and achievement in students. For this reason, according to Pascoe et al. (2019), it is necessary to have an ability and skill in stress management for students. According to Almigbal (2015) research results, high stress among academics indicates the need to establish a mental health and counselling service.

Spiritual welfare is an important variable in human life on this earth. In addition to having an important role and benefits for human life (Brown, 2012; Ekşi & Kardaş, 2017), spiritual well-being can provide various other benefits for academic life (Muñoz-garcía & Aviles-herrera, 2014). In Indonesia, spirituality and religion are integrated into the National Education System Law to obtain superior future generations. At the beginning of Indonesia's independence, the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia was issued, which mandates the Indonesian Government to seek and organize a national education system that increases faith and piety to God Almighty and noble character in the context of educating the nation's life which is regulated in law.This became the basis for the issuance of the National Education System Law or abbreviated as the National Education System Law no. 20 of 2003 in the article (4), which reads "national education aims to develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe and fear ...".

Spirituality and religion are characteristics of humans, where there is a belief and a practice that is carried out based on that belief. This belief is persuasive, stable, and pervasive in the human psyche, where humans believe that there is a transcendent or non-physical dimension (Peterson & Seligman, 2004:600). According to Ellison (1983), spiritual well-being refers to a person's tendency to have a meaningful life and life purpose without anything to do with religion, which is also called existential welfare. Not only that, according to Ellison (1983), spiritual well-being also refers to the relationship between humans and their God, which is called religious welfare. (Fisher, 2011) mentions that humans intentionally create spiritual well-being to develop themselves, which is spiritual well-being.

Based on a study conducted, religious denominations and satisfaction with life values can provide academic success. Spiritual-based coping strategies provide benefits for academic achievement and success for educational institutions (Cox, 2011). Spiritual well-being is also useful for overcoming the problem of academic dishonesty (Muñoz-garcía & Aviles-herrera, 2014). It is also said that religious beliefs and rituals can be a coping strategy to deal with problems of anxiety, stress and even depression (Musa, Pevalin, & Al Khalaileh, 2018). Research conducted by Cox (2011) previously correlated spirituality, stress and academic performance where he found no correlation between spirituality and anxiety and no correlation between stress and academic performance. Meanwhile, Alsalhi, Almigbal, Alsalhi, & Batais (2018) investigated the relationship between stress and academic achievement, where they found that high stress resulted in poor academic performance.

However, due to the large number of studies that reveal contradictory relationships between spirituality and academic stress, the scope of research is limited. This research is needed to see the relationship between spiritual well-being and academic stress experienced by students in Riau

during this pandemic. It is hoped that this research will become a reference in making decisions to implement appropriate and efficient interventions in dealing with academic stress problems.

METHODS

This study uses a cross-sectional research method by looking at the correlation between spiritual well-being and academic stress on students in the Indragiri Hulu area, Riau. The target respondents in this study were aged 18 to 22 years who were in middle school to college in Indragiri Hulu, Riau. Sample size in correlation research is at least 30 people (Gay, L.R. & Diehl, 1992). However, in this study, we took a sample of 85 people. The larger the number of samples taken, the better and more representative (Gay, L.R. & Diehl, 1992).

The instrument used to measure spiritual well-being is the Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWB-S) instrument developed by Ellison (1983), consisting of 20 question items adapted into Indonesian. By giving a score from 1 to 6, with the answer choices "strongly agree", "moderately agree", "agree", "disagree", moderately disagree", and "strongly disagree". The respondent's highest answer score is 120 points, and the lowest score is 20 points. The instrument was tested for validity (see table 1. Validity test) and reliability (see table 2. Recapitulation of Spiritual Well-Being Instrument Reliability Test).

Table 1. Recapitulation of Instrument Validity Test Spiritual Well-being

Statement Items	Correlation coefficient (r)	Information
1. I find no satisfaction in praying with God	0.416**	Valid
2. I don't know who I am, where I come from and where I'm going	0.440**	Valid
3. I believe that God loves me and cares for me	0.471**	Valid
4. I feel life is a positive experience	0.405**	Valid
5. I believe that God is not interested in my life	0.493**	Valid
6. I feel uncomfortable with my future	0.578**	Valid
7. I have a meaningful personal relationship with God	0.433**	Valid
8. I feel very satisfied with the life I have	0.459**	Valid
9. I don't feel like I get much strength and support from God	0.633**	Valid
10. I feel I have a purpose in life that is prosperous	0.365**	Valid
11. I believe that God cares about the problems I'm experiencing	0.491**	Valid
12. I don't really enjoy life	0.515**	Valid
13. I personally do not have a satisfying relationship with God	0.539**	Valid
14. I feel happy with my future	0.450**	Valid
15. My relationship with God helps me not to feel lonely	0.353**	Valid
16. I feel that my life is full of conflict and unhappiness	0.428**	Valid
17. I feel satisfied when I am in a close relationship with God	0.504**	Valid
18. Life doesn't have much meaning	0.473**	Valid
19. My relationship with God contributes to a feeling of well-being	0.442**	Valid
20. I believe there is a real purpose in my life	0.379**	Valid

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 2. Recapitulation of Instrument Reliability Test Spiritual Well-being

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.723	21

In testing the instrument's validity, if t_{count} is greater than t_{table} then the instrument is said to be valid (Sundayana, 2010:61). Based on Table 1, recapitulation of the welfare Instrument validity test above, all of the spiritual welfare items developed by Ellison after adaptation to Indonesian showed valid results. In testing the reliability of the instrument, Guilford criteria for reliability. The coefficient of 0.723 belongs to high reliability (Sundayana, 2010:71). The Academic Stress Scale (ASS) instrument developed by (Kohn & Frazer, 1986) consists of 33 statement items adapted into Indonesian to measure academic stress. By giving a score from 1 to 5, with the answer choices "not stressed", "often stressed", "sometimes stressed", "always stressed", and "very stressed". The highest answer score is 165 points, and the lowest answer score is 33 points.

Table 3. Recapitulation of Instrument Validity Test Academic Stress

Statement Items Conditions that Cause Stress (Stressors)	Correlation coefficient (r)	Information
1. Final score	0.401**	Valid
2. A lot of homework (PR)	0.346**	Valid
3. Papers	0.185	Invalid
4. Exam	0.228*	Valid
5. Study for exams	0.213	Invalid
6. Paper presentation	0.437**	Valid
7. Waiting for the promotion test	0.413**	Valid
8. Lecturer/teacher speaks too fast	0.470**	Valid
9. Quiz	0.401**	Valid
10. Forgot to do homework	0.533**	Valid
11. Unfinished task	0.647**	Valid
12. The task is not clear / not understood	0.584**	Valid
13. Not ready to respond to questions	0.613**	Valid
14. The announcement will be a quiz	0.465**	Valid
15. Studying the wrong subject matter	0.456**	Valid
16. Giving the wrong answer	0.377**	Valid
17. No class	0.153	Invalid
18. Buying a textbook	0.203	Invalid
19. Learn a new skill	0.453**	Valid
20. Unclear course objectives	0.497**	Valid
21. Hot study room	0.322**	Valid
22. Learn a language	0.551**	Valid
23. Boring class	0.430**	Valid
24. Entered the wrong class	0.573**	Valid
25. Class is late	0.062	Invalid
26. The study room is too cold	0.571**	Valid
27. Too late	0.468**	Valid
28. Forgot to bring a pencil/pen	0.277*	Valid
29. Take notes on the subject matter	0.485**	Valid
30. When studying, there is noise	0.640**	Valid
31. Lessons that are not relevant to the major	0.402**	Valid
32. The class is too crowded	0.223*	Valid
33. Class without open discussion	0.422**	Valid
34. Evaluating the work of classmates	0.211	Invalid
35. Poor lighting	0.105	Invalid

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 4. Recapitulation of Instrument Reliability Test
Academic Stress

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.733	29

Then after testing the validity of the academic stress instrument using SPSS 16.00 for windows, 28 items were found to be valid statements, while seven items were not valid statements. For instrument reliability testing, items that are not valid are not included in the reliability test (Sundayana, 2010: 70). It can be seen from Table 4. Recapitulation of Reliability Test of Academic Stress Instruments, the reliability coefficient of 0.733 is categorized as high reliability.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

There were as many as 105 questionnaire packages distributed, with up to 20 incompletely filled, based on the total number of questionnaire packages distributed. There were a total of 85 packages of questions that could be processed in one day. As observed in Table 5, student characteristics, the total number of respondents was 85 students, with more than half of the respondents being female, i.e. 70% or as many as 59 individuals. In contrast, male responders accounted for 30% of the total or as many as 26 individuals.

Table 5. Characteristics of Students (n = 85)

Variabel		n[a] (%)
Gender	Man	26 (30%)
	Woman	59 (70%)
Level of education	Secondary school	49 (58%)
	College	36 (42%)
Academic Stress	Tall	14 (18%)
	Currently	56 (66%)
	Low	15 (16%)
Spiritual Well-being	Tall	30 (35%)
	Currently	49 (58%)
	Low	6 (7%)

Respondents in high school accounted for as many as 49 people, or approximately 58 per cent, of the total. In comparison, respondents in college accounted for as many as 36 people or approximately 42 per cent. It was discovered that, out of 85 responses, 14 persons experienced considerable academic stress, accounting for approximately 18 per cent of the total; 56 individuals, accounting for 66 per cent of the total; and 15 individuals, accounting for 16 per cent of the total. There are 30 individuals, or 35 per cent, who have a high level of spiritual well-being, 49 individuals, or 58 per cent who have moderate spiritual well-being, and 6 individuals, or 7 per cent, who have low spiritual well-being, based on the level of spiritual well-being among students.

The relationship between academic stress and student variables can be seen in that the number of stressed students is dominated by female students by 88% while male students by 69%. This is similar to research in Saudi Arabia and America that stress is more common among women compared to men (Alsalhi et al., 2018; Misra & Castillo, 2004). In life, women tend to be more influenced by stressors when compared to men (Mayor, 2015). Women react more to anger,

anxiety, frustration and depression. Where anxiety and frustration are associated with stress in humans (Calvarese, 2015), another reason could be that women have less freedom compared to men to do activities to avoid stress (Alsalhi et al., 2018; Kumar & Bhukar, 2013). If the statistical calculation of the significance value is greater than the alpha value (α), Ho is rejected (Sundayana, 2010:179). The calculation results using SPSS 16.00 for windows yielded a significance value of 0.073 > = 0.01. This indicates that there is no significant difference between the academic stress of the male and female groups.

Table 6. The relationship between academic stress and student variables

Variable		Stress	No Stress	Significance Value
Gender	Man	18 (69%)	8 (31%)	0.073
	Woman	52 (88%)	7 (12%)	
Level of education	Secondary school	40 (80%)	10 (20%)	0.362
	College	30 (86%)	5 (14%)	
Spiritual well-being	Tall	27 (90%)	3 (10%)	0.004
	Currently	41 (84%)	8 (16%)	
	Low	3 (50%)	3 (50%)	

When viewed from the level of education, students experience more stress than students in high school, namely 86% and 80%, respectively. However, if it is seen from the significance value of the results of statistical calculations using SPSS 16.00 for windows of 0.362 > = 0.01, it can be concluded that there is no difference between the two groups of colleges and students. Although sometimes academic and environmental problems can be a stressor for college students (Yikealo, Yemane, & Karvinen, 2018). However, stress can also positively impact students to make them think about the importance of being in college (Robotham, 2008). Meanwhile, students with a high level of well-being experience more stress, which is around 90% compared to students who have moderate and low spiritual well-being with moderate and non-stressed levels of stress. From statistical testing using SPSS 16.00 for windows, a statistically significant value of 0.002 was obtained with a Pearson Correlation of 0.325. According to Khamis (2008), the value of r = 0.3 is interpreted as having a weak correlation.

CONCLUSION

It becomes homework for teachers and counsellors to assist children experiencing high and medium levels of stress, which accounts for 82 per cent of the population. Since academic stress and spiritual well-being have such a poor relationship, teachers and counsellors in schools and colleges must rethink service programs in order to give suitable treatments in dealing with students' academic stress concerns. Further research is required on the spiritual well-being variable in order to develop a spiritual welfare instrument that is appropriate for the conditions of the people in Indonesia, given that the spiritual well-being instrument developed by Ellison has a ceiling effect for Indonesians who adhere to religious beliefs. Furthermore, the tool devised by Ellison to discuss spiritual well-being continues to rely on limiting perspectives, particularly religion and existentialism.

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