

Self-Acceptance and Spiritual Well-Being as Determinants of Student Happiness

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Abstract

Some students do not feel happiness because they are too down on themselves and tend to give up when facing difficulties. Happiness is positive feelings and positive activities without experiencing negative feelings. The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of self-acceptance and spiritual well-being on the happiness of SMA X students in Purwokerto, Central Java, Indonesia. The research method used is a quantitative approach with a correlational type, with a sample size of 121 students. Self Acceptance Scale, Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire (SWBQ), and Authentic Happiness Scale (AHS) were used as data collection instruments. Statistical analysis used multiple linear regression tests. The results showed that there is an influence of self-acceptance and spiritual well-being on student happiness. The results of this study can be used as a basis for developing more effective interventions for improving student well-being.

Keywords: Self-Acceptance, Spiritual Well-Being, Happiness, Student

Introduction:

Senior High School education is a comprehensive program designed to prepare students for the next step in their educational journey (Bendejo et al., 2019). Nurazizah et al. (2022) argue that the role of students can be the foundation for the development of a creative generation that is able to make things that are useful not only for themselves but also for others. Fostering a supportive school environment can help the development of students' emotional intelligence. Proper facilities and infrastructure should be available in schools to enhance student learning and create a calm and comfortable learning environment (Anggraeni, 2018).

Students in Senior High School have reached adolescence, which is a stage where young people can develop problems that lead to unhappiness (Anas et al., 2022). Students in adolescence are characterized by a number of challenges, a period full of emotional upheaval, a period of being lost, and a period of identity search (Azmi, 2015). Students in adolescence need support from family, educators, and friends as they are a safe place to share (Olana & Tefera, 2022). High school students' emotions have a greater influence than students' realistic thinking. Many students have difficulty managing emotions well, despite the fact

that increasing cognitive capacity and awareness can better equip students to deal with emotional changes (Fauzi & Purnama Sari, 2018). As a result, students have a higher tendency to become angry and lose emotional control, which can result in a number of problems (Yuliani, 2013). In addition, the demands of school activities, academic pressures, and school-related stress are the main causes of students' bad feelings and unhappiness (Masdudi, 2019). Students' stress levels and well-being are associated with the transition from junior to senior high school, indicating that academic demands and pressures increase as students progress through their education (Klapp et al., 2023). Regardless of one's background, age, residential location, social class, or religion, happiness is a goal and source of hope for everyone. Happiness is the idea of having positive feelings and engaging in positive activities without experiencing bad feelings (Seligman, 2005).

Islamic-based schools conduct religious activity programs by inviting their students to actively participate in various platforms provided by the school, where they can gain cultural familiarity as well as valuable time management and problem-solving skills (Ristanti & Salsabilla, 2021). Religious activities aim to develop students' moral character by exchanging insights and expanding activities related to Islamic religious beliefs (Ritonga et al., 2021). One of the most effective ways to grow in faith is through worship, as it allows us to build relationships and interact with Allah SWT (Hidayah et al., 2021). Worship that is recommended by Allah SWT includes prayer, fasting, dhikr, prayer, and reading the Qur'an. By doing these things, we can be sure that students will get guidance from Allah SWT (Susilo et al., 2022).

The results of the preliminary study found a number of problems, namely there are students who still have a low level of self-confidence, find it difficult to understand the meaning obtained every time they do various activities at school, have feelings of loneliness because they feel far from their closest friends so that they limit themselves in socializing, have thoughts of changing schools to be with their old friends rather than forming good

relationships with new friends, and feel they have excessive academic burden and pressure to be able to achieve the desired achievement so that they tend to choose to give up when taking exams. Hidayat & Na'imah (2016) found the problem of students feeling a lack of optimism and experiencing anxiety and fear of the school environment. The problem indicates that a number of students experience unhappiness in the school environment. These findings emphasize the need for attention to student well-being in schools in order to create an environment that supports students' positive growth. For this reason, it is necessary to examine the factors that influence students' happiness at school.

Several studies have shown that there are several factors that can affect happiness, namely friendship quality (Fangidae et al., 2023), self-acceptance (Lestiani, 2016), spiritual well-being (Feizi et al., 2020), emotional intelligence (Ghahramani et al., 2019), self-perception (Rina et al., 2022), self-esteem (Leonita et al., 2020), optimism (Nandini, 2016), *hardiness* (Erianti et al., 2021), spiritual intelligence (Condinata et al., 2019), security needs (Hidayat & Na'imah, 2016).

Happiness is important to research because it is related to increasing one's productivity, creativity, and performance (Ananda Krisma Delya, Tri Na'imah, Ugung Dwi Ario Wibowo, 2023). Medvedev & Landhuis (2018) recommend that happiness variables be investigated using internal variables, which requires a thorough understanding of the intricate relationships between various aspects of happiness, as happiness is a complex construct that is influenced by various internal causes and not a single outcome. Although many studies have identified factors, no study has comprehensively investigated how internal factors interact with each other and affect student happiness. Therefore this study conducted a measurement of internal variables to gain a better understanding of the construction of student happiness.

Self-acceptance facilitates the attainment of happiness as it offers students opportunities to fulfill their psychological needs, thus contributing

to their overall well-being (David, 2013). Several studies have found the influence of self-acceptance on happiness in schools. Widyasari et al. (2023) conducted a study of 122 seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 9 Depok which found self-acceptance to be an important basis for student happiness. Azrina Abharini research (2023) involving 381 high school students from class XI found that 66 students had high self-acceptance, 256 students were in the medium category, and 56 students were in the low category. Chen et al. (2020) and Khairuddin & Mahmud (2020) argue that self-acceptance is a factor that can affect happiness. With self-acceptance, individuals can grow independently and have a fulfilling life (Sheerer, 1949). When students accept themselves as they are, including strengths and weaknesses, they tend to have a more positive attitude towards themselves. This allows students to face challenges with more confidence and take risks in achieving their goals. With self-acceptance, students feel more satisfied with their lives, gaining happiness that comes from genuine self-satisfaction and appreciation of their lives.

Happiness can be achieved by individuals if they have spiritual well-being (Muhjab & Sunawan, 2021). Feizi et al. (2020) argue that spiritual well-being can make a significant contribution to happiness and have a significant effect. Pandya (2017) conducted research on 5339 adolescents from 60 schools in 15 countries with the result that adolescents from countries that are relatively prosperous and practice spiritual well-being get higher scores. The study showed that spirituality is an important variable for 13-15-year-olds. Spiritual Well-Being supports personal development, contentment, and the satisfaction of basic psychological needs which are necessary for happiness (Božek et al., 2020). The extent to which individuals can live in harmony with one another in the four domains of personal relationships, community, environment, and God is a measure of their spiritual well-being (J. Fisher, 2010). Spiritual well-being helps individuals develop personally, achieve fulfillment in their lives, and fulfill basic psychological needs such as belonging and being

loved. The experience of happiness is seen as the result of an individual's alignment with various aspects of their life, including personal relationships, relationships with the community, the physical environment, and conceptions of God or higher meaning.

This study fills a population gap identified from research on happiness. A number of previous studies have highlighted aspects of happiness in various groups, including employees (Lestiani, 2016), junior high school students (Widyasari et al., 2023), university students (Feizi et al., 2020), teenagers in Islamic boarding schools (Primada & Fadhillah, 2016), teachers (Aziz, 2011), lecturers (Mahani et al., 2020), special school teachers (Cahyaningtyas et al., 2020), elementary school students (Affandi et al., 2020), and high school students (Fangidae et al., 2023). The renewal of this study is to use students from Islamic-based schools as research participants. Religious elements in the educational environment can provide a strong foundation for understanding the relationship between self-acceptance, spiritual well-being, and happiness. Students in an Islamic-based educational environment are likely to be exposed to religious and cultural values that prioritize self-acceptance, spiritual well-being, and happiness in the context of their faith. M. Suud & Na'imah (2023) argue that education in Islamic schools provides religious teachings and spiritual values that strengthen the understanding of the meaning of life in the context of Islam. Students from Islamic schools experience higher positive emotions, peace, and life satisfaction due to their involvement in religious practices and appreciation of spiritual values.

This study examines students' personal power as the focus of research because it is believed to have the potential to significantly influence changes in individual behavior or emotions. The main basis for this research is Self Determination Theory, which suggests that internal factors, including psychological needs, values, and interests, have a major impact on how individuals act. The theory identifies three core human psychological needs, namely relatedness, competence, and autonomy, which promote personal growth as well as better

mental well-being and higher motivation. This concept emphasizes the importance of personal development and fulfillment through meeting basic psychological needs (Ryan, 1985). This study also aims to understand the role of self-acceptance and spiritual intelligence variables on happiness.

Methods:

The research method applied was a quantitative approach with a correlational type. The participants in this study consisted of 161 students of SMA X in Purwokerto, Central Java, Indonesia. They consisted of 44 male students (36%) and 77 female students (64%). The age distribution of the participants was as follows: one student aged 14 (1%), 47 students aged 15 (39%), 69 students aged 16 (57%), three students aged 17 (2%), and one student aged 18 (1%).

Data collection used modified scales from the Self Acceptance Scale (Sheerer, 1949), the Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire (SWBQ) (R. G. & J. W. Fisher, 2005), and the Authentic Happiness Scale (AHS) (Seligman, M, E, P. & Christoper, 2002). This study compiled a scale using a Likert scale made in the form of closed questions to assess favorable and unfavorable sentiments towards an attitude object (Azwar, 2013). The number of alternative answers consists of Strongly Agree (SS), Agree (S), Neutral (N), Disagree (TS), and Strongly Disagree (STS).

The Self Acceptance Scale was modified from Sheerer (1949) scale which was developed into 26 items. The dimensions consist of feeling equal, believing in one's abilities, taking responsibility,

outward orientation, and taking a stand. The scale consists of favorable and unfavorable statements. With a reliability coefficient value of $\alpha = 0.864$.

Spiritual Well-Being was measured using a modified scale of the Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire (SWBQ) (R. G. & J. W. Fisher, 2005) consisting of 17 items. This scale consists of personal domain, communal domain, environmental domain, and transcendental domain with a reliability coefficient value of $\alpha = 0.891$.

Happiness was measured using a modified scale of the Authentic Happiness Scale (AHS) (Seligman, M, E, P. & Christoper, 2002) consisting of 17 items. The items were developed based on the dimensions of positive relationships with others, full involvement, meaning in daily life, realistic optimism, and resilience with a reliability coefficient value of $\alpha = 0.865$.

The data analysis technique used multiple linear regression tests to determine how strong the relationship between the variables of self-acceptance and spiritual intelligence with happiness. The statistical model was built to predict the value of the dependent variable based on the values of the independent variables.

Results and Discussion:

Results:

Multiple linear regression analysis is a method used to determine the extent to which the relationship between independent variables affects the dependent variable. Information about the partial test results can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Partial Test Results

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients			
	B	Std.Error	Beta	t	Sig.	R square
Constant	50.711	6.203		8.175	0.000	
Self-Acceptance > Happiness	0.189	0.76	0.222	2.484	0.014	0.039
Constant	25.632	6.300		4.068	0.000	

Spiritual Well-Being > Happiness	0.596	0.092	0.509	6.452	0.000	0.373
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The partial test results of the self-acceptance variable with the t-test obtained a value of $t = 2.484$ with sig. of $0.000 < 0.05$, which means that there is a significant influence of self-acceptance on happiness. The coefficient of determination is indicated by the R Square value of 0.039, meaning that the self-acceptance variable affects happiness by 3.9%. Meanwhile, the second partial test of spiritual well-being variables with the t-test obtained a value of $t = 6.452$ with sig. of $0.000 < 0.05$, which means that there is a significant

influence of spiritual well-being on happiness. R Square's spiritual well-being is 0.373, meaning that spiritual well-being affects happiness by 37.3%.

Simultaneous testing of the model is done with the F test (joint regression test) to determine whether there is an influence of the independent variables together with the dependent variable. The results of the F test can be seen in Table 2:

Table 2. Simultaneous Test Results

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	R Square
Self-acceptance, spiritual well-being > happiness	Regression	3413,014	2	1706,507	22,888	.000 ^b	0.412
	Residual	8797,779	118	74,557			
	Total	12210,783	120				

The table shows the value of $F = 22.888$ with sig. $0.000 < 0.05$ which shows that self-acceptance and spiritual well-being affect student happiness. R square is 0.412, meaning that the variation in the rise and fall of happiness can be explained by 41.2% of self-acceptance and spiritual well-being.

Discussion:

Happiness can arise when students are able to accept themselves which allows students to overcome various obstacles and difficulties they face (Ningsih, 2019). Students in Islamic institutions are encouraged to engage in a process of self-reflection and self-improvement in order to develop self-acceptance. By learning to explore religion, actions, and social relationships, students can gain a deeper understanding of themselves and others which leads to self-acceptance (Gibbs, 2017). Self-acceptance at school is part of the aspect of establishing positive relationships with others that can affect happiness in individuals (Oktaviani, 2019). Positive friendship interactions among students are associated with higher levels of

happiness (Hidayat & Na'imah, 2016). This is related to the research of Widyasari et al. (2023) which suggests that Self-acceptance can affect happiness because it can provide opportunities for students to increase happiness through fulfilling students' psychological needs. The influence given is at a positive level which means that the better the self-acceptance, the better the happiness in students.

Students' activities at school play a role in creating happiness in students (Anas et al., 2022). When students are in excellent spiritual well-being, they can persevere through difficult times until they are in a state of good mental health (Latif, 2022). Effective Islamic religious education learning can improve students' spiritual well-being by involving time discipline, religious activities such as sunnah prayers in congregation, Qur'anic tadarus, and other activities that can foster inner unity and good social relationships. Religious activities have the potential to enhance happiness by fostering a positive outlook on various aspects of the surrounding environment, particularly when students already possess high levels of spiritual

well-being. This relates to environmental conditions in the domain of spiritual well-being which has a relationship with happiness (Özgenel & Yılmaz, 2020). This aligns with the research conducted by Feizi et al. (2020), which proposes that students develop life skills through the perseverance, resilience, and patience they exhibit when navigating challenging situations, ultimately leading to their attainment of happiness. These conditions indicate the existence of a good spiritual condition that is related to the resilience aspect of the happiness variable. This shows that spiritual well-being has an influence on happiness in students.

Self-acceptance and spiritual well-being are very important personal factors to achieve student happiness. Although both are important personal factors, the results of this study show that spiritual well-being plays a greater role by contributing 37.3% to student happiness, while self-acceptance contributes only 3.9%. Self-acceptance and spiritual well-being help create psychological balance in students. Self-acceptance helps students feel good about themselves, while spiritual well-being provides a strong foundation to overcome life's challenges with confidence and high hopes. By having both simultaneously, students are better able to deal with stress and pressure better, thus increasing their level of happiness.

Happiness emphasizes one's well-being, such as complete life satisfaction or the experience of pleasure (Maruti, 2021). Education in Islamic institutions focuses on the development of moral character that is believed to bring happiness including how students learn about the virtues of gratitude, patience, humility, and compassion as these are considered essential for life. Even the environment in Islamic educational institutions such as support from teachers, peers, and family can provide emotional and spiritual support that is important for students' mental and emotional well-being (Shahama et al., 2022). The findings of this study indicate that when students can acknowledge their limitations and enhance their spiritual well-being through religious practices and school-based learning, they are more likely to attain heightened

levels of happiness. Komarudin et al. (2022) argue that self-acceptance becomes a substantial mediating role when examining the relationship between happiness and social support, gratitude, and spirituality in students. The influence given is at a positive level which means that the better the self-acceptance and spiritual well-being, the better the happiness of students.

Based on this explanation, it can be concluded that self-acceptance and spiritual well-being are essential for student happiness. Self-acceptance helps students feel good about themselves, while spiritual well-being provides confidence to overcome life's challenges. With both, students are better able to deal with academic and non-academic problems and increase their happiness. The research findings show a positive relationship between self-acceptance, spiritual well-being, and student happiness, emphasizing their important role in Islamic-based education.

Conclusion:

The results showed a significant influence of Self-Acceptance and Spiritual Well-Being together on the level of student happiness. In addition, Self-Acceptance and Spiritual Well-Being individually also have a significant influence on student happiness. However, this study has limitations, namely the relatively small number of participants (121 students) and only using two independent variables (Self-Acceptance and Spiritual Well-Being) to assess the factors that influence student happiness. Therefore, the results of this study need to be interpreted with caution, and generalization of the results needs to be done with caution. For future research, it is recommended to use a larger sample so that the results are more reliable and generalization can be done better. In addition, future research can also deepen the understanding of other factors that can affect the level of student happiness, such as social support, the quality of interpersonal relationships, or school environmental factors. Consequently, we will gain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of

student happiness and the various factors that contribute to it.

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