Students' Spiritual Well-being Landscape: Insights from Indonesian Islamic Universities

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Abstract

Introduction: The rising prevalence of mental health concerns among students in Indonesian higher education necessitates thorough exploration. This study systematically investigates the intricate landscape of spiritual well-being among Indonesian students within Islamic universities. Methodology: Employing a rigorous mixed-methods approach, a survey covering 1547 students aged 18-22, consisting of 26.8% males and 73.2% females across 30 Indonesian Islamic universities was conducted, from Jawa (58.1%), Kalimantan (9.5%), Papua (4.5%), Sulawesi (7.8%), Sumatera (20.1%). This study systematically investigates the intricate landscape of spiritual well-being among Indonesian students within Islamic universities. Guided by Fisher's four-domain theory—personal, communal, environmental, and transcendental—the survey served as the analytical framework. Results: Survey outcomes reveal nuanced levels of spiritual well-being: very low (0.0%), low (42.3%), moderate (57.1%), high (0.6%), and very high (0.0%). The survey results highlight a diverse spectrum of spiritual well-being levels among students, with a significant portion falling into the low to moderate range. This indicates a clear imperative for interventions aimed at enhancing spiritual well-being among this demographic. In-depth interviews with 30 academics from 30 Islamic universities illuminate the repercussions of low spiritual well-being, impacting various dimensions of students' lives. Interview findings discern three distinctive counseling approaches: modern (reality, behavior, and REBT), post-modern (SFBC), and religious counseling (fill ard kholifah counseling). However, these approaches are underutilized, resulting in suboptimal provision of counseling services. The findings recommend each institution focus on crafting an Islamic counseling model to mitigate the prevalence of mental health concerns and significantly enhance students' spiritual well-being, aligning with the distinct characteristics of those studied in Islamic universities in Indonesia.

Keywords: *Students, Spiritual Well-Being, Islamic Universities, Indonesia.*

INTRODUCTION

The rising prevalence of mental health issues among students is a matter that demands urgent and comprehensive attention. In the Indonesian context, students often experience heightened stress and depression influenced by a combination of cultural, educational, and economic factors (Astutik et al., 2020; Suryaputri et al., 2022; Juliansen et al., 2024). The intense emphasis on academic achievement, deeply ingrained in Indonesian society, creates a pervasive expectation for students to excel academically. The national education system's emphasis on standardized exams and the competitive nature of university admissions intensifies the academic pressure (Manongga et al., 2018; Fadlia et al., 2021; Jiang et al., 2022). Additionally, societal expectations regarding specific career paths, often tied to familial and cultural values, contribute to a sense of obligation that can be overwhelming for students. Furthermore, financial stress is a significant contributor, given the economic disparities in Indonesia. Many students face challenges affording tuition, accommodation, and daily expenses, leading to heightened anxiety about their financial stability (Daud et al., 2018; Moore et al., 2021; Hidayat et al., 2023). This economic strain is further compounded by limited access to scholarships or financial aid. Cultural dynamics, such as the importance of family and community, can both be a source of support and a stressor. The pressure to uphold family honor and expectations can contribute to feelings of guilt or inadequacy, particularly if students perceive themselves as falling short of these expectations (Wang & Heppner, 2002; Windarwati et al., 2020). Then, every aspect of life encounters advancement in the current

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globalization era (Muawaliyah & Saifuddin, 2023). The widespread use of technology and social media also introduces additional challenges, including the fear of missing out (FOMO) and social comparison.

Drawing from Fisher's theory of spiritual well-being, the relationship between mental health and the level of spiritual well-being is elucidated through the lens of four distinct domains: personal, communal, environmental, and transcendental (Gomez & Fisher, 2003). Those with high spiritual well-being often experience a greater sense of purpose, contributing to positive mental health (Bożek et al., 2020; Coppola et al., 2021; Hamka et al., 2020). The personal domain emphasizes inner connection and values, fostering emotional resilience (Godor et al., 2023; Zach & Rosenblum, 2021; Kuo et al., 2024). Moreover, communal and environmental domains stress social connections and a harmonious environment, supporting mental health (Torres-Soto et al., 2022; Leung & Pong, 2021; Singh et al., 2023). Furthermore, the transcendental domain, focusing on connection to something greater, aids in coping with challenges and reducing stress (Fenzel & Richardson, 2022; Tamminga et al., 2023). So, imbalances in these domains may lead to vulnerabilities in mental health. Understanding this interplay emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach. Fisher's framework provides insights into nurturing spiritual well-being for positive mental health outcomes (Schwebel, 2017; Michaelson et al., 2023) offering a comprehensive perspective for theoretical exploration and practical applications in mental health interventions.

One notable theoretical framework in the realm of spiritual well-being is the Spiritual Well-Being Theory, formulated by psychologists including David B. Larson and his collaborators (Matthews et al., n.d.). Affiliated with the initiatives of the National Institute for Healthcare Research, this theory is structured around two fundamental dimensions. The first, Religious Well-Being, explores an individual's sense of connection with a higher power, the purpose and significance derived from religious beliefs, and the contentment with their relationship to a transcendent being or force (Mcbane, 2019). The second dimension, Existential Well-Being, centres on an individual's perception of life purpose, meaning, and satisfaction derived from a broader existential perspective, whether or not explicitly tied to a religious context (Binder, 2022). Larson's theory posits that individuals exhibiting elevated spiritual well-being typically encounter improved mental and physical health outcomes (Binder, 2022). This theoretical framework has found widespread application and adaptation in diverse fields such as psychology, medicine, and counseling, contributing significantly to an advanced comprehension of the intricate interplay between spirituality and overall well-being.

Alorani & Alradaydeh (2018) research at the University of Jordan reveals that 64% of students possess high spiritual well-being, emphasizing the significance of spirituality, religiosity, faith, and the meaning of life. This study also in line with the study from Kim & Lee (2013) that showed a positive correlation between spiritual well-being, perceived social support, and life satisfaction. It underscores how spiritual beliefs and religious attitudes encourage social engagement, enhancing psychological and social health, and increasing satisfaction with oneself, family, and friends (Pfeiffer et al., 2018). Additionally, students with high levels of meaning and purpose correlate positively with increased life satisfaction and a positive outlook on the future. Contrastingly, Straud's (2019) insight, based on the American Psychological Association's (APA) research, highlights the adverse effects of low spiritual well-being. In the U.S., 58% of adults reported stress symptoms, with 24% experiencing extreme stress, leading to various physical, emotional, and mental health problems. Chronic stress, as indicated, is associated with challenges in adjustment, lower academic achievement, decreased retention rates, and overall difficulties in academic success (Schraml et al., 2012; Alzukari & Gallo, 2023). Then, findings further confirmed this, noting that two out of ten Canadian students with poor spiritual well-being encountered stress symptoms during their higher education journey, affecting both academic activities and the overall educational experience (Michaelson et al., 2016). Lastly, research findings indicate that the spiritual well-being of students in Islamic boarding schools significantly influences their overall quality of life (Khamida et al., 2023).

Beyond the issue of stress, the prevalence of learning boredom is closely associated with the overall health of students, emerging as a widespread concern globally. According to Acharya (2018), a survey conducted by the Associated Press and mtvU in the United States revealed that approximately 40% of students frequently experience stress, and 10% have had thoughts of suicide. This vulnerability is attributed to students' developmental stages in life. Adjusting to a new college environment, managing academic expectations, and navigating higher education programs contribute to stress and behavioral challenges. Meanwhile, research by Hok Ko Pong (2017) further supports these observations, indicating that the spiritual well-being dimension of

students ranks lowest compared to other well-being dimensions. This lower spiritual well-being, in turn, diminishes students' coping abilities to effectively address various challenges in their daily lives. Beyond academic activities, the positive impact of spiritual well-being extends to other sectors, as evidenced by research findings from Suryani (2016). The study indicates a significant relationship between spiritual well-being and emotional exhaustion among nurses at Unhas Hospital, Makassar, with a P-value of -0.326 at α 0.004. This correlation implies that a higher level of spiritual well-being corresponds to a lower level of burnout in the emotional exhaustion dimension.

This study identifies gaps in existing literature compared to studies from previous researchers. While previous research highlights high spiritual well-being and its positive effects, it lacks specificity about the unique environment of Islamic universities in Indonesia. Additionally, there is a dearth of information on how academics contribute to students' spiritual well-being. The research gaps extend to the absence of studies linking stress and boredom to spiritual well-being within the specific context of Islamic universities. This study aims to address these gaps by exploring the nuanced relationship between spiritual well-being, academic roles, and the overall student experience in Indonesian Islamic universities, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the subject based on Fisher's theoretical framework.

As national assets, students in higher education are expected to possess high moral and intellectual maturity, undergoing a phase of self-discovery. The learning process should be designed to foster meaningful learning experiences and promote independence. The previous studies above indicate that spiritual well-being significantly enhances individuals' quality of life, enabling them to navigate tasks and challenges more effectively. The objective of cultivating students' spiritual well-being is a long-term endeavor, preparing them to confront the professional challenges associated with stressful occupations (Zheng, 2022; Chaudhry & Chhajer, 2023), particularly in the field of education. This emphasis is particularly crucial for students attending Islamic universities, where a higher level of spirituality is expected. Islamic universities impart academic education across various scientific disciplines while concurrently emphasizing religious character education (Basri & Maros, 2023), making spiritual well-being a cornerstone of their educational approach. Therefore, it is imperative to analyze the level of spiritual well-being among students in Indonesian Islamic universities at the national level to ascertain their mental health condition. This investigation should be supplemented by exploring the roles and experiences of academics as a best practice to evaluate the effectiveness of counseling services provided at these universities. This is especially relevant in comprehending the ways in which these services contribute to the improvement of students' spiritual well-being.

Rationale of The Study

The research endeavors to contribute to scholarly discourse by introducing novel elements and systematically exploring the multifaceted aspects of spiritual well-being within Indonesian Islamic universities. A primary innovation lies in the study's focused examination of the intersection between spirituality, education, and cultural nuances within the unique context of Islamic academic settings, offering insights that transcend conventional higher education well-being research. An additional distinctive feature is the nationwide scope of the study, involving a comprehensive survey of 1547 students across various Islamic universities in Indonesia. This broad sampling strategy enables a nuanced analysis of regional variations, cultural influences, and diverse factors shaping students' spiritual well-being. This approach aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the intricate dynamics influencing spiritual fulfilment.

The research novelty is multifaceted. Firstly, the application of Fisher's theoretical framework, encompassing personal, communal, environmental, and transcendental dimensions (Fisher, 2011), adds a structured and comprehensive lens to comprehend the nuanced interplay shaping students' spiritual well-being. The survey component, involving a substantial number of students, contributes methodological innovation by allowing for a systematic analysis of the scale of spiritual well-being, providing insights into regional variations and cultural influences. Qualitative insights from interviews with 30 academics at 15 Islamic universities constitute another innovative aspect. Going beyond traditional student-centric studies, this qualitative method explores the roles and experiences of academics, shedding light on the impact of students' spiritual levels on the broader university environment (Ma & Wang, 2022). This exploration encompasses how spiritual well-being influences academic

success (David et al., 2022; Midi et al., 2019), contributes to campus culture, and shapes the implementation of counseling services. Moreover, the research delves into the techniques employed in group counseling services within Islamic Universities, a relatively unexplored area in previous studies. This dimension introduces a novel perspective, investigating the practical strategies that contribute to students' spiritual well-being, thereby providing valuable insights for enhancing support systems within the academic context.

In summary, **the research's novelty** lies in its systematic exploration of spiritual well-being within Indonesian Islamic Universities, employing Fisher's theoretical framework, utilizing a nationwide survey, incorporating qualitative insights from academics, and addressing the techniques employed in group counseling services. These innovative elements collectively contribute to a comprehensive understanding of students' spiritual fulfilment, bridging theoretical insights with practical applications for the enhancement of well-being support systems in Islamic educational settings.

Purpose or Hypotheses of The Study

The study aims to investigate the spiritual well-being of students in Indonesian Islamic universities, utilizing Fisher's four-domain theory. It focuses on detecting diverse levels of spiritual well-being, emphasizing the roles of academics and uncovering the consequences of low spiritual well-being on students' mental health, academic performance, and overall quality of life. Thus, the main research question is "How does the mean level of spiritual well-being among students at an Islamic university in Indonesia across the four domains—Personal, Communal, Environmental, and Transcendental—with assessment categories ranging from very low to very high?"

The purpose of the research question is to investigate and understand the average level of spiritual well-being among students enrolled in an Islamic university in Indonesia. The research aims to explore this phenomenon across four distinct domains—Personal, Communal, Environmental, and Transcendental. The inclusion of assessment categories ranging from very low to very high provides a comprehensive framework for evaluating and categorizing the spiritual well-being levels of the students. This research question seeks to uncover insights into the multidimensional aspects of spiritual well-being and contribute to a deeper understanding of how these domains contribute to the overall spiritual well-being of students within the specific cultural and educational context of an Islamic university in Indonesia.

In addition, there are 2 hypotheses in this research; Hypothesis 1: There is a significant variation in the overall level of spiritual well-being among Islamic university students in Indonesia; Hypothesis 2: Students demonstrate distinct levels of spiritual well-being in the four domains: Personal, Communal, Environmental, and Transcendental. These hypotheses provide a framework for testing and analyzing the data collected in the study.

METHODS

Design

The research design employed in this study is a mixed-methods approach, encompassing both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. This study systematically utilizes quantitative survey research methods, aiming to deliver a precise numerical depiction of tendencies, attitudes, or opinions within a given population through the examination of representative samples. The research strategically adopts a cross-sectional approach, involving the collection of data at a singular point in time, as recommended by Creswell (2018). In the context of a national-scale study, the cross-sectional approach is well-suited as it allows for the collection of data at a single point in time, providing a snapshot of the spiritual well-being of 1547 students in 30 Indonesian Islamic universities. This methodological choice not only facilitates a broad exploration of the research objectives but also ensures the feasibility and practicality of data collection and analysis on a nationwide scale.

In the qualitative phase of this research, comprehensive interviews were undertaken with 30 academicians serving as lecturers in Islamic education guidance and counseling within 30 distinguished Islamic Universities across Indonesia. The primary objective was to solicit their perspectives on the ramifications of diminished spiritual well-being among students. Furthermore, these interviews sought to elucidate prevalent counseling methodologies employed by these academics, evaluate the efficacy of their roles, and delve into their

experiential insights in providing counseling services within their respective academic institutions. This inquiry holds paramount significance in elucidating the substantive contributions of these services toward fortifying the spiritual well-being of students. The interviews were conducted utilizing a hybrid methodology, encompassing both offline and online platforms through mediums such as Google Meet or Zoom meetings.

Population and Methods Of Sampling

The study's population encompasses all students in Islamic universities across Indonesia, reflecting a nationwide perspective with 55 institutions under the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs. However, for focused analysis, the sampling specifically targets Muslim students aged 18-22 attending 30 Islamic universities on five islands in Indonesia. This deliberate selection aims to capture the unique experiences of this demographic, enhancing the depth of research contributions. Gathering data from 30 Islamic universities situated across the five major islands of Indonesia in a nationwide survey is imperative to ensure equitable representation of the nation's geographical and cultural diversity. The inclusion of universities from diverse islands enhances the survey's capacity to faithfully reflect the comprehensive national landscape. Survey results that are robustly generalizable serve as a cornerstone for precision in policymaking, facilitate nuanced regional comparisons, and provide a basis for further research aimed at a more thorough comprehension of regional dynamics. By embracing this diversity, the survey holds the potential to furnish in-depth insights into challenges and opportunities across various regions, thereby contributing to judicious and effective decision-making at the national level.

Screening participants through Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS), a sampling approach leveraging social networks, enables the examination of elusive or difficult-to-reach populations (Abadie et al., 2022). Utilizing Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS), a strategic method leveraging social networks, ensures a more inclusive examination of populations challenging to reach through conventional means. This aligns with the research commitment to comprehensiveness and inclusiveness, promoting diverse representation in the sample. Data collection took place from January 5 to January 26, 2024, with a total of 1547 respondents. The survey is administered through a Google Form link distributed across social media platforms such as Instagram and WhatsApp groups. Participants completing the survey are eligible to enter a prize draw, featuring two 32 GB flash disks, five Go-Pay (e-money) vouchers worth IDR 50,000, and five internet quota vouchers worth IDR 100,000.

Furthermore, beyond the primary focus on spiritual well-being, the collected data incorporates crucial sociodemographic variables such as gender, age, address, university, semester, and study program. This intentional inclusion broadens the study's analytical scope, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the diverse backgrounds within the sample population.

Instruments

The data collection methods employed in this study comprised interviews and questionnaires. Two types of instruments were utilized: an interview guide for qualitative data and a spiritual well-being scale questionnaire with a validation sheet for quantitative data. The scale was employed to gather data on the spiritual well-being levels of students enrolled in Islamic Universities. Adapted from Fisher, J.W. & Wong (2013) questionnaire on spiritual well-being, the scale was initially in English, and its translation was facilitated by the Language Development Unit (UPB) at the State Islamic University (UIN) Salatiga. The decision to adapt Fisher's questionnaire stemmed from its previously validated status, falling within the "very high" category. The instrument consists of 20 items designed to gauge spiritual well-being in students, measuring their needs for assistance focused on prevention, problem alleviation, and personal development. The questionnaire employs a scaled format, ranging from Very Low (VL), Low (L), Medium (M), High (H), to Very High (VH). The scale, adapted from Fisher, underwent testing via an instrument adaptation examination, adhering to the translation and cross-cultural adaptation concepts outlined by Lenz et al. (2017) concerning assessments for use in counseling research.

The questionnaire, designed in alignment with The Spiritual Well Being Scale by Fisher, explores four specific domains: Personal, Communal, Environmental, and Transcendental. Items 1 to 5 measure the Personal

Domain that focuses on aspects such as sense of identity, self-awareness, joy in life, inner peace, and meaning in life. Item 6-10 measure the Communal Domain that explores dimensions like love for other people, forgiveness toward others, trust between individuals, respect for others, and kindness toward other people. Then, item 11-15 measure the Environmental Domain that addresses participants' connection with nature, awe at a breathtaking view, oneness with nature, harmony with the environment, and a sense of 'magic' in the surroundings. Lastly, item 16-20 measure the Transcendental Domain that delves into the examination of a participant's personal relationship with the Divine/God, worship of the Creator, oneness with God, peace with God, and prayer life. Each domain contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the various aspects shaping an individual's spiritual well-being.

Meanwhile, an interview guide served as the instrument for collecting qualitative data. The following is a compilation of questions utilized as an interview guide for the purpose of gathering qualitative data.

How would you describe the impact of diminished spiritual well-being on students within the context of Islamic education and counseling?

Can you provide insights into the prevalent counseling methodologies employed by you and your colleagues to address issues related to students' spiritual well-being?

In your perspective, what role does spiritual well-being play in the overall development and academic success of students within an Islamic educational framework?

Could you share your views on the effectiveness of the counseling services you and your colleagues provide in enhancing the spiritual well-being of students?

How do you perceive the relationship between spiritual well-being and students' academic achievement?

Can you discuss any challenges or unique aspects encountered while providing counseling services related to spiritual well-being in an Islamic university setting?

In your experience, which counseling approaches have shown positive outcomes in addressing and improving students' spiritual well-being?

How do you assess the impact of your role as an academician and counselor in fostering a supportive environment for the spiritual well-being of students?

Could you share any notable trends or patterns observed in the spiritual well-being of students within the Islamic universities you have been associated with?

What recommendations or enhancements do you propose to further strengthen the contribution of counseling services to the spiritual well-being of students in the context of Islamic education?

Ethical Considerations

The Institute of Research and Community Service (LPPM) UNNES has reviewed and approved all research procedures, ensuring compliance with ethical guidelines outlined in the LPPM UNNES research guidelines. All individuals expressing interest in participating in the study have provided written informed consent. Ethical standards are upheld through a thorough process of obtaining written informed consent from all interested participants, ensuring transparency and ethical conduct throughout the research.

Analysis plan

The analysis for this study will be executed through a multi-faceted approach to comprehensively understand the landscape of spiritual well-being among students in Indonesian Islamic universities. In the initial phase, the survey data will be subjected to descriptive statistics, offering a clear depiction of the distribution of spiritual well-being levels. Percentages for each level, namely very low, low, moderate, high, and very high, will be calculated to quantify the prevalence among the surveyed population. Additionally, inferential statistics, such as chi-square tests, will be employed to discern any significant associations between demographic variables and spiritual well-being.

Moving to the qualitative phase, in-depth thematic analysis will be applied to the interview data gathered from academics. This analysis aims to identify recurring themes related to the consequences of low spiritual well-being, shedding light on its impact on mental health, academic performance, social relationships, and overall quality of life. Moreover, it will explore the nuanced roles and responsibilities of academics contributing to psychological issues among students. The counseling approaches extracted from the interviews will undergo evaluation, examining their utilization and effectiveness in addressing students' spiritual well-being. Patterns or preferences among academics in employing specific counseling methodologies will be identified. To ensure a comprehensive understanding, the survey and interview findings will be correlated to explore the relationship between spiritual well-being levels and their consequences.

Recommendations will be developed by synthesizing both data sources to address identified gaps and enhance support for students' spiritual well-being. The formulation of strategies for implementing an Islamic counseling model within Indonesian Islamic universities will be grounded in the unique context and characteristics revealed by the research. The analysis will be facilitated through statistical software like SPSS for quantitative data and qualitative data analysis tools like NVivo for in-depth exploration of interview data. A peer review process will be incorporated to refine the analysis plan and enhance the overall robustness of the research outcomes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This survey covered 1,547 students aged 18-22 years, with the following distribution of respondents based on age, gender and geographical location.
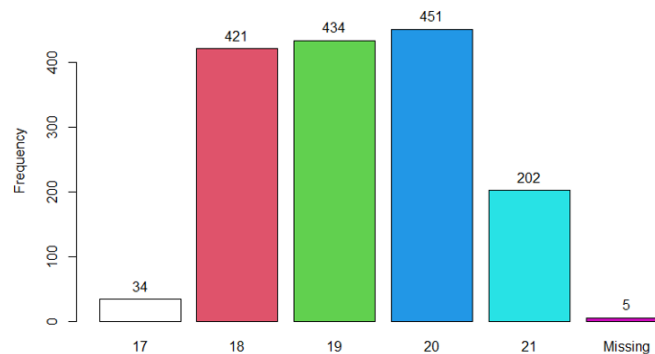

Table 1. distribution of respondents based on age

The data presented indicates that the study encompassed a total of 1,547 respondents. Within this sample, there were 34 individuals aged 17 years, 421 respondents aged 18 years, 434 participants aged 19 years, and 451 subjects aged 20 years. Notably, there were also 5 respondents for whom age information was not available. This detailed breakdown of the sample composition serves as a fundamental basis for further analysis, facilitating a deeper understanding of the demographic characteristics under examination within academic discourse.

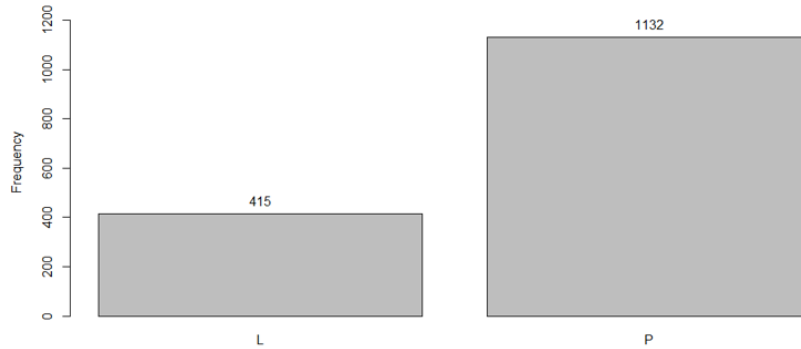Meanwhile, the following table illustrates the distribution based on gender.

Table 2. distribution of respondents based on gender

From the table above, it is evident that the number of male student respondents amounted to 415, constituting 28.8% of the total, whereas the number of female student respondents totaled 1132, representing 73.2%.

Moreover, the distribution of respondents according to geographical location is as follows:
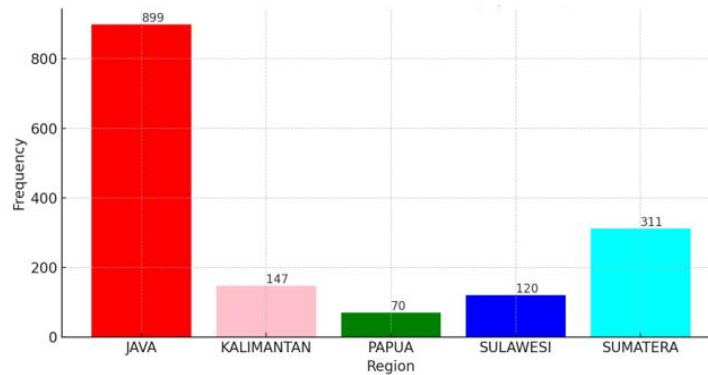

Table 3. distribution of respondents based on geographical location

Based on the data presented in the table above, it is evident that the respondents originated from 30 Indonesian Islamic universities, distributed as follows: Jawa accounted for 58.1%, comprising 899 students; Kalimantan represented 9.5%, with 147 students; Papua contributed 4.5%, involving 70 students; Sulawesi comprised 7.8%, totalling 120 students; and Sumatra constituted 20.1%, encompassing 311 students.

The survey includes 20 questions focusing on four different areas: Personal, Communal, Environmental, and Transcendental. Questions 1 to 5 are about the Personal Domain, questions 6 to 10 relate to the Communal Domain, questions 11 to 15 pertain to the Environmental Domain, and questions 16 to 20 address the Transcendental Domain. The following table presents the distribution of score data:
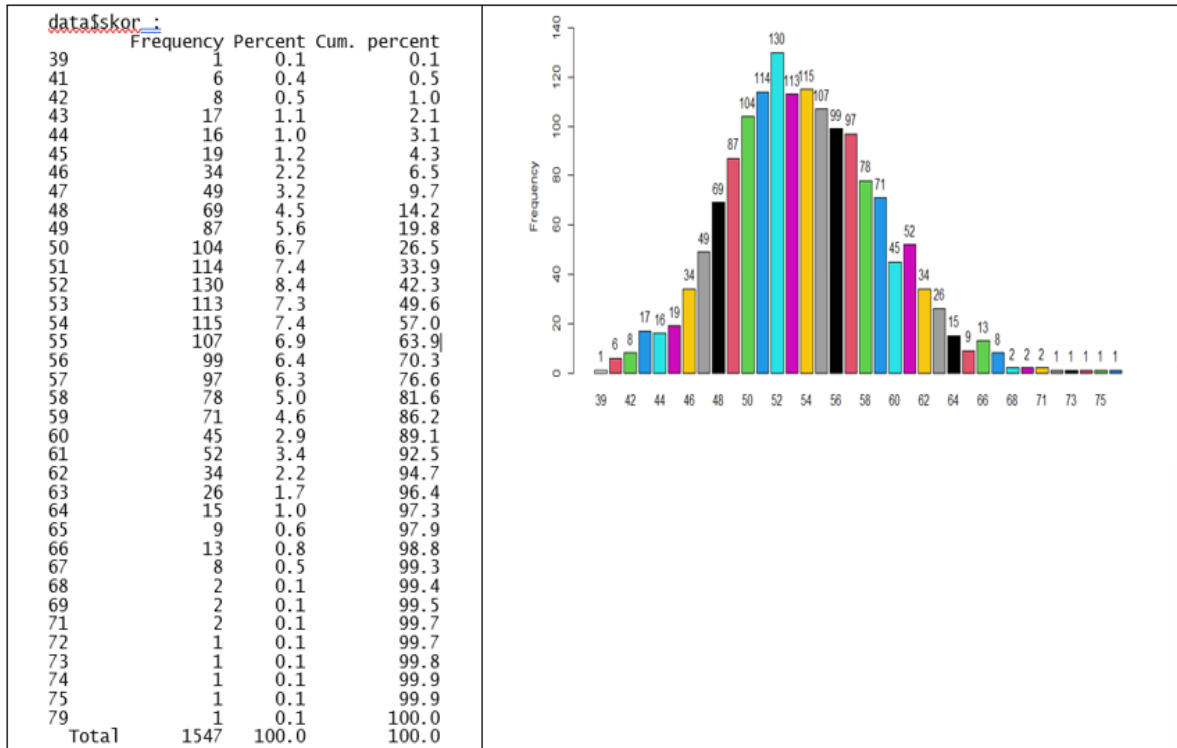
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data$skor :
         Frequency Percent Cum. percent
39           1      0.1          0.1
41           6      0.4          0.5
42           8      0.5          1.0
43          17      1.1          2.1
44          16      1.0          3.1
45          19      1.2          4.3
46          34      2.2          6.5
47          49      3.2          9.7
48          69      4.5         14.2
49          87      5.6         19.8
50         104      6.7         26.5
51         114      7.4         33.9
52         130      8.4         42.3
53         113      7.3         49.6
54         115      7.4         57.0
55         107      6.9         63.9|
56          99      6.4         70.3
57          97      6.3         76.6
58          78      5.0         81.6
59          71      4.6         86.2
60          45      2.9         89.1
61          52      3.4         92.5
62          34      2.2         94.7
63          26      1.7         96.4
64          15      1.0         97.3
65           9      0.6         97.9
66          13      0.8         98.8
67           8      0.5         99.3
68           2      0.1         99.4
69           2      0.1         99.5
71           2      0.1         99.7
72           1      0.1         99.7
73           1      0.1         99.8
74           1      0.1         99.9
75           1      0.1         99.9
79           1      0.1        100.0
Total     1547    100.0        100.0
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Table 4. distribution of data score

This table shows the frequency and percentage distribution of scores obtained by respondents. The "Frequency" column indicates the number of respondents who achieved a particular score, while the "Percent" column shows the proportion of respondents relative to the total number of respondents (expressed as a percentage). The "Cumulative percent" column demonstrates the cumulative percentage of respondents up to each score category. For instance, 39 respondents scored 1, which constitutes 0.1% of the total respondents. The cumulative percentage indicates that 0.1% of respondents scored 1 or less, 0.5% scored 2 or less, and so on until reaching 100% of the respondents.

Here are the summarized results of the respondents' spiritual well-being scale, as depicted in the following table.
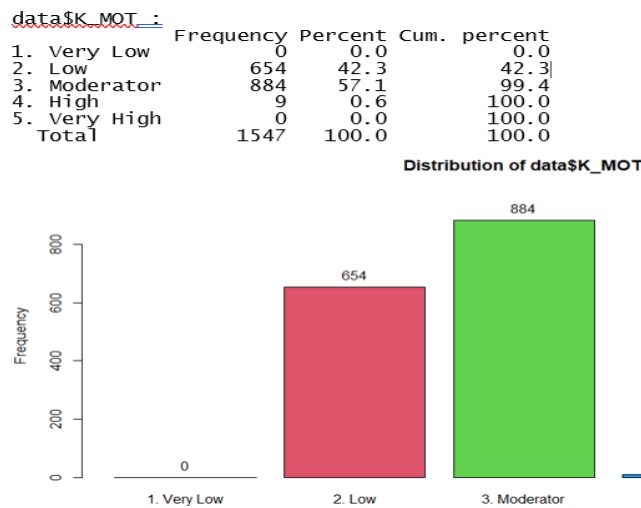
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data$K_MOT :
               Frequency Percent Cum. percent
1. Very Low           0     0.0          0.0
2. Low              654    42.3         42.3|
3. Moderator        884    57.1         99.4
4. High               9     0.6        100.0
5. Very High          0     0.0        100.0
   Total           1547   100.0        100.0
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Distribution of data$K_MOT

Table 5. respondents' spiritual well-being scale

The data provided offers a comprehensive breakdown of respondents' spiritual well-being levels across various categories. Notably, none of the respondents reported falling into the "Very Low" or "Very High" categories, indicating the absence of extremely low or high levels of spiritual well-being within the sample. Among the reported categories, "Low" spiritual well-being was the most prevalent, with 654 respondents, comprising 42.3% of the total sample population. The majority of respondents, accounting for 57.1% of the total, reported "Moderate" spiritual well-being, totalling 884 individuals. Conversely, a very small proportion of respondents, only 9 individuals representing 0.6% of the total, reported "High" spiritual well-being. These findings collectively highlight a predominant trend towards moderate spiritual well-being among the surveyed individuals, underscoring the significance of further investigation and potential interventions aimed at bolstering spiritual well-being within this demographic.

The data on respondents' spiritual well-being levels reveals a predominantly moderate level of spiritual well-being among the surveyed population, with 57.1% falling into this category. Low spiritual well-being was reported by 42.3% of respondents, while only a small fraction (0.6%) reported high spiritual well-being. Notably, no respondents reported very low or very high levels of spiritual well-being. This distribution suggests a general trend towards moderate spiritual well-being among the surveyed individuals. Additionally, the cumulative percentages indicate that the vast majority of respondents had been captured within the moderate and low categories, highlighting the prevalence of these levels of spiritual well-being within the sample population. This distribution reflects a substantial portion of students experiencing low to moderate levels of spiritual well-being, suggesting a significant need for targeted interventions to enhance their spiritual welfare.

Additionally, qualitative research was conducted to augment the quantitative data. In-depth interviews with 30 academics representing 30 Islamic universities provided rich insights into the ramifications of low spiritual well-being among students. Academics underscored the multifaceted impact of low spiritual well-being on students' academic performance, mental health, and overall quality of life. Additionally, the interviews elucidated three distinctive counseling approaches employed by academics: modern counseling techniques (e.g., reality therapy, behavior therapy, Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy - REBT), post-modern counseling methods (e.g., Solution-Focused Brief Counseling - SFBC), and religious counseling approaches (e.g., Fill Ard Kholifah counseling). Despite the availability of these counseling approaches, academics highlighted their underutilization, resulting in suboptimal provision of counseling services. The following presents the results of interview excerpts from respondents, which have been summarized by researchers.

Question 1: "How would you describe the impact of diminished spiritual well-being on students within the context of Islamic education and counseling?"

Response: "Diminished spiritual well-being among students in Islamic education settings has significant implications. It can lead to a sense of disconnection from their faith, affecting their overall mental health and academic performance. In counseling, we often see students struggling with issues like identity crisis, moral dilemmas, and existential concerns due to this diminished spiritual well-being".

Question 2: "Can you provide insights into the prevalent counseling methodologies employed by you and your colleagues to address issues related to students' spiritual well-being?"

Response: "Certainly. In our counseling efforts, we employ a variety of methodologies tailored to meet the unique needs of our students. These include modern approaches like reality therapy, behavioral therapy, and Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT), as well as post-modern approaches such as Solution-Focused Brief Counseling (SFBC). Additionally, we integrate religious counseling methods, like Fill Ard Kholifah counseling, which draws from Islamic teachings to address spiritual well-being".

Question 3: "In your perspective, what role does spiritual well-being play in the overall development and academic success of students within an Islamic educational framework?"

Response: "Spiritual well-being is foundational to holistic development within an Islamic educational framework. It not only shapes students' character and values but also provides them with a sense of purpose and direction in their academic pursuits. A strong spiritual foundation empowers students to navigate challenges with resilience and fosters a deeper understanding of their academic endeavors in the context of their faith".

Question 4: "Could you share your views on the effectiveness of the counseling services you and your colleagues provide in enhancing the spiritual well-being of students?"

Response: "While our counseling services have shown promise, there is room for improvement. We've observed positive outcomes in addressing students' spiritual well-being through our tailored approaches. However, challenges such as stigma surrounding mental health and limited resources sometimes hinder our efforts. Hence, there's a need for further collaboration and resource allocation to enhance the effectiveness of our counseling services".

Question 5: "How do you perceive the relationship between spiritual well-being and students' academic achievement?"

Response: "The relationship between spiritual well-being and academic achievement is intricate. A strong spiritual foundation can positively influence students' motivation, resilience, and overall well-being, thereby enhancing their academic performance. Conversely, diminished spiritual well-being may lead to distraction, disengagement, and decreased academic productivity. Thus, fostering spiritual well-being is integral to nurturing academic success among students".

Question 6: "Can you discuss any challenges or unique aspects encountered while providing counseling services related to spiritual well-being in an Islamic university setting?"

Response: "One of the significant challenges we face is the diversity of students' spiritual needs and understandings within an Islamic university setting. Balancing traditional Islamic teachings with contemporary counseling approaches requires careful navigation. Additionally, addressing cultural stigma surrounding mental health and promoting help-seeking behaviors remains an ongoing endeavor".

Question 7: "In your experience, which counseling approaches have shown positive outcomes in addressing and improving students' spiritual well-being?"

Response: "We've found that an integrated approach combining modern, post-modern, and religious counseling methodologies yields positive outcomes. By addressing students' psychological, existential, and spiritual needs holistically, we can effectively enhance their spiritual well-being. However, ongoing evaluation and adaptation of counseling approaches are crucial to meet the evolving needs of our students".

Question 8: "How do you assess the impact of your role as an academician and counselor in fostering a supportive environment for the spiritual well-being of students?"

Response: "As both an academician and counselor, fostering a supportive environment for students' spiritual well-being is central to my professional ethos. Through teaching, research, and counseling interventions, I strive to cultivate a culture of empathy, understanding, and holistic well-being within the university community. Regular feedback mechanisms and student engagement initiatives help assess the effectiveness of these efforts".

Question 9: "Could you share any notable trends or patterns observed in the spiritual well-being of students within the Islamic universities you have been associated with?"

Response: "Over the years, we've observed a growing awareness of the importance of spiritual well-being among students. However, there's also an increasing prevalence of existential concerns, moral dilemmas, and identity crises, particularly among those grappling with the challenges of modernity and globalization. These trends underscore the need for proactive interventions to support students' spiritual growth and resilience".

Question 10: "What recommendations or enhancements do you propose to further strengthen the contribution of counseling services to the spiritual well-being of students in the context of Islamic education?"

Response: "To strengthen the contribution of counseling services to students' spiritual well-being, we propose several enhancements. Firstly, investing in counselor training and professional development to equip practitioners with culturally sensitive and evidence-based approaches. Secondly, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration between religious scholars, psychologists, and educators to develop comprehensive counseling models rooted in Islamic principles. Lastly, advocating for destigmatization of mental health issues and

promoting a campus culture that prioritizes holistic well-being. These collective efforts can significantly enhance the support systems available to students within the Islamic educational context".

In summary, this study utilized qualitative research in conjunction with quantitative data to explore the effects of low spiritual well-being among students in Indonesian Islamic universities. Through interviews with academics, it was found that diminished spiritual well-being significantly impacts students' academic performance, mental health, and overall quality of life. Despite the presence of various counseling methods, such as modern, post-modern, and religious approaches, their underutilization remains a challenge.

DISCUSSION

The survey data presented in this study offers a thorough examination of the demographic characteristics and spiritual well-being levels among 1,547 students aged 18-22 from 30 Indonesian Islamic universities. The breakdown of respondents by age reveals a varied distribution, with the majority falling within the 19 and 20-year-old age brackets. Notably, while there were substantial numbers of respondents in the 18 and 19-year-old categories, the representation of individuals aged 17 was relatively small, indicative of the focus on young adults within the university age range. Moreover, the inclusion of respondents with unspecified age information, albeit a minor portion, underscores the challenges in data collection and underscores the importance of transparency in reporting sample demographics.

Regarding gender distribution, the data highlights a significant imbalance, with female students comprising the majority at 73.2% compared to 28.8% male students. This gender disparity could reflect broader societal trends or differential enrollment rates within Islamic higher education institutions. Further exploration into the underlying factors driving this gender gap could provide valuable insights into educational access and participation among male and female students in the context of Islamic education.

Geographically, the distribution of respondents across different regions of Indonesia offers insights into the diverse representation within the sample. The majority of respondents originate from Jawa, which is consistent with the region's status as the most populous island in Indonesia. Sumatra follows closely, suggesting significant participation from this region as well. Conversely, smaller proportions of respondents' hail from Kalimantan, Papua, and Sulawesi, reflecting regional disparities in educational access or representation within the study's sample. Understanding these regional variations is essential for contextualizing the findings and developing targeted interventions tailored to the unique needs of students across different geographic locations.

Analysis of respondents' spiritual well-being levels provides valuable insights into the psychological and existential dimensions of students' experiences within Islamic universities. The distribution of scores across different categories reveals a predominant trend towards moderate levels of spiritual well-being, with low spiritual well-being also prevalent among a substantial portion of the surveyed population. Notably, no respondents reported very low or very high levels of spiritual well-being, suggesting a relatively balanced distribution across the spectrum. However, the predominance of moderate and low levels underscores the importance of addressing spiritual well-being concerns and implementing targeted interventions to support students' holistic development and well-being.

Qualitative interviews with academics from 30 Islamic universities further enrich the study's findings by providing nuanced perspectives on the ramifications of low spiritual well-being among students. Academics underscored the multifaceted impact of diminished spiritual well-being on students' academic performance, mental health, and overall quality of life. Additionally, insights into counseling approaches employed by academics, including modern, post-modern, and religious methodologies, shed light on the diverse strategies utilized to address students' spiritual well-being needs. Despite the availability of these approaches, academics highlighted challenges such as underutilization of counseling services, emphasizing the need for enhanced support systems and interventions within Islamic educational settings.

In conclusion, the comprehensive analysis of survey data and qualitative interviews offers valuable insights into the demographic characteristics, spiritual well-being levels, and counseling practices within Indonesian Islamic universities. The findings underscore the significance of addressing spiritual well-being concerns and implementing targeted interventions to support students' holistic development and academic success. Moving

forward, collaboration between educational institutions, policymakers, and mental health professionals will be crucial for developing effective strategies to promote students' spiritual well-being and well-being within the context of Islamic education.

The findings of this study can be intricately examined through the prism of Fisher's (2011) theory of spiritual well-being, a framework renowned for delineating the intricate relationship between mental health and the varying levels of spiritual well-being, dissected across four distinct domains: personal, communal, environmental, and transcendental. Individuals endowed with heightened spiritual well-being often manifest a profound sense of purpose, thereby contributing substantially to positive mental health outcomes. This assertion finds empirical support from numerous studies, including those by Coppola et al. (2021) and Hamka et al. (2020), which underscore the symbiotic relationship between spiritual well-being and mental health. The personal domain, a cornerstone of Fisher's framework, places emphasis on inner connections and core values, thereby nurturing emotional resilience—a crucial component for bolstering mental well-being, as expounded by Kuo et al. (2024). Similarly, the communal and environmental domains accentuate the pivotal role of robust social connections and a nurturing environment in fostering mental health, as posited by Leung & Pong (2021). These domains serve as pillars, fortifying individuals against the ravages of mental health challenges by instilling a profound sense of belonging and equilibrium. Moreover, the transcendental domain, characterized by an individual's connection to something greater, whether it be religious beliefs or a sense of cosmic unity, facilitates effective coping mechanisms and stress reduction, as elucidated by Fenzel & Richardson (2022). The intricate interplay between these domains underscores the holistic nature of spiritual well-being and its profound implications for mental health outcomes.

However, the existence of imbalances within these domains may herald vulnerabilities in mental health, a phenomenon corroborated by empirical evidence and theoretical frameworks alike. Imbalances in the personal domain, for instance, may result in a dissonance between an individual's core values and their lived experiences, thereby precipitating psychological distress and maladaptive coping strategies. Similarly, deficits in the communal and environmental domains may engender feelings of isolation, alienation, and discord within social and environmental spheres, thereby exacerbating mental health challenges. Moreover, disruptions in the transcendental domain may manifest as a loss of faith, existential crises, or a dearth of spiritual connections, leading to heightened stress levels and diminished psychological well-being. Thus, a nuanced understanding of these interrelated domains is imperative for discerning the multifaceted nuances of spiritual well-being and its profound ramifications for mental health outcomes.

In light of Fisher's framework, practitioners are poised to adopt a comprehensive approach to nurturing spiritual well-being for positive mental health outcomes. By integrating Fisher's theoretical constructs into counseling practices within Islamic universities, practitioners can address the holistic dimensions of students' spiritual well-being, thereby fostering their overall mental health and well-being. Practical applications of Fisher's framework may include tailored interventions aimed at bolstering personal connections and values, fostering robust social networks and supportive environments, and facilitating avenues for transcendental exploration and spiritual growth. Through such holistic interventions, practitioners can navigate the intricate interplay between spiritual well-being and mental health, paving the way for transformative experiences and enhanced well-being among students within Islamic educational settings.

The quantitative and qualitative findings of this study provide comprehensive insights into the complex landscape of spiritual well-being among students in Indonesian Islamic universities. Distribution of Spiritual Well-Being: The diverse distribution of spiritual well-being levels among students highlights the pressing need for tailored interventions to address students' spiritual needs effectively. The prevalence of low to moderate spiritual well-being underscores the urgency of implementing holistic approaches to enhance students' spiritual welfare and mitigate the adverse consequences associated with low spiritual well-being.

The qualitative insights obtained from interviews with academics shed light on the crucial role that academic institutions play in supporting the spiritual well-being of students. Despite the presence of various counseling approaches, the limited utilization of these services highlights a notable gap in the provision of support for students' spiritual welfare. It is imperative for academic institutions to prioritize the creation and

implementation of Islamic counseling models that are specifically tailored to address the unique needs of students in Islamic universities. By enhancing counseling services and promoting collaboration between academics and counselors, academic institutions can make significant strides towards improving students' spiritual well-being and overall mental health.

The qualitative research sheds light on how low spiritual well-being affects students' lives in Islamic universities. It goes beyond academic performance, showing that students' spiritual well-being also impacts their mental health and overall well-being. Recognizing and addressing students' spiritual needs is crucial for creating a supportive learning environment in Islamic educational institutions.

Research Implication

The implications derived from this research bear significance for various aspects of academic and counseling practices in Indonesian Islamic universities. Firstly, there is a clear call for the revisitation and refinement of academic policies to explicitly incorporate guidelines for educators in supporting students' spiritual well-being. Establishing transparent roles and responsibilities for academics in the context of spiritual development can contribute to a more nurturing academic environment. Secondly, the identified gaps in empowering students for mental health and overall well-being emphasize the need for universities to invest in and enhance counseling services. Encouraging a comprehensive adoption of various counseling approaches can better equip academics to address students' psychological challenges effectively. Thirdly, the ambiguity in the roles and responsibilities of academics highlights the necessity for professional development programs. These programs can provide educators with the requisite skills and knowledge to address students' mental health concerns within the Islamic educational framework.

The study also suggests the development of an Islamic counseling model tailored to the distinct characteristics of students in Islamic universities. Moreover, interdisciplinary collaboration between all study programs and Islamic education guidance and counseling study program is advocated to foster a holistic approach to students' well-being. The research calls for continued exploration into the effectiveness of specific counseling approaches, the impact of academic support on mental health outcomes, and the development of tailored interventions for diverse student populations. Lastly, there is an opportunity for policy advocacy to integrate spiritual well-being considerations into the broader framework of higher education policies in Indonesia. Collectively, these implications aim to guide institutions, policymakers, and educators in fostering a supportive and holistic educational environment for the spiritual well-being of students in Indonesian Islamic universities.

Limitations of the Research

This study, while providing valuable insights, has several limitations. Firstly, the findings are context-specific to Indonesian Islamic universities, limiting their generalizability to a broader national or non-Islamic academic setting. The reliance on self-reported data introduces the potential for response bias, even with measures in place to ensure anonymity. Additionally, the cross-sectional design captures a snapshot of students' experiences, but a longitudinal approach could offer a more dynamic understanding of their spiritual well-being over time. The predominance of quantitative methods, though informative, leaves room for a more in-depth exploration of the qualitative aspects of students' spiritual experiences. The study identified three counseling approaches but did not thoroughly analyze their effectiveness, presenting an avenue for further investigation.

Suggestions for Further Research

Future research endeavors could address these limitations and deepen our understanding of the intricate relationship between spiritual well-being and mental health in academic settings. Comparative studies across diverse cultural and religious contexts would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing students' well-being. Longitudinal investigations tracking changes in spiritual well-being throughout students' academic journeys could offer valuable insights. In-depth analyses of specific counseling approaches would contribute to the development of targeted interventions. Exploring interdisciplinary collaboration between all study programs and Islamic education guidance and counseling study program and evaluating the effectiveness of existing or proposed policies could further enhance support for students' overall well-being. Additionally, a national comparative analysis would shed light on the impact of cultural and educational

differences on spiritual well-being and mental health. Addressing these suggestions could contribute to a more nuanced and globally applicable understanding of the complex interplay between spiritual well-being, mental health, and the academic environment.

CONCLUSIONS

This comprehensive study has systematically examined the intricate landscape of spiritual well-being among Indonesian students in Islamic universities, driven by the escalating mental health concerns within higher education. Utilizing a rigorous mixed-methods approach, the survey results, guided by Fisher's four-domain theory, present a nuanced distribution of spiritual well-being levels, highlighting the diverse experiences of students. The percentages indicate the prevalence of different well-being levels: very low (0%), low (42.3%), moderate (57.1%), high (0.6%), and very high (0.0%). Despite this variability, a notable gap exists in effectively addressing mental health and overall well-being issues among students. The percentages reveal the prevalence of various well-being levels, with a significant portion falling into the low to moderate range. Despite this variability, there is a noticeable gap in effectively addressing mental health and overall well-being issues among students.

The in-depth interviews with academics from various Islamic universities shed light on the multifaceted repercussions of low spiritual well-being, affecting various dimensions of students' lives. The ambiguity in academic roles adds to the complexity, contributing to heightened risks of psychological issues. Additionally, the study identifies three distinctive counseling approaches—modern, post-modern, and religious counseling—each offering unique perspectives. However, these valuable approaches are underutilized, leading to a suboptimal provision of counseling services.

Finally, this research underscores the pressing need for concerted efforts to address mental health and well-being issues among Indonesian students in Islamic universities. The findings strongly advocate for each institution's focus on developing a tailored Islamic counseling model. Such a model aims to significantly enhance students' spiritual well-being, aligning with the distinctive characteristics of those within Islamic universities in Indonesia. The conclusions emphasize the urgency of comprehensive interventions to bridge the existing gap and foster holistic well-being among students in the unique context of Islamic higher education. By leveraging diverse counseling approaches and enhancing their utilization, Islamic universities can better meet the mental health needs of their students, fostering holistic development and flourishing within the higher education landscape in Indonesia.

Acknowledgment

Author Contribution Statement

Muhamad Rozikan contributed to the conception and design of the research study, conducted data collection, performed data analysis and interpretation, and drafted the manuscript. Furthermore, **Mungin Eddy Wibowo** served as a researcher and supervisor, providing guidance, expertise, and feedback throughout the research

process. He also contributed to the conception and design of the study, reviewed and revised the manuscript, and approved the final version for submission. Moreover, **Edy Purwanto** also served as a researcher and supervisor, offering valuable insights, advice, and support throughout the research endeavor. He contributed to the conception of the study, provided methodological guidance, critically reviewed and revised the manuscript, and approved the final version for submission. In addition, **Mulawarman**, in the role of researcher and supervisor, provided invaluable guidance, mentorship, and expertise throughout the research project. He contributed to the conceptualization of the study, assisted with data analysis and interpretation, critically reviewed and revised the manuscript, and approved the final version for submission. All authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

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