



The Importance of the Spiritual Dimension in Improving the Mental Well-Being of College Students

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ABSTRACT

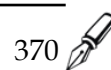
The research investigated the relationship between spirituality and students' mental well-being. The aim was to explore the impact of high spiritual levels on different aspects of mental well-being through the results of previous research. This research uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, which includes the identification, review, evaluation, and interpretation of various existing studies. The findings suggest a strong link between high spiritual levels and improved mental well-being among college students. Students with high spirituality showed higher levels of purpose, gratitude, effective stress management, positive social relationships, and better physical health. The research contributes new insights by highlighting the significant impact of spirituality on diverse aspects of mental well-being in the context of university life and college efforts to deal with it. These findings underscore the importance of integrating the spiritual dimension into mental health and Education programs and provide a foundation for future studies to explore specific spiritual practices and cultural variations in more detail that can be applied practically to higher education. Some of the efforts that universities can make are providing materials about spirituality in the curriculum, providing affordable mental health services, creating a conducive learning environment, and providing social support to students. Some programs that can be done by universities include religious activities, meditation or yoga activities, and volunteer activities. These refinements add a novelty aspect to the research by emphasizing its practical implications. As such, the research not only presents findings on the relationship between spirituality and students' mental well-being but also highlights their relevance in the context of higher education policy and practice.



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INTRODUCTION

Students are one of the vulnerable groups that require special attention in terms of mental health. This is because students are faced with various challenges and demands, in the academic, social, and personal fields. According to data from WEduShare on November 21, 2021, as many as 87% of Indonesian students feel wrong in choosing a major, 73% of Indonesian students have difficulty managing time, 68% of Indonesian students have difficulty managing finances, 63% of Indonesian students have difficulty in establishing relationships with peers, and 58% of Indonesian students have difficulty in establishing relationships with family. In addition, data from the Center for Population and Policy Studies Universitas Gadjah Mada (PSKKP UGM) in 2021 showed that 28.2% of students experienced stress, 14.8% of students experienced depression,



and 12.5% of students experienced anxiety. These data show that the mental well-being of students in Indonesia is still an issue that needs attention.

Based on the results of the I-NAMHS (Indonesian National Adolescent Mental Health Survey) survey conducted by Gadjah Mada University in 2022, the prevalence rate of mental disorders in Indonesian students is 32.2%. This figure shows that about 1 in 3 students in Indonesia experience mental disorders. The most common mental disorder suffered by students is anxiety disorder (a combination of social phobia and generalized anxiety disorder), which is 22.8%. Depressive disorders rank second with a prevalence of 19.4%. Even the mental well-being of students in Indonesia in 2023 is still relatively low. This can be seen from the results of a survey conducted by the Student Counseling Board (BKM) of the University of Indonesia (UI) in 2023. The survey involved 1,200 students from various faculties at UI. The survey results showed that 60% of UI students experienced mental health problems. The most common mental health problems experienced by UI students are stress (35%), anxiety (25%), and depression (10%).

Several factors can affect a student's mental well-being, including academic pressure, financial pressure, social pressure, and family pressure. These factors can cause stress, anxiety, and depression. If mental health issues are not addressed properly, they can hurt students' lives, such as decreased academic achievement, impaired social relationships, and even risky behaviors, such as substance abuse and suicide. Therefore, students need to maintain their mental health by making various efforts such as maintaining a healthy lifestyle, managing stress well, building positive social relationships with friends, family, and loved ones, and seeking professional help if experiencing mental health problems.

In addition, the role of universities is paramount in nurturing students' mental well-being. Mental well-being encompasses the capacity to navigate life's pressures while fostering harmony, resilience, and self-assurance (Bakar et al., 2022). It signifies a state of contentment characterized by positive emotions, adeptness in confronting challenges, and fostering meaningful connections with others. This state of well-being holds immense significance for all individuals, particularly college students.

The spiritual dimension emerges as a potent force in fortifying students' mental well-being. Spirituality imbues life with meaning and purpose, offering solace and guidance in times of adversity. Previous studies underscore the pivotal role of spirituality in bolstering mental health and overall well-being. For instance, research conducted in the United States in 2016 revealed that college students who embraced spirituality exhibited higher levels of mental well-being compared to their less spiritually inclined counterparts. Spirituality, rooted in one's belief in a higher power, manifests through behavior and one's commitment to religious practice (Umaliyah, 2022).

However, while spirituality has real potential in improving mental health, there is still a critical gap in understanding its multifaceted impact on student well-being. Therefore, this research seeks to fill in the gap by investigating the relationship between high levels of spirituality and improved mental well-being among college students. This research aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how spirituality can affect various aspects of mental well-being, as well as provide an overview of higher education efforts or programs in suppressing mental well-being issues. The hope is that this research can make a new contribution by highlighting the significant impact of spirituality on various aspects of students' mental well-being while confirming its relevance in the context of higher education policy and practice.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research was prepared based on a literature review using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, which includes the identification, reviewing, evaluation, and interpretation of various existing studies. Researchers systematically review articles relevant to the research topic. The review process is carried out with a defined structure, following predetermined steps.

To ensure that the research was conducted systematically, it was based on PRISMA guidelines. The literature search process will be carried out on November 16, 2023, using Google

Scholar sources using the Publish or Perish (PoP) application with keywords. The researchers limited the number of articles to 140 from 2019 to 2023, and after analysis, only 35 articles relevant to the main title and research objective were chosen.

In a broader context, systematic approaches such as those used in this research mirror similar efforts in the academic literature (Suprpto et al., 2020). A well-structured research process allows researchers to compile findings from the vast amount of available literature within a clear and defined framework. This corroborates the validity and reliability of the findings and ensures that the conclusions drawn are based on a comprehensive and objective analysis of the relevant literature.

Table 1. Search Strategy

Google Scholar (n=90)
Keyword :
Spirituality and mental well-being of students, The influence of spirituality on students' mental well-being, How Spirituality Improves Student Mental Well-Being, Spirituality as a Protective Factor for Student Mental Well-Being, Spirituality as an adaptive Capital of students, Student Spirituality and Stress, Student Spirituality and Anxiety, Spirituality and Depression of College Students, Spirituality and Quality of Life of Students, The university's efforts, Student Mentality Based on Spirituality, programs university.

Table 2. Eligibility criteria

Criteria Inclusion	Exclusion Criteria
Published between 2019 and 2023	Content is not related to research topics and questions, namely:
Articles are journals or proceedings	1. Is there a relationship between the level of spirituality and the level of mental well-being of students?
Content written in Indonesian or English	2. Can spirituality help students overcome challenges and difficulties in their lives?
	3. How can spirituality improve students' mental well-being?
	4. How are the college's efforts to improve students' mental well-being based on spirituality?
	Outside of higher education

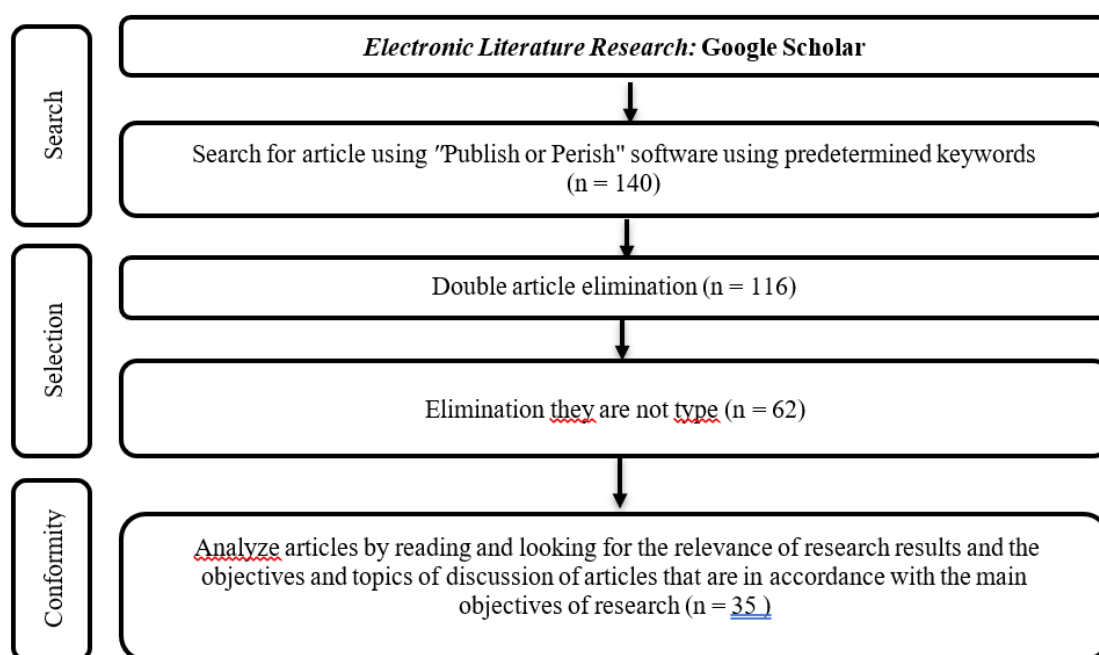


Figure 1. Prism systematic literature review

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on the data collection process, 35 articles are on the topic. The following articles found in the systematic review are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Systematic review articles

No	Author and Year	Finding
1	(Osmanoglu, 2019)	The results showed that classical music had a positive impact on the Psychological Well-being score. This article provides the view that listening to classical music, as a form of spiritual experience, can improve the psychological well-being of students.
2	(Lopes & Nihei, 2021)	High scores in adaptive coping (such as planning and positive reframing) can have a protective effect, suggesting that spiritual strategies or spiritual support may be able to help students overcome their challenges.
3	(Lew et al., 2019)	This article focuses on psychological factors such as depression, anxiety, stress, and orientation towards happiness. However, it does not explicitly address spirituality as a research variable.
4	(Leung & Pong, 2021)	The research showed that college students' level of spirituality correlated with quality of life, satisfaction, and happiness. The results showed that all domains of spirituality, both in personal and communal, environmental, and transcendent aspects, had a negative relationship with symptoms of psychological disorders such as depression, anxiety, and stress.
5	(Abbas et al., 2020)	This article can provide insight into whether there is a relationship between a student's level of spirituality and level of mental well-being. The results of regression analysis may provide a clearer picture of the correlation.
6	(Otanga et al., 2022)	Spirituality, especially in the form of talking to family/friends and using social media, can help students overcome challenges and difficulties in their lives.
7	(Fradelos et al., 2019)	The contribution of emotional intelligence and spirituality has a very significant role in achieving well-being, happiness, and meaning of life for students.
8	(Deb et al., 2020)	There is a significant positive correlation between spirituality and subjective happiness. Spirituality is also correlated with the meaning of life and the scale of life satisfaction.
9	(Bahadorani et al., 2021)	The article implies that Tamarkoz's practice may provide some advantages compared to the usual stress management resources provided by the student health center.
10	(Arslan & Yildirim, 2021)	The results imply that a combination of meaning-based coping and spirituality can reduce the impact of pandemic stress on subjective well-being. Therefore, it can be concluded that engaging in spiritual activities and seeking meaning in difficult situations can be an effective strategy to improve the mental well-being of students.
11	(Cherblanc et al., 2021)	The article suggests that dimensions of spirituality, including religion, are one of the main predictors of spiritual quality of life (SQoL). Therefore, it can be concluded that through aspects of spirituality, such as involvement in religious activities, students can experience improved mental well-being.
12	(Felicilda-Reynaldo et al., 2019)	The article suggests that nursing students who actively participate in religious activities, whether organized or not, tend to have a better quality of life, especially in the physical and environmental domains
13	(Mathad et al., 2019)	The research findings showed a significant relationship between the level of spirituality and mental well-being of college students. Spiritual aspects such as self-compassion and awareness can be a significant source of support when students face difficult situations.
14	(Singh Negi et al., 2021)	Research shows a positive and significant relationship between universal awareness and anxiety among engineering students. The most influential dimension of spirituality is the relationship with oneself and the relationship

No	Author and Year	Finding
		with others. In addition, it turns out that female students have a stronger level of spirituality than male students.
15	(Rakhshandehrou et al., 2021)	The results of the data analysis showed a positive relationship between spiritual abilities and students' mental well-being. Suggestions to university officials and administrators to create mechanisms to enhance and promote spirituality in universities suggest that improving spirituality in higher education settings can be key to improving students' mental well-being.
16	(Bayani et al., 2020)	The findings suggest that fasting contributes to improved overall psychological well-being. In this context, we can conclude that there is a positive relationship between aspects of spirituality (in this case, Ramadan fasting) and the mental well-being of students.
17	(Parviniannasab et al., 2022)	A high level of spiritual well-being can improve the mental well-being of nursing students, with the help of positive psychology as an intermediary. Therefore, positive psychology has an important role in improving the mental well-being of nursing students.
18	(Bożek et al., 2020)	Spirituality and health-related behaviors positively correlate with psychological well-being, with the former being influenced by the latter. Among students concentrating on the human mind and spirit, spirituality uniquely links with educational pursuits, exhibiting a heightened association with psychological well-being.
19	(Dami et al., 2019)	Students of the Christian Education Study Program succeeded in reducing and overcoming negative emotional problems such as depression, stress which is more dominant, and anxiety. They also managed to improve spiritual intelligence through group counseling with a spiritual approach.
20	(Turi et al., 2020)	Spiritual intelligence was identified as one of the factors that had a significant impact on academic performance. Through better integration of spiritual intelligence into academic practice, routine, and culture, students can experience improved mental well-being.
21	(Pakdaman & Balideh, 2020)	The article highlights the importance of spiritual intelligence and psychological capital in staff performance in organizations. In the context of students, we can see how aspects of spirituality can relate to mental well-being and the ability to overcome challenges.
22	(Singh & Bandyopadhyay, 2021)	In general, spiritual interventions improve several aspects of well-being, including mental well-being, general well-being, and peace of mind. In this context, spiritual intervention through video edutainment promises to be an approach that can improve student welfare.
23	(Kim et al., 2021)	The article implies that high levels of spiritual support are associated with a lower risk of depression. This suggests that spirituality can be a factor that helps students overcome mental challenges, including depression.
24	(Varadwaj & Varadwaj, 2022)	Research shows that spiritual intelligence, which includes critical existential thinking, personal meaning formation, transcendent awareness, and expansion of consciousness, acts as a link between psychological capital and academic behavior.
25	(Francis et al., 2019)	In the article, there is information about the relationship between aspects of spirituality and the mental well-being of medical students. The results showed that there was a significant association between Islamic religion, negative religious coping, and the presence of depressive symptoms with anxiety symptoms.
26	(Purnell et al., 2019)	Religiosity/spirituality was identified as a factor that had a positive impact on students' emotional/mental well-being, although the mechanism was not described in detail in this research.
27	(Yun et al., 2019)	The results showed a significant relationship between students' stress levels and the handling methods they chose. Adaptive coping methods, such as Active Coping, Positive Framing, and Religious, were significantly correlated with lower stress levels, while maladaptive coping methods, such as



No	Author and Year	Finding
		Behavioral Alienation, Self-Ablation, Denial, Substance Abuse, Emotional Release, and Self-Blaming correlated with higher stress levels.
28	(Philip et al., 2019)	Research findings suggest that religion/spirituality plays a central role in helping students cope with acculturative stress.
29	(Rahmat et al., 2022)	The article mentions that factors such as mental health, psychological resilience, and social support contribute to spiritual well-being.
30	(Putri et al., 2021)	The results showed a decrease in stress levels in students after being given Qur'an murottal.
31	(Vanderweel e, 2019)	The exploration of activities, institutional commitments, and interventions we have examined reveals great potential in efforts to improve human well-being. A focus on the good of the family through marriage and relationship therapy, contribution to the world through work and job formation, as well as a divine dimension through religious communities, create a diverse, holistic approach.
32	(Lin & Shek, 2019)	through the Counseling Guidance service in universities to facilitate and assist, as well as solutions to problems faced by students at the University of Borneo Tarakan.
33	(Dyrbye et al., 2019)	The school has implemented various curricula and welfare activities for medical students. Evaluation of specific competencies in well-being needs to be improved to ensure the effectiveness of the strategy and the proper allocation of resources. Strengthening evaluation is an important step in reducing student pressure and improving student welfare.
34	(Arfianto et al., 2023)	This research indicates a significant relationship between spiritual well-being and stress levels in college students. Although the correlation is weak, the direction of correlation is negative. That is, students with high spiritual well-being tend to experience less stress.
35	(Rai et al., 2020)	The results show how academic advisors need student mental health services as part of the academic process, which shows that there are crucial problems related to student mental health.

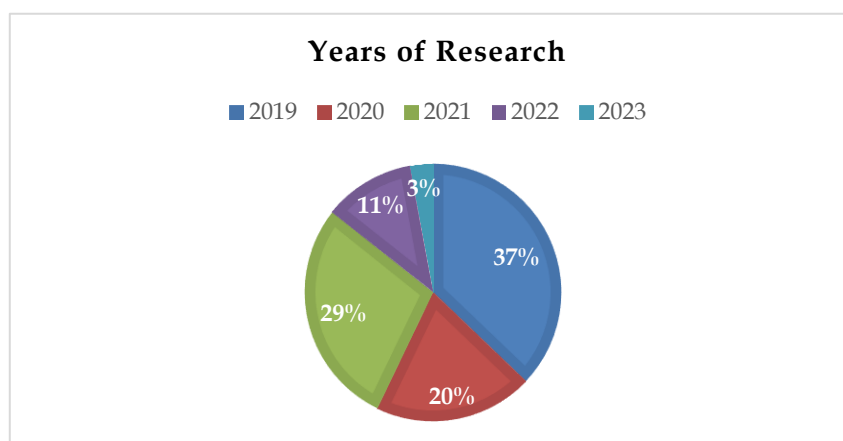


Figure 2. On-topic research years

Discussion

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that the first findings suggest that spiritual experiences, such as listening to classical music, can positively impact students' Psychological Well-Being scores. This can be explained by several factors. First, classical music can evoke positive emotions, such as a sense of calm, peace, and happiness. These positive emotions can improve psychological well-being, including reducing stress, anxiety, and depression. Second, classical music can help students better understand themselves and the world around them. This can increase the sense of meaning and purpose of life, which is also an important factor in psychological well-being so there is a positive correlation between the level

of spirituality and the mental well-being of students. The research showed that students with high levels of spirituality tended to have better mental well-being.

Referring to the research of Otanga et al. (2022), the importance of understanding the meaning and purpose of life for students cannot be ignored. Those who have a solid understanding of this tend to be more courageous and calm in the face of academic pressure. The belief that life has a deeper meaning than just academic tasks provides additional motivation to face challenges with your head held high. In the busyness and pressure of academics, understanding the meaning of life brings not only courage but also calm amid the hustle and bustle of student life.

In another aspect, spirituality helps students develop gratitude and acceptance of themselves and their environment (Cherblanc et al., 2021). Religious activities, including Ramadan fasting, have been shown to contribute to improving students' mental well-being (Bayani et al., 2020). Believing in a greater power can provide inner calm and a positive outlook on life, reducing levels of anxiety and depression. In a social context, students who are active in spiritual activities tend to be involved in communities or groups with similar values (Anselmus Dami et al., 2019) It improves social relationships, creates a positive supportive environment, and reduces feelings of loneliness or isolation.

Abbas et al. (2020) emphasizes the potential relationship between students' levels of spirituality and mental well-being, using regression analysis to get a clearer picture of correlations. Regression, as a statistical technique, is used to predict the value of the dependent variable based on the independent variable. In this context, mental well-being becomes the dependent variable, while the level of spirituality becomes the independent variable. If the results of regression analysis show a positive relationship between spirituality and mental well-being, then it can be concluded that the higher a person's level of spirituality, the higher his mental well-being. This approach provides a more detailed look at the complex dynamics between the spiritual dimension and mental well-being in the context of students.

Mathad et al. (2019) revealed that spirituality, especially in the context of social interaction and social media use, can be an important source of support for students in facing the challenges and difficulties of campus life. In this context, spirituality helps students form meaningful relationships with others, gain emotional and social support, and seek guidance and advice. Thus, this spiritual dimension is not only a personal foundation but also an effective tool for strengthening social networks and student resilience in the campus environment.

Spirituality not only impacts mental well-being but also has a positive influence on students' physical health (Rakhshanderou et al., 2021). Spiritual abilities are linked to a healthy lifestyle, such as a good diet and regular exercise. Thus, improving spirituality in a higher education environment can be key to improving students' mental and physical well-being.

The results of the above study show that spiritual experiences have a significant impact on students' mental well-being. By integrating the spiritual dimension in our mental health approach, we can better understand the complexity of human beings as beings who not only have physical needs, but also mental needs. The importance of participation in spiritual activity cannot be ignored. Through prayer, meditation, reflection on spiritual values, or participation in a religious community, students can find a source of strength and calm in the face of life's challenges. A supportive environment is also an important factor in facilitating meaningful spiritual experiences for students. Colleges and educational institutions can play an important role in creating an environment that supports students' spiritual development, through the provision of space and time for spiritual practice as well as support from staff and peers.

In the context of health independence, understanding the role of spirituality is becoming increasingly important. Students who have good mental well-being tend to be better able to manage stress, cope with academic pressure, and maintain emotional balance. Thus, the development of health independence includes not only physical and mental aspects, but also spiritual dimensions.

College Students, as part of society, are faced with a variety of challenges and difficulties, ranging from academic pressures to personal problems. Those with strong spirituality are better able to find meaning and purpose in life when faced with trials. This gives them the strength and motivation needed to take on the challenge. Spirituality can also provide calm and hope, helping them in overcoming difficulties with a clear and relaxed mind.

In addition, spirituality also provides much-needed emotional support. This helps students feel stronger and ready to face any obstacle. For example, a student who feels stressed because of his academic assignments can use spirituality to seek calm and strength. She can pray, meditate, or listen to spiritual music to help her feel calmer and more peaceful. A college student who feels lonely because she has just moved to a new city can use spirituality to form social connections. He can join religious groups or other spiritual communities to meet people who share his values. A college student who feels anxious about the future can use spirituality to find meaning and purpose in life. He can reflect on the values that are important to him and how he can use those values to make the world a better place.

Therefore, college students need to develop their spirituality. This can be done in a variety of ways, such as participating in religious activities, such as worship, praying, or meditation, reading books or articles about spirituality, and talking to people experienced in spirituality. That way, students can improve their mental well-being and face the challenges of campus life more effectively.

Various studies have shown that the spiritual dimension can play an important role in improving mental well-being. The spiritual dimension is the aspect of life related to the meaning and purpose of life, the relationship with the divine, as well as moral and ethical values. Another research conducted by the University of Borneo Tarakan shows that counseling guidance services in universities can help improve students' mental well-being. This service provides help and solutions to problems faced by students, including mental health problems.

Based on these studies, universities need to make efforts to improve students' mental well-being, including their spiritual dimension. Here are some efforts that can be made by universities, namely: (1) Increasing student awareness about the importance of the spiritual dimension, universities can increase student awareness about the importance of the spiritual dimension by providing material about spirituality in the curriculum, holding seminars or workshops on spirituality, and promoting spiritual activities on campus; (2) Providing affordable and quality mental health services, universities need to provide affordable and quality mental health services for students. This service can help students with mental health problems, including spiritual problems; (3) Creating a conducive learning environment, universities need to create a conducive learning environment for students. A conducive learning environment can help students feel more comfortable and happy, to improve their mental well-being; (4) Providing social support to students, universities need to provide social support to students. Social support can help students feel more connected to others and more valuable, which can improve their mental well-being.

Here are some examples of programs that can be carried out by universities to improve students' mental well-being, including their spiritual dimensions: (1) Religious activities, universities can hold religious activities, such as joint worship, religious studies, and spiritual retreats. These activities can help students deepen their understanding of religion and spiritual values; (2) Meditation or yoga activities, meditation, and yoga are activities that can help students control their thoughts and emotions. These activities can help students to reduce stress and anxiety, and improve their mental well-being; (3) Volunteering can help students feel more connected to others and more valuable. This activity can also help students to find meaning and purpose in life.

Universities can choose programs that suit the needs and conditions of their students. These programs need to be well designed and implemented sustainably to have a positive impact on students' mental well-being.

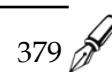
CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been discussed, it can be concluded that there is a strong relationship between spirituality and students' mental well-being. Students who have high spirituality tend to have better mental well-being, reflected in various aspects such as higher life purpose, gratitude, effective stress management, positive social relationships, and better physical health. Therefore, students must develop their spirituality through various means, such as participating in religious activities, reading books or articles about spirituality, or talking to people who are experienced in spirituality. The university's efforts in raising students' awareness of spirituality through providing materials on spirituality in the curriculum, affordable and quality mental health services for students, creating a conducive learning environment, and providing social support to students, are also very important. Programs that can be carried out by the university to improve student's mental well-being, including dimensions of spirituality such as religious activities, meditation, or yoga, as well as volunteer activities. The implications of this research suggest that paying attention to aspects of spirituality can be an effective strategy to improve mental well-being while exploring interventions or programs that can be applied practically to improve students' levels of spirituality and mental well-being. For future research, it is necessary to compare groups of students with different levels of spirituality to provide further insight.

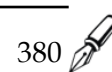
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