

## The Effects of Emotional and Spiritual Intelligence on Self-Control

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### Abstract

Both emotional and spiritual intelligence help individuals do self-control. This study aimed at proving the extent to which emotional and spiritual intelligence affect students' self-control. This correlational study involved 329 students from 4 islamic junior high schools in Semarang City selected using a cluster sampling technique. Their data were analyzed using a hierarchical regression analysis. Findings have proved that both spiritual and emotional intelligence had significant effects on self-control. It can be implied that students need to be assisted in performing self-control for to achieve future success by reinforcing emotional and spiritual intelligence.

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## INTRODUCTION

Adolescents who are in a transitional period from childhood to adulthood must experience biological, cognitive, and emotional changes. In this phase adolescents are looking for their own identities. According to Fatimah (2006) adolescents are expected to predict the impact of their deviant behavior. They will be good if guided properly, and vice versa. One of their tasks in this period is to strengthen self-control over values, principles, and philosophy of life (Yusuf, 2004).

Self-control is an ability to change or neglect a particular response within, eliminate undesired wishes, and refrain from actions (Tangney, et al., 2004). Individuals with self-control will be able to control themselves over negative behavior and shift it to the positive one. However, the transitional phase often causes some conflicts, such as feeling strange and awkward which in turn can cause delinquency.

Previous studies have showed that individuals who are able to do self-control from an impulsive behavior will be able to achieve success. Self-control functions as a mental block to prevent from unnecessary behavior and emotions and direct to positive and consistent actions (Baumeister, 2007; Chaplin, 2011, Inzlicht, et al., 2014).

In reality, there still found a self-control problem on students. Not all of them have self-control such as impulsive behavior, preference for simple things, doing risky behavior, egocentric, and anger (Grasmick, et al., 1993). Other examples are smoking, consuming alcohol, anger, moral violation, and schoolwork procrastination (Leary, 2004). In addition, according to the findings of the Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYST) Indonesia (2019) among 91% of students in grades 7-12 aged 13-15, 19.2% of which admitted to be active smokers. This indicates that the behavior show by students is a deviant behavior that violates norms in the school and community environment.

The results of the preliminary study showed that students had self-control with a low

category of 30%. In this case, they did not have the ability to control themselves from impulses or desires, tended to dislike limits on their behavior, and did not need supervision or discipline. In short, students with low self-control allow for deviant actions.

One of the psychological factors that influence self-control is emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is an important part that plays a role in self-control and emotions. Based on a study by Masithah, et al., (2021) there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and self-control. Emotional intelligence is the ability to understand one's own emotions and distinguish the emotions of others and use information to direct one's thoughts and behavior (Labba, 2011).

In addition to emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence is a part of life that supports and nourishes oneself. This intelligence can heal and build oneself as a whole, enable individuals to overcome or at least be able to make peace with problems (Emmons, 2000). The positive influence of spiritual intelligence makes a contribution to psychological well-being and overall human development, one of which is self-control (Vaughan, 2002). Through spiritual intelligence, students become emotionally and spiritually intact, bridging themselves to God and human relations in general.

Empirical evidence regarding studies on emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and self-control literature is still few. Nonetheless, the present study is expected to enrich literature on self-control in personal and social settings. The results of this study can later become knowledge for counselors to provide proper guidance and counseling services for students. With this regard, this study attempted to examine emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence and self-control. In relation to this, the purpose of this study was to determine the effects of emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence on self-control.

## METHODS

The respondents involved in this study totaled 329 students aged 15-18 years from 4 Islamic Senior High Schools (MA) in Semarang City, Central Java. They were sampled using a cluster sampling technique. Previously, the students were clustered and then randomly picked from the existing clusters. It aimed at giving the same chance for each participant.

There were three scales used in this study, namely the scales of emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and low self-control. The scales of emotional and spiritual intelligence were independently developed by the researchers, while the low self-control scale was adopted from a published article so that back translation process was done to adjust to Indonesian situations.

Emotional intelligence was measured using an emotional intelligence scale developed by researchers. In this study, 5 components were measured, namely knowing one's own emotions, managing emotions, self-motivation, knowing other people's emotions, and establishing relationships (Mayer & Salovey, 2004). The emotional intelligence scale consists of 25 items scored using 5 option criteria (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Its reliability as indicated the value of (Cronbach  $\alpha$ ) was 0.746 and was declared reliable. Therefore, this scale could be used.

Spiritual intelligence was measured using a spiritual intelligence scale developed by researchers. It aims to measure 8 components, namely a high level of awareness, being flexible, facing and taking advantage of suffering, facing and going through pain, reluctance to cause unnecessary harm, quality of life with vision and values, having a tendency to ask questions and becoming independent (Zohar and Marshall, 2009). This scale consists of 30 items with 5 option criteria (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The results of the reliability test on the spiritual intelligence scale obtained a Cronbach  $\alpha$  coefficient of 0.938.

The job search self-control variable was measured using the low self-control scale (LSCS) developed by Grasmick (1993) in (Vazsonyi, et al., 2001). This scale consists of 24 items based

on 6 aspects or constructs, namely impulsivity, simple tasks, risk seeking, physical activity, self-centered, and temper. It was assessed using a Likert scale with 5 options (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The results of the reliability test on the LSCS scale obtained a coefficient (Cronbach  $\alpha$ ) of 0.893.

In the data analysis, a hierarchical regression analysis technique was done using SPSS version 23.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the descriptive analysis, the mean and standard deviation of emotional intelligence was (M = 58.48; SD = 9.126), spiritual intelligence was (M = 66.30; SD = 14.510), and low self-control was (M = 61, 64; SD = 11,756). The higher mean value than the standard deviation showed a good representation of the distribution of data. In detail the data are presented in table 1

**Table 1.** Data Description

Variable	M	SD
Emotional intelligence	58.48	9.126
Spiritual intelligence	66.30	14.510
Low Self-Control	61.64	11.756

Following the descriptive analysis, hypothesis testing was carried out using the hierarchical regression analysis technique in SPSS version 23.

**Table 2.** The Effects of Emotional and Spiritual Intelligence on Self-Control

Predictor	$\beta$	T	P
Emotional intelligence	.18	2.18	< 0.05
Spiritual intelligence	.30	5.60	< 0.01
<i>R</i>		.16	
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>		.12	
<i>F</i> (1,326)		31.35	

<i>p</i>	< 0.01
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Regarding table 2, there found a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence on self-control with the value of (( $R = .16$ ,  $F(1,326) = 31.35$   $p < .01$ ). Since its coefficient of determination was ( $R^2 = 0.12$ ), self-control was influenced by emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence by 1.2%.

It was also found that the spiritual intelligence partly gave a positive effect on self-control (( $\beta = .30$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Furthermore, emotional intelligence had a positive effect on self-control ( $\beta = .18$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). These meant that if students have a high level of emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence perspective, it can be said that students' self-control is high.

The findings from this study have proved that emotional intelligence affected self-control. Previous findings by Choi, et al., (2014) conclude that high emotional intelligence is able to exercise self-control over itself. Then, a study by Cahyani and Siswati's (2020) has confirmed emotional intelligence as a mental competency that is invisible but very influential on self-control. The results of their study have confirmed that emotional intelligence can help individuals control behavior and be able to take action to achieve the desired results. Meanwhile, other findings by Lourdes Rey, et al., (2013) show that emotional intelligence can not only provide self-control in times of stress, but also produce better mental and social well-being. Self-control in students is very important to create positive behavior. High student self-control is a requirement in controlling all forms of action within and leads to success.

Emotional intelligence can function properly when it is supported by spiritual intelligence. Spiritual intelligence plays an important role in life because no matter how intelligent someone is, his intelligence cannot work properly if spiritual intelligence is missing. Spiritual intelligence is soul intelligence, namely intelligence that can help heal and build oneself as a whole (Zohar & Marshal, 2009). Therefore,

through spiritual intelligence, students are intellectually, emotionally and spiritually intact, and can bridge themselves with their God and human relations with their surroundings in a broad and meaningful way.

Spiritual intelligence reduces pain caused by inability in doing self-control over a problem. In this study, it was showed that the component of spiritual intelligence which significantly gave a contribution to adolescents were facing and going through pain. It is in line with what is stated by Khodabakhshi, et.al (2019) that self-compassion can reduce suffering and pain. Spiritual intelligence helps to deal with and overcome the pain of low self-control (Casey & Kristina, 2013). This study has proved the influence of spiritual intelligence on students' self-control.

Pressure on low self-control requires positive spiritual intelligence. Spiritual intelligence will give individuals a sense of morality, the ability to distinguish between good and bad, and provide the ability to adapt to new rules (Rizal, 2018). Spiritual intelligence makes a positive contribution to life satisfaction (Ramdani, et.al, 2015) and can reduce anxiety and work stress (Sumah, 2020). These mean that when students have spiritual intelligence competence, they will be better able to control themselves (self-control) over the problems they face and take meaning from these problems.

Another finding was spiritual and emotional intelligence simultaneously affected self-control. When both are integrated, students' self-control will be boosted. It is because emotional intelligence is a key factor to self-control and has a long-term consequence on life (Allemand, et.al, 2019). Spiritual intelligence needs to be owned by students to achieve success in functioning intellectual intelligence and emotional intelligence (Nachiappan, et.al, 2014). Thus, the results of this study indicated that emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence could improve students' self-control.

This study gives significant implications to guidance and counseling that emotional and spiritual intelligence had some effects on students' self-control. Hence, Effective guidance

and counseling services will be important for students given these services are aimed at maintaining mental health and other aspects of life needed by students (Awalya et al., 2020). Therefore, the services need to be done with appropriate collaborative support for interpersonal training. The self-control perspective can be used as an approach in providing personal services to students. Students' understanding of self-control can make students aware of the importance of self-control in the future. Moreover, the results of this study showed that emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence had positive effects on self-control.

Apart from the novelty, some limitations of this study were: 1) the scope of this study was limited to exploring the relationship between emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence on self-control, and it provided no intervention, 2) the present study lacked of supporting studies on emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence which have a direct relationship to self-control, 3) the sample in this study was limited to MA students in Semarang City with cluster sampling.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that there is a direct effect between emotional and spiritual intelligence on self-control. Since this study investigated the relationship between emotional and spiritual intelligence on self-control, the findings are expected to be used as a reference for the basis of the future studies. Accordingly, school counselors are suggested to encourage their students to improve emotional and spiritual intelligence within the scope of school. It is important given the findings of this study have confirmed that emotional and spiritual intelligence have positive effects on students' self-control. Finally, the findings of this study can be used as a basis for the future experimental studies aimed at increasing self-control in students, not to mention future studies are wished to develop research instruments according to the conditions of the research subjects or with different populations.

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