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**Introduction to Spiritual Intelligence for Non-Muslim
Students at a Higher Learning Institution**

**Rohana Hamzah¹; Ahmad Muhaimin Mohamad²; Fatmawati Latada³;
Anita Abdul Rani⁴; Nur A'thiroh Masyaa'il Tan Abdullah⁵;
Christina Andin Abdullah⁶; Zarina Mohd Ali⁷**

^{1,2,3,4,7}Universiti Malaysia Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah, Malaysia

⁵Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia

⁶Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia

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INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE FOR NON-MUSLIM STUDENTS AT A HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTION

Rohana Hamzah¹; Ahmad Muhaimin Mohamad²; Fatmawati Latada³;
Anita Abdul Rani⁴; Nur A'throh Masyaa'il Tan Abdullah⁵;
Christina Andin Abdullah⁶; Zarina Mohd Ali⁷

^{1,2,3,4,7}Universiti Malaysia Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah, Malaysia

⁵Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia

⁶Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia

¹Correspondence Email: rohanahamzah@ump.edu.my

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Abstract

The overemphasis on science and technology for economic and national growth, driven by Western influence, has led to the neglect of the intrinsic value of spiritual and social dimensions in education. This issue undoubtedly affects non-Muslim students as well. To address this, the Department of Social Sciences at the Centre for Human Sciences, Universiti Malaysia Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah, introduces and exposes non-Muslim students to the knowledge of spiritual intelligence. The aim of this study was to examine students' self-understanding of spiritual intelligence based on test scores for elements of God consciousness, self-transcendence, and self-determination. A total of 209 first-year non-Muslim students participated in this study. Data were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive analysis, mean rank comparison, and correlational analysis. The results from the descriptive analysis indicated that non-Muslim students understood all key concepts in spiritual intelligence. The mean rank comparison showed a significant difference only in the God consciousness element between Hindu students and others. Finally, correlation analysis revealed that all three variables positively correlated with each other. The findings of this study suggest the need to continue efforts to impart the knowledge of spiritual intelligence to non-Muslim students in higher education institutions to improve well-being within society, regardless of race and individual beliefs.

Keywords: *Spiritual Intelligence; Non-Muslims; Human Development; Education; Da'wah.*



A. Introduction

The overemphasis on science and technology for economic and national growth, driven by Western influence, has resulted in the neglect of the intrinsic value of spiritual and social dimensions in education. This problem is not new; it was also reported by UNESCO in 2002 (UNESCO, 2002). The process of secularization in the educational system throughout the 19th century has been identified as one of the leading root causes of this problem (Muhamad et al., 2021).

The secularization process significantly impacted the educational vision of universities, challenging the educational process with scientific evidence and technological advancements focused on job marketability and material ends. It removed educational content related to religious beliefs or the metaphysical, such as spirituality, which provides values, a sense of purpose, and responsibility in human life. According to Ismail et al. (2019), changes in the mind without changes in the spiritual dimension do not produce lasting impact and are only temporary. This is the reason for the instability in the educational process, as the objectives of education are constantly revised and changed, and they never reach their true mission (Al-Attas, 1995).

The true vision of education is to develop the core value of human beings: spiritual intelligence. It is primarily because spiritual intelligence guides the development of human thinking and behavior related to moral and social intelligence. Possessing knowledge of spiritual intelligence enables a person to understand the meaning of one's existence more comprehensively, thereby contributing to the well-being of the individual, family members, and the community (Al-Attas, 1995; Daud, 2005). Therefore, knowledge of spiritual intelligence is vital for self-management and is greatly needed by every human (Baba & Zayed, 2015).

Meanwhile, knowledge in science and technology, also known as knowledge of system management (Baba & Zayed, 2015), is complementary. In its application, system management knowledge should be guided by spiritual intelligence to enable humans to fulfill their function as *Khalifah* to all of God's creations.

According to Al-Attas (1995), the real purpose of education is to produce the universal man, who is not only an expert in a specific field of knowledge but also possesses a true system of thought. This system is based on firm belief and devotion to the Oneness of God (Turmudi et al., 2017). This belief fosters the realization that one owns nothing and that everything in the universe belongs to God. Such a system of thought will cultivate a sense of responsibility, sharing, and caring in one's actions.

In a similar vein, Zohar and Marshall (2004) have emphasized that to bring about personal transformation, it is essential first to modify the fundamental aspects of our existence, such as the spirit or soul. They assert that spiritual intelligence is crucial in shaping behavior that is aligned with more comprehensive meanings and values. Additionally, spiritual intelligence is essential for maximizing the effectiveness of emotional intelligence and intellectual capacity. In other words, spiritual intelligence should be prioritized in the overall development of an individual's potential (Hanefar et al., 2015).

A recent study using path analysis conducted by Rosadi (2023) involving Indonesian senior high school students provided empirical evidence of positive and significant direct relationships not only between one independent variable, emotional intelligence (X1), and the dependent variable, students' character development (Z), but also between another independent variable, spiritual intelligence (X2), and the dependent variable. Furthermore, spiritual intelligence (X2) was also found to indirectly influence the mediating variable of school culture (Y) at Jambi Province Senior High School in Indonesia.

In addition, Asadi et al. (2023) empirically tested their hypothesis using multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) and discovered that spiritual intelligence training improved the quality of life and happiness among Iranian medical students at the Tehran University of Medical Sciences. Although both studies provided valuable empirical evidence, they were conducted among Muslim students, as Indonesia and Iran are countries where the majority of the population comprises Muslims.

Nevertheless, it can be argued that emotional intelligence and, more importantly, spiritual intelligence may significantly impact students' academic



performance. Thus, there is a need for a better understanding of students' knowledge of spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence in educational practices, daily life, and cultural contexts (Turi et al., 2020). Based on their mini-review study, Ma and Wang (2022) posited that spiritual intelligence would increase students' awareness of their mental and spiritual resources to solve problems while enhancing their academic engagement in second language (L2) learning. An interesting research finding by Pinto et al. (2023) showed that nursing education improved communication skills and reduced levels of anxiety, stress, and depression among their research participants.

Despite the many benefits of spiritual intelligence on students' development it is often overlooked in the educational process (Hanefar et al., 2015), and the same issue certainly affects non-Muslim students. This issue is acknowledged by Meerangani (2019), who stated that Muslim preachers or educators often neglect *da'wah* in non-Muslim communities. This situation arises due to a lack of interaction across religions and ethnicities in Malaysia's diverse educational systems. This creates difficulties for religiously inclined educators in approaching non-Muslim students, yet the knowledge of spirituality must be effectively communicated to them (Meerangani, 2019).

Therefore, the Department of Social Sciences at the Centre for Human Sciences, Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP), undertook the initiative to introduce the knowledge of spiritual intelligence to first-year non-Muslim students. As of 30 July 2023, the university has been renamed Universiti Malaysia Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah (UMPSA). The primary objective of this study was to examine non-Muslim students' acceptance of spiritual intelligence knowledge. Specifically, the study focused on three elements or variables: God-consciousness, self-transcendence, and self-determination. The rationale for selecting these variables will be discussed in the following subsection. This study holds significance as it may serve as a foundational exploration into how non-Muslim students respond to the knowledge of spiritual intelligence. The findings of this study could provide valuable insights for future plans in *da'wah* to non-Muslim students at higher learning institutions in Malaysia and across the Malay Archipelago region or *Nusantara*.

1. A Conceptual Framework of Spiritual Intelligence for Non-Muslim Students

The influence of secularism, rooted in Western scientific epistemology, has prompted many Western scholars to argue that spiritual intelligence is not inherently tied to religion (Sudi et al., 2017). Individuals who don't believe in God may still exhibit spiritual intelligence, often described as "spiritual but not religious" (Kenneson, 2015). However, when spiritual intelligence is divorced from religious values, it can potentially lead individuals to be consumed by worldly desires and material gains (Ghazali et al., 2014).

Moreover, even among individuals who adhere to religion, there's a possibility of unknowingly embracing polytheistic beliefs, which reject the concept of the unity of God. Such beliefs can foster pluralism and acts of polytheism within religion (Harris, 2015; Suhaimi, 2013). Consequently, despite the shared goal of seeking the meaning and value of life, the Western perspective's definition of spiritual intelligence has the potential to generate confusion in its development. As Al-Attas (1995) noted, the secular education system lacks a reliable, holistic, and authentic source to delineate the boundaries of human freedom and social life.

Agustian (2005) has delineated three stages in the spiritual development process: soul purification, or *tawhid*; mental building; and the exercise of free will to choose what is right when faced with decisions. Most Muslim scholars concur on *tawhid*, or God-consciousness, as the belief in the One True God without associating Him with any partner (Al-Attas, 1995; Hamzah, 2009; Muhamad et al., 2021). This fundamental difference between the concept of spiritual intelligence in Islam and the West (Sudi, et al., 2017) underscores the significance of God-consciousness, which activates an individual's latent potential for self-improvement upon realizing their role as a servant of God. God-consciousness, therefore, serves as a cornerstone in shaping a righteous personality, with self-control being intrinsic to those who acknowledge their connection to God. Consequently, the value of *tawhid* extends to other virtues such as *taqwa* and patience, which are pivotal for personality development (Sudi, et al., 2017).



The second stage in the spiritual development process is mental building, which involves instilling a sense of purpose in human life. According to Hanefar et al. (2015), the ability to understand life's purpose is closely related to self-transcendence. Self-transcendence denotes the capacity to move beyond self-centered consciousness and cultivate a sense of interconnectedness with other creations. Muhamad et al. (2021) have also defined this state of mind as *fitrah*, signifying that recognizing the unity of God's creations entails submitting to the will of God. Every entity in the cosmos and every event that occurs does so according to God's commands, which are always for the greater good. Consequently, the cosmic order is sustained by a dynamic balance of natural laws that complement each other, operating in harmony to maintain the equilibrium of the universe. Each aspect of existence serves a purpose, which is never final but continuously subject to another purpose, with God as the ultimate cause and end.

Therefore, the concepts of *tawhid* and self-transcendence in the purpose of life as *khalifah* promote another value, which is *taqwa* (Sudi, et al., 2017). *Taqwa* is the internal drive to choose and act according to God's commands and to avoid His prohibitions. Hence, *taqwa* may be practiced by a *khalifah* who applies *tawhid* in everyday life by engaging in acts of worship and showing devotion to Allah, as well as by performing good deeds for others.

Moreover, according to Hanefar et al. (2015), *taqwa* can also be defined as self-determination, which takes the form of freedom to make choices. Al-Attas (1995) explains that free will is not total freedom but rather related to the concept of *ikhtiyar*, which means choosing what is good or better. Therefore, "self-determination" involves making decisions that lead to what is good or better and acting accordingly, as this is the true definition of freedom, which is free from the influence of evil or self-desire. Any choice that leads to something bad is not considered a choice for someone who exercises their free will. Making a continuous effort to choose what is good or better will lead to a good personality, which is evidenced in the form of action (Hamzah, 2009).

The conceptualization of spiritual intelligence, incorporating God-consciousness, self-transcendence, and self-determination, provides a valuable reference for understanding spiritual intelligence among non-Muslim students. By employing this conceptual framework, the aim is to foster inclusivity in individuals' relationships with the divine and social interactions rooted in values such as goodness, justice, prosperity, mutual respect, and tolerance, thereby mitigating egocentrism within the community (Alam et al., 2022). Consequently, this study endeavors to deepen comprehension and facilitate the integration of spiritual intelligence into the lives of non-Muslim students. To achieve this goal, a team of lecturers at the Centre for Human Sciences was tasked with developing a module content based on this framework. Subsequently, the content underwent validation by a panel of experts before its delivery to the non-Muslim students.

2. Methodology for Delivering Spiritual Intelligence Knowledge to Non-Muslim Students

The question of divinity related to spiritual intelligence is the central theme that requires effective communication in propagating da'wah to non-Muslims (Meerangani, 2019). However, before determining the most suitable method for imparting the knowledge of spiritual intelligence, it is essential to understand the characteristics of non-Muslims and the primary factors motivating them to embrace Islam.

According to Meerangani (2019), non-Muslims are individuals who do not acknowledge the concept of the Oneness of God (tawhid) and do not recognize Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as the messenger of God. Even if they believe in God, they may attribute godlike qualities to other objects and creatures, thus associating partners with Him. Agustian (2005) further explains that such individuals often lack clarity regarding the purpose of their lives as they fail to anchor themselves to the eternal principles of truth. The purpose of da'wah, conversely, is to invite people to believe in the Oneness of God and the Prophethood of Muhammad as His



messenger (Abd Zamani et al., 2021). Da'wah also aims to cultivate a community dedicated to establishing justice and goodness in society by eradicating evil and injustice based on God's definition rather than individual interpretations.

The aim of da'wah aligns with the vision of education, which seeks to educate individuals to recognize the original purpose of their creation. This purpose entails acknowledging God as the Lord and Creator and arranging one's life as God's servant and vicegerent or khalifah (Al-Attas, 1995; Daud, 2005). There are evident parallels between the aims of da'wah and education from an Islamic perspective. For instance, while education aims to echo the purpose of life, it fundamentally entails providing spiritual guidance to attain maturity. Maturity, in this context, denotes a state of the soul characterized by faith in God and expressed through worship, where attitudes and behaviors align with God's decrees as a way of life (Masbur, 2022).

The methodology of da'wah encompasses three main principles: delivering da'wah wisely, providing sound advice, and engaging in constructive debates (Abd Zamani et al., 2021). Non-Muslims are drawn to Islam in their pursuit of life's meaning, stemming from observations, research about Islam, and their quest for inner peace. Abd Zamani et al. (2021) propose that employing a "wise da'wah approach" effectively captivates non-Muslims to explore Islam. Meerangani (2019) defines the wise approach to da'wah as one that employs systematic, logical, and truth-based arguments and facts to engage the minds and hearts of non-Muslims, encouraging them to consider and embrace the truth. This approach eschews coercion or manipulation, relying instead on reasoned arguments and evidence to persuade them.

In the realm of education, this prudent approach is recognized as knowledge integration (Surajudeen & Mat, 2013). The knowledge integration strategy entails imparting knowledge by blending intellectual development, stimulating critical thinking, and guiding individuals toward embracing revealed truths. This method harmonizes intellectual knowledge and revealed knowledge, grounded in the principle of truth's unity, as both



streams of knowledge ultimately stem from God (Surajudeen & Mat, 2013). Hence, it is posited that employing the methodology of da'wah, particularly the aforementioned wise or integrated approach, would be fitting and effective in conveying spiritual intelligence to non-Muslim students. This methodology is depicted in Figure 1:

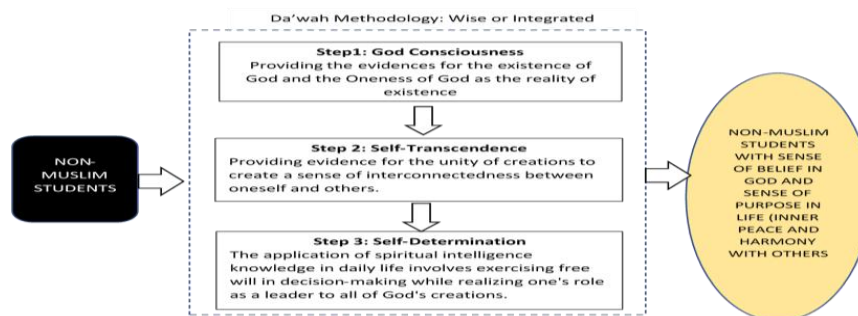


Figure 1. The methodology for delivering spiritual intelligence to non-muslim students.

B. Method

This quantitative study combines descriptive and correlational analyses with the aim to: (i) identify respondents' demographics, (ii) analyze their scores on a spiritual intelligence test, (iii) examine score differences based on religious affiliation, and (iv) investigate the correlation between scores of spiritual intelligence knowledge regarding God-consciousness, self-transcendence, and self-determination among non-Muslim students.

A total of 209 first-year non-Muslim students enrolled in the Soft Skills subject at the Department of Social Sciences, Centre for Human Sciences, UMP during Semester I of the 2022/2023 academic session participated in this study. However, our focus for this study was solely on spiritual intelligence for non-Muslims. The non-Muslim students attended two teaching and learning sessions on the topic, with each session lasting approximately two hours.

A series of questions was crafted from the content of a specially designed module to evaluate the spiritual intelligence knowledge among non-Muslim students. Following validation by a panel of subject experts and necessary revisions, the test was disseminated online to non-Muslim students via a Google form to invite their participation in this study.



Data were collected and analyzed using both Microsoft Excel and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 16. Students provided responses categorized as either “right” (1 mark) or “wrong” (0 mark). Thus, the collected scores of dichotomous data were nonparametric. Descriptive statistical analysis was utilized to examine the demographic characteristics of the students and their scores in terms of percentages on the spiritual intelligence test. Additionally, the Kruskal-Wallis test (Kruskal & Wallis, 1952), recommended by Ostertagová et al. (2014), was employed for inferential analysis to assess percentage score differences based on religious affiliation. Lastly, Spearman’s rank correlation coefficient test was employed to measure any correlation between the percentage scores of the variables. To gauge the level of self-understanding among the respondents regarding spiritual intelligence knowledge, the percentage scores were divided into four levels: very low (0%–25%), low (26%–51%), moderate (52%–77%), and high (78%–100%).

C. Result and Discussion

1. Result

The results of this study are illustrated in the following figures and tables. Figure 2 offers an overview of the respondents’ demography categorized by religious affiliation. Meanwhile, Tables 1, 2, and 3 display the participants’ responses to the spiritual intelligence test, assessing the three variables: God-consciousness, self-transcendence, and self-determination. The overall findings are summarized in Table 4. Additionally, Table 5 and Table 6 present the inferential analysis of score differences based on religious affiliation among the respondents and correlation analysis between the percentage scores of the variables, respectively.

The demographic analysis based on respondents’ religious affiliation (refer to Figure 2) revealed that the majority were Buddhists (46.4%), followed by Hindus (34.5%) and Christians (16.7%). A smaller proportion identified with non-religious affiliations, including animism and atheism (2.4%).



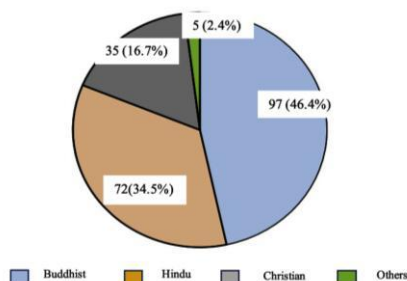


Figure 2. Respondents demographic based on religion

This result suggests that non-Muslim students obtained an average percentage score of 83% for God-consciousness, indicating a high level of self-understanding in this regard. Further analysis revealed that eight items (questions 5, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 19, and 25) received scores of 78% or higher, signifying a high level of comprehension.

Table 1. Result of Descriptive Analysis for God-Consciousness

God-Consciousness					
No.	Item	Right	Wrong	Mod	Right (%)
2	Spiritual intelligence is the highest form of intelligence that helps develop wisdom.	44	165	0	21
5	I will learn more about spiritual intelligence as I realize it helps me strengthen my connection to God	203	6	1	97
11	Reflecting on my mistakes and asking for God’s forgiveness brings me inner peace.	200	9	1	96
12	I believe that remembering the One True God can purify one’s heart from associating Him with any partner.	195	14	1	93
14	Developing intellectual knowledge guided by religious teaching, is important to develop a true concept of God.	201	8	1	96
16	As I reflect on my life, I have come to realize that I cannot lead it without a sense of connection to God.	178	31	1	85
17	Knowledge of spiritual intelligence has helped me understand the importance of a strong connection to God for inner peace and strength.	201	8	1	96



God-Consciousness					
No.	Item	Right	Wrong	Mod	Right (%)
19	Through spiritual intelligence, I have come to appreciate God's perfect love for me.	191	18	1	91
25	Attending a spiritual intelligence lecture has taught me the importance of having a final destination in our lives.	186	23	1	89
31	True happiness comes from within by having a strong connection with God.	146	63	1	70
Average Percentage Score					83

However, item number 31 yielded a response of 70%, suggesting a relatively moderate level of understanding. Conversely, item number 2 yielded only 21%, indicating a very low level of understanding. These findings suggest that the respondents generally possess a high level of self-understanding regarding God-consciousness. Most respondents chose the correct answers for items measuring the importance of connection to God, the concept of God, and the final destination. The percentage score was moderate for the item measuring the idea of happiness and connection with God. However, the percentage score for the idea of spiritual intelligence being the highest form of intelligence was unexpectedly low.

Table 2 presents the scores for self-transcendence. Overall, the average score was 84%, indicating a high level of self-transcendence. Item number 4 garnered the highest percentage of responses, with all respondents agreeing with the statement in the test item. This suggests that non-Muslim students fully recognize the importance of spiritual intelligence in maintaining emotional stability as well as moderate thinking and behavior. Seven other items, namely, item numbers 1, 6, 10, 13, 18, 22, and 23, also obtained high percentages of responses, indicating that most respondents accepted the idea of self-transcendence as true.

Item numbers 7 and 27, which measured non-Muslim students' understanding of God's commands and the purpose of life, respectively, yielded responses with each a percentage score of 73% and 54%. This suggests



a moderate level of understanding. However, item number 24, which assessed how individuals with low spiritual intelligence would deal with problems, obtained a percentage score of 47%, indicating a relatively low level of understanding.

Table 3 presents the results for self-determination. The average percentage score for this variable was 90%, indicating an exceptionally high level of self-understanding about self-determination among non-Muslim students. This finding demonstrates that most respondents chose the correct answers for all items that assessed self-determination. These items examined the respondents' understanding of how spiritual intelligence applies to their daily lives.

The overall average percentage score for the spiritual intelligence test was 86%, which is considered high. Regarding each variable, the highest score was obtained from the self-determination variable, with a score of 90%. This was 6% higher than the second highest score, which was for God-consciousness, at 84%. Self-transcendence followed closely with 83%, only 1% lower than God-consciousness. All scores were above 80%, indicating a relatively high level of understanding.

Table 2. Result of descriptive analysis for self-transcendence

Self-Transcendence					
No.	Item	Right	Wrong	Mod	Right (%)
1	Spiritual intelligence is related to my personality development.	188	21	1	90
4	With spiritual intelligence, I can maintain balance in my emotions, thoughts, and actions (not extreme).	209	0	1	100
6	To enter heaven, we need to be blessed by the Creator.	186	23	1	89
7	God commands us not to harm ourselves, others, or the world.	153	56	1	73
10	Not believing in the existence of God will improve my internal self-control.	201	8	1	96
13	Observing and reflecting on God's creation brings me closer to Him.	207	2	1	99



Self-Transcendence					
No.	Item	Right	Wrong	Mod	Right (%)
18	As I observe nature, I realize that everything is interconnected.	171	38	1	82
22	If a friend scolds me in front of others for not completing my task in a group project properly, as a student with high spiritual intelligence, I will ask for forgiveness and act to improve my performance.	208	1	1	99
23	Spiritual intelligence has made me more responsible toward myself and others.	189	20	1	90
24	The sequence of “problem –emotion –action” is typical of those who are weak in spiritual intelligence.	98	111	0	47
27	The Creator created us is to fulfill our desire	112	97	1	54
Average Percentage Score					84

Table 3. Result of descriptive analysis for self-determination

Self-Determination to Choose for Good					
No.	Item	Right	Wrong	Mod	Right (%)
3	After I learned about spiritual intelligence, I will ensure that I only choose to do good things as I realize that God’s command is for goodness.	200	9	1	96
8	I will choose to accept God’s destiny even if I do not like it because I know that obeying God’s command will only bring a positive impact to my life.	169	40	1	81
9	Believing that God’s destiny is only for good helps me to be more positive about what happens in my life.	200	9	1	96
21	Loving others just as I love myself because I realize that God’s love is infinite and perfect, is an example of integrating spiritual intelligence into daily life practices.	188	21	1	90
26	I realized that I can manage my stress better when everything happens according to my plan.	184	25	1	88



Self-Determination to Choose for Good					
No.	Item	Right	Wrong	Mod	Right (%)
28	I can develop a positive feeling and mindset by strengthening my belief that I own everything in this world and am free to do anything as I wish.	183	26	1	88
29	We can avoid feeling lost in our lives by following the way of life inherited from previous generations.	196	13	1	94
30	Thinking rationally and making a choice that aligns with God's command is the true meaning of freedom in exercising the power of free will.	163	46	1	78
32	Spiritual intelligence helps us to be more successful in our lives by covering up our mistakes and blaming others.	195	14	1	93
33	Spiritual intelligence helps me develop my self-confidence by making me feel "okay" for not practicing what I believe to be the truth.	200	9	1	96
Average Percentage					90

Table 4. Overall Result of the Spiritual Intelligence Test

No.	Variable	Percentage (%)
1.	God-Consciousness	83
2.	Self-transcendence	84
3.	Self-determination	90
Average		86

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test and the chi-square tests to examine score differences based on religious affiliation are presented in Table 5. These analyses revealed a significant difference in the percentage of God-consciousness based on religious affiliation, with a chi-square value of 7.9, which was significant at 0.048 (i.e., $p < 0.05$). However, there was no significant difference in the percentage score for the other two variables. The mean rank analysis indicated that respondents of the Hindu religion had the lowest mean rank (92.53), differing from that of respondents from other religions.



Table 5. Percentage Score Comparison Based on Religion Affiliation

No.	Variable	Means Rank				Chi-Square ¹	Asymp. Sig.	Result
		Buddhist	Hindu	Christian	Other			
1.	God-consciousness	105.49	92.53	125.19	115.13	7.903	0.048	Significant difference
2.	Self-transcendence	103.2	105.75	105.5	104.88	0.098	0.992	No significant difference
3.	Self-determination	105.36	102.42	111.93	56.25	3.413	0.332	No significant difference

¹Critical value_{0.05} = 7.815, degree of freedom (df) = 3

²If critical value is more than the calculated chi-Square, then there is no difference

The Spearman's rho correlation coefficient was calculated to determine the relationship between the three variables, and the results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Spearman's rank correlation coefficients

No.	Variable 1	Variable 2	Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (2 Tailed)	Result
1.	God-consciousness	Self-transcendence	0.278**	0.000	Positive
2.	God-consciousness	Self-determination	0.228**	0.001	Positive
3.	Self-transcendence	Self-determination	0.292**	0.000	Positive

* N = 209

The Spearman's correlation coefficients revealed positive correlations between God-consciousness and self-transcendence (0.28), and God-consciousness and self-determination (0.23), respectively, at a significant level of $p < 0.05$. Additionally, a positive correlation was observed for self-transcendence and self-determination, with a correlation coefficient value of 0.29 at a significant level of $p < 0.05$. Thus, the overall Spearman's rank correlation coefficient test indicated a positive relationship for all variables.



2. Discussion

The results of the spiritual intelligence test indicated that the majority of first-year non-Muslim students at UMP exhibited religious inclinations, regardless of their religious affiliation. Typically, a religious person is characterized by specific beliefs concerning God, sacred scriptures, values, and culture (Victor & Treschuk, 2020; Tabrani ZA et al., 2023). Religion can be understood as a collection of learned behaviors and social expressions reflecting cultural values within a particular group. These findings are consistent with the definition of non-Muslims proposed by Meerangani (2019), who defines them as individuals rejecting the concept of the Oneness of God and the prophethood of Muhammad.

The overall high percentage score indicates that the majority of respondents selected “right” as the correct answers for items assessing God-consciousness after attending lectures on spiritual intelligence. This finding suggests that non-Muslim students comprehended key concepts related to God-consciousness, including the significance of spiritual intelligence knowledge, self-connection to God, the concept of God, God’s unconditional love, forgiveness for inner peace, and the ultimate destination. However, the non-Muslim students who took part in this study did not fully grasp the concept of spiritual intelligence as the highest form of intelligence.

The findings from the results of the scores obtained from the God-consciousness items in the spiritual intelligence test have affirmed that attending spiritual intelligence classes aids non-Muslim students in comprehending and embracing crucial concepts about God-consciousness, including the notion of the One True God. It has become evident that employing a wise approach in delivering knowledge about God-consciousness – logical, systematic, and truth-based – assisted the participants in considering and understanding the knowledge more effectively. Therefore, it would be essential to expose non-Muslim students to the knowledge of spiritual intelligence to facilitate a deeper understanding of the significance of God-consciousness and the true concept of God as defined by the Islamic Principle of Tawhid (Al-Attas, 1995; Hamzah, 2009; Idris & Tabrani ZA., 2017; Muhamad et al., 2021).



Similarly, the results obtained from the data analysis of the scores for the second variable, self-transcendence, also indicated that non-Muslim students comprehended most of the items used to measure ideas of self-transcendence. They grasped the importance of self-connection with God for personality development and the concept of interconnectedness with others (Muhamad et al., 2021; Turmudi et al., 2017). The understanding of self-transcendence is crucial as it may nurture an appreciation for social connections with others and nature (Mahmud et al., 2023; Padzil et al., 2020). Consequently, they acknowledged their responsibility as khalifah, whose purpose is to maintain harmony and balance in their social relationships with all of God's creations (Sudi et al., 2017). Therefore, this knowledge could enhance the non-Muslim students' social intelligence. However, an area that might require improvement in the module content could be the non-Muslim students' understanding of the connection between spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence, intellectual intelligence, and their actions in dealing with problems.

As for the third variable, self-determination, a similar trend has been observed. The high average percentage score for almost all items provides empirical evidence that the non-Muslim students understood the concept of self-determination in decision-making, which involves making choices aligned with goodness. Thus, non-Muslim students in the present study generally accepted the idea that the right choice would align with God's commands, recognizing that God's commands are for the greater good. Understanding the true concept of freedom becomes a driving factor for good decision-making, enabling students to exercise their free will and function as God's khalifah (Al-Attas, 1995; Daud, 2005).

The comparison of percentage scores revealed a significant difference only concerning the God-consciousness variable. Mean rank analysis further demonstrated that Hindu-affiliated respondents had a lower mean rank score compared to respondents of other religions. This finding confirms that the concept of God-consciousness, as presented in the items of the spiritual intelligence test for this variable, was well-received by

Buddhist and Christian students among the non-Muslim participants in this study. However, the same did not apply to non-Muslim students of Hindu religious affiliation.

According to Ghazali et al. (2014), Hinduism, a polytheistic religion, believes in multiple creators or gods governing the universe's creation, preservation, and destruction. Misunderstanding this concept of truth can obscure life's purpose, diverting individuals from eternal principles and virtuous living (Agustian, 2005; Harris, 2015; Mohd Yusoff et al., 2022). This finding indirectly suggests that the method used to convey knowledge about God-consciousness may be more suitable for non-Muslim students with Buddhist and Christian affiliations. To effectively apply this method to Hindu-affiliated students, improvements may be necessary.

Lastly, the correlation analysis in this study revealed positive relationships among all three variables, echoing findings from prior research. For instance, Sudi et al. (2017) observed that God-consciousness forms a cornerstone knowledge linked to the emergence of other values. Therefore, spiritual intelligence plays a crucial role in reintegrating values, ensuring non-Muslim students remain engaged. This is because God-consciousness, a core value in spiritual intelligence, fosters a set of life values that ultimately shape personal character development. This foundation is essential for cultivating exceptional and holistic personalities among university students, irrespective of their ethnicity or religion.

D. Conclusion

The tertiary education system plays a pivotal role in shaping individuals who are not just well-versed in their fields but also exhibit robust self-management skills. Spiritual intelligence serves to instill value systems and life responsibilities, enabling students to mold their thoughts and behaviors within the context of a purposeful and fulfilling life, as ordained by God. This epitomizes the core vision of the educational system, which should be prioritized as a proactive measure against a myriad of social and psychological challenges stemming from deficiencies in essential



values crucial for spiritual and social growth.

Hence, it's imperative to introduce non-Muslim students to the concept of spiritual intelligence, as it's not exclusive to Muslims. Spiritual intelligence is indispensable for everyone, enabling a deeper understanding of life's essence and offering comprehensive insights into life's phenomena. Furthermore, spiritual intelligence serves as a crucial predictor for students' psychological well-being and overall life satisfaction. Moreover, it significantly influences students' happiness and academic performance positively.

This study has offered empirical evidence through an initial exploration of non-Muslim students' comprehension of spiritual intelligence delivered via the integration or wise approach. Overall, non-Muslim students demonstrated a solid grasp of the three highlighted elements of spiritual intelligence: God-consciousness, self-transcendence, and self-determination. The only discordance in understanding was observed in the aspect of God-consciousness, primarily among Hindu students who adhere to a belief in multiple gods. Hence, there's a pressing need for further research, especially focusing on delivery methods tailored to Hindu-affiliated students.

Moreover, it would be beneficial to explore other student characteristics beyond their religious affiliations. This could provide additional empirical insights and enhance the initial conceptual framework by integrating moderating, mediating, or intervening variables. Future research in this domain should also contemplate employing more sophisticated quantitative analyses and advanced statistical techniques like structural equation modeling (SEM).

In conclusion, it is imperative to persist in disseminating the knowledge of spiritual intelligence to non-Muslim students at institutions of higher education. This endeavor serves as a platform for conveying truth and as an ongoing initiative to foster societal well-being, irrespective of race or religion.

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