

The Influence of Spiritual Well-being of Life Satisfaction: Self Esteem as a Mediator

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Abstract--- This study examines the relationship between spiritual well-being and self-esteem that ultimately affects life satisfaction. A total of 383 respondents were selected to participate in this research through cluster sampling from all over Selangor. The study followed a quantitative research design to investigate the degree of relationship between spiritual well-being, self-esteem and life satisfaction. Data were analysed through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using AMOS. The findings of this study corroborate that spiritual well-being is observed to have impacts on life satisfaction. At the same time, SEM analysis found significant influences of spiritual well-being on self-esteem. The indirect effects of spiritual well-being were observed on life satisfaction via self-esteem as a full mediator. The findings imply that self-esteem appear to be crucial in the relationship between spiritual well-being and life satisfaction.

Keywords--- Spiritual Well-Being, Self Esteem, Life Satisfaction, Mediator.

I. INTRODUCTION

Life satisfaction is considered as an important aspect in an individual's life. It is a crucial aspect in the efforts of shaping individuals who own the strength to build a quality life. (Ma & Huebner, 2008). Life satisfaction has big influence in the individuals irrespective of children, adolescents, youths, adults and even the elderly. Similar to the other groups, adolescents too would like to feel the satisfaction of life. Adolescents' life satisfaction can be defined as a dynamic situation from the aspects of physical well-being, mental and social which functions positively throughout their lives (Diener, 2009). Levin et al. (2011) had defined adolescents' life satisfaction as cognitive evaluation by adolescents while considering their satisfaction towards life as a whole. This is related to aspects such as relationship with family and friends, personal development, health conditions and personal well-being, in addition to relationship with environment. However, an adolescents' life which is a transition from childhood to adulthood causes adolescents to deal with physical, emotional, spiritual, cognitive and social imbalance which leads to self-conflict (Smith 2016; Chung, 2018). The research by Pina-Watson et al. (2017) proves that self-conflict brings to the decline in adolescents' life satisfaction. Self-conflict too causes uncertainty and ambiguity in self-esteem and hinders adolescents in learning about themselves, and what is needed in life to obtain life satisfaction (Sharafi, 2011) In addition, the decline in life satisfaction is noticeable among adolescents facing self-conflict whereby they are identified as risky adolescents (Azziyati et al., 2013). Interestingly, compared to the early and late adolescents; the middle adolescents face the most self-conflict as they wish for freedom and are far from parental controls (Keijsers & Poulin, 2013). According to Kapetanovic et al. (2019), middle adolescents have become bolder in protesting against parents' instructions, besides feeling neglected, no sense of belonging and loved when advised by family members.

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Adolescents' life satisfaction can be increased through spiritual well-being aspect which encourages adolescents to obtain religious well-being such as loving the religion and holding strongly to life guidance as set by God, in addition to existential well-being which is to practice good life practices based on divinity (Apostolides, 2017; Michaelson et al., 2016). Research by Lerner et al. (2008) states that existential well-being is important for adolescents; as it functions to make them peaceful and able to form own outlook about their daily lives. The researches by Azyyati et al. (2013) and Kadir et al. (2012) discuss about adolescents' self-conflict being caused by the lack of spiritual well-being awareness and the negligence in being religious. This eventually leads adolescents to behaviors deviating from life norms such as eloping from house, bullying, illegal racing, extortion and robbery

Previous researchers found that the self-esteem plays an important role as the mediator to life satisfaction and a few other psychological aspects such as self- stigma and life satisfaction (Huang et al., 2018); depression and life satisfaction (Cikrikci et al., 2018); grit and life satisfaction (Li et al., 2018) and concern and life satisfaction (Zamir, 2012). However, there is a lack of researches to see how far self-esteem has become a mediator which structurally connects spiritual well-being and life satisfaction among adolescents. Therefore, this research involves spiritual well-being and self-esteem which could influence life satisfaction. Based on the understanding of the researchers, the effects of spiritual well-being and self-esteem towards life satisfaction have not been tested. We have contributed towards the literature by discussing the direct relation between spiritual well-being towards self-esteem and life satisfaction. Furthermore, this research focuses on self-esteem as the mediating variable between spiritual well-being and life satisfaction of adolescents. Following are the research questions:

1. Does spiritual well-being directly influence self-esteem?
2. Does spiritual well-being directly influence life satisfaction?
3. Does self-esteem play role as mediator between spiritual well-being and life satisfaction?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1) *Life Satisfaction*

According to Ma and Huebner (2008), life satisfaction is an important aspect in an individual's life. This aspect is important in efforts to shape individuals with strength in building a quality life. Life satisfaction is a form of evaluation process from the aspect of cognitive, whereby individuals measure the quality of their lives based on unique criteria established by themselves (Pavot & Diener, 2009). Friman et al. (2018) assume that the family, friends, schools and living environment aspects are important elements which carries the establishment of adolescents' life satisfaction. Researchers assume that researches related to the aspects of life satisfaction should have clear descriptions regarding the contributions of the components of life satisfaction.

Research by Brueck et al. (2012) states that family structure plays an important role in contributing to life satisfaction among adolescents. Adolescents living with parents show better achievement in education, lesser involvement in social illness and have healthier lifestyle. Meanwhile, adolescents from broken families show high tendency to behave negatively and not having life satisfaction (Sweeney et al., 2009). Henceforth, the influence of

school environment on adolescents' life is another dimension in the life satisfaction which needs to be considered. Previous researchers found that there is a relationship between school environment with their life satisfaction (Antaramian, 2017). Research done by Yuen et al. (2016) also showed that satisfaction while at school becomes a contributing factor towards life satisfaction in general. The aspect of living in a neighbourhood is also considered important by Ash and Huebner as a subdomain in the life satisfaction domain. Besides, the research by Gilman et al. (2000), Ching and Hung (2017) also agrees that the living environment; such as experiences with neighbours and involvement in co-curriculum activities with members of the society are significant contributors to the life satisfaction of adolescents. However, other researchers found that the stronger contributors towards life satisfaction among adolescents are parents and friends' involvements (Marion et al., 2013).

2) *Spiritual Well-Being*

Four Domains of Spiritual Health and Well Being Model was introduced by John Fisher (1998) to understand the spiritual well-being and health, besides the relationships between personal, communal, environment and transcendent (Gomez & Fisher, 2003). This model was introduced in the research of well-being and used widely by researchers in various situations, especially in researching the spiritual well-being aspect. This model states that spiritual well-being is a form of dynamic well-being, whereby the inner harmony of an individual is obtained based on the individual's intention to develop and expand him or herself. Based on this model, Fisher (2010) divides spiritual well-being into four domains which are personal domain, communal domain, environmental domain and transcendent domain.

Spiritual well-being is a part of psychosocial and cognitive development which takes place on all human being (Sifers et al., 2012). The definition of spiritual well-being comprises the feelings towards transcendent and other dimension such as meaning of life, self- satisfaction, beliefs and local values (Miller & Thoresen, 2003; Monod et al., 2011). The definition of spiritual well-being differs from one individual to another (Egan, 2009). Spiritual practice encourages personal well-being, reduces stress, increases life satisfaction and has positive influence regarding religious well-being aspect. According to Ellison and Anderson (2001), spiritual practices also is beneficial in improving the level of personal well-being even when the individuals do not get much social and psychological support from people around. Besides, according to Ellison (1983) who introduced religious well-being domain; religious rituals indirectly improves the mental health and psychological well-being.

3) *Self-Esteem*

The self-esteem theory of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is suitable to be applied to measure the level of self-esteem and life satisfaction as it encourages human to move forward and up to the next level of needs. According to this theory, Maslow (1943) arranged the five levels of human needs accordingly in a hierarchy which is considered suitable to fulfill physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of humans. According to Adiele and Abraham (2013), the five levels of needs are physiological, safety, love, self-esteem and self-actualization. Various researches regarding self-esteem have been brought forward by previous researchers. In this research, researchers are referring to Rosenberg (1965) who mentions that the sub domain of self-esteem; which are positive and negative feeling of oneself are seen as suitable to be related to adolescents' life. The self-esteem is seen as providing a significant and positive relationship with life

satisfaction and acts as the mediating variables which connects spiritual well-being and life satisfaction (Joshnloo & Daemi, 2014; Yoo, 2017).

According to Rosenberg (1979), self-esteem is a self-evaluation towards own self either from positive or negative aspects. High self-esteem individuals would evaluate themselves useful and value themselves more, while the individuals with low self-esteem always consider themselves useless and being in an all lacking situation. Zeng (2013) assumes that self-esteem is the perception of someone about themselves. This self-perception will portray the self-confidence of a person which eventually plays an important role in determining the success or failure in his or her life. Self-esteem can be considered as an essential concept during adolescence. The concept of self-esteem in oneself would determine how an individual behaves within his or her circle. The role of self-esteem can be seen through the thinking processes, emotions, values, ambitions and the purpose someone wishes to achieve. Individuals with high self-esteem would show it through good behaviors, while the ones with low self-esteem will tend to portray negative behavior (Coopersmith, 1967; Descartes et al., 2018).

III. METHODOLOGY

1) Research Design

This is a quantitative research using survey method. Survey method is well-defined as the collecting of data from samples over questions and answers given by them (Check & Schutt, 2012). The survey method is very popular in various research fields; especially in science social s it is often used to describe and explore human behavior (Singleton & Straits, 2009). Figure 1 shows a suggested model which combines the relationships of spiritual well-being, self-esteem and life satisfaction. This research involves the spiritual well-being as an independent variable, while self-esteem and life satisfaction are dependent variables. Next, this research also tests the self-esteem as a mediator between the relationship of spiritual well-being and life satisfaction. We presume that self-esteem functions as the mediator in the relationship of spiritual well-being and life satisfaction.

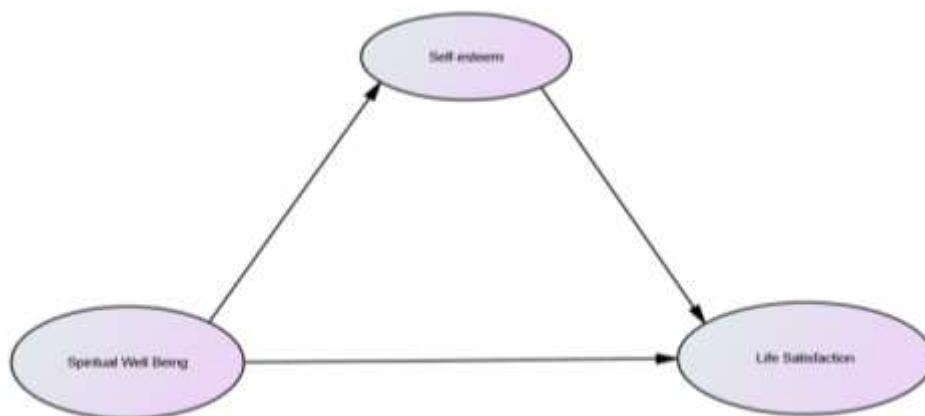


Figure 1: A Priori Model

2) Research Participants

The population of this research consist of form four secondary school students in Selangor. There is a total of 367,962 secondary school students and 68,569 of them are in form four (Source: Selangor State Education Department,

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2019). Selangor is chosen as the research location because it has the most secondary schools and most adolescent students compared to the others states in Malaysia. In Selangor, there are 278 secondary schools governed by 10 District Education Department (PPD). All samples are selected from the 10 PPD. Ponto (2015) mentions that to obtain accuracy in concluding about the population; samples should be chosen from individuals with same criteria as the population. Cluster sampling is chosen as the area involved in this research is wide and involves a huge, scattered population; in addition to high cost. The sample size is determine based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination table. Researchers chose 383 samples from form four students in Selangor. From 383 adolescents who took part in this research, 202 (52.7%) respondents are females while 181 (47.3%) are males. It is clear that more female adolescents are involved in this research.

3) *Research Instruments*

a) *Life Satisfaction*

Adolescents' life satisfaction is measured using the Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS) with 40 items built by Huebner (2001). By using this instrument, the respondents are requested to evaluate each item based on the 6-point Likert scale; with respondent choices from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (6). There are 5 sub construct which measures life satisfaction which are family, friends, schools, living environment and self. High score shows high life satisfaction level and the other way around, lower scores shows lower life satisfaction. The reliability of Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS) is 0.75. Alpha Cronbach value (α) more than 0.70 is considered good (Pallant, 2010).

b) *Self-Esteem*

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965) is a valid instrument to measure global self-esteem (Harris et al., 2016). This instrument contains 10 items, divided into 2 sub construct which are positive feeling and negative feeling. 4 points Likert Scale is used for responses; "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (4). Among the statements in this instrument are, "I feel that I do not have much to be proud of, "I have positive attitude towards myself" and "I am capable of doing something as good as other". The reliability for The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is 0.83. Alpha Cronbach (α) value more than 0.70 is considered good (Pallant, 2010).

c) *Spiritual Well-Being*

Spiritual Well-Being Scale (Paloutzian & Ellison, 1982) is a self-report instrument containing 20 items with 2 sub construct. The first represents religious well-being and the second represents existential well-being. Every sub construct has 10 items. All the items in sub construct of religious well-being contains the word "God". Meanwhile, there are no religious phrases used directly for existential sub construct; but it focuses on questions based on life such as purpose of life, relationships with human and environment. Each item is represented by 6-point Likert scale with following choices of answers; "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (6). The reliability of Spiritual Well-Being Scale is 0.76. The alpha Cronbach (α) value more than 0.70 is good (Pallant, 2010).

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

By referring to SEM assumptions, a few earlier analyses were conducted before testing the research questions specifically. The SEM assumptions discussed in this research are sample size, missing data, normality, extreme data (outliers) and multicollinearity. Previous researchers discussed that it is normal for data to be scattered if the skewness and kurtosis are lesser than ± 2 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Kline (2005) also claimed that skewness should be lesser than 3.0 and kurtosis should be lesser than 8.0 for normal data. Next, SPSS program is used to determine extreme data (outliers) like box plots. Researchers also focused on the multicollinearity issue, which takes place when the relationship between variables are very high. According to Kline (2005), the multicollinearity issue exist when the relationship between variables are more than 0.90 ($r = 0.90$).

The measurement index of Goodness of fit; which is used in this research are as suggested by Kline (1998); to use a minimum of four reported tests. Researcher will report the results of goodness-of-fit tests which are chi-square/df, CFI, TLI, and RMSEA (Awang, 2012). Chi-square value is not significant if the models match well. Significant chi-square shows less satisfying match of models. CFI value must be equivalent to or more than 0.90 to receive model and to show that 90% covariation in data can be removed again by model. The value of TLI must be equivalent or more than 0.90. In general, models are said to match well if the value of RMSEA is 0.08 or lesser. The value of RMSEA 0.05 or lesser shows a good match (indicate close approximate fit). Values in between 0.05 and 0.08 suggests reasonable error of approximation, and the value of RMSEA being more or equivalent to 0.10 suggests a weak match (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). Next, according to Hair et al. (2010), the mediating variables available in the research can be tested using structural equation model analysis. The application of this structural equation model helps researchers build, estimate and test complex variable models, in addition to test the effects of variables in the research (Awang, 2012).

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1) Early Analysis

There is no missing value found in this research involving 383 respondents. Table 1 shows the average value, standard deviation, correlation matrices, skewness and kurtosis for all variables.

Table 1: Average value, standard deviation, correlation matrices, skewness and kurtosis

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Life Satisfaction</i>	<i>Spiritual Well-Being</i>	<i>Self-Esteem</i>
Life Satisfaction	1	.120*	.207**
Spiritual Well-being		1	.635**
Self-Esteem			1
Skewness	-0.815	-0.760	-0.503
Kurtosis	2.277	-0.493	-0.211
Average	4.21	4.08	2.76
Standard Deviation	0.52	1.28	0.70
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).			
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Table 1 shows the findings from the early analysis for life satisfaction, spiritual well-being and self-esteem. The skewness value for life satisfaction is -0.815, and the value of kurtosis is 2.277. Skewness and kurtosis values for spiritual well-being is -0.760 and -0.493. While value of skewness for self-esteem is -0.503, and kurtosis value is -

0.211. Since the values of skewness and kurtosis are lower than the accepted range, both Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) and Kline (2005) opinions are fulfilled; whereby the data are distributed in normal ways in this research. In the context of multicollinearity; there is a statistically significant correlation between life satisfaction and spiritual well-being ($r = 0.120$), life satisfaction and self-esteem ($r = 0.207$) and spiritual well-being and self-esteem ($r = 0.635$). The relationships between life satisfaction, spiritual well-being and self-esteem are significant but not more than 0.90. Therefore, the discriminant validity of the spiritual well-being variable is accomplished.

2) *Measurement Model*

The measurement model analysis for life satisfaction suits the Malaysian adolescents in this research, $\chi^2 = 3659.553$, $\chi^2/df = 5.013$, $p = 0.000$, CFI = 0.573, TLI = 0.543 and RMSEA = 0.102. The second-order measurement model analysis for life satisfaction is suitable for Malaysian adolescents in this research, $\chi^2 = 919.193$, $\chi^2/df = 3.343$, $p = 0.000$, CFI = 0.900, TLI = 0.900 and RMSEA = 0.078. The measurement model analysis for spiritual well-being is deemed not suitable for Malaysian adolescents in this research, $\chi^2 = 1003.463$, $\chi^2/df = 5.868$, $p = 0.000$, CFI = 0.817, TLI = 0.796 and RMSEA = 0.113. The second-order measurement model analysis for spiritual well-being suits the Malaysian adolescents in this research, $\chi^2 = 276.832$, $\chi^2/df = 3.899$, $p = 0.000$, CFI = 0.948, TLI = 0.934 and RMSEA = 0.077. Measurement model analysis for self-esteem is also suitable for Malaysian adolescents in this research, $\chi^2 = 224.129$, $\chi^2/df = 6.592$, $p = 0.000$, CFI = 0.814, TLI = 0.754 and RMSEA = 0.121. Second-order measurement model for self-esteem suits the Malaysian adolescents in this research, $\chi^2 = 22.355$, $\chi^2/df = 2.794$, $p = 0.000$, CFI = 0.977, TLI = 0.991 and RMSEA = 0.069.

3) *Structural Model*

SEM analysis findings show that structural model for this research is suitable for the adolescents in Malaysia, which is $\chi^2 = 1684.306$, $\chi^2/df = 2.721$, $p = 0.000$, TLI = 0.883, CFI = 0.891 and RMSEA = 0.067. The value of corresponding index of this model fulfills the overall index as suggested by previous researchers. However, the corresponding index of the structural model can be improved by checking the results of modification indices (MI). As a result, researchers did a review and re-analyzed the structural model of this research to improve the corresponding index of the model. Therefore, model 2 is tested involving co-variants error between item B1 and B3; B7 and B11 which has MI (more than 15.00) (Awang, 2012). Thus, by connecting e118 and e119; e114 and e115; the corresponding index of structural model can be improved to $\chi^2 = 1630.114$, $\chi^2/df = 2.642$, $p = 0.000$, TLI = 0.900, CFI = 0.900 and RMSEA = 0.066). Loading factor and the SEM coefficient of regression after modification (MI) is shown in Figure 2.

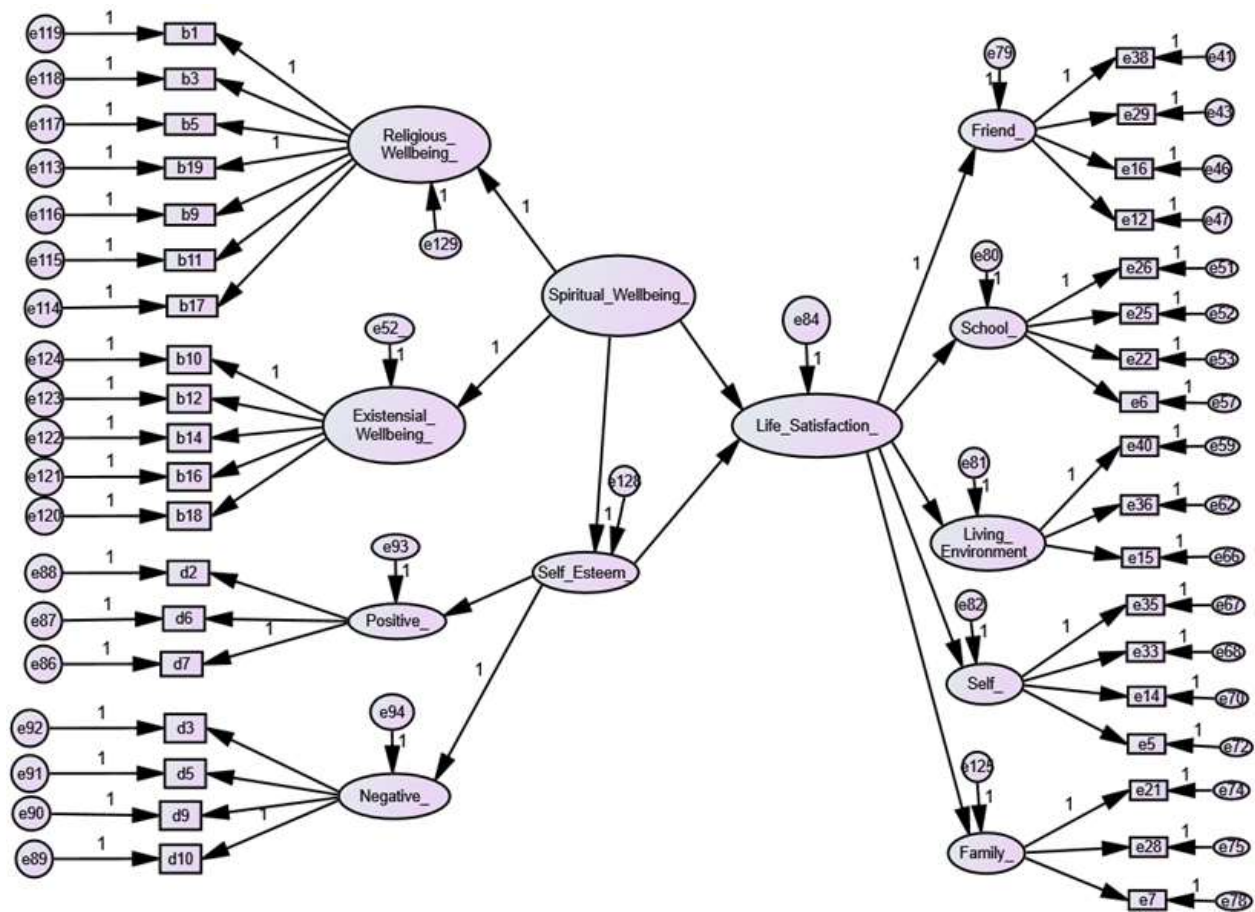


Figure 2: Structural Model after Modification

4) Relationship Between Spiritual Well-Being and Life Satisfaction Among Adolescents

The first hypothesis (H01) of this research is that there is no significant relationship between spiritual well-being and life satisfaction among adolescents. SEM analysis shows that spiritual well-being ($\beta = 0.086, t = 2.421, p < 0.05$) affects life satisfaction. Therefore, H01 is not supported entirely, whereby spiritual well-being is a factor which contributes to life satisfaction. This means, adolescents with high spiritual well-being has better life satisfaction.

5) Relationship Between Spiritual Well-Being and Self-Esteem Among Adolescents

The second hypothesis (H02) of this research is that there is no significant relationship between spiritual well-being and self-esteem among adolescents. SEM analysis shows that the spiritual well-being ($\beta = 0.554, t = 14.106, p < 0.05$) influences self-esteem. Therefore, H02 is not entirely supported whereby spiritual well-being is a factor which contributes to self-esteem. This implicates that adolescents with high spiritual well-being has higher self-esteem.

6) The Effects of Self-Esteem Mediation Between Spiritual Well-Being with Life Satisfaction Among Adolescents

Third hypothesis (H03) of this research is that self-esteem is not the mediator which connects spiritual well-being with life satisfaction among adolescents. The effects of mediation are expected to influence the relationship between spiritual well-being and life satisfaction among adolescents. Table 2 lists the results from the analysis of mediation effects using the bootstrapping procedure.

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Table 2: Mediation Path by AMOS

Path	Direct Effect		Indirect Effect		Results
	β	P Value	β	P Value	
SWB→SE→LS	0.344	0.050	0.458	0.001	Partial Mediation

Note: SWB: Spiritual Well-Being; SE: Self-Esteem; LS: Life Satisfaction

Table 2 reveals the results of self-esteem mediations effects between spiritual well-being and life satisfaction. The findings of the research show that partially self-esteem mediations effects ($\beta = 0.458, p < 0.05$) between spiritual well-being and life satisfaction ($\beta = 0.344, p < 0.05$) is found in this research. Therefore, there is a direct effect of spiritual well-being over life satisfaction ($\beta = 0.344, p < 0.05$). This also means, adolescents with high level of self-esteem is completely responsible in improving the relationship between spiritual well-being and life satisfaction.

7) Discussion

This research shows that spiritual well-being gives positive effects towards life satisfaction. The findings of this research support previous researches whereby it was found that spiritual well-being positively affects life satisfaction (Abdel-Khalek, 2012; Chui & Wong, 2015; Reynolds et al., 2016; Sillick et al., 2016). This is elaborated through the concept of spiritual well-being which focuses on harmony. Someone with spiritual well-being usually has a non-monotonic well-being, whereby he or she is always capable to identify and develop the potentials in them. In addition, individuals focusing on the improvement of spiritual well-being always focuses on the growth of personal domain, communal domain, environmental domain and transcendent domain (Fisher, 2010). This is in line with the views of Friman et al. (2018) who stated that an individuals' life satisfaction is very dependent on the aspects of family, friends, schools and living environment. Besides, spiritual practices can encourage personal well-being, reduce depression, improve life satisfaction and provide positive influence towards religious well-being.

SEM analysis also shows that spiritual well-being provides a significant and positive effect towards self-esteem among adolescents. One of the reasons is based on the concept of religious well-being, as stated by Ellison (1983) which is through religious rituals indirectly improving the mental health and psychological well-being of an individual. Besides, one of the focus of spiritual well-being is the personal domain. In this domain, one always gets involved with meanings, purposes and values in life which indirectly encourages human to seek spiritual well-being, identity and self-value. This is in line with the view of Rosenberg (1979) whereby one who has high self-esteem will respect and consider own self as useful. On the other hand, an individual with low self-esteem always feels useless and remains in the state of lacking. This strengthens the findings of previous researches (Joshnloo & Daemi, 2015; Papazisis et al., 2013; Sallquist et al., 2010) stating that there is a significant and positive relationship between spiritual well-being and self-esteem.

SEM analysis also shows that self-esteem is recognised as complete mediation between spiritual well-being and life satisfaction. This proves that self-esteem can improve the relationship between spiritual well-being and life satisfaction. Self-esteem is an important factor between spiritual well-being and life satisfaction. The reason for this relationship is that, one with positive feeling can control how he or she acts in his or her environment. This can be done through process of thinking, emotional, values, ambitions and purposes to be achieved by someone. This process encourages

someone who has spiritual well-being to improve adolescent life satisfaction. Besides, this statement supports the findings of previous research (Joshanloo & Daemi, 2014; Yoo, 2017) which states that self-esteem can become the medium between spiritual well-being and life satisfaction. Interestingly, the effects of self-esteem as mediator is explained through the findings of previous researches which proves there is a significant positive relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction (Arslan et al., 2010; Casas et al., 2012; Cecen, 2008). Individuals who value their self-esteem positively are capable of being satisfied with their lives. Positive feeling toward oneself functions as the catalyst for life satisfaction.

VI. CONCLUSION

The findings of this research prove the importance of spiritual well-being and self-esteem in improving adolescents' life satisfaction. Besides, the existence of self-esteem variable improves the relationship between spiritual well-being and life satisfaction. This research supports that self-esteem components which are influenced by the spiritual well-being can improve the life satisfaction of Malaysian adolescents. Therefore, this research implicates that both factors should be considered in encouraging the life satisfaction of adolescents in Malaysia. This research also suggests to include the components of socio-economics, genders and types of schools as moderators. By including these moderators, future researches may be able to provide more interesting findings as they focus only on particular groups.

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