

## The portrait of spiritual intelligence and aggressiveness of university students

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**Abstract:** Aggression is interpreted as a behavior that aims to hurt others physically and verbally. This study used quantitative approach through correlational method to find out the influence of spiritual intelligence (SQ) to the aggressiveness in university students. Students' aggressiveness was measured using adapted aggression questionnaire, while SQ was measured using the adapted spiritual intelligence scale. The sample technique used proportional random sampling technique and data analysis used regression test through SPSS 22. The findings of the research suggest that spiritual intelligence has a positive and significant effect on students' aggressiveness. The research results point out that SQ among the students encourages God spot activation. God spot leads students to show ideal behavior and find peaceful solution for every problem. God spot makes students crave on the transcendence; as the consequence, the deep love, peaceful, unity of existence arise in students' mind and behavior. The peaceful behavior significantly decreases students' aggressiveness

**Keywords:** Spiritual Intelligence; Aggressiveness; Students; God Spot.

**Abstrak:** Agresi sering diartikan sebagai suatu perilaku yang bertujuan untuk menyakiti orang lain baik secara fisik maupun verbal. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif, teknik penelitian yang digunakan adalah teknik korelasional untuk mengatahui pengaruh kecerdasan spiritual terhadap agresivitas mahasiswa. Agresi diukur dengan menggunakan hasil adaptasi dari skala *aggression questionnaire* dan kecerdasan spiritual yang diukur menggunakan skala yang diadaptasi dari skala SQ (*spiritual quotient*). Teknik sampel pada penelitian ini menggunakan *proportional random sampling* dan teknik analisis data dilakukan melalui uji regresi sederhana menggunakan SPSS 22. Berdasarkan temuan peneliti, kecerdasan spiritual berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap agresivitas mahasiswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kecerdasan spiritual pada mahasiswa mendorong pengaktivan *god spot*. Titik tuhan yang disebut *god spot* menyebabkan seseorang bersikap idealis dan mencari solusi atas problem yang ada. *God spot* membuat seseorang berhasrat pada sesuatu yang lebih tinggi (transenden), sehingga muncul rasa cinta yang mendalam, rasa damai yang mendalam, rasa kesatuan eksistensi, dan keindahan yang mendalam. Keinginan untuk berperilaku damai akan menurunkan agresivitas mahasiswa.

**Kata Kunci:** Kecerdasan Spiritual; Agresivitas; mahasiswa; *God Spot*.

## INTRODUCTION

Aggressiveness level in students is quite high. Data from KPAI show that there were 150,476 cases or 12.5% of brawls among students in 2017, which increased to 14% in 2018. Furthermore, data from Statistics Indonesia show that there were 406,178 (14%) cases of violence at campus. The violence included both physical and mental violence (Zuhra, 2019). Violence and brawls are aggressive behaviors. The high number of brawls among students contributes to the increasing both physical and mental violence. Students' violent behavior has resulted in a high tendency of developing behaviors against general norms by doing what they want for their own benefit (Suyitno, 2016).

Aggression is defined as a behavior to hurt other people physically and verbally (Bekiari & Petanidis 2016; Ghavami & Peplau 2017). Aggression can also refer to the behavior of physically and mentally hurting other people to protect oneself, to show patriotism, or to gain social support (Tankamani & Jalali, 2017).

Aggression includes a behavior of hurting others and creating hostility to achieve desired goals. Aggression consists of four aspects: physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility (Rugen, 2019; Pronin & Gerasimova, 2018; Purwadi & Muyana, 2018).

Pronin & Gerasimova (2018); Erdal et al. (2018); Watkins & Maldonado (2016); Prescott, Sargent, & Hull (2018) aggression is categorized into three types first, physic aggression refers to an aggression to hurt people physically such as hitting, kicking, stabbing, burning, etc. Second, verbal aggression is a tendency to attack people verbally, such as insulting, threatening, swearing, shouting or rejecting. Third, relational aggression is defined as a hostile behavior viewed from cognitive perspective, such as hatred, suspicion, jealousy and feeling of unfairness in life. For instance, one often feels suspicious of the others having a grudge even though the suspicion is not always true.

Based on the aggression types discussed above, factors contributing to aggression include uncontrolled emotion rising naturally from within and inability to control emotion such as anger (Avci & Sak, 2018). Studies have shown that students exhibit aggressive behaviors by arrogance, vilification of fellow friends, low social awareness, increased pre-marital sex and

declined appreciation and respect for parents and teachers as figures who should be respected. Recent incidents have been raising concerns because the decline of nation's morality can be observed from almost all walks of life (Ghavami & Peplau, 2017; Pronin & Gerasimova, 2018; Purwadi & Muyana, 2018; Tankamani & Jalali, 2017). Students tend to have difficulties in controlling their emotion (Méndez, Ruiz & Ortega, 2019; Reyes et al., 2019).

Preliminary research by the current researcher indicated that among Universitas Islam Negeri Malang students, demonstration was part of violent behavior on the street and aggressiveness on verbal, physical and relational levels. Studies have demonstrated that high aggressiveness in students is caused by low emotional and spiritual intelligence (Ahmed et al., 2016). Results of relevant studies show that there is a relationship between students' aggressiveness levels and emotional intelligence (Willinger et al., 2017; Mitrofan, 2018; García, Salguero, & Fernández 2017; Garaigordobil & Peña, 2015). Emotional intelligence (EQ) is viewed as one's ability to recognize one's and people's emotions and to know how to behave with others. However, EQ has insufficient power to regulate aggressiveness specifically in university students. Spiritual intelligence (SQ), on the other hand, is perceived to be more influential (Karimi & Mohammadi, 2017; Baloochi, Abazari, & Mirzaee, 2017).

In the Islamic context, SQ includes teachings that forbid Muslims to commit despicable acts on others; one of which is to hurt others physically and verbally as well as directly and indirectly. SQ is the intelligence needed to deal with and solve problems related to the meanings of life, values, and wholeness; the intelligence to place behavior and life in a broader and richer meaning; and the intelligence to judge that one's actions or ways of life are more meaningful than others' (Nair & Paul, 2017; Rahmani, Mikaeili, & Vahidi, 2016).

One can find meanings from working, learning and questioning, as well as facing problems or suffering. SQ is intelligence that helps heal and build humanity as a whole. SQ is the foundation necessary to effectively activate IQ and EQ. In fact, SQ is the highest intelligence (Mahmood et al, 2015; Jain & Kansal, 2017; Ahmed et al., 2016). In line with previous studies, SQ allows an individual to

recognize his or her own and others' characteristics (Ahmed et al., 2016).

SQ is constructed based on the theory of God spot, which refers to a group of nerves located in the temporal lobe of the brain behind the temple. God spot activates the fundamental existence that causes people to behave idealistically and find solutions to the problems. God spot leads an individual to desire for something higher (transcendence) that triggers a deep sense of love, peace, unity of existence, and beauty (Arnout & Alkhatib, 2019; Ajawani, 2017; Singh, Swarup, & Singh, 2015; Nullens, 2019). SQ is defined as the intelligence to handle and resolve problems of life, meanings and values; the intelligence to place human behavior and life in a broader and richer meaning; and the intelligence to judge that one's actions or ways of life are more meaningful (Sucic, Radosavljevic, & Sprajc, 2016). According to Ary Gunanjar Agustian, SQ is the intelligence that relies on human values so that one can give religious meaning to every behavior and action through pure steps and thoughts to become fully human (*hanif*), believe in oneness of God (*tawhid*), and have the "only for Allah" principle.

Studies have been conducted to investigate the relationship between EQ, SQ and aggressiveness (Karimi & Mohammadi, 2017; Baloochi, Abazari, & Mirzaee, 2017; Hui et al, 2017; Roman & Roman, 2018). However, those studies focused only on aggressiveness among students and workers. Therefore, the present study aims to examine the relationship between SQ and aggressiveness in university students by considering gender as a moderating variable.

## METHODS

This study employed quantitative approach with correlational method. Operational

**Table 1.** Dependent Variable Aggressiveness

Model	R Square	Beta	Sig
(Constant)			.000
Spiritual	.206	-.454	.000

As seen from Table 1, the R value shows a Pearson correlation, a correlation between an independent variable and a dependent variable. The R value is -.454, meaning that SQ has a negative impact on aggressiveness. Thus, the higher the students' SQ, the lower the students'

definitions of the terms used in this study are 1) aggressiveness, which is an unpleasant or detrimental behavior, tendency or stimulus carried out physically and verbally by one party to another party with the intention to hurt both physically and psychologically and to achieve desired outcomes or goals and 2) spiritual intelligence (SQ), which refers to the ability derived from the development of the mind to think about divine matters out of the immaterial world that radiate mental energy to stimulate observance and morality.

The population of the study was the students of Universitas Islam Syarif Hidayatullah Malang. Proportional random sampling technique was used, so the classes in each faculty were selected randomly. The instrument used was 1) the Aggressiveness Scale from accommodating several aspects, namely verbal aggression, hostility and physical aggression of which its reliability and validity have been tested. The reliability value was 0.89, while the validity value was 0.37; and 2) the Spirituality Scale adapted from consisting of 18 items that measure the aspects of awareness, faith, responsibility, and aversion that cause unnecessary harms as well as the ability to face and take advantage of suffering.

Those two scales used modified Likert scale consisting of favorable and unfavorable items: 4-Strongly Agree, 3-Agree, 2-Disagree, and 1-Strongly Disagree. Data analysis was performed using simple linear regression with the help of SPSS 22 software.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following table describes the results of simple linear regression analysis on the independent variables: individual SQ and student aggressiveness.

aggressiveness. The R Square value showing the coefficient of determination is 206, meaning that aggressiveness is influenced by SQ by 20.6%. The remaining percentages are influenced by other variables not included in this model. Significance is the probability to obtain errors in decision making. If the test uses a significance

level of 000, the probability of obtaining a maximum error is 0%. Table 1 shows that the higher the students' SQ, the lower the students' aggressiveness. This finding corresponds to the results of previous studies (Karimi & Mohammadi, 2017; Raisi et al., 2018; Dehghani et al., 2017).

The negative correlation between SQ and aggressiveness level results from the fact that SQ has a closer relationship with transcendence and meanings of behaviors. Thus, it is believed that one with a high level of SQ resigns oneself to God so one's actions can have more meanings in life (Karimi & Mohammadi, 2017). SQ also involves the highest level of every line of progress such as cognitive, moral, emotional and interpersonal aspects (Mansouri, Khorshidzade & Asgari, 2016). As a result, the high level of SQ can contribute to one's ability to manage emotions and anger positively, think rationally, logically and creatively, and solve conflicts and problems.

Moral, emotional and interpersonal development, as the indicators of SQ, will establish students to become individuals who can solve problems, manage anger and avoid violent behaviors physically and verbally (Raisi et al., 2018; Dehghani et al., 2017). One with low level of aggressiveness on the cognitive aspect tend to solve problems creatively and positively and to avoid violence (Garaigordobil & Peña-Sarrionandia, 2015).

Furthermore, in regards to moral and emotional development, one with high level of SQ has high moral intelligence and stable emotions. Some studies have shown that there is a negative relationship between moral intelligence, SQ, mental and emotional disorders in teenagers. One with high SQ shows the dimensions of forgiveness, high empathy and understanding, low aggression and high subjective well-being (Rachmawati & Alfiasari, 2017).

However, the present study found that aggressiveness was affected by SQ by 20.6% and the remaining percentages were affected by other variables not included in this study. Some relevant studies indicate socio-demographic factors, such as gender, religion, diet, parenting style and mixed-sex education have considerable influence on a person's level of aggressiveness (Jain et al., 2018; Hofer & Spengler, 2018; Silva et al., 2017; Jang et al., 2018). An impactful factor of SQ, however, is religion or religious values a person follows. In the cultural context,

SQ in Indonesian society is dominated by Islamic SQ, which is different from SQ in general.

Those factors are the reasons why SQ generally affects students' aggressiveness level by 20.6%. SQ from the Islamic perspective specifically focuses on the concept of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, which refers to the ability to build good relationships with Allah (Akhtar et al., 2018; Hanefar & Siraj, 2016) and to build good relationships with fellow humans and the environment (Rahman & Shah, 2015). Therefore, SQ in the Islamic perspective is comprised of several indicators: patience, gratefulness, concerns, good perception, honesty, good relationship, relying on God, sincerity and religiosity (Rahman & Shah, 2015; Baharuddin & Ismail, 2015).

The indicators previously mentioned are the elements of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*. Thus, it can be assumed that 79.4% of other factors affect the aggressiveness level of the students.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study concludes that: 1) SQ negatively correlates with students' aggressiveness level. The higher one's SQ, the lower one's aggressiveness level. This is because SQ involves the highest level of the progress of: cognitive, moral, emotional and interpersonal elements. These elements are part of the abilities of forgiveness, high empathy and understanding, and subject well-being as well as anger management and emotion stabilization. Some studies have shown that these dimensions have negative association with aggressiveness levels and 2) SQ affected students' aggressiveness levels by 20.6% although 79.4% of other factors also affected students' aggressiveness levels. Those other factors deal with a belief that Indonesian socio-demography is dominated by Islam. As a result, SQ is based on the teaching *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, which refers to a person's ability to build a good relationship with Allah, fellow humans and the environment.

Based on the findings of the present study, future researchers are recommended conducting further research on the specific relationship between SQ and the levels of student aggressiveness and on the process of giving meaning of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* to social interaction and aggressive behavior.

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