

# Emotional Intelligence and its Impact on the Psychological Well-Being of Counseling Clients in the Pandemic Covid-19: Spiritual Intelligence as a Mediator

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## Emotional Intelligence and its Impact on the Psychological Well-Being of Counseling Clients in the Pandemic Covid-19: Spiritual Intelligence as a Mediator

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### Abstract

Mental health issues are often ignored and brought lightly by society because they cannot be physically expressed. Local studies lack emphasis on awareness, role, and effectiveness of existing services. This study was conducted to gauge the connection of emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and psychological well-being among counseling clients in one of all the government agencies in Malaysia. A complete of 157 counseling clients answered the questionnaire. Structural Equation Modeling (PPS) in SmartPLS was accustomed to psychometrically evaluate the information content of the questionnaire form and test the research hypotheses. The results of the PPS analysis yielded several significant findings: First, there was a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence (i.e., self-awareness, social awareness, and emotional acceptance) and spiritual intelligence. Second, there is a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Third, there is a positive and significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being. Fourth, there is a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and psychological well-being. This study confirms that spiritual intelligence is an important mediating variable within the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Thus, the findings of this study are used as essential recommendations to assist practitioners in understanding the range of perspectives on the construct of emotional intelligence and develop a spiritual intelligence management plan in counseling sessions to achieve and maintain their emotional health in everyday life.

**Keywords:** Emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, psychological well-being, counseling, SmartPLS, Covid-19

## Introduction

Malaysia's economic, scientific, technological, political, and academic achievements are commendable and are expected to expand its growth. To sustain this development, the Malaysian government has formulated the Vision of Shared Prosperity 2030 with a more comprehensive goal of improving the living standards of Malaysians to a more comfortable level by 2030. Several measures will be implemented to reduce risk by increasing economic opportunities, nourishing human capital inclusively, and revamping public institutions and finances (Tinjauan Ekonomi, 2020;2019). Living standards rose delightfully in recent times, but Malaysia has been affected due to Covid-19 in late 2019. The movement control orders (MCOs) period has lasted from March 18, 2020, until mid-2021 (phase-3). The spread of the epidemic significantly impacts different groups in society; school activities, sources of income and employment, social and community activities, seclude basic food needs for low-income families and rural people, and expansion of workload among front-liner officers.

This condition disrupts some mental and emotional health, which can cause stress, depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia (Eikhwan & Mahirah, 2020). In general, psychological well-being is an individual's happiness, either internally or externally, yet its assessment varies according to knowledge, skills, and behavior. Ryff (1989) has presented several elements in this model: autonomy, environmental control, self-development, positive relationships with others, life goals, and self-acceptance. These elements serve as a measure of an individual's psychological well-being against existing strengths and weaknesses. These elements are the basis for constructing the Psychological Well-Being Index among Malaysia's people and civil servants. Although the basis of this formation is measured as a whole, a person's sensitivity and awareness of their psychological well-being depend on how they handle themselves wisely. In 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) saw psychological well-being as closely related to (may also be a risk factor for) mental illness, followed after heart disease. (WHO, 2012; Noradilah & Mansor, 2009).

The increase in those who have a mental illness is becoming more significant. This statement is supported when the National Health and Morbidity Survey Report shows statistics about 40 percent of 32.4 million Malaysians are feared to have mental health (Nurul Sofiah et al., 2020), and a total of 18,336 individuals out of 273,203 individuals who received health care in hospitals and clinics are reported to suffer from mental health disorders such as depression, schizophrenia and suicidal tendencies (N<sup>37</sup>ayati, 2018). This statistic is underpinned by The Talian Kasih Report published from the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (KPWKM) showed an increasing number of people look for counseling services which soared up 47.3% during PKP Phase 1 implementation. The service recorded 336 complaints on physical, mental, emotional, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect of children, domestic violence, people with disabilities (OKU), and the elderly.

Suicide symptoms in Malaysia are also at an apprehensive level and need to be resolved immediately since the increasing number of cases reported, from 609 cases in 2020 while 631 cases in 2021 (Berita Harian, 2021). The WHO (2017) further elaborates on the estimated average suicide case of 3,000 per day; above 20 persons are attempted to get involved in it. President of the Malaysian Psychiatric Association (APA) stated that more than 2,000 Malaysians died in a suicide, almost seven suicides on average per day and 200 for a month, and about seven people out of 100,000 people were intended to suicide (Nurul Sofiah et al., 2020).

Data shows that we are significantly needed for an indicator to look after psychological well-being among citizens. The present data showed a necessity to develop an index of psychological well-being, yet do others feel that was important? Do they realize the connection between psychological well-being and happiness in life? This study intends to scrutinize to overcome this issue as a whole. Government has to play an essential role in resolving these problems wisely. The earnest effort must be taken immediately to solve this issue.

## Literature review

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### *The Relationship of Emotional Intelligence with Spiritual Intelligence*

The role of emotional Intelligence in changing human behavior is in line with the theoretical proposal introduced by Daniel Goleman through his famous book "Emotional Intelligence," which uses Salovey and Major's model to work out how EI relates to lifestyle. Thus, EI is formulated as a person's ability to regulate the emotions and emotions of oneself and others yet as having the ability to guide all their actions and thought rationally (Salovey and Mayer 1990). Goleman (1998) categorizes EI into five dimensions: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. However, recent studies have found that emotional intelligence has been developed using two main aspects (i.e., personal competence and social competence) and specializing in six main elements (Sandhya & Namrata, 2013). Among the six elements in personal and social skills are self-awareness, self-motivation, emotional regulation, social awareness, social skills, and emotional receptivity. This study focuses on three elements—first, self-awareness, which refers to seeing oneself objectively. Self-awareness involves interactions between thoughts and feelings that alert a personality's positive and negative emotions in an exceedingly particular situation or circumstances. Second, social awareness refers to the power to determine, understand and reply to the emotions of others and feel socially comfortable. It involves knowing about others in terms of feelings, thought patterns, points of view, achievements, facial expressions, and non-verbal messages. Third, emotional acceptance refers to accepting and inspiring the purpose of view of others by being receptive to their emotions. Good emotional acceptance makes an individual emotionally and socially competent. Furthermore, it makes the individual empathetic to the requirements of others. In general, EI could be a person's ability to manage and control their feelings and people while providing positive impetus toward establishing human relationships, which will cause achieving a goal (Cooper & Sawaf 1997; McGarvey 1997).

The recommendations proposed by the theory are supported by empirical studies that are applied by researchers, namely Joanna Samul (2020), who studied 190 students of the University of Technology in Poland; ArdhiArdhi Ardiana et al. (2019) studied 217 cadets at Surabaya Polytechnic and Md. Aftab, AAhad, and Muhammad SabSab Sabbir (2018) studied 250 students from various higher education in Malaysia. These studies show that emotional intelligence and spiritual Intelligence are interrelated and reinforce each other. Spiritual intelligence can develop intrapersonal and interpersonal competencies, which are emotional intelligence components closely associated with good attitudes like humility, forgiveness, and gratitude. Therefore, this evidence leads to the construction of the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 1:** Self-awareness has a significant relationship with spiritual intelligence.

**Hypothesis 2:** Social awareness has a significant relationship with spiritual intelligence.

**Hypothesis 3:** Emotional receptivity has a significant relationship with spiritual intelligence.

### *The Relationship of Spiritual Intelligence with Psychological Well-Being*

Furthermore, it has been found that a spiritual intelligence's role in improving psychological well-being, which uses a collection of abilities and competencies in solving lifestyle problems in line with the speculation of spiritual intelligence introduced by Emmons (1999). This theory reveals that spiritual intelligence could be a framework for identifying the skills and abilities needed for adaptive spiritual use. Emmons (2000) proposed five components to spiritual intelligence: first, the flexibility to use spiritual resources to unravel problems; second, the flexibility to enter situations causing awareness to increase; third, the flexibility to hold out daily social activities with a way of holiness, fourth, the flexibility to transcend physical and material, and therefore the fifth is that the ability virtuous.

Several studies have recognized that spiritual intelligence is a significant antecedent of psychological well-being. For example, a article by Melley, Getrude, and Stephencie (2019) reviewed 255 members of the Christian Emmanuel Fellowship, the study by Fereshteh et al. (2019) studied 220 students of Mazandaran University, the study by Ahoie, Faramarzi, and Hassanzadeh (2017) studied 90 women, i.e., breast cancer patients who received treatment. They attended hospital counseling sessions. The study by Ivizan et al. (2013) studied 205 participants from various religious denominations recruited from various religious institutions for spiritual encounters, and studied by Dastjerdi et al. (2013) studied 123 gifted female high school students in Birjand, Iran. These studies show that people with good emotional intelligence tend to have better mental abilities and intelligence in understanding situations and to respond to the tensions and stresses of the internal and external environment. At the same time, they can manage feelings and emotions when faced with problems and immediately take steps to cope with stress in daily life. Thus, high emotional intelligence can improve quality of life, achieve success, good social status and is an important factor in determining psychological well-being. Therefore, this evidence leads to the construction of the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 4:** Spiritual intelligence has a significant relationship with psychological well-being.

#### *The relationship of emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and psychological well-being*

Although the relationship of the direct effect model has been extensively studied but based on the limitations of previous studies, so far, there have been only two studies concerning the indirect effect model involving spiritual Intelligence as a mediating variable. For example, a study conducted by Abdalla and Ahmed (2018) showed that spiritual intelligence as a mediating variable explains the relationship between stress coping strategies and well-being. Whereas a study by Said et al. (2020) found that the mediating role of spiritual intelligence in the relationship between perfection and life expectancy among administrators of Azad Islam University, Mazandaran, Iran has an indirect effect on life expectancy. Furthermore, about 56% of the variance of spiritual intelligence and 25% of the variance of life expectancy are explained by perfectionism, while Spiritual intelligence justifies about 88% of the variance of life expectancy. This percentage indicates that the importance of spiritual intelligence as a mediating variable to see the influence among other variables. Therefore, this evidence leads to the construction of the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5: Spiritual intelligence as a mediating variable has a significant relationship with self-awareness and psychological well-being.

Hypothesis 6: Spiritual intelligence as a mediating variable has a significant relationship with social awareness and psychological well-being.

Hypothesis 7: Spiritual intelligence as a mediating variable has a significant relationship with emotional receptivity and psychological well-being.

Although many previous studies have examined the influence of emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence in improving psychological well-being, most studies have only focused on direct effect models. In conclusion, previous studies have had limitations in emphasizing Spiritual Intelligence as an intermediary variable. Thus, it is clear here that the lack of past studies indicates a significant lack of evidence on the relationship between emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and psychological well-being. These prompted researchers to fill the gap and, at the same time, want to prove that this relationship is essential and should be given due attention in society. Moreover, it can identify the effectiveness of counseling sessions conducted during a covid -19 outbreak. Therefore, this study was conducted to guide counselors, educators, and organizational leaders on the importance of their role in improving psychological well-being.

The research literature has guided the researchers to formulate a conceptual framework for this research, as illustrated in Figure 1.

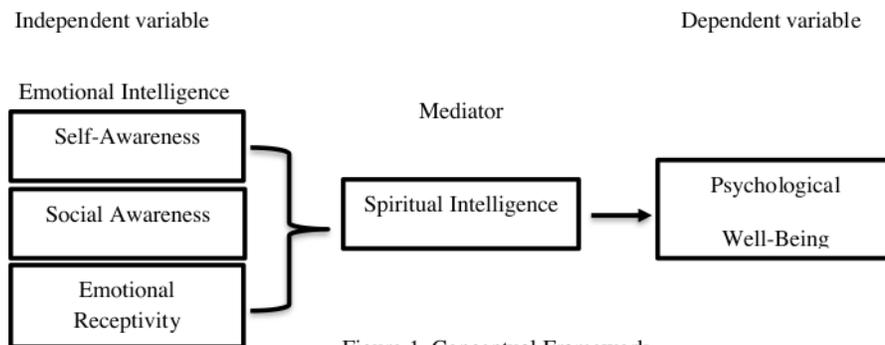


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

## Method and study area

### *Research Design*

This study was conducted in one of the government agencies that supply counseling services within Pahang, Malaysia. The name of this institution is not displayed supported confidentiality. The institution has planned various strategies to beat psychological problems involving individuals, families, and society. Supported the context of this study, the agency was given autonomy to plan and organize the distribution of questionnaires to realize the vision, mission, and objectives of this study. The distribution of those questionnaires was taken from various forms and differentiated by time, function, and resource. As an example, counselors will distribute this questionnaire to clients who have completed counseling sessions, during group sessions, and clients involved in counseling programs.

This study uses survey methods and cross-sectional research design by collecting accurate data, reducing bias, <sup>40</sup> improving research quality. The questionnaire was compiled based on the literature guided by emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and <sup>41</sup> psychological well-being in the first stage. While, technical translation back-to-back is used to translate the questionnaire survey in English and Malay to improve the quality of research results (Lomand, 2016).

### *Research Sample*

This study uses a sampling method to distribute 200 questionnaires to counseling clients in one bureau that provides counseling services in Pahang, Malaysia. This sampling technique was chosen for this study because agency management failed <sup>19</sup> provide detailed information about counseling clients on confidentiality. This limitation does not allow researchers to use sampling techniques in selecting participants for this study. Counselors distributed questionnaires to all or any respondents who came to hunt counseling services. The assistance of this counselor is vital to assist the researcher in obtaining data accurately and promptly because the evaluator knows the condition and development of the respondent.

Further, the counseling client answered this questionnaire voluntarily without coercion from any party. A total of 157 (78.5%) questionnaires were returned. The Harman single factor test was performed to identify the bias caused by the survey method. This study found <sup>1</sup> that bias was absent in this survey method because the proportion of variance was 40.548, and this value was less than 50 percent of the variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

<sup>1</sup>

### *Research Instruments and Procedures*

The questionnaire of this study included four main sections: First, emotional intelligence using 14 items adapted from the study of Sandhya and Namrata (2013). These constructs were assessed using three elements: self-awareness <sup>42</sup> social awareness, and emotional acceptance. Second, spiritual intelligence using ten items adapted from the study of Abdollahzadeh et al. (2016<sup>9</sup>). Third, psychological well-being using four items adapted from Ryff's (1989) study. A 5-point Likert <sup>43</sup> scale ranging from (1) "strongly disagree" to (5) "strongly agree" was used to rate the items. Demographic variables such as gender, age, place of residence, religion, citizenship, higher education, occupation, marital status, and a monthly income as this study assessed the emotions of counseling clients.

### *Data analysis*

Questionnaire data were analyzed using SmartPLS by performing several analytical procedures. Among them; assessing the reliability and validity of measurement scales, testing direct relationships guided by t-statistical values greater than 1.65 (one-tailed <sup>1</sup> test) (Henseler et al., 2009), testing indirect relationships guided by t-statistical values greater than 1.96 (test two tails) (Henseler et al., 2009), evaluated R<sup>2</sup> to see the overall predictive strength of the model using the following measurement lines: 0.19 <sup>3</sup> weak), 0.33 (moderate), and 0.67 (large) (Hair et al., 2017; Henseler et al., 2009), evaluated f<sup>2</sup> to determine the effect size of the predictive variable in a model using the following measurement lines: 0.02 (weak), 0.15 (moderate <sup>1</sup>), and 0.35 (large) (Hair et al., 2017), evaluate Q<sup>2</sup> to see the appropriateness of forecasts using the following guidelines: 0.020

(weak), 0.15 (moderate), and 0.35 (large) and finally root quality mean residual value (SRMR) is below 0.1 and applied as model suitability criteria (Hair, Hult, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2016).

## Results and discussion

To ensure that the questionnaire data are analyzed to meet the analysis and reliability criteria, the questionnaire data will be screened first by checking the outlier, missing value, and Skewness and Kurtosis values greater than +/- 2.0 removed from this questionnaire.

### Characteristics of respondents

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents were female (66.2%), aged between 25 and 40 years (45.9%), live in the city (57.3%), the majority of whom are Muslims (94.3%), ethnic Malays (95.5%), education level degree (45.9%), working in the government sector (43.3%), married (52.2%) and earning in the range below RM1999 (49.7%).

Table 1: Demographics

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	53	33.8
	Female	104	66.2
Age	Below 25	65	41.4
	25- 40	72	45.9
	41- 56	20	12.7
Residence	Town	90	57.3
	Rural	67	42.6
Religion	Muslim	148	94.3
	Non-muslim	9	5.7
Nation	Malay	150	95.5
	Cina	1	0.6
	India	1	0.6
Education	Others	5	3.2
	LCE/SRP/PMR	2	1.3
	MCE/SPM/SPMV	22	14.0
	HSC/STPM/STAM	2	1.3
	Sijil/Diploma	48	30.6
	Ijazah	72	45.9
	Others	11	7.0
Employment	Government	68	43.3
	Private	22	14.0
	Self-employed	67	42.7
Marital status	Married	82	52.2
	Single	69	43.9
	Others	6	3.8
Income	< RM1999	78	49.7
	RM2000 – RM2999	30	19.1
	RM3000 – RM3999	13	8.3
	RM4000 - RM4999	14	8.9
	RM5000 - RM5999	10	6.4
	>RM6000	12	7.6

*Reflective measurement model*

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This reflective measurement analysis includes internal consistency reliability (composite reliability), convergent validity (outer loadings and average variance extracted), and discriminant validity. The results of this analysis are obtained to prove whether the model designed through constructs and indicators has achieved reliability and validity. Composite reliability values are used to measure internal consistency in measuring constructs. The values of outer loading and AVE were used to identify the extent to which the indicators correlated with alternative indicators in the same construct. The value of HTMT in discriminant validity analysis refers to the ratio between the correlation and the correlation between constructs.

Table 2 shows that all outer loading values recorded the value as recommended by Hair et al. (2017) above 0.708. Convergent validity is seen in the value recorded by AVE, which must reach at least 0.5. For internal consistency reliability, the defective CR value is > 0.708.

**Table 2:** The value of a reflective measurement model

Indicator	Convergent Validity			Internal Consistency Reliability
	Outer Loadings	AVE (>0.50)	Indicator Reliability (>0.50)	Composite Reliability
B01	0.833	0.640	0.577	0.899
B04	0.815		0.554	
B06	0.800		0.547	
B09	0.801		0.568	
B11	0.748	0.720	0.588	0.911
B36	0.755		0.555	
B39	0.853		0.542	
B40	0.901		0.520	
B41	0.879	0.587	0.518	0.850
B58	0.772		0.559	
B61	0.784		0.596	
B62	0.793		0.542	
B67	0.713	0.708	0.595	0.960
C03	0.707		0.525	
C04	0.870		0.506	
C05	0.862		0.559	
C08	0.824	0.762	0.550	0.928
C09	0.852		0.522	
C11	0.887		0.592	
C15	0.863		0.533	
C16	0.899	0.617	0.576	0.928
C27	0.910		0.508	
C28	0.715		0.580	
E30	0.815		0.552	
E33	0.895	0.509	0.509	0.643
E36	0.862		0.509	
E37	0.917		0.643	

Source: Questionnaire

4 Table 3 shows the results of construct validity and reliability. The value of the Heterotrait-monomethod (HTMT) correlation ratio indicates that the construct has met the discrimination validity criteria (Hair et al., 2017; Henseler et al., 2017; Henseler et al., 2009) when the value of each construct shown is less than 0.90 (Hair et al., 2017). Whereas the value of the discriminant validity interval indicates that the construct has met the standards of discrimination analysis when each construct shown in parentheses is below 1 (Hair et al., 2017).

**Table 3:** Discrimination Analysis Results

Construct	Self Awareness	Social Awareness	Emotional Receptivity	Spiritual Intelligence
Social Awareness	0.642			
Emotional Receptivity	0.505	0.714		
Spiritual Intelligence	0.572	0.581 (0.103, 0.430)	0.503 (0.040, 0.324)	
Psychological well-being	0.753 (0.157, 0.439)	0.636	0.575	0.620 (0.487, 0.683)

1 Note. The values in the parentheses are the values of confidence interval at 5% and 95%.

### Construct Analysis

Table 4 shows the analysis of variance inflation factors and descriptive statistics. The results showed that the mean values for all constructs were between 4 to 7. Meanwhile, the variance inflation factor test found that these data did not have serious collinearity problems because the stated values were less than 5.0 (Hair et al., 2017).

**Table 4.** Analysis of variance inflation factor and descriptive statistics

Construct	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance Inflation Factor	
			Spiritual Intelligence	Psychological well-being
Self Awareness	5.60	2.56	1.513	
Social Awareness	6.50	2.18	1.894	
Emotional Receptivity	5.25	2.05	1.592	
Spiritual Intelligence	6.20	2.54		1.000
Psychological well-being	4.25	2.35		

### Structural Model Measurement

Table 5 shows that Self\_A, Social\_A, and ER explain 38.7 percent of the changes in SI for the direct effect model. Refer for this explains that 61.3 percent of the SI variance is explained by other factors that were not the focus of this study. This R2 value greater than 0.33 indicates that this model has a large effect. For the indirect effect model, 34.1 percent of the PWB variance was described by SI, Self\_A, Social\_A, and ER. Refer for this explains that 65.9 percent of the PWB variance was explained by other factors that were not the focus of this study. A value of R2 greater

than 0.33 indicates that this model has a large effect. In turn, the study hypothesis test findings showed seven important findings: First, Self\_A correlated significantly with SI (B = 0.295; t = 3.989); therefore, supporting H1. Second, Social\_A correlated with JSI (B = 0.277; t = 3.298); thus, supporting H2. Third, ER was significantly correlated with SI (B = 0.172; t = 2.367); thus, supporting H3. Fourth, SI was significantly correlated with PWB (B = 0.584; t = 11.611); thus, supporting H4. Fifth, Self\_A and SI correlated significantly with PWB (B = 0.172; t = 3.2580); thus, supporting H5. Sixth, Social\_A and SI correlated significantly with PWB (B = 0.161; t = 3.069); thus, supporting H6. Seventh, ER and SI correlated significantly with PWB (B = 0.100; t = 32.230); thus, supporting H7.

Next, effect size (f2), model fit (SRMR value), and forecast relevance (Q2) were tested. The f2 value for the relationship between Self\_A and SI (0.094) was lower than 0.15 (Hair et al., 2017), indicating that it had a moderate effect. The value of f2 for the relationship between Social\_A and SI (0.066) was lower than 0.15, indicating that it had a moderate effect. The value of f2 for the relationship between ER and SI (0.030) was lower than 0.15, indicating that it had a moderate effect. The value of f2 for the relationship between Self-A, Social\_A, ER, SI, and PWB (0.516) was higher than 0.35, indicating that it had a large effect. The standard root means residual value (SRMR) is 0.075, lower than 0.1, indicating that this model is appropriate. The Q2 value for SI is 0.260, and PWB is 0.249, which is higher than zero, indicating that the model has a relevant forecast.

**Table 5:** Results of structural model measurement analysis

Hypothesis	Relationship	$\beta$	P	t	Result	R <sup>2</sup>	F <sup>2</sup>	Q <sup>2</sup>	SRMR
H1	Self_A → SI	0.295	0.000	3.989	Accepted	0.387	0.094	0.260	0.075
H2	Social_A → SI	0.277	0.001	3.198	Accepted		0.066		
H3	ER → SI	0.172	0.018	2.367	Accepted		0.030		
H4	SI → PWB	0.584	0.000	11.611	Accepted	0.341	0.516	0.249	
H5	Self_A → SI → PWB	0.172	0.000	3.580	Accepted				
H6	Social_A → SI → PWB	0.161	0.002	3.069	Accepted				
H7	ER → SI → PWB	0.100	0.026	2.230	Accepted				

Note. Significant at \* t > 1.96 (two tail testing); Self\_A: Self-Awareness; Social\_A: Social Awareness; ER: Emotional Receptivity; SI: Spiritual Intelligence; PWB: Psychological well-being

## Conclusion

Many past studies have extensively used direct impact models to analyze the connection between emotional intelligence (self-awareness, social awareness, and emotional acceptance) and spiritual intelligence (Joanna Samul, 2020; Ardhiana et al., 2019; Md. Aftab, AAhad, and Muhammad Sabbir, 2018 & Maryam and Hossein, 2015). The test results of such a model only determine the strength of the correlation between the variables. However, most researchers cannot live the role of spiritual intelligence as a significant mediating variable between emotional intelligence (i.e., self-awareness, social awareness, and emotional acceptance) and psychological well-being. This example inspired researchers to expand the literature by evaluating the intermediate effects of spiritual intelligence within the relationship between emotional intelligence (i.e., self-awareness, social awareness, and emotional acceptance) and psychological well-being. Structural models have shown that spiritual intelligence may be a significant mediating variable within the relationship between emotional intelligence (i.e., self-awareness, social awareness, and emotional acceptance) and psychological well-being. These findings suggest that psychologists

can use the importance of spiritual intelligence in their counseling sessions to improve clients' emotional intelligence and psychological well-being.

In the context of this study, the role of the counselor is to pander to a range of human problems during a form of situations (e.g., family, employment, education, rehabilitation, community, etc.). In Malaysia, community guidance agencies, responsible centers, particularly the Ministry of social welfare, LPPKN, and NGOs, are empowered to supply comprehensive support services involving strategies and counseling services to boost the well-being of people, families, and communities. The bulk of participants indicated that levels of emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and psychological well-being were low. This case explains that a counselor's ability to implement comfortable communication and supply adequate support will increase the client's emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and psychological well-being.

This study provides two significant impacts on theoretical contributions and practical contributions. This study confirmed that spiritual intelligence had influenced the emotional intelligence and psychological well-being of counseling clients contributing to the theory. These results are in step with understanding (Bar-On, 2006; Emmons, 2000). Bar-On's (2006) model argues that emotional intelligence involves interrelated relationships of emotional and social competence. These theories tend to see how we understand and express ourselves, how we understand others, how we relate to the people around us, and how we deal with daily emotional challenges. At the same time, Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences finds that spiritual intelligence meets the standards for independent intelligence modalities. This view is supported by Emmons (2000a), who states that the adaptive use of spiritual information can facilitate the solving of everyday problems and achieve specific goals in life. As a result, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being are enhanced through the client's spiritual intelligence. The theories are supported by the study of Joanna Samul (2020), Ardhiana et al. (2019), Getrude and Stephencie (2019), Md. Aftab, AAhad and Muhammad Sabbir (2018), Najib et al. (2017), and Famararzi and Hassanzadeh (2017) revealed that the flexibility of counselors to practice emotional intelligence is predicated on the varied personalities, needs, and expectations of clients in formal and informal counseling activities have improved their spiritual intelligence. Therefore, this effectiveness can improve the psychological well-being of clients in each counseling service firm.

To improve the effectiveness of guidance and counseling management in counseling agencies, practitioners can use the results of this study to achieve management objectives such as the following recommendations: first, psychological training programs should be designed to assist clients in applying emotional, spiritual, and psychological well-being guidelines for use in daily life with different needs and expectations. Second, responsible centers, both government and private sectors, should plan formal assembly sessions three times a year to guide clients to distinguish between right and wrong and motivate them to rely on Allah SWT in facing life. Third, group counseling programs should help other clients deal with similar situations that others have experienced. They will share success stories, motivate and guide team members to support other clients' emotional, spiritual, and psychological well-being. Finally, counseling programs specifically for low-performing should be established to improve cognitive behavior (e.g., fostering clients' positive beliefs and expectations about realizing life goals and increasing client motivation). The effects of this program can help prepare clients to improve their emotional

intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and psychological well-being when a variety of problems need to be faced.

Other suggestions are related to improving the methodological and conceptual limitations found during this study: first, some essential characteristics of clients like age, gender, status, occupation, income, and level of education should be explored in future studies. The inclusion of various client characteristics can enhance our understanding of the effectiveness of counseling sessions at different agencies. Second, longitudinal studies should be considered because they will show patterns of variables over a prolonged time, provide valuable data on individual changes, and assess the strength and nature of relationships between variables. Third, Future research will be made to increase the understanding of the intermediate effects of spiritual intelligence in counseling sessions in other agencies in Malaysia. Finally, other specific theoretical terms about spiritual intelligence must be explored and published to be widely referred to as a significant link between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being.

Research has identified several limitations in this study. First, the only cross-sectional research design was used in this study. Second, this study does not focus on the dimensions/elements of each variable. Third, this study only focused on client perceptions as a measure to assess the relationships between variables in the hypothesized model. Fourth, this research was only done in a counseling agency in Pahang. Therefore, it is hoped that future studies can improve these shortcomings.

## Acknowledgment

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