

# The Relationship between Attachment to God and Students' Psychological Well-Being

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the relationship between attachment to God and psychological well-being among 244 Muslim students. This study is quantitative in nature because it uses a Likert scale. Data were collected using the Short 18 item scale of psychological well-being developed by Ryff and the Muslim Spiritual Attachment Scale (M-SAS) by Yildiz. The hypothesis shows that there is a positive correlation between attachment to God and emotional stability. The results showed that there was a positive relationship between attachment to God and students' psychological well-being with a value of  $r = 0.325$  and  $p = 0.000$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). This shows that the increase in attachment to God helps to develop psychological well-being. Therefore, the hypothesis in this study is accepted.

**Keywords:** *Attachment to God; Psychological Well-Being; Students*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

People want to live in a state of psychological well-being because they have the right to prosper physically and psychologically [1]. According to [2], people with good psychological well-being tend to be kept away from unpleasant situations.

Therefore, psychological well-being is individuals' ability to function optimally because it allows them to achieve desired goals and overcome life problems. This is in line with study of [3] that it is peoples' assessment through their experiences and feelings of happiness in a positive self-actualization process. Also, [4] affirmed that psychological well-being is individuals' ability to develop and utilize their potential to deal with the demands of life.

Generally, students at the age of 18-25 years old experience changes in different developmental tasks because they are in transitional adulthood [5]. According to [6], this period affects psychological well-being because it triggers many changes in tasks and responsibilities. Study of [7] showed that undergraduates at the stage of late adolescents to early adulthood need to prepare for life and their future.

However, students need good psychological well-being to deal with different life changes in school and society. Study of [8] explained that emotional stability helps undergraduates to achieve educational success in

universities. According to [2]-[9]-[10], psychological well-being assists in satisfying life academically and socially, resolving changes and existing demands, having lower stress levels, as well as identifying something that is missing.

In reality, various demands and problems are experienced while individual assumes the role of students because these challenges lead to confusion and difficulty to overcome [7]. These demands enable undergraduates to adapt to academic and non-academic changes that are different from the previous school level [2]. According to [11-12], students need to live independently, adapt to changes in the environment and life, social and financial management, environmental temptations, as well as recognize their identity. Moreover, undergraduates are demanded to deal with family problems and future uncertainties [12].

Several demands faced by these students affect them to be in a state of psychological well-being. Study of [13] showed that poor emotional stability causes undergraduates to have low self-confidence, be dependent, have difficulty in dealing with other people, have uncertain goals, and be unable to develop themselves. According to [14]-[11]-[15]-[2]-[16], students with poor psychological well-being are not tough, have low optimism, prone to stress and anxiety, use dysfunctional coping strategies, having many shortcomings, are unhappy, dissatisfied with life, have

low academic grades, decreased learning interest, and have a desire to commit suicide.

In Indonesia, students' psychological well-being is low and this is shown in the following study data. According to [2]-[9], undergraduates tend to have poor emotional stability with the percentage of 51% and 47.2% respectively. Study of [17] showed that Muslim students have low psychological well-being, specifically in the aspect of environmental control.

Moreover, undergraduate's poor emotional stability is presented from the results of interviews with the two subjects. The first comprises of females at the age of 21 years with the initials V, while the second consists of 19 years old with the initials MFN. Therefore, the statements showed conformity with Ryff's low psychological well-being indicators [18].

The two subjects explained that students were not satisfied with their current life and feel disappointed, as well as having low self-acceptance. Also, they find it difficult to associate with others, uneasy to make positive relationships with people, and unable to perform their roles and responsibilities because of the low mastery environment. Students' life experiences that were not sufficient and far from expectations are part of poor personal development in society. Furthermore, subject V showed that female undergraduates are dependent, show low autonomy, and had not yet determined their goals.

Several factors including external, internal, and demographic affect psychological well-being. Meanwhile, external factors are peer attachment, social support, and attachment to parents [19]-[1]-[20]. According to [10]-[14]-[11]-[21], internal factors are self-efficacy, optimism, toughness, and attachment to God. However, demographic factors are age, gender, and socioeconomic status [3]-[22]-[3]-[7].

**Table 1** Description of subjects

Demographic Variables		Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	50	20.5 %
	Female	194	79.5 %
<b>Total</b>		<b>244</b>	<b>100 %</b>

**Table 2** Description of Research Data

Variable	Psychological well-being	Attachment to God
<b>Mean</b>	79	67
<b>Standard Deviation</b>	9	7

The table 3 and 4 show that data description was processed using the categorization formula.

This study focuses on attachment to God as one of the internal factors affecting psychological well-being. [23] showed that attachment to God is a belief to be in a safe place while under threat because it becomes the basis for individuals in living life's challenges. This is in line with study of [24] that attachment to God is positively correlated with psychological well-being. [21] indicated that attachment to God contributes to good emotional stability because it is associated with increased optimism and self-esteem. Also, [25] showed that a safe attachment to God is positively correlated with psychological well-being. Therefore, this study aims to determine the relationship between attachment to God and the students' psychological well-being.

## 2. METHOD

A total of 244 male and female Muslim students aged 18 to 25 years at the University were selected as participants for this study. Furthermore, psychological well-being was measured using the Short 18 item scale consisting of 10 favourite and 8 unfavourable items developed by Ryff [18]. The reliability test on the psychological well-being scale showed Cronbach's alpha of 0.720. Meanwhile, attachment to God was measured using the Muslim Spiritual Attachment Scale adapted and modified by Yildiz [23]. There were 15 favourable items. The reliability test on the Muslim Spiritual Attachment Scale showed Cronbach's alpha of 0.867.

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A total of 244 students were selected as participants for this study with the demographic criteria in the table 1 and 2.

**Table 3** Categorization of Subjects in Psychological Well-Being Variable

Formula	Categorization	Norm Formula	Frequency	Percentage (%)
$X < M - 1.5 \text{ SD}$	Very low	$X < 66$	21	8.6 %
$M - 1.5 \text{ SD} < X \leq M - 0.5 \text{ SD}$	Low	$66 < X \leq 74$	55	22.5 %
$M - 0.5 \text{ SD} < X \leq M + 0.5 \text{ SD}$	Moderate	$74 < X \leq 83$	100	<b>41.0 %</b>
$M + 0.5 \text{ SD} < X \leq M + 1.5 \text{ SD}$	High	$83 < X \leq 92$	53	21.7 %
$X > M + 1.5 \text{ SD}$	Very high	$X > 92$	15	6.1 %
Total			244	100 %

**Table 4** Categorization of Subjects in Attachment to God Variable

Formula	Categorization	Norm Formula	Frequency	Percentage (%)
$X < M - 1.5 \text{ SD}$	Very low	$X < 57$	20	8.2 %
$M - 1.5 \text{ SD} < X \leq M - 0.5 \text{ SD}$	Low	$57 \leq X \leq 64$	44	18.0 %
$M - 0.5 \text{ SD} < X \leq M + 0.5 \text{ SD}$	Moderate	$64 \leq X \leq 71$	101	<b>41.4 %</b>
$M + 0.5 \text{ SD} < X \leq M + 1.5 \text{ SD}$	High	$71 \leq X \leq 78$	79	32.4 %
$X > M + 1.5 \text{ SD}$	Very high	$X > 78$	0	0 %
Total			244	100 %

However, the hypothesis test was conducted using non-parametric Spearman Rho one-tailed analysis because data were not normally distributed. The

hypothesis was accepted if the correlation significance value is  $p < 0.05$ , and it is rejected while the significance value is  $p > 0.05$ .

**Table 5** Hypothesis Test Results

Variable	r	r <sup>2</sup>	P	Description
Attachment to God and Psychological Well-being	0.325	0.106	0.000	<b>Significant</b>

**Table 6** Results of Psychological Well-being Correlation Test for each gender

Psychological Well-Being Correlation	Sig.
Male	0.720 (not correlated)
Female	0.960 (not correlated)

**Table 7** Results of Psychological Well-being Difference Test in terms of Gender

Category	Sig.	Mean
Male	<b>0.966</b>	78.14
Female	no significant ( $p > 0.05$ )	<b>78.65</b>

**Table 8** Results of Psychological Well-Being Different Test by Age

Category	Sig.	Mean
18 years old	0.748	79.00
19 years old	no significant ( $p > 0.05$ )	77.89
20 years old		76.89
21 years old		79.14
22 years old		80.06
23 years old		77.42
24 years old		76.50
25 years old		<b>82.00</b>

**Table 9** Results of Different Test on Psychological Well-Being by Parents' Income

Category	Sig.	Mean
< IDR. 2,000.000	<b>0.226</b>	77.61
IDR. 2,000.000 – 3,000.000	no significant ( $p > 0.05$ )	<b>80.21</b>
IDR. 3,000.000 – 5,000.000		79.05
> IDR. 5,000.000		77.94

**Table 10** Intercorrelation between aspects of attachment to God and Psychological Well-being

Aspect	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>Attachment to God Variables</b>								
1. God's positive closeness and model	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Positive self-model	0.445 (0.000)	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. Separation protest	0.510 (0.000)	0.466 (0.000)	1	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Variable Psychological Well-Being</b>								
4. Accepting yourself	0.222 (0.000)	0.183 (0.004)	0.230 (0.000)	1	-	-	-	-
5. Positive relationship with others	0.168 (0.009)	0.157 (0.014)	0.118 <b>(0.067)</b>	0.420 (0.000)	1	-	-	-
6. Independent	0.147 (0.021)	0.149 (0.020)	0.135 (0.035)	0.277 (0.000)	0.168 (0.009)	1	-	-
7. Environmental control	0.291 (0.000)	0.211 (0.001)	0.107 <b>(0.096)</b>	0.376 (0.000)	0.450 (0.000)	0.214 (0.001)	1	-
8. Purpose of life	0.051 <b>(0.427)</b>	0.028 <b>(0.660)</b>	0.049 <b>(0.446)</b>	0.050 <b>(0.433)</b>	0.094 <b>(0.142)</b>	0.138 (0.031)	0.187 (0.003)	1
9. Personal development	0.307 (0.000)	0.275 (0.000)	0.196 (0.002)	0.330 (0.000)	0.318 (0.000)	0.290 (0.000)	0.415 (0.000)	0.288 (0.000)

**Table 11** Intercorrelation between aspects of attachment to God on Psychological Well-Being

<i>Attachment to God</i>	Aspect	Psychological Well-Being	
		<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
1. God's positive closeness and model		<b>0.288</b>	0.000 significant
2. Positive self-model		0.240	0.000 significant
3. Separation protest		0.199	0.000 significant

This study aims to determine the relationship between attachment to God and students' psychological well-being. The hypothesis is accepted because there is a positive relationship between attachment to God and psychological well-being with  $r = 0.325$  and  $p = 0.000$ . Therefore, students with an increased attachment to God have high psychological well-being and vice versa. These results were in line with study of [24] that attachment to God is positively correlated with emotional stability in each of its aspects. According to psychological well-being categorization, the subjects were included in the moderate category indicating that students had fairly good abilities.

The correlation of the two variables showed a significant value of  $r = 0.325$  and  $p = 0.000$  because the attachment to God contributes 10.6% to psychological well-being. Meanwhile, the remaining 89.4% were affected by other factors outside of this study. This is in line with study of [24] that attachment to God affects psychological well-being.

Additional analysis performed on male and female students shows different tests on gender, age, and socioeconomic status, as well as intercorrelation tests on attachment to God and psychological well-being.

Meanwhile, the correlation test for each gender showed that attachment to God was not correlated with psychological well-being, while the different tests yield a significance value of 0.966. The mean value is in line with study of [26] that female subjects had higher emotional stability than males.

Based on the age, the significance value is 0.748 because there was no difference between participants aged from 18 to 25 years. However, the mean value shows that subjects at 25 years old had higher psychological well-being compared to others. These results have similarities with study of [27] that increasing age in individuals affects good emotional stability.

Furthermore, the different tests on parental income showed no significant difference because the sig value was 0.226. The mean value with a parental income of IDR 2,000,000 – 3,000,000 indicated that the subject in this category had higher psychological well-being compared to others. This is in line with study of [1] that Indonesia's economic conditions are not the main factor in achieving students' emotional stability.

The intercorrelation test on the two variables shows that attachment to God is significantly correlated with psychological well-being. However, some aspects

including life goals, psychological well-being, and attachment to God have insignificant correlation results. The life goals are not correlated with closeness and a positive God model of 0.427, positive self-model at 0.660, and separation protest of 0.446. Also, psychological well-being has no positive relationship with self-acceptance of 0.433 and others at 0.142. The aspect of attachment to God is not correlated with others at 0.067 and environmental mastery at 0.096.

Meanwhile, the correlation analysis of attachment to God on psychological well-being showed that the highest positive relationship is the closeness and the positive God model with  $r = 0.288$  and  $p = 0.000$  values. This is in line with study of [21] that making God a buffer base and a place of refuge while individuals experience problems tends to increase emotional stability.

The self-model aspect with a value of  $r = 0.240$  and  $p = 0.000$  does not have a big impact on increasing psychological well-being. [23] indicated that a positive self-model is an individuals' perception and relationship with God. People need to be anxious about being close to God because the inconsistent perception affects their psychological well-being [28].

Meanwhile, the separation protest with  $r = 0.199$  and  $p = 0.000$  was the lowest aspect because it has very little correlation with psychological well-being. This is in line with study of [23] that individuals understand God is close and merciful, but they feel anxious and afraid to be left behind considering their sins [29].

However, this study needs social desirability because study questions are not answered based on the normal rules. The Muslim Spiritual Attachment Scale also needs to be examined more in terms of its suitability with the participants in Indonesia. Moreover, it is difficult in finding references and journals that support the theory because there are few explanations on attachment to God in Islam.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study result showed that there is a positive relationship between attachment to God and psychological well-being. The increase in attachment to God helps to develop students' emotional stability and vice versa. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted.

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