



# Interrelation of Spiritualism and Materialism of Madrasah Teachers

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Received 03 November 2023 | Received in revised form 29 January 2024 | Accepted 10 February 2024

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## APA Citation:

Susmiyati, S., Zurqoni, Z., Saugi, W., Dewi, L., & Abdillah, M.H. (2024). Interrelation of Spiritualism and Materialism of Madrasah Teachers. *DINAMIKA ILMU*, Vol. 24(1), 77-89.  
doi: <http://doi.org/10.21093/di.v24i1.7506>

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## Abstract

While materialism is strongly spreading in society, one of which is in the educational environment, madrasah teachers are supposed to have high spiritualism to be able to control it. This research aims to analyze the interrelation of spiritualism and materialism of madrasah teachers in East Kalimantan. The research used a quantitative-correlative approach with 1604 madrasah teachers in East Kalimantan as the research population. The selected sample, 241 State Madrasah Aliyah teachers, was taken using a purposive sampling technique. Data was collected using a questionnaire instrument, which was then analyzed using linear regression correlation analysis techniques. The research results show that there is a very significant relationship between spiritualism and materialism of madrasah teachers. The higher the teacher's spiritualism, the lower the materialism, conversely the lower the spiritualism, the higher the teacher's materialism. This research has implications for the importance of building the spiritualism of madrasah teachers so that they are not easily influenced by the strong materialism in the current era.

**Keywords:** interrelation, materialism, madrasah teacher, spiritualism

## 1. Introduction

Teachers play a critical role in strengthening religion and religiosity in students. Because religion is a guide to life and human life, it plays a critical role in social life. Religion gives an individual the strength to live their life so that various problems can be resolved. Apart from that, religion encourages a person to do well in their life and contribute to the community.

Humans need religion because religion can preserve harmonious relationships between humans (Al-Khu'i, 2003).

Schools are potential educational institutions to instill religious values, in addition to families and communities. The instilling of values in schools is carried out through learning Islamic religious education and character. Religion and character studies have a critical position in the curriculum because of the demands that graduates not only have intellectual intelligence and skills, but also spiritual and emotional intelligence (Muhaemin, 2017). Thus, teachers at madrasah have a strategic role in creating students who are religious and have noble character.

The role of madrasah teachers is not just to convey religious knowledge, but also to build students' spiritualism (Susmiyati et al., 2022). Spiritualism describes the experiences of individuals who have discovered and understood the substance of life (King, 2017). Spiritualism is a psychological condition that leads to an attitude of independence, being proactive, directed toward the truth, behaving based on values, establishing good relationships, and respecting other people (Budiman, 2016). Students' spiritualism will be awakened if the teacher who teaches them also has spiritualism. Madrasah teachers who have spiritualism practice Islamic teachings properly and correctly which are actualized in learning activities that not only focus on knowledge but also on religious and moral education. Therefore, it is critical for teachers to have spiritualism because with spiritualism teachers can strengthen their awareness of spiritual matters such as the origins of individual existence and the essence of the purpose of life (Houghton et al., 2016).

Spiritualism is an aspect that is often called as the opposite of materialism. Materialism is a lifestyle that encourages a person to be obsessed with owning things and earning a lot of money (Yaccarini & Furman, 2017; Sinha, 2014). A higher spiritual level is associated with a decrease in the desire to be materialistic by consuming things or spending a lot of money (Stillman et al., 2012).

Nowadays, aspects of materialism are strongly spreading in society, one of which is in the educational environment. The teaching profession becomes a dilemma when faced with materialistic aspects, such as teacher salaries/honors, allowances and other incentives as teachers. For materialistic reasons in the form of receiving salaries/honors, incentives and other income, there are teachers who carry out teaching strikes (Eliza et al., 2022). In the view of spiritualism, teaching or conveying knowledge is a form of worship that is carried out solely for a reply from God. Religious teachers who should have high spiritualism also do things that lead to materialism, namely threatening to go on a teaching strike as a form of protest because Islamic religious education teachers are not included in the formation as government employees with work agreements (PPPK) (Sejatiningrum, 2019). Materialism is not always identified with demands but also pleasure related to the material that will be obtained when the demands are approved, such as the happiness of religious teachers when their formation is included in the formation of government employees with work agreement (PPPK) in 2022 (Gisya et al., 2021). Someone who is in a family environment that has aligned

values and is very materialistic is likely to experience great life satisfaction, and little depression (Flurry et al., 2021).

Based on preliminary interviews with teachers at one of the madrasah in Samarinda, it appeared that a few teachers at the madrasah still prioritized a materialistic attitude, namely they were willing to work if there was reward obtained, for example an honorarium given when the activity was completed. Based on the interview, financially the school has a minimal budget so teacher salaries are still below the minimum wage. However, teachers have different attitudes. There are those who continue to work if they are given a task even though they have a minimal budget. In contrast, there are also those who prioritize material if they get additional tasks outside their main duties. Besides, there are also those who are financially more prosperous (having received teacher certification), but the daily performance was just average, and they seemed very happy when the teacher certification allowance was received (Sutiono, 2021).

Several factors might influence the materialism of the religious teachers, including the factor of low spiritualism. Spiritualism is seen as a basic human need, because the instinct of developing spiritualism can encourage self-integrity, inner peace, and the will to provide assistance to others wholeheartedly (Lepherd, 2015). In the context of work, spiritualism can shape the individual's attitudes and behavior by directing them to give meaning to every action so that they will display good performance (Rocha & Pinheiro, 2021). Thus, it can be understood that an individual's character and religious values will be inversely related to materialism.

It is important to identify the spiritualism of madrasah teachers because they have a critical role in building students' spiritualism. If they do not have spiritualism, then they will not be able to transfer it to students. This is supported in research by Pellegrino, et al (2022) that there is a relationship between spiritualism and materialism. Their research shows that spiritualism, but not religion, reduces the willingness to buy goods that express materialism. Materialism in teachers is also important to identify because madrasah teachers should not make materialism the main goal in carrying out their duties and profession as teachers. By knowing the interrelation of spiritualism and materialism of madrasah teachers, this study can be an insight for evaluating policies related to efforts to increase teacher spiritualism and improve the perspective of implementing teacher performance as a noble task and God's calling, not merely to obtain material from what one does as a teacher.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Spiritualism**

Spiritualism describes the experiences of individuals who have discovered and understood the meaning of life. Spiritualism is also understood as an individual's search for an understanding of the answer to a basic question about the meaning of life (King, 2017). Spiritualism is a basic human need, because an instinct for the development of spiritualism

can stimulate the emergence of self-integration, inner calm, and the desire to provide assistance to others sincerely and wholeheartedly (Lepherd, 2015).

Four dimensions of spiritualism are first, Loving Connection, the dimension that describes a relationship full of love. Indicators include loving, happy, loyal and full of hope. Second, Self-effacing Altruism, a dimension that describes individuals not only focusing on themselves but prioritizing other people. Indicators include being humble, patient, caring for others, ethical, charitable and loyal. Third, Blissful Transcendence, a dimension that describes individuals who believe in happiness outside the current world. Indicators include transcendence, otherworldly, happy, reverent, mystical, and full of awe. Fourth, The Religiosity/Sacredness, a dimension that describes individuals who believe in sacredness. Indicators include religious, sacred, blessed, supernatural, holy and eternal (Greenwald & Harder, 2003).

## **2.2 Materialism**

Materialism is an attitude that emphasizes the importance of material possessions within an individual and the belief that ownership of something in particular is the main source of happiness (Belk, 1985). Materialism can also be interpreted as a set of fundamental beliefs held by an individual related to the importance of material possessions as the center of individual satisfaction or dissatisfaction in their life. Materialistic Individuals will always try to fulfill all material needs and desires and tend to ignore spiritual matters (Rindfleisch et al., 1997). Dittmar, et al (2014) define materialism as individual differences in society's long-term endorsement of values, goals, and related beliefs that center on the importance of acquiring money and material possessions.

Three aspects of materialism are Acquisition Centrality, Possession-defined Success, and Acquisition as the Pursuit of Happiness. Acquisition Centrality means that a materialistic individual puts possessions as central in their life and makes ownership of goods their goal in life. Possession-defined Success means that materialistic individuals see themselves and others as successful based on the number and quality of their possessions. Acquisition as the Pursuit of Happiness means that materialistic individuals believe that ownership of property is the main source of a person's satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Richins & Dawson, 1992). Factors that influence materialism are self-esteem (Park & John, 2011), religiosity (Rakrachakarn et al., 2015), spiritualism (Yaccarini & Furman, 2017), gratefulness (Polak & McCullough, 2006), parenting (Kasser et al., 2002), family and parents' psychological wellbeing (Flouri, 2007), and peers (Chan & Prendergast, 2007).

Materialism as a lifestyle is consumerist and desires to own things and accumulate a lot of money, while spiritualism acts as an alarm to reduce the desire to fulfill this lifestyle. Thus, materialism is related to spiritualism. If spiritualism can be realized well, then it can control materialism. On the other hand, if spiritualism cannot be realized well in life, then this will also influence materialism. The hypothesis of this research is that "there is a relationship between spiritualism and materialism of madrasah teachers in East Kalimantan", meaning that the higher the teacher's spiritualism, the lower the teacher's materialism. On the other

hand, if the spiritualism of madrasah teachers is low, the higher the materialism of madrasah teachers.

### 3. Research Methodology

This research used a quantitative-correlative approach. The research subjects were madrasah teachers in East Kalimantan Province (Samarinda City, Bontang City, Kutai Kertanegara Regency, Balikpapan City, Berau Regency, Paser Regency, North Penajam Paser Regency, and West Kutai Regency).

The selected sample, 241 State Madrasah Aliyah teachers, was taken using a purposive sampling technique. Data was collected using an instrument in the form of a questionnaire that consists of the variable of materialism and spiritualism. The materialism variable contains statements that reflect the aspects to measure and are directly given to the subject. The materialism aspect in this research refers to the materialism aspect of Richins & Dawson, namely: acquisition centrality, possession-defined success, and acquisition as the pursuit of happiness (Richins & Dawson, 1992). Table 1 shows the initial blueprint of materialism aspects.

Table 1. Aspects of Materialism

No	Aspects of Materialism	Item Number		Total
		Favorable	Unfavorable	
1	<i>Acquisition Centrality</i>	3	2	5
2	<i>Possession-Defined Success</i>	3	2	5
3	<i>Acquisition as the Pursuit of Happiness</i>	3	2	5
<b>Total</b>		<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>

Scoring is based on a Likert scale model which is modified into four alternative answers, which are Very Untrue of Me, Untrue of Me, True of Me, and Very True of Me. The scores for the favorable answer choices are: Very True of Me (score 4), True of Me (score 3), Untrue of Me (score 2), and Very Untrue of Me (score 1). The answer choices for unfavorable items are: Very True of Me (score 1), True of Me (score 2), Untrue of Me (score 3), and Very Untrue of Me (score 4).

The spiritualism aspects contain statements that reflect dimensions about variable objects. This aspect is based on the dimensions of spiritualism, namely the dimensions of Loving Connection, Self-Effacing Altruism, Blissful Transcendence, and The Religiosity/Sacredness (Greenwald & Harder, 2003). Table 2 shows the scale of spiritualism.

Table 2. Aspects of Spiritualism

No	Dimensions of Spiritualism	Total
1	<i>Loving Connection</i>	4
2	<i>Self-effacing Altruism</i>	4
3	<i>Blissful Transcendence</i>	4
4	<i>The Religiosity/Sacredness</i>	3
Total		<b>15</b>

Scoring is based on a Likert scale model, in which for each item four alternative answers are available. The weight of the answer scores from this scale ranges from 1 to 4. The choice scores are Very Untrue of Me (score 1), Untrue of Me (score 2), True of Me (score 3), and Very True of Me (score 4). The higher the total score obtained by the subject on this scale, the higher the subject's spiritualism, and vice versa.

The validity used in this research is content validity that is validity estimated by testing the content of the instrument using rational analysis or expert judgment. One way to obtain the content validity of a measuring instrument is by adjusting the items in the scale that have been written using a blueprint. The researcher asked for help from fellow lecturers who are experts in their fields to provide expert judgment on the scale of this research.

Reliability in research is described by an instrument that can be trusted when used as a research data collection tool. Reliability measurement used the Cronbach's alpha coefficient ( $\alpha$ ), which is basically the average of the correlation of data items of a measurement instrument. The data obtained was then analyzed using statistical methods with linear regression correlation techniques, which is a procedure used to determine whether there is a relationship between spiritualism and materialism in religious teachers. Calculations in analyzing research data were carried out using the SPSS (Statistical Product or Service Solution) computer program.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis using empirical data aims to provide a general description of the data obtained by researchers in the field. This analysis displays the mean score, minimum score, maximum score and standard deviation of each variable, namely: spiritualism and materialism. This data was used by researchers to create categorizations for each variable.

Table 5. Description of Empirical Data

Variable	Empirical Data				Hypothetical Data			
	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Materialism	13	40	27.89	4.5	13	52	32.5	6.5
Spiritualism	43	60	53.48	5.2	15	60	37.5	7.5

The purpose of categorization is to determine the high and low scores obtained by the subject on each variable. The score is classified using three categories, namely: high, medium and low.

Table 6. Categorization Norms

Norm	Categorization
$X \geq M + 1.SD$	High
$M - 1.SD < X \leq M + 1.SD$	Medium
$X < M - 1.SD$	Low

Description:

- X : Raw Score
- M : Mean
- SD : Standard Deviation

From the results of categorizing materialism scores, it appears that 1% of madrasah teachers were in the high category, 67% of madrasah teachers were in the medium category and 32% of madrasah teachers were in the low category. It can be concluded that on average, research subjects tend to have a moderate level of materialism. Table 7 shows the results of the categorization of materialism scores.

Table 7. Materialism Data Categorization

Norm	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Description
$X \geq 39$	2	1%	High
$39 < X \leq 26$	162	67%	Medium
$X < 26$	77	32%	Low
Total	241	100%	

From the results of the categorization of spiritualism scores, it appears that 97% of madrasah teachers were in the high category and 3% of madrasah teachers were in the medium category. It can be concluded that on average, research subject has a high level of spiritualism. Table 8 shows the results of the spiritualism score categorization.

Table 8. Spiritualism Data Categorization

Norm	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Description
$X \geq 45$	233	97%	High
$45 < X \leq 30$	8	3%	Medium
$X < 30$	0	0%	Low
Total	241	100%	

#### 4.2. Classical Assumption Test

Before conducting hypothesis analysis, it is necessary to test the classical assumptions first. The purpose of the classical assumption test is to determine which statistical analysis (between parametric and non-parametric) is used in hypothesis analysis. This research used correlation hypothesis analysis. The classic assumption tests used in this analysis were the normality test and linearity test.

The aim of the normality test is to see whether the distribution of the subject's scores on a variable being analyzed is normal or not, in other words to find out whether the sample can represent the population. Normality testing used the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test; in this test, if the significance probability value is 0.05 or more ( $> 0.05$ ) then the data is normally distributed and if the significance probability is less than 0.05 ( $< 0.05$ ) then the data is not normally distributed. Table 9 shows the normality test results for each variable.

Table 9. Normality Test

Variable	Score KS-Z	Sig (p)	Description
Spiritualism	2,140	0,000	Not Normal
Materialism	1,590	0,013	Not Normal

The normality test results presented in the table above show that the materialism variable has a significance probability = 0.013 ( $p < 0.05$ ) while the spiritualism variable has a significance probability = 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ). These results indicate that data of each research variable is not normally distributed.

The linearity test aims to see whether from the distribution of points, which are the values of the research variables, a straight line can be drawn which shows a linear relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. Criteria for testing linearity using the Deviation from Linearity test; in this test, if the significance value for linearity is less than 0.05 ( $< 0.05$ ) then the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable is said to be linear. Table 10 presents the results of the linearity test.

Table 10. Linearity Test

Variable	Deviation from Linearity	Sig (p)	Description
Spiritualism with Materialism	1,252	0,000	Linier

Based on the results of the linearity test analysis in table 10 above, it can be concluded that the relationship between the materialism and spiritualism variables is linear.



### 4.3. Hypothesis Testing

From the results of the classical assumption test, it appears that either normality or linearity tests was not fulfilled so that in the hypothesis test, the statistical analysis used was nonparametric Spearman's-Rho. Spearman's-Rho analysis aims to determine the relationship between spiritualism and materialism. The rule used is that if the correlation coefficient is negative and the significance is less than 0.05 then the hypothesis is accepted.

Table 11. *Spearman's-Rho Hypothesis Test*

Variable	Correlation Coefficient	Sig (p)	Description
Spiritualism with Materialism	-0,265	0,000	Linier

From the results of the Spearman's-Rho analysis, a correlation coefficient of -0.265 was obtained with a significance of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ). This means that there is a significant negative relationship between spiritualism and materialism of madrasah teachers; Thus, the higher the spiritualism, the lower the materialism, conversely, the lower the spiritualism, the higher the materialism of madrasah teachers.

## 5. Discussion

This research aims to determine the negative relationship between spiritualism and materialism of madrasah teachers. Based on data analysis and the results of research hypothesis testing, it shows that the proposed hypothesis is accepted that there is a very significant negative relationship between spiritualism and materialism of madrasah teachers, which means the relationship between the two variables is very significant.

The emergence of materialism values in an individual is related to several factors. In this research, the factor that is associated is the spiritualism factor. Numerous studies have noted that human goals related to spiritualism or religion are in contrast to goals related to high monetary values or materialism (Piedmont & Wilkins, 2013; Piotrowski et al., 2021). Spirituality is an inseparable dimension that provides individuals with an "integrative factor" that is evidenced in a person's behavioral characteristics (McGhee & Grant, 2015). In this case, spiritualism reduces excessive materialism activities (Stillman et al., 2012). Supported by many previous studies, religion and spiritualism are indistinguishable from each other. Spiritualism can reduce the willingness to buy items that depict materialism (Zemojtel-Piotrowska & Piotrowski, 2016). Materialist values are also associated with financial success and better social status. Materialism works hard to improve one's standard of living (Sidhu & Foo, 2015), It is similar to this research that materialism is low among madrasah teachers who have high spiritualism because madrasah teachers are given provisions or knowledge related to religion. In this case, spiritualism controls materialism in teachers through high faith and the application of religious values applied in the school.

Every individual knows that there are rules in religion. As in the Islamic religion, there are rules not to exaggerate in everything. If these religious values are applied in everyday life, they will control materialism. Religion always rejects the concept of materialism and urges people to live in simplicity and moderation (Feibleman, 2013; Pace, 2013). However, the reality shows a different phenomenon, recent research finds that religion does not have a negative effect on the consumption of luxury goods which leads to materialism (Alserhan et al., 2014). In contrast, previous research found that religion has a significant impact on luxury goods consumption (Ahmed et al., 2013; Al-Hyari et al., 2012). Spirituality is an inner transformation of the self that goes beyond sensory phenomena and becomes inclusive of others. It is a search for a deeper meaning in life and a process of connecting with a greater reality, other people, humanity in general, and the divine. On the other hand, materialism is worldliness which focuses on the primacy of matter. This is the belief that everything, including mind and consciousness, evolved from matter acting on matter. Materialism works together with hedonism which directs individuals to acquire and enjoy the objects they consume. In Western thought spirituality and materialism are considered mutually exclusive (Sinha, 2014).

Inconsistent results are the result of how one views the concepts of materialism and luxury goods as interrelated (Arlı et al., 2016). Research results (Arlı et al., 2020) show that people view materialism and luxury goods as two separate constructs. As previously mentioned, someone who is intrinsically religious often experiences conflict when situations with high materialism arise (Vincent & Othman, 2012) as (Dekhil et al., 2017) in the context of a Muslim who in this research is a madrasah teacher. Therefore, differences related to religious value commitments influence the contribution of spiritualism to materialism. This is similar to this research, in which the commitment to implementing religious values and the direction to grow and improve these religious values aims to be able to regulate and control all actions taken. Instilling religious values through education in Madrasah schools that prioritize religious values is critical because the application of religious values controls all things that are excessive. The cultivation of these values is also in order to achieve success in life in this world which will then be able to produce goodness in the afterlife.

## **6. Conclusion**

Based on the results of research data analysis, it can be concluded that "there is a very significant relationship between spiritualism and materialism of madrasah teachers". The higher the madrasah teacher's spiritualism, the lower the materialism. Conversely, if the madrasah teacher's spiritualism is low, their materialism is higher. It is recommended for madrasah teachers to further increase spiritualism by applying the values of Islamic teachings in everyday life. Apart from that, related institutions can provide training to teachers and create modules to increase spiritualism to be able to control the teacher's materialism. This research has implications for the importance of building the spiritualism of madrasah teachers so that they are not easily influenced by the strong materialism in the current era.

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