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## Finding God's Way: Spiritual Well-Being on the People Who Do *Tirakat Mlaku*

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**Abstract:** One of the ways to get closer to God is to escape from the world's temptations by going on a journey (*safar, mlaku*). This study aims to uncover the meaning of spiritual well-being in individuals who perform *tirakat mlaku*. This article is qualitative research with a phenomenological approach. The subject of this study is the congregation (*jemaat*) of Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud Sukabumi, who perform *tirakat mlaku*. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and using interpretive phenomenological analysis. This study found that there are three meanings for those who undergo *tirakat mlaku*: (1) quality of life, (2) social well-being, and (3) environment well-being. This study also reveals that spiritual well-being is an interrelationship between one's relationship with God, subjective well-being, and socio-environment well-being. This article provides a new perspective on the concept of *tirakat* as a path to closeness to God, directly affecting the quality of life, social life, and environmental protection.

**Contribution:** The results of this study can be used as a guide in constructing the dimension of spiritual well-being in the context of Islamic psychological theory. While practically, it provides an outlook of the meanings of divinity that are implemented in social activities.

**Keywords:** positive psychology; spiritual well-being; *tirakat mlaku*

## Introduction

Everyone cannot be separated from pleasant and unpleasant life situations. When someone experiences an enjoyable life, the hope is that it can increase his closeness to God. While when a person experiences many unpleasant conditions or experiences various problems in life, they often look for ways to get close to God and get His help. One way to get close to God is to go on a trip (traveling) or *tirakat mlaku*. *Tirakat mlaku* or *tirakat safar* is an activity carried out in the month of *Safar* / *Sapar* in the Hijri calendar. This *tirakat* is done by walking from the westernmost tip of Java Island to the easternmost tip of Java Island without provisions to find the essence of a transcendent relationship with God.<sup>1</sup> This ritual begins at dawn from Angsana Village, Ngalindung District, Sukabumi Regency, and will end up at Batu Ampar, Syech Abdul Manan's grave, Sampang Madura East Java. It takes 35 days to 40 days to travel on foot. One of these *tirakats* was taught by one of the Indonesian Sufis, namely Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud or Raden Didi Djayadinta, the founder of Miftahul Huda Sukabumi Indonesia.<sup>2</sup>

The concept of *tirakat mlaku* relates to giving up everything owned as a transition from a worldly life to the hereafter. One of the main goals of this practice is to leave the world's lusts, even some Sufis who spend their time traveling until they die, such as Abi Abdillah al-Maghrabi and Ibrahim bin Adham. Two dichotomies are often embedded in this behaviour. First, the journey of *tirakat mlaku* is often considered a journey to the end of loving the worldly life, when a person is ready to let go of material and worldly-related things, to let go of himself entirely and spend his life activities always worshiping and be close to Allah. This concept is often the highest level of a person's Sufi journey; it is challenging to do even though it is universal and carried out in various other religious teachings. Second, ironically, the other side of the

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<sup>1</sup> data from interviews conducted with ustadz at Miftahul Huda Sukabumi college (on September 8, 2021)

<sup>2</sup> Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud made a Sufism college named Miftahul Huda in Sukabumi 12.5 Km from Sukabumi to Sagaranten. There is no formal organizational structure because he just likes to help people who are having a hard time living there and he serves well. Based on information obtained from research subjects and secondary data, from a young age Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud really liked to gather people who had difficulties both financially and mentally. He provided housing, food, clothing and all appropriate facilities at the Miftahul Huda College. Until finally the college was known to many people, even among officials.

dichotomy considers that this *tirakat trip* is not recommended by religion. *Tirakat mlaku* is considered vanity and immoral activity, as stated by Snouck Hurgronje.<sup>3</sup> Some believe that *tirakat mlaku* is practiced, and various rituals found at this *tirakat* are a form of worshiping things other than Allah.

The purpose of human life is to interpret the existence of God. God's way is considered constructively as the path of goodness that brings prosperity. A few decades ago, most researchers interested in subjective well-being ignored the spiritual dimension of human well-being. Well-being is composed of three main dimensions, i.e., the need to have, which refers to material needs; the need to relate, which refers to social relationships; and the need to achieve goals that are more focused on attaining self-actualization and esteem.<sup>4</sup> Further in his research, Campbell<sup>5</sup> found a significant difference that satisfaction with material and financial income is not the main thing in well-being, but the leading role is interpersonal satisfaction. That is self-satisfaction, including satisfaction in the relationship of oneself with their transcendent.

Spiritual well-being is directly indicated in the quality of the relationship with God and is the quality of a person's existential relationship with his God. Spirituality has religious and humanistic values.<sup>6</sup> The concept of spiritual theology is related to the isolation of the soul and a two-way integration of one's commitment to the meaning of his life. And well-being will always be correlated with the purpose of a person's positive life and feelings.<sup>7</sup> Optimistic psychology experts agree that belief in God will bring forth the energy of the heart and strong quality with peace of mind, gratitude, and other positive emotions. However, some phenomena of *tirakat* that, according to some people, can be used as a shortcut or a fast way to a transcendent relationship with God and ignore the

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<sup>3</sup> Dita Hendriani, 'Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936): Biografi Dan Pemikirannya Tentang Islam Di Indonesia', *Jurnal Widya Citra* 1, no. 1 (2020): 54–70, <https://doi.org/10.10101/juwitra.v1i1.103>.

<sup>4</sup> Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, and Willard L. Rodgers, *The Quality of American Life: Perceptions, Evaluations, and Satisfactions* (New York: Russel Sage Foundation, 1976).

<sup>5</sup> Angus Campbell, *The Sense of Well-Being in America: Recent Patterns and Trends* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981).

<sup>6</sup> Daniel A. Helminiak, 'A Scientific Spirituality: The Interface of Psychology and Theology', *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 6, no. 1 (January 1996): 1–19, [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327582ijpr0601\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327582ijpr0601_1).

<sup>7</sup> Louis Tay, Mitchel N. Herian, and Ed Diener, 'Detrimental Effects of Corruption and Subjective Well-Being', *Social Psychological and Personality Science* 5, no. 7 (September 2014): 751–59, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550614528544>.

personal welfare side of the individual as a human being. This study will be a new concept of *tirakat mlaku* in the view of positive psychology as the meaning of spiritual well-being. This study will focus on studying the dynamic theory between Islamic spiritual ideas and the concept of spiritual well-being in positive psychology to answer the gap between the values of religious and humanist well-being. So, this study will examine more deeply how the perpetrators of *tirakat mlaku* of Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud interpret spiritual well-being based on positive psychology.

## Literature Review

Some studies related to this article have been conducted so far. Ali studied Islamic perspectives on psychological and spiritual well-being and treatment.<sup>8</sup> This study shows the Islamic concept related to spiritual well-being, which is built on the epistemology and ontology of Islam. The study also illustrates how Islam explains spiritual well-being that can be used to support health care practices. The difference with this study is that the concept and study of spiritual well-being will be concluded based on the reality of the meaning and sub-meanings obtained from the in-depth research and analysis of the performers of *tirakat mlaku* so that conclusions about spiritual well-being become more profound and in accordance with the phenomenon, which exists.

Then Laela and Pramesti studied how spiritual value and spiritual well-being are from an Islamic perspective.<sup>9</sup> The study reveals that spiritual values and well-being from an Islamic perspective are the dominant factors in forming one's character. The study also demonstrates that ethics and spiritual ties are based on the Qur'an and hadith from an Islamic perspective. In contrast to this study, the authors emphasize spiritual well-being in psychological studies and theories so that spiritual well-being is not only seen in Islamic textual studies but is supported by field data.

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<sup>8</sup> Hooman Keshavarzi and Bilal Ali, 'Islamic Perspectives on Psychological and Spiritual Well-Being and Treatment', in *Islamophobia and Psychiatry*, ed. H. Steven Moffic et al. (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019), 41–53, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-00512-2\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-00512-2_4).

<sup>9</sup> Fitri Laela Wijayati and Wahyu Pramesti, 'How Spiritual Value and Spiritual Wellbeing from Islamic Perspective as an Alternative of Agency Problem', *Journal of Education and Social Sciences* 4 (2016): 107–17, [https://www.jesoc.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/KC4\\_47.pdf](https://www.jesoc.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/KC4_47.pdf).

Again, Maulana studied the phenomenological approach to travelers who perform *tirakat mlaku*.<sup>10</sup> This thesis explains the essence of religion and the motivation for the journey of *tirakat mlaku*. The study results indicate that individuals who perform this ritual of *tirakat* find their identity from the process of *tirakat* that they do. They also get peace of mind and satisfaction in making the pilgrimage. Lastly, Heintzman and Mannell studied the spiritual functions of leisure and spiritual well-being.<sup>11</sup> This study was conducted in Canada with Buddhists, Christian, Jewish, and Muslims. This article shows that specific spiritual experiences can maintain or enhance a person's spiritual well-being. These spiritual functions can also serve as coping strategies to remedy the adverse effects of the pressures of time and the course of one's life on one's spiritual well-being. This study supports the authors' assumption that every appreciation of events and appreciation of time will affect a person's spiritual well-being.

## Method

This study uses a qualitative research method with a phenomenological approach. Phenomenology seeks to find the psychological meaning contained in phenomena through the investigation and analysis of living examples.<sup>12</sup> The focus of this article is to describe the process of spiritual well-being experienced by the people who do *tirakat mlaku*. The selection of participants is purposive with the following criteria: the people who do *tirakat mlaku*, they are the congregation of *tirakat mlaku* of Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud Sukabumi. Two participants were found in this study based on the criteria of participants. Participant determination does not rely on sampling but the depth of the analysis strategy. Therefore, small sample size is not a problem as long as the analysis is carried out in detail to reveal differences and similarities in the small sample size. Data collection methods use semi-structured interviews and observation. The

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<sup>10</sup> Muhammad Mahbub Maulana, 'Tirakat Ziarah Mlaku Ke Makam Waliyullah : Tinjauan Fenomenologi Terhadap Musafir Di Makam Sunan Kalijaga, Syaikh Kholil Bangkalan Dan Syaikh Syamsuddin Batuampar Madura' (Institut Agama Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang, 2012).

<sup>11</sup> Paul Heintzman and Roger C. Mannell, 'Spiritual Functions of Leisure and Spiritual Well-Being: Coping with Time Pressure', *Leisure Sciences* 25, no. 2-3 (April 2003): 207-30, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400306563>.

<sup>12</sup> Mega Tala Harimukthi and Kartika Sari Dewi, 'Eksplorasi Kesejahteraan Psikologis Individu Dewasa Awal Penyandang Tunanetra', *Jurnal Psikologi Undip* 13, no. 1 (15 April 2014): 64-77, <https://doi.org/10.14710/jpu.13.1.64-77>.

data analysis technique used is interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA). Verification of the feasibility used in this study is four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

## Results and Discussion

### *Tirakat Mlaku*

*Tirakat* is a practice that is explicitly applied to someone under the guidance of a spiritual teacher to achieve spiritual maturity for those who live it. *Tirakat* empowers a person's spiritual specifically. For example, if someone consistently can't stand the temptation to eat a lot, the teacher will choose what practice must be done intensively. All these practices are still within limits permitted by the shari'a and do not endanger the creator's life.<sup>13</sup>

To be close to Allah, many Sufis seek a way out or escape from the world's temptations, namely traveling (*mlaku/safar*) for prayer and seclusion in one place, such as in mosques and the tombs of the saints. Because when a person is determined to run away from gathering with family, friends, and people who disturb him towards Allah SWT, he will do anything, and temptations will be overcome with all his might. One of the rituals performed during *tirakat mlaku* is a grave pilgrimage, namely visiting the graves of the saints. *Safar* has the meaning of opening, revealing, explaining, and showing and also means traveling a distance. A journey is called *safar*, which means "opening," because on the way it will be open or will appear the character, behaviour, or factual nature of a person because traveling will bring tests in various forms such as happy times, tedious, complex, and free and narrow periods. In such conditions, a person experiences tests and trials of attitudes and behaviour towards everything he encounters and feels along the way. Such conditions, of course, will "open" or show one's true personality.<sup>14</sup>

The study explains that the *tirakat mlaku* is a method initiated by Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud to teach his students about the greatness of Allah by reflecting on Allah. This practice consists of two: the *tirakat akbar* and the *private tirakat*. The *tirakat akbar* was followed by hundreds of *Jemaah*. All supplies and preparations were provided by Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud so that

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<sup>13</sup> Bambang Khusein Al-Marie, *Kajian Serat Wedatama: Kajian Sastra Jawa Klasik* (Yogyakarta: Sempulur Publisher, 2018).

<sup>14</sup> Abdul Kholiq El-Qudsy, 'Fiqh Safar; Makna Dan Hikmah Yang Terkandung Dibalik Perjalanan', 2012, <https://www.scribd.com/document/89507458/Pedoman-Jaulah-Gamais-2012..>

the congregation could focus on going on *tirakat mlaku*, seeing how God's power, visiting the guardian's grave, remembrance, and *muhasaba* (self-examination). On the journey of the *tirakat akbar*, Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud taught his students about getting closer to Allah and various Sufism values. In contrast to the *tirakat akbar*, during the private *tirakat*, Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud did not provide any supplies and facilities. So, in personal travel, the determination and firm intention of the perpetrators of penance are the main provisions.

### **Spiritual Well-Being**

In 1975 the National Interfaith Coalition on Aging (NICA)<sup>15</sup> conceptualized spiritual well-being as a harmonious relationship with oneself, others, God, and the world. This concept is extended by Fisher,<sup>16</sup> who describes spiritual well-being as a fundamental dimension of health and well-being of society as a whole and integrates all other dimensions of Health, namely physical, emotional, mental, social, and honesty. Various quantitative and qualitative studies continue to be carried out to obtain the concept of spiritual well-being empirically. Qualitative research by Stringer and McAvoy conceptualized spiritual well-being as an emotion of admiration for natural wonders that contribute to the mystical experiences of individual spirituality. In addition, this spiritual experience is associated with spiritual experiences such as connectedness, increased senses, inner calm, joy, peace, happiness, and joy. From this qualitative study, it can be explained that spiritual well-being is a variety of individuals' mystical experiences that can create a sense of calm, prosperity, and even joy.

Spiritual motivation as a Muslim is based on the direction of the Qur'an and Hadith. In Islam, spiritual motivation has two main factors, *hablun minallāh* (relation with Allah) and *hablun minannās* (relation among humans), the relationship between the individual himself and Allah and others. *Hablun minallāh* means believing in Allah in his life. Every action taken by an individual must be based on the Qur'an and Hadith: five daily prayers, zakat, fasting, and

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<sup>15</sup> Craig W. Ellison, 'Spiritual Well-Being: Conceptualization and Measurement', *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 11, no. 4 (8 December 1983): 330–38, <https://doi.org/10.1177/009164718301100406>.

<sup>16</sup> Rapson Gomez and John W Fisher, 'Domains of Spiritual Well-Being and Development and Validation of the Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire', *Personality and Individual Differences* 35, no. 8 (December 2003): 1975–91, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869\(03\)00045-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869(03)00045-X).

other acts of worship to establish a good relationship with Allah. *Hablu minannās* refers to how the individual interacts with the social environment. In the concept of spiritual well-being, each individual cannot separate his relationship with God and his relationship with the social environment. Both are integrated as human nature, where every action is guided by religious demands and maintains the social environment properly.<sup>17</sup>

The results of in-depth interviews with research participants and analysis carried out by authors using interpretive phenomenological analysis have obtained three main and seven super-ordinate themes (Table 1). This phenomenological interpretive analysis is one of the advantages of this study because authors can examine in depth the subjective experiences of research participants and find the meaning of important experiences obtained by participants regarding *tirakat mlaku*. The authors got the main theme by carrying out systematic steps equipped with research sensitivity in relating participants' subjective experiences and relevant literature references.<sup>1819</sup>

Table 1  
Super Ordinate Theme and Main Theme

Super Ordinate Theme	Main Theme
Believing in <i>qada</i> and <i>qadar</i>	Quality of life
The positive meaning of life	
Self-regulation	
Feeling sufficient sustenance	
Feel the kindness of others	Social well-being
Do good to others	
Protecting the environment as admiration for God	Environmental well-being

<sup>17</sup> Wijayati and Pramesti, 'How Spiritual Value and Spiritual Wellbeing from Islamic Perspective as an Alternative of Agency Problem'.

<sup>18</sup> YF La Kahija, *Penelitian Fenomenologis: Jalan Memahami Pengalaman Hidup* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2017).

<sup>19</sup> Kate Hefferon and Elena Gil-Rodriguez, 'Reflecting on the Rise in Popularity of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis', *The Psychologist* 24, no. 10 (2011): 756–59, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/266911324\\_Reflecting\\_on\\_the\\_rise\\_in\\_popularity\\_of\\_interpretive\\_phenomenological\\_analysis](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/266911324_Reflecting_on_the_rise_in_popularity_of_interpretive_phenomenological_analysis).



## Quality of Life

The first central theme is quality of life (QoL). The World Health Organization (WHO) defines the quality of life as individuals' perceptions of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and about their life goals, expectations, standards, and concerns (World Health Organization Quality of Life Assessment or WHOQOL Group, 1996).<sup>20,21</sup> Quality of life is also very closely related to the individual's self-concept.<sup>22</sup> This definition of quality of life clearly describes research participants' quality of life findings. These include believing in destiny as the purpose of life, having a positive meaning in life, self-regulation, and feeling sufficient in sustenance. Various studies on quality of life have demonstrated the importance of the existential domain for individual quality of life.<sup>23</sup> The results of this study show that the quality of life of the people who do *tirakat mlaku* is a combination of existential and subjective well-being.

The central part of the quality of life found in this study is believing in destiny. The super-ordinate theme believes this destiny to be the highest hierarchical component in the meaning of the participant's quality of life because they think that making peace and believing in the future positively is their life goal. The belief that God loves every creature, the god who regulates all the dynamics of this life, they get from the results of the meaning of the journey of *tirakat mlaku*. In a travel situation full of uncertainty, respondents feel that God always provides help. This concept makes them believe that the destiny given by God is the best for their lives. Believing in the future is the primary basis for the quality of individual life, which can be understood as values, perspectives, satisfaction, living conditions, and achievements closely related to spirituality.

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<sup>20</sup> WHOQOL provides a particularly useful alternative in studies requiring a brief assessment of quality of life, for example, in large epidemiological studies and clinical trials where quality of life is a concern. In addition, the WHOQOL may be useful to healthcare professionals in the assessment and evaluation of treatment efficacy.

<sup>21</sup> World Health Organization. Division of Mental Health, 'WHOQOL-BREF: Introduction, Administration, Scoring and Generic Version of the Assessment' (Geneva, 1996).

<sup>22</sup> Tiara Ersha Octari, Bambang Suryadi, and Dian R. Sawitri, 'The Role of Self-Concept and Health Locus of Control on Quality of Life Among Individuals with Diabetes', *Jurnal Psikologi* 19, no. 1 (15 April 2020): 80–94, <https://doi.org/10.14710/jp.19.1.80-94>.

<sup>23</sup> S Robin Cohen et al., 'Measuring the Quality of Life of People at the End of Life: The McGill Quality of Life Questionnaire–Revised', *Palliative Medicine* 31, no. 2 (18 February 2017): 120–29, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0269216316659603>.

That is the dimension of life that involves beliefs and meanings about what is right in terms of the principles and moral values that are believed.<sup>24</sup>

The findings of this study also show that belief in destiny can give rise to positive meanings in life. In Islam, destiny is part of *aqida* or faith, namely believing in *qada* (decree) and *qadar* (destiny). This is also related to certain limits in oneself, the nature or maximum ability of creatures that God has determined.<sup>25</sup> When there is a balance between understanding one's limitations and God's decree, the heart becomes more peaceful and calmer. This calmness and peace in the heart can rise to positive meaning for all domains of life. In positive psychology, authentic happiness is when individuals have positive emotions past and present—experiencing positive emotions from enjoyment, getting much pleasure by exerting personal strength, to using their power for something more prominent outside of themselves. This power refers to the belief in the power of God so that, in general, the domain of personal well-being cannot be separated from the domain of transcendence.<sup>26</sup> In contrast to Seligman, Fisher considers self-awareness as a driving force or transcendent aspect of the human psyche in the search for identity and self-worth.

Self-regulation is also a part of QoL. Bandura<sup>27</sup> explains that self-regulation is a person's ability to control his behaviour and one of the main drivers of human personality consists of self-observation, judgment, and response. Self-regulation is an individual's internal factor; through regulation, a person will easily find a picture of his future to develop skills. Self-regulation involves understanding oneself and relating to circumstances outside oneself, including self-confidence in transcendent things. This concept is found in research participants who believe that destiny is not just something passive or passive surrender. However, it is directed at the form of increasing self-ability and controlling behaviour to achieve a good life. This is understood as the concept of picking up the love of God. We can correlate that the provisions given by Allah are still related to self-regulation so that individuals still have a good quality of life, even in difficult or harmful situations.

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<sup>24</sup> Laís Fumincelli et al., 'Quality of Life and Ethics: A Concept Analysis', *Nursing Ethics* 26, no. 1 (15 February 2019): 61–70, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0969733016689815>.

<sup>25</sup> Achmad Su'udi, *Bersama Allah Meraih Takdir Baik* (Jakarta: QultumMedia, 2009).

<sup>26</sup> Martin E. P. Seligman, *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment* (New York: The Free Press, 2002), 3–14.

<sup>27</sup> Albert Bandura, 'Self-Regulation of Motivation and Action Through Internal Standards and Goal Systems', in *Goal Concepts in Personality and Social Psychology*, ed. Lawrence A. Pervin (London: Psychology Press, 2015), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315717517>.

The last super-ordinate theme in QoL is feeling self-sufficient. In the *Şūra al-Ra'd* verse 26, there is a meaning of "narrowing" or "limiting". The discussion is not far from sustenance. Allah bears their nourishment about Allah's decree regarding food for animals and plants. Whereas in humans, God is responsive. The point here is that God has sent down food on His earth, and humans are tasked with achieving that sustenance.<sup>28</sup> This discussion returns to the statement that the mechanism of destiny is causal. There is a cause (looking for food) and an effect (getting sustenance). Allah declares that He widens and narrows food for those whom He wills. This shows that anyone will be given food by Allah, no matter whether he believes it or not. Allah limits sustenance for a believer not because Allah does not love him but because Allah wants to test how patient he can deal with it.

This concept of understanding sustenance is found clearly in the exploration of research participants. Research participants no longer look at sustenance on how much material they get but more on how much God loves them. In the end, there is no worry for them about sustenance. Participants explained that more and more, they feel that Allah is giving more and more abundant sustenance even without being asked. In understanding QoL, the material and electoral aspects become one of the leading indicators. So, it is clear that this belief in sustenance is a vital dimension of QoL.

In this study, findings about the financial dimension in the sustenance concept differ from some economic ideas in QoL in several studies. Indicators of poverty and deprivation that can be measured objectively (materially) hurt material security, social status, and even one's life satisfaction.<sup>29</sup> Clench-Aas and Holte<sup>30</sup> conducted research in Europe on the impact of the economic crisis in various European countries on a person's QoL. This research provides a middle line between understanding life satisfaction about sustenance in spiritual concepts. After experiencing an economic crisis, a person's life satisfaction decrease, but mainly for a short time. This shows that life satisfaction on the

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<sup>28</sup> Agus Mustofa, *Mengubah Takdir* (Surabaya: Padma Press, 2008).

<sup>29</sup> Ashley Elizabeth Muller, 'A Systematic Review of Quality of Life Assessments of Offenders', *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 64, no. 13–14 (28 October 2020): 1364–97, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624X19881929>.

<sup>30</sup> Jocelyne Clench-Aas and Arne Holte, 'The Financial Crisis in Europe: Impact on Satisfaction with Life', *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health* 45, no. 18\_suppl (29 August 2017): 30–40, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1403494817718692>.

financial side is not always related to ownership but is broader than that, namely, how individuals give meaning to the essence of sustenance.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that in this study, QoL has multidimensional aspects, including personal and transcendent well-being.<sup>31</sup> Sufis who go on a journey of *tirakat mlaku* eventually embark on a spiritual journey and want to achieve closeness to God as a manifestation of their *tawhid*.<sup>32</sup> This research includes belief in destiny, positive meaning of life, self-regulation, and feeling sufficient in sustenance.

### Social Well-Being

The second main theme is social well-being. The central main theme consists of two super-ordinate themes, namely, feeling the goodness of others and doing good to others. Social welfare is a matter of concern to classical sociological theory. Although anomie and alienation are important, Durkheim and Marx also positively discuss several dimensions of social welfare. The benefits of public life are integration and social cohesion, a feeling of belonging and interdependence, a sense of shared awareness, and a feeling of having a common destiny.<sup>33</sup> This concept is the same as research results showing that the participants' gratitude manifests in mutual togetherness for their help during the trip. The participants applied appreciation in the form of a desire to help others.

WHO explains that social well-being is one of the predictors of a person's mental health.<sup>34</sup> Social well-being assesses a person's social condition and functioning in society.<sup>35</sup> Keyes explained that social well-being consists of five dimensions: social integration, social contribution, social coherence, social actualization, and social acceptance. In this study, the dimensions of social well-

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<sup>31</sup> Shu-Fen Wu et al., 'The Exploration of Health-Related Quality of Life: Factors Influencing Quality of Life in Gynecologic Cancer Patients', *Clinical Nursing Research* 26, no. 1 (25 February 2017): 114–31, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1054773815600665>.

<sup>32</sup> Dejan Aždajić, 'The Doctrine of Tawhīd and Its Practical Manifestation by a Living Sufi Practitioner', *Teosofia: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Mysticism* 10, no. 1 (2021): 1–20, <https://doi.org/10.21580/tos.v10i1.7971>.

<sup>33</sup> Yohanes Budiarto, 'Social Well-Being, Psychological Well-Being Dan Emotional Well-Being: Studi Kausal Komparatif Pada Praktisi Seni Bela Diri Bima Dan Kebugaran Fisik', *Jurnal Psikologi* 16, no. 1 (2018): 18–28, <https://doi.org/10.47007/jpsi.v16i1.26>.

<sup>34</sup> Lester Breslow, 'A Quantitative Approach to the World Health Organization Definition of Health: Physical, Mental and Social Well-Being', *International Journal of Epidemiology* 1, no. 4 (1972): 347–55, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ije/1.4.347>.

<sup>35</sup> Corey Lee M. Keyes, 'Social Well-Being', *Social Psychology Quarterly* 61, no. 2 (June 1998): 121–40, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2787065>.

being obtained in the super-ordinate theme are social contribution and social acceptance. The dimension of social acceptance indicates the generalization of the society category based on the assessment of others. Individuals with high social acceptance tend to believe in others and perceive others nicely; this dimension was found in research participants in the form of feeling the goodness of others. The social contribution dimension is an evaluation of the individual's social value. Individuals with high social contributions always feel they have something useful for others. Social contributions are formed by self-efficacy and a sense of responsibility. The value of social assistance in this study was found in research participants in the form of doing good to others.

In the results of developing emergent meaning, it was found that the research participants felt they received much help from others during their journey. What is interesting in this theme of communal well-being is that the research participants perceive that any support they receive from others is a gift from God and a form of God's love. This concept ultimately raises the spirit and awareness of the research participants to do good for others. The meaning of receiving kindness from others is closely related to doing good to others. This is because participants believe there is love and mercy from Allah by consistently doing good to others.

Although it does not have a direct implication, the dimension of social integrity also appears in the research participants. The dimension of social integration describes the evaluation of the quality of an individual's relationship with society and community. Research participants have a positive review of their social community. The results of in-depth interviews found that this positive evaluation is more on the quality of their social interactions, namely feeling helped by others and wanting to help others. This study does not reveal the actualization dimension because the goal of individual social actualization is a form of gratitude and love from God. Meanwhile, in social well-being theory, the dimension of social completion is an evaluation of the community's potential. So, it can be concluded that on the central theme of social well-being, research participants have two main dimensions: feeling helped by others, which refers to social acceptance, and doing good to others, which refers to social contributions.

### **Environmental Well-Being**

Environmental well-being in environmental science studies has five heterogeneous indicators: atmospheric conditions, water quality, environmental management in the region, environmental impacts on population health, and

disaster dynamics in the area.<sup>36</sup> Several studies have begun to examine whether ecological welfare only affects physical indicators or is related to personal and psychological matters. The results show that environmental interest is not only related to the physical condition of the environment but is also related to mindfulness and meaning to the social environment.<sup>37</sup>

The meaning of the environment has positive implications for pro-environmental attitudes or behaviour to protect the environment.<sup>38</sup> Protecting the environment is the super-ordinate theme of environmental well-being in this study. However, the characteristics of the research participants are the desire to preserve the environment as a form of admiration for the majesty of God. This is different from the domain of environmental well-being in general. Environmental well-being in the Sufism concept does not only see the environment as a physical dimension, but rather it is the responsibility of all of us to realize that protecting the environment. The most important and urgent message of *tajallī* (God manifestation) is that the crisis in our current environment results from neglecting our spirituality.<sup>39</sup>

Based on the explanation of the three main themes above in general, it can provide an overview of the characteristics of the results of this study. Spiritual well-being in the context of positive psychology cannot be separated from the two main characters, namely,<sup>40</sup> who define spiritual well-being in two dimensions, namely the horizontal dimension (subjective well-being) and the

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<sup>36</sup> Elizabeth A. Arapova et al., 'Fuzzy-Logic Analysis of the Level of Comfort and Environmental Well-Being of the Urban Environment on the Example of Large Cities of Rostov Region', in *13th International Conference on Theory and Application of Fuzzy Systems and Soft Computing — ICAFS-2018*, ed. Rafik A. Aliev et al., vol. 896, Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019), 643–50, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-04164-9\\_84](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-04164-9_84).

<sup>37</sup> Shalini Bahl et al., 'Mindfulness: Its Transformative Potential for Consumer, Societal, and Environmental Well-Being', *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing* 35, no. 2 (1 September 2016): 198–210, <https://doi.org/10.1509/jppm.15.139>.

<sup>38</sup> Naoko Kaida and Kosuke Kaida, 'Pro-Environmental Behavior Correlates with Present and Future Subjective Well-Being', *Environment, Development and Sustainability* 18, no. 1 (8 February 2016): 111–27, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-015-9629-y>.

<sup>39</sup> Bambang Irawan, Ismail Fahmi Arrauf Nasution, and Hywel Coleman, 'Applying Ibn 'Arabi's Concept of Tajallī: A Sufi Approach to Environmental Ethics', *Teosofia: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Mysticism* 10, no. 1 (22 April 2021): 21–36, <https://doi.org/10.21580/tos.v10i1.7204>.

<sup>40</sup> Ellison, 'Spiritual Well-Being: Conceptualization and Measurement'.

vertical dimension (transcendent well-being). The second character is<sup>41</sup> who defines spiritual well-being in four dimensions, namely the dimensions of personal well-being, transcendent well-being, social well-being, and environmental well-being. These two figures explain that the domains of emotional and transcendent well-being are the main domains of Spiritual well-being. Still, these two domains are inseparable and not integrated. From the exploration of the meaning of spiritual well-being in the actor of *tirakat mlaku*, Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud, it was concluded that the transcendent and subjective well-being domains cannot be separated but instead become integrity that influences each other. So in this study, researchers used the part of life satisfaction to describe the integrity between transcendent well-being and subjective well-being.

This study's results align with the latest research by Clark & Hunter. They explain that the dimensions of spiritual well-being include quality of life.<sup>42</sup> The philosophy is that humans are creatures that cannot be separated between spiritual and physical. Hence, concern for health and the physical condition becomes a form of individual quality of life on the physical aspect. Aspects of social support reflect the potential for more meaningful interpersonal relationships. So, it becomes logical to include the domain of quality of life as a new theory that can explain the meaning of spiritual well-being.

## **Conclusion**

This study seeks to uncover the meaning of spiritual well-being in those who do *tirakat mlaku* practiced by Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud followers. This is a rare phenomenon. Phenomenological interpretive analysis was used in this study to consider that this analysis can search for the most profound meaning of a phenomenon with clear and detailed steps, as well as integration with references that increasingly support concluding the meaning of spiritual well-being. Based on the interpretation results, seven super-ordinate implications for the actors of *tirakat mlaku were found*, namely believing in *qada* and *qadar*, the meaning of joyous life, self-regulation, feeling sufficient in sustenance, feeling the goodness

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<sup>41</sup> John W. Fisher, 'Comparing Levels of Spiritual Well-Being in State, Catholic and Independent Schools in Victoria, Australia', *Journal of Beliefs & Values* 22, no. 1 (April 2001): 99–105, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1361760120039284>.

<sup>42</sup> Clayton C. Clark and Jennifer Hunter, 'Spirituality, Spiritual Well-Being, and Spiritual Coping in Advanced Heart Failure: Review of the Literature', *Journal of Holistic Nursing* 37, no. 1 (8 March 2019): 56–73, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0898010118761401>.

of others, doing good to others and protecting the environment as admiration for others. Three primary purposes are obtained from the seven super-ordinate meanings, which then become the meaning of spiritual well-being to answer the problem formulation, i.e., quality of life, social well-being, and environmental well-being.

This study can be the only detailed initial explanation of the meaning of spiritual well-being in the context of Islamic psychology in Indonesia. The results of this study have relevance in the fields of positive psychology, Islamic psychology, and Islamic studies related to spiritual well-being. In general, the results of this study can be used to describe the dimensions of the meaning of spiritual well-being so that individuals can understand the importance of spiritual well-being more clearly and efficiently and take valuable lessons from the perpetrators of the *tirakat mlaku*.

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I.H. wrote a draft article, collected data, and performed the analysis; I.F.H. reviewed the article. M.F. edited and data curation. All authors agreed with the published article.



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