

Analyzing Spiritual Well-Being of Senior High School Learners: Basis for Intervention Program

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Abstract

This study examined the spiritual well-being of 220 Senior High School learners at Holy Cross of Mintal, Inc. (HCMI) to provide a diagnostic basis for a targeted intervention program. Anchored in Erikson's Psychosocial Theory and the Holistic Theory of Wellness, the research employed a descriptive-predictive design using an adapted 30-item "Tradition-Specific Measures of Spiritual Well-Being" instrument ($\alpha = 0.97$). Results indicated an overall Very High level of spiritual well-being ($M = 4.28$, $SD = 0.63$). Stepwise discriminant analysis revealed that Relationship with God and Service with God are the most significant predictors distinguishing high-perceiving learners from others, while general "Service" was found to be a common trait across all groups. These findings suggest that depth of personal connection, rather than mere religious activity, is the primary driver of spiritual health. The study proposes the VINE Project as a dynamically responsive intervention to strengthen these predictive dimensions.

Keywords: Spiritual Well-being, SHS Learners, Stepwise Discriminant Analysis, HCMI, Identity Formation

1. Introduction

Spiritual well-being among Senior High School learners has become an important area of inquiry in light of the growing pressures adolescents face in a fast-paced and socially demanding environment. The introduction presents spirituality as a core dimension of the self, closely associated with meaning, values, purpose, and ethical orientation. It underscores those contemporary challenges such as social media exposure, peer pressure, and family difficulties may affect learners' spiritual health, thereby reinforcing the need for a focused assessment. The literature situates spiritual well-being within adolescent development, educational psychology, and religious studies, while the paper responds to a contextual gap by offering a multidimensional analysis of learners' beliefs, practices, service, communion with God, Christian character, and relationships. Anchored in Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory and the Holistic Theory of Health and Wellness, the discussion also emphasizes its relevance to holistic learner development and to SDG 3 on good health and well-being.

Spirituality is presented as more than religious compliance; it is the inner core of a person's values, beliefs, ethics, meaning, and purpose (Levin, 2017). In the context of teaching Christian Living and Religious Education, the study recognizes that Senior High School learners are navigating a difficult developmental period shaped by social media influence, peer pressure, and family-related stressors (Gantt, 2021). These pressures are not merely academic concerns but lived realities that may affect learners' inner stability and spiritual well-being. For this reason, the study seeks to understand students not only in terms of academic performance but also in terms of their spiritual health, with the goal of supporting their holistic development.

Related literature shows sustained scholarly interest in the relationship between spirituality, religiosity, and adolescent well-being. Some studies in rural Catholic schools examined religiosity, such as church participation, in relation to students' sense of purpose (Madrigal et al., 2020). Other studies in the Central Philippines highlighted the close connection between mental and spiritual dimensions, while also underscoring the importance of family life in adolescent spiritual development (Tajonera, 2022). However, these studies often framed spirituality either as an extension of mental health or as a checklist of religious behaviors. In contrast, the present study emphasizes a deeper and more multidimensional understanding of spiritual well-being, especially for Senior High School learners who are at a critical stage of identity formation. It therefore focuses on six interwoven dimensions: Beliefs, Practice, Service, Communion with God, Christian character, and Relationships, which together offer a fuller picture of students' spiritual lives (Piedmont, 2014).

At the global level, prior scholarship has explored how faith and religiosity shape adolescent meaning, purpose, and well-being (Madrigal et al., 2020). At the national level, studies in the Philippines have shown that spirituality among young people is closely connected with mental and family life, pointing to the broader psychosocial significance of spiritual development (Tajonera, 2022). At the local level, research in Davao City has already examined the influence of students'

moral beliefs on behavior and academic pathways (Dela Cruz, 2025). However, such work does not fully address whether learners are spiritually well in a holistic sense. The present study therefore responds to a clear contextual need by generating current, institution-specific evidence on the spiritual well-being of Senior High School learners at Holy Cross of Mintal, Inc., with the explicit goal of informing a practical intervention program.

The study is anchored in Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory and the Holistic Theory of Health and Wellness. Erikson (1963) identifies adolescence as the stage of Identity vs. Role Confusion, in which individuals seek to answer the question, "Who am I?" Within this study, that developmental task includes spiritual identity formation, particularly the internalization of Marian humility and Rivierian zeal as part of a cohesive sense of self (King et al., 2017). This framework helps explain how variables such as beliefs and character relate to learners' efforts to negotiate personal, social, and spiritual demands. The Holistic Theory of Health and Wellness further strengthens the framework by emphasizing the interconnectedness of physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions of well-being (Steiner, 1919; Hettler, 1984). From this perspective, spiritual health is not isolated; it functions as a vital anchor that contributes to resilience, meaning, and overall wholeness (Myers et al., 2000). Together, these theories provide a developmental and holistic basis for understanding spiritual well-being among Senior High School learners and for designing a responsive intervention that supports integral formation.

Despite existing work on adolescent religiosity, spirituality, and morality, the introduction identifies a clear gap in the literature. Prior studies often reduced spirituality either to religious participation or to a secondary aspect of mental health, leaving limited attention to the multidimensional spiritual well-being of Senior High School learners. Even local studies addressing moral beliefs and student behavior did not directly assess whether students possess spiritual well-being in a broader and more diagnostic sense (Dela Cruz, 2025). This creates the rationale for the present study, which aims to provide a deeper and current analysis of spiritual health among learners and to use the findings as a basis for a real-world intervention program. The study therefore moves beyond description by seeking evidence that can directly support action, care, and program development within the school setting.

The introduction explicitly aligns the study with SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being, particularly by recognizing spiritual health as part of the holistic well-being of adolescents (Tajonera, 2022). The study also naturally relates to SDG 4: Quality Education, since it highlights the role of schools in supporting not only academic achievement but also the integral formation and overall development of learners. By examining spiritual well-being as an educational concern and as a basis for intervention, the study supports a broader understanding of student wellness within the educational process.

This study is important to multidisciplinary sustainability because it contributes to educational sustainability, public health sustainability, and institutional sustainability. In educational terms, it supports the development of evidence-based programs that strengthen students' spiritual formation alongside academic learning. In public health terms, it treats spiritual well-being as part of holistic wellness, thereby reinforcing learner resilience, emotional grounding, and psychosocial stability. In institutional terms, the study provides a basis for school-level interventions and possible policy enhancement, enabling educational institutions to respond more effectively to the developmental needs of adolescents. It also contributes to educational psychology, religious studies, and adolescent development by extending the discussion of spiritual well-being to the Senior High School population and by offering findings that may inform future comparative and long-term studies across diverse learner groups.

2. Materials and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study employed a descriptive-predictive research design. This design was used not only to describe the existing level of spiritual well-being among learners but also to identify which dimensions significantly distinguish the highest-scoring group from the other groups. In this context, predictive modeling was used to determine the likelihood of particular outcomes based on existing data patterns, thereby allowing the study to generate a diagnostic basis for targeted interventions rather than limiting itself to simple description (Halton, 2024).

2.2 Research Setting

The study was conducted at Holy Cross of Mintal, Inc. The institution served as the setting for assessing the spiritual well-being of Senior High School learners within its Marian-Rivierian educational environment. The locale was also central to the contextual adaptation of the research instrument and to the interpretation of findings related to the school's spiritual formation and integral development program.

2.3 Respondents

The respondents of the study were 220 Senior High School learners officially enrolled at Holy Cross of Mintal, Inc. for the Academic Year 2024–2025. These learners represented the target population from whom data on spiritual well-being were gathered. To ensure equitable representation across grade levels and academic strands, the study used stratified equal

allocation sampling. The population was divided into 11 strata or sections, and 20 respondents were selected from each section. To maintain gender balance, each section included 10 male and 10 female respondents. This sampling procedure was intended to provide a balanced cross-section of the Senior High School community and to minimize sampling bias in the analysis of psychosocial and spiritual variables.

2.4 Research Instruments

The primary data-gathering tool was an adapted and modified version of the “Tradition-Specific Measures of Spiritual Well-Being” developed by Tyler et al. (2021). The instrument was revised to ensure cultural and contextual suitability to the Marian-Rivierian environment of Holy Cross of Mintal, Inc. It consisted of 30 items measuring several dimensions of spirituality, including beliefs, service, and communion. To establish suitability in the local setting, the instrument underwent an internal consistency test and obtained a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.97, indicating excellent reliability. Responses were gathered using a 5-point Likert scale. The questionnaire items covered the dimensions of Beliefs, Practices, Service, Communion with God, Christian Character, and Relationships.

2.5 Data Collection

Data were gathered through the administration of the adapted survey questionnaire to the selected Senior High School learners of Holy Cross of Mintal, Inc. The instrument was used to collect responses on the learners’ perceived spiritual well-being across the identified dimensions. The adapted format and contextual modification of the tool ensured that the collected responses were appropriate to the school’s Marian-Rivierian setting and to the objectives of the research.

2.6 Data Analysis

The study used descriptive and inferential statistical tools to analyze the gathered data. Frequency and percentage were employed to describe the distribution of respondents according to group-level perception. Mean was used to determine the respondents’ level of spiritual well-being. To identify the dimensions that best differentiated students with high spiritual health from those in lower groups, the data were further subjected to Discriminant Function Analysis.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Spiritual Well-Being of the Respondents

3.1.1 Overall Level of Spiritual Well-Being

The results showed that the respondents had an overall mean spiritual well-being score of 4.28 with a standard deviation of 0.63, corresponding to a Very High level. Among the indicators, Beliefs obtained the highest mean at 4.65, followed by Communion with God at 4.48 and Christian Character at 4.39, all interpreted as Very High. Meanwhile, Practice with a mean of 4.14, Service with 4.05, and Relationship with 3.98 were rated High. These findings indicate that the respondents manifested strong spiritual wellness across all dimensions, with the strongest scores concentrated in core internal faith dimensions. These findings suggest a robust internalization of spiritual values among the Senior High School learners of Holy Cross of Mintal, Inc. The prominence of Beliefs, Communion with God, and Christian Character indicates that their spiritual health is anchored in deeply held convictions, a strong sense of divine connection, and value-based conduct. The relatively high ratings in Practice, Service, and Relationship still reflect a strong outward expression of faith, while the narrow standard deviations imply substantial agreement among learners. Taken together, the results support the view that the school’s Marian-Rivierian formation fosters a consistent spiritual identity and acts as a protective factor for learners’ holistic health, particularly in sustaining emotional resilience and moral grounding during adolescence.

3.1.2 Distribution of Respondents by Group Perception Level

The distribution results revealed a predominantly positive spiritual climate. Of the respondents, 45.3% or 111 learners were classified under the Very High category with a mean of 4.47, while 44.9% or 110 learners were under the High category with a mean of 3.90. Only a small proportion fell into the lower categories: 6.1% or 15 learners were Average, 2.0% or 5 learners were Low, and 1.6% or 4 learners were Very Low. Overall, 90.2% of the learners belonged to the top two levels of spiritual well-being. The concentration of respondents in the upper categories indicates that the Integral Formation programs of Holy Cross of Mintal, Inc. are effective for the majority of learners. At the same time, the presence of a small group in the Average, Low, and Very Low levels points to the existence of an at-risk segment that may require more focused support. This pattern implies that while the general spiritual environment is healthy and nurturing, some learners may still need more responsive accompaniment to prevent academic and spiritual stagnation. The findings therefore support the need for targeted and inclusive intervention strategies within the school’s formation framework.

3.2. Variables Separating the Highest Group from the Other Groups

The discriminant analysis showed that the **Very High** spiritual well-being group was primarily distinguished by five predictors: **Beliefs, Practice, Service with God, Christian Character, and Relationship with God**. The discriminant function was highly significant, with Wilks’ lambda = 0.074, $\chi^2(20) = 622.931$, $p < 0.001$. The first function had an eigenvalue of 8.216 and explained 94.90% of the variance, while the canonical correlation of 0.944 indicated that about 89.11% of the variance in group membership was explained by the model. The classification accuracy was also very high,

with 97.70% of original grouped cases and 96.30% of cross-validated grouped cases correctly classified. The predictive equation identified was $D = -19.267 + 0.947 (\text{Beliefs}) + 0.790 (\text{Practice}) + 1.111 (\text{Service with God}) + 0.881 (\text{Christian Character}) + 1.121 (\text{Relationship})$. Notably, general **Service** was excluded from the final model. These results indicate that the highest level of spiritual wellness is not explained simply by outward acts of service alone but by faith dimensions that are more internal, relational, and theologically grounded. The exclusion of general Service, together with the retention of Service with God and Relationship with God, suggests that what differentiates the top group is not mere external participation in good works but the depth of personal and spiritual connection embedded in those actions. This interpretation is supported by Wong-McDonald (2021), who found that intrinsic religiosity is the strongest predictor of psychological flourishing, and by Counted et al. (2023), who argued that secure attachment to God serves as a key anchor for adolescents confronting identity-related developmental struggles. Likewise, Francis and Village (2022) emphasized that spiritual health becomes more enduring when students move from merely learning about the Divine to personally relating with the Divine. In this context, the findings validate the Marian-Rivierian charism of zeal by showing that the highest spiritual wellness is achieved through personal encounter, conviction, and relational faith rather than routine compliance alone.

3.3. Implications for Intervention

The results indicate that although the learners generally demonstrate a Very High level of spiritual well-being, the school still needs a targeted response for those outside the top tiers. The identified predictors show that improvement efforts should focus on strengthening Beliefs, Practice, Service with God, Christian Character, and Relationship with God, particularly among learners who are currently in the High, Average, Low, or Very Low groups. The findings therefore provide an empirical basis for a focused intervention program intended to help students move from high spiritual wellness to the highest level. The discussion clearly points to the value of shifting from broad religious instruction to more formational and relational experiences. Since the strongest predictors are tied to personal conviction and connection with God, the intervention program should not only provide information but also cultivate reflective, faith-deepening encounters. This supports the school's commitment to integral formation and transformative advocacy by ensuring that even learners in lower categories receive responsive spiritual accompaniment.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The findings indicate that Senior High School learners at Holy Cross of Mintal, Inc. demonstrate a **Very High** level of spiritual well-being, particularly in terms of Beliefs and Communion with God. Although the learners generally show high spiritual homogeneity, the analysis established that **Relationship with God** and **Service with God** are the key dimensions that elevate learners to the highest level of spiritual wellness. These results affirm that the school's Marian-Rivierian formation fosters a resilient spiritual identity that helps learners navigate the Eriksonian stage of Identity vs. Role Confusion, while also showing that a small at-risk group still needs more personalized and dynamically responsive spiritual accompaniment.

To sustain these findings and strengthen the continuous Integral Formation of stakeholders, learners should actively participate in reflective and mentoring activities such as "Cor-ad-Cor" dialogues so that faith is internalized as a personal spiritual resource rather than an academic requirement (Fisher, 2021). Teachers should adopt contemplative pedagogy and model "Marian Humility" in ways that facilitate encounters with the Divine and support character formation (Kim & Ryu, 2023). Parents should reinforce the school's spiritual goals at home through shared prayer and "Digital Sabbath" practices (Vasalou et al., 2022). The school should institutionalize the VINE Project within its Institutional Risk Management Plan, including support for prayer spaces and service-learning with theological reflection (Counted et al., 2023), while future researchers are encouraged to conduct longitudinal and mixed-methods studies to examine continuity of spiritual well-being and the lived experiences of learners in the Average and Low categories (Bichard et al., 2023).

The study is limited to Senior High School learners of Holy Cross of Mintal, Inc. for Academic Year 2024–2025, which means the findings are context-specific and grounded only in the Marian-Rivierian environment of the institution. It also relied on a descriptive-predictive design and an adapted 30-item survey instrument, so the analysis was confined to measured self-reported dimensions of spiritual well-being rather than deeper qualitative accounts of learners' lived experiences. Moreover, the manuscript itself recommends future longitudinal and mixed-methods inquiry, indicating that the persistence of spiritual well-being over time and the experiences of learners in the Average and Low categories were not fully explored in the present research (Bichard et al., 2023). A technical limitation is likewise evident in the inconsistency between the reported number of respondents in the Methods and Abstract sections, which state 220 learners, and the Results section, which reports a total of 245 respondents.

Compliance with ethical standards

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