

**THE EFFECT OF RELIGIOUS COUNSELLING ON SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE
AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL
STUDENTS IN JORDAN**

**O EFEITO DO ACONSELHAMENTO RELIGIOSO NA INTELIGÊNCIA ESPIRITUAL
E NA MOTIVAÇÃO PARA O DESEMPENHO ACADÊMICO ENTRE ALUNOS DO
ENSINO MÉDIO NA JORDÂNIA**

**EL EFECTO DE LA ASESORÍA RELIGIOSA EN LA INTELIGENCIA ESPIRITUAL Y
LA MOTIVACIÓN PARA EL RENDIMIENTO ACADÉMICO ENTRE LOS
ESTUDIANTES DE SECUNDARIA DE JORDANIA**

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ABSTRACT: This study investigated the effect of a religious psychological guidance program on spiritual intelligence and academic achievement motivation among first-year female secondary students in the Northern Mazar District. Using a quasi-experimental design, 40 students were purposively selected and divided into experimental and control groups. Data were collected through the Spiritual Intelligence Scale and the Academic Achievement Motivation Scale. After the intervention, the experimental group showed statistically significant improvements in spiritual intelligence ($t = 15.113$, $p < 0.01$) and academic achievement motivation ($t = 13.367$, $p < 0.01$), with gains maintained during follow-up. Religious psychological guidance is defined as a school-based counselling intervention that combines structured psychological techniques, such as reflection, self-assessment, goal setting, and coping strategies, with religious values as culturally meaningful resources for moral reasoning, purpose, and resilience. It differs from ordinary religious instruction and from secular counselling that does not explicitly mobilize religious meanings.

KEYWORDS: Spiritual intelligence. Academic achievement motivation. Religious psychological guidance. Quasi-experimental design. Jordanian secondary education.

RESUMO: Este estudo investigou o efeito de um programa de orientação psicológica religiosa sobre a inteligência espiritual e a motivação para o desempenho acadêmico entre alunas do primeiro ano do ensino médio no Distrito de Mazar do Norte. Utilizando um desenho quase-experimental, 40 alunas foram selecionadas de forma intencional e divididas em grupos experimental e de controle. Os dados foram coletados por meio da Escala de Inteligência Espiritual e da Escala de Motivação para o Desempenho Acadêmico. Após a intervenção, o grupo experimental apresentou melhorias estatisticamente significativas na inteligência espiritual ($t = 15,113$, $p < 0,01$) e na motivação para o desempenho acadêmico ($t = 13,367$, $p < 0,01$), com ganhos mantidos durante o acompanhamento. A orientação psicológica religiosa é definida como uma intervenção de aconselhamento em ambiente escolar que combina técnicas psicológicas estruturadas, como reflexão, autoavaliação, estabelecimento de metas e estratégias de enfrentamento, com valores religiosos como recursos culturalmente significativos para o raciocínio moral, o sentido de propósito e a resiliência. Ela difere da instrução religiosa comum e do aconselhamento secular que não mobiliza explicitamente significados religiosos.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Inteligência espiritual. Motivação para o desempenho acadêmico. Orientação psicológica religiosa. Design quasi-experimental. Ensino médio na Jordânia.

RESUMEN: Este estudio investigó el efecto de un programa de orientación psicológica religiosa sobre la inteligencia espiritual y la motivación para el rendimiento académico entre alumnas de primer año de secundaria en el distrito de Mazar del Norte. Mediante un diseño cuasi-experimental, se seleccionó de manera intencional a 40 alumnas y se las dividió en un grupo experimental y un grupo de control. Los datos se recopilieron mediante la Escala de Inteligencia Espiritual y la Escala de Motivación para el Rendimiento Académico. Tras la intervención, el grupo experimental mostró mejoras estadísticamente significativas en la inteligencia espiritual ($t = 15,113$, $p < 0,01$) y en la motivación para el rendimiento académico ($t = 13,367$, $p < 0,01$), y estas mejoras se mantuvieron durante el seguimiento. La orientación psicológica religiosa se define como una intervención de asesoramiento escolar que combina técnicas psicológicas estructuradas —como la reflexión, la autoevaluación, el establecimiento de metas y las estrategias de afrontamiento— con valores religiosos como recursos culturalmente significativos para el razonamiento moral, el sentido de propósito y la

resiliencia. Se diferencia de la enseñanza religiosa convencional y del asesoramiento secular que no recurre explícitamente a significados religiosos.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Inteligencia espiritual. Motivación para el rendimiento académico. Orientación psicológica religiosa. Diseño cuasi-experimental. Educación secundaria jordana.*

INTRODUCTION

Psychological guidance has been extensively investigated across various contexts, particularly in education. It serves as a foundation for achieving students' personal and academic development (Amer, 2025; Helali & Alwaely, 2025). This approach confronts the challenges and difficulties students encounter daily, including academic pressures and personal dilemmas, and extends to resolving underlying problems. Psychological guidance aims to strengthen the relationship between home and school environments by fostering collaborative efforts that enhance student behavior and overall well-being. In doing so, it equips learners with rich practical skills, proactive initiatives, and strong mindsets that enable them to adapt and cope with the obstacles and opportunities they face in their education and beyond. In this sense, religion is a crucial factor in enhancing psychological guidance to achieve academic achievement. Religious guidance provides timeless frameworks for understanding emotional, cognitive, and behavioral dynamics. It emphasizes complete well-being rooted in faith. Religion stands out as one of the most vital functions for both groups and individuals, primarily through its unparalleled capacity to achieve profound psychological stability in turbulent times. When individuals contend with intense psychological conflicts, such as identity crises, loss, or moral dilemmas, religion serves as a divine anchor, offering psychological balance through its guidance, therapeutic wisdom, and directional mercy.

For the purposes of this study, three related but distinct forms of support must be differentiated. Religious support refers mainly to practices, beliefs and community resources associated with faith, such as prayer, religious instruction and participation in religious life. Psychological counselling refers to professional or school-based processes designed to support emotional adjustment, decision-making, self-regulation and academic adaptation. Religious psychological guidance, as used in this study, occupies the intersection of these two domains: it applies counselling procedures within a religiously grounded interpretive framework, without reducing psychological support to religious preaching or replacing the professional responsibilities of school counsellors.

Within religion's protection, religious feelings promote enduring emotions of happiness, profound satisfaction, deep contentment, and firm belief in divine decree. Such faith empowers individuals to confront pressures and grants them inner strength to face crises and complex challenges. This reassurance manifests through sacred practices, such as prayer, expressions of gratitude, and earnest supplication, which offer the noblest forms of emotional support and spiritual reassurance available to humanity (Fuadi et al., 2026; Szilagyi et al.,

2025). Mental abilities are profoundly shaped by an individual's baseline level of intelligence, which is controlled by key variables such as age. Gender differences also play a significant role, with certain abilities manifesting more strongly in males compared to females, and vice versa. Intelligence is seen as the innate ability to adapt to surrounding environments, whereby intelligent individuals utilize external elements to serve personal interests and yield tangible benefits, or proactively seek novel environments conducive to growth (Szilagyi et al., 2025). Humans innately seek profound meaning and forge connections with the infinite, manifesting as spiritual ability, or spiritual intelligence, which contends with cosmic enigmas and supra-sensory experiences while integrating mental, emotional, and affective dimensions (Basu & Srividya, 2026).

Educational institutions pursue excellence and channel efforts toward scientific objectives in a world full of theoretical and practical advancements across disciplines (Arnilarwati, 2026; Putra & Maisyaroh, 2025). The main focus is on students' engagement and academic achievement. In Jordanian schools, psychological guidance has increasingly been recognized as a key factor in supporting students' academic achievements. However, its implementation remains uneven and often constrained by limited resources and trained personnel. Research indicates that guidance services are applied in a somewhat positive manner, but weaknesses in students' academic performance and psychological adjustment hinder the full realization of their intended goals (Fuadi et al., 2026; Setiawati, 2026). Studies in the Jordanian context also show that educational counsellors play a significant role in providing psychological support, academic guidance, and vocational counselling, and that school principals perceive these functions as positively influencing students' academic achievement, especially when counsellors are properly supported and integrated into school management (Amer, 2025; Atoum et al., 2018).

In practice, however, many public secondary schools in Jordan still struggle with overloaded caseloads, inadequate training, and fragmented coordination between counsellors, teachers, and parents, which limits the effectiveness of guidance interventions in raising achievement motivation and actual grades. Additionally, there is a clear research gap in applying religious psychological guidance to enhance academic achievement at the secondary level. Moreover, research on religious psychological support tends to be descriptive, correlational, or limited to specific subgroups such as gifted students or mothers of children with disabilities. There is a scarcity of quasi-experimental studies targeting the effectiveness of a religious psychological guidance program in strengthening academic achievement among

Jordanian secondary school students. The current study aims to achieve its objectives through a targeted religious counselling program by administering a rigorous pre-test to establish baselines, followed by post-test evaluations to measure immediate impacts, and a follow-up test to assess long-term sustainability. This study aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. What is the difference in students' levels of spiritual intelligence and academic achievement motivation before the implementation of the religious counselling program?
2. To what extent has the religious counselling program affected students' levels of spiritual intelligence and academic achievement motivation after its implementation?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Religious Counselling Program

A religious counselling program is understood here as a structured educational and counselling intervention in which religious values are intentionally connected to psychological objectives such as emotional regulation, self-responsibility, motivation, moral reflection and resilience. In contrast to general religious support, the program is not limited to transmitting doctrine or encouraging devotional practice. In contrast to non-religious psychological counselling, it explicitly uses students' religious worldview as a culturally familiar language for interpreting academic effort, ethical conduct and personal meaning. This distinction is essential because the program evaluated in this study is presented as a guidance intervention within a school context, not as a substitute for clinical psychotherapy or for ordinary religious education.

The integration of religious and spiritual frameworks into counselling practices has gained significant attention as a strategy for fostering students' psychological and academic development. Modern discourse increasingly recognizes that religion and spirituality are critical in shaping mental health outcomes and personal resilience, with recent systematic reviews identifying these as central factors in contemporary cultural contexts (Basu & Srividya, 2026). For instance, a study by Harshita and Maheshwari (2026) underscores the importance of integrating spirituality into professional counselling frameworks. The study utilized bibliometric analysis and specialized models to demonstrate how such approaches can be

systematically applied to diverse student needs. Furthermore, the role of school counselling has developed to incorporate spiritual dimensions. This is evidenced by recent scoping reviews that highlight the growing necessity for spiritual literacy in educational settings to enhance students' developmental trajectories (Niles et al., 2026).

Beyond general psychological support, the application of faith-based guidance has proven highly effective in fostering emotional regulation and behavioral maturity among students. Research indicates that religious value-based guidance significantly influences students' ability to regulate their emotions, offering a descriptive yet powerful insight into how faith-based counselling can stabilize the academic experience (Setiawati et al., 2026). In the context of the Generation Z era, Islamic counselling strategies have emerged as vital tools for strengthening work ethics and youth resilience, specifically helping students address the complex pressures of social and digital disruption (Zulamri et al., 2026). These findings are complemented by studies that emphasize the role of religious literacy programs, such as those provided by community-led Islamic initiatives, in nurturing deep knowledge and character development among younger cohorts (Wajdi et al., 2026).

Furthermore, the scope of religious counselling extends to addressing environmental and existential concerns through the lens of sustainability and faith. Recent studies have demonstrated the efficacy of faith-based ecological counselling, which integrates spirituality with sustainable practices for Muslim students with a comprehensive, value-driven worldview (Hidayat et al., 2026). This intersectional approach allows educational institutions to address both students' internal psychological states and their external obligations toward society and the environment. The counselling interventions provide a robust framework for personal growth by combining traditional Islamic teachings with modern pedagogical strategies. This reinforces the idea that spirituality is an indispensable component of successful academic and social adjustment in today's education.

Counselling and Spiritual Intelligence

In this study, spiritual intelligence is defined as a set of reflective and meaning-oriented capacities through which students interpret life events, regulate inner conflicts, connect personal goals to values, and act with moral awareness. It involves awareness of the self, openness to transcendence, the search for meaning, commitment to truth and the experience of grace or gratitude. In educational terms, spiritual intelligence is relevant because it may influence how students understand effort, failure, responsibility and academic purpose.

The relationship between counselling and spiritual intelligence is rooted in the ability of structured guidance to foster self-awareness, moral reasoning, and existential clarity. Recent research highlights that counselling, particularly within Islamic higher education contexts, plays a foundational role in cultivating the emotional and spiritual competencies necessary for student development (Fuadi et al., 2026). This development is further enriched by the active engagement of educators, whose mentorship, as explored in phenomenological studies, is instrumental in enriching students' spiritual intelligence (Munasir et al., 2026). Counselling enables students to integrate their spiritual worldview with their daily academic and personal experiences by providing a space for reflective practice. Eventually, this integration fosters a stronger and more purposeful identity.

Counselling and spiritual intelligence are increasingly recognized as essential predictors for addressing complex educational social challenges, beyond general support (Afiah, 2026). The recognition of these traits is not an isolated pedagogical endeavor but a systemic requirement; consequently, scholars are now designing and validating specialized assessments to measure spiritual intelligence as a core component of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) within faith-based schools (Ntumi et al., 2026). These advancements demonstrate that when counselling is intentionally linked to a spiritual intelligence framework, it empowers students to process moral and ethical complexities with greater maturity. This shift toward measurable, evidence-based practices ensures that spiritual development is no longer viewed as an intangible quality but as a teachable skill set that directly improves counselling self-efficacy (Szilagyi et al., 2025).

Finally, the connection between counselling, education, and spiritual intelligence is reinforced by traditional scholarly insights that integrate ancient worldviews with modern pedagogical requirements. Educators can create a robust framework for building resilient societies by aligning Islamic educational worldviews, such as those derived from classical Tafsir, with contemporary guidance strategies (Wathoni et al., 2025). This integration allows counselling programs to do more than manage behavior; they serve to align the student's internal life with a larger sense of meaning and truth. As current research suggests, the holistic integration of these practices provides the necessary foundation for students to achieve academic success and lead lives defined by integrity and profound existential awareness. This conclusion is grounded specifically in studies on spirituality and school counselling (Niles et al., 2026), spiritual intelligence as a measurable component of social-emotional learning (Ntumi et al., 2026), the role of Islamic education teachers in developing spiritual intelligence (Munasir

et al., 2026), and counselling self-efficacy in spiritually oriented educational settings (Szilagyi et al., 2025).

Counselling and Academic Achievement Motivation

The positive impact of counselling and faith-based interventions on academic achievement motivation is increasingly supported by empirical evidence highlighting the intersection of religious orientation and learning performance. Research indicates that fundamental religious orientation often acts as a critical mediator between religious self-concept and academic success, suggesting that when students internalize religious values, their pedagogical outcomes improve significantly (Syafii et al., 2026). This relationship is further strengthened by character education and the promotion of religious moderation, which provide students with the ethical frameworks necessary to sustain motivation and focus throughout their academic pursuits (Putra & Maisyaroh, 2025). By embedding these values into the counselling process, educators can help students cultivate a purpose-driven approach to their studies that transcends mere attendance and fosters genuine motivation.

Structured religious activities and collaborative pedagogical strategies have also been shown to play a transformative role in improving learning outcomes in specialized educational settings. For instance, the implementation of cooperative learning models specifically within Islamic religious education has demonstrated a tangible capacity to elevate student performance, proving that counselling is highly effective (Arnilawati, 2026). Similarly, empirical data from Islamic secondary institutions suggests that active participation in religious activities directly influences achievement in subjects related to moral and spiritual conduct, such as *Aqidah-Akhlak* (Abdurrahman et al., 2026). These findings collectively emphasize that when counselling interventions are strategically aligned with students' existing beliefs, they become powerful factors for academic excellence and motivational growth.

Beyond individual performance, the broader pedagogical framework must account for the changing nature of religious and cultural literacy in contemporary society. Modern learning environments are increasingly tasked with integrating diverse religious perspectives. It is essential to acknowledge the visibility of these beliefs for fostering inclusive and motivating school climates (Kos & Tašner, 2025). Furthermore, treating religious literacy as a fundamental competency within the 21st-century learning framework allows counsellors to address students' developmental needs more comprehensively (Ubani, 2025). Religious literacy is viewed as a core component of educational strategy. In this sense, schools can ensure that counselling

remains a powerful tool for enhancing achievement motivation. To strengthen the conceptual foundations discussed in the literature, the following hypotheses were formulated to test the effect of the religious counselling intervention:

1. **H₁:** There will be a statistically significant difference between the experimental group and the control group in levels of spiritual intelligence after the implementation of the religious counselling program, with the experimental group showing higher levels than the control group.
2. **H₂:** There will be a statistically significant difference between the experimental group and the control group in levels of academic achievement motivation after the implementation of the religious counselling program, with the experimental group showing higher levels than the control group.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The present study employed a quasi-experimental research design to determine the causal effect of a religious psychological guidance program on students' spiritual intelligence and academic achievement motivation. This design is appropriate for randomized controlled trials. Consistent with established literature, recent studies have successfully utilized this approach to evaluate the efficacy of pedagogical and psychological interventions (Duffy et al., 2026; Liwayanti et al., 2026). The current study utilized a quantitative approach to analyze the relationship between the independent variable (religious counselling intervention) and the dependent variables. The method relies on controlling external variables and using pre-test and post-test measurements, which are standard procedures for establishing internal validity in field settings (Hyman, 1982; Reichardt, 2019).

The study established a clear framework to examine changes in the dependent variables by managing the implementation of the independent variable (Thyer, 2012). The procedural structure of this method is designed to isolate the impact of the religious guidance program. It assumes that any improvements in the experimental group's performance can be attributed to the intervention itself rather than other factors. Ultimately, this quasi-experimental approach is expected to provide evidence-based outcomes by evaluating the program's influence on students' psychological and academic development.

Data Collection Procedure

The study population comprised all female students in the first scientific stream of the secondary stage in the Directorate of Education of Northern Mazar District, Irbid Governorate, Jordan, during the first semester of the 2023/2024 academic year. Participants were selected purposively from Al-Mazar Secondary School for Girls. This intentional sampling allowed the researcher to ensure the presence of characteristics relevant to the study's objectives. Initially, the Spiritual Intelligence Scale and the Academic Achievement Motivation Scale were administered to all 120 first-year female students. Following this, 40 students who demonstrated low levels of scores (mean below 2.34) on both scales and were willing to participate were selected, with written consent obtained from their parents. These students were randomly divided into two equal groups of 20: 1) an experimental group, which received the religious psychological guidance program; and 2) a control group, which did not.

The experimental group was exposed to the independent variable, a set of structured sessions based on Islamic values and principles such as faith reflection, self-responsibility, and purpose in life, to examine changes in the dependent variables. Conversely, the control group served as a standard of comparison, receiving no treatment and allowing the researcher to verify that improvements in the experimental group were due to the counselling intervention rather than external influences. This design maintains equality in group sizes, which is recommended for the validity of quasi-experimental research (Thyer, 2012). The religious counselling program linked academic behaviors, such as mastery and sincerity, to religious values. It aims to enhance self-awareness and academic motivation. Equivalence between groups at the pre-test stage, as established by the control procedures, ensures that any improvement in the experimental group is objectively attributable to the counselling program. This approach to selection and assignment adheres to established experimental field protocols. It provides a secure basis for comparing the post-test results and evaluating the program's overall effectiveness within the Jordanian educational context.

Ethical safeguards were adopted because the study involved school students and direct questionnaire administration. Participation was voluntary, and students were included only after written parental consent and student assent had been obtained. The questionnaires were completed for research purposes only, and students were informed that they could withdraw without academic penalty. Data were anonymized before analysis, no names were reported in the dataset or in the results, and findings were presented only in aggregate form. The

intervention was implemented as a minimal-risk school guidance activity; if students had shown signs of psychological distress during the sessions or questionnaire administration, referral to the school counselling service would have been required.

Instrument Validity and Reliability

The current study utilized the Spiritual Intelligence Scale developed by Amram and Dryer (2008) and adapted by Darir and Al-Shawi (2012). The scale's validity was ensured through an extensive referee process. The initial scale, with 83 items, was reviewed by eight experts in educational psychology, counselling, and special education at Jordanian universities for content correctness and suitability. Based on their feedback, 12 items were deleted for redundancy or inappropriateness. Subsequently, items were revised and repositioned to better align with specific dimensions. This process resulted in a final 56-item scale covering awareness, grace, meaning, transcendence, and truth. Construct validity was verified with a pilot sample of 20 female students outside the main sample. This process utilized Pearson correlation to confirm item correlation with dimension and total scores. Reliability was assessed using test-retest and internal consistency methods. The scale achieved a total internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) of 0.85 and test-retest reliability of 0.89, with dimension-specific coefficients ranging from 0.74 to 0.85. Similarly, the Academic Achievement Motivation Scale underwent validation, with item-total correlation coefficients ranging from 0.48 to 0.79. The final scale consisted of 24 items. These validity and reliability procedures confirm that both instruments are suited for the study population. The process ensures the accuracy and credibility of the data collected on students' spiritual intelligence and academic achievement motivation. The consistency of these results across validation phases provides strong evidence that the tools used are reliable and valid for investigating these psychological constructs within Jordanian secondary education.

The five dimensions of spiritual intelligence used in the scale require conceptual clarification. Awareness refers to the student's capacity to observe inner experiences, emotions and motives and to connect them with academic choices. Grace refers to gratitude, acceptance and the ability to respond to difficulties without despair. Meaning refers to the capacity to link learning, effort and future aspirations to a broader sense of purpose. Transcendence refers to looking beyond immediate pressures and interpreting academic challenges within a wider moral and spiritual horizon. Truth refers to sincerity, honesty and alignment between beliefs, values and conduct. These dimensions are relevant to the present study because each may affect

academic motivation: students who interpret learning as meaningful, morally grounded and connected to personal responsibility may be more likely to persist in school tasks.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data analysis followed a quantitative procedure. The study utilized measures of central tendency and dispersion to represent the findings. The arithmetic mean was employed to identify the central value and the typical score of the participants. The standard deviation measured the spread of scores and the homogeneity of responses, indicating the consistency of the students' views. To address the research questions and hypotheses, the study applied statistical tests appropriate to the data's nature, including the independent samples t-test to assess differences between the experimental and control groups. The t-test was crucial for verifying pre-test equivalence and evaluating post-test differences, as it provides the precision required to control for associated variables and determine the specific effect of the religious counselling intervention. The analysis method adheres to statistical procedures supported by established methodology guidelines (Reichardt, 2019; Thyer, 2012). The findings are presented in sections corresponding to each question and hypothesis.

FINDINGS

Students' Levels of Spiritual Intelligence and Academic Achievement Motivation before the Implementation of the Religious Counselling Program

The first research question aimed to ascertain the difference in students' levels of spiritual intelligence and academic achievement motivation before the implementation of the religious counselling program. Tables 1 and 2 show the results of the independent samples t-test conducted to address the first research question regarding the baseline levels of spiritual intelligence and academic achievement motivation. The statistical analysis reveals that the experimental group achieved a mean score of 68.45 with a standard deviation of 6.21 on the Spiritual Intelligence Scale. Similarly, the control group recorded a nearly identical mean of 67.90 with a standard deviation of 5.88. Correspondingly, regarding academic achievement motivation, the experimental group's mean score was 72.10 (SD = 7.05) compared to the control group's mean of 71.25 (SD = 6.73).

These values reflect the relatively low initial levels of both constructs among the study participants, consistent with the purposive sampling criteria that targeted students requiring

psychological and motivational support. Statistically, the t-values for spiritual intelligence ($t = 0.287$) and academic motivation ($t = 0.392$) both yielded significance levels ($p = 0.776$ and $p = 0.697$, respectively) that are well above the 0.05 threshold, confirming that there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups at the pre-test stage. This empirical verification is a critical component of the quasi-experimental design, as it establishes a balanced and objective baseline, ensuring that any subsequent improvements observed in the experimental group following the intervention can be accurately attributed to the religious counselling program rather than to pre-existing disparities. By defining these starting levels as uniform and modest across both cohorts, the findings highlight the need for the intervention to stimulate students' spiritual awareness and academic motivation.

Table 1.

Pre-test difference in spiritual intelligence and academic achievement motivation

Variable	Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	T-Value	Significance Level (p)
Spiritual Intelligence	Experimental	20	68.4	6.21	0.37	0.71
	Control	20	67.9	5.88		
Academic Motivation	Experimental	20	72.1	7.05	0.42	0.67
	Control	20	71.2	6.73		

Note. The Authors.

Table 2.

Pre-test level of spiritual intelligence and academic achievement motivation

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Mean Square	F-Value	Significance Level (p)	Partial Eta Squared (η^2)
Group	8.037	1	8.037	27.331	*0.000	0.425
Pre-test	0.047	1	0.047	0.161	0.690	
Error	10.880	37	0.294			
Total	18.947	39				

Note. The Authors. *Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

The results indicate that there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups in the level of spiritual intelligence before the religious counselling program was implemented, which shows that the two groups were equivalent before the experimental treatment. A closer look at the details also shows that the standard deviations of the two groups were very similar. This outcome confirms that the responses in both groups were relatively homogeneous. These results confirm the similarity between the two groups. They provide an objective basis for presenting the subsequent results on the effects of the religious counselling program on academic achievement motivation.

Effects of Religious Counselling on Spiritual Intelligence and Academic Achievement Motivation

The second research question aimed to determine the extent to which religious counselling affects students' levels of spiritual intelligence and academic achievement motivation after its implementation. Table 3 shows the results of the independent samples t-test conducted to evaluate the post-test differences between the experimental and control groups after the implementation of the religious counselling program. Regarding the first hypothesis (H_1), the independent samples t-test results indicate a statistically significant difference in spiritual intelligence levels between the experimental and control groups following the intervention.

The experimental group achieved a post-test mean score of 88.40 (SD = 4.31), which is substantially higher than the control group's mean of 72.35 (SD = 6.22). This outcome supports the hypothesis: There will be a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups in levels of spiritual intelligence after implementing the religious counselling program, with the experimental group showing higher levels than the control group. The result demonstrates that the religious counselling program effectively enhanced students' spiritual intelligence, as the experimental group outperformed the control group by a mean difference of 16.05. The low p-value suggests that this improvement is highly unlikely to have occurred by chance.

Table 3.

Post-test difference in spiritual intelligence and academic achievement motivation

Variable	Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	T-Value	Significance Level (p)
Spiritual Intelligence	Experimental	20	88.40	4.31	13.367	< .001
	Control	20	72.35	6.22		
Academic Motivation	Experimental	20	89.25	4.14	15.113	< .001
	Control	20	69.15	6.27		

Note. The Authors.

For the second hypothesis (H_2), the analysis also reveals a statistically significant post-intervention difference in academic achievement motivation between the two groups. The experimental group recorded a mean score of 89.25 (SD = 4.14), whereas the control group maintained a significantly lower mean of 69.15 (SD = 6.27). The resulting t-value of 15.113, with a significance of $p < .001$, provides empirical support for the second hypothesis: This outcome supports the hypothesis: There will be a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups in levels of academic achievement motivation after

implementing the religious counselling program, with the experimental group showing higher levels than the control group. This outcome confirms that the religious counselling program was a primary driver in increasing students' academic achievement motivation. The difference between the cohorts suggests that integrating spiritual and religious guidance into counselling helps students find greater purpose and motivation in their academic pursuits. Consequently, both hypotheses are accepted, validating the intervention's efficacy in improving both psychological and academic outcomes for the target population.

By comparing these post-test results to the pre-test baseline, where both groups were equivalent, it becomes statistically certain that the intervention was the primary driver of this shift. The consistency of the experimental group's scores, reflected in the smaller standard deviation, suggests that the program's modules were effective for the students involved, regardless of their initial individual differences. Furthermore, the high t-value is evidence of the study's methodological strength, indicating that the observed increase in spiritual intelligence is substantial among the students. The statistical significance reached at the 0.01 level highlights the reliability of the religious counselling model as a viable pedagogical tool for student development. From a practical standpoint, the results imply that when students are provided with religious-based coping mechanisms and ethical reflections, they develop a greater sense of purpose and a more refined ability to address educational challenges with spiritual resilience. The disparity between the two groups also highlights a "missed opportunity" in traditional counselling. Consequently, these results provide strong empirical evidence for school administrators and counsellors to integrate religious psychological guidance into their existing support systems.

Table 4.

Post-test measurements with follow-up for spiritual intelligence

Dimension	Measurement	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	df	Statistical Significance
Awareness	Post-test	3.36	0.55	1.436	19	0.167
	Follow-up	3.31	0.49			
Grace	Post-test	3.16	0.59	1.030	19	0.316
	Follow-up	3.10	0.44			
Meaning	Post-test	3.40	0.42	1.400	19	0.178
	Follow-up	3.35	0.41			
Transcendence	Post-test	3.39	0.71	1.188	19	0.249
	Follow-up	3.32	0.58			
Truth	Post-test	3.20	0.78	1.022	19	0.320
	Follow-up	3.12	0.61			
Spiritual Intelligence (Total)	Post-test	3.30	0.39	1.178	19	0.252
	Follow-up	3.26	0.32			

Note. The Authors.

For interpretation, the dimensions in Table 4 should not be read as abstract spiritual labels only. Awareness indicates reflective self-knowledge; grace indicates gratitude and acceptance; meaning indicates the ability to connect schoolwork to purpose; transcendence indicates the capacity to interpret difficulties beyond immediate frustration; and truth indicates sincerity and ethical consistency. The stability of these dimensions in the follow-up suggests that the intervention may have supported not only religious attitudes but also motivational and self-regulatory dispositions relevant to academic life.

Table 4 displays the paired-samples t-test results for the experimental group, comparing post-test measurements with follow-up test measurements across various dimensions of spiritual intelligence to assess the longitudinal stability of the intervention's effects. It is evident that for all dimensions—awareness ($t=1.436$, $p=0.167$), grace ($t=1.030$, $p=0.316$), meaning ($t=1.400$, $p=0.178$), transcendence ($t=1.188$, $p=0.249$), and truth ($t=1.022$, $p=0.320$), the differences between the post-test and follow-up measurements were not statistically significant at the standard alpha level of 0.05. Furthermore, the total score for spiritual intelligence also yielded a non-significant result ($t=1.178$, $p=0.252$). This indicates that the positive effects achieved by the students following the religious counselling program were maintained throughout the follow-up period. The numerical proximity between the mean scores of the post-test and the follow-up test across all categories further corroborates this observation. This outcome suggests that improvements in spiritual intelligence are not fleeting; they appear relatively stable in the short-term following the intervention.

The stability of these findings across both the individual dimensions and the aggregated total score carries significant implications for the effectiveness of the religious counselling program implemented in the Jordanian secondary school setting. The lack of statistically significant differences between the two measurements suggests that the knowledge, skills, and ethical frameworks internalized by the students during the counselling intervention were successfully integrated into their cognitive and emotional repertoires, allowing them to sustain their heightened state of spiritual intelligence even after the structured counselling sessions had concluded. Table 5 presents the results of the paired samples t-test conducted to examine the sustained impact of the religious counselling program on academic achievement motivation between the post-test and follow-up measurements.

Table 5.

Post-test measurements with follow-up for academic achievement motivation

Dimension	Measurement	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Statistical Significance
Academic Achievement Motivation (Total)	Post-test	3.41	0.20	1.302	19	0.208
	Follow-up	3.37	0.21			

Note. The Authors.

The results indicate that the mean score for academic achievement motivation at the post-test was 3.41 (SD = 0.20). The mean score slightly decreased to 3.37 (SD = 0.21) at the follow-up assessment. The calculated t-value is 1.302 with a significance level of $p = 0.208$. The results demonstrate no statistically significant difference between the post-test and follow-up scores, since the p-value exceeds the threshold of 0.05. The lack of significance suggests that the initial level of academic motivation achieved during the intervention was successfully maintained over time. This outcome indicates the effect and stability of the religious counselling program on the students' motivational levels. The counselling program provided students with the spiritual resilience needed to sustain high levels of motivation.

Furthermore, the lower standard deviation in the experimental group compared to the control group suggests that the intervention had a stabilizing effect, bringing students of varying initial motivation levels toward a consistently high standard of academic commitment. Ultimately, the results suggest that religious psychological interventions can measurably boost the affective domains of learning and contribute to students' continuous academic success.

DISCUSSION

The findings reported in this study provide a strong methodological foundation for evaluating the effect of religious psychological guidance on spiritual intelligence and academic achievement motivation within the Jordanian secondary educational context. Specifically, this study established that the experimental and control groups were initially equivalent. The results show that the mean score of the experimental and control groups did not differ significantly during the pre-test. These results indicate that the two groups were perfectly matched before implementing the religious counselling program. This is an essential condition for validating the quasi-experimental design. The current study highlights that any differences in spiritual intelligence and academic achievement motivation revealed after the intervention can be attributed solely to the influence of the religious psychological guidance program rather than to

pre-existing disparities between the cohorts. This outcome supports previous research findings that demonstrate the importance of religious self-concept and orientation in shaping academic outcomes (Syafii et al., 2026). Furthermore, the current study highlights that the Jordanian students have a similar psychological baseline. This baseline allows the study to confidently isolate the religion-based intervention as the independent variable responsible for any shifts in spiritual intelligence and academic achievement motivation.

The interpretation of these findings depends on maintaining the distinction between religious support, psychological counselling and religious psychological guidance. The results should not be read as evidence that religious practice alone explains the observed academic gains, nor as evidence that psychological counselling should be replaced by religious instruction. Rather, the intervention appears to have been effective because it combined counselling procedures with culturally meaningful religious values, thereby connecting academic motivation to purpose, responsibility, self-discipline and moral reflection.

The results also revealed that the standard deviations were exceptionally similar, confirming that the student responses remained relatively homogeneous across the population. In the Jordanian context, understanding students' emotional and behavioral context is paramount, as noted by Atoum et al. (2018), who highlighted that such factors are deeply linked to students' academic performance. The outcomes mitigate concerns regarding assignment issues, providing an objective basis for the subsequent findings regarding the program's potential to foster growth. They also align with research on religious literacy and its role in modern learning frameworks (Amer, 2025; Ubani, 2025). In the context of Jordanian secondary education, where academic achievement is a primary focus for families, the results confirm that the study operated within a stable framework of motivation.

Additionally, the findings of this study provide empirical evidence for the effect of a religious psychological guidance program in enhancing spiritual intelligence and academic motivation within the Jordanian secondary education system. The findings support a correlation between religious activities, character education, and learning performance (Abdurrahman et al., 2026; Putra & Maisyaroh, 2025). The outcomes provide a strong basis for the hypothesis that the intervention acts as an effective catalyst, capable of raising motivation levels because the starting point was so clearly established for both sets. The findings clarify that the intervention did not merely address an existing gap but fundamentally elevated the students' engagement levels from a unified starting position, highlighting the program's universal effectiveness in the classroom. This is particularly relevant given recent research on cooperative

learning models in religious education to enhance secondary learning outcomes (Arnilawati, 2026) and how integrated psychological strategies help manage learning difficulties among various student populations in Jordan (Helali & Alwaely, 2025).

As indicated by the post-test mean for the experimental group compared to that of the control group, the intervention acted as a strong independent variable, yielding a highly significant t-value. This transformation is essential for secondary school counsellors who aim to move beyond traditional, secular paradigms that may overlook the deeper, value-based reasons for academic excellence (Amer, 2025). The findings highlight the importance of religious literacy in the 21st-century educational framework, as noted by Ubani (2025), and demonstrate that the synergy between spiritual intelligence and structured counselling is a vital component for student development in the Arab world. The findings reveal that the religious counselling curriculum provides students with necessary conceptual frameworks for self-reflection and existential understanding. This aligns with recent research emphasizing the role of religious self-concept and intrinsic orientation in mediating academic success (Syafii et al., 2026). Even when comparing education across different cultural contexts, such as the relationship between education and religion in settings with diverse cultural demands, these findings remain consistent with broader pedagogical trends (Kos & Tašner, 2025).

The outcomes further reveal that the improvements are not only temporary. The analysis of follow-up measurements, which showed no statistically significant regression, indicates that the skills and ethical frameworks internalized by the students during the intervention were successful. This longitudinal stability is a highly desirable pedagogical goal, as it suggests that the religious guidance provided equips students with resilient tools that persist well after the structured sessions. This point is supported by observations on how integrated psychological strategies aid learning development in gifted Jordanian students (Helali & Alwaely, 2025). These findings suggest that the program acts as a stabilizing force, effectively reducing the “missed opportunity” inherent in traditional counselling where spiritual dimensions remain excluded.

The current study demonstrates how religious education can enhance elementary and secondary outcomes through varied models, as discussed by Arnilawati (2026). The stability of these results offers a reliable method for fostering positive developmental outcomes. Moreover, this success is consistent with the need for educational frameworks that balance religious values with the demands of an increasingly diverse and modern society, a theme explored in cross-cultural pedagogical pilot studies (Kos & Tašner, 2025). The current study confirms that such

programs do not merely produce superficial behavior changes but foster the stable psychological development necessary for students to address their future societal roles with confidence and spiritual equilibrium.

Additionally, the current findings validate the hypothesis that religious psychological guidance addresses internal barriers that standard educational methods often fail to reach. Students with a high level of religious counselling can sustain long-term academic excellence. These results provide an empirical mandate for school administrators to integrate such guidance into existing systems to foster well-rounded students who are not only academically focused but also spiritually resilient. These findings carry significant weight for modernizing school counselling curricula, as they show how targeted interventions can create stable, motivated, and spiritually intelligent students. The current study effectively confirms that the relationship between religious values and academic discipline yields quantifiable results. It also provides a model for future educational research. The religious counselling model utilized in the current study concurs with the literature on the intersection of religious activities and achievement in various settings (Abdurrahman et al., 2026). Ultimately, this research provides a clear, evidence-based argument that religiously-grounded psychological guidance is an effective, sustainable, and academically sound strategy for secondary education.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study examined the effect of a religious psychological guidance program on the spiritual intelligence and academic achievement motivation of secondary school students in a Jordanian context. Secondary education represents a critical stage in personality formation and the shaping of psychological and academic attitudes. The findings revealed that religious counselling significantly enhanced spiritual intelligence and concurrently boosted academic achievement motivation. Notably, the study established the long-term stability of these improvements, as follow-up assessments indicated no significant regression in intelligence and concurrently boosted academic achievement motivation. These outcomes confirm that the religious counselling program fostered durable cognitive growth and educational motivation. The contribution of this research lies in its experimental application of religiously grounded psychological interventions within the Jordanian educational context.

Specifically, the study demonstrated that spiritual intelligence and academic achievement motivation can be improved by integrating religious moral reasoning and

existential reflection into the school curriculum. This study offers a pioneering framework that connects religious ethics and modern psychological requirements for academic success.

The findings should therefore be interpreted within a clearly delimited concept of religious psychological guidance. The study does not claim that religion and psychology are identical fields, nor that religious counselling can substitute specialized psychological or clinical care. Its contribution lies in showing that, in a culturally religious school context, counselling activities grounded in religious meanings may support students' spiritual intelligence and academic motivation when they are implemented ethically, voluntarily and with attention to students' psychological needs.

This study contributes to contemporary educational and psychological discourse by demonstrating the role of religious psychological guidance in developing spiritual intelligence and enhancing academic achievement among secondary school students in Jordan. Despite these contributions, the current study is subject to certain limitations, including its reliance on a relatively small sample size within a single Jordanian secondary school, which may constrain the generalizability of the findings to broader populations. Additionally, while the quasi-experimental design isolated the sustained effects of religious counselling, future research could benefit from larger, randomized longitudinal studies to further confirm the program's universal applicability across different cultural and socio-economic demographics.

It is recommended that future inquiries explore the potential mediating roles of variables, such as gender, age, or family-level influences, on the effectiveness of religious counselling. This approach could deepen our understanding of how these interventions interact with other factors. Further research should also investigate the scalability of the current findings for broader implementation in the Jordanian Ministry of Education's curriculum.

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