The Relationship between Social Support and Spiritual Belief with Self-Acceptance among Correctional Inmates

Putri Safitri Rachman, Dyan Evita Santi, Suryanto

Master of Psychology Study Program, Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya

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ABSTRACT

Self-acceptance is an important foundation for correctional inmates to adapt to the institutional environment, manage stigma, and support the process of social reintegration. Low self-acceptance often triggers self-rejection, social isolation, and psychological disturbances that hinder the success of rehabilitation. Theoretically, Berger's concept of self-acceptance emphasizes the individual's ability to accept oneself completely, including strengths and weaknesses, which can be strengthened by external factors in the form of social support and internal factors in the form of spiritual belief. This research used a quantitative approach with a correlational design. The population numbered 338 inmates at the Class IIB Detention Center in Sumenep, with a sample of 250 people selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using three scales that had been adapted and tested for reliability, namely the Self-Acceptance Scale ($\alpha = 0.903$), the Social Support Scale ($\alpha = 0.922$), and the Spiritual Belief Scale ($\alpha = 0.831$). Data analysis was carried out with simple and multiple linear regression using Jamovi after the assumption tests were fulfilled. The majority of participants were male (92.8%), aged 20–39 years, and most were involved in narcotics cases. The results showed that social support and spiritual belief each had a positive and significant relationship with self-acceptance. Simultaneously, both were also significantly related and explained 6.5% of the variation in self-acceptance. These findings affirm that social support and spiritual belief act as complementary protective factors in forming the self-acceptance of correctional inmates.

Keywords: social support, spiritual belief, self-acceptance, correctional inmates

INTRODUCTION

Crime is behavior that violates the legal norms that apply in society and can be subject to criminal sanctions in accordance with the provisions of the applicable laws and regulations. Diovani & Septria (2021) explain that crime is everything related to acts, behavior, speech, that violates the law and economically and socio-psychologically causes harm to society, and can result in the safety of society being threatened. Crime is a problem that occurs in all countries, both developed and developing countries. One of the steps to overcome criminal acts in a country is the existence of special regulations regulated in Correctional Institutions in order to provide punishment, a deterrent effect, and rehabilitation so that the perpetrators of crime can carry out social reintegration, and not repeat their criminal acts again.

Perpetrators of crime receive a special designation, namely Prisoners or Correctional Inmates. In the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language, Prisoner means a person under sentence (a person who is undergoing a sentence because of a criminal act) or a convict. Furthermore, according to Wilson in (Rinaldi, 2021) it is explained that a Prisoner is a troubled human being who is separated from society so that they can learn how to live in society properly. Rinaldi, 2021 more completely explains that a prisoner is every individual who has committed a violation of the applicable law and then is given a decision by a judge whose decision is in the form of a prison sentence or confinement sentence. Next, when that individual is designated as a prisoner, the next action given by the government to the Prisoner is in the form of deprivation of liberty by placing them in a Correctional Institution or Detention Center.

Prisoners as individuals whose liberty has been taken still obtain their human rights as human beings, therefore the government provides a special institution to regulate the deprivation of liberty of the lawbreaker while

simultaneously providing rehabilitation. The rehabilitation carried out by the government for prisoners aims so that the prisoners can improve the quality of their lives so that they do not repeat the criminal acts that were committed (recidivism) when they are declared free from the correctional institution. In Law No. 12 of 1995 Article 1 Paragraph (1), it is explained that correction is an activity to carry out rehabilitation for Correctional Inmates based on a system, institutions, and methods of rehabilitation which is the final part of the criminal justice system. Next, in Law No. 12 of 1995 Article 1 paragraph 3 it is stated that a Correctional Institution is a place to carry out the rehabilitation of Prisoners and correctional students. Continued in paragraph 7 of that article, a prisoner is a convict who is serving a sentence of loss of liberty in a Correctional Institution.

However, efforts at rehabilitation and social reintegration of prisoners often face serious obstacles. One of the main obstacles is the problem of adaptation during the rehabilitation process. Adaptation is a very important initial step in the rehabilitation of prisoners, because through adaptation prisoners are expected to adjust themselves to the new environment, rules, routines, and rehabilitation programs inside the correctional institution. This adaptation process is greatly influenced by the level of self-acceptance of the prisoners. Self-acceptance is the main foundation in the process of adaptation of inmates in the environment of the correctional institution. Without adequate self-acceptance, inmates tend to experience self-rejection. They often blame themselves for the past, feel ashamed, inferior, or even hate their new identity as prisoners. This condition causes their psychological energy to be largely drained in fighting the existing reality, so that it is difficult to concentrate and adapt to the rules, routines, and social dynamics inside the prison. In line with this, Nabilla & Ardelia (2025) explain that prisoners who often struggle with feelings of guilt, anxiety, loneliness, and social stigma. Therefore, self-acceptance is needed as an initial step to make peace with oneself and build resilience inside the Correctional Institution. Self-acceptance becomes important for prisoners because it is the initial step for prisoners to make peace with themselves so that they can adapt and accept all forms of rehabilitation; further, self-acceptance will also influence the reintegration of prisoners who have been declared free.

One of the problems that often appears as a result of the problem of self-acceptance is self-rejection that causes social isolation. Many inmates tend to reject their new identity as prisoners. They often state “I am not like them” so that they avoid interaction with fellow inmates. As a result, the process of adaptation to the routines and rules of the institution becomes disrupted, which is marked by repeated disciplinary violations such as fights among fellow inmates up to gambling activities carried out among inmates. Other conflicts carried out by inmates are conflicts with officers such as deliberately violating rules by not following rehabilitation instructions, not maintaining cleanliness, both personal cleanliness and the environment, and deliberately being sick. Another very fatal violation committed by inmates when they are unable to accept their condition is carrying out an escape or deliberately smuggling prohibited items into the detention center or Prison such as narcotics, and other prohibited drugs.

What is no less serious than the problems above is psychological disturbance due to excessive feelings of guilt. Inmates easily experience severe depression because they continuously blame themselves for the impact caused on the family. This condition causes a refusal to participate in work programs, skills training, and other rehabilitation activities. They are also vulnerable to experiencing panic attacks and self-harming behavior. One real example is a young inmate who had just entered the prison often showing an aggressive attitude and easily provoked. He felt ashamed and angry at himself because of “disappointing his parents”.

One other example of a problem that has occurred in a Detention Center due to low self-acceptance of inmates is one inmate who tried to smuggle narcotics by contacting his dealer associates through the public telephone in the detention center. In addition to that, there were several inmates who gave false information to the family such as saying that there were additional costs in the Detention Center so that the inmates requested money transfers from the family, which in fact that money was used for gambling among fellow inmates. These problems certainly occurred as a result of the self-rejection felt by the inmates, in which they rejected the condition and status that occurred to them. Low self-acceptance made it difficult for them to manage emotions, so that they often became involved in fights with other inmates. This worsened their adaptation process and made them often receive disciplinary punishment so that they entered isolation cells.

For prisoners, self-acceptance becomes important because self-acceptance is the initial step for prisoners in accepting themselves so that they can form resilience when undergoing rehabilitation so that it does not influence the psychological condition of the prisoners when they are in the Correctional Institution. Prisoners who have low self-acceptance can influence their psychological condition. Efendi et al., (2025) in their research stated that there is a significant negative relationship between self-acceptance and the stress level of Female prisoners. The lower the self-acceptance of Female prisoners, the higher the stress level they have. Continued by Pratama & Wibowo, (2024) who explained that the stigma attached to the status of a prisoner causes deep anxiety, and higher self-acceptance can lower the level of anxiety in Prisoners. The same research was also conducted by Maharani et al., (2023) and Humaira et al., (2024) who explained that the higher the self-acceptance possessed, the lower the level of anxiety. Conversely, low self-acceptance will cause increasingly higher social anxiety. Good self-acceptance in prisoners not only lowers anxiety but also supports resilience in prisoners.

So, from that. Self-acceptance functions as an important prerequisite in the process of adaptation of inmates. Self-acceptance enables inmates to accept the current condition as a reality that must be faced, not something that continues to be rejected or denied. With the existence of self-acceptance, the individual can reduce excessive ego defense and defensive attitudes, so that they become more open in accepting guidance, following rehabilitation programs, and adjusting themselves to the rules and routines of the correctional institution. In addition, self-acceptance also builds intrinsic motivation to change and develop authentically, not merely carrying out superficial adaptation or false compliance alone. Finally, high self-acceptance is also effective in lowering the levels of stress, anxiety, and aggressiveness that often appear as a result of the inability to accept oneself.

According to Berger in Arrizqi, 2023, self-acceptance is a condition when the individual is able to accept themselves as they are, including strengths, limitations, weaknesses, failures, and life experiences that have been experienced without carrying out rejection of their existence as a whole. In this view, self-acceptance does not only mean a passive attitude toward the condition of the self, but a psychological process that shows that the individual already has a relatively healthy evaluation of themselves. For prisoners, self-acceptance becomes important because self-acceptance is the initial step for prisoners in accepting themselves so that they can form resilience when becoming rehabilitation so that it does not influence the psychological condition of the prisoners when they are in the Correctional Institution. Prisoners who have low self-acceptance tend to experience disturbances in their psychological condition. Low self-acceptance makes it difficult for prisoners to accept past mistakes and their self-identity, so that it triggers various emotional problems such as prolonged stress and anxiety.

From those studies it can be seen that self-acceptance has a consistent negative relationship with anxiety and stress and has a positive relationship with resilience and self-acceptance. Further, that is because it is difficult to accept themselves, inmates often close themselves, find it difficult to adapt to the rehabilitation environment, and lose the spirit to follow the existing programs. Inmates feel that they are not worthy to change or to be given a second chance. In fact, healthy self-acceptance is actually the initial key so that they can begin to open their hearts, accept the rehabilitation process, and gradually build a better life after being free later.

The increase in self-acceptance of prisoners is certainly influenced by various external and internal factors. Some external factors that give a positive influence on the self-acceptance of prisoners are social support, family support, rehabilitation programs, and the length of the detention period. Among those external factors, social support becomes the most dominant element. Social support from prison officers, family, or fellow prisoners gives a good role in the self-acceptance of prisoners.

Various studies show that social support has a significant positive relationship with self-acceptance in prisoners. Nainggolan, 2019 in her research on 90 female prisoners at the Tanjung Gusta Correctional Institution found a strong positive correlation between family social support and self-acceptance. Family social support contributed 60.9% to the variation in self-acceptance, with the conclusion that the higher the social support received, the higher also the ability of female prisoners in accepting their condition completely.

Similar results were also found in the research of Adianto & Lestari, (2014) which involved 168 prisoners at

the Class II B Boyolali Detention Center. Through multiple regression analysis, this research showed a very significant positive relationship between social support and self-acceptance. Social support contributed 17.6% to self-acceptance, although the self-concept variable also played a role. This research strengthens the finding that social support functions as a protective factor that helps prisoners overcome psychological pressure inside the detention center. Other research on female prisoners at the Class III Kendari Women's Prison belonging to Fajriyah, et al. 2024 also confirmed a consistent pattern. There was a significant positive relationship between family social support and self-acceptance. Social support from the family helps prisoners manage stigma, feelings of guilt, and anxiety, so that it facilitates a better process of self-acceptance during undergoing the rehabilitation period.

Overall, the findings from various studies affirm that social support especially from the family is one of the most dominant external factors that influence the level of self-acceptance of prisoners. Emotional, instrumental, and informational support from the family is able to become a buffer against the negative impact of social stigma and the prison environment. However, research also shows that there are still other factors around 30–75% that influence self-acceptance, so that a more comprehensive approach is needed in rehabilitation programs at correctional institutions.

In addition to external factors that can influence the self-acceptance of prisoners, there are also internal factors such as self-concept, self-esteem, resilience and spiritual belief. Spiritual belief or spiritual belief is one of the internal factors that plays an important role in increasing the self-acceptance of prisoners. Spiritual belief includes personal belief toward a transcendent power, the search for the meaning of life, and experiences of forgiveness and inner peace (Nasyrah Rahmatullah et al., 2024). Various empirical studies show that spiritual belief has a significant positive relationship with self-acceptance in correctional inmates. Nasyrah Rahmatullah et al., (2024) in their research on narcotics case prisoners found a strong relationship between religiosity and spiritual belief with self-acceptance. Prisoners who have a higher level of spiritual belief tend to be more able to accept their condition, interpret the sentence as a process of learning and transformation, and reduce feelings of inferiority and internalized stigma.

In line with that, Safitri et al., 2022 stated that a high level of spirituality contributes significantly to the resilience of prisoners, one dimension of which is self-acceptance. Spiritual belief helps inmates in the process of self-forgiveness and building a more positive life narrative even though they are in a situation of restricted liberty. Research by Adina, et al. 2025 on female prisoners also strengthens that spiritual activities and beliefs (spiritual activities) significantly increase self-acceptance. Through spiritual reflection and belief in divine forgiveness, prisoners are able to integrate negative experiences into a more adaptive self-identity. Overall, the literature consistently shows that spiritual belief functions as a strong protective factor in increasing the self-acceptance of prisoners.

Social support and spiritual belief have a dynamic relationship that mutually strengthens self-acceptance of inmates. Social support from family, fellow inmates, and rehabilitation officers provides a sense of acceptance and external recognition, so that it reduces feelings of shame and self-isolation. Meanwhile, spiritual belief helps inmates interpret past mistakes as part of the process of repentance and an opportunity for self-improvement. These two factors interact positively; strong social support tends to strengthen spiritual belief, and conversely, deep spirituality increases the openness of inmates in receiving social support. Together, both become important protective factors that facilitate the increase of self-acceptance in inmates.

Based on the description above, this research becomes important to be carried out. This research is expected to fill the scientific gap while providing practical recommendations for the development of more holistic rehabilitation programs at correctional institutions, so that it can increase the quality of rehabilitation and support the success of the social reintegration of prisoners.

METHOD

Research Method

This research used a quantitative approach with a correlational design. This approach was chosen to objectively test the direction, strength, and significance of the relationship between social support as well as spiritual belief as independent variables with self-acceptance as the dependent variable in Correctional Inmates, without giving treatment or manipulation toward the variables that were researched. The research population covered all Correctional Inmates at the Class IIB Detention Center in Sumenep which numbered 338 people. A sample of 250 people was determined through the purposive sampling technique with the criteria: having undergone a rehabilitation period of at least six months, able to read and speak Indonesian well, aged 20–45 years (although the actual age distribution was broader), willing to become respondents, and able to fill in the questionnaire independently. The sample size justification did not use formal power analysis, however the number of 250 (around 74% of the population of 338) was considered sufficiently representative for multiple regression analysis with two predictors.

Data Collection

Data collection was carried out using three scale instruments that had been adapted, tested for validity, and reliability. The Self-Acceptance Scale was adapted from Berger and initially consisted of 38 items. After validity testing using item-total correlation, as many as 20 items were declared valid and retained with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.903. The Social Support Scale was adapted from the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) which was developed by Zimet and colleagues (1988). This scale measures the perception of support from three sources, namely family, friends (fellow inmates), and people considered important (detention center officers). From the initial 22 items, 20 items were declared valid with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.922. Meanwhile, the Spiritual Belief Scale was adapted from the Beliefs and Values Scale belonging to King and colleagues (2006) which covers aspects of transcendental belief, meaning and purpose in life, spiritual experience, and spiritual connectedness. The adaptation process included forward translation, back translation, expert judgment, and item adjustment so that it suited the context of inmates. After the adaptation process and validity testing (item-total correlation), 20 items were declared valid with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.831. All scales used a four-point Likert response format (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree).

Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out with the assistance of Jamovi software version 2.7.31. Before hypothesis testing, a series of classical assumption tests were carried out which included normality tests (Shapiro-Wilk, Kolmogorov-Smirnov, and Anderson-Darling), linearity tests through scatterplots, multicollinearity tests (VIF and tolerance values), and heteroscedasticity tests using the Glejser method. After all assumptions were fulfilled, the analysis was continued with Pearson correlation tests to test partial relationships between variables and multiple linear regression to test the simultaneous contribution of social support and spiritual belief toward self-acceptance. Regression analysis was also carried out separately for each source of social support (family, friends/fellow inmates, and officers). No covariate controls (age, length of detention, education) or moderation/mediation tests were carried out. This research had obtained official permission from the Regional Office and used informed consent; participation was voluntary without consequences toward parole, the confidentiality of respondents' identities was maintained from staff, and referrals were available for respondents who experienced psychological difficulties.

RESULTS

Participant Characteristics

The research participants numbered 250 Correctional Inmates (WBP) who were actively following rehabilitation at the Class IIB State Detention Center in Sumenep. The majority of participants were male, namely as many as 232 people (92.8%), while females numbered 18 people (7.2%).

Table 1. Distribution of Participants Based on Gender

Gender	n	%
Male	232	92.8
Female	18	7.2
Total	**250**	**100**

Based on age group, the most participants were in the age range of 30–39 years as many as 72 people (28.8%), followed by the age group of 20–29 years as many as 68 people (27.2%). The fewest participants were in the age group under 20 years, namely 12 people (4.8%).

Table 2. Distribution of Participants Based on Age Group

Age Group	n	%
< 20 years	12	4.8
20–29 years	68	27.2
30–39 years	72	28.8
40–49 years	55	22
50–59 years	32	12.8
≥ 60 years	11	4.4
Total	**250**	**100**

The type of crime most committed by participants was narcotics as many as 98 people (39.2%), followed by child protection cases as many as 45 people (18.0%) and theft as many as 32 people (12.8%).

Table 3. Distribution of Participants Based on Type of Crime

Type of Crime	n	%
Narcotics	98	39.2
Child protection	45	18
Theft	32	12.8
Murder	18	7.2
Corruption	12	4.8
Embezzlement	11	4.4
Domestic violence	8	3.2
Fraud	7	2.8
Sexual violence/molestation	6	2.4
Others	13	5.2
Total	**250**	**100**

General Description of Research Variables

The results of the descriptive analysis showed that the average score of spiritual belief was 3.13 (SD = 0.34), social support was 3.29 (SD = 0.36), and self-acceptance was 3.24 (SD = 0.34). In general, the three variables were in a relatively homogeneous score range. Based on score categorization, the majority of WBP had a moderate level of spiritual belief as many as 159 people (63.6%), moderate social support as many as 171 people (68.4%), and moderate self-acceptance as many as 159 people (63.6%). Thus, in general the WBP in this research had spiritual belief, social support, and self-acceptance at a moderate level.

Assumption Testing

Before hypothesis testing, multiple linear regression assumption tests had been carried out. The results of the normality test using Shapiro-Wilk showed a p value = 0.668, Kolmogorov-Smirnov p = 0.819, and Anderson-Darling p = 0.388. All significance values were greater than 0.05, so that the residual of the regression model was normally distributed. The linearity test through scatterplots showed a positive linear relationship between social support and self-acceptance, as well as between spiritual belief and self-acceptance. The multicollinearity test produced a VIF value of 1.01 and tolerance of 0.993 for both independent variables, so that there was no multicollinearity. The results of the Glejser test also showed a significance value of spiritual belief of 0.529 and social support of 0.215; both were greater than 0.05, so that the regression model fulfilled the assumption of homoscedasticity. Thus, all assumptions of multiple linear regression analysis had been fulfilled.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was carried out using simple linear regression analysis for the first and second hypotheses, and multiple linear regression for the third hypothesis. The analysis was carried out using Jamovi version 2.7.31 with the following results:

1. The Relationship of Social Support with Self-Acceptance

Results of Simple Linear Regression of Social Support toward Self-Acceptance

Predictor	B	SE	t	p
Constant	2.529	0.197	12.84	< 0.001
Social support	0.215	0.06	3.6	< 0.001

The results of the analysis showed that social support was positively and significantly related to self-acceptance in WBP, B = 0.215, t(248) = 3.60, p < 0.001. The positive regression coefficient indicates that the higher the social support received by WBP, the higher also the level of their self-acceptance. Thus, the first hypothesis was accepted.

2. The Relationship of Spiritual Belief with Self-Acceptance

Results of Simple Linear Regression of Spiritual Belief toward Self-Acceptance

Predictor	B	SE	t	p
Constant	2.793	0.198	14.1	< 0.001
Spiritual belief	0.141	0.063	2.25	0.025

The results of the analysis showed that spiritual belief was positively and significantly related to self-acceptance in WBP, B = 0.141, t(248) = 2.25, p = 0.025. The positive direction of the relationship shows that the stronger the spiritual belief of WBP, the higher also their self-acceptance. Thus, the second hypothesis was accepted.

3. The Relationship of Social Support and Spiritual Belief simultaneously with Self-Acceptance

Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p
Constant	2.178	0.264	—	8.26	< 0.001
Social support	0.205	0.06	0.212	3.44	< 0.001
Spiritual belief	0.123	0.062	0.123	1.99	0.048

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis showed that social support and spiritual belief simultaneously were significantly related to self-acceptance in WBP, $F(2, 247) = 8.55$, $p < 0.001$. The R^2 value = 0.065 shows that both independent variables together explained 6.5% of the variation in self-acceptance, while the remaining 93.5% was explained by other variables outside the research model.

Partially, social support was positively and significantly related to self-acceptance, $B = 0.205$, $\beta = 0.212$, $t = 3.44$, $p < 0.001$. This means that every increase of one unit in the social support score is predicted to increase self-acceptance by 0.205 units with the assumption that spiritual belief is constant.

Spiritual belief was also positively and significantly related to self-acceptance, $B = 0.123$, $\beta = 0.123$, $t = 1.99$, $p = 0.048$. Thus, the higher the spiritual belief of WBP, the higher also their self-acceptance with the assumption that social support is constant.

DISCUSSION

The results of this research show that social support and spiritual belief have a role in forming the self-acceptance of correctional inmates. These findings affirm that self-acceptance is not a process that stands alone, but rather the result of the interaction between external and internal factors that complement each other. In the context of inmates, self-acceptance becomes a psychological aspect that greatly determines the ability of the individual to face stigma, rearrange self-identity, and adjust themselves to the reality of life in the correctional institution. Therefore, the results of this research can be understood as an affirmation that the quality of self-acceptance is greatly influenced by how the individual is treated by their social environment as well as how they interpret themselves, their life experiences, and the situation that is being undergone.

Theoretically, the findings regarding social support are in line with Berger's view that self-acceptance develops when the individual obtains recognition, appreciation, and acceptance from people who are considered meaningful. Social support gives a sense of psychological security, reduces feelings of being rejected, and helps the individual view themselves more realistically. In the condition of inmates who live in an environment full of restrictions, stigma, and pressure, the presence of social support becomes a very important source of strength. Support from family, fellow inmates, or correctional officers can lower feelings of shame, anxiety, and rejection of oneself. When the individual feels that they are still accepted as a human being who has value, they tend to more easily accept shortcomings, past mistakes, and their new identity as inmates. Thus, social support not only functions as emotional assistance, but also as an important means in the process of reconstructing self-identity.

These findings also strengthen the results of previous research that consistently show a positive relationship between social support and self-acceptance in prisoners or inmates. Nainggolan (2019) found that family social support is closely related to self-acceptance in female prisoners, which shows that the family remains a source of meaning, recognition, and self-validation that is very strong even though the individual is undergoing a period of sentence. Similar results were also put forward by Adianto and Lestari (2014), who showed that social support plays a role in helping prisoners adjust psychologically and accept their condition. In addition, Fajriyah et al. (2024) also affirmed that family social support helps female prisoners manage stigma, feelings of guilt, and emotional pressure that appear during undergoing rehabilitation. This series of findings shows the consistency that social support is one of the most important protective factors for the self-acceptance of inmates. This research expands that understanding because it shows that the influence of social support does not only come from the family, but can also appear from relations with fellow inmates and correctional officers, although the strength of the influence can differ depending on the quality of the interaction that is felt by the individual.

If reviewed based on the dimensions of social support, the family is the source of support that is most influential psychologically because the family has a history of closeness, emotional bonds, and strong identity legitimacy. Family support gives the message that limitations and past mistakes do not automatically erase the value of a person as a family member. In the framework of the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) theory belonging to Zimet et al. (1988), family support becomes an important foundation to build a sense of security and being accepted, so that inmates are more ready to face the stress of rehabilitation.

Support from fellow inmates also has its own meaning because they are in life experiences that are relatively similar. Similarity of situation can foster empathy, a sense of shared fate, and solidarity that makes it easy for the individual to feel understood. Although support from peers in the prison environment may not be as strong as family support, its existence remains important to prevent social isolation and maintain emotional stability. Thus, relationships among fellow WBP can function as a social space that helps the individual not to completely sink into feelings of shame and regret.

Meanwhile, support from correctional officers needs to be understood more carefully. Theoretically, officers can become significant others who give direction, validation, and opportunities for WBP to develop. However, the results of this research show that this dimension does not always work automatically as a reinforcer of self-acceptance. In the context of correctional institutions, the relationship between officers and inmates can be influenced by power distance, experiences of discipline, and perceptions of control. Because of that, officer support will only be effective if it is felt as an attitude that is humane, fair, and non-judgmental; if not, that support can be perceived as formality or control alone. This explains why this dimension can appear weaker compared to sources of social support that are affective and more personal.

On the other hand, the results of this research also show that spiritual belief is positively related to the self-acceptance of correctional inmates. Conceptually, this finding can be explained through the view that spiritual belief gives a framework of meaning for life experiences that are full of suffering. For inmates, the period of sentence is often perceived as a heavy experience, threatening identity, and giving rise to a sense of failure. In a condition like this, spiritual belief becomes an internal source that helps the individual understand that suffering does not always mean destruction, but can be interpreted as a process of learning, introspection, repentance, and self-change. In other words, spiritual belief enables the individual to see their past more completely, without being trapped in excessive feelings of guilt or rejection of themselves.

This result is in line with the research of Rahmatullah et al. (2024) and colleagues who found that spiritual belief is positively related to self-acceptance in prisoners. These findings show that spirituality is able to help the individual interpret the sentence as part of a life journey that has a purpose. Safitri et al. (2022) also showed that spirituality is related to the resilience of prisoners, one dimension of which is the ability to accept oneself more adaptively. Research by Adina et al. (2025) also showed that spiritual activities and beliefs can increase self-acceptance and self-compassion in female prisoners. The interconnectedness of these results shows that spiritual belief is not only related to the relationship of the individual with God or a transcendent power, but also with the way the individual views themselves, manages inner wounds, and builds hope for change. In the context of inmates, spiritual belief becomes a psychological resource that helps reduce the psychological burden due to past mistakes and gives space for the appearance of self-forgiveness. Psychologically, spiritual belief plays a role through processes of meaning-making, acceptance, and hope. Individuals who have strong spiritual beliefs tend to be more able to interpret life more broadly than merely a series of failures. They have an orientation that the self can still be improved, that the future is still open, and that self-worth is not entirely determined by the mistakes that have occurred. Beliefs like this are very important in the formation of self-acceptance, because self-acceptance does not mean justifying mistakes, but rather acknowledging the reality of the self honestly without continuously punishing oneself. Thus, spiritual belief becomes an internal means that helps inmates exit from the cycle of self-rejection, excessive regret, and the loss of hope.

In addition, the results of this research show that social support and spiritual belief do not stand separately, but rather complement each other in forming self-acceptance. Social support provides validation from outside, while spiritual belief provides reinforcement from within. Social support helps the individual feel accepted by the environment, while spiritual belief helps the individual accept themselves in the light of a broader meaning. The combination of both becomes very important for inmates, because they face two challenges at once, namely relational challenges in the form of stigma and alienation, as well as intrapsychic challenges in the form of feelings of guilt, shame, and self-rejection. When both are present simultaneously, inmates have more complete psychological resources to adapt, endure, and develop during the rehabilitation period.

The simultaneous results of this research can also be understood in the framework that self-acceptance is the result of the integration between the experience of being accepted by other people and the ability to interpret

the self positively. Social support prevents the individual from sinking into isolation and feelings of worthlessness, while spiritual belief fosters the ability to see past mistakes as part of a process of transformation. Thus, self-acceptance is no longer understood as a passive attitude, but as the result of an active process in rearranging relationships with oneself, other people, and the meaning of life. In the context of correctional institutions, this condition is very relevant because inmates need not only behavioral rehabilitation, but also identity restoration and more fundamental psychological strengthening.

When compared with previous research, these findings show the existence of scientific continuity as well as strengthening in one more comprehensive model. Previous research tended to test social support or spiritual belief separately. Nainggolan (2019) and Fajriyah et al. (2024) emphasized the role of family social support, Adianto and Lestari (2014) highlighted the contribution of social support toward self-acceptance, while Rahmatullah et al. (2024), Safitri et al. (2022), and Adina et al. (2025) affirmed the importance of the spiritual dimension in increasing self-acceptance or resilience. This research unites those two pathways in one model, so that it shows that the self-acceptance of inmates is most appropriately understood as the result of the interaction between external and internal factors. Thus, this research not only confirms the results of previous studies, but also integrates various findings that until now were still scattered into one more complete explanation.

From the side of novelty, this research gives an important contribution for the development of correctional psychology because it shows that the formation of self-acceptance in inmates requires a holistic approach. An approach that only emphasizes supervision or skills without strengthening the social and spiritual dimensions risks not touching the root of the psychological problems of inmates. Conversely, a rehabilitation program that combines healthy social support, humane relations, and spiritual strengthening will have a greater chance of helping inmates build an adaptive self-identity. This is important not only for mental health during undergoing the period of sentence, but also for readiness for social reintegration after being free later.

Thus, the results of this research show that social support and spiritual belief are two protective factors that mutually strengthen each other in forming the self-acceptance of correctional inmates. Social support helps the individual feel that they are still valued and not completely rejected by the environment, while spiritual belief helps the individual interpret mistakes, accept the limitations of the self, and build hope for the future. When both run together, inmates have a greater opportunity to develop self-acceptance that is healthy, stable, and meaningful. Therefore, the results of this research support the importance of rehabilitation that is not only administrative and disciplinary in nature, but also psychological, relational, and spiritual.

CONCLUSION

This research concludes that social support and spiritual belief have a positive and significant relationship, both partially and simultaneously, with the self-acceptance of correctional inmates at the Class IIB Detention Center in Sumenep. Simultaneously, both variables explained 6.48% of the variation in self-acceptance ($R = 0.255$; $R^2 = 0.0648$; $p < .001$), with social support giving a stronger contribution compared to spiritual belief. These findings affirm that self-acceptance is the result of the interaction between external factors (social support from family, fellow WBP, and officers) and internal factors (spiritual belief).

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

This research has several limitations. First, the correlational design does not allow causal claims. Second, the sample size justification did not use formal power analysis. Third, the demographic data did not cover marital status, religion, length of sentence, and actual time served in detail. Fourth, no covariate controls (age, education, length of detention) or moderation/mediation tests were carried out. Fifth, the research was only carried out at one facility (Class IIB Detention Center in Sumenep) so that generalization is limited. Sixth, there were no qualitative data that can deepen the understanding of the subjective experiences of inmates toward social support and spiritual belief.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Practical Recommendations

Correctional institutions are advised to develop holistic rehabilitation programs that integrate the strengthening of social support (family contact, peer support, and humane relations with officers) as well as the spiritual dimension (spiritual guidance and counseling that is sensitive to belief). Officers are expected to build relationships that are more empathetic and non-judgmental. Families are advised to continue maintaining communication and acceptance. Inmates are expected to open themselves toward the support that is available and develop spiritual belief as a source of meaning and self-forgiveness.

Academic Recommendations

Future researchers are advised: (1) to carry out longitudinal studies at various facilities; (2) to add covariate controls and test moderation/mediation models; (3) to more specifically separate the dimensions of spirituality (belief, practice, meaning); (4) to use a mixed-methods approach or in-depth interviews to understand the mechanisms of experiences of support and belief; and (5) to develop evidence-based intervention programs that combine social support and spiritual strengthening.

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