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APASWE

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Spirituality



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**Decolonization,
Indigenization,
Spirituality,
and Buddhist Social Work**
**Social Work Academics
Resisting the Globalization of
Western-rooted Social Work**



**Living Spirituality and How It is Used in Social Work Practice
in Indonesia**

Toton Witono

Widyaiswara/Trainer on Social Welfare
at Ministry of Social Affairs, Republic of Indonesia
e-mail: totonwitono@gmail.com

Abstract

Many literatures define spirituality in the context of searching for life meaning, of life purpose, of values, of connectedness, of transcendence, and of the sacred. In Indonesian perspective, this term is well known as *ruhani* or *ruhaniah* (originated from Arabic terms), as opposed to something physical (*jasmani/jasmaniah* –also from Arabic terms). Indonesians seem to have a tendency toward the dualistic view of body and soul/mind, which is parallel to the division of *jasmani* and *ruhani*. The term is also interchangeably used with religion and/or religiosity, so it sometimes creates ambiguity. Nevertheless, that is not say that they do not have spirituality. Their spirituality is not defined, nor comprehended. It is lived in praxis and daily life. Such living spirituality is not clearly expressed in the context of social work practice, especially in the interaction between practitioners and clients. In the social service for the elderly, for instance, it is hard to find that practitioners use forms of spirituality-based assessment and/or intervention developed by Western scholars. That is because they were not taught either in school or in training so that they are unfamiliar with the spiritual models. To what extent the living spirituality is implemented in practice, it depends both on the capability of practitioners to understand the spirituality held by the clients and by themselves and on their initiative how it is articulated in interaction.

Keywords: Living spirituality, ruhaniah, social work, practitioners, and the elderly