

Faith in Times of Crisis: The Moderating Role of Religious Belief on Happiness and Life Effectiveness Among Malaysian University Students

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Abstract: This study investigates how religious faith moderates the relationship between happiness and life effectiveness among university students in Sabah, Malaysia, during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research aims to address the growing psychological challenges faced by youths by exploring whether internal resources such as happiness and faith can strengthen life competencies in times of crisis. A quantitative research design was employed using a cross-sectional online survey distributed to students from public and private universities in Sabah. The survey collected data from 521 participants using validated instruments to measure happiness, religious faith, and life effectiveness. The data were analysed using hierarchical regression analysis to assess the moderating effect of religious faith. The findings show that happiness significantly predicts life effectiveness, accounting for 31.3% of the variance. Religious faith adds an additional 2.7%, while the interaction between happiness and faith contributes a further 1.0%, indicating a significant moderating effect. Students who reported both high happiness and strong faith demonstrated higher levels of emotional control, time management, and initiative. The study implies that cultivating both emotional well-being and religious faith can enhance youth resilience and functional effectiveness, especially during crises. These findings have practical applications in mental health programming and student development initiatives, particularly in multicultural settings like Sabah. This study offers a novel contribution by empirically testing the moderating role of religious faith in the happiness–life effectiveness relationship—a dimension rarely explored in previous literature. It expands current understanding of psychosocial dynamics among young people in culturally diverse societies.

Keywords: Happiness; life effectiveness; psychosocial; religious faith; youth.

Abstract: Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana keyakinan agama memoderasi hubungan antara kebahagiaan dan efektivitas hidup pada mahasiswa di Sabah, Malaysia, selama pandemi COVID-19. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk merespons meningkatnya tantangan psikologis yang dihadapi oleh kaum muda dengan mengeksplorasi apakah sumber daya internal seperti kebahagiaan dan iman dapat memperkuat kompetensi hidup di masa krisis. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kuantitatif dengan survei daring bersifat potong lintang yang disebarakan kepada mahasiswa dari universitas negeri dan swasta di Sabah. Survei ini mengumpulkan data dari 521 partisipan menggunakan instrumen terstandar untuk mengukur kebahagiaan, keyakinan agama, dan efektivitas hidup. Data dianalisis menggunakan analisis regresi hierarkis untuk menilai efek moderasi dari keyakinan agama. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kebahagiaan secara signifikan memprediksi efektivitas hidup, menjelaskan sebesar 31,3% variansi. Keyakinan agama memberikan kontribusi tambahan sebesar 2,7%, sementara interaksi antara kebahagiaan dan keyakinan menyumbang 1,0% tambahan, yang menunjukkan adanya efek moderasi yang signifikan. Mahasiswa yang melaporkan tingkat kebahagiaan dan iman yang tinggi menunjukkan tingkat pengendalian emosi, manajemen waktu, dan inisiatif yang lebih tinggi. Penelitian ini menyiratkan bahwa pengembangan kesejahteraan emosional dan keyakinan agama secara bersamaan dapat meningkatkan resiliensi dan efektivitas fungsional pemuda, khususnya selama masa krisis. Temuan ini memiliki aplikasi praktis dalam program kesehatan mental dan pengembangan mahasiswa, terutama di lingkungan multikultural seperti Sabah. Studi ini memberikan kontribusi baru dengan secara empiris menguji peran moderasi dari

keyakinan agama dalam hubungan antara kebahagiaan dan efektivitas hidup—dimensi yang jarang dieksplorasi dalam literatur sebelumnya. Penelitian ini memperluas pemahaman tentang dinamika psikososial di kalangan generasi muda dalam masyarakat yang beragam secara budaya.

Keywords: Kebahagiaan; efektivitas hidup; psikososial; keyakinan agama; pemuda.

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about significant disruption across various aspects of social life, with particularly adverse effects on the mental health and psychological well-being of young people, as evidenced by increasing rates of depression, anxiety, and insomnia globally and across diverse cultural contexts (Akkaya-Kalayci et al., 2020; Bell et al., 2023; Cielo, Ulberg, & Di Giacomo, 2021; Özlü-Erkilic et al., 2021). In Malaysia, university students have emerged as one of the most emotionally affected groups. They were compelled to adapt rapidly to online learning, adhere to mobility restrictions imposed through the Movement Control Order (MCO), and endure heightened academic and social uncertainty. Such pressures have led to an increase in psychological disorders, including insomnia, stress, and depression. A study conducted among undergraduate students from the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) revealed that 54.9% of students experienced symptoms of depression, while 33.9% reported suffering from insomnia during the second wave of COVID-19 in Malaysia (Iqbal, Binti Riza Effendi, Syed Alwi, Saidi, & Sarchio, 2023). These findings highlight a significant correlation between insomnia and depression, underscoring that the pandemic's impact extends beyond physical health to inflict profound psychological distress among students.

This situation is further complicated in culturally diverse regions such as Sabah, which is characterised by a complex tapestry of ethnic and religious plurality—home to over 30 indigenous groups and various immigrant communities—where faith-based practices often serve as essential coping mechanisms in times of crisis (Hajimin, 2021; Sintang, Kamu, & Mohd Khalli, 2024). Within such a context, religious belief and spiritual practices often serve as vital coping mechanisms for maintaining emotional balance and psychological resilience. Therefore, it is essential to explore how students in Sabah—who navigate daily life within a socio-religiously plural environment—draw upon happiness and faith to manage the psychological pressures brought on by the pandemic.

Previous studies have shown that happiness contributes significantly to various life outcomes. For example, Lyubomirsky and Tucker (1998) found that happier individuals are more likely to perceive adversity as a learning opportunity. In the Malaysian context, Ah Gang (2022) and Cosmas (2020, 2022) highlighted how university students drew upon psychological resources such as resilience and religious faith to maintain emotional well-being during lockdowns (Ah Gang & Lambun, 2021). Other studies have emphasised external contributors to happiness, such as mindfulness (Bajaj, Khoury, & Sengupta, 2022) and community support (Kiernan, Chmiel, Garrido, Hickey, & Davidson, 2021). Additionally, research has established a positive link between religious faith and psychological outcomes such as well-being and resilience (Childs, 2010; Colón-Bacó, 2010; Villani, Sorgente, Iannello, & Antonietti, 2019). However, most existing studies have either examined happiness and faith separately or overlooked the interactive role of religious faith in strengthening the impact of happiness on life effectiveness—particularly among youth populations in multicultural settings. This study seeks to address that gap.

This research aims to examine how religious faith moderates the relationship between happiness and life effectiveness among university students in Sabah, Malaysia. Life effectiveness in this context encompasses a range of psychosocial competencies including emotional control, intellectual flexibility, motivation, time management, social competence, leadership, self-confidence, and initiative. The study specifically focuses on understanding whether sustaining a strong religious faith can enhance the positive effects of happiness in enabling youths to function effectively during challenging times, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Based on the review of existing literature and identified research gaps, this study hypothesises that religious faith positively moderates the relationship between happiness and life effectiveness. In other words, university students who possess higher levels of happiness and strong religious faith are predicted to demonstrate significantly greater life effectiveness compared to those with lower levels of religious faith. This hypothesis is grounded in the assumption that religious faith not only fosters resilience and emotional well-being but also amplifies the benefits of happiness in navigating personal and academic challenges.

2. Method

This study focused on university students in the Malaysian state of Sabah as its unit of analysis. Sabah, located in northern Borneo, is characterised by its cultural richness and harmonious religious diversity (Mohd Khalli, Sintang, & Kamu, 2022), making it a conducive context for studying psychosocial factors such as happiness and religious faith. The participants comprised undergraduate students from both public and private universities in Sabah, regardless of academic year or programme of study. All participants had undergone online learning experiences as a result of the national lockdown imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic beginning 18 March 2020.

A quantitative research design was employed, using a cross-sectional survey method. This approach was selected due to its suitability for measuring relationships among variables through statistical procedures. In particular, a quantitative design enables the use of validated instruments to assess levels of happiness, life effectiveness, and religious faith among a large sample size (Benn, Harvey, Gilbert, & Irons, 2005). Moreover, as the study was conducted during the height of the pandemic, an online survey was considered the most practical and safe means of collecting data from geographically dispersed respondents.

The primary data in this study were obtained from student respondents via an online questionnaire developed through Google Forms. Prior to participation, each student received an information sheet and was required to give consent by selecting a 'Yes' response before proceeding to the survey. Demographic information (including gender, religion, ethnicity, academic year, and accommodation) was also collected. A total of 521 students voluntarily participated and completed the survey.

The questionnaire consisted of four sections. The first section collected demographic information. The second section measured happiness using the *Subjective Happiness Scale* (SHS) by Lyubomirsky and Lepper (1999), which comprises four items rated on a seven-point Likert scale. The third section assessed life effectiveness using the *Life Effectiveness Questionnaire* (LEQ) developed by Neill (2008), consisting of 24 items across eight domains such as emotional control, initiative, and time management, rated on an eight-point scale. The final section measured religious faith using a three-item scale adapted from Plante and Boccaccini (1997), with statements such as "I look to my faith as a source of comfort," rated from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The scale was intentionally non-denominational to accommodate participants from different faith backgrounds.

Prior to analysis, the dataset was screened for normality. Skewness and kurtosis values for all variables fell within acceptable ranges (Byrne, 2010; Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010), indicating a normal distribution. Descriptive statistics were calculated to describe participants' profiles. To test the research hypothesis, a hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to examine the moderating effect of religious faith on the relationship between happiness and life effectiveness. This statistical method allows the interaction term to be tested while controlling for the main effects, providing a clear insight into the moderation mechanism.

3. Results

In this study, a total of 521 participants completed and submitted the survey. A majority were female (79.5%, $n=414$) with only a fifth being male (20.3%, $n=101$). One participant did not reveal their gender (0.2%). The mean age of participants was 21.72 ($SD=4.59$). In terms of accommodation, over half of the participants were staying off-campus (55.5%, $n=289$) with the remaining having on-campus

accommodation (44.5%, n=232). The participants demonstrated a diversity of religious affiliations. A majority were Muslim (52.2%, n=272), followed by Christian (45.3%, n=236), Buddhist (1.9%, n=10), and Hindu (0.4%, n=2). One participant did not disclose their religion (0.2%).

Contribution of Happiness to Life Effectiveness

The first step of the hierarchical regression analysis examined the direct contribution of happiness to life effectiveness. Results revealed that happiness alone accounted for 31.3% of the total variance in life effectiveness ($R^2 = .313$, $\beta = .560$, $t(520) = 15.38$, $p < .001$). This indicates a statistically significant and substantial contribution of happiness to how effectively students manage different aspects of their lives, such as time management, emotional control, and initiative.

Table 1. Hierarchical Regression Analysis – Step 1

Step	Variable	β	R^2	t-value	p-value
1	Happiness	.560	.313	15.38	<.001

This table summarises the result of the first model, showing the predictive strength of happiness alone. The statistical output in Step 1 reveals that happiness has a significant and positive relationship with life effectiveness. In simpler terms, this means that students who consider themselves happier are more likely to be effective in dealing with daily tasks, academic responsibilities, and personal challenges. Nearly one-third of the variation in students' effectiveness can be explained solely by their self-reported happiness.

The analysis reveals several important patterns regarding the relationship between happiness and life effectiveness. First, the data indicate that happiness serves as a strong predictor, independently explaining 31.3% of the variance in life effectiveness among university students. This substantial contribution highlights the pivotal role happiness plays in shaping how effectively students function in their daily lives. Furthermore, the β coefficient of .560 suggests a robust positive association, meaning that as students' levels of happiness increase, so does their overall life effectiveness. This relationship is not confined to a single area but extends across multiple domains of functioning, such as emotional control, time management, leadership, and motivation. In addition, the findings suggest that happier individuals tend to exhibit greater emotional resilience—they are more capable of managing stress, staying calm under pressure, and taking proactive steps in their academic and personal responsibilities. The consistency of this association across all measured domains underscores the pervasive influence of happiness as a psychological resource that supports students' ability to thrive, particularly during challenging periods such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

These findings reinforce the existing body of literature which asserts that happiness plays a crucial role in psychological functioning and life outcomes. For example, Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) found that happy individuals tend to be more successful across a variety of life domains, including relationships, work, and health. In the Malaysian context, Ah Gang (AH Gang, 2022) also noted that happiness enhanced students' ability to cope with academic and emotional challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the specific context of this study, where young people were coping with pandemic-induced disruptions to learning and social life, happiness acted as a psychological buffer. It not only contributed to emotional well-being but also promoted behavioural competencies such as leadership, motivation, and initiative. This implies that fostering happiness among youth—through mental health programmes, recreational activities, or supportive educational environments—could significantly improve their overall life effectiveness, especially during times of crisis.

Contribution of Religious Faith to Life Effectiveness

In the second step of the hierarchical regression analysis, the addition of religious faith as a variable accounted for an additional 2.7% of the variance in life effectiveness (R^2 change = .027). The beta coefficient for religious faith was $\beta = .169$, with a t -value of 4.61 and a significance level of $p < .002$. This suggests that religious faith is a statistically significant predictor of life effectiveness even after accounting for the influence of happiness.

Table 2. Hierarchical Regression Analysis – Step 2

Step	Variable	β	R^2	R^2 change	t -value	p -value
2	Religious Faith	.169	.340	.027	4.61	<.002

The data indicate that religious faith contributes independently and significantly to youth life effectiveness. When introduced into the regression model alongside happiness, it increased the model's explanatory power by 2.7%. This means that, beyond merely being happy, students who hold strong religious convictions are more likely to demonstrate effective personal and social functioning. These findings highlight that religious faith has a unique value in promoting personal development and psychological functioning in youth (Sonja Lyubomirsky, 2001).

From the data presented, several key patterns emerge regarding the role of religious faith in shaping life effectiveness among youths. First, the analysis demonstrates that religious faith has a statistically significant independent effect on life effectiveness. Although the strength of the effect ($\beta = .169$) is less pronounced than that of happiness, it nonetheless contributes meaningfully to how well young people manage and perform across various life domains. Second, participants who reported higher levels of religious faith also exhibited traits associated with emotional resilience and personal confidence. These individuals appeared better equipped to handle stress, remain emotionally grounded, and take initiative in different areas of their lives. This suggests that faith serves not only as a source of comfort but also as a psychological strength that promotes adaptive functioning. Third, the integration of religious faith into the regression model marginally increased the model's explanatory power, adding an additional 2.7% to the variance explained. While this increase may seem modest, it reflects a real and relevant contribution that enriches our understanding of the psychosocial factors influencing life effectiveness. Lastly, religious faith appears to function not as a substitute for happiness, but as a complementary resource. It enhances the internal coping mechanisms of individuals, providing both psychological and spiritual tools that support motivation, flexibility, social engagement, and goal-oriented behaviour. In sum, religious faith emerges as a quiet yet steady force that contributes to a young person's ability to navigate life effectively—especially in the face of adversity such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

These findings are consistent with earlier studies by Colón-Bacó (Colón-Bacó, 2010), Villani et al. (Villani et al., 2019), and Childs (Childs, 2010), which assert that religious belief positively influences subjective well-being and behavioural outcomes. In the multicultural context of Sabah—where Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism coexist—religious faith functions not merely as a belief system but as a critical psychosocial anchor (UNFPA, 2023). It helps young people find meaning, cope with uncertainties, and maintain a stable sense of purpose. As such, religious faith can be understood as an inner compass that guides attitudes and behaviours during periods of stress, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, enabling youths to remain centred and effective in various life domains.

Interaction Between Happiness and Religious Faith (Moderation Effect)

In the third step of the hierarchical regression analysis, the interaction term combining happiness and religious faith (Happiness \times Religious Faith) was introduced to examine whether religious faith moderates the relationship between happiness and life effectiveness. This step resulted in a statistically significant improvement in the model, contributing an additional 1.0% to the variance in life effectiveness (R^2 change = .010). The interaction term yielded a standardised coefficient of $\beta = .677$ with a t -value of 2.82 and a significance level of $p = .005$.

Table 3. Hierarchical Regression Analysis – Step 3

Step	Variable	β	R ²	R ² change	t-value	p-value
3	Happiness × Religious Faith	.677	.350	.010	2.82	.005

The inclusion of the interaction term in Step 3 shows that there is a statistically significant moderating effect: religious faith strengthens the relationship between happiness and life effectiveness. In other words, the positive impact of happiness on life effectiveness is greater for individuals with strong religious faith (Haji, Mohammadkhani, & Hahtami, 2011). This interaction contributes a modest but meaningful enhancement to the predictive power of the overall model.

From the data on the interaction between happiness and religious faith, several meaningful patterns emerge. Firstly, there is a synergistic impact observed in the relationship: the combination of high happiness and strong religious faith yields greater life effectiveness than when either factor is considered independently. This implies not just an additive effect but a multiplicative one, where the presence of both variables simultaneously enhances the outcome more powerfully than either alone.

Secondly, the participants who scored high on both happiness and religious faith consistently demonstrated superior functionality across all life effectiveness indicators. These individuals showed particularly strong competencies in emotional regulation, leadership, time management, and personal motivation—areas critical for navigating academic and personal challenges. Their ability to manage stress, take initiative, and remain confident and productive highlights the unique benefits of combining positive emotional states with spiritual conviction.

Thirdly, while the contribution of the interaction term to the overall model (1.0%) may appear quantitatively modest, it represents a statistically significant and psychologically meaningful increase in explanatory power. In the context of human behavioural research, especially in psychosocial studies, even small increments can signal important dynamics—particularly when dealing with multi-layered constructs such as happiness and faith that influence individuals' coping capacities.

The pattern reflects a deep interconnection between emotional experience and belief systems. Happiness, representing a state of emotional well-being, and religious faith, representing an internalised source of meaning and guidance, together form a resilient psychological framework. This framework allows individuals to respond to adversity with greater confidence, adaptability, and optimism. The presence of both dimensions equips young people with a more holistic set of internal resources to face disruptions like those brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This finding directly addresses the central research objective of the study: to investigate whether religious faith moderates the relationship between happiness and life effectiveness. The results confirm that such a moderating effect exists. In the context of a global crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic, the data shows that young people who possess both high levels of happiness and strong religious faith are better equipped to maintain effective, balanced, and resilient functioning across various domains of life (Tag et al., 2022). This supports broader theoretical frameworks in positive psychology and resilience studies, suggesting that when personal well-being is grounded in both emotional positivity and spiritual meaning, individuals become more adept at navigating adversity. In multicultural contexts like Sabah, where religion plays a significant social and cultural role, the implications of these findings are especially relevant for designing youth support programmes that integrate both emotional and spiritual well-being strategies.

4. Discussion

This study found that happiness significantly contributes to life effectiveness among university students in Sabah during the COVID-19 pandemic. Happiness accounted for 31.3% of the variance in life effectiveness, establishing it as a strong psychosocial factor. Furthermore, religious faith added an additional 2.7% to the explained variance in life effectiveness. Most notably, the findings demonstrate that religious faith acts as a moderator, strengthening the relationship between happiness and life

effectiveness. The combination of high happiness and strong faith increased life effectiveness by an additional 1% compared to happiness alone.

The higher levels of life effectiveness observed among university students can be explained through the role of happiness as a robust psychological resource. According to Fredrickson's Broaden-and-Build Theory (2001), positive emotions such as happiness do not merely produce fleeting pleasant feelings; rather, they broaden individuals' momentary thought-action repertoires and build enduring personal resources. These include enhanced cognitive flexibility, emotional resilience, and coping capacity. Consequently, happier students are more likely to manage stress effectively, organise their time efficiently, and sustain motivation and initiative when facing academic or personal challenges.

In parallel, religious faith provides a structured sense of meaning, emotional stability, and a guiding value system. From the perspective of Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), spiritual belief supports the fulfilment of basic psychological needs—particularly *relatedness* and *competence*—thereby enhancing personal well-being and adaptive functioning. The moderation effect found in this study suggests that happiness and religious faith operate synergistically. Specifically, happiness that is underpinned by spiritual conviction produces a more resilient psychological foundation. This combination enables students to maintain optimal life effectiveness even under adverse conditions such as those brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

These findings align with previous studies that underscore the importance of happiness and religious faith in promoting psychological well-being and life effectiveness. Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) argued that happier individuals tend to succeed across various life domains including interpersonal relationships, work, and health. In Malaysia, Cosmas (2022) emphasised that happiness enhances students' coping abilities when dealing with academic and emotional stress during the pandemic. Similarly, Colón-Bacó (2010) and Villani et al. (2019) confirmed that religious belief contributes to subjective well-being and mental resilience. However, this study offers a distinct contribution by specifically testing the moderating effect of religious faith on the relationship between happiness and life effectiveness—particularly within the multicultural youth context of Sabah. Unlike previous research that tends to assess the roles of happiness and religiosity independently, this study demonstrates how both interact synergistically to generate stronger psychosocial effects. A previous study by Cosmas et al. (2022) revealed that resilience explained 6% of the variance in happiness and 18% in life effectiveness among university students. Although religious faith did not moderate the relationship between resilience and happiness, it enhanced the link between resilience and life effectiveness, adding 1.6% to the explained variance. This highlights the role of religiosity as an internal resource that reinforces personal effectiveness during times of crisis. Other studies further support these dynamics. Lau et al. (2023) found that *mindfulness* (a mental state achieved by focusing awareness on the present moment) significantly reduced stress and improved life satisfaction among adolescents, although no major differences were found between religious and non-religious participants. Büyükçolpan and Özdemir (2023) showed that *Social Emotional Learning* (SEL) skills improved happiness and life satisfaction by reducing the negative effects of *intolerance to uncertainty* (IU), especially during the pandemic. Regarding spirituality, Alewell et al. (2022) found that workplace spirituality moderated the negative impacts of the pandemic on life and job satisfaction, suggesting its protective role in times of adversity. In Poland, Krok et al. (2021) observed that religiosity mediated the relationship between *meaning-making* (the process of making sense of life events) and life satisfaction, particularly among adolescents experiencing high fear of COVID-19.

The results of this study suggest that happiness is not merely a transient emotional state but serves as a psychological foundation that influences one's ability to function effectively. Meanwhile, religious faith emerges as an inner source of strength that both complements and amplifies the effects of positive emotions on personal and social achievement. Together, happiness and religious faith function as a *dual-resource system*, equipping young individuals with psychosocial resilience to confront stress and change. In a setting like Sabah—where religion is deeply embedded in social life—these findings illustrate the transformative power of faith as an integrated element of daily experience.

On the positive side, these findings affirm that higher education institutions, religious organisations, and community groups can harness the values of happiness and faith to improve student well-being. However, a potential downside lies in the risk of over-reliance on internal resources without integrating professional support or systemic interventions in more complex psychological cases. Therefore, psychosocial approaches must balance spiritual, emotional, and structural dimensions.

The findings offer a foundation for designing more holistic youth development programmes. Universities could incorporate emotional regulation training, happiness-centred activities (such as arts and volunteering), and provide safe spaces for interfaith spiritual growth. In the long term, higher education policies should embed mental well-being and religiosity as core elements of student development frameworks. Governments and religious institutions can also collaborate to create community-based interventions that not only comfort individuals but also strengthen their capacity to navigate crises effectively.

5. Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that both happiness and religious faith are significant contributors to enhancing life effectiveness among university students during times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The most notable finding is that religious faith serves as a positive moderator in the relationship between happiness and life effectiveness. In other words, students who experience higher levels of happiness and simultaneously sustain strong religious faith are more likely to demonstrate greater emotional regulation, social competence, and personal initiative—key indicators of life effectiveness.

The scientific contribution of this research lies in its integrative approach, offering empirical evidence of the *interactive effect* between two psychosocial variables—happiness and religious faith—within a multicultural youth context. Unlike previous studies that have examined these variables in isolation, this study highlights their synergistic role in strengthening resilience and adaptive functioning. It also extends the literature by focusing on university students in Sabah, a region notable for its cultural and religious diversity, thus broadening the relevance of the findings in multicultural settings.

Nonetheless, the study has certain limitations. Most notably, it did not differentiate the effects of specific religions on happiness or life effectiveness. As each religious tradition may provide distinct spiritual and psychological frameworks, future research could investigate how different faith systems uniquely influence these relationships. Additionally, further studies might explore other potential moderators, such as cultural values, community support, or environmental factors, to develop a more holistic understanding of what drives life effectiveness among young people in times of adversity.

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