

## **Happiness and Life Satisfaction among University Students in Malaysia: A Scoping Review**

(Kegembiraan dan Kepuasan Hidup dalam Kalangan Pelajar Universiti di Malaysia: Suatu Ulasan Penskopan)

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### **Abstract**

*Being a university student can be challenging. As such, it is imperative to gain insight into the positive psychology of university students. In this paper, happiness and life satisfaction among university students in Malaysia are reviewed accordingly. Two research questions were highlighted, that is, (i) factors affecting happiness and (ii) factors affecting life satisfaction. The review was conducted using a framework suggested by Arksey and O'Maley (2005). EBSCOhost, ScienceDirect, and Scopus electronic databases were searched for published articles from 2000 to 2021. A total of 588 titles were extracted from electronic databases. After considering inclusion criteria and research questions, 19 articles were selected for review. Happiness was found to have positive relations with social skills, psychological well-being attributes, problem-solving skills, parental home involvement, religious commitment, and religiosity. Factors such as positive religious coping, self-confidence, being an extrovert, and resiliency are found to correlate with life satisfaction. Those with suicidal attitudes, loneliness, shyness, and poorer health displayed lower life satisfaction. Students' life satisfaction is also associated with happiness, intrapreneurial self-capital, intercultural sensitivity, flourishing, spiritual well-being, and spiritual involvement. The review assists the university authorities and student management unit in planning effective curricula and programs for students' psychological well-being.*

**Keywords:** University students, Malaysia, happiness, life satisfaction

### **Abstrak**

*Menjadi seorang pelajar universiti merupakan satu cabaran. Dengan demikian, adalah penting untuk mendapatkan pemahaman mengenai psikologi positif pelajar universiti. Dalam kertas ini, kegembiraan dan kepuasan hidup dalam kalangan pelajar universiti di Malaysia diulas sewajarnya. Dua persoalan kajian telah diketengahkan iaitu (i) faktor yang mempengaruhi kebahagiaan dan (ii) faktor yang mempengaruhi kepuasan hidup. Ulasan ini dilakukan dengan menggunakan rangka kerja yang dicadangkan oleh Arksey and O'Maley (2005). Pangkalan data elektronik EBSCOhost, ScienceDirect dan Scopus digunakan sebagai sumber untuk artikel yang diterbitkan daripada tahun 2000 hingga 2021. Sejumlah 588 tajuk telah diekstrak daripada pangkalan data elektronik. Selepas mempertimbangkan kriteria serta dan persoalan kajian, 19 artikel telah dipilih untuk diulas. Kegembiraan didapati mempunyai hubungan positif dengan kemahiran sosial, sifat kesejahteraan psikologi, kemahiran penyelesaian masalah, penglibatan ibu bapa di rumah, komitmen agama, dan keagamaan. Faktor-faktor seperti daya tindak agama yang positif, keyakinan diri, bersikap ekstrovert, dan daya tahan didapati berkorelasi dengan kepuasan hidup. Mereka yang mempunyai sikap membunuh diri, kesunyian, pemalu, dan kesihatan yang teruk menunjukkan kepuasan hidup yang rendah. Kepuasan hidup pelajar juga dikaitkan dengan kegembiraan, modal diri intrapreneurial, sensitiviti antara budaya, kejayaan, kesejahteraan kerohanian dan penglibatan kerohanian. Ulasan ini membantu pihak pentadbiran universiti serta unit pengurusan pelajar merancang kurikulum dan program yang efektif untuk kesejahteraan psikologi pelajar.*

**Kata kunci:** Pelajar universiti, Malaysia, kegembiraan, kepuasan hidup

## INTRODUCTION

Happiness is an emotional state that plays an important role in human lives. It can facilitate positive behaviour (e.g. students' engagement in learning) (Choi 2016) and impact people's lives. When people who engage in rewarding behaviours or positive interactions feel happiness and joy, they will likely continue to engage in those behaviours or interactions (Carver 2003). Moreover, happy people have better positive energy and are more energetic, passionate and vibrant than less happy individuals (Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter 2003; Park & Peterson 2006; Park et al. 2009). Due to the importance of happiness, it has become the most searched goal by individuals in one's life (Safaria 2014).

Life satisfaction refers to enjoying and feeling content with one's life (Jan & Masood 2008) and the most important and stable component of a person's subjective well-being (Kim-Prieto et al. 2005) and quality of life (Pavot & Diener 2009; Safaria 2014). Good educational opportunities, effective academic services, and pleasant academic life enhance life satisfaction (Chow 2005; Diener & Seligman 2004). Gilman and Huebner (2006) reported that highly satisfied teenagers scored higher points in academic, personal, and interpersonal functionality scales than those with low life satisfaction. On the contrary, life dissatisfaction significantly increases the long-term risk of suicide (Idler & Benyamini 1997), social discontent, and potential political instability (Appleton & Song 2008).

According to the above literature, happiness and life satisfaction are essential contributors to the quality of life and subjective well-being and impact people in specific areas of their lives. In past decades, many countries have done research on university students' happiness and life satisfaction, where it was discovered that several factors are associated with their happiness and life satisfaction. Those factors are essential to be used to predict university students' happiness and life satisfaction. Thus, it is vital to understand university students' happiness and life satisfaction because it will help university management in planning mental health programs or counselling programs for the students based on the factors that cause low levels of happiness.

To date, no reviews have been conducted regarding Malaysian university students' happiness and life satisfaction. Therefore, this scoping review aims to identify the: (i) factors affecting happiness and (ii) factors affecting life satisfaction among them. A scoping review was deemed most appropriate for these outcomes because it is exploratory and includes a wide range of research designs, focusing on breadth rather than depth. This review considered all types of research methodology (qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods) to ensure the

breadth of the study. The paper summarises the literature on happiness and life satisfaction among university students in Malaysia and identifies gaps that will provide direction for future research in the area.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Procedure

A scoping review presents a broad overview of evidence pertaining to a topic and is useful when examining emerging areas. It clarifies key concepts, identifies gaps in the literature (Peters et al. 2015), and summarises previous research findings (Pham et al. 2014) without giving a concrete answer to a distinct research question (Sucharew & Macaluso 2019). This review utilised the five-stage framework by Arksey and O'Malley (2005).

#### Stage 1: Identify the research questions

The research questions for this scoping review were: (1) What are the factors that affect happiness among university students? (2) What are the factors that affect life satisfaction among university students?

#### Stage 2: Identify relevant studies

Research articles published online served as the source for this scoping review. Searches for articles related to the study's topic were conducted using electronic databases from EBSCOhost, ScienceDirect, and Scopus. The keywords used to search for the articles included "Happiness AND University Students AND Malaysia", "Life Satisfaction AND University Students AND Malaysia", and "Relationship Between Happiness AND Life Satisfaction AND University Students AND Malaysia."

Two reviewers (the first author and second author) independently screened the titles and abstracts and assessed all the articles to see if they fulfilled the inclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria were as follows: the articles were published between 2000 and 2021, written in English or Malay (articles written in other languages were excluded since the authors do not comprehend them), articles on happiness and life satisfaction that involved university students, and articles with a proper methodology (comprises research question and data collection) to appropriately identify the participants and obtain information from the tools (e.g. questionnaires) used to measure happiness and life satisfaction. In the event of a disagreement, a third reviewer (an academician who was not involved in the study and author list) joined the discussion and provided feedback. Study quality was not evaluated as the goal of this review was to know the breadth of happiness and life satisfaction among university

students in Malaysia. Ethical approval does not apply to this study as the review does not report on or involve the use of any human data.

### Stage 3: Study selection

In the beginning, 588 articles were identified for this review. During the selection of articles, the irrelevant articles were eliminated when they did not contain the keywords “happiness”, “life satisfaction”, “university student”, and “Malaysia” in the title, abstract, or method. As a result, only 284 articles were left, which were next checked for duplicates. A total of 193 duplicated articles were removed from the study, leaving 91 articles to be assessed for eligibility. Next, all articles were checked in full (full-text review) to eliminate studies that did not answer the current research questions and fit the inclusion criteria. Finally, only 19 articles were eligible and included in the study. The articles included six research papers involving

happiness among university students, 12 articles on life satisfaction among university students, and one article about happiness and life satisfaction among university students. The flow chart of this scoping review is shown in Figure 1.

### Stage 4: Chart the data

This stage was carried out using Microsoft Excel. The information included in the final stage comprised the author(s) and year of publication, the study design, the purpose of the study, and any findings pertinent to the study’s objectives.

### Stage 5: Collect, summarise, and report results

The pertinent information from the articles included in the final stage was retrieved, summarised, and tabulated properly. Finally, the results were reported and described in the results section.

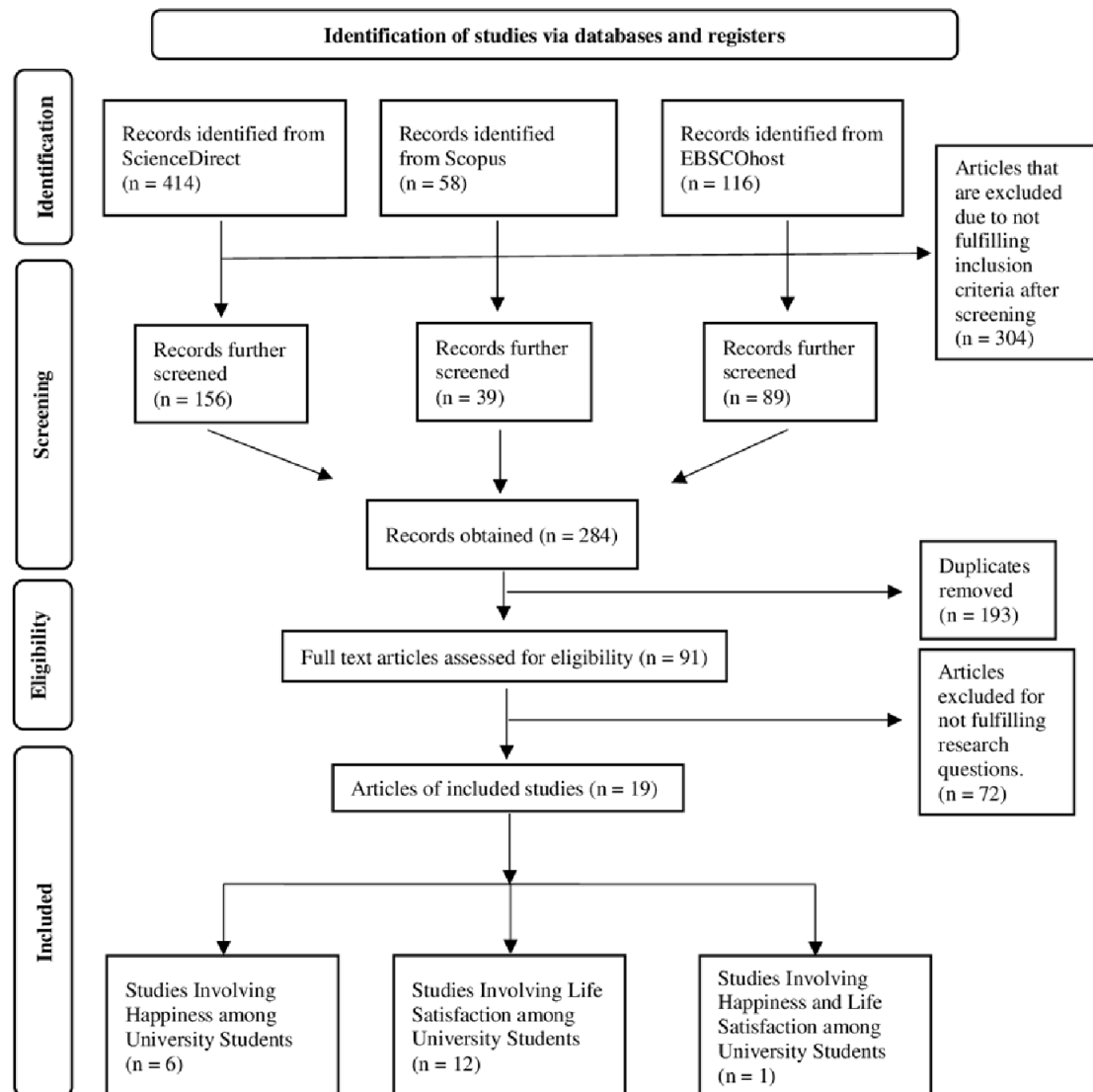


Figure 1. Flow chart of scoping review (adapted from the framework by Arskey and O'Malley 2005)

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Following the study objectives, the articles were divided into two groups: factors affecting (i) life satisfaction and (ii) happiness among Malaysian university students. As presented in Table 1 (factors associated with happiness) and Table 2 (factors associated with life satisfaction), this review yielded 19 articles (all research papers) published between 2002 and 2021. Table 1 consists of seven articles, while Table 2 comprises 12 articles. Of the data collected, only one article (Adding et al., 2012) addressed the association between happiness and life satisfaction among university students. The facts in the articles will be specifically explored under the headings of happiness and life satisfaction.

To sum up, research concerning university students' life satisfaction was conducted the most compared to research concerning university students' happiness. Only one study was conducted on the association between university students' happiness and life satisfaction, so further research is needed to verify the issues. All articles' results were about factors related to happiness and life satisfaction among university students. The studies were conducted in public and private universities and among undergraduate and postgraduate students. International and local students were involved in the studies. All studies were cross-sectional.

### Factors associated with happiness among university students in Malaysia

Happiness contributes to life satisfaction (Ading et al. 2012). Feeling happy and having a good mood throughout educational life positively affects university students. Feeling good about themselves and their life could lead to greater creativity, mental clarity, and better relationships in their study life. Studies conducted among Malaysian students found few factors associated with student happiness. Achour et al. (2017) found a correlation between religious commitment and subjective happiness, while Tekke et al. (2018) discovered a significant relationship between religiosity and personal happiness. Both findings align with Francis et al. (2003) in Germany, which showed significant positive correlations between happiness and attitude toward Christianity.

Social skills are correlated with happiness (Demir et al. 2012). People with higher social skills are generally happier and able to communicate positively with others. Feeling matter to others (feeling significant by other people) can predict happiness (Foo & Prihadi 2021) as individuals will feel more satisfied when they feel significant to others. Moreover, increased psychological well-being attributes (such as health, vitality, self-

acceptance, self-control, and positive relationship with others) are associated with increased students' happiness (Khairuddin & Mahmud 2020) due to individual readiness to accept their strengths and weaknesses and willingness to change for the better. Besides, problem-solving skills and parental home involvement also contribute to students' happiness (Khan et al. 2014).

The review also found the involvement of sociodemographic factors in happiness study. Ading et al. (2012) reported a significant association between religion (Christian, Muslim, and Buddhist) and happiness, and Christian students showed higher happiness levels than Buddhist students. In comparison, Buddhist students reported lower happiness levels than Muslim students, while there were no significant differences between Christian and Muslim students in happiness. Regarding gender differences, male students show higher happiness levels than female students (Ading et al. 2012). This could be explained by the fact that male students are more likely than female students to be optimistic about new challenges.

### Factors associated with life satisfaction among university students in Malaysia

Life satisfaction seems to link up with religious and spiritual issues. Imam et al. (2009) claimed that spiritual well-being significantly predicts life satisfaction, while Ading et al. (2012) showed the impact of spiritual involvement on life satisfaction. Abu-Raiya et al. (2019) reported a significant correlation between positive religious coping and satisfaction with life. In brief, the study suggested that religious involvement can promote life satisfaction.

Conversely, life satisfaction was negatively correlated with suicidal attitudes and loneliness (Swami et al. 2007). People with suicidal attitudes lose the purpose of living or almost give up on their lives. Hence, the more a person loses their sense of living, the lower their satisfaction will be. Moreover, life dissatisfaction is associated with poorer health (Swami et al. 2007), which can cause unnecessary problems for individuals, such as spending time and money to get health treatment. Moreover, Ponnusamy et al. (2020) found that shyness and loneliness influence life satisfaction. Individuals with these attitudes cannot gain sufficient help from friends when help is needed, leading them to low life satisfaction.

Seok et al. (2020) finding shows a significant direct effect between satisfaction with life and flourishing. Seok et al. (2020) also discovered that satisfaction with life positively affects student intrapreneurial self-capital, a core of individual resources used to cope with career and

Table 1. Summary of the study reporting the factors associated with happiness among university students in Malaysia

No.	Study (Author & Year)	Type of Study	Purpose	Findings
1.	Ading et al. (2012)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To investigate the religion and gender differences in stress, happiness, and life satisfaction among university students.</li> <li>• To investigate the effects of spiritual involvement and happiness on life satisfaction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spiritual involvement and happiness contribute to life satisfaction (happiness has more impact than spiritual involvement)</li> <li>• Students who are actively involved in spiritual involvement experience higher life satisfaction than those who are not active in spiritual activities.</li> <li>• Male shows higher happiness than female students.</li> <li>• Significant difference between Christian, Muslim, and Buddhist in spiritual involvement, happiness, and life satisfaction.</li> <li>• Christian students have higher spiritual involvement, happiness, and life satisfaction than Buddhist students.</li> <li>• Buddhist students reported lower happiness than Muslim.</li> <li>• No significant differences between the Christian students and the Muslim students on any of the variables.</li> <li>• Social skills are positively associated with happiness.</li> <li>• Friendship quality fully mediates the association of social skills and happiness.</li> </ul>
2.	Demir et al. (2012)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To investigate the associations between social skills, friendship quality, and happiness.</li> <li>• To test a mediational model positing that friendship quality would mediate the relationship between social skills and happiness among American and Malaysian college students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem-solving and parental home involvement significantly positively influence positive psychological strengths and subjective well-being.</li> <li>• Higher levels of subjective well-being among participants of religious groups than non-religious groups, wealthier families than poor families, and males than females.</li> </ul>
3.	Khan et al. (2014)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To examine the predictors of psychological strengths and subjective well-being for dealing with academic stress perceived by university engineering students.</li> </ul>	

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4.	Achour et al. (2017)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To examine the relationship between religiosity and level of happiness in an Islamic context among Muslim students studying at Malaysian universities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positively correlation between religious commitment and subjective happiness is moderated by educational attainment.</li> </ul>
5.	Tekke et al. (2018)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To investigate whether higher levels of positive religious affect are associated with higher levels of personal happiness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal happiness is positively associated with religiosity and religious affect.</li> </ul>
6.	Khairuddin and Mahmud (2020)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To determine the students' Psychological Well-Being Happiness Index.</li> <li>To model the relationship between the Psychological Well-Being dimensions and the students' happiness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Psychological well-being attributes (general health, vitality, self-acceptance, academic stress, self-control, and positive relation) are positively associated with the students' happiness.</li> </ul>
7.	Foo and Prihadi (2021)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify the association between mattering (feeling matter to others) and happiness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mattering is a predictor of perceived social support (PSS) and optimism.</li> <li>Optimism and perceived social support (PSS) partially mediate the association between mattering and happiness in the new normal (post-quarantine situation amidst the pandemic).</li> </ul>

Table 2. Summary of the study reporting the factors associated with life satisfaction among university students in Malaysia

No.	Study (Author & Year)	Type of study	Purpose	Findings
1.	Le et al. (2002)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To investigate the relationship between culture and alexithymia.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Life satisfaction negatively correlated with alexithymia in the European American and Asian American groups but not in the Malaysian group.</li> </ul>
2.	Swami et al. (2007)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To examine the associations between life satisfaction, loneliness, general health and depression.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The effects of loneliness and life satisfaction on depression are mediated by health.</li> <li>Life satisfaction is negatively correlated with suicidal attitudes, loneliness and depression.</li> <li>Life satisfaction is positively correlated with health.</li> </ul>

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3.	Imam et al. (2009)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To assess the magnitude of an association between spiritual and psychological health measures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spiritual well-being positively predicts life satisfaction.</li> <li>Increased existential well-being is associated with increased life satisfaction.</li> </ul>
4.	Malik et al. (2013)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To investigate the relationship between academic achievement and life satisfaction among undergraduate students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women are more satisfied with their lives than men.</li> <li>89.5% of students demonstrate a moderate level of life satisfaction; 6% of students show high life satisfaction levels; 4.5% of students show low life satisfaction.</li> </ul>
5.	Alahdad et al. (2014)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify major traits of personality that affect life satisfaction among married students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic achievement and life satisfaction are not correlated.</li> <li>Self-confidence, extroversion, and resiliency positively correlated with life satisfaction.</li> </ul>
6.	Yunus et al. (2015)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To compare the part-time distance learning students and the full-time students' emotional intelligence, psychological well-being and life satisfaction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No significant effect of the mode of learning on life satisfaction in both part-time distance learning and full-time students.</li> </ul>
7.	Yi et al. (2017)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To investigate social and behavioural factors associated with binge drinking among university students in nine ASEAN countries.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher binge drinking is significantly associated with a lower level of life satisfaction.</li> </ul>
8.	Abu-Raiya et al. (2019)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To investigate the levels and consequences of positive religious coping among a multinational sample of Muslims.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant positive correlation between positive religious coping and life satisfaction with national origin as moderator.</li> <li>Significant positive correlation between age and satisfaction with life.</li> <li>No significant differences between gender in their scores on satisfaction with life.</li> <li>Married individuals with children scored significantly higher with regard to satisfaction with life.</li> <li>Marital status is associated with greater satisfaction with life.</li> </ul>

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9.	Fitriana et al. (2020)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To examine the relationship between positive orientation and aversive peer experience on social networking sites among university students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant positive relationship between (i) cyber aggression and cyber victimisation, (ii) cyber aggression and satisfaction with life.</li> <li>Cyber aggression increases the likelihood of reduced life satisfaction among students.</li> </ul>
10.	Lulan et al. (2020)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To investigate the influence of intercultural sensitivity and knowledge-sharing attitude on the life satisfaction of international students in three private universities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International students show a high level of life satisfaction.</li> <li>Significant positive correlation between (i) intercultural sensitivity and knowledge-sharing attitude, (ii) intercultural sensitivity and students' life satisfaction.</li> </ul>
11.	Ponnusamy et al. (2020)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To investigate the influence of students' needs on Instagram addiction by considering the moderating role of psychological well-being.</li> <li>To investigate the association among Instagram addiction, academic performance, shyness, loneliness and life satisfaction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Life satisfaction is positively influenced by academic performance and negatively influenced by shyness and loneliness.</li> <li>Instagram addiction has a positive effect on life satisfaction.</li> </ul>
12.	Seok et al. (2020)	Cross-sectional Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To investigate the intrapreneurial self-capital role as a mediator in the relationship between satisfaction of life, academic performance, and flourishing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant positive effect of satisfaction with life to student flourishing.</li> <li>Satisfaction with life affects student intrapreneurial self-capital.</li> <li>Intrapreneurial self-capital mediates the positive relationship between satisfaction with life and the student outcome of flourishing.</li> </ul>



life construction challenges (Di Fabio 2014). How people perceive their life satisfaction would determine their intrapreneurial self-capital for coping with continuing societal change and transitions. Students' intercultural sensitivity also correlates with life satisfaction (Lulan et al. 2020). The students seem keen on adapting to others' cultures and seeking clarity about others' cultures. The results discussed above provide an insight that a satisfying and excellent life experienced by university students will nourish their growth through positive relationships, competency, and meaningful life (Diener et al. 2010). In particular, life satisfaction can generate an individual's positive outcomes. When people are happier, they will work more to improve their life, eventually leading to greater personal success. Moreover, Alahdad et al. (2014) found that self-confidence, being an extrovert, and resiliency correlate with life satisfaction. Individuals with these attitudes are better at socialising and communicating with others, have a higher chance of making more friends, decrease miscommunication problems, and feel more satisfied with their relationships with friends.

The review also discovered that sociodemographic factors were relevant to life satisfaction. Abu-Raiya et al. (2019) showed a significant correlation between age and life satisfaction which contradicts Sachs (2003), where life satisfaction scores were insignificantly associated with age. Regarding gender, Abu-Raiya et al. (2019) found no significant gender differences in life satisfaction. The results align with Anggraeni and Kurniawan (2012) and Sachs (2003) studies, revealing that male and female students have similar levels of life satisfaction. Abu-Raiya et al. (2019) also reported an association between marital status and life satisfaction. Married students with children scored significantly higher on life satisfaction.

Concerning the religion factor, Ading et al. (2012) found that Christian students had higher levels of life satisfaction than Buddhist students, perhaps because Christian students usually go to Sunday Church classes for religious study. The result also shows no significant differences between Christian and Muslim students in life satisfaction scores, most likely because both groups hold religious beliefs and perform religious behaviour accordingly, which helps increase optimism, positive thinking and hope. For example, Muslim people pray five times a day and recite Al-Quran, which leads a person to feel calm and satisfied.

In summary, numerous factors (including sociodemographics) are associated with students' happiness and life satisfaction. Feeling happiness and life satisfaction can impact students' psychological, social, and environmental well-being. According to Jiang et al. (2022), happiness

is crucial for the growth and future careers of university students. Students who excel in their academic achievement have higher self-esteem and life satisfaction, and those with better self-efficacy can effectively deliver their knowledge and skills in managing their academic lives. A longitudinal study could be helpful for future research to understand better students' self-esteem and life satisfaction as they progress through their years of study in the specific academic programme. For the upcoming study, researchers are recommended to conduct studies on emotional intelligence, social dysfunction, emotional distress, and internal locus control (internal locus of control defines control within one's own efforts in which the individual is more likely to take responsibility for their actions, fewer influences by the opinions of other people, work hard to achieve the things they want, have a strong sense of self-efficacy) among the university students as those characteristics were linked to happiness or life satisfaction in other population (e.g., Feng et al. 2012; Pannells & Claxton 2008; Cook et al. 2000). As for the sociodemographic, the researcher can further study employment status, family status, and family income. Comparison between undergraduate and postgraduate students, courses, and years of study is also recommended, as considering the students will be in distinct groups, their perceptions about and factors influencing their happiness and life satisfaction are likely to differ.

The primary limitation of this scoping review is the lack of quality assessment of the included articles. Despite this, a scoping review aims to identify research conducted, not necessarily to assess quality. Arksey and O'Malley (2005) state, "... the scoping study does not seek to assess the quality of evidence and consequently cannot determine whether particular studies provide robust or generalisable findings" (p. 27). Nevertheless, some limitations should be noted. First, research publications on happiness and life satisfaction, as well as the association between the variables among university students in Malaysia, are limited. As a consequence, little factors and sociodemographic issues can be discussed. Second, the articles do not comprise students from all universities in Malaysia, and third, none investigates the differences between undergraduate and postgraduate students, which are part of the university learner. For the fourth, this review was dependent fully on database searches but not manual searches of unpublished papers.

## CONCLUSION

There is emerging evidence of happiness and life satisfaction among university students, although this is still very limited in Malaysia. This review has compiled pertinent studies on the factors

affecting happiness and life satisfaction among Malaysian university students and suggests future directions for research. In this review, social skills, psychological well-being attributes, problem-solving skills, parental home involvement, religious commitment, and religiosity have all been discovered to correlate with happiness positively. In terms of life satisfaction, it is found to link with positive religious coping, self-confidence, being an extrovert, and resiliency. Happiness, intrapreneurial self-capital, intercultural sensitivity, flourishing, spiritual well-being, and spiritual involvement are also related to students' life satisfaction. Lower life satisfaction was seen in those with suicidal attitudes, loneliness, shyness, and poorer health. University students' happiness is associated with their gender and religion, whereas their life satisfaction is correlated with their age, marital status, and religion. This information benefits the university authorities and student management unit to plan an effective learning environment significant for students' psychological well-being.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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