

Exploring the construct of meaning in life among the senior undergraduate student

Farida Agus Setiawati¹, Edi Purwanta²

¹Department of Psychology, Faculty of Education and Psychology, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

²Department of Special Education, Faculty of Education and Psychology, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Article Info

Article history:

Received Sep 13, 2022

Revised Aug 17, 2023

Accepted Sep 12, 2023

Keywords:

Exploring the construct

Meaning in life

Undergraduate student

ABSTRACT

The meaning in life is a fundamental human behavior that plays an essential role in self-development. The concept of meaning in life continues to focus on researchers using various theoretical perspectives. This study explored the construct of meaning in life from the vantage point of undergraduate students in their final year. They were chosen by considering the severity of the developmental tasks that must be completed during this time. By using the mixed-method approach, the study found the concept of meaning in life through the qualitative method. Some themes were related to the meaning of life, namely: experiencing a number of important events, being devoted to religion, learning from life, feeling positive emotions, benefiting others, interacting socially, and caring for oneself. The study was followed by a quantitative method through exploratory factor analysis and found that the construct of the meaning in life consisted of three factors, namely: facing difficult and severe situations, getting lessons from unpleasant situations, and thinking flexibly when dealing with various situations. This measurement model could be used in the development of meaning in life theory. Practically, it becomes the reference in solving the life problems.

This is an open access article under the [CC BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.



Corresponding Author:

Farida Agus Setiawati

Department Psychology, Faculty of Education and Psychology, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta

Karangmalang, Yogyakarta 55281, Indonesia

Email: farida_as@uny.ac.id

1. INTRODUCTION

In daily life, humans might face any event, either as a recurring event that occurred repetitively or as an event that occurred immediately. The routine of the lives was many experiences associated with meaning in life [1]. Those events can be passed through without leaving any impressions and experiences. Sometimes, an event can make humans feel a deep impression or emotion—happy or sad emotion. Humans can learn a valuable lesson from an experience of an event. How an individual can get a deep impression, emotion, and lesson from the events he or she experiences will depend on how he or she gives meaning to those events. The ability of an individual to interpret the events or how they relate to felt meaningfulness is called meaning in life [2]. Meaning in life is also defined as cognizance about a person's existence and goals, and this feeling could be fulfilled [3].

For humans, meaning in life means a fundamental ability that can make them feel important and valuable. This meaning can make humans different from one another. A similar event in a group of people will be defined differently depending on how they interpret it. Meaning in life is an individually, constructed by cognitive system each person [4], [5]. Meaning in life also gives humans a goal and orientation toward their activities [6], [7]. It also can be a part of self-evaluation that later on can create an improvement in behaviors and attitudes [3]. An individual that can have meaning in life can see any phenomena he or she is

experiencing that later make the individual able to have an optimistic behavior or attitude in running the future life [8]. Several studies showed that the meaning in life positively affects the development of psychological characteristics in humans [2].

The concept of meaning in life was developed along with the development of positive psychology, one of the schools in psychology that looks at individual behavior with a focus on positive behavior, i.e., excellent and fun behavior and meaningful life [9], [10]. In positive psychology, each individual is seen as having the potential to develop what is in themselves through character strengths and not only focusing on improving weaknesses. In the efforts to understand the human potential, there is a need for an attempt to interpret any experiences positively. Individuals can have positive ways to interpret any stressors, including making a goal or orientation for the future, learning from experiences, being optimistic, and developing themselves or achievement [8], [11]. The meaning also associates with elevated psychological distress, such as emotional problems, suicidal thoughts, and psychosomatic complaints [7], [12], [13].

One of the theories in humanistic psychology developing the concept of meaning in life is Viktor Frankl, with a theory known as logotherapy [14]. Logotherapy has three fundamental principles. The first principle states that life has a meaning from each condition; the second principle in the form of the main strength in life is the desire to find out the meaning in life, and the last principle is to have the freedom to decide an attitude in any changing situation [15]. Based on the principle, the theory of Victor is then known as the 'meaning triangle', stating that the meaning in life consists of three aspects: creative, experience, and attitude [16]. Creativity here means ideas or thoughts of humans to find out and give something valuable to the surrounding environment. This attempt is made by expressing and creating something for the environment. Any activities can give meaning in life related to creativity, such as working, art, music, or writing. The experience related to how an individual accepts any information from the environment includes the experience with nature, culture, social interaction, and spirituality. The attitude related to how an individual faces any changes is related to how the individual selects an accurate response in any situations, conditions as well as unpleasant situations.

Emotional expression also can show how an individual interprets his or her life [7], [16]. The joyful and smiling facial expression illustrates his or her happy life. Happiness is related to how an individual interprets his or her life though it is not prolonged. The reflected happiness shows that he or she can feel a positive feeling. Someone that tends to be gloomy will show an individual how negatively or pessimistically feels about his or her life. This life's positive and negative feelings will determine someone's meaning in life [17], [18]. Similar to positive and negative feelings, the concept of meaning is related to many events in life. Furthermore, Kim, Kang, and Choi [19] related the meaning in life with a pleasant situation; meanwhile, Bellieni [20] related the meaning in life with an unpleasant experience that made someone cry to tears. The meaning in life was associated with forgiving behavior in couples who love each other [21]. Forgiving behavior often done by couples will increase the meaningfulness of their life.

The meaning in life is also related to the individual that experiences problems. Many individuals can interpret their life as full of miseries and problems they must face. The research about the meaning in life of an elderly scavenger found that the scavenger can interpret the meaning in life by accepting his condition, being patient, grateful, and steadfast in feeling happiness in himself [22]. The meaning in life is also frequently related to the suffering of people who are chronically ill [23]. The meaning in life is negatively correlated to the chronic disease suffered. The higher the meaning in an individual's life, the lower the interference of the disease suffered. Some individuals stay strong and can survive the chronic illness they experience because they can interpret their illness as a test and a part of life that must be passed through. However, some cannot accept their physical condition, consequently worsening their illness [24].

The meaning in life was constructed from two dimensions, they are presence of meaning and search of meaning [7], [25], [26]. The first related to how the individual experiences can be understood by themselves; it refers to "the degree to which people experience their lives as comprehensive and significant, and feel a sense of purpose or mission in their lives that transcends the mundane concerns of daily life." The meaning concerns "the dynamic, active effort people expend trying to establish and augment their comprehension of the meaning, significance, and purpose of their lives." This instrument measurement was developed from 10 items, and each dimension was represented from five items [27].

The meaning in life changes with age [25], [28]. Children, teenager, adolescence, and adult, will have different meanings in their life experiences. The meaning in life is also related to the culture where they live. There are differences in the meaning based on ethnicity [29]. Gender [30], [31] and crisis situations also effect the meaning in life [28], [32]. Thus, the measurement of the meaning in life is indigenous and has a uniqueness in each person's place, age and circumstances the persons live in [33]. The meaning in life impacts the student goal [7], improving the mindsets and lifestyles among university students [8], someone who can interpret their environment would be more enthusiastic in life, and especially university students can

make him or her more enthusiastic about learning and doing any academic tasks. Thus, it became optimized, have the spirit to complete the study on time while staying to optimize the achievements.

University students are young intellectuals who are critical and creative [34]. The advantages of these psychological characteristics of undergraduate students will affect a person's performance. Even the students frequently become the drivers of change. However, the psychological characteristics related to the idealism of these students are sometimes not in accordance with the conditions and abilities they own, particularly for those in the final semester. Students must solve many problems in this period, especially in academic, writing final assignments or thesis, careers, and social/friendship problems [35]. For them, this is a period of transition to adulthood. The transition period is a period that is sometimes difficult for students to feel, thus, affecting their well-being or happiness [35], [36].

Many undergraduate students successfully develop themselves and can face their problems, but some have difficulty overcoming their problems [37], [38]. The final semester is more stressful than the first semester [39]. One of the effects that can be seen is that many students complete their education in so long. Then it also affects other aspects of life, such as experiencing psychological disorders, including being distressed, emotionally disordered, and even depressed. The student's stress level working on a thesis is high [40]. However, many students have succeeded in solving problems they have experienced by being able to interpret their lives and manage themselves. Meaning in life was associated with self-efficacy [41]–[43] and coping with everyday stressors [44], [45].

The various studies showed that the meaning in life has a broad role in the psychic characteristics of humans. Concepts built from the meaning in life are also various. From the previous explanation, the mindset of how a person views various events faced, past experiences, and the severity of the problems being faced also affects his or her view of the meaning in life [27]. Thus, the exploration of the meaning in life from various perspectives needs to be studied further. Based on the background, it is essential to identify the meaning of life for the final semester undergraduate students. The description of students interpreting their life can be reduced to the concept of the meaning in life they have. Thus, this study aims to find the concept of meaning in life and explore the concept to obtain a more substantial and quantitatively tested concept in the form of constructs of the meaning in life among the final semester undergraduate students. Therefore, the question of the research are: i) How the concept of meaning in life resulted from the theme of qualitative research?; and ii) How the construct of meaning in life resulted from the quantitative research?

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research used the mixed method approach or the mixed qualitative-quantitative approach. Research question one was answered in study one, and the second was in study two. The qualitative approach was conducted in study one to obtain any behavior indicators related to the meaning in the life of university students. After obtaining the behavior indicators, it was continued with study two as further research to obtain the concept of the meaning in life with a quantitative approach.

The first study involved 62 final-semester students willing to be the research informants. The sampling was done using purposive sampling. The criteria of the sample of this research included the students in the final semester and willing to be the research subject. The participant of the second study were 141 persons, and they had the same characteristic as the first study.

The qualitative research in the first study was conducted by giving an open question to the students: "Mention a significant event that you have ever experienced and why this event is significant for you." The students were asked to give a written answer. Various answer patterns of research subjects were then combined and described entirely. This study continued with the quantitative approach. It was to find out the construct of the meaning in the life of the final semester students. The subject of this study had criteria similar to the first study. The data collection was done by giving the instrument in the form of the scale of meaning in life. The instrument was developed based on the results taken from the theme or indicator from the result of the first study.

Data analysis was conducted by displaying the data, reducing, and making conclusions. Data reduction in the first study from the answers to the open-ended questions was carried out based on the similarity of the indicator to the informant's answer. The similarity of these was described as various indicators, and the grouping indicator is the theme of the meaning in life. Several that are formed are conclusions from the findings of the concept of the meaning in life qualitatively.

Quantitative analysis in the second study was carried out in item analysis, reliability, and construct analysis. Questionnaire meaning in life was made from the result of the concept from the study of qualitative. Item analysis is carried out to obtain items related to the total score, and reliability analysis is to observe the internal consistency of the measuring instrument. Furthermore, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was carried out to determine the meaning in life construct, which was tested quantitatively. The factor analysis was used to reduce the data. The reduction refers to a technique to simplify or summarize the data. This technique

reduces various measurements and tests to make them simple. It is used to help identify the entire and fundamental properties underlying the measurement. Data reduction is analyzed with the principal component. The determination of the number of factors used criteria for an eigenvalue that was greater than one and the number of items at a minimum factor of three [46].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. The themes of meaning in life

The results of this research are explained from two studies. The results of the first study were done based on the qualitative analysis by seeing the patterns of the response of the answer from the research subjects. From any responses given, the writer did the coding based on the similarity of the content. The coding results showed seven answer patterns that were grouped into seven themes. Those seven themes were named by the similarities of the meaning obtained from the results of reducing the answers from the research subjects. Those seven themes obtained were the concept of meaning in life based on the perspective of the final semester students. Those themes as the indicator of the meaning in life from the results of the study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Themes from the indicator of the meaning in life

| Themes | Indicator |
|--|--|
| Theme 1: Experiencing the important events | Suffering pain because far from the family Accompanying parents who were seriously ill Participating in activities from campus organizations Being a representative to join a historical tour Feeling the income from own business Joining and taking part in the dance cover competition Going to many places that were never visited before Creating fundraising activities dedicated to children with cancer |
| Theme 2: Learning from life | Meaning the fear of death experienced for several days Successfully coping with the sadness Taking the lessons from the negative behavior of other attitudes Changing negative views and getting up from failure Adapting to a new environment Facing any challenging tasks Facing various difficulties and succeeding |
| Theme 3: Feeling the positive emotion | Feeling calm and happy Being motivated to get up Getting warmth in the family Feeling loved Feeling valuable when getting achievements Proud of being able to get the results of the hard work done |
| Theme 4: Devotion to religion | Realizing to be little in this world Grateful to God Learning religion in forum Feeling peaceful in worship Believing that the afterlife is much better than this world |
| Theme 5: Self-concern | Feeling close to God Motivating to get up Maintaining health Defending the position of being a champion A better understanding of who I am and who the people around me |
| Theme 6: Having social interaction | Chasing the dreams Meeting new friends with different characters from various places Having a good friend Gathering with friends and family Feeling needed by other people Sharing experiences with other people |
| Theme 7: Giving benefits to other people | Helping other people Feeling useful for other people Helping others who are less fortunate Giving help to others who are under privileged |

The grouping results showed the variety of behavior indicators in interpreting the life grouped in some themes in explaining the meaning in life. If analyzed further, of those seven themes, there were two essential dimensions: how the participant was valuable in their life and felt the life meaningful. Related to how the participant was valuable in life, the answer was in the second theme, when they can learn from life.

While an individual was valuable in his or her life, the answers were when he or she experienced a particular event, was devoted to religion, felt a positive emotion, gave self-concern, made a social interaction, and was able to give some benefits to other people.

The exploration of the construct of meaning in life from qualitative research found various themes related to the meaning in life, feeling an important event in life, learning from life, devotion to religion, feeling a positive emotion, self-concern, giving the benefits for others, and making social interaction. The results of this qualitative study indicated the meaning in life as seen from various perspectives. One perspective was when an individual felt their life was meaningful. This concept is certainly different when the meaning in life is seen from the perspective of how someone interprets their life. The themes related to the findings of this research were by learning from life. Individuals who could learn from various events, whether a pleasant or unpleasant situation, both from an important event he or she faced or events others faced, could learn from various important events they experienced as well as religious activities, which makes their life meaningful.

Important events in human life occur unavoidably and uncontrollably, whether they are pleasant or unpleasant. Various essential events are experienced to give a person a different atmosphere that is unusually experienced. The events of success, failure, pain, luck or misfortune, and various events that are unusually experienced will be felt like something different. Thus, it will bring meaning in life itself in human life. The experience of these various events is a process of interpreting human life [1].

Pleasant events are beautiful, so one can enjoy them and be happy. Many students are impressed by the pleasant experience and feel happy that it can make the event something meaningful for them. Happiness makes a person's life meaningful, and meaning life also makes someone happy [2]. Unpleasant events can also become meaningful after successfully dealing with them with effort, hard work, and getting help from God or the people nearby. An ability to interpret unpleasant events can be fun in the future. The various feelings experienced give rise to individual diversity in the meaning in life.

Devotion to religion was one of the meaningful activities for the final semester students. It is one of the individual efforts to get closer to God by conducting religious orders. For many people, this religious activity will be felt as guidance when doing daily activities, coping with any problem, and life satisfaction [47]. Spiritual condition is related to how students interpret their life [48], [49]. Some experiences felt meaningful when doing religious service. For example, included participating in religious activities at universities, carrying out religious worship both daily and incidentally, such as *umrah*, feeling a little weak, having many shortcomings leading people to be dependent upon God, getting peace of mind, closeness to God, happiness when getting closer to God, and being grateful for various events experienced. So, it can be concluded the belief related to the meaning in life [50], [51].

Self-concern is part of the way university students interpret life. Various efforts have been made to understand oneself, manage various conditions experienced to efforts for self-improvement, try to achieve desires, and achieve achievement is part of life's meaning. It is not only psychological or physical concern in the form of exercise, and health is also a form of self-concern. Student life cannot be apart from other people. Social interaction with other people is a form of activity that can also give specific meaning. This related to the social support. Several studies show that social support is related to the meaning of life [50], [52], [53]. Various activities with friends intensely and occasionally become a daily experience. It is similar to the interaction with family. Students who wander will feel the burden of living away from family more; thus, they can understand how meaningful the presence of family is [54]. Interacting with many people can raise awareness that many people are experiencing a condition far less fortunate than what they experience. One of the effects is being more grateful for their condition and giving something that can be done for others. When students can give something to others, they will feel more valuable, making them feel helpful to others.

The first study's results showed several important themes that could be reduced qualitatively to the meaning in life. Based on the result, several indicators of life's meaning could be differentiated into two forms. The meaning in life is related to the behavior, as shown by the effects of people with a meaningful life (reflective indicator) and the behavior related to the cause of people with a meaningful life (formative indicator). Reflectively, it is related to any individual learning from the experiences that emerged when an individual feels that his or her life was meaningful. Meanwhile, formatively relates to the sources affecting an individual's meaningful life. Based on the results of the concept of meaning in life, reflectively, a research instrument of meaning in life was made to construct meaning quantitatively. The items were formed from the themes of behavior related to learning from life. All items were 32 statements that must be responded (1=very not appropriate, 2=not appropriate, 3=neutral, 4=appropriate, and 5=very appropriate).

3.2. The construct of meaning in life

The quantitative research aimed to find out the construct of meaning in life among the final semester undergraduate students and to describe the characteristics of meaning in the students' life based on the construct obtained. The phase done to obtain the construct of the meaning in life was by doing the item

analysis and factor analysis. Item analysis was used to seek the property item from correlated the items to the total score. Item selection was conducted with the Pearson formula by correlating the item score with the total scores that have been subtracted from the item scores. Based on the index of minimum correlation of 0.2, there were 25 valid items and eight items with a correlation coefficient below 0.2. Thus, in the following analysis, items were removed; in this case, items number 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 16, 27, and 32.

Reliability is one of the characteristics of a measuring instrument showing the instrument's accuracy in doing the measurement function. An accurate instrument is an instrument that measures precisely with minimum measurement errors. The reliability of this study was analyzed using the alpha formula from Cronbach (α) and the results $\alpha=0.854$. It indicated that the score of the result of measuring instrument was very reliable ($\alpha>0.8$) thus, the measurement results could be trusted.

Construct exploration of meaning in life was done using the confirmatory factor analysis. It was done to find out the construct based on the items. The factor analysis was initiated by seeing the correlation matrix among the variables or items. If the number of correlations in this matrix was relatively high (>0.3), then the completion of factor analysis was continued on factor extraction. The high correlation between these variables can be seen from the anti-image in the correlation matrix. A low anti-image indicated a low correlation, which resulted in insufficiency, and did the factor analysis. This factor analysis's sufficiency was seen in the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test results. If $KMO >0.5$, it could be stated that there were sufficient samples; thus, the factor reduction could be conducted. In addition to the KMO test, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity could be used. If the probability alpha (Sig.) <0.05 , the factor analysis could be continued. The analysis results showed that the KMO was 0.754, and the significance of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was 0.000. KMO more than 0.5 and the significance of Bartlett's test of sphericity less than 0.05 indicated that factor analysis could be performed.

The results of factor analysis showed seven factors with an eigenvalue above one. From the seven components with an eigenvalue of more than one, there were four factors with number of items fewer than three, so that cannot become the one factor. Thus, three factors or dimensions were obtained by this measuring instrument analyzed. The number of variants described from the three factors was 43.887%. The factor loading before being rotated, respectively, from the first factor, was 21.72%, 15.375%, and 6.793%. Meanwhile, after being rotated, each factor's loading was 18.367%, 15.279%, and 10.241%, respectively. Table 2 presents the factor loading for each item.

Table 2. Factor loading for each the items in each dimension after being rotated

| No items | Component | | |
|-------------|-----------|---------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 0.54 | | |
| 6 | | 0.544 | |
| 7 | | 0.773 | |
| 8 | | 0.721 | |
| 9 | | 0.685 | |
| 11 | 0.564 | | |
| 12 | 0.812 | | |
| 13 | | 0.633 | |
| 14 | | 0.524 | |
| 15 | | | |
| 17 | 0.743 | | |
| 18 | 0.771 | | |
| 19 | | | 0.408 |
| 20 | 0.654 | | |
| 21 | | | 0.716 |
| 22 | | | 0.628 |
| 23 | 0.55 | | |
| 24 | 0.486 | | |
| 25 | | 0.629 | |
| 26 | 0.431 | | |
| 28 | | | 0.698 |
| 29 | 0.656 | | |
| 31 | 0.556 | | |
| 32 | | | 0.498 |
| Eigen value | 5.213 | 3.69 | 1.63 |
| % variant | 18.367% | 15.279% | 10.241% |

Once obtaining the factor loading in each item, the maximum factor loading of the three factors formed was sought. Each item had a one-factor loading based on the maximum factor loading. After each item had the factor loading, the final step in the factor analysis was to group the items into similar factors and give a name to the factors formed. The name was given based on the similarity of the content of the statements of the grouped items. There are several set of items that have been grouped along with the names of the factors. The first factor was a behavior related to the ability to face difficult situations as seen from the unfavorable items, i.e., the high response in the items showing the individuals that tended to be failed in facing the difficult situation. The second factor also dealt with an ability to cope with any difficult situations, but it was seen from the favorable items. High responses on these items were related to the behavior of individuals who learned lessons from unpleasant situations. The third factor was related to the flexibility of thinking in various situations. High response in this factor showed individuals who could think from various points of view in interpreting their life so that they had the ease of adapting to various situations.

The second study obtained the construct meaning in life from how an individual interpreted his or her life, how to learn from life. The results of quantitative research succeeded in finding a construct of meaning in life consisting of three factors, and the term factor is referred to as dimension. The first factor was meaning in life in terms of an ability to deal with any problematic situations. This component consisted of unfavorable items, including difficulty interpreting difficult situations, sadness, burden, fear of new situations, difficulty in accepting any input, and criticism. Because it was based on unfavorable items, students who scored high on these items included those who failed to interpret their life, especially in a difficult life. At the same time, the low scores on these items were the students who were able to interpret many difficulties in their life.

The second factor is the ability to deal with difficult situations, as seen from the favorable items. These results were in line with the previous studies stated that the items favorable and unfavorable are difficult to unite one construct or dimension. However, the factor analysis result was grouped into two from one construct [55]–[57]. So, the high responses on these items were related to the behavior of individuals who learned lessons from unpleasant situations. Statements related to this factor included being able to see the benefits behind the calamity, the ability to cope with any difficulties in doing the heavy and challenging tasks, the ability to solve any solutions to problems, the ability to improve themselves, and success in facing failure and taking advantage of challenges. This is relevant to the self-regulation learning that facilitated the meaning in life [57].

The third factor is the ability to interpret life, which is related to flexibility in thinking in dealing with various situations. Several statements related to this factor included the ability to interact in a new situation, do various activities that are difficult for others to do, and prefer busyness to a relaxed atmosphere. High response in this factor showed that the individuals who could think from various points of view in interpreting their lives had ease of adapting to various situations. Various experiences experienced by a person in overcoming the problems experienced make a person's way of thinking more flexible. Flexible students would be able to manage themselves better and be eager to solve challenging situations [7].

Various incidents experienced by university students require an appropriate response. Any various events not in line with expectations are certainly experienced by everyone, including the final semester students. When having difficulty completing a final project, a student will feel negative and unpleasant emotions. How students interpret the difficulties experienced is one way of interpreting their life that enables them to solve problems. Many failed people can overcome the problems they are experiencing. This failure is undoubtedly felt by individuals who are less able to interpret the difficulties or problems they are experiencing. This condition becomes a specific indicator separate from the indicator for individuals who have successfully overcome the difficulties experienced. When a final semester undergraduate student cannot interpret the difficulties he or she feels when compiling the final project, he or she will interpret himself as incapable, failed, and less fortunate. However, students who can interpret the difficulties they experience, for example, because they feel unable to read foreign literature, will try to overcome them. They will succeed in overcoming their problems, and it can take them to be happy. This is in line with Frankl's opinion stating that a person's attitude is related to his or her ability to deal with various changes he or she faces [14]. It is also related to how an individual chooses the correct response to unpleasant situations, conditions, and situations and used by people as a part of their meaning system to cope with life's difficulties and challenges [49].

4. CONCLUSION

This research concludes that various component among the final semester student is related to the meaning in life until to get the meaning in life construct that has been tested quantitatively. Several components related to the meaning in life included learning from life, feeling positive emotion, devotion to religion, self-concern, interacting socially, and benefiting others. While the construct built from quantitative

research was an ability to face any difficult situations, learn the lessons from an unpleasant situation, and the flexibility of thinking when faced with various situations.

The implications of the results of this study are explained theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research gets the construct of meaning in life for final-semester undergraduate students. This study's themes and dimensions of the meaning in life can be a reference for subsequent analyses, especially in developing theories and measurement instruments for the next research. The limitation of this research is that the sample focuses on the final undergraduate student. Further studies can replace the subjects with different characteristics, such as early semester undergraduate students, overseas students, teens, early adults, parents, and teachers. The other limitation of the resulting study was that the variance extracted from the measurement model of the meaning in life instrument was 43.887%. It is no more than 50%. So, the development of this instrument is essential to construct meaning in life entirely and more valid.

Practically, the results of this study can be used as a reference in interpreting the problem, especially for final-semester undergraduate students, such as finishing the thesis. The complicated experienced are difficult situations to solve. Still, it is a critical moment to be interpreted positively. One will be a success when he can mean this situation positively. It will be a memorable experience and help individuals solve more severe problems and learn to succeed.

REFERENCES




- [1] S. J. Heintzelman, J. Trent, and L. A. King, "Encounters with objective coherence and the experience of meaning in life," *Psychological Science*, vol. 24, no. 6, pp. 991–998, Jun. 2013, doi: 10.1177/0956797612465878.
- [2] A. Kauppinen, "Meaning and happiness," *Philosophical Topics*, vol. 41, no. 1, pp. 161–185, 2013, doi: 10.5840/philtopics20134118.
- [3] S. M. To, H. L. Tam, S. S. Y. Ngai, and W. L. Sung, "Sense of meaningfulness, sources of meaning, and self-evaluation of economically disadvantaged youth in Hong Kong: Implications for youth development programs," *Children and Youth Services Review*, vol. 47, no. P3, pp. 352–361, Dec. 2014, doi: 10.1016/j.chilyouth.2014.10.010.
- [4] D. Krok and E. Telka, "Optimism mediates the relationships between meaning in life and subjective and psychological well-being among late adolescents," *Current Issues in Personality Psychology*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 32–42, Mar. 2019, doi: 10.5114/cipp.2018.79960.
- [5] P. T. P. Wong, "Toward a dual-systems model of what makes life worth living," in *The human quest for meaning*, London & New York: Routledge, 2012, p. 23.
- [6] H. Zhang, X. Ge, Z. Liu, and L. Wei, "Goal-related unethical behaviors and meaning in life: the moderating role of goal state," *Journal of Research in Personality*, vol. 87, p. 103970, Aug. 2020, doi: 10.1016/j.jrp.2020.103970.
- [7] J.-B. Li, S. Salcuni, and E. Delvecchio, "Meaning in life, self-control and psychological distress among adolescents: a cross-national study," *Psychiatry Research*, vol. 272, pp. 122–129, Feb. 2019, doi: 10.1016/j.psychres.2018.12.033.
- [8] E. A. Yu and E. C. Chang, "Meaning in life as a predictor of optimism: how parents mattering matters to Asian and European Americans," *Personality and Individual Differences*, vol. 138, pp. 366–369, Feb. 2019, doi: 10.1016/j.paid.2018.10.031.
- [9] R. Bretherton, "Existential dimensions of positive psychology," in *Positive Psychology in Practice: Promoting Human Flourishing in Work, Health, Education, and Everyday Life: Second Edition*, Hoboken, NJ, USA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2015, pp. 47–60. doi: 10.1002/9781118996874.ch4.
- [10] D. Febrianingsih and M. T. Chaer, "Positive psychology: personalities, major issues, advantages and disadvantages," *Muaddib: Studi Kependidikan dan Keislaman*, vol. 8, no. 1, p. 34, Jun. 2018, doi: 10.24269/muaddib.v8i1.1048.
- [11] H. Ju, J. W. Shin, C. Kim, M. Hyun, and J. Park, "Mediational effect of meaning in life on the relationship between optimism and well-being in community elderly," *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics*, vol. 56, no. 2, pp. 309–313, Mar. 2013, doi: 10.1016/j.archger.2012.08.008.
- [12] K. L. Henry, P. J. Lovegrove, M. F. Steger, P. Y. Chen, K. P. Cigularov, and R. G. Tomazic, "The potential role of meaning in life in the relationship between bullying victimization and suicidal ideation," *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, vol. 43, no. 2, pp. 221–232, Feb. 2014, doi: 10.1007/s10964-013-9960-2.
- [13] G. Arslan and M. Yıldırım, "Coronavirus stress, meaningful living, optimism, and depressive symptoms: a study of moderated mediation model," *Australian Journal of Psychology*, vol. 73, no. 2, pp. 113–124, Apr. 2021, doi: 10.1080/00049530.2021.1882273.
- [14] F. Mohammadi, F. D. Fard, and H. Heidari, "Effectiveness of logo therapy in hope of life in the women depression," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 159, pp. 643–646, Dec. 2014, doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.12.440.
- [15] D. Devoe, "Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy: The search for purpose and meaning," *Inquiries Journal*, vol. 4, no. 7, pp. 1–8, 2012.
- [16] A. Shoshani and P. Russo-Netzer, "Exploring and assessing meaning in life in elementary school children: Development and validation of the meaning in life in children questionnaire (MIL-CQ)," *Personality and Individual Differences*, vol. 104, pp. 460–465, Jan. 2017, doi: 10.1016/j.paid.2016.09.014.
- [17] L. A. King, J. A. Hicks, J. L. Krull, and A. K. Del Gaiso, "Positive affect and the experience of meaning in life," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 90, no. 1, pp. 179–196, Jan. 2006, doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.90.1.179.
- [18] K. A. Machell, T. B. Kashdan, J. L. Short, and J. B. Nezlek, "Relationships between meaning in life, social and achievement events, and positive and negative affect in daily life," *Journal of Personality*, vol. 83, no. 3, pp. 287–298, Jun. 2015, doi: 10.1111/jopy.12103.
- [19] J. Kim, P. Kang, and I. Choi, "Pleasure now, meaning later: Temporal dynamics between pleasure and meaning," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, vol. 55, pp. 262–270, Nov. 2014, doi: 10.1016/j.jesp.2014.07.018.
- [20] C. V. Bellieni, "Meaning and importance of weeping," *New Ideas in Psychology*, vol. 47, pp. 72–76, Dec. 2017, doi: 10.1016/j.newideapsych.2017.06.003.
- [21] D. R. Van Tongeren, J. D. Green, J. N. Hook, D. E. Davis, J. L. Davis, and M. Ramos, "Forgiveness increases meaning in life," *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 47–55, Jan. 2015, doi: 10.1177/1948550614541298.

- [22] D. A. Ningsih, I. F. Reza, and M. Uyun, "The meaning of life of elderly Muslim scavengers in Sukajaya landfill (TPA) Sukarame sub-district Palembang," (in Indonesian), *Psikis: Jurnal Psikologi Islami*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 52–59, Aug. 2017, doi: 10.19109/psikis.v3i1.1394.
- [23] H. Richardson and S. Morley, "Action identification and meaning in life in chronic pain," *Scandinavian Journal of Pain*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 1–10, Oct. 2015, doi: 10.1016/j.sjpain.2015.04.024.
- [24] D. J. Hallford, D. Mellor, R. A. Cummins, and M. P. McCabe, "Meaning in life in earlier and later older-adulthood: confirmatory factor analysis and correlates of the meaning in life questionnaire," *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, vol. 37, no. 10, pp. 1270–1294, Oct. 2018, doi: 10.1177/0733464816658750.
- [25] B. Semma, M. Henri, W. Luo, and C. G. Thompson, "Reliability generalization of the meaning in life questionnaire subscales," *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, vol. 37, no. 7, pp. 837–851, Oct. 2019, doi: 10.1177/0734282918800739.
- [26] M. H. Yek, N. Olendzki, Z. Kekecs, V. Patterson, and G. Elkins, "Presence of meaning in life and search for meaning in life and relationship to health anxiety," *Psychological Reports*, vol. 120, no. 3, pp. 383–390, Jun. 2017, doi: 10.1177/0033294117697084.
- [27] L. P. de Vries *et al.*, "Gene-by-crisis interaction for optimism and meaning in life: the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic," *Behavior Genetics*, vol. 52, no. 1, pp. 13–25, Jan. 2022, doi: 10.1007/s10519-021-10081-9.
- [28] E. A. Yu and E. C. Chang, "Parent-child closeness and parents' meaning in life in personal meaning in life: examining ethnic differences," *Family Journal*, vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 300–305, Jul. 2018, doi: 10.1177/1066480718795122.
- [29] Z. H. Khan, P. J. Watson, A. Z. Naqvi, K. Jahan, and Z. J. Chen, "Muslim experiential religiousness in Pakistan: meaning in life, general Well-being and gender differences," *Mental Health, Religion & Culture*, vol. 18, no. 6, pp. 482–491, Jul. 2015, doi: 10.1080/13674676.2015.1079602.
- [30] A. Baltacı and S. N. Yaglı Soykan, "Optimism, happiness, life meaning and life satisfaction levels of the faculty of divinity students: a multi-sample correlational study," *Spiritual Psychology and Counseling*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 167–184, Jun. 2020, doi: 10.37898/spc.2020.5.2.91.
- [31] W. E. Davis and J. A. Hicks, "Judgments of meaning in life following an existential crisis," in *The Experience of Meaning in Life*, Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2013, pp. 163–174. doi: 10.1007/978-94-007-6527-6_13.
- [32] S. Hupkens, A. Machiels, M. Goumans, and P. Derckx, "Meaning in life of older persons: an integrative literature review," *Nursing Ethics*, vol. 25, no. 8, pp. 973–991, Dec. 2018, doi: 10.1177/0969733016680122.
- [33] H. T. Snyder, J. A. Hammond, M. G. Grohman, and J. Katz-Buonincontro, "Creativity measurement in undergraduate students from 1984–2013: a systematic review," *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 133–143, May 2019, doi: 10.1037/aca0000228.
- [34] X. Liu, S. Ping, and W. Gao, "Changes in undergraduate students' psychological well-being as they experience university life," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, vol. 16, no. 16, p. 2864, Aug. 2019, doi: 10.3390/ijerph16162864.
- [35] Y. Ayriza, F. A. Setiawati, S. R. Nurhayati, S. R. Gumelar, and E. P. D. R. Sholeha, "Does sleep quality serve as a mediator between well-being and academic achievement?" *Cakrawala Pendidikan*, vol. 38, no. 1, pp. 63–74, Feb. 2019, doi: 10.21831/cp.v38i1.22181.
- [36] M. Patnani, "Efforts to improve problem solving skills in college students in Indonesian," *Jurnal Psikogenesis*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 185–198, 2013.
- [37] J. Cavanagh, M. Burstyn, A. Southcombe, and T. Bartram, "Contributing to a graduate-centred understanding of work readiness: an exploratory study of Australian undergraduate students' perceptions of their employability," *The International Journal of Management Education*, vol. 13, no. 3, pp. 278–288, Nov. 2015, doi: 10.1016/j.ijme.2015.07.002.
- [38] H. Elias, W. S. Ping, and M. C. Abdullah, "Stress and academic achievement among undergraduate students in Universiti Putra Malaysia," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 29, pp. 646–655, 2011, doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.11.288.
- [39] R. Wardi and Ifdil, "Stress conditions in students completing thesis," *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan, Psikologi, Bimbingan dan Konseling*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 190–194, 2016, doi: 10.24127/gdn.v6i2.512.
- [40] M. Yuen and J. A. D. Datu, "Meaning in life, connectedness, academic self-efficacy, and personal self-efficacy: a winning combination," *School Psychology International*, vol. 42, no. 1, pp. 79–99, Feb. 2021, doi: 10.1177/0143034320973370.
- [41] J. A. Lewis, T. L. Rague-Bogdan, S. Lee, and M. A. Rao, "Examining the role of ethnic identity and meaning in life on career decision-making self-efficacy," *Journal of Career Development*, vol. 45, no. 1, pp. 68–82, Feb. 2018, doi: 10.1177/0894845317696803.
- [42] T. Sorensen *et al.*, "The sources of meaning and meaning in Life questionnaire in the Norwegian context: relations to mental health, quality of life, and self-efficacy," *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 32–45, Jan. 2019, doi: 10.1080/10508619.2018.1547614.
- [43] S. Ward, J. Womick, L. Titova, and L. King, "Meaning in life and coping with everyday stressors," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, vol. 49, no. 3, pp. 460–476, Mar. 2023, doi: 10.1177/01461672211068910.
- [44] M. Miao, L. Zheng, and Y. Gan, "Meaning in life promotes proactive coping via positive affect: a daily diary study," *Journal of Happiness Studies*, vol. 18, no. 6, pp. 1683–1696, Dec. 2017, doi: 10.1007/s10902-016-9791-4.
- [45] J. F. Hair, J. J. Risher, M. Sarstedt, and C. M. Ringle, "When to use and how to report the results of PLS-SEM," *European Business Review*, vol. 31, no. 1, pp. 2–24, Jan. 2019, doi: 10.1108/EBR-11-2018-0203.
- [46] O. I. Alorani and M. F. Alradaydeh, "Spiritual well-being, perceived social support, and life satisfaction among university students," *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, vol. 23, no. 3, pp. 291–298, Jul. 2018, doi: 10.1080/02673843.2017.1352522.
- [47] I. Ivtzan, C. P. L. Chan, H. E. Gardner, and K. Prashar, "Linking religion and spirituality with psychological well-being: examining self-actualisation, meaning in life, and personal growth initiative," *Journal of Religion and Health*, vol. 52, no. 3, pp. 915–929, Sep. 2013, doi: 10.1007/s10943-011-9540-2.
- [48] D. Krok, "The role of meaning in life within the relations of religious coping and psychological well-being," *Journal of Religion and Health*, vol. 54, no. 6, pp. 2292–2308, Dec. 2015, doi: 10.1007/s10943-014-9983-3.
- [49] K. L. De Vogler and P. Ebersole, "Adults' Meaning in Life," *Psychological Reports*, vol. 49, no. 1, pp. 87–90, Aug. 1981, doi: 10.2466/pr0.1981.49.1.87.
- [50] N. Krause, R. D. Hayward, D. Bruce, and C. Woolever, "Church involvement, spiritual growth, meaning in life, and health," *Archive for the Psychology of Religion*, vol. 35, no. 2, pp. 169–191, May 2013, doi: 10.1163/15736121-12341263.
- [51] M. H. Liu, C. H. Wang, T. H. Tung, C. M. Lee, and A. F. Chiou, "Care needs, social support and meaning in life in patients after acute heart failure hospitalisation: A longitudinal study," *European Journal of Cardiovascular Nursing*, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 106–114, Apr. 2021, doi: 10.1177/1474515120945478.
- [52] N. Krause, "The social foundation of religious meaning in life," *Research on Aging*, vol. 30, no. 4, pp. 395–427, Jul. 2008, doi: 10.1177/0164027508316619.




- [53] M. E. Grouden and P. E. Jose, "Do sources of meaning differentially predict search for meaning, presence of meaning, and wellbeing?" *International Journal of Wellbeing*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 33–52, Jan. 2015, doi: 10.5502/ijw.v5i1.3.
- [54] B. Weijters and H. Baumgartner, "Misresponse to reversed and negated items in surveys: a review," *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 49, no. 5, pp. 737–747, Oct. 2012, doi: 10.1509/jmr.11.0368.
- [55] S. Y. Y. Chyung, J. R. Barkin, and J. A. Shamsy, "Evidence-based survey design: the use of negatively worded items in surveys," *Performance Improvement*, vol. 57, no. 3, pp. 16–25, Mar. 2018, doi: 10.1002/pfi.21749.
- [56] F. A. Setiawati, S. R. Nurhayati, R. N. Amelia, and A. A. Darajat, "Study on the threats of reverse-worded items to the psychometric properties of the marital quality scale," *The Open Psychology Journal*, vol. 15, no. 1, Nov. 2022, doi: 10.2174/18743501-v15-e2208150.
- [57] D. R. Van Tongeren, C. N. DeWall, J. D. Green, A. H. Cairo, D. E. Davis, and J. N. Hook, "Self-regulation facilitates meaning in life," *Review of General Psychology*, vol. 22, no. 1, pp. 95–106, Mar. 2018, doi: 10.1037/gpr0000121.

BIOGRAPHIES OF AUTHORS



Farida Agus Setiawati    is lecturer in Department Psychology, Faculty of Education and Psychology, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia. She was born in Pekalongan on August 13, 1972. She studied undergraduate students in the Department Psychology and Mastery Program in Psychometric Universitas Gadjah Mada and doctoral program in Educational Research and Evaluation, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta. She can be contacted at email: farida_as@uny.ac.id.



Edi Purwanta    was born in Klaten on Nopember 5, 1960. He studied undergraduate students in guidance and counseling in IKIP Yogyakarta, Indonesia (1983). He studied mastery and doctoral in the same program, passed in 1993 and 2011. He is professor and lecturer in department Special Educational, Faculty of Education and Psychology, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia. He can be contacted at email: edi_purwanta@uny.ac.id.