

DIGITAL SPIRITUAL ENGAGEMENT: AN INTEGRATIVE REVIEW OF RESILIENCE AND LIFE SATISFACTION

Archana Shori^{1*}, Prof. Monika Rikhi, DU²

^{1*}Research Scholar, Centre of Excellence for the Science of Happiness, Delhi Technological University
archana.shori123@gmail.com ORCID ID : 0009-0008-1792-5428

²Professor, Department of Applied Psychology, Sri Aurobindo College(E), University of Delhi
drmonika@aurobindoe.du.ac.in ORCID ID- 0009-0009-2084-2751

Abstract

The rapid expansion of digital technologies has transformed religious and spiritual practices, giving rise to digital spiritual engagement as a prominent feature of contemporary life. While traditional spirituality has been consistently associated with psychological resilience and life satisfaction, the implications of digitally mediated spiritual practices remain insufficiently synthesised. This integrative review examines the conceptual foundations, theoretical mechanisms, and empirical evidence linking digital spiritual engagement with psychological resilience and life satisfaction. A comprehensive review of interdisciplinary literature published in recent years was conducted, drawing from psychology, sociology, religious studies, and health research. The analysis focused on theoretical models, empirical findings, and emerging themes related to online worship, spiritual coping, community belonging, and subjective well-being. Findings indicate that digital spiritual engagement contributes to resilience through meaning-making, emotional regulation, and perceived social support. These resilience processes, in turn, enhance life satisfaction by fostering purpose, gratitude, and relational connectedness. However, potential risks such as digital fatigue and reduced embodied interaction warrant consideration. Digital spiritual engagement functions as a hybrid psychosocial resource that can promote resilience and life satisfaction in technologically mediated contexts. Future research should employ longitudinal and culturally sensitive approaches to refine the understanding of its long-term effects.

Keywords: digital spirituality, psychological resilience, life satisfaction, meaning making, online religious participation

Received: 02/04/2026

Revised: 13/04/2026

Acceptance: 20/04/2026

Publication: 25/04/2026

1. Introduction

The digital revolution has radically transformed the way of human interaction, communication, and identity formation by impacting its consequences even on the spheres that were traditionally viewed as belonging to the realm of embodiment and collective experience, in particular, religion and spirituality. All over the world, religious services are broadcast, meditation and prayer apps are downloaded by millions, and spiritual communities are becoming virtual spaces to be located anywhere in the world. This change is the beginning of digital spiritual engagement, which is defined as an act of using digital technologies to practice, experience, and express spirituality. With the integration of technological mediation into daily life, it has become more and more significant to understand the impact of technological mediation on psychological resilience and life satisfaction.

The spiritual thinking and religious involvement tend to intensify during the global crisis. A vivid example of this tendency is the COVID-19 pandemic. In the initial few months of the crisis, search engines saw an increase in searches of the word prayer all over the world, which could be interpreted as a global shift to religious coping due to uncertainty and fear (Bentzen, 2021). Researchers soon realised that the point of intersection between religion, mental health, and crisis response had to be examined (Dein et al., 2020). There was a quick adaptation of the religious institutions where physical meetings were turned to online platforms, providing worship services via livestream, virtual prayer sessions, and online pastoral counselling. These changes did not simply maintain religious attendance; these changes redefined the way in which spirituality was accessed and experienced.

Religion coping strategies were vital in the pandemic. Mental health outcomes in different communities were linked to religious coping mechanisms, including seeking spiritual support, praying, and redefining tragedy in theological terms (Pirutinsky et al., 2020). Koenig (2020) stressed that taking action based on faith, i.e. praying, serving, and being involved in the community, contributed to sustaining well-being in times of extended uncertainty. Notably, most of these religious activities were enabled by the digital process, and it showed the flexibility of spiritual practice in technologically mediated situations.

There have been early empirical studies that have commenced to look at the particular impact of online religious attendance. As an illustration, Shiba et al. (2023) discovered that the use of online religious services during the COVID-19 lockdown was positively linked to the future health and well-being of UK adults. These results provoke the premise

that digital worship is inherently a lesser experience to physical attendance at the services. Rather, they provide that digital spirituality can serve as an effective psychosocial factor, especially when a physical meeting is limited.

In addition to crisis situations, there is a strong body of research that has interconnected religion and spirituality with subjective well-being and life satisfaction. A meta-analysis by Yaden et al. (2022) showed that there was a positive relationship between religion/spirituality and life satisfaction in different cultures and methodological designs. Religions and spiritual practices offer meaning-making models, ethical guidance, a social support system and possibilities of gratitude and transcendence, which all lead to overall well-being. Much of this research has, however, centred on the conventional modes of religious participation, i.e. physical service attendance, and institutional participation. The growing digitalisation of spiritual existence preconditions the appearance of new dynamics, and it should be properly systematically studied.

The concept of psychological resilience is useful in offering the conceptual prism through which these dynamics can be studied. Resilience can be defined as the ability to positively change amid stress, trauma or adversity. Spiritual worldviews can be strengthening as they provide interpretive systems to give meaning to suffering and can provide supportive communities to cushion stress. These protective mechanisms can be enhanced on digital platforms because they become more accessible, more immediate, and global. Simultaneously, digital mediation provokes such significant questions as authenticity, embodiment, and the richness of communal bonds.

Although digital religion and mental health have become the subjects of growing concern, the literature is still disjointed. Online worship, spiritual coping, resilience, and life satisfaction studies are usually undertaken in different disciplinary silos. Little has been done in terms of integrative scholarship to determine the extent to which digital spiritual engagement is a coping strategy and concurrently a source of breaks in life satisfaction. Moreover, the affordances and constraints brought about by digital environments are often not taken into consideration by theoretical models.

The current review fills this gap by synthesising the recent studies on the topic of digital spiritual engagement and its connection with psychological resilience and life satisfaction. Particularly, the integrative review will provide an explanation of the conceptual backgrounds and theoretical accounts pertinent to digital spirituality, review existing empirical evidence that connects digital engagement to the resilience processes, and interpret how the resilience processes can be extrapolated to affect life satisfaction. This article combines the perspectives of psychology, sociology, religious studies, and digital media scholarship into a new conceptual framework of digital spiritual engagement in the context of larger well-being paradigms.

Today, living in the time of accelerated technology and the world in a state of global confusion, the psychosocial concerns of digital spirituality are probable and even urgent. The research on the role of digital spiritual involvement in resilience and life satisfaction will bring insight to researchers, mental health practitioners, faith leaders, and policymakers interested in facilitating human thriving in more digitalised societies.

2. Conceptual Foundations and Theoretical Frameworks

2.1 Defining Core Constructs

An articulated conceptual base is required to assimilate the interdisciplinary literature regarding digital spirituality, resilience and life satisfaction. This part outlines the three main constructs and places them in the context of modern psychology and religious studies.

Digital Spiritual Engagement (DSE) can be described as an application of digital technology (live-stream worship services, meditation apps, online prayer groups, spiritual podcasts, and faith-specific social media groups) in the expression, exploration, or further development of spiritual beliefs and practices. By contrast to the face-to-face religious engagement, the DSE is mediated by the technological interfaces that transform the ritual, power, community-building, and meaning-making practices. It is not just the digitalisation of religious material, but the change in the spiritual experience of networked space.

The psychological resilience can be considered as the ability to respond positively to adversity, stress or trauma. The modern approach to the concept of resilience highlights that it is a dynamic process instead of a characteristic. Religious and spiritual resources, including hope, forgiveness, gratitude, transcendence, and community belonging, have also proven to aid resilience mechanisms (Dolcos et al., 2021). Specifically, the interaction between religiosity and well-being is mediated by cognitive reappraisal and coping self-efficacy, which indicates that spiritual involvement has the potential to enhance adaptive emotional regulation.

Life Satisfaction is the cognitive assessment aspect of subjective well-being. It is a kind of world judgment of a person regarding the quality and significance of his or her life. The meaning in life has always proven to be a high-quality predictor of psychological well-being (García-Alandete, 2015). Existential frameworks created by spiritual worldviews tend to create more coherence, purpose and direction, which lead to more life satisfaction.

These constructs overlap in digital circumstances distinctly. Spiritual practices via the Internet could be used to help in meaning reconstruction in crisis, promote a sense of perceived social support, and promote positive emotions, which are the core mechanisms of resilience and well-being. The three constructs have their comparative definitions and dimensions of core that are captured in Table 1, with emphasis being made on adapting them to the digital environment.

Table 1. Comparative Definitions and Core Dimensions of Key Constructs

Construct	Key Scholars	Core Dimensions	Digital Adaptation
-----------	--------------	-----------------	--------------------

Digital Spiritual Engagement	Campbell and Tsuria (2021)	Ritual participation, community interaction, identity formation, transcendence	Live-stream worship, meditation apps, online prayer groups, and AI-based spiritual dialogue
Psychological Resilience	Dolcos et al. (2021); Cowden et al. (2024)	Adaptive coping, cognitive reappraisal, emotional regulation, coping self-efficacy	Online support groups, digital faith communities, and app-based stress regulation
Life Satisfaction	García-Alandete (2015); Schnell & Krampe (2020)	Meaning in life, purpose, self-control, and global life evaluation	Digital gratitude journaling, virtual fellowship, and spiritually oriented wellbeing apps

Digital mediation, according to Table 1, does not change the essence of these constructs but changes their forms of expression. The digital platforms increase access and immediacy and may alter communal intensity and embodiment in ritual.

2.2 Distinguishing Spirituality from Religion in Digital Contexts

Spirituality and religion also need a conceptual difference to analyse them. Religion is generally understood as systems of beliefs, ritual, organization and practices of a communal nature. Spirituality, in its turn, is traditionally considered as a more subjective and personal quest for meaning, transcendence and contact with the sacred.

Religion and spirituality are similar and different concepts in modern-day scholarship. Krause (2021) also highlights that gratitude, compassion, and forgiveness are some of the virtues that are encouraged through religious engagement, and the three are directly associated with health outcomes. In the meantime, spirituality can be independent of major religious institutions, especially in digitally mediated spaces where individualisation is the key.

These boundaries are obscured in digital environments. People can be part of institutionalised worship through livestream (religion) but may also practice meditation or spiritual reflection through their smartphone app (spirituality). In addition, spiritual struggles, doubts, and personal or existential tensions can also be presented in online environments. There is longitudinal evidence that religious and spiritual struggle can have a reciprocal, time-dependent relationship in whole-person functioning (Cowden et al., 2024). Consequently, online interaction may enhance both enjoyable and problematic elements of the spiritual life.

Pargament and Exline (2021) believe that spiritual struggles are not pathological in nature but can trigger growth when dealt with in a constructive way. Online, religious questioning can be heightened by learning about multiple interpretations, theological controversies, and world crises, in addition to being provided with more extensive support groups. The significance of integrative theoretical models is supported by this duality.

2.3 Theoretical Foundations

In order to realise the avenues connecting digital spirituality and life satisfaction with resilience, several theoretical lenses are supposed to be incorporated.

According to the theory of meaning-making, people make sense out of the events of their lives using the global belief systems that offer them a sense of coherence and purpose. When faced with stress, people strive to make a reconciliation between the situational meaning and the larger existential systems. Sensational purpose has been demonstrated to forecast psychological wellness (García -Alandete, 2015) and meaning-focused coping to counter stress in the COVID-19 pandemic (Schnell and Krampe, 2020). Online spiritual practices can help recreate the meaning with the help of sermons, spiritual meditations, online testimonies, and community talks.

The theory of Fredrickson (2004) is the broaden-and-build theory that suggests that positive emotions expand the cognitive repertoires, as well as develop the durable psychological assets. Positive emotions are produced through spiritual practices (gratitude, compassion, hope, and awe) to increase the ability to cope. Positive affect can be developed through meditation applications, inspirational content, and community worship activities in the digital space and reinforce resilience mechanisms. This theoretical course can be supported by emotional regulation strategies, which mediate the relationship between religiosity and well-being (Dolcos et al., 2021).

The social support theory stresses that emotional and instrumental support are perceived to buffer stress and promote well-being. The virtual fellowship groups, prayer networks and digital faith societies can offer a sense of belonging and identity. According to Krause (2021), religious communities are developing virtues that support positive relations. Perceived spiritual support can be used to improve adaptive functioning, even in virtual environments.

The Self-determination theory is based on the idea that human psychology can be well-being in relation to the satisfaction of three levels of needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Digital spirituality, in most cases, enables users to choose freely the practices which are consistent with personal beliefs, which leads to intrinsic motivation. With skill-building in meditation or scriptural study, competence may arise, and with regard to scriptural study, through online communities.

The digital media ecology approach does not consider technology as neutral tools but as the environments that influence cognition, communication, and identity. Digital spaces reorganise the time of rituals, communal space and power relations. They enable asynchronous engagement, algorithmic engagement with the material, and transnational spiritual networking. These characteristics impact the way meaning-making and emotional processes are conducted.

Figure 1 gives a synthesis of theoretical perspectives in an integrative conceptual model. It demonstrates that digital spiritual forms of practice have a positive impact on creating meaning and positive affective experiences that contribute to emotional regulation and coping self-efficacy. These processes reinforce the psychological strength, and that goes on to create a sense of life satisfaction. The direct ways of linking digital activity and life satisfaction are also suggested that represent the direct profits like belongingness and perceived support.

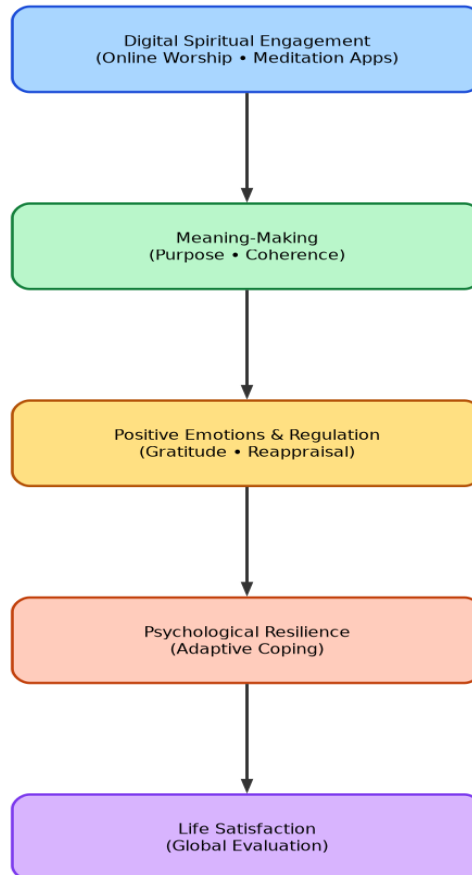


Figure 1. Conceptual Map of Digital Spiritual Engagement, Resilience, and Life Satisfaction

Resilience can be described as a key mediating factor between digital spiritual interaction and satisfaction with life. The framework brings in meaning-making theory, broaden-and-build theory, and social support perspectives into a logical explicatory framework. In combination, these conceptual grounds form the theoretical framework of analysing empirical evidence in further chapters.

3. Digital Spiritual Engagement: Forms, Modalities, and Global Trends

Digital spiritual engagement (DSE) is one of the most considerable changes in modern religious and spiritual life. Instead of simply replicating the traditional practices in the digital realm, the digital media have transformed the performance of rituals, power, embodiment and community. Proponents of digital religion claim that digital space is also lived in as religious and that beliefs are expressed, negotiated, and performed there (Campbell and Tsuria, 2021). This part looks at the key shapes of digital spiritual interaction, population and cultural differences, and the debate that exists on authenticity and embodiment in the spirituality mediated by technology.

3.1 Digital Spiritual Engagement

Digital spiritual practices take place in various forms of technology, and in each of these technologies, there are unique forms of participation and psychic consequences.

Live-stream worship has gained new prominence during the COVID-19 pandemic, when religious institutions have switched to online platforms. Sunday services online, virtual sermons and interactive prayer sessions allowed people to continue with community worship even when they were physically constrained. According to qualitative research, people tended to have a sense of continuity, belonging, and spiritual uplift, yet some of them also experienced a weaker sense of ritual intensity than when they were at in-person worship (Dein and Watts, 2023).

Online worship services can make communities resilient by ensuring that they are connected even in times of crisis. One of the previous researchers, Hutchings (2017), has already noted that online church spaces provide well-organised ritual spaces that recreate aspects of physical worship, such as liturgical movement, visual representation, and collective

communication in the form of chat features. Even though these findings were analysed earlier than the pandemic, they can be taken as the cornerstone of the study of digital liturgy. Individualised digital spirituality is in the meditation and spiritual well-being applications. These applications feature guided meditations, gratitude practices, scriptural practices and contemplation. This kind of application fosters independence in spiritual practice as well as emotional control. Bingaman (2020) posits that digital technologies have brought new forces to the evolution of spiritual experience never seen before, which have increased the levels of accessibility and individualisation of contemplative practices. Prayer groups, forums on scripture discussion and faith-based support networks exist on social media. These groups provide emotional support, mutual coping and shared testimony. According to Campbell and Tsuria (2021), digital religion is facilitated by networked authority practices, in which institutional leadership exists side by side with peer-based spiritual interaction. Feelings of inclusion and belonging can be increased through such decentralised participation. The emergence of religious influencers and faith-based content creators has created more access to religious teaching. Video sermons and podcasts make it possible to participate asynchronously and be exposed to other cultures. This growth questions the old levels of authority at the same time democratizing spiritual knowledge (Lövheim and Lundmark, 2019). Nevertheless, it can also be the cause of disjointed theological interpretations and performative spirituality. New technologies are spiritual chat interfaces with AI and digital devotional assistants. These applications offer biblical explanations, prayers and thought-provoking suggestions. Although they are still in their development, these platforms show how the introduction of artificial intelligence into spiritual guidance is becoming more integrated, and the new theological and ethical issues of mediation and authenticity are emerging (Campbell and Tsuria, 2021).

Table 2. Forms of Digital Spiritual Engagement and Reported Psychological Outcomes

Platform Type	Mode of Engagement	Target Population	Reported Outcomes
Live-stream Worship	Real-time virtual participation; chat interaction	Congregational members, the elderly, and diaspora communities	Continuity of belonging; emotional comfort (Dein & Watts, 2023)
Meditation Apps	Guided audio/video contemplative practices	Young adults; working professionals	Emotional regulation; stress reduction (Bingaman, 2020)
Online Prayer Groups	Social media-based communal prayer	Women; caregivers; crisis-affected individuals	Perceived social support; collective coping (Campbell & Tsuria, 2021)
Spiritual Podcasts & YouTube	Asynchronous content consumption	Youth; global audiences	Increased accessibility; identity exploration (Lövheim & Lundmark, 2019)
AI Spiritual Tools	Interactive digital spiritual guidance	Tech-oriented users	Personalized reflection; ethical ambiguity (Campbell & Tsuria, 2021)

Table 2 demonstrates that online platforms differ in their interactivity, personalisation, and communal intensity. Some are focused on the continuity of collective rites, whereas others are focused on individualistic spiritual development. Such differences affect psychological consequences, e.g. belongingness, emotional regulation, and identity formation. In order to place the fast increase of such modalities into perspective, Figure 2 provides a conceptual timeline of the worldwide development of digital spiritual platforms. Hybrid religious participation was preconditioned by the emergence of social media after 2015, with a significant increase in 2020 and 2021 due to pandemic-related limitations.

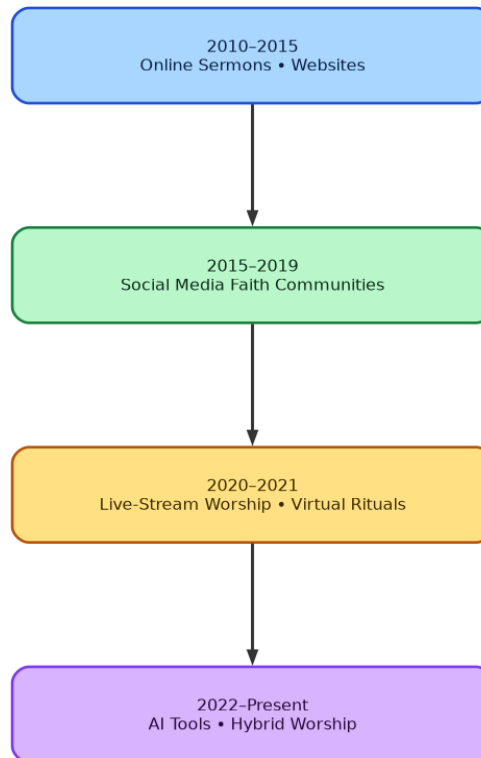


Figure 2. Global Growth of Digital Spiritual Platforms (Conceptual Trend Illustration)

As Figure 2 demonstrates, digital spirituality has developed in the form of additional online presence to merged hybrid religious ecosystems. The acceleration following 2020 was a structural adjustment and not a temporary adjustment.

3.2 Demographic and Cultural Variations

Digital spirituality does not cut across the population; demographic and cultural factors have a strong influence on participation.

The younger generations are more inclined towards social media-based spirituality, podcasts or mobile applications. The digital platforms enable the youth to experiment with spiritual identity without being institutionalised. On the other hand, live-stream worship is a common activity used by older adults to preserve the traditional congregational connections (Dein and Watts, 2023).

Digital spirituality in Western culture often focuses on independence and self-development. Communal participation in rituals and persistence by the community continue to hold the centre in most Eastern situations. Digital mediation can thus play a different role within the structure of different cultures and either augment the personal spiritual journey or maintain that of the community.

Digital religious authority and digital religious participation are also influenced by gender dynamics. Lövheim and Lundmark (2019) emphasise that the digital media allow women to raise their religious voices, and it disrupts the traditional hierarchies. Meanwhile, the online spaces might replicate extant relations of power by mechanising visibility and governing platforms.

Cities are also usually more accessible to both high-speed internet and digital literacy, which lets people engage in a variety of spiritual practices. In the countryside, online worship can substitute for inadequate physical access to places of worship.

3.3 Technological Mediation and the Authenticity Debate

Authenticity is one of the main arguments of digital religion studies. Opponents are unsure of whether embodied spiritual experience can be achieved through virtual worship. Radde-Antweiler (2021) notes that the embodiment of such a significant aspect of the religious practice is that physical presence, the sense of being present, and ritual co-presence determine the spiritual meaning.

Nevertheless, researchers argue that authenticity is socially formed instead of being directly linked to physical space. According to Campbell and Tsuria (2021), the space of digital religion is real religion, to the extent that the participants of the digital religion assign sacred value to the digital practice. Likewise, Bingaman (2020) claims that digital technologies are transforming the spiritual evolution instead of lowering it.

The creation of community online only increases the issue of authenticity. Religious networks on the Internet might create emotional intimacy, but in the absence of the multisensory aspects of embodied meetings. The authors of the study by Dein and Watts (2023) concluded that the reason behind the increased accessibility and the desire to be in the physical

presence were reported by people deeply engaged in virtual worship, which indicated the hybridization of modern spirituality.

Finally, digital spiritual engagement can be seen as a spectrum but not a dichotomy of religion in the real and in the virtual. Transcendent experience is mediated by digital environments, although not eliminated. Rather, they change the time of the rituals, the distribution of power, and the limits of the community.

4. Digital Spiritual Engagement and Psychological Resilience

Digital spiritual experience (DSE) is a new, important psychosocial resource amid collective uncertainty and personal misfortune. A dynamic ability to respond positively to stress or trauma is referred to as resilience, and various mechanisms affect it, including cognitive, emotional, relational, and existential. These adaptive processes may be enhanced by spiritual resources, which today are actively accessed via digital resources. This part examines hypothetical processes, evidence, and intervening aspects between digital spiritual engagement and resilience.

4.1 Mechanisms Linking Digital Spirituality to Resilience

4.1.1 Meaning Reconstruction During Crisis

The resilience theory is based on meaning-making. When people pass through misfortune, they seek to come to terms with disruptive experiences to fit into the wider belief systems (Park, 2022). Digital faith spaces, including livestream sermons, virtual prayer meetings, and virtual devotional reflective essays, give interpretative frameworks that assist individuals to put suffering back into context.

The longitudinal study conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic showed that life meaning had a positive relationship with resilience and mental well-being in the long term (Arslan and Yildirim, 2021). These results indicate the role played by existential coherence in facilitating adaptive functioning. Spiritual stories of hope, divine providence and collective endurance in digital space contend spiritual beliefs in the process of cognitive restructuring.

Spirituality has been postulated as one of the resilience mechanisms with acceptance, transcendence, and connectedness as theorised (Mehrotra and Tripathi, 2016). These mechanisms are not removed by digital mediation; they are only increased in accessibility across geographical and cultural borders.

4.1.2 Emotional Regulation and Cognitive Reappraisal

The other key mechanism of resilience is emotion regulation. The favourable religious coping measures, which include benevolent reappraisal and spiritual support seeking, have been linked with better adjustment in psychology (Ano and Vasconcelles, 2005).

Emotional awareness and cognitive reframing are achieved with the help of digital meditation apps, guided prayers, and reflective spiritual podcasts. These procedures could lead to improvement of coping self-efficacy and adaptive appraisal of stressors. Perceived spiritual support, which is supported by entry-level online religious involvement, has been linked to reduced anxiety and depression (Yoo, 2022), which indicates that online expression can indirectly support resilience. Conceptualise Resilience, measured by the brief resilience scale (Smith et al., 2025), conceptualises resilience as recovery ability following stress. Online spiritual practice can enhance this resilience ability through encouraging self-control over feelings and making adaptive responses.

4.1.3 Online Spiritual Communities as Social Buffers

The social connectedness has a protective effect on resilience. Traditionally, attendance in churches has been linked with resilience in elderly people (Manning and Miles, 2018). Online worship and online prayer networks could mimic some of the aspects of community support under the conditions when physical meetings are limited.

Online spiritual communities create a sense of belonging through online chat exchanges, joint testimonies and group rituals. Individual distress can be changed to collective coping because of the perceived similarity of faith and mutual support. These relational aspects make the difference by buffering stress and increasing emotional stability.

4.1.4 Hope, Transcendence, and Adaptive Coping Narratives

Spiritual traditions also focus on hope, gratitude, forgiveness and transcendence, which are virtues of adaptive functioning. The study on religious coping always indicates that positive coping in religion is a predictor of superior psychological adaptation (Ano and Vasconcelles, 2005).

The inspirational sermons, testimonies and reflections supporting these virtues are propagated through digital platforms. Digital spiritual stories can create optimism and psychological resilience by portraying a negative experience as a challenge, growth or even divine testing. This reframing has much in common with the modern models of resilience, which put focus on the post-adversity development.

4.2 Empirical Evidence

4.2.1 Pandemic-Based Longitudinal Studies

COVID-19 provided a special setting to study digital spiritual engagement. According to Arslan and Yıldırım (2021), meaning in life forecasted resilience and well-being in the long term, which became particularly important due to the protective effect of existential coherence.

Likewise, Yoo (2022) found that online religious activity was linked with spiritual support, which was related to reduced anxiety and depressive symptoms. These results indicate that digital spirituality may serve as a resource related to resilience in times of a collective crisis.

4.2.2 Age-Specific and Community-Based Findings

A study conducted on elderly individuals has demonstrated that going to church enhances resilience (Manning and Miles, 2018). Even though it has been initially researched in a physical context, similar mechanisms can be applied in digital worship, especially when being involved creates a sense of belonging.

The younger generations are increasingly using online spiritual resources as a way of searching for their identity and seeking psychological comfort. The process of meaning-making can be especially salient in adaptive coping in such circumstances (Park, 2022).

4.2.3 Measurement of Resilience in Spiritual Contexts

Validated scales that are widely used to determine resilience include the Brief Resilience Scale (Smith et al., 2025) determining stress-related recovery capacity. By combining the theoretical pathways with the key results of the research on digital spiritual engagement and incorporating resilience measurement, it is possible to empirically validate the theory. Previous meta-analytic studies of religious coping show that positive coping models are linked to psychological adaptation (Ano and Vasconcelles, 2005), which offers preliminary evidence in the study of online variations of the same.

Table 3. Empirical Studies Linking Digital Spiritual Engagement and Resilience

Author (Year)	Country	Sample	Method	Key Findings
Arslan & Yıldırım (2021)	Turkey	Adults during COVID-19	Longitudinal survey	Meaning in life predicted resilience and well-being
Yoo (2022)	United States	Adults during the pandemic	Cross-sectional survey	Online religious involvement linked to spiritual support and lower anxiety
Manning & Miles (2018)	United States	Older adults	Quantitative survey	Religious attendance is associated with higher resilience
Ano & Vasconcelles (2005)	Meta-analysis	Multiple contexts	Meta-analysis	Positive religious coping predicted better psychological adjustment
Smith et al. (2025)	International	Various samples	Scale validation	BRS measures adaptive recovery capacity

Table 3 indicates that meaning making, coping style, and perceived support are factors that affect the outcomes of resilience. Even though previous research paid attention to traditional religious involvement, current research points to the possibility that digitally mediated spiritual involvement might follow the same adaptive mechanisms.

4.3 Moderators and Mediators

Online spiritual engagement is related to perceived belongingness that mediates adaptive outcomes. The benefits of resilience seem to be more potent when digital participation can bring a genuine connection (Yoo, 2022). Greater resilience results may be achieved with more effective participation in virtual prayer groups compared to passive content consumption. Spiritual intensity influences psychological effects. Up to now, positive religious coping is a resilience boosting factor, and negative coping (e.g., spiritual dissatisfaction) can be a well-being derailing factor (Ano and Vasconcelles, 2005). The digital spaces can enhance the adaptive and maladaptive stories. Digital spiritual engagement may be moderated by personality factors, intrinsic religious devotion, and previous spiritual commitment. This can bring more benefits of resilience to individuals who have high levels of meaning-oriented orientations (Park, 2022).

Digital spiritual involvement enhances resiliency by operating interdependently, which means reconstruction, emotional control, social support, and adaptive coping scripts. The theoretical hypothesis, which was proven based on the empirical evidence, is that any spiritual engagement, both in physical and digital forms, improves adaptive functioning. Resilience, therefore, proves to be a key mediator in connecting digital spiritual activity with the overall well-being outcomes. The next section will look at the contribution of these resilience processes to general life satisfaction.

5. Digital Spiritual Engagement and Life Satisfaction

Digital spiritual engagement (DSE) is not limited to the instantaneous coping mechanisms, as it affects the bigger assessments of the quality of life. As a cognitive element of subjective well-being, life satisfaction is the response of an individual to the overall assessment regarding the desirability and significance of the situation in his or her life. In this

section, theoretical backgrounds of life satisfaction, the routes that connect digital spirituality and wellbeing, opposing outcomes and threats, and methodological issues in the literature are discussed.

5.1 Life Satisfaction as a Cognitive Component of Well-Being

The conceptualisation of life satisfaction is the evaluative aspect of subjective well-being (Diener et al., 2018). Life satisfaction is a reflective judgment of life as a whole in contrast with emotional states, which vary according to day-to-day incidents. It works together with such areas of self-assessment as relationships, work, purpose, and health.

It is well known that religiosity correlates with increased life satisfaction in all cultures (Okulicz-Kozaryn, 2010). Religious affiliations are also beneficial as they offer social groups, shared values, and meaning of existence (Lim & Putnam, 2010). These are the relational and meaning-based resources, which are the central predictors of life satisfaction. On the Internet, these mechanisms can be copied or modified by spiritual engagement. Online services, online prayer groups, and online spiritual communities establish some new places of belonging and contemplation. According to the arguments of VanderWeele (2017), religious communities lead to the flourishing of humans as they cultivate virtues, relationships, and mission. These channels can be expanded online to make them even more profitable.

5.2 Pathways from Digital Spirituality to Life Satisfaction

Digital spiritual involvement can act on life satisfaction in a few interrelated ways, that is, in terms of meaning in life, gratitude practices, a sense of community, and positive affect cultivation.

5.2.1 Meaning in Life

Life meaning is also among the clearest predictors of life satisfaction (Diener et al., 2018). Spiritual world views are interpretive systems which make experiences consistent in terms of narratives. Lectures, thought-provoking readings, theological debates, and spiritual accounts about life are available on digital platforms, which add to existential order.

Digital faith formation programs have taken the form of an organised program to develop the spirit and integrate the identity of young adults in specific cases (de Kock, 2025). These examples are ways to show how digital spiritual spaces can nurture maintained meaning-making missions. As soon as people find their lives meaningful and shaped by the transcendent values, their general life satisfaction goes up.

5.2.2 Gratitude Practices

Thanksgiving is another theme that is repeated in religious traditions and empirically associated with good health. The Thanksgiving practices, reflective prayer, and appreciation are common practices of worship, either physical or digital. Munir et al. (2012) observed that attendance to worship had a positive effect on an individual's well-being, and it may be proposed that the effectiveness of organised devotional practices promotes emotional elevation and psychological stability.

These effects could be increased by online apps that promote gratitude journals, reflection, or prayers. The cognitive patterns are developed through the repetitive reinforcement of appreciative focus in line with the greater levels of life satisfaction.

5.2.3 Community Belonging

Satisfaction with life is a life-dependent determinant. According to Lim and Putnam (2010), religion has been proven to increase satisfaction in life not just by the belief but by social networks. The relational continuity is provided through the digital spiritual community through the livestream chat participation, prayer requests, and social media interaction.

Perceived community membership can yield even in the virtual environment emotional security and identity affirmation. According to VanderWeele (2017), relational integration is the key to prosperity; the digital spiritual spaces can thus be viewed as a new business model of relational support.

5.2.4 Positive Affect Cultivation

Positive emotions like hope, compassion, awe and joy are usually developed through spiritual practices. A good mood is a direct cause of life satisfaction (Diener et al., 2018). Online worship services and inspirational messages can also produce emotional moods, which support a positive cognitive appraisal.

Cultural context, however, has a moderating effect on these associations. Ugur and Aydın (2023) discovered that the correlation between religiosity and happiness is relative to the religious standards of the society. Religious people can have greater benefits of well-being because of social congruence in highly religious surroundings. Such contextual alignment or integration can be reaffirmed or disrupted by digital spaces depending on the community membership composition.

5.3 Contradictory Findings and Risks

Digital spiritual engagement is not an all-good thing, although the overall correlations are positive. There are a number of risks that should be considered. The prolonged exposure to the screen can result in the emergence of digital fatigue, which decreases the level of attention and emotional involvement. The lack of interaction with online worship, passive consumption without engagement in it, can reduce the depth of the community and the strength of relations. The social

media settings can support performative rather than reflective expressivity of faith in order to gain social approval. Intrinsic motivation can become undercut when spirituality is packaged so that people can see it, thus rendering it less advantageous to their well-being. Echo chambers tend to be generated through digital algorithms that filter content based on what one already accepts to be true. Although this could strengthen identity, it can also narrow exposure to different viewpoints and decrease criticality. In other settings, social pressure in religiously homogeneous settings can define the life satisfaction of religious and non-religious people in different ways (Ugur & Aydın, 2023). Spiritual bypassing involves the spiritual beliefs that are used to evade psychological pain. Spirituality would be comforting, but excessive dependence on digital spiritual materials without dealing with the underlying emotional issues can be counterproductive. A harmonious combination of spiritual and psychological resources is required.

5.4 Longitudinal vs Cross-Sectional Evidence

A large portion of the literature that connects religiosity and life satisfaction is based on cross-sectional designs, which restrict causal inference (Diener et al., 2018). The cross-sectional studies only prove the relationship, but not directionality. An example is that people who are more satisfied with their life may be more willing to be in spiritual groups than the opposite.

Longitudinal studies give greater support to cause-and-effect relationships. Research that has been conducted on the issue of religious participation over the years: The continued participation has been found to be a predictor of a higher life satisfaction nexus, in part by heightened social integration (Lim & Putnam, 2010). Other new studies on the topic of digital faith formation among young adults also emphasise the need to engage continuously and not intermittently (de Kock, 2025).

Future longitudinal research on digital spiritual engagement, in particular, is required to establish the role of resilience in mediating between digital spirituality and life fulfilment as time progresses.

Figure 3 below can be used to synthesise the theoretical and empirical insights presented in Sections 4 and 5 by proposing a mediation model that connects the digital spiritual engagement to life satisfaction via psychological resilience.

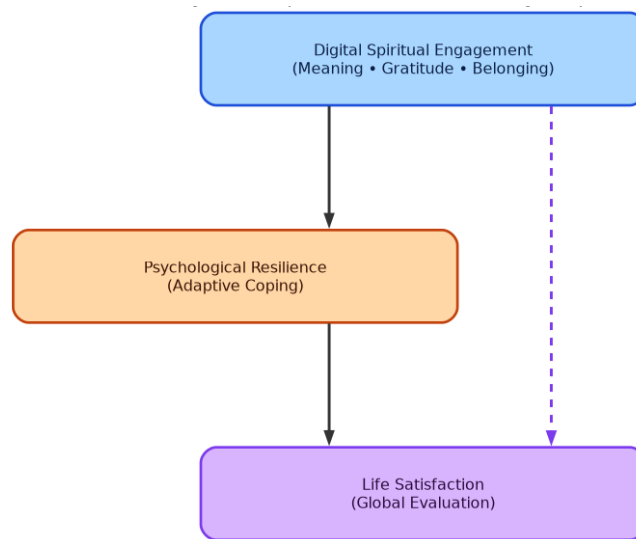


Figure 3. Proposed Mediation Model: Digital Spiritual Engagement → Resilience → Life Satisfaction

As Figure 3 shows, digital spiritual involvement can have both direct and indirect impacts on life satisfaction. The indirect route works by promoting the resilience mechanisms, including adaptive coping and emotion management, whereas the direct route indicates the short-term gains of connectedness, thankfulness, and positive affect development. This integrative model is compatible with the more comprehensive flourishing models that contextualise spirituality in relation to existential larger contexts of well-being (VanderWeele, 2017).

Digital spiritual experience promotes life satisfaction by building meaning, reinforcing gratitude, creating relational belonging and emotional uplift. Although risks like digital fatigue and performative spirituality are to be considered, there is evidence that long-term, genuine engagement can actually have a positive effect on subjective well-being. The mediation framework suggested puts the key explanatory mechanism, resilience, into the spotlight, and combines existential, relational, and affective pathways. These findings are summarised in the section that follows, with the direction of future research.

6. Integrative Synthesis and Future Directions

The section is a synthesis of the conceptual and empirical insights revealed in the preceding sections and provides future research and practice directions. Based on the interdisciplinary research on psychology, digital religion, and health studies,

this integrative approach places digital spiritual engagement (DSE) within the context of the larger theoretical and social changes.

6.1 The Integrative Model

Figure 3 suggested a mediation model under which the digital spiritual engagement directly and indirectly affects life satisfaction via psychological resilience. The model combines existential, emotional and relational pathways.

Digital spirituality creates meaning-making, gratitude, hope, and community belonging, which help to create adaptive coping and emotional control. These processes enhance resilience, which can be defined as the capacity to bounce back after a bad experience. With time, the increased resilience leads to more positive cognitive assessments of life, which leads to an increase in life satisfaction.

The integrative framework supports more extensive cross-domain integration strategies in religion and health studies that focus on the connection between psychological, relational, and spiritual realms (Park et al., 2015). Instead of considering spirituality as a single variable, modern scholarship would support multidimensional frameworks of consideration of the cultural background, health condition, and social identity.

Moreover, the digital culture transforms the experience of religion through mediation by technology. According to Evolvi (2021), the concept of religion in the digital space cannot be perceived outside the wider digital culture with its patterns of organising communication, power, and identity. Thus, the digital spiritual interaction is to be understood as a hybrid phenomenon that is functioning on the scale of socio-technical ecosystems.

This model is also enriched by the spiritual transformation theory. Spiritual development is associated with changes in identity, faith and relational direction (Hermans, 2013). The digital engagement can enhance or hasten such transformation processes by exposing more people to different opinions and facilitating transnational spiritual networks.

6.2 Key Thematic Insights

6.2.1 Digital Spirituality as a Hybrid Coping System

Online spiritual networking is a type of hybrid coping mechanism that brings together the existing religious coping activities with electronic technology affordances. It blends institutional worship, which is systematic and organised, personalised app-based meditation, peer-to-peer support networks, and artificially selected content. The literature review of lived experiences of online spirituality in young adults has emphasised how web-based activities incorporate the personal with communal aspects (Lubis and Asrin, 2025). Instead of ousting traditional religiosity, digital platforms develop stratified patterns of interaction, both individual and shared. This hybridity makes it more accessible and instantaneous as well as more complex. Online platforms can help people get fast emotional reinforcement in times of crisis and, at the same time, expose users to competing theological accounts.

6.2.2 Community vs. Individual Practice Distinction

One of the key thematic differences that can be observed as a result of this review is the issue of communal and individualised spiritual practice. The institutional livestream worship focuses on the continuity of rituals, and the meditation applications and individual devotion websites accentuate self-control and self-reflection. The factor of belonging continues to be a very important aspect of digital religiosity. Digital youth religiosity usually overlaps with youth identity politics and youth belonging negotiation (Mattes et al., 2025). Electronic spaces can either enhance a sense of community or disintegrate it due to selective exposure. The individual-community axis, therefore, constitutes one of the central axes of theoretical improvement in the future. Spiritual activities in a digital form cannot be limited to an isolated use; they usually involve a complex bargain between individual faith and group membership.

6.2.3 Cultural Sensitivity Considerations

The practice of digital spirituality occurs in different sociocultural environments. An example of how youth religiosity overlaps with politics of belonging, migration, and digital citizenship is youth religiosity (Mattes et al., 2025). Digital spiritual expression can have a positive or negative impact on social integration or marginalisation, which depends on cultural norms. Researchers warn against extrapolating the results based on the populations of the West (Park et al., 2015). Digital spiritual outcomes are based on variations in access to technology, freedom of religion, and community structure. The models of the future should be able to accommodate cultural variability; otherwise, they will be oversimplified.

6.3 Research Gaps

With the fast development of scholarship, there remain a number of drawbacks. A lot of the current studies are based on cross-sectional designs. To find out the causal relationship between digital spiritual engagement, resilience, and lifestyle satisfaction over time, longitudinal studies are required. Monitoring developmental patterns, especially in the youth, would help establish whether the digital interaction aids in maintaining spiritual changes (Hermans, 2013). Most empirical studies have a Western origin. The samples of the Global South populations that lack digital access, religious diversity, and sociopolitical dynamics are underrepresented. Research has to be context sensitive in order to be applicable globally. The measurement tools differ very much in research. Other measures of religious attendance, others of intrinsic religiosity, and not many directly measure digital spiritual engagement as a construct. Digital instruments that incorporate standardised instruments are required. In educational studies on the integration of faith in psychological practice, it is

proposed that systematic structures enhance better conceptual clarity (Adams et al., 2014). Like rigour, digital spirituality measurement needs similar rigour to increase cross-study comparability. The majority of research are based on self-report questionnaires and this could create a social desirability bias. Digital ethnography and interviews (qualitative) could be used as mixed methods to record subtle lived experiences (Lubis and Asrin, 2025).

6.4 Practical Implications

There is potential in the incorporation of spiritual resources in digital mental health interventions. Programs of faith-informed resiliency provided online can increase accessibility to the most hesitant populations to receive traditional therapy. The cross-domain integration methods are based on cooperation between spiritual communities and health professionals (Park et al., 2015). Online delivery is able to expand such collaboration to larger groups. Culturally responsive care could be found through online counselling services, which involve spiritual assessment and integration. Structured integration has been proven to be possible as a result of training programs that incorporate faith perspectives into psychological education (Adams et al., 2014). These integrative approaches can be extended to telehealth with the use of digital platforms. Evidence-based resilience frameworks should be implemented by developers of spiritual and mindfulness apps. Aspects that encourage gratitude, group discussion and journals can improve psychological outcomes. The most important issue is ethical issues. Trust has to be maintained by transparency about the use of data, curating algorithms and theological neutrality. Digital spiritual spaces are powerful social institutions that must not be ignored by policymakers. Since religion overlaps with digital culture and identity politics (Evolvi, 2021; Mattes et al., 2025), regulation needs to strike a balance between the right to freedom of speech and misinformation and exclusion prevention. The digital faith communities can also work with the public health efforts during a crisis to spread encouraging messages.

7. Conclusion

Online spirituality is an impressive development in the way people feel, express and maintain spirituality within the modern world. As this review has established, the adoption of digital technologies in the practice of spirituality has transformed the nature of ritual experience and role in the formation of community, the formation of meaning, and processes of coping. Based on the interdisciplinary research, the evidence indicates that digital spiritual practice may become a valuable psychosocial resource, especially during crisis and disruption of social life. Digitally mediated spiritual practices are associated with psychological resiliency through the lens of the following pathways: the reconstruction of existential meaning, emotional regulation, perceived social support, and gratitude cultivation. Resilience, in its turn, is a core means that connects spiritual activity to more general measures of life contentment. Although the conventional religious practice is traditionally linked to well-being, online platforms broaden the provision of spiritual resources beyond the geographical and institutional scope, providing hybrid forms of community and individual practice. Meanwhile, the review also presents significant reflections, such as the risk of digital fatigue, performative spirituality, and contextual variability within the context of various cultures. The proposed integrative framework highlights that longitudinal, culturally sensitive, and methodologically rigorous studies are necessary to help clarify the line of causation further. Finally, digital spirituality is not to be considered as a substitute for embodied spirituality and must rather be taken as an extension of spirituality in technologically mediated societies. With a careful application of spiritual resources in online spaces, people and society can potentially keep building resilience and satisfaction with life, which will lead to human flourishing in an increasingly interconnected world.

References

1. Adams, W., McMinn, M. R., & Thurston, N. (2014). Teaching Christian faith integration in psychological assessment courses. *Journal of psychology and theology*, 42(2), 136-149.
2. Ano, G. G., & Vasconcelles, E. B. (2005). Religious coping and psychological adjustment to stress: A meta-analysis. *Journal of clinical psychology*, 61(4), 461-480.
3. Arslan, G., & Yildirim, M. (2021). A longitudinal examination of the association between meaning in life, resilience, and mental well-being in times of coronavirus pandemic. *Frontiers in psychology*, 12, 645597.
4. Bentzen, J. S. (2021). In crisis, we pray: Religiosity and the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of economic behavior & organization*, 192, 541-583.
5. Bingaman, K. A. (2020). Religious and spiritual experience in the digital age: unprecedented evolutionary forces: new directions in pastoral theology conference (honoring lewis rambo). *Pastoral Psychology*, 69(4), 291-305.
6. Campbell, H. A., & Tsuria, R. (Eds.). (2021). *Digital religion: Understanding religious practice in digital media*. Routledge.
7. Cowden, R. G., Pargament, K. I., Chen, Z. J., & Bechara, A. O. (2024). Religious/spiritual struggles and whole person functioning among Colombian university students: Longitudinal evidence of mutual influence. *International Journal of Psychology*, 59(5), 701-716.
8. de Kock, A. (2025). Christian Digital Faith Formation Among Young Adults: A Literature Review. *Religious Education*, 120(5), 438-455.
9. Dein, S., & Watts, F. (2023). Religious worship online: A qualitative study of two Sunday virtual services. *Archive for the Psychology of Religion*, 45(2), 191-209.

10. Dein, S., Loewenthal, K., Lewis, C. A., & Pargament, K. I. (2020). COVID-19, mental health and religion: An agenda for future research. *Mental Health, Religion & Culture*, 23(1), 1-9.
11. Diener, E., Oishi, S., & Tay, L. (2018). Advances in subjective well-being research. *Nature human behaviour*, 2(4), 253-260.
12. Dolcos, F., Hohl, K., Hu, Y., & Dolcos, S. (2021). Religiosity and resilience: Cognitive reappraisal and coping self-efficacy mediate the link between religious coping and well-being. *Journal of religion and health*, 60(4), 2892-2905.
13. Evolvi, G. (2021). Religion, new media, and digital culture. In *Oxford research encyclopedia of religion*.
14. Fredrickson, B. L. (2004). The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. *Philosophical transactions of the royal society of London. Series B: Biological Sciences*, 359(1449), 1367-1377.
15. García-Alandete, J. (2015). Does meaning in life predict psychological well-being?. *The European Journal of Counselling Psychology*, 3(2), 89-98.
16. Hermans, C. A. (2013). Spiritual transformation: Concept and measurement. *Journal of Empirical Theology*, 26(2), 165-187.
17. Hutchings, T. (2017). *Creating church online: Ritual, community and new media*. Routledge.
18. Koenig, H. G. (2020). Maintaining health and well-being by putting faith into action during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of religion and health*, 59(5), 2205-2214.
19. Krause, N. M. (2021). *Religion, virtues, and health: New directions in theory construction and model development*. Oxford University Press.
20. Lim, C., & Putnam, R. D. (2010). Religion, social networks, and life satisfaction. *American sociological review*, 75(6), 914-933.
21. Lövheim, M., & Lundmark, E. (2019). Gender, religion and authority in digital media. *Essachess: Journal for Communication Studies*, 12(2 (24)), 23-38.
22. Lubis, M., & Asrin, A. (2025). Understanding the Lived Experience of Digital Spirituality among Young Adults. *Irfana: Journal of Religious Studies*, 1(12), 501-512.
23. Manning, L. K., & Miles, A. (2018). Examining the effects of religious attendance on resilience for older adults. *Journal of religion and health*, 57(1), 191-208.
24. Mattes, A., Haselbacher, M., Limacher, K., & Novak, C. (2025). Religion and politics of belonging in digital times: Youth religiosity in focus. *Frontiers in Political Science*, 6, 1476762.
25. Mehrotra, S., & Tripathi, R. (2016). Spirituality and resilience: Explored pathways and unexplored territories. In *The Routledge international handbook of psychosocial resilience* (pp. 214-229). Routledge.
26. Munir, F., Awan, A., & Hamdani, S. N. H. (2012). The impact of worship on individual's well-being. *Journal of Advanced Research in Law and Economics*, 3(2), 21.
27. Okulicz-Kozaryn, A. (2010). Religiosity and life satisfaction across nations. *Mental health, religion & culture*, 13(2), 155-169.
28. Pargament, K. I., & Exline, J. J. (2021). *Working with spiritual struggles in psychotherapy: From research to practice*. Guilford Publications.
29. Park, C. L. (2022). Meaning making following trauma. *Frontiers in psychology*, 13, 844891.
30. Park, C. L., Sherman, A. C., Jim, H. S., & Salsman, J. M. (2015). Religion/spirituality and health in the context of cancer: cross-domain integration, unresolved issues, and future directions. *Cancer*, 121(21), 3789.
31. Pirutinsky, S., Cherniak, A. D., & Rosmarin, D. H. (2020). COVID-19, mental health, and religious coping among American Orthodox Jews. *Journal of religion and health*, 59(5), 2288-2301.
32. Radde-Antweiler, K. (2021). Embodiment. In *Digital religion* (pp. 103-119). Routledge.
33. Schnell, T., & Krampe, H. (2020). Meaning in life and self-control buffer stress in times of COVID-19: Moderating and mediating effects with regard to mental distress. *Frontiers in psychiatry*, 11, 582352.
34. Shiba, K., Cowden, R. G., Gonzalez, N., Ransome, Y., Nakagomi, A., Chen, Y., ... & Fancourt, D. (2023). Associations of online religious participation during COVID-19 lockdown with subsequent health and well-being among UK adults. *Psychological Medicine*, 53(9), 3887-3896.
35. Smith, B. W., deCruz-Dixon, N., Schodt, K., & Torres, F. (2025). Brief resilience scale (BRS). In *Handbook of assessment in mindfulness research* (pp. 1677-1695). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.
36. Ugur, Z. B., & Aydın, F. (2023). Are religious people happy or non-religious people unhappy in religious contexts?. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 14(2), 156-172.
37. VanderWeele, T. J. (2017). Religious communities and human flourishing. *Current directions in psychological science*, 26(5), 476-481.
38. Yaden, D. B., Batz-Barbarich, C. L., Ng, V., Vaziri, H., Gladstone, J. N., Pawelski, J. O., & Tay, L. (2022). A meta-analysis of religion/spirituality and life satisfaction. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 23(8), 4147-4163.
39. Yoo, J. (2022). Online religious involvement, spiritual support, depression, and anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Religions*, 13(11), 1052.