


## Single women's happiness in terms of social support and religiosity

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Article information	Abstract
Submitted: 2024-02-04 Revised: 2024-05-14 Published: 2024-06-30	In Indonesia, single women still get a negative stigma. They are considered "incomplete" individuals because they haven't or don't want to get married. The society also sees the single women in concern even though they can also get happiness, with the social support and religiosity they have. This study aims to determine the relationship between social support and religiosity and happiness in single women. The participants of the study were 82 single women aged 26-45 who were unmarried. Data retrieval was carried out by distributing questionnaires using google form by online and the measurment using likert scale. This study uses a quantitative research method. The hypotesis test that was used in this research using SPSS program. The results showed that there was a relationship between social support and religiosity and happiness. The correlation results obtained of 0.650 showed a strong relationship with the direction of positive correlation, it means the higher the social support and religiosity of single women, the higher their happiness either. This study contributes to the understanding of how social support and religiosity influence happiness in single women. By confirming a strong positive correlation, it emphasizes the importance of emotional and spiritual resources in enhancing well-being, offering valuable insights for future psychological and social interventions targeting single adult populations.
<b>Keywords:</b> Social Support, Religiosity, Happiness, Singleness.	

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## INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of single women remains underexplored in Indonesia. Azhima and Indrawati (2020) note that nearly half of adult women were unmarried in 2020, indicating a growing trend. Researchers such as Mullins (2016) and Lianda and Himawan (2022) interpret this as a reflection of changing assumptions about the appropriate age for marriage, with many young adults postponing marital commitments. Himawan (2020a) emphasizes that this phenomenon is shaped by the interaction of social, cultural, and religious values. Mulyani and Sari (2024) argue that women aged 30 and above often face societal pressure in Eastern cultures, where adult women living alone are considered "incomplete" and expected to bear children. Gong et al. (2015) and Budgeon (2015) explain that single women are stigmatized with labels such as "pasted," "past their time," or "unsold," while Nanik et al. (2022) highlight negative perceptions including being "weird," "cold," or "materialistic." Such stigma, according to Nanik et al. (2020), can reduce psychological well-being, aligning with Erikson's (Ang et al., 2020) view that failure to form intimate relationships in early adulthood may result in isolation, melancholy, and anxiety.

Literature studies indicate that single women can be categorized based on their experiences of singleness into three groups: positive, negative, and ambivalent. Ang and colleagues (2020) observe that women with positive experiences often feel a sense of freedom and can dedicate more time to themselves. Conversely, Anhar (2021) notes that women with negative experiences frequently desire companionship, experiencing sadness, loneliness, self-doubt, and even depression. The ambivalent group, as described by Ariska (2020), enjoys independence and solitude but occasionally struggles with emotional emptiness, loneliness, and concern about societal judgments. Most single women are found within this ambivalent group, illustrating that despite challenges, single women can still experience happiness. Pandelaere (2016) and Tu and Hsee (2016) argue that happiness involves positive emotions and engagement in enjoyable activities, while Veenhoven (2012), Husna (2016), Ng (2022), Singh et al. (2023), and Arini and Indriani (2024) emphasize that happiness is subjective, with its meaning and sources varying individually. Akhrani and Nuryanti (2021) further highlight that religiosity plays a significant role, explaining 19.6% of happiness among disaster relief volunteers, indicating that spiritual engagement can enhance well-being.

Based on the literature review, several research gaps can be identified. Although previous studies indicate that single women's experiences can be positive, negative, or ambivalent, most research focuses on emotional aspects, loneliness, and social stigma without deeply examining the role of social support and religiosity in influencing their happiness levels. Furthermore, while some studies highlight the subjectivity of happiness and the influence of religiosity on individual well-being, there is a lack of comprehensive research analyzing how social support and religiosity simultaneously contribute to the happiness of adult single women. Previous research also tends not to differentiate the effects of each factor on happiness or explore the interaction between social support and religiosity. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by systematically examining the relationships and contributions of social support and religiosity to the happiness of adult single women, providing clearer empirical insights into the factors that affect their well-being.

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationships between social support, religiosity, and the happiness levels of adult single women. Specifically, the research aims to analyze how social support and religiosity influence happiness, assess the direct effects of these factors on the well-being of single women, and determine their combined contribution in shaping overall happiness. By exploring these dimensions, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the psychosocial and spiritual factors that affect the quality of life of adult single women. The benefits of this research are twofold. Practically, the findings can inform interventions, counseling programs, and community initiatives designed to enhance social support networks and

spiritual engagement, thereby promoting greater happiness and psychological well-being among single women. Theoretically, the study contributes to the literature on positive psychology, gender studies, and the role of religiosity in subjective well-being, offering empirical evidence that can guide future research on social and spiritual determinants of happiness in diverse populations.

Based on the objectives of this study, the preliminary conclusion suggests that both social support and religiosity are likely to play significant roles in influencing the happiness of adult single women. Social connections, emotional support, and a sense of belonging may provide resilience against loneliness and societal stigma, while religiosity may offer spiritual comfort, purpose, and coping mechanisms that enhance overall well-being. It is anticipated that these two factors not only independently affect happiness but also interact to strengthen positive outcomes in life satisfaction and emotional health. From these insights, the study hypothesizes that higher levels of social support and greater religiosity will be positively associated with increased happiness among adult single women. Additionally, it is expected that the combined influence of social support and religiosity will contribute significantly to determining overall happiness, with each factor potentially moderating or amplifying the effect of the other on psychological well-being.

## METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach using survey research to examine populations on both large and small scales. A non-probability sampling method was chosen due to the unknown size of the population under study. Participants were selected based on specific criteria: women aged 26-45 years, unmarried, and not currently dating. Data were collected through online questionnaires distributed via Google Forms, with responses measured using a five-point Likert scale: "always," "often," "sometimes," "rarely," and "never." Hypothesis testing was conducted using the SPSS program.

The independent variables in this study are social support and religiosity, while the dependent variable is happiness. Social support, as conceptualized, refers to feedback from one's environment that signals the individual is loved, valued, respected, engaged, and cared for. It encompasses emotional, informational, and instrumental support, which can influence psychological well-being. Religiosity, following Brailovskaia et al., (2017), reflects both an individual's beliefs about religion and the extent of their commitment to religious practices, rituals, and values. Happiness, based on Lin et al., (2019), is understood as the experience of positive emotions combined with active engagement in meaningful or enjoyable activities. By examining these variables together, this study seeks to analyze how the presence of social support and the degree of religiosity contribute to the overall happiness of adult single women, offering insights into the psychosocial and spiritual factors that shape well-being in this population.

This study employed three validated instruments to measure the variables. Social support was assessed using the Medical Outcomes Study Social Support Survey (MOS-SSS), compiled by Sungadi (2020), which demonstrated a high reliability coefficient of 0.97. Religiosity was measured using the Centrality of Religiosity Scale developed, which consists of 15 core questions and 5 multiple-choice questions; the study used only the 15 core items, with a reported reliability coefficient of 0.84. Happiness was measured using the Indonesian Indigenous Peoples Happiness Scale, developed and cited by Augustiya et al. (2020). This scale evaluates happiness across four dimensions: family ties, personal achievements, social relationships, and spiritual needs, with a reliability coefficient of 0.90. According to the cited researchers, all three instruments demonstrate strong reliability, justifying their selection for this study to ensure accurate measurement of social support, religiosity, and happiness among adult single women.

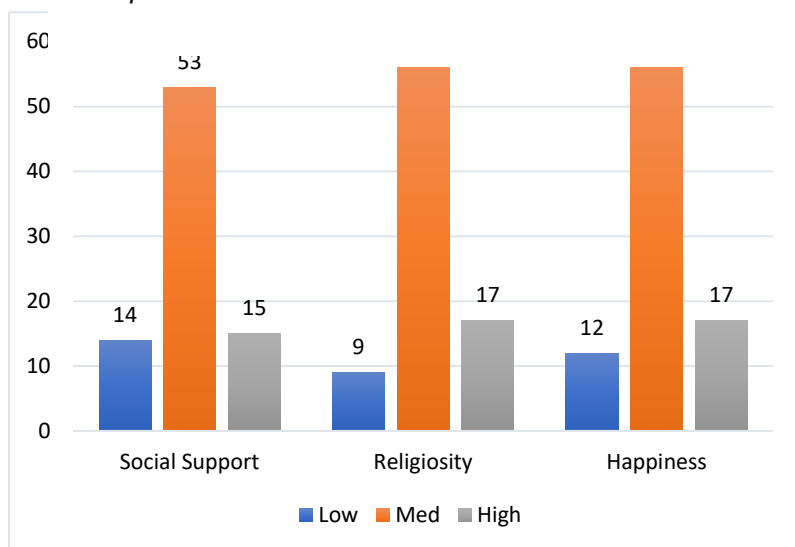
## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Analysis of social support, religiosity, and happiness levels among single adult women

This study aims to provide an overview of the level of social support, religiosity, and happiness in single adult women. Based on data obtained from 82 participants, it was found that most respondents were in the moderate category for the three variables. This shows that the majority of single women in this study have sufficient levels of social support, religiosity, and happiness, although not classified as high. These findings provide an important basis for understanding how single women live their lives emotionally and spiritually, and the extent to which external and internal factors contribute to their happiness.

**Figure 1**

*The Participants*



According to Chart 1 (N=82), 17.1% (14 participants) were categorized as low in social support, 11% (9 participants) in religiosity, and 14.6% (12 participants) in happiness. A larger group, 64.6% (53 participants), fell into the moderate category for social support, 68.3% (56 participants) for religiosity, and happiness. Finally, 18.3% (15 participants) were classified as high in social support, 20.7% (17 participants) in religiosity, and 17.1% (14 participants) in happiness. Overall, the majority of participants, 64.6% in social support, 68.3% in religiosity, and happiness, fall into the moderate category. This highlights that most individuals exhibit a moderate level of these factors, suggesting a more balanced distribution across the variables.

The study involved participants aged between 26 and 40 years, with the majority being 26 years old, accounting for 65.8% (54 individuals). Participants aged 27 years comprised 32.9% (27 individuals), while those aged 28 and 29 years represented 3.65% (3 individuals). Participants aged 30 years were 4.87% (4 individuals), and ages 31, 32, 33, and 40 each accounted for 1.21% (1 individual per age category). In terms of geographical distribution, most participants, 86.5% (71 individuals), were from Java, while the remaining 23.5% (11 individuals) came from outside Java. Regarding educational background, the majority held a bachelor's degree, totaling 80.48% (66 individuals). Participants with a master's degree made up 7.31% (6 individuals), while 1.21% (1 individual) had an associate degree, and 9.75% (8 individuals) had completed senior high school. This demographic profile indicates that the participants were predominantly young adults from Java with higher education, providing a focused sample for examining social support, religiosity, and happiness among adult single women.

Before conducting a multiple correlation analysis test to see if there is a strong relationship between variable x and variable y, an assumption test is carried out by conducting a normality test and a linearity test.

**Table 1**  
*Normality Test*

Kolmogorov-Smirnov	
	Sig.
Social Support	0,200*
Religiosity	0,200*
Happiness	0,200*

Table 1 reveals that the significance value for the scales of social support, religiosity, and happiness is 0.200. This suggests that the data follows a normal distribution, as the p-value is greater than 0.05. This normality in the data distribution indicates that the values for these variables are evenly spread out, making them suitable for further statistical analysis. The result reinforces the reliability of the dataset, confirming that the assumptions for conducting parametric tests have been met, allowing for more accurate and meaningful conclusions to be drawn.

**Table 2**  
*Linearity Test*

Variable	Linearity
Social Support and Happiness	0,000
Religiosity and Happiness	0,000

Based on Table 2, the significance values for the relationships between social support and happiness, and religiosity and happiness, were both 0.000, indicating a linear relationship ( $p < 0.05$ ). This demonstrates that increases in social support and religiosity are associated with higher levels of happiness among single women. These findings underscore the critical role of external support systems and internal spiritual beliefs in fostering psychological well-being. They suggest that interventions aimed at enhancing happiness should prioritize strengthening social networks and promoting religiosity. Overall, social support and religiosity emerge as essential determinants of life satisfaction and emotional resilience for single women.

The findings show that most participants fell into the moderate category for social support, religiosity, and happiness, suggesting that adult single women generally experience a balanced level of these factors. Baumeister and Leary (1995) argue that adequate social support fosters belonging and well-being. Carvallo and Gabriel (2006) highlight that moderate religiosity provides moral guidance and emotional stability without rigidity, while Barnes et al. (2010) note that balanced spiritual engagement enhances adaptive coping. Diener (2000) adds that extremely high support or religiosity may create dependency, and low levels may increase loneliness. Collectively, these perspectives suggest that moderate levels represent an optimal state, supporting psychological health and helping participants navigate social and emotional challenges of singlehood.

Regarding demographic factors, most participants were aged 26-27, aligning with early adulthood when single women often seek stability in social relationships. Slatcher and Selcuk (2017) suggest that individuals in this age range experience fluctuating social support and religiosity as they navigate career development, intimate relationships, and personal growth. The predominance of participants from Java (86.5%) highlights the influence of cultural context on singlehood experiences. Anjara et al. (2021) argue that regions with strong communal and familial networks provide more accessible social support, which can enhance subjective well-being. Putra et al. (2024) further emphasize that cultural norms regarding unmarried women shape

expectations, influencing religiosity practices and perceptions of happiness. Comparatively, these findings suggest that age, regional culture, and social networks interact to shape the psychosocial experiences and overall well-being of adult single women in Indonesia, underscoring the importance of contextual factors in understanding happiness.

Educational attainment plays a vital role in shaping social support and religiosity among adult single women. In this study, most participants held a bachelor's degree, supporting Lammers et al. (2011), who argue that higher education enhances access to social networks and deepens religious understanding. Higher education provides career opportunities, financial independence, and broader social engagement, fostering belonging and well-being, while also promoting resilience against societal pressures and stigma associated with singlehood. Social Exchange Theory, proposed by Homans (1958) and expanded by Cook et al. (2013) and Cropanzano et al. (2017), emphasizes that individuals evaluate rewards and costs in relationships. The positive correlation between social support and happiness suggests that perceived support enhances well-being, while religiosity offers meaning, comfort, and stress relief. Hidayati (2020) interprets social connections as emotional sustenance and religiosity as a source of resilience and coping. Comparative studies (Natasha & Desiningrum, 2020) indicate that cultural context influences these effects, highlighting the need for holistic strategies to strengthen both social and spiritual resources, thereby enhancing life satisfaction and psychological health.

**Social support and religiosity on happiness in single women**

Relationship between social support, religiosity, and happiness. Findings indicate that both social support and religiosity are positively associated with happiness in single adult women. Although the relationship between social support and religiosity appears weaker, each factor independently contributes to participants' overall well-being. These results highlight the important role that interpersonal relationships and personal beliefs can play in fostering happiness in the context of singlehood.

**Table 3**  
*Correlation Test*

	Social Support	Religiosity	Happiness
Social Support	1	0,152	0,374*
		0,35	0,001
Religiosity	0,152	1	0,582**
	0,174		0,000
Happiness	0,374**	0,582**	1
	0,001	0,000	

Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)

According to the results from Table 3, the correlation test revealed a statistically significant relationship between social support and happiness, with a correlation value of 0.374 ( $p = 0.001$ ). This indicates a low positive correlation between the two variables. Additionally, the relationship between religiosity and happiness showed a stronger statistically significant correlation of 0.582 ( $p = 0.000$ ), reflecting a moderate positive association. These findings indicate that both social support and religiosity are positively correlated with happiness in single women. Specifically, as social support increases, so does happiness, and similarly, higher levels of religiosity are associated with greater happiness. These results suggest that both external support from others and personal spiritual beliefs play an important role in enhancing the well-being of single women.

Positive social support plays a crucial role in enhancing the well-being of single women. Amna (2023) argues that healthy interpersonal relationships foster feelings of appreciation, acceptance, and emotional security, which directly contribute to higher levels of happiness.



Moningga (2022) adds that such support not only improves emotional states but also positively affects physical health and reduces stress. Comparative research by Girmé et al. (2022) in New Zealand and Canada indicates that single individuals often report lower psychological well-being than their partnered counterparts, a difference partly explained by heightened social stigma and negative societal treatment (Oh et al., 2021; Cantarella et al., 2023). These perspectives collectively suggest that the absence of social support and societal acceptance can undermine emotional stability, highlighting that fostering supportive networks is essential for the psychological and overall well-being of single women.

Religiosity is a significant factor influencing an individual's sense of purpose and life direction. Ruiter and De Graaf (2006) argue that faith provides a framework for understanding life events, while Akhrani and Nuryanti (2021) emphasize its role in fostering emotional stability and resilience. Petrovic et al. (2024) further note that religious practices offer coping mechanisms that help individuals navigate life challenges. For single women, Pello and Soetjningsih (2020) suggest that religiosity provides meaning and acceptance of their life circumstances. Adamczyk et al. (2024) highlight that perceiving one's status through a spiritual lens enables women to embrace singleness with peace and satisfaction. Comparative studies by Granqvist and Hagekull (2000) and Abo-Zena (2024) demonstrate that strong religious commitment supports psychological well-being, buffering the negative effects of societal pressures and stigma associated with being single, and fostering an enduring sense of happiness and resilience.

These findings align with Khuzaimah et al.'s (2021) study on elderly residents at the Binjai Medan nursing home, which emphasizes that social support is a key predictor of happiness. Julianto et al. (2020) argue that both the quantity and quality of support influence well-being, while Luchesi et al. (2018) and Mahmoodi et al. (2022) note that for the elderly, support from friends and caregivers reduces dependency and familial conflicts, fostering a sense of independence and increasing happiness. Comparatively, Akhrani and Nuryanti (2021) found that religiosity significantly contributed to happiness among 135 disaster relief volunteers, accounting for 19.6% of variance. Ruiter and De Graaf (2006) and Petrovic et al. (2024) interpret this effect as stemming from the spiritual meaning volunteers derive from helping others, framing their actions as an expression of gratitude to God. Collectively, these studies illustrate that both social support and religiosity operate as complementary mechanisms that enhance well-being and life satisfaction across different populations.

### The Contribution of Social Support and Religiosity in Determining the Happiness of Single Women

This study shows that social support and religiosity jointly influence happiness among single women, explaining a significant portion of the variance. While both factors enhance well-being, other variables also contribute. The findings underscore the crucial role of social connections and spiritual engagement in promoting a positive and fulfilling singlehood experience.

**Table 4**  
*Multiple Correlation Test*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of The Estimate
1	0,650 <sup>a</sup>	0,422	0,408	11,403

a. Predictors: (Constans), Religiosity (X2), Social Support (X1)

b. Dependent Variable: Happiness (Y)

The multiple correlation analysis revealed a correlation value (R) of 0.650 and a determination coefficient ( $R^2$ ) of 0.422, indicating that social support and religiosity collectively explain 42.2% of the variance in happiness, while the remaining variance is influenced by other

factors. This finding suggests a positive association between social support, religiosity, and happiness. Rani (2016) interprets social support as essential for psychological well-being, as adequate emotional and social backing fosters a sense of security, belonging, and satisfaction. Ramadhani et al. (2023) and Yuliani et al. (2023) further emphasize that sufficient support systems enhance life satisfaction, whereas insufficient support can lead to emotional distress and decreased happiness. Riski and Ticoalu (2024) argue that these results underscore the interdependence of social and spiritual resources, highlighting the importance of strengthening both to optimize psychological health and overall well-being among single women.

Social support from friends, close peers, and family plays a crucial role in alleviating the loneliness often experienced by single women. Rahmani et al. (2016) and Shahrak (2021) argue that emotional and social connections provide a buffer against isolation, fostering a sense of belonging and psychological stability. Women who remain single not by choice may be particularly vulnerable to loneliness, as Mund et al. (2020) and Umberson et al. (2022) note, due to limited social interactions with the opposite sex and societal stigma that can lead to feelings of inferiority. Conversely, Granqvist and Hagekull (2000) and Abo-Zena (2024) observe that women who choose to remain single experience lower stress levels, facilitating social engagement and well-being. Chapman and Guven (Himawan, 2020b) further highlight that happiness is not necessarily tied to marital status, while Nisa et al. (2021) and Indrianie & Dwijayanthi (2024) emphasize that single women can cultivate their own happiness regardless of marriage, illustrating that social support and personal agency interact to shape psychological resilience and life satisfaction.

Religiosity, alongside social support, plays a pivotal role in enhancing happiness among single women. Akhrani and Nuryanti (2021) interpret that volunteers assisting disaster victims derive happiness when their actions align with religious values, illustrating how faith can guide purposeful behavior. Similarly, Mullins (2016), Lianda and Himawan (2022), and Maryanto et al. (2024) argue that single women with high religiosity experience greater psychological well-being, as their decisions and perspectives are shaped by divine principles rather than societal judgment. This aligns with Bennett (2015) and Sallam et al. (2018), who emphasize that religiosity can buffer the negative emotional effects of social stigma, enabling individuals to maintain inner peace and contentment. Comparatively, these findings suggest that religious engagement offers a protective framework, complementing social support in fostering resilience, emotional stability, and overall happiness in the face of external pressures.

Research by Himawan (2020b) involving 635 male and female participants aged 26-50 in Indonesia demonstrates that religiosity significantly supports the well-being of single adults. Himawan (2020a) further notes from interviews that many participants view their single status as an opportunity for self-reflection, personal growth, and spiritual development, which strengthens religiosity. Attia et al. (2022) interpret this mindset as especially beneficial for those single not by choice, helping to reduce concerns about unmarried status. Nasution and Fauziah (2020) suggest that focusing on spiritual growth allows single women to maintain happiness despite societal pressures. Overall, these findings indicate that religiosity acts as a psychological buffer, fostering resilience, emotional stability, and enhanced well-being for individuals navigating the challenges of singleness.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion obtained from the results of this study is that there is a relationship between social support and religiosity and happiness in single women. The correlation obtained was 0.650, indicating that there was a strong relationship with the direction of positive correlation. This is interpreted as the higher the social support and religiosity of single women, the higher their happiness, and vice versa. Social support is an important factor for single women to overcome



their status as single, especially because of the stigma and discrimination that they often get. When social support becomes support from the outside, religiosity becomes spirituality support for single women. The more single women believe that being single is not a punishment from God, and that solitude has a positive meaning in religion, the lower the stress level that single women have so that they will be easier to feel happy.

Theoretically, this study underscores the importance of social support and religiosity as key determinants of happiness in single women, highlighting how external support and spiritual beliefs interact to enhance psychological well-being. Both social and religious dimensions help mitigate negative effects associated with singleness, deepening understanding of factors shaping happiness in this group. Practically, the findings suggest that strengthening social networks and fostering religiosity can serve as effective interventions to improve mental well-being, particularly for women facing societal stigma. Policies and programs that enhance community support and encourage spiritual growth may help single women navigate their status, reduce stress, and increase happiness, providing integrated social and spiritual strategies to support well-being in singlehood.

Future research could examine which specific types of social support emotional, informational, or instrumental most effectively enhance the happiness of single women across different cultural and social contexts. Longitudinal studies may further explore how the interplay between social support, religiosity, and happiness changes over time, particularly in response to life events such as aging or shifts in relationship status. Additionally, investigating the influence of other factors, including personality traits or coping strategies, could clarify how these variables mediate well-being. Comparative studies between single women and those in relationships would provide deeper insights, informing more targeted interventions to promote happiness and psychological resilience in diverse populations of single women.

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