

## The influence of hope and meaning on life as predictors of flourishing among higher education students

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**Abstract:** This study aims to investigate the influence of hope and the meaning of life on the flourishing of university students in education departments. Flourishing is individuals positive mental state to balance negative and positive aspects and recognize their strengths. For students of education departments, flourishing is essential to ensure that they are prepared to possess motivation and commitment as educators. The study utilized quantitative approach with a correlational method. A multiple linear regression test was conducted to see the influence of hope and meaning of life on student flourishing, showing a significant value of 0,000, which means that hope and meaning of life influence student flourishing.

**Keywords:** flourishing; hope; meaning of life; students of education departments.

**Abstrak:** Penelitian bertujuan untuk melihat pengaruh harapan dan makna hidup terhadap flourishing mahasiswa jurusan pendidikan. Flourishing merupakan kondisi mental individu yang positif dalam diri individu sehingga ia memiliki kemampuan dalam menyeimbangkan aspek negatif maupun positif dan mengenali kekuatannya. Bagi mahasiswa jurusan pendidikan, flourishing dibutuhkan agar mereka siap memiliki motivasi dan komitmen sebagai seorang pendidik. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode korelasional. Uji regresi linier berganda yang digunakan untuk melihat pengaruh harapan dan makna hidup terhadap flourishing mahasiswa menunjukkan nilai sig. sebesar 0,000 yang berarti harapan dan makna hidup memiliki pengaruh terhadap flourishing mahasiswa.

**Kata kunci:** flourishing; harapan; makna hidup; mahasiswa pendidikan.

## INTRODUCTION

College students are in the transition period of adolescence to adulthood. There are various challenges, pressures, and setbacks that arise in this period, hindering them from achieving an optimal level of well-being. Various demands, including increased academic workloads, heightened self-expectations, and growing expectations from parents and the surrounding environment, may potentially make students more susceptible to stress or depression. Descriptive analysis conducted by Setyanto (2023) involving 227 college students as respondents showed that 26,9% experienced mild depression, 18,5% experienced moderate depression, and 9,3% experienced severe or extreme depression. In addition, 86,8% of it, or 197 students, experienced anxiety in the high category.

Higher education students across different academic programs naturally exhibit varying levels of stress and depression. Especially for students in education departments, the levels of stress tend to be high. A study conducted by SP (2023) found that 85% of university students in education departments experienced high levels of academic stress. Academic programs whose students exhibit very high levels of academic stress are Primary School Teacher Education, Educational Technology, Early Childhood Teacher Education, and Community Education. Meanwhile, those categorized as high are Special Education, Educational Management, and Guidance and Counseling. Moreover, a study by Ellis (2021) showed that 200 university students majoring in Educational Sciences at Pattimura University exhibited considerable stress in completing their coursework.

Drawing on data regarding stress and depression levels among students, this study will explore the influence of hope and meaning in life on the flourishing of students in education departments. Flourishing is a concept in positive psychology introduced by Martin Seligman. Flourishing is defined as a condition in which an individual has a high level of well-being (Seligman, 2011). This concept posits that individuals who attain a high level of well-being are not only free from mental disorders but also exhibit positive attitudes and demonstrate healthy psychological functioning across various aspects of life (Sekarini et al., 2020). Flourishing is a refined positive psychology concept of authentic happiness, comprising five dimensions

known as PERMA. The PERMA dimensions consist of positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment/achievement. The concept is also defined by Huppert and So (2013) as a combination of positive feelings and effective functioning, which together lead to a well progressed life experience.

Flourishing enables individuals to achieve their life goals while also appreciating every process of their daily experiences. Flourishing can be enhanced by some factors including hope and meaning in life. Individuals who possess hope tend to strive for certain achievements. This aligns with one of the accomplishment or achievement dimension of flourishing. Accomplishment or achievement significantly shapes personal development and the quality of an individual's flourishing, as two types of achievement goals may affect the process of attaining flourishing: spiritual fulfillment and worldly accomplishments.

Hope was conceptualized by Snyder et al., (1994) as an individual cognitive process in pursuing goals through pathways thinking and agency thinking. Støre et al., (2025) redefined hope as the capacity to pursue desired goals by utilizing one's abilities and the potential pathways toward achieving those goals. Meanwhile, the meaning of life was first articulated by Frankl, (1985) as a driving force that enables individuals to develop themselves, improving their quality of life. Meaning in life is also one of the dimensions within the concept of flourishing, representing an optimal state in which individuals experience comprehensive happiness and well-being. By having a strong sense of meaning in life, individuals tend to reach high well-being easier. According to King & Hicks (2021), meaning in life is a subjective feeling in of logical, purposeful, meaningful, and impactful life. Moreover, Seligman (2011) defined meaning in life as a sense of interconnection and contribution that something has a bigger meaning than it is in in visible sense.

Based on the phenomenon of high stress levels among university students and the relationship between hope and meaning of life with individual well-being, this study was considered as important to conduct. This study will explore the influence of hope and meaning in life on the flourishing of education major students as an effort to understand the factors that can comprehensively enhance their well-being. By understanding the role of hope and

meaning in life, it is expected to develop an effective intervention strategy to help university students cope with academic and emotional pressures, enabling them to achieve a better quality of life and higher levels of happiness.

## METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach using a descriptive design. In regard to data collection and analysis, quantitative approach is defined as a systematic and objective method that involves the use of numerical data to collect and analyze information validly and reliably about a particular phenomenon or issue (Creswell, 2018). This correlational study was conducted to identify the relationship between meaning in life and hope with students' flourishing. The population of this study is active students of education departments from various universities in Indonesia, with the sample size as determined by the requirements of statistical analysis.

Flourishing was measured using the Indonesian version of the Diener Flourishing Scale (Nurchahyo & Valentina, 2024). The Flourishing Scale is a psychological assessment consisting of 8 brief statements that measure respondents' perception level of success in some key areas, which are relationships, self-esteem, purpose, and optimism. The scale yields a score reflecting an individual's mental well-being.

The respondents' level of hope was measured using the Indonesian Hope Scale (Asiah et al., 2022). The Hope Scale is an assessment consisting of 12 items designed to

measure the level of hope held by an individual. Furthermore, the scale is divided into two subscales based on Snyder's cognitive model of hope, agency and pathways thinking. From the 12 items, 4 of them constitute the Agency subscale and the other 4 constitute the Pathways subscale. The remaining 4 items serve as fillers. Each item is supposed to be answered using an 8-point Likert scale, ranging from Definitely False to Definitely True.

To measure the respondents' level of meaning in life, the researcher used the Meaning of Life Scale (Ifdil et al., 2024).

Data were collected through an online survey by distributing questionnaires to respondents who met the criteria of being registered students in the education departments. By following research principles such as confidentiality and participant consent, a total of 521 education major students across Indonesia participated as the respondents of this study.

The data analysis technique employed multiple linear regression to examine the influence of the Hope variable (X1) and the Meaning of Life variable (X2) on the Flourishing variable (Y).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data were obtained from the instruments distributed to 521 students of education departments. The instruments used in this study were of the Flourishing Scale, the Hope Scale, and the Meaning of Life Scale. Results of the data analysis can be seen in Table1.

Table 1. Description of Students' Flourishing, Hope, and Meaning in Life

Variable	N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
Flourishing	521	44	48	48	5,83
Hope	521	71	75	75	8,05
Meaning in Life	521	56	52	52	6,13

Table 1 shows that the mean scores for flourishing, hope, and meaning in life are 44, 71, and 56, respectively. These values indicate that, on average, the students' flourishing is in the low category, hope is in the moderate category, and meaning in life in the high category.

To examine the influence of hope and

meaning in life on students' flourishing, prerequisite tests consisted of normality test and multicollinearity test were conducted

The normality test was conducted using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to determine whether the data for the three variables under study were normally distributed.

**Table 2. Results of Normality Test**

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
N		Unstandardized Residual
Normal Parameters <sup>a,b</sup>	Mean	523
	Std. Deviation	0,0000000
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	4,34579392
	Positive	0,037
	Negative	0,029
		-0,037
Test Statistic		0,037
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		0,092 <sup>c</sup>
a. Test distribution is Normal.		
b. Calculated from data.		
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.		

As shown in Table 2, it is evident that the asymp. Sig (2-tailed) significance value is 0,092, bigger than 0,05 baseline. This indicates that the data are normally distributed.

The second prerequisite test was the multicollinearity test, conducted to determine the correlation among the independent variables.

**Table 3. Result of Multicollinearity Test**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>								
Model				Standardized	t	Sig.	Collinearity	
				Coefficients			Statistics	Tolerance
				Beta				
1	(Constant)	3,958	1,926		2,055	0,040		
	Hope	0,273	0,029	0,375	9,452	0,000	0,671	1,490
	Meaning in Life	0,364	0,038	0,384	9,683	0,000	0,671	1,490
a. Dependent Variable: Flourishing								

Based on Table 3, it is shown that the VIF value for hope and meaning in life similar which is 1.490, and it less than 10 baseline. It means that the three variables do not show any multicollinearity.

multiple linear regression analysis using SPSS was performed to examine the influence of hope and meaning in life on students' flourishing. The result of the data analysis can be seen in Tables 4, 5, and 6.

After conducting the prerequisite tests,

**Table 4. Result of Multiple Linear Regression Test on the Influence of Hope and Meaning in Life on Flourishing**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model				Standardized	t	Sig.
				Coefficients		
				Beta		
1	(Constant)	4,118	1,931		2,132	0,033
	Hope	0,275	0,029	0,380	9,576	0,000
	Meaning in Life	0,358	0,038	0,377	9,482	0,000
a. Dependent Variable: Flourishing						

Based on Table 4, it can be seen that the significance values for hope and meaning in life

are 0,000, which is less than 0,05 baseline, indicating that hope and meaning in life have an

influence on students' flourishing.

Table 5. Result of F-Test

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7967,001	2	3983,501	212,278	0,000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	9720,523	518	18,765		
	Total	17687,524	520			

a. Dependent

Variable:

Flourishing

b. Predictors:

(Constant),

Meaning in Life,

Hope

Table 5 shows that the F-test significance value is 0,000, which is below 0,05 baseline,

indicating that hope (X1) and meaning in life (X2) simultaneously affect flourishing

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination Values of Hope and Meaning in Life Variables on the Flourishing Variable

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0,671 <sup>a</sup>	0,450	0,448	4,332

a. Predictors:  
(Constant), Meaning in Life, Hope

The result of R-square or coefficient of determination value is 0,450, or 45%. This value indicates that hope (X1) and meaning in life (X2) collectively influence flourishing (Y) by 45%, while the remaining 55% is affected by other variables not examined in this study.

The concept of flourishing is described as a positive mental state within an individual, enabling them to balance both negative and positive aspects and recognize their strengths (Destalia et al., 2024; Mariana et al., 2023). The flourishing concept developed by Seligman encompasses five aspects known as PERMA, an acronym for Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment or Achievement. These aspects are influenced by several factors, such as social support from friends and family, positive life events, and personality (Du Plooy et al., 2019; Schotanus-Dijkstra et al., 2016).

Hope is an ability for an individual to motivate themselves and achieve their goals (Snyder, 2002). An individual must possess hope in order to have the desire to achieve their goals (Montolalu et al., 2023). Individuals who are hopeful, resilient, optimistic, and efficacious develop positive emotions from happiness,

enabling them to achieve an optimal state of flourishing (Khodarahimi, 2013; Kuanr et al., 2025).

Meanwhile, meaning of life is defined as individual's subjective evaluation of their life, characterized by coherence, purpose, and essence (Steger, 2022). As a fundamental drive of human in achieving a meaningful and valuable life, the meaning of life can serve as both motivation and a guide to help individuals attain sense of purpose in life (Aiwani et al., 2023).

Flourishing is related to hope and meaning in life. An individual is said to flourish if they possess some factors, which are positive emotions, emotional stability, hopefulness, engagement and positive relationships, resilience, self-esteem, and a sense of meaning (Schotanus-Dijkstra et al., 2016). This is in line with the result presented in Table 4, which indicates that both hope and meaning in life influence flourishing.

University students, as individuals in the transition from adolescence to early adulthood, with its demands and challenges Hope and meaning in life are considered as predictors of students' flourishing; having hope allows them to

experience more positive emotions, which positively impact their flourishing (Khodarahimi, 2013).

Educators are then expected to also have the state of flourishing enabling them stay motivated, remain committed to teaching, and overcome challenges in the instructional process (Mariana et al., 2023; Yulisinta et al., 2023). On the other hand, for education departments students who are expected to be educators in the future, flourishing is a crucial condition to have. Flourishing allows students of education departments to maintain a positive mental state, ensuring that upon graduation, they are prepared to become educators who are motivated and committed to the teaching process.

## CONCLUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results of the multiple linear regression analysis involving 521 respondents from students of education departments, it can be concluded that hope and meaning in life have a simultaneous effect on the flourishing of these students. Hope and meaning in life are individual's capacity to foster positive emotions which influences a person's level of flourishing. Flourishing is a condition in which individuals possess a positive mental state, enabling them to balance negative and positive aspects in their life and to recognize their strengths. This condition needs to be developed among students in education departments, so that they held the motivation and commitment required for teaching and learning related work upon graduation.

This study may provide a basis for future research. Hope and meaning in life, as predictors of university students' flourishing state, are expected to receive attention and consideration, in order to facilitate further interventions to enhance the flourishing of students in education departments.

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