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Sense of Coherence and Life Satisfaction among Jordanian University Students

Farah Abu Khadra
University of Pécs, Hungary
Applied Science Private University, Jordan

Aseel Aburub
Applied Science Private University, Jordan

Anwaar Amro
Applied Science Private University, Jordan

Zoltán Csapek
University of Pécs, Hungary

Bendegúz Kertai
University of Pécs, Hungary

Sára Jeges
University of Pécs, Hungary

Ákos Levente Tóth
University of Pécs, Hungary

ABSTRACT

This study examines university students' life satisfaction, well-being, and sense of coherence. It focuses on Jordanian students studying in Jordan and those studying abroad in Hungary, using the Optimal Living Profile-Modified to evaluate well-being and life satisfaction, and the Sense of Coherence to measure comprehensibility, manageability, and meaningfulness. Data from 307 students revealed that while demographics affect SOC, the role of cultural context was significant. Jordanian students studying in Hungary reported greater

meaningfulness, highlighting the impact of international students' experiences. Emotional and social health dimensions were predictors of life satisfaction, with SOC indirectly influencing life satisfaction through the emotional health dimension. This study contributes to understanding how SOC can shape well-being among university students locally or abroad, offering insights into interventions for enhancing student well-being in higher education.

Keywords: International Students; Life Satisfaction; Optimal Living Profile-Modified; Sense of Coherence; University Students

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Corresponding author: Farah Abu Khadra, Budapest, Hungary. ORCID ID: 0000-0002-9441-3775

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INTRODUCTION

Life satisfaction, as a major indicator of well-being, reflects an individual's evaluation of their contentment and fulfillment with life (Diener, 2000). Among university students, higher life satisfaction is often equated with better mental health and academic excellence, highlighting the importance of students' well-being (Li & Zhong, 2022; Diener et al., 2018). However, there is a general lack of research on well-being in the Arab world—and in Jordan in particular—given the cultural context that might influence students' life satisfaction, considering that Jordanian youth come from collectivist cultures where religion, social support, and family values are decisive (Hofstede, 2023). Understanding their life satisfaction determinants and predictors would assist in directing specially tailored well-being interventions in the higher education setting. This study examines university students' life satisfaction, well-being, and sense of coherence, focusing on Jordanian students studying in Jordan and Jordanians studying abroad in Hungary, who represent international students in this context, by measuring the Optimal Living Profile-Modified (OLP-M) and the Sense of Coherence-13 (SOC-13). The OLP-M tool allows individuals to assess their overall health and well-being. It measures life satisfaction and assesses well-being in several dimensions, including intellectual, spiritual, social, emotional, and physical health (Abu Khadra et al., 2025). It emphasizes a holistic approach when evaluating well-being on the basis of the Total Person Concept (TPC), which suggests viewing an individual as a whole being (Renger et al., 2000). Additionally, the SOC-13 is a

shorter version of the original Sense of Coherence (SOC), based on the Orientation to Life questionnaire developed by Aaron Antonovsky as a broad orientation that enables individuals to perceive life as comprehensible, manageable, and meaningful. Antonovsky's salutogenic model focuses on health promotion and contributes to the overall concept of meaning in life, derived from individuals' experiences, motivations, and values, enabling them to make sense of the world and their own lives, thereby establishing predictability and patterns in their environment (Martela & Steger, 2016). In essence, a person with a strong SOC perceives internal and external experiences as structured and explainable (comprehensibility), believes in having resources to cope with demands (manageability), and finds challenges in life to be worthy of engagement (meaningfulness) (Antonovsky, 1987). This capacity to derive coherence from stressors is thought to enhance resilience and well-being (Mc Gee et al., 2018). Thus, university students with stronger SOC may overcome academic and social challenges positively and maintain better well-being.

LITERATURE REVIEW

SOC and Life Satisfaction

Increasing evidence suggests that SOC is positively correlated with life satisfaction and well-being, both of which are central constructs in positive psychology and emphasize individuals' strengths, meaning, and capacity for resilience (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). A stronger SOC appears to help students cope with anxiety and academic pressures, leading to higher life satisfaction, better mental health outcomes, and greater resilience (Shankland et al., 2019; Hochwälder & Saied, 2018; Moksnes et al., 2013). Research has shown that SOC directly decreases student stress and academic burnout (Shankland et al., 2019; Hochwälder & Saied, 2018). Students with higher SOC scores tend to be organized with greater problem-solving skills. They are more likely to seek help from their peers, which in turn indirectly enhances life satisfaction. In contrast, those with lower SOC scores align with harmful coping practices such as substance use, which increases stress and reduces life satisfaction (Jurczyszyn & Zdziarski, 2022; Mahanta & Aggarwal, 2013; Qian et al., 2023). These findings indicate that healthy behaviors such as better nutrition, regular physical activity, and a higher quality of sleep increase SOC and, thus, life satisfaction (Lindmark et al., 2020). Furthermore, research has noted that higher SOC remains connected to higher life satisfaction despite demographic differences (Moksnes et al., 2013). The SOC correlation with life satisfaction is in line across populations but with different methods (Länsimies et al., 2017). These findings highlight the direct and indirect correlations of the SOC with life satisfaction among students, indicating that the SOC positively influences well-being.

Students' Well-being and SOC in the Cultural Context

University students' well-being can be influenced by several factors, as they begin to experience different challenges in balancing academic and personal life. Cultural context, including intellectual, spiritual, social, emotional, and physical health, can be among the factors impacting any of the well-being dimensions. Findings from previous research have shown that social support is positively correlated with well-being and life satisfaction among Jordanian students, indicating that better social support is associated with greater life satisfaction, underscoring the importance of family and community relationships (Mahasneh, 2022). Similarly, in a cross-cultural study comparing Jordanian students in Hungary with Hungarian students, Jordanians reported higher scores on the OLP-M dimensions and greater life satisfaction, highlighting the influence of cultural context. Religiosity is also a key determinant; research has shown that for many Arab students, well-being and sense of meaning attained through religion impact life satisfaction, suggesting that cultural and religious values shape well-being (Abdel-Khalek, 2022; Schellekens & Okun, 2024). Furthermore, the manageability and meaningfulness dimensions are standard in collectivist societies because of everyday religious practices, which improve resilience among students (Ali et al., 2018; Hofstede, 2011; Nosheen et al., 2017). Despite these findings, the well-being of Arab students remains underrepresented in the context of SOC and life satisfaction.

International Students

International student mobility and global education have increased over time, shedding light on the well-being of international students, who face numerous challenges, including cultural disorientation, language barriers, family separation, and depression, which negatively impact their life satisfaction (Gebregergis, 2018; Harvey et al., 2018; Luo, 2023). On the other hand, findings have shown that international students with stronger SOC reported lower stress levels than their peers did and were more likely to maintain life satisfaction during cultural transitions (Mayer et al., 2019; Peng et al., 2023). Moreover, studying abroad offers students additional benefits, as it enhances their resilience, adaptability, and personal growth, and helps them understand cultural differences and similarities (Mayer & Larsen, 2024; Beaven & Borghetti, 2016). Such opportunities allow students to have distinct experiences from their peers who study locally. However, further research on SOC in cross-cultural environments is needed; even though SOC is widely researched in higher education in general, studies on Jordanian student populations are lacking. It is essential to understand how the SOC works for students in a foreign setting, as it buffers stressors and sustains life satisfaction abroad.

Objectives

This research aims to examine the SOC, life satisfaction, and well-being of Jordanian students in Jordan (JJ) and Jordanian students in Hungary (JH) by measuring the SOC-13 and OLP-M. This research aims to examine the extent to

which the salutogenic model influences the well-being of Jordanian students and whether JH differs in this regard from JJ. Additionally, it examines whether the SOC is directly related to life satisfaction or if other factors mediate this relationship. This study also evaluates a unique sample of students from the Middle East and examines how the cultural context influences well-being. It addresses the following research questions (RQs):

RQ[1]: Does the SOC-13 questionnaire align with the concept of SOC in the Jordanian student sample based on construct validity indicators? In other words, does it measure the dimensions of comprehensibility, manageability, and meaningfulness?

RQ[2]: Do demographics influence the SOC?

RQ[3]: Does the sample (JH and JJ) differ in terms of the SOC?

RQ[4]: What is the relationship between the SOC and OLP-M dimensions, controlling for the sample**?**

RQ[5]: Does the SOC play a role in life satisfaction?

METHOD

Participant and Ethical Considerations

Data were gathered in this cross-sectional study via online Google Forms. For JH, ethical approval was obtained from the University of Pécs Regional Research Ethics Committee, and the Institutional Review Board approved the proposal in June 2022 (Nr. 9263 – PTE 2022). Data was collected from September 2022 to April 2023. For JJ, ethical approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of Applied Science Private University, which approved the proposal in June 2024 (AMS-24-5). Data was collected from September to December 2024. Additionally, formal consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring that their participation was anonymized and voluntary. The questionnaire was distributed to 300 JJ students and 207 JH students via email and social media across the faculties of medicine, health sciences, and sciences. A total of 307 students completed the questionnaire, with 90% of the questions answered. Of these, 112 students from JH completed the questionnaire in English, as they were required to pass an English proficiency test to study at the University of Pécs, yielding a response rate of 54.1%. From JJ, 195 students completed the questionnaire in English, as they studied in English, resulting in a response rate of 65.0%.

Instruments and Methods

Demographics. The demographics obtained included age, sex, education level, and employment status.

OLP-M. The OLP-M assessment tool is a modified version of the OLP, developed by Renger (2000) and modified by Abu Khadra (2025). It aims to

assess well-being in five dimensions: intellectual, spiritual, social, emotional, and physical health. The participants were asked to rate most of the items on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (*almost never*) to (*very frequently*) for some items and from (*strongly agree*) to (*strongly disagree*) for others.

Life Satisfaction. The life satisfaction item derived from the OLP-M: "I am satisfied with my personal life" was rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*almost never*) to 5 (*very frequently*).

SOC-13. The SOC-13 assessment tool aims to assess three dimensions of SOC: Comprehensibility (C), which represents five items, e.g., "Has it happened in the past that you were surprised by the behavior of people whom you thought you knew well?"; Manageability (MA), which represents four items, e.g., "Has it happened that people whom you counted on disappointed you?"; and Meaningfulness (ME), which represents four items, e.g., "Do you have the feeling that you do not really care about what goes on around you?". The participants were asked to rate the items on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*very often*) to 7 (*very seldom or never*) for most items, with higher scores indicating a stronger SOC and ranging from 13 to 91.

Data Analysis

We performed a sample size estimation via G*Power software (Faul et al., 2009). The calculation was based on a 5% significance level, a statistical power of 0.8, and a medium effect size (0.15). The sample size proved to be sufficient for the methods to be applied. As a first step, we checked the distribution of the variables via the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test. The suitability of the SOC questionnaire was evaluated through confirmatory factor analysis, Cronbach's alpha, and Omega coefficients for measuring internal consistency (*RQ1*). The reliability indicators were calculated via the **Lavaan** method, and the Maximum Likelihood procedure was applied. The internal consistency of the individual SOC dimensions was characterized by the coefficient ω (Omega). To identify the most significant factors influencing the dimensions of the OLP-M, hierarchical linear regression models (using a stepwise method) were applied. Path analysis was used to examine the role of SOC in the differences in life satisfaction and well-being across the samples.

RESULTS

Demographics

The sex distribution of the samples (JH and JJ) revealed **43%** males and **56.7%** females. In JH, men constitute a greater proportion (**58%**), whereas in JJ, women constitute a greater proportion (**65.1%**). The average age of JH is **25.8 ± 4.6**, whereas in JJ, it is **22.5 ± 3.4,** indicating a significantly lower average age. Additionally, employment was most common among men in JH. The education level was the same for all participants (College/University). These variables are considered control variables in the correlation analyses.

Construct Validity and Consistency of the SOC

According to the chi-square test, the factor structure of the model did not fit the data perfectly. However, other fit indices, such as CFI (0.930) and IFI (0.931), indicated an acceptably good fit (≥ 0.90). The TLI and NNFI (0.900) were acceptable (≥ 0.90 is desirable). The RMSEA (0.077, 90% CI: 0.056–0.099) suggested a moderately good fit (within the range of 0.05–0.08). The SRMR (0.055) (≤ 0.08) and GFI (0.950) also indicated a good fit.

The factor loadings of the items for all three dimensions (C, MA, and ME) were significant ($p < .001$), indicating that the items represented the SOC dimensions well.

The reliability of all three factors fell within the good or acceptable range:

- C: $\omega = 0.752$, $\alpha = 0.748$
- MA: $\omega = 0.850$, $\alpha = 0.841$
- ME: $\omega = 0.852$, $\alpha = 0.843$

The item with the highest factor loading in each dimension is as follows:

- C: Item 9 (*"Does it happen that you have feelings inside you would rather not feel?"*)
- MA: Item 3 (*"Has it happened that people whom you counted on disappointed you?"*)
- ME: Item 4 ("*Until now your life has had:"*)

For the SOC-13 scale (C + MA + ME): $\omega = 0.804$ and *Cronbach's alpha = 0.806.*

The Effects of Demographics and Samples on the SOC

The relationships between sense of coherence (SOC) and demographics were examined via multiple linear regression models. The SOC scale and its dimensions (C, MA, and ME) were treated as dependent variables. Table 1 shows the following:

- In the first model, sex, age, and employment status were included as predictor variables.
- In the second model, the sample variable (JH vs. JJ) was added alongside these predictors.

All the models were statistically significant (ANOVA, $p < 0.050$). The findings show that age was significantly positively correlated with all three dimensions and the SOC scale. Employment also had a positive effect on the SOC, but this effect was significant only for the ME dimension and the SOC scale. With respect to sex, male students had a significantly stronger sense of coherence in the C dimension ($p = 0.036$), but there were no substantial sex differences in the MA and ME dimensions. For MA, neither the demographics (sex, age, employment) nor the sample (JH vs. JJ) were significant predictors. A significant difference was found between the samples in the ME dimension—JH students had a significantly higher ME score than JJ students did ($p < 0.001$). However, no significant differences were observed in the other SOC dimensions. *The influence*

of demographics on the SOC is not negligible. Therefore, in multivariate analyses, these variables are always included as control variables in the models.

Table 1: Multiple Linear Regression Models of Demographics and SOC

Predictor variables	β	Dependent variable			
		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
		SOC	*C*	*MA*	*ME*
Sex	β1	-0.09	-0.13	-0.05	-0.04
	p1	0.136	0.036	0.429	0.500
Age	β2	0.18	0.16	0.16	0.01
	p2	0.009	0.020	0.019	0.049
Employment Status	β3	0.15	0.11	0.12	0.15
	p3	0.019	0.081	0.069	0.020
Sample	β4	0.01	0.10	0.12	-0.21
	p4	0.837	0.116	0.066	0.001

Models: Dependent variables=β0+β1Sex+β2Age+β3Employment+β4Sample

Relationship between SOC and OLP-M

In Table 2, we examined this relationship via multiple linear regression models with a hierarchical approach. According to the SOC scale and its dimensions, the JH and JJ differ significantly in terms of social and physical health, with JJ students having better well-being. In terms of the ME dimension, the two samples differ in emotional health, with JJ students scoring better. Regardless of the sample, SOC has a strong positive effect on intellectual, spiritual, and emotional health. C and MA significantly influence intellectual and emotional health, whereas ME affects spiritual and emotional health.

The Relationship between OLP-M and Life Satisfaction

We established multiple linear regression models, considering life satisfaction as the dependent variable. In Table 3, only the significant ($p<0.05$) predictor variables of life satisfaction are presented. In the first model, the sample was significant, whereas in the second model, emotional health had the strongest correlation with life satisfaction. Finally, in the third model, social health was added, weakening the sample's significance (the probability of Type I error increased from $p=0.003$ to $p=0.057$). Thus, for both students in Hungary and those in Jordan, life satisfaction is not influenced by demographics or the sample. However, the emotional and social health dimensions determine life satisfaction.

Table 2: Multiple Linear Regression Model of OLP-M and SOC

Predictor variables	β	Dependent variable				
		Intellectual health	Spiritual health	Emotional health	Social health	Physical health
SOC	β	0.16	0.13	0.15	0.05	0.19
	p	0.007	0.022	<0.001	0.385	0.744
Sample	β	-0.12	0.08	0.10	0.23	0.20
	p	0.859	0.242	0.113	<0.001	0.003
C	β	0.16	-0.11	0.17	0.07	0.01
	p	0.004	0.069	0.003	0.197	0.889
Sample	β	-0.03	0.07	0.09	0.22	0.20
	p	0.686	0.305	0.180	<0.001	0.003
MA	β	0.12	0.10	0.15	0.02	-0.05
	p	0.033	0.075	0.011	0.666	0.385
Sample	β	-0.02	0.07	0.09	0.23	0.21
	p	0.711	0.317	0.189	<0.001	0.002
ME	β	0.1	0.13	0.16	0.02	-0.01
	p	0.090	0.027	0.008	0.736	0.857
Sample	β	0.01	0.11	0.14	0.24	0.20
	p	0.857	0.111	0.037	<0.001	0.004

Models:
1.OLP-M Dimensions (1-5) =β0+β2Age+β3Gender+β3Employment
2.OLP-M Dimension (1-5) =β0+β2Age+β3Gender+β3Employment+β4(SOC and Dimensions (1-3)
3.OLP-M Dimensions (1-5) =β0+β2Age+β3Gender+β3Employment+β4(SOC and Dimensions (1-3) +β5Sample
*The demographics in the final models were insignificant, and only the results of the final model are presented.

Table 3: Hierarchically Linear Regression Models of Life Satisfaction

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	*Std. Error*	*Beta*		
1	(Constant)	3.528	0.140		25.284	<0.001
	Sample	0.195	0.057	0.193	3.442	<0.001
2	(Constant)	0.558	0.319		1.750	0.081
	Sample	0.148	0.049	0.147	3.009	0.003
	Emotional health	0.901	0.090	0.492	10.057	<0.001
3	(Constant)	-0.299	0.337		-0.888	0.375
	Sample	0.091	0.048	0.091	1.910	0.057
	Emotional health	0.669	0.094	0.365	7.118	<0.001
	Social health	0.486	0.083	0.306	5.838	<0.001

Dependent Variable: Life Satisfaction
Predictor variables: Age, Sex, Employment, Sample, Intellectual, Spiritual, Emotional, Social, Physical

Relationship between SOC and Life Satisfaction

We extended the previous multiple linear regression Model 3 by including the order of SOC, C, MA, and ME as predictor variables via a stepwise method. The results indicated that the SOC (as shown in Table 4), as well as C and MA, were not significantly associated with life satisfaction.

Table 4: Hierarchically Linear Regression Model of Life Satisfaction and SOC

Predictor Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	*Std. Error*	*Beta*		
(Constant)	-0.292	0.369		-0.792	0.429
Sample	0.091	0.048	0.091	1.896	0.059
Emotional health	0.670	0.096	0.366	6.980	<0.001
Social health	0.486	0.083	0.306	5.820	<0.001
SOC	0.082	0.048	0.081	1.708	0.089
Dependent Variable: Life Satisfaction					

Thus far, the SOC and its dimensions have had a significant impact on the emotional health dimension of the OLP-M. At the same time, the emotional health dimension has the strongest influence on life satisfaction. This suggests that the SOC or its dimensions affect life satisfaction through the mediation of the emotional health dimension. We tested this via path analysis (with a Simple Mediation Model), according to which SOC, C, and MA had detectable effects on life satisfaction only through the mediation of emotional health, whereas their total effects were not significant. However, ME showed both direct and strongly significant indirect effects through emotional health. This is illustrated in Figure 1, where the path coefficients (betas) are indicated. (** indicates that the beta's significance level is $p<0.001$.

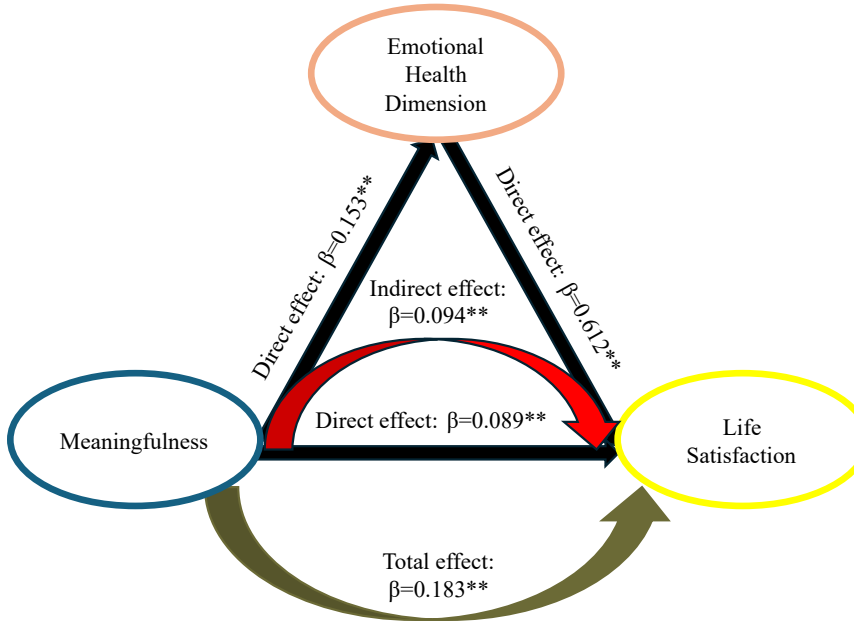

Figure 1: Path Model

DISCUSSION

Our study aimed to explore the relationships between Sense of Coherence (SOC), life satisfaction, and Optimal Living Profile-Modified (OLP-M) among Jordanian University students, both those studying in Jordan (JJ) and those studying abroad in Hungary (JH). We assessed how SOC dimensions—comprehensibility, manageability, and meaningfulness—shape life satisfaction and well-being in different cultural contexts. The construct validity of the SOC-13 was confirmed by confirmatory factor analysis, and the reliability coefficients confirmed the internal consistency, suggesting that the scale appropriately measures the SOC dimensions across our sample (**RQ^1**); this finding is consistent with previous research validating the SOC-13 across different populations (Eriksson, 2005). Our findings showed that demographics, such as sex, age, and employment, influenced SOC, with JH reporting higher scores on the meaningfulness dimension than JJ did. Interestingly, the correlations between the SOC and well-being dimensions were significant, indicating that emotional health has a strong predictive value for life satisfaction. These findings demonstrate how the SOC can assess students' well-being in different cultural settings.

Impact of Demographics on the SOC (RQ^2)

Furthermore, age was positively correlated with all three dimensions of SOC, indicating that older students tend to have a stronger SOC since they are exposed

to diverse challenges and coping strategies, which aligns with Antonovskys' theory that SOC strengthens with repeated resolutions of stressors (Koelen & Eriksson, 2017; Silverstein & Heap, 2015; Antonovsky, 1987). In contrast, studies have shown that older adults experience decreases, especially in the meaningfulness dimension, due to reduced future orientation and life goals and increased loneliness and depression (Zielińska-Więczkowska & Sas, 2020; Lv et al., 2023). However, as this applies to elderly individuals, older students are likely to benefit from structured goals during their education, enhancing their SOC. Moreover, male students reported higher scores in the C dimension, potentially due to a combination of factors. Research has shown that psychological differences and societal expectations often impact how males and females manage stressors; males tend to prioritize problem-focused coping involving seeking solutions to challenges actively, which improves their sense of comprehensibility, whereas females emphasize emotional regulation, social support, and health perceptions influencing their C (Bonaccorsi et al., 2023; Kayi et al., 2023; Cherepanov et al., 2011). Finally, employment status affects the ME dimension, emphasizing that employed students experience financial stability, structured routines, and a sense of contribution, indicating that education and income are positively correlated with the SOC (Bonaccorsi et al., 2023; Bargehr et al., 2023; Barnard, 2013). Thus far, demographics have influenced different dimensions of SOC among university students.

Cultural Differences in SOC (JH vs. JJ) (RQ^3)

Moving on to SOC differences in the sample, the results revealed that, compared with JJ, JH scored significantly higher in terms of the SOC ME dimension. This suggests that, compared with their peers at home, JH find their lives more meaningful or perceive challenges as opportunities for growth. In collectivist societies such as Jordan, high SOC is supported mainly by the manageability dimension through social health or by the meaningfulness dimension through religious and cultural practices, which provide structure and resilience during stress (Ali et al., 2018; Hofstede, 2011; Nosheen et al., 2017). Both groups likely rely on these cultural resources, yet JH high ME highlights additional sources of purpose gained from their experiences living abroad, which develops a more profound sense of purpose and identity (Mayer & Larsen, 2024; Beaven & Borghetti, 2016). Studying abroad exposed JH to several challenges that added greater meaning to their academic journey. Such experiences may encourage a motivational outlook to handle challenges, which is the core of the meaningfulness dimension, as it enables individuals to find stressors worthy of engagement, fostering resilience and adaptive coping (Pinarbasi, 2023; Mayer & Larsen, 2024). Similarly, research has reported that Arab international students utilize their religious coping and connection with Arab communities to derive emotional significance from challenges, highlighting how a sense of purpose enhances resilience (Nazir & Özçiçek, 2023). In contrast, JJ remained in their familiar environment where their SOC was driven by community and routine

without the hurdles of living abroad, explaining why they had lower ME than JH did. In summary, adapting to a new culture can strengthen the ME dimension.

Cultural Context and Its Influence on Well-being

Compared with JH, their well-being was also influenced across several dimensions of the OLP-M, with JJ reporting better outcomes in emotional, social, and physical health dimensions. This may be due to the challenges JH faces. Several studies on international students have shown that adapting to a new culture can negatively influence their well-being and mental health (Razgulin et al., 2023; Kristiana et al., 2022). In contrast, JJ benefits from living in their home country, where they are supported by family and community, as social support buffers stress, enhancing emotional stability and healthy behaviors (Abu Khadra, Aburub, et al., 2025; Razgulin et al., 2023; Acoba, 2024). This aligns with the collectivist context of Jordan, which emphasizes such values (Hofstede, 2023). Despite these differences in well-being, it is important to note that life satisfaction did not differ significantly between the two groups, highlighting that the cultural context influences how students attain their well-being rather than the level of life satisfaction they report. One explanation is that JH's strong ME maintains their life satisfaction, indicating that while being in a familiar cultural context provides benefits in well-being, those studying abroad can achieve similar life satisfaction levels by leveraging salutogenic factors and coping mechanisms. Indeed, international students with strong internal resources can maintain life satisfaction despite stressors (Abu Khadra, Aburub, et al., 2025; Mayer & Larsen, 2024; Peng et al., 2023).

SOC, Life Satisfaction, and OLP-M (RQ^4, RQ^5)

SOC was positively correlated with multiple dimensions of OLP-M. Students with stronger SOC had better intellectual, spiritual, and emotional health regardless of their cultural context. In particular, C and MA were significantly correlated with intellectual and emotional health, whereas ME was linked to greater spiritual and emotional health. Previous research has shown that a stronger SOC is significantly correlated with better well-being and fewer health complaints, which helps students cope with academic and life challenges (Dadaczynski et al., 2022; Rai et al., 2018). Furthermore, studies have shown that university students who participate in spiritual practices have greater emotional balance, resilience, and meaningfulness (Sora Pazer, 2024; Mayer & Larsen, 2024). These correlations support the salutogenic view that a strong SOC promotes holistic well-being, highlighting that the emotional health dimension was especially connected with the SOC across our sample. This finding is also consistent with the positive psychology framework, which emphasizes individuals' ability to cultivate well-being and resilience through internal strengths such as meaning, purpose, and emotional regulation (Seligman, 2011). However, when examining life satisfaction, we found that the influence of SOC was indirect rather than mediated by emotional and social health dimensions.

Additionally, path analysis revealed that the ME dimension enhances emotional health, indirectly influencing life satisfaction. Whereas previous research has reported that students with stronger SOC scores have greater life satisfaction (Moksnes et al., 2013), our findings suggest that this correlation is mediated by how SOC improves emotional health, which enhances life satisfaction. To support this interpretation, several studies noted that students with strong SOC rely on problem-solving skills, which improve life satisfaction (Jurczyszyn & Zdziarski, 2022). In summary, in the Jordanian context, adequate social support and emotional stability are related to higher life satisfaction, which is also consistent with our findings that the ME dimension of the SOC influences life satisfaction mainly by maintaining social and emotional well-being.

Implications

This comparative approach contributes to understanding how SOC shapes well-being and life satisfaction among university students locally and abroad. This finding suggests that enhancing the SOC, considering the cultural context, may offer support for coping with stressors. It emphasizes the importance of the cultural context in well-being initiatives, especially for international students, as they may benefit from programs that promote social inclusion and emotional stability. Furthermore, it promotes interventions tailored to student well-being on the basis of the role of the SOC in maintaining resilience and life satisfaction.

Strengths and Limitations

This study features a large, underrepresented sample of Jordanian university students from both local and international contexts, allowing for a valuable cross-cultural comparison. It offers a comprehensive assessment of students' well-being, life satisfaction, and SOC while examining both direct and indirect relationships between key variables. The comparative design enhances the practical relevance of the findings, offering insights for university administrators and policymakers. In particular, the study highlights how cultural context influences emotional and social health, which can inform the development of culturally sensitive health strategies aimed at enhancing student life satisfaction. A key strength lies in the study's quantitative design, which allowed the identification of statistically significant relationships across the student sample. However, the exclusive focus on Jordanian students limits the generalizability of the findings to other cultural or regional populations. In addition, the lack of qualitative data restricts the depth of understanding regarding students' lived experiences. Future research could benefit from a mixed-methods design, incorporating qualitative approaches such as interviews or focus groups to explore students' subjective perceptions and coping narratives. Moreover, other influencing factors—such as personality traits or alternative coping mechanisms—were not examined in this study but may play important roles in shaping well-being and life satisfaction.

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Author bios

Farah Abu Khadra, PhD Candidate at the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Pécs, with a research interest in Health Promotion, Wellness, Health Sociology, Life Satisfaction, Cross-Cultural, and Recreation. Email: A014bk@pte.hu

Aseel Aburub, Assistant Dean and Head of the Physiotherapy Department at the Faculty of Allied Medical Sciences, Applied Science Private University, with a research interest in movement disorders, particularly Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis, while exploring the impact of cardiovascular and pulmonary rehabilitation on improving the quality of life for individuals with these conditions.
Email: a_abualrob@asu.edu.jo

Anwaar Amro, Neuromuscular Physiotherapist and MSc candidate at the University of Jordan - Teacher Assistant in the physiotherapy department at Applied Sciences Private University, with a research interest in cardiopulmonary and orthopedic rehabilitation.
Email: anwaar.amro98@gmail.com

Zoltán Csapek, Computer Scientist and a software developer at the Educational Technology and Development Department, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Pécs-Hungary.
Email: zoltan.csapek@etk.pte.hu

Bendegúz Kertai, Demonstrator at the Institute of Sport Sciences and Physical Education, Faculty of Sciences, University of Pécs-Hungary with a research interest in Pedagogy, Education, Teaching, and Learning.
Email: kertaib@gamma.ttk.pte.hu

Sára Jeges, Professor Emerita at the Doctoral School of Health Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Pécs-Hungary with a research interest in Statistics, Wellness, Health Promotion, and Sense of Coherence – Email: jegessara@gmail.com

Ákos Levente Tóth, Associate Professor at the Institute of Sport Sciences and Physical Education, Faculty of Sciences, University of Pécs-Hungary, with a research interest in Sports Sciences, Sports Medicine, and Rehabilitation. Email: tothahu@gmail.com