Scientific Research Publishing

Psychology, 2026, 17(4), 397-413
https://www.scirp.org/journal/psych
ISSN Online: 2152-7199
ISSN Print: 2152-7180

Impacts of Ramadan on Psychological Well-Being, Life Satisfaction, and Subjective Happiness

Malak Elayyan[1], Sarah Liener[2], Abdullah Alwaleedi[2,3], Katerina Garcia-Chope[1], Danny Jandali[1], Dianna Hammoud[2], Amine Sheik[2], Weiyun Chen[2*]

[1]College of Literature, Sciences, and Arts, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA
[2]School of Kinesiology, Physical Activity and Health Lab, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA
[3]College of Sports Science, University of Jeddah, Jeddah, KSA
Email: *chenwy@umich.edu

How to cite this paper: Elayyan, M., Liener, S., Alwaleedi, A., Garcia-Chope, K., Jandali, D., Hammoud, D., Sheik, A., & Chen, W. Y. (2026). Impacts of Ramadan on Psychological Well-Being, Life Satisfaction, and Subjective Happiness. *Psychology, 17,* 397-413.
https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2026.174023

Received: February 17, 2026
Accepted: April 11, 2026
Published: April 14, 2026

Abstract

Background: This study investigated changes in life satisfaction, subjective happiness, and psychological well-being (PWB) during and one month after Ramadan among Muslim adults in the United States. The aim was to examine how fasting and religious observance influence hedonic and eudaimonic aspects of well-being and whether effects differ by gender. **Methods**: Fifty-eight healthy Muslims (mean age = 35 ± 13 years, 10 males and 48 females) completed validated surveys, including the Psychological Well-Being Scale, the Satisfaction with Life Scale, and the Subjective Happiness Scale, through Qualtrics during Ramadan and 1-month post Ramadan. Paired t-tests were conducted to compare changes across time for the total sample and by gender, with significance set at $p < 0.05$. **Results**: No significant change was observed in PWB for the total sample. However, life satisfaction ($t = 1.900$, $p = 0.064$) was marginally significantly increased, while subjective happiness ($t = 4.683$, $p < 0.001$) was significantly increased for the total sample from during Ramadan to 1-month post-Ramadan. Gender-specific analyses showed that males had significant increases in both life satisfaction and subjective happiness, whereas females showed significant increases in subjective happiness only. **Conclusion**: One-month post Ramadan was associated with improved hedonic well-being—life satisfaction and happiness—but not with significant changes in eudaimonic PWB. These findings suggest that the spiritual and communal aspects of Ramadan can have short-term impacts on hedonic well-being among Muslims living in non-Muslim-majority settings.

Keywords

Ramadan, Psychological Well-Being, Life Satisfaction, Subjective Happiness,

Religion, Hedonic, Eudaimonic

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of Ramadan and Psychological Well-Being

Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, is a sacred period during which healthy Muslims abstain from eating and drinking from dawn to sunset for 29 to 30 consecutive days. Exemptions are granted to those who are ill, elderly, young children, and women during menstruation (Faris et al., 2019). The primary purpose of Ramadan is not deprivation but rather spiritual growth, self-discipline, empathy toward those who are less fortunate, and strengthening one's relationship with God, Allah. In addition to fasting, Muslims engage in increased prayer, reflection, religious learning, and charitable acts, aiming to cultivate moral and spiritual improvement (Faris et al., 2019). Such substantial adjustments to dietary and daily routines can influence various aspects of life, including an individual's psychological well-being (PWB).

Psychological well-being (PWB) differs from traditional definitions of mental health, which typically emphasize the absence of psychological disorders or distress. In contrast, PWB focuses on the presence of positive psychological functioning and traits that enable individuals to thrive. PWB encompasses two primary domains: hedonic and eudaimonic. The hedonic domain involves subjective happiness, defined as an individual's self-perceived level of happiness (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1997), and life satisfaction, which reflects overall contentment with life (Diener et al., 1985). The eudaimonic domain, by contrast, pertains to meaning, purpose, and the realization of one's potential. According to Ryff and Singer (1996), eudaimonic well-being comprises six dimensions: self-acceptance, personal growth, autonomy, purpose in life, environmental mastery, and positive relationships. Respectively, these refer to maintaining a positive attitude toward oneself, striving for continual improvement, exhibiting independence, setting purposeful goals, adapting effectively to one's surroundings, and cultivating meaningful and supportive social connections.

Both the hedonic and eudaimonic dimensions contribute to a holistic sense of psychological health (Ryff & Singer, 1996; Zhang & Chen, 2019). Consequently, examining both domains is essential for understanding overall well-being and for evaluating how specific life experiences, such as Ramadan observance, may influence psychological outcomes.

1.2. Positive Correlations between Religion and Psychological Well-Being

Engagement in Ramadan or other forms of religious practice has been shown to positively influence psychological well-being (PWB) (Fatima et al., 2018; Ivtzan et al., 2013; Sulaiman et al., 2022). This association may result from several factors,

including a heightened sense of community, participation in causes greater than oneself, strengthened identity, relaxation through prayer and meditation, and comfort during times of hardship or existential uncertainty (Ivtzan et al., 2013; Mykto & Knight, 2000). Each of these factors aligns closely with components of the eudaimonic dimension of PWB, which emphasizes meaning, connection, and personal growth.

Empirical studies further support this relationship. Krok (2022) found a positive association between psychological well-being (PWB), specifically life purpose, self-acceptance, and personal growth, and religious attitudes and behaviors among 176 Anglican participants. Similarly, Abdel-Khalek (2007) reported significant correlations between religiosity and both hedonic and eudaimonic dimensions of PWB in Muslim youth. Research conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic across diverse faith groups also revealed that the communal and supportive aspects of religion contribute to higher happiness, increased life satisfaction, stronger purpose in life, and improved interpersonal relationships (Saud et al., 2021).

Additional evidence highlights the link between spiritual practices and meaning-making. Whittington and Scher (2010) observed that meaning and purpose in life were significantly associated with prayer among a predominantly U.S. sample, suggesting that prayer serves as a key mechanism through which individuals seek connection with the divine. Martos et al. (2010) similarly found that religious beliefs provide existential meaning and a moral framework that guides behavior, thereby reinforcing both psychological stability and well-being.

1.3. Negative Correlations between Religion and Psychological Well-Being

Although studies have identified positive associations between religion and psychological well-being (PWB), religious engagement is not universally beneficial. In some contexts, religious practices can yield neutral or even negative effects on well-being. These outcomes may arise from strict, anxiety-inducing, or judgmental social environments within certain religious communities, which can diminish happiness and other aspects of hedonic well-being (Ivtzan et al., 2013).

Ramadan, for instance, represents a physically and mentally demanding period that requires significant self-control and endurance. Despite these challenges, existing literature continues to report positive outcomes across both hedonic and eudaimonic domains during this period. Such results may be explained by several factors, including the neurological and physiological effects of fasting, the establishment of structured daily routines, enhanced faith and spirituality, and the cultivation of self-discipline throughout the fasting month (Iqbal et al., 2020). These elements appear to transform the difficulty of the practice into an opportunity for psychological growth and resilience, ultimately supporting rather than diminishing overall well-being.

1.4. Purpose of the Study

Although considerable research has explored the relationship between religion

and psychological well-being (PWB), and some studies have examined the effects of Ramadan on PWB, there remains a notable gap in research conducted within the United States. Most existing studies have been carried out in Muslim-majority countries such as Pakistan, Nigeria, and Kuwait, where the cultural and social contexts surrounding Ramadan differ significantly from those in Western societies. In contrast, Muslims living in the United States, where Islam represents a minority faith, may experience unique challenges in observing Ramadan due to differing lifestyles, limited communal infrastructure, and social expectations. As of 2017, approximately 3.45 million individuals in the United States identified as Muslim, a number that continues to grow (Pew Research Center, 2017). This demographic presence highlights the importance of understanding how Ramadan influences well-being within this distinct cultural environment.

Moreover, while prior studies have primarily focused on psychological outcomes during Ramadan, few have examined whether these effects persist beyond the fasting month. Addressing this gap can provide insight into the short-term sustainability of Ramadan's psychological benefits.

The present study had two primary objectives: (1) to assess profiles of the hedonic and eudaimonic domains of PWB, and (2) to examine potential changes in these outcomes between during Ramadan and 1-month post Ramadan among Muslim adults in the United States. It was hypothesized that both hedonic and eudaimonic dimensions of PWB would show significant increases from during Ramadan to 1-month post Ramadan.

2. Methods

2.1. Participants and Study Design

A total of 58 healthy Muslim adults between the ages of 17 and 62 years (mean age = 35 ± 13 years; 10 males and 48 females) participated in this study. Participants were recruited through convenience sampling in multiple communities and institutional settings. Recruitment materials were distributed at local mosques following Friday prayers, through announcements made by mosque leaders, within Muslim student associations on university campuses, and across social media platforms. Word-of-mouth referrals were also encouraged to maximize community participation.

Recruitment occurred during the weeks preceding Ramadan and continued into the early days of fasting. Participants were eligible for inclusion if they met the following criteria: (1) self-identified as Muslim; (2) were between 18 and 64 years of age; (3) were in good general health; (4) were committed to fasting throughout the entire month of Ramadan; and (5) were proficient in reading and speaking English. Participants who did not meet these criteria were excluded.

This study employed a single-group, within-subjects design with two-time points assessments (during Ramadan vs. 1-month post Ramadan). After the eligibility assessment, 58 participants were enrolled. They completed Qualtrics surveys during Ramadan. However, 15 participants did not complete the Qualtrics surveys one-

month post Ramadan, resulting in a final analytic sample of 43 participants.

Figure 1 illustrates the study flow and participant retention. The participants' demographic information is presented in Table 1. All study procedures adhered to the ethical standards of the Declaration of Helsinki and were approved by the University of Michigan Institutional Review Board for Health Sciences and Behavioral Sciences (HUM00226755). Written informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection.

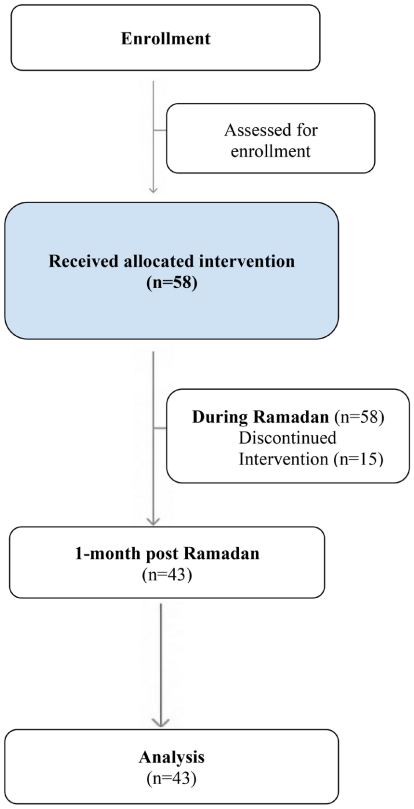

Figure 1. The study design using the CONSORT flow chart.

2.2. Data Collection

Data for the dependent variables (life satisfaction, subjective happiness, and psychological well-being) were collected using an online Qualtrics survey administered at two time points. The first survey was distributed on March 29, 2023, during the second week of Ramadan, and remained open throughout the fasting month. The second survey was distributed on May 20, 2023, one month after the conclusion of Ramadan, and participants were given one week to complete it.

The Qualtrics platform was used to integrate all questionnaires into a single online survey accessible via a QR code link. On the cover page, participants were presented with an informed consent form describing the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, potential risks and benefits, and confidentiality measures. Participants indicated their consent by selecting the "agree" option before proceeding to the remainder of the survey.

The survey consisted of four components: demographic information, the Psychological Well-Being Scale, the Satisfaction with Life Scale, and the Subjective Happiness Scale. Demographic variables included age, gender, ethnicity, race, education level, employment status, marital status, and household income. The data collected represented both during-Ramadan and post-Ramadan measures for the present study.

***Psychological Wellbeing Scale* (*PWS*)**

The Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWS), developed by Ryff (1989), is a validated instrument designed to assess the eudaimonic domain of psychological well-being across six dimensions: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. Each dimension reflects a core component of optimal functioning and personal development.

The PWS consists of 18 items distributed equally across the six subscales, with each subscale containing three items. Participants responded to each item on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly agree to 7 = strongly disagree. After 10 items were reversely coded, subscale scores were calculated by summing the responses within each domain, and a total PWS score was obtained by summing all subscale scores. Higher scores indicate greater levels of psychological well-being.

Ryff (1989) reported Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the six subscales ranging from 0.86 to 0.93, indicating strong internal consistency. In the present study, the overall Cronbach's alpha value for the scale was 0.774, demonstrating acceptable reliability for the current sample.

***Satisfaction with Life Scale* (*SWLS*)**

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), developed by Diener et al. (1985), is a widely used instrument designed to assess an individual's global cognitive judgment of life satisfaction. The SWLS consists of five items rated on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The items include: (1) "In most ways my life is close to my ideal," (2) "The conditions of my life are excellent," (3) "I am satisfied with my life," (4) "So far I have gotten the important things I want in life," and (5) "If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing."

The total life satisfaction score is computed by summing responses to all five items, with higher scores reflecting greater satisfaction with life. According to Diener et al. (1985), scores ranging from 31 to 35 represent extreme satisfaction, while scores from 5 to 9 indicate extreme dissatisfaction. The original study reported a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.887, demonstrating strong internal consistency. In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha value for the SWLS was 0.814, indicating good reliability for this sample.

***Subjective Happiness Scale* (*SHS*)**

The Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS), developed by Lyubomirsky and Lepper (1997), is a 4-item self-report instrument designed to measure an individual's

overall perception of happiness. Each item is rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not a very happy person) to 7 (a very happy person). The scale captures both an individual's general sense of happiness and their perceived happiness relative to others.

Scores are calculated by averaging the responses across all four items, with the fourth item reversely coded. Higher mean scores indicate greater subjective happiness. Previous research has demonstrated high internal consistency for the SHS, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.79 to 0.94, averaging 0.86 (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1997). In the present study, the SHS yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.91, indicating excellent reliability within this sample.

2.3. Data Analysis

Prior to data analysis, we used four steps to screen the data, including (1) remove cases that did not complete one of the three questionnaires on the Qualtrics at the first time point (during Ramadan), (2) use the same protocol to remove cases at the second time point (1-month post Ramadan) using Listwise deletion method, and (3) remove cases whose study ID at the first time point did not match it at the second time point. This screening results in the exclusion of 15 participants from the final data analysis. Listwise deletion method was used for bias estimates in this convenience sample.

Descriptive statistics were conducted for all demographic variables, including frequency and percentage distributions, and for each study variable, with the mean and standard deviation reported for the total sample, males only, and females only. The final analytic sample consisted of 43 participants who completed both the pre-test and post-test assessments. Paired-sample t-tests were conducted to examine changes in the eudaimonic domain of psychological well-being, life satisfaction, and subjective happiness from pre-test to post-test. Additionally, paired-sample t-tests were performed by gender to identify potential differences in these outcomes over time. All statistical analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics software (version 27.0; IBM Corp., Armonk, NY, USA). The level of statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

3. Results

3.1. Preliminary Statistics

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the study variables, including the mean and standard deviation for the total sample, males only, and females only, along with the corresponding *t*-values, degrees of freedom, *p*-values, and Cohen's *d* effect sizes.

Table 1. Demographics of participants.

Variables	Count	Percentage
Gender		
Male	10	17

Continued

Female	48	82
Race		
White	2	3
Black or African American	1	1
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0
Asian	16	27
Middle Eastern	39	67
Marital Status		
Married	35	60
Single	22	37
Divorced	1	1
Education Status		
High School Diploma	7	12
Associate's degree	0	0
Bachelor's Degree	20	34
Master's Degree	15	25
Doctoral Degree	16	27

For the eudaimonic Psychological Well-Being (PWB) scale, which has a maximum possible score of 126, the mean scores during Ramadan and 1-month post Ramadan were 99.67 and 98.05, respectively, indicating consistently high levels of well-being among participants. For the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), score ranges of 31 - 35 represent extreme satisfaction, 26 - 30 indicate satisfaction, 21 - 25 reflect slight satisfaction, 15 - 19 suggest slight dissatisfaction, 10 - 14 represent dissatisfaction, and 5 - 9 denote extreme dissatisfaction. As shown in Table 2, the mean SWLS scores were 25.00 during Ramadan and 26.48 at 1-month post Ramadan, suggesting that participants moved from being slightly satisfied to satisfied with their lives 1-month post Ramadan. Regarding the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS), population averages typically range from 4.5 to 5.5, with scores above 5.6 reflecting higher-than-average happiness. In this study, the mean SHS scores were 4.52 during Ramadan and 5.21 at 1-month post Ramadan, indicating typical average levels of subjective happiness. These results indicate that while participants' PWB remained stable, both life satisfaction and subjective happiness showed positive trends 1-month post Ramadan.

3.2. Changes in the Outcome Variables during Ramadan vs. 1-Month Post Ramadan

As shown in Table 2, the results of the paired-sample t-tests indicated no statistically significant differences in the six eudaimonic subscales of psychological well-being (self-acceptance, purpose in life, environmental mastery, positive relations,

personal growth, and autonomy) between pre-test and post-test for the total sample (t = −0.407 to −1.676, $p > 0.05$). Similar nonsignificant results were observed for males (t = −1.567 to 1.276, $p > 0.05$) and females (t = −1.404 to −0.425, $p > 0.05$).

Table 2. Results of T-test for eudaimonic PWB, life satisfaction, and subjective happiness during Ramadan and 1-month post Ramadan.

Variables	During Ramadan		1-Month Post Ramadan					
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t	df	*p*	d
Total sample								
Eudaimonic Average	99.67	13.38	98.05	13.81	−0.982	42	0.332	−0.15
Acceptance	17.09	4.13	16.94	3.67	−0.407	46	0.686	−0.059
Purpose	16.62	3.11	16.23	3.4	−0.72	46	0.476	−0.105
Environment	14.73	3.69	14.36	3.36	−0.731	44	0.469	−0.109
Relation	16.85	3.66	16.28	3.48	−1.122	45	0.268	−0.165
Personal	18.8	2.48	18.04	2.81	−1.676	45	0.101	−0.247
Autonomy	15.89	3.63	15.38	3.13	−1.028	46	0.309	−0.15
Life Satisfaction	25	6.49	26.48	6.11	1.9	45	0.064	0.28
Subjective Happiness	4.52	0.8	5.21	1.15	4.683	46	<0.001**	0.683
Males								
Eudaimonic Average	97	12.57	96.5	12.39	−0.148	9	0.885	−0.047
Acceptance	16.1	4.93	17.2	3.19	1.276	9	0.234	0.403
Purpose	15	2.21	15.4	3.5	0.274	9	0.791	0.087
Environment	14.8	3.49	15.3	2.63	1.048	9	0.322	0.331
Relation	14.9	3	15.4	3.27	0.785	9	0.453	0.248
Personal	19.7	1.16	18.2	2.49	−1.567	9	0.152	−0.495
Autonomy	16.5	3.24	15	3.68	−1.548	9	0.156	−0.49
Life Satisfaction	24.33	5.55	29	2.29	2.828	8	0.022*	0.943
Subjective Happiness	4.93	0.91	5.78	0.7	2.486	9	0.035*	0.786
Females								
Eudaimonic Average	100.48	13.7	98.52	14.36	−1.022	32	0.315	−0.178
Acceptance	17.35	3.92	16.86	3.83	−1.245	36	0.221	−0.205
Purpose	17.05	3.2	16.46	3.39	−1.071	36	0.292	−0.176
Environment	14.7	3.79	14.09	3.53	−0.971	34	0.338	−0.164
Relation	17.39	3.68	16.53	3.54	−1.404	35	0.169	−0.234
Personal	18.56	2.7	18	2.93	−1.074	35	0.29	−0.179
Autonomy	15.73	3.75	15.49	3.01	−0.425	36	0.674	−0.07
Life Satisfaction	25.16	6.76	25.86	6.59	0.835	36	0.409	0.137
Subjective Happiness	4.41	0.74	5.06	1.21	3.93	36	<0.001**	0.646

However, for life satisfaction, a marginally significant increase was found from during Ramadan to 1-month post Ramadan for the total sample (t = 1.900, p = 0.064) and for males (t = 2.828, p = 0.022). However, this change was not significant for females (t = 0.835, p = 0.409).

Furthermore, subjective happiness showed a statistically significant increase across all groups. The total sample demonstrated a significant improvement (t = 4.683, $p < 0.001$), as did males (t = 2.486, p = 0.035) and females (t = 3.930, $p <$ 0.001). These results indicate that while eudaimonic psychological well-being remained stable over time, hedonic well-being—life satisfaction and subjective happiness—showed marginally significant improvement and significant improvement over time (from during Ramadan to 1-month post Ramadan), respectively.

4. Discussion

4.1. Relatively Stable Eudaimonic Domain Results

This study aimed to examine potential changes in both hedonic and eudaimonic dimensions of psychological well-being (PWB) during Ramadan and 1-month post Ramadan, with the expectation of observing significant improvements across both domains. Contrary to the hypothesis, the results revealed no statistically significant differences in the eudaimonic domain between during Ramadan and 1-month post Ramadan for the total sample, males, or females.

The eudaimonic dimensions of PWB, including self-acceptance, personal growth, autonomy, purpose in life, environmental mastery, and positive relationships, are deeply connected to one's sense of meaning, direction, and fulfillment. During Ramadan, the combination of spiritual focus, intentional self-restraint, and communal worship likely nurtures these qualities, offering participants a framework for reflection and personal realignment (Alghafli et al., 2019; Jandali et al., 2024). This period of heightened spiritual activity and moral awareness may temporarily strengthen feelings of purpose and connectedness. However, as daily life resumes after Ramadan, the structured nature and communal intensity of the month naturally lessen, which may explain the modest decline in eudaimonic well-being scores observed afterward.

These findings are consistent with previous research suggesting that Ramadan observance can temporarily heighten both spiritual and psychological well-being. Studies have shown that periods of fasting and increased religious devotion can promote self-reflection and goal orientation, which are key features of eudaimonic well-being (Chen et al., 2024; Jandali et al., 2024; Wasiuzzaman & Al-Musehel, 2018). Bayani et al. (2020) similarly reported that Muslim graduate students who observed Ramadan experienced significant increases in eudaimonic well-being, supporting the interpretation that the high levels recorded during Ramadan in the current study may reflect the positive psychological effects of spiritual engagement and community cohesion.

The slight 1-month post-Ramadan decline observed in the present study may reflect a transitional adjustment rather than a true decrease in well-being. Com-

parable patterns have been observed in studies exploring major life transitions. For instance, Martinez et al. (2012) examined individuals transitioning from academic to professional life, while Flack and Kite (2021) investigated military veterans adjusting to civilian life. Both studies documented temporary reductions in eudaimonic well-being during periods of significant change. Although these transitions differ in scale and context, they share underlying similarities with the shift from the intense, spiritually oriented structure of Ramadan to ordinary daily living. Such shifts often entail the loss of a clear routine and purpose, which can momentarily influence perceptions of meaning and growth.

The nonsignificant nature of these results suggests that participants' overall eudaimonic well-being remained stable across the study period. Rather than indicating regression, the small decrease likely represents a return to well-being during Ramadan once the heightened emotional and spiritual engagement of Ramadan subsided. These results reinforce the notion that Ramadan fosters a temporary enhancement in certain psychological domains, followed by stabilization as individuals reintegrate into their typical lifestyle patterns. This stability highlights the enduring nature of participants' psychological resilience, as their sense of purpose, autonomy, and self-acceptance remained largely unaffected by the transition.

Gender-specific trends were also observed. While male participants showed slight increases in several eudaimonic subdomains, females and the total sample demonstrated marginal decreases. These patterns, though not statistically significant, may be explained by differences in social and religious engagement across genders. In many Muslim communities, men are more likely to participate in public religious activities such as congregational prayers, community events, and mosque-based programs, which can foster a greater sense of social support and belonging (Jandali et al., 2024; Koburtay et al., 2022; Maselko & Kubzansky, 2006). This communal engagement may reinforce purpose in life, positive relations, and self-acceptance among men. Conversely, women's experiences during Ramadan may be shaped by different social expectations and domestic responsibilities, which could influence the degree to which they experience communal or spiritual enrichment.

Individual variations in coping strategies, perceived religious meaning, and engagement with spiritual practices may also contribute to these differences (Jandali et al., 2024; Lefebvre & Huta, 2021). Women, for instance, may experience Ramadan as both spiritually fulfilling and logistically demanding, particularly if household and caregiving responsibilities intensify during the fasting period. These factors could explain the small decreases in eudaimonic well-being observed among female participants.

Overall, the findings indicate that while eudaimonic well-being did not significantly change from during Ramadan to 1-month post Ramadan, the stability of scores reflects the resilience and adaptability of participants' psychological states. The slight decline 1-month post Ramadan likely represents a natural transition rather than a deterioration in well-being. However, the persistence of high mean scores suggests that Ramadan may offer a temporary enhancement in meaning

and purpose, which gradually stabilizes over time. Future research may benefit from incorporating qualitative data or longitudinal designs to explore how individuals sustain eudaimonic growth beyond the Ramadan period and how community context and gender roles shape these experiences.

4.2. Positive Changes in Life Satisfaction and Subjective Happiness Results

In contrast to the eudaimonic dimensions, the hedonic aspects of psychological well-being showed measurable improvement, which was consistent with the hypothesis. Life satisfaction marginally increased from during Ramadan to 1-month post Ramadan for the total and male samples, while the increase among females was not statistically significant. Subjective happiness increased significantly across all groups. These findings suggest that while participants' deeper sense of meaning and purpose remained stable, their emotional well-being and contentment were enhanced following Ramadan.

Ramadan's emphasis on gratitude, empathy, and social connection may contribute to these gains. The month's collective rituals and charitable acts foster belonging and appreciation, both of which strengthen positive emotions. Moreover, completing the fast can evoke pride and accomplishment, reinforcing happiness through self-efficacy and spiritual fulfillment. These results align with prior findings linking religiosity to greater life satisfaction (Habib et al., 2018; Kortt et al., 2015; Krause, 2004). Other studies have similarly noted that spiritual engagement, rather than ritual participation alone, best predicts sustained improvements in subjective well-being (Desmond et al., 2018).

Gender differences in hedonic outcomes were slight but meaningful. Although women typically report higher levels of religiosity, men demonstrated greater gains in life satisfaction, which may also be attributed to their greater participation in communal religious activities that provide emotional support and social affirmation (Jandali et al., 2024; Maselko & Kubzansky, 2006). In contrast, women's experiences of Ramadan may be more private or shaped by additional family responsibilities, which could moderate the emotional benefits.

Increases in subjective happiness across all groups may also reflect the residual emotional uplift associated with Ramadan's spiritual and communal experiences. Practices of reflection, mindfulness, and generosity cultivated during the month can promote enduring positive affect (Ugur, 2018). Returning to familiar routines after fasting may further enhance comfort and stability, contributing to higher happiness scores (Jandali et al., 2024). Overall, these findings highlight that Ramadan supports not only spiritual enrichment but also lasting improvements in emotional well-being, particularly through mechanisms of gratitude, community, and self-reflection.

4.3. Cultural Factors

The findings of this study should be interpreted within the broader cultural context of Ramadan observance in the United States. Muslims in the U.S. navigate

distinct social and structural challenges compared to those in Muslim-majority countries. The U.S. is a diverse and multicultural society where religious accommodations are not consistently integrated into public life, and individuals often balance fasting and worship with demanding academic, professional, and social obligations (Alghafli et al., 2019; Smith & Schonfeld, 2000). The fast-paced and individualistic nature of American society can add additional stressors that may influence psychological outcomes (Jandali et al., 2024).

In contrast, Muslim-majority countries typically offer greater societal support for fasting, communal worship, and altered schedules during Ramadan, which reinforce the collective experience and spiritual engagement of the month (Norris & Inglehart, 2012). These contextual differences may explain variations in how participants experience and sustain changes in psychological well-being.

Despite these challenges, the positive changes in life satisfaction and subjective happiness observed in this study highlight the adaptability and resilience of Muslims living in non-Muslim-majority settings. The ability to maintain spiritual connection and emotional well-being amid limited structural support underscores the significance of faith, community networks, and personal discipline as protective factors for psychological health during Ramadan.

4.4. Limitations and Future Research

While this study provides meaningful contributions to the growing literature on Ramadan and psychological well-being, several limitations should be acknowledged when interpreting the findings. First, the sample size was relatively small, with only 43 participants completing both pre- and post-test assessments. This limits the generalizability of the results to the broader and highly diverse Muslim population. Future studies should recruit larger and more demographically varied samples that reflect different cultural, ethnic, socioeconomic, and regional backgrounds in order to improve representativeness and allow for subgroup comparisons.

Secondly, the study did not include a pre-Ramadan baseline measurement, which restricts the ability to isolate the specific effects of Ramadan on psychological well-being. Without an assessment period prior to fasting, it is difficult to determine whether the observed changes in life satisfaction and subjective happiness were driven by Ramadan or influenced by other external factors. Future research should use longitudinal designs that include pre, during, and post-Ramadan assessments to more accurately capture the trajectory and causality of psychological changes.

Lastly, the study primarily captured short-term outcomes, focusing on well-being during Ramadan and one month after its completion. Although the findings suggest that Ramadan may positively influence hedonic well-being, the long-term sustainability of these effects remains unclear. Future studies should conduct extended follow-up assessments to determine whether these psychological benefits persist over time and whether they contribute to lasting improvements in mental

health. Additional research should also examine gender-specific patterns and explore how fasting experiences vary across different cultural and societal contexts, including settings where Ramadan is not widely accommodated. This work can provide deeper insight into the social and environmental factors that shape well-being during Ramadan.

5. Conclusion

This study demonstrates the significant relationship between religious observance and psychological well-being (PWB) among Muslims living in the United States. The findings revealed that life satisfaction and subjective happiness significantly increased after Ramadan, reflecting the positive influence of spiritual engagement, community connection, and self-discipline experienced during the holy month. In contrast, eudaimonic well-being scores showed slight but non-significant decreases one month after Ramadan, suggesting a return to baseline levels following the heightened spiritual and social structure of Ramadan. Based on these findings, we conclude that Ramadan serves as a period of psychological enrichment that enhances certain dimensions of well-being, particularly those tied to happiness and life satisfaction. The stability of eudaimonic scores, despite the transitions following Ramadan, also points to the resilience and adaptability of participants' overall psychological health. The practical implications of this study suggest that faith-based practices can play an essential role in promoting psychological well-being, especially within multicultural and non-Muslim-majority societies. Understanding how religious rituals contribute to happiness and life satisfaction may help guide community leaders, mental health practitioners, and policymakers in creating culturally sensitive strategies that support mental health among diverse populations. Scientifically, this study contributes to the growing literature on the intersection of religion, culture, and psychological well-being. It emphasizes the need for continued research on how spiritual observances like Ramadan influence both hedonic and eudaimonic domains of well-being over time, deepening our understanding of how faith and culture interact to shape mental health outcomes.

6. Summary

This study examines whether life satisfaction, subjective happiness, and eudaimonic psychological well-being change during Ramadan and one month afterward among Muslim adults living in the United States. Using validated self-report scales administered online at two time points, the authors report increases in hedonic well-being (especially subjective happiness) with no detectable change in overall eudaimonic well-being. The paper argues that spiritual and communal aspects of Ramadan may support short-term well-being in a non-Muslim-majority context.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

Abdel-Khalek, A. M. (2007). Religiosity, Happiness, Health, and Psychopathology in a Probability Sample of Muslim Adolescents. *Mental Health, Religion & Culture, 10,* 571-583. https://doi.org/10.1080/13674670601034547

Alghafli, Z., Hatch, T. G., Rose, A. H., Abo-Zena, M. M., Marks, L. D., & Dollahite, D. C. (2019). A Qualitative Study of Ramadan: A Month of Fasting, Family, and Faith. *Religions, 10,* Article 123. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10020123

Bayani, A. A., Esmaeili, R., & Ganji, G. (2020). The Impact of Fasting on the Psychological Well-Being of Muslim Graduate Students. *Journal of Religion and Health, 59,* 3270-3275. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-018-00740-3

Chen, Z. J., Khan, Z., Cowden, R. G., Palitsky, R., & Huang, Y. (2024). Call and Response: A Six-Wave Study of Bidirectional Links between Religiosity and Spirituality among Pakistani Muslims during Ramadan. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality, 16,* 54-62. https://doi.org/10.1037/rel0000479

Desmond, S. A., Kraus, R., & Dugan, B. J. L. (2018). "Let the Heavens Be Glad, and the Earth Rejoice": Religion and Life Satisfaction among Emerging Adults in the United States. *Mental Health, Religion & Culture, 21,* 304-318. https://doi.org/10.1080/13674676.2018.1478397

Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. J., & Griffin, S. (1985). The Satisfaction with Life Scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment, 49,* 71-75. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327752jpa4901_13

Faris, M. A. E., Jahrami, H. A., Alsibai, J., & Obaideen, A. A. (2019). Impact of Ramadan Diurnal Intermittent Fasting on the Metabolic Syndrome Components in Healthy, Non-Athletic Muslim People Aged over 15 Years: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *British Journal of Nutrition, 123,* 1-22. https://doi.org/10.1017/s000711451900254x

Fatima, S., Sharif, S., & Khalid, I. (2018). How Does Religiosity Enhance Psychological Well-Being? Roles of Self-Efficacy and Perceived Social Support. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality, 10,* 119-127. https://doi.org/10.1037/rel0000168

Flack, M., & Kite, L. (2021). Transition from Military to Civilian: Identity, Social Connectedness, and Veteran Wellbeing. *PLOS ONE, 16,* e0261634. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0261634

Habib, D. G., Donald, C., & Hutchinson, G. (2018). Religion and Life Satisfaction: A Correlational Study of Undergraduate Students in Trinidad. *Journal of Religion and Health, 57,* 1567-1580. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-018-0602-6

Iqbal, S., & Khan, M. I. (2020). Spirituality as a Predictor of Psychological Well-Being: An Explanatory Mechanism of Religiosity and Sustainable Consumption. *Religions, 11,* Article 634. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11120634

Ivtzan, I., Chan, C. P. L., Gardner, H. E., & Prashar, K. (2013). Linking Religion and Spirituality with Psychological Well-Being: Examining Self-Actualisation, Meaning in Life, and Personal Growth Initiative. *Journal of Religion and Health, 52,* 915-929. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-011-9540-2

Jandali, D., Alwaleedi, A., Marenus, M. W., Liener, S. R., Sheik, A., Elayyan, M. et al. (2024). Mental Health, Sleep Quality, and Psychological Well-Being during the Holy Month of Ramadan. *Healthcare, 12,* Article 1301. https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare12131301

Koburtay, T., Abuhussein, T., & Sidani, Y. M. (2022). Women Leadership, Culture, and Islam: Female Voices from Jordan. *Journal of Business Ethics, 183,* 347-363. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-022-05041-0

Kortt, M. A., Dollery, B., & Grant, B. (2015). Religion and Life Satisfaction Down Under. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 16,* 277-293. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-014-9509-4

Krause, N. (2004). Common Facets of Religion, Unique Facets of Religion, and Life Satisfaction among Older African Americans. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences, 59,* S109-S117. https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/59.2.s109

Krok, D. (2022). Exploring Basic Hope as a Mediator between Attitudes Towards Religion and Psychological Well-Being among Anglicans. *Studia Oecumenica, 22,* 219-236. https://doi.org/10.25167/so.4876

LeFebvre, A., & Huta, V. (2021). Age and Gender Differences in Eudaimonic, Hedonic, and Extrinsic Motivations. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 22,* 2299-2321. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-020-00319-4

Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. S. (1997). A Measure of Subjective Happiness: Preliminary Reliability and Construct Validation. *Social Indicators Research, 46,* 137-155. https://doi.org/10.1023/a:1006824100041

Martinez, C. J., Martin, A. J., Liem, G. A. D., & Colmar, S. (2012). A Longitudinal Analysis of Physical and Psychological Wellbeing Amongst Late Adolescents: Exploring the Transition from School to Postschool Life. *The Australian Educational and Developmental Psychologist, 29,* 17-43. https://doi.org/10.1017/edp.2012.1

Martos, T., Thege, B. K., & Steger, M. F. (2010). It's Not Only What You Hold, It's How You Hold It: Dimensions of Religiosity and Meaning in Life. *Personality and Individual Differences, 49,* 863-868. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2010.07.017

Maselko, J., & Kubzansky, L. D. (2006). Gender Differences in Religious Practices, Spiritual Experiences and Health: Results from the US General Social Survey. *Social Science & Medicine, 62,* 2848-2860. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2005.11.008

Mytko, J. J., & Knight, S. J. (2000). Body, Mind and Spirit: Towards the Integration of Religiosity and Spirituality in Cancer Quality of Life Research. *Psycho-Oncology, 8,* 439-450. https://doi.org/10.1002/(sici)1099-1611(199909/10)8:5<439::aid-pon421>3.0.co;2-l

Norris, P., & Inglehart, R. F. (2012). Muslim Integration into Western Cultures: Between Origins and Destinations. *Political Studies, 60,* 228-251. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.2012.00951.x

Pew Research Center (2017). *Demographic Portrait of Muslim Americans.* https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2017/07/26/demographic-portrait-of-muslim-americans/

Ryff, C. D. (1989). Happiness Is Everything, or Is It? Explorations on the Meaning of Psychological Well-Being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 57,* 1069-1081. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.57.6.1069

Ryff, C. D., & Singer, B. (1996). Psychological Weil-Being: Meaning, Measurement, and Implications for Psychotherapy Research. *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics, 65,* 14-23. https://doi.org/10.1159/000289026

Saud, M., Ashfaq, A., Abbas, A., Ariadi, S., & Mahmood, Q. K. (2021). Social Support through Religion and Psychological Well-Being: COVID-19 and Coping Strategies in Indonesia. *Journal of Religion and Health, 60,* 3309-3325. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-021-01327-1

Smith, D. G., & Schonfeld, N. B. (2000). The Benefits of Diversity What the Research Tells Us. *About Campus: Enriching the Student Learning Experience, 5,* 16-23. https://doi.org/10.1177/108648220000500505

Sulaiman, S. K., Tsiga-Ahmed, F. I., Arora, T., Faris, M. E., Musa, M. S., Kareem, Y. A. et

al. (2022). Perceived Changes in the Mental Well-Being among Nigerians Due to Ramadan Intermittent Fasting during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Brain and Behavior, 13,* e2990. https://doi.org/10.1002/brb3.2990

Ugur, Z. B. (2018). Does Ramadan Affect Happiness? Evidence from Turkey. *Archive for the Psychology of Religion, 40,* 163-175. https://doi.org/10.1163/15736121-12341358

Wasiuzzaman, S., & Al-Musehel, N. A. (2018). Mood, Religious Experience and the Ramadan Effect. *International Journal of Emerging Markets, 13,* 290-307. https://doi.org/10.1108/ijoem-01-2017-0001

Whittington, B. L., & Scher, S. J. (2010). Prayer and Subjective Well-Being: An Examination of Six Different Types of Prayer. *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion, 20,* 59-68. https://doi.org/10.1080/10508610903146316

Zhang, Z., & Chen, W. (2019). A Systematic Review of Measures for Psychological Well-Being in Physical Activity Studies and Identification of Critical Issues. *Journal of Affective Disorders, 256,* 473-485. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2019.06.024