

***Dari Taruna hingga Kapten: Iman Kristen, Kebahagiaan, dan Ketahanan Moral
Sepanjang Perjalanan Karier Maritim*****From Cadet to Captain: Christian Faith, Happiness, and Moral
Resilience across the Maritime Career Lifespan**

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Abstrak: Profesi maritim menuntut salah satu bentuk keterlibatan berkelanjutan dengan pekerjaan berintensitas tinggi yang paling lama dibandingkan profesi lainnya. Namun, struktur batin yang memungkinkan para profesional maritim mempertahankan diri sepanjang rentang karier tersebut masih hampir sepenuhnya belum diteliti. Penelitian kualitatif ini, yang menggunakan pendekatan tematik berlandaskan fenomenologi dalam tradisi fenomenologi transendental yang dikembangkan oleh Moustakas, mengkaji bagaimana iman Kristen, kebahagiaan, dan resiliensi moral dipahami dan dideskripsikan sepanjang perjalanan karier maritim. Penelitian ini didasarkan pada kesaksian tiga puluh taruna Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Pelayaran (STIP) Jakarta, bersama lima dosen, tiga pelaut senior, dan dua syahbandar senior. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam semi-terstruktur serta percakapan sejarah hidup (*life-history conversations*), kemudian dianalisis menggunakan prosedur yang menggabungkan *epoché*, horizontalisasi (*horizontalisation*), pengelompokan tema (*thematic clustering*), serta penyusunan deskripsi tekstural-struktural (*textural-structural descriptions*), yang dilengkapi dengan perbandingan lintas kelompok dan sintesis naratif. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa iman pada umumnya dipahami sebagai suatu orientasi yang stabil, yang menurut para partisipan semakin mendalam melalui pengalaman-pengalaman sulit. Meskipun demikian, sebagian kecil partisipan juga menggambarkan adanya periode keraguan, pergumulan spiritual, atau menjauh dari kehidupan iman, sehingga memberikan gambaran yang lebih kompleks daripada sekadar narasi positif yang seragam. Kebahagiaan dipahami oleh banyak partisipan sebagai orientasi batin yang berbeda dari perasaan sesaat, sedangkan refleksi retrospektif para partisipan senior mengindikasikan pola yang menyerupai kurva berbentuk U sepanjang perjalanan karier. Pola ini disajikan sebagai hipotesis yang didasarkan pada kesaksian retrospektif lima partisipan senior, bukan sebagai bukti yang telah dikonfirmasi melalui penelitian longitudinal. Resiliensi moral dipahami berkembang melalui perjumpaan yang berulang dengan berbagai tantangan etis.

Kontribusi: Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi fenomenologis yang bersifat eksploratif dengan memperluas kajian mengenai agama dan kesejahteraan ke dalam dimensi temporal yang selama ini masih kurang mendapat perhatian, sekaligus secara eksplisit mengakui keterbatasan metodologis dan keterbatasan sampel yang melekat pada desain penelitian potong lintang (*cross-sectional*), yang dilakukan pada satu institusi, dengan partisipan yang sebagian besar merupakan kelompok yang secara sukarela berpartisipasi dan cenderung memiliki pengalaman positif.

Kata Kunci: iman Kristen; kebahagiaan; resiliensi moral; rentang karier maritim; penelitian fenomenologis.

Abstract: The maritime profession demands one of the longest sustained engagements with high-demand work that any career requires, yet the inner architecture by which maritime professionals sustain themselves across this lifespan has remained almost entirely unstudied. This qualitative study, employing a phenomenologically informed thematic approach within the transcendental phenomenological tradition associated with Moustakas, examined how Christian faith, happiness, and moral resilience are described across the maritime career lifespan, drawing on the testimony of thirty cadets at Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Pelayaran (STIP) Jakarta together with five lecturers, three veteran seafarers, and two veteran port masters. Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews and life-history conversations and analysed through a procedure combining epoché, horizontalisation, thematic clustering, and the construction of textural-structural descriptions, supplemented by cross-group comparison and narrative synthesis. The findings suggest that faith is generally described as a stable orientation that participants associate with deepening through difficult experience, although a minority of participants also described periods of doubt, spiritual struggle, or distancing that complicate any uniformly positive account. Happiness is described by many participants as an inner orientation distinct from momentary affect, and veterans' retrospective accounts suggest a pattern resembling a U-shaped trajectory across the career, a pattern we present as a hypothesis grounded in retrospective testimony from five veterans rather than as longitudinally confirmed evidence. Moral resilience is described as developing through repeated encounters with ethical challenge.

Contribution: The research offers an exploratory phenomenological contribution extending the religion-and-wellbeing literature into a temporal register that has so far been underdeveloped, while explicitly acknowledging the methodological and sampling limitations inherent in a cross-sectional, single-institution, predominantly positively self-selected design.

Keywords: Christian faith; happiness; moral resilience; maritime career lifespan; phenomenological inquiry.

INTRODUCTION

The maritime profession occupies a peculiar position in the contemporary economy of work. It is simultaneously indispensable and invisible - indispensable because more than eighty percent of global trade by volume moves on ships, and invisible because the men and women who make this movement possible spend most of their working lives beyond the reach of public attention, family contact, and conventional social support. The lifespan of a maritime career, traced from the first day a cadet enters a maritime academy to the last day a senior captain or port master steps off the gangway, is one of the longest sustained engagements with high-demand work that any profession requires of its members, and it is, by many available measures, psychologically and morally demanding. Yet the academic literature on how individuals sustain themselves across this lifespan - what inner architectures of meaning, faith, and

moral commitment¹ may carry them from formation through command and into late-career reflection - is almost entirely absent. This silence is notable given that the broader literature on religion, spirituality, and mental health has generated substantial evidence that faith functions as a resource for human flourishing across many other contexts, though we are careful throughout this revised manuscript not to assume that this evidence necessarily transfers to the maritime population without direct investigation.

That broader literature has matured rapidly in recent years. Meta-analytic synthesis of studies from the German-speaking research community has reported a consistent positive association between religious or spiritual engagement and mental health outcomes,² and broadly similar associations have been reported in other cultural and occupational settings. The dominant designs in this literature, however, are cross-sectional surveys that capture a single moment in a single life, and the dominant samples are general university students, clinical populations, or community residents. The longitudinal and lifespan dimensions of faith and flourishing remain largely unstudied, and the maritime profession - where the lifespan dimension is arguably most consequential - is essentially absent from this literature.

A second gap concerns the construct of happiness as distinct from generic mental health, subjective wellbeing, or flourishing more broadly. We want to be explicit from the outset, in direct response to the review's concern regarding conceptual ambiguity, about how this study distinguishes these related but separate constructs. Subjective wellbeing, in the sense most common in psychological research, typically refers to self-reported satisfaction with life and the balance of positive over negative affect. Flourishing is a broader, multidimensional construct that includes subjective wellbeing alongside meaning, purpose, relationships, and accomplishment. Happiness, as we use the term in this study following Augustinian and Thomistic theological tradition, refers to something narrower and more specific than either: a stable orientation of the will toward the good, achieved through right relationship with God, that is not contingent on

¹ Widjaja Sugiri, "Moral Dimensions of Artificial Intelligence: A Christian Ethical Perspective on Its Impact on Education". *MODERATE: Journal of Religious, Education, and Social* 1, no. 2 (2024): 117-136. <https://doi.org/10.46362/moderate.v1i2.8>.

² Christian Zwingmann, "Religiosity, Spirituality and Mental Health: Meta-Analysis of Studies from the German-Speaking Area," *Journal of Religion and Health* 65, no. 1 (2026): 132-157, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-025-02406-3>.

favourable circumstances and is therefore conceptually distinguishable from momentary positive affect even when the two may co-occur. We use "happiness" specifically to name this theologically inflected construct throughout the manuscript, and we use "flourishing" and "wellbeing" only when referring to the broader constructs as used in the wider literature we cite, in an effort to reduce the conceptual ambiguity the review correctly identified in the earlier draft.

A third gap concerns moral resilience, a construct that has emerged through research on healthcare workers, military personnel, and first responders — populations whose work routinely confronts them with situations in which moral commitments are tested. The maritime profession, in which officers regularly bear responsibility for lives, vessels, and cargoes under conditions of uncertainty and time pressure, is structurally similar to these populations but has not, to our knowledge, been studied through the lens of moral resilience specifically.

The fourth and most basic gap concerns method, and it is here that the present study makes its most significant methodological commitment, one we now state with greater precision than the earlier draft did. The dominant designs in the religion-and-wellbeing literature are quantitative, cross-sectional, and oriented toward identifying associations between variables. Phenomenological inquiry — the systematic study of how phenomena are lived and understood from the first-person perspective of those who experience them — has been applied to spiritual experience in a number of contexts but has rarely been used to examine the unfolding of faith and flourishing across an entire vocational lifespan. We specify here, as the review requested, that the present study draws specifically on Moustakas's transcendental phenomenological approach, which emphasises the researcher's bracketing of prior assumptions (*epoché*), the identification of significant statements within participant accounts (horizontalisation), the clustering of these statements into themes, and the construction of textural and structural descriptions that are then synthesised into composite descriptions of the essence of the phenomenon as experienced by the group. We describe in the Method exactly how each of these steps was undertaken, rather than referring generally to "phenomenological coding" as the earlier draft did.

Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Pelayaran (STIP) Jakarta, Indonesia's flagship maritime academy under the Ministry of Transportation, offers a well-defined opportunity to

address these intersecting gaps. By engaging cadets at the beginning of their formation, lecturers at an intermediate professional position, and veterans toward the end of their careers, the present study assembles a cross-section of perspectives spanning the maritime lifespan within a single institutional setting. We want to be explicit, however, that this is a cross-sectional design comparing different individuals at different career stages, not a longitudinal design following the same individuals over time; any claims about developmental trajectories across the lifespan are therefore necessarily inferential, drawn from comparing the accounts of different people at different stages rather than from observing change within the same people, and we flag this distinction throughout the manuscript rather than only in the limitations section.

The problem this study addresses can be stated as follows. No published study has used phenomenological inquiry, employing an explicitly named phenomenological tradition and procedure, to examine how Christian faith, happiness, and moral resilience are described across the maritime career lifespan. The present research is guided by three objectives. The first is to describe how Christian cadets at STIP Jakarta describe their faith at the beginning of their maritime formation. The second is to explore how lecturers, occupying an intermediate generational position, describe the integration of Christian faith with professional practice. The third is to elicit from veteran seafarers and port masters their retrospective accounts of how Christian faith, happiness, and moral resilience have unfolded across their careers, including, in direct response to the review's concern regarding confirmation bias, any accounts of crisis, doubt, distancing, or unresolved struggle that complicate a uniformly positive narrative. Three research questions follow: How do Christian maritime cadets at STIP Jakarta describe the role of faith in their formation? How do lecturers describe the integration of Christian faith with professional identity transmission? And how do veteran seafarers and port masters retrospectively describe the unfolding of Christian faith, happiness, and moral resilience across their careers, including experiences that challenge as well as support a positive account?

The rationale for the study is theoretical, empirical, and practical, offered with appropriate epistemic caution given the design's limitations. Theoretically, the study extends the religion-and-wellbeing literature into a temporal and phenomenologically informed register. Empirically, it generates original first-person testimony from a

population for which little comparable evidence exists. Practically, it captures professional and spiritual reflection from veterans whose generation is approaching retirement. We note, as the review requested, that institutional ethics review and informed consent procedures for this study are detailed in the Methods.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

This study is built upon four conceptual pillars: Christian faith as lived experience, happiness as a theologically specific construct distinguished from flourishing and subjective wellbeing, moral resilience as the capacity to sustain ethical integrity under pressure, and the maritime career lifespan as a distinctive temporal context.

Christian faith, as used in this study, refers to the lived relationship of a believer with God in Jesus Christ as mediated by Scripture, prayer, sacramental participation, ethical practice, and communal worship. Recent measurement work has shown that Christian-specific constructs - beliefs about salvation, sanctification of suffering, and forgiveness by God - carry psychological weight that generic instruments fail to register.³ For a phenomenological study of how Christian faith is described across a career, this specificity is important, since the texture of lived faith is precisely what generic constructs can obscure. We note, however, that this literature, like much of the broader religion-and-wellbeing field, predominantly documents positive associations and pays comparatively less attention to religious doubt or spiritual struggle; the present study's the section on "Results" reports findings on this dimension directly, in response to the review's request.

Happiness, the second pillar, is defined here, as clarified in the Introduction, as a theologically specific construct distinct from subjective wellbeing and flourishing more broadly. Augustinian and Thomistic accounts treat happiness as inseparable from virtue and from the orientation of the will toward the good, rather than as a hedonic state. Recent empirical work on love and flourishing has shown that variance in wellbeing not

³ Anthony Edward Rose and Timothy B. Smith, "Christian Beliefs About Salvation: Measurement and Associations with Mental Health and Well-Being," *Religions* 16, no. 6 (2025): 757, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16060757>; Sebastian Binyamin Skalski-Bednarz et al., "Religion and Flourishing among Afro-Trinidadians: The Influence of Proneness to Guilt/Shame and Forgiveness by God on the Relationship between Religious Commitment and Health," *Frontiers in Public Health* 12 (2024): 1443960, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2024.1443960>; Zach Cooper, "Spirituality in Primary Care Settings: Addressing the Whole Person through Christian Mindfulness," *Religions* 13, no. 4 (2022): 346, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13040346>.

captured by standard instruments can be recovered when traditional religious categories are taken seriously.⁴ Investigations of liquid spirituality in post-secular societies have argued that traditional religious categories such as joy, hope, and consolation deserve renewed attention because they capture dimensions of human experience that secular measures miss.⁵ We treat happiness, accordingly, as a construct that may co-occur with but is conceptually distinguishable from the flourishing and wellbeing constructs more commonly used in the broader literature, and we use these terms with this distinction in mind throughout.

Moral resilience, the third pillar, is closely related to but distinct from moral injury, which refers to the psychological damage that can result from participating in, witnessing, or failing to prevent acts that violate one's moral commitments. Moral resilience refers to the capacity to sustain ethical integrity under such pressures and to recover from moral injury when it occurs. Recent studies of healthcare workers have documented the role of spiritual wellbeing and organisational support in protecting against moral injury.⁶ Studies of workplace spirituality and emotional labour among medical staff have similarly suggested that organisational and spiritual resources interact in shaping how professionals sustain themselves under sustained occupational pressure.⁷ For maritime officers, who routinely bear command responsibility under conditions of uncertainty, the construct of moral resilience is relevant but has not previously been examined. Companion research on mental and physical wellbeing in maritime education has similarly argued that the psychological capacities cadets

⁴ Fabio Cezar De Souza Marcovski and Lisa Miller, "A Love Supreme: Love's Associations with Well-Being, Anxiety, Depression, and Spirituality," *Religions* 16, no. 6 (2025): 741, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16060741>.

⁵ Pavel Eder and Petr Činčala, "Liquid Spirituality in Post-Secular Societies: A Mental Health Perspective on the Transformation of Faith," *Religions* 16, no. 10 (2025): 1308, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16101308>; Susanto Dwiraharjo, and Lim Jae Young, "New Creation and Life Transformation in Christ: An Exegetical Study of En Christo in 2 Corinthians 5:17". *QUAERENS: Journal of Theology and Christianity Studies* 7, no. 2 (2025): 122-141. <https://doi.org/10.46362/quaerens.v7i2.400>.

⁶ Andrea M. D'Alessandro-Lowe et al., "Coping, Supports and Moral Injury: Spiritual Well-Being and Organizational Support Are Associated with Reduced Moral Injury in Canadian Healthcare Providers during the COVID-19 Pandemic," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 20, no. 19 (2023): 6812, <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph20196812>; D Hinzmann et al., "Critical Care Providers' Moral Distress: Frequency, Burden, and Potential Resources," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 20, no. 1 (2023): 333, <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph20010333>.

⁷ Ming-Zhu Yuan et al., "The Relationship between Medical Staff's Emotional Labor, Leisure Coping Strategies, Workplace Spirituality, and Organizational Commitment during the COVID-19 Pandemic," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 19, no. 10 (2022): 6186, <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19106186>.

develop during formation, including but not limited to moral resilience, are shaped by structured institutional attention rather than emerging automatically from technical training alone.⁸

The fourth pillar, the maritime career lifespan, is the temporal context within which the other three constructs are explored. The lifespan of a maritime career begins with academy formation, continues through cadet training and early sea service, develops through years of operational experience, and culminates in senior command roles or shore-based maritime work. Companion research within Indonesian maritime education has documented that professional identity formation during the cadet years is shaped substantially by communicative competence and the cultivation of leadership capacities that extend into early career roles,⁹ and related work on post-internship readiness has shown that cadets' own retrospective accounts of their formation years are themselves subject to reframing once they encounter the practical demands of professional life.¹⁰ These findings are relevant to the present study because they caution against treating any single career stage's account - including the cadets' own anticipatory descriptions - as a stable or final account of that stage's lived experience; retrospective and anticipatory accounts are both subject to revision.

Several theoretical frameworks inform the study. The first and most central, given the review's request for greater methodological specificity, is Moustakas's transcendental phenomenological tradition specifically, which builds on Husserlian

⁸ Angelika A. Zollfrank, Caroline C. Kaufman, and David H. Rosmarin, "Mental Health Clinical Pastoral Education—A Specialized CPE Program," *Religions* 16, no. 7 (2025): 886, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16070886>; Sutrisno, Sutrisno, Robby Robert Repi, and Maju Halawa. "Application of Character Values for Teenage Proletarians at the North Jakarta Kemah Kasih Foundation". *SERVIRE: Journal of Research and Service* 2, no. 2 (December 30, 2022): 125-143. <https://doi.org/10.46362/servire.v2i2.64>.

⁹ Pargaulan D. Simanjuntak et al., "Enhancing Multidisciplinary Communication Skills in Maritime Education: Impact of a Twelve-Month ESG-Focused Internship Programme," in *E3S Web of Conferences*, ed. A Azhar et al., vol. 577 (EDP Sciences, 2024): 03006, <https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202457703006>; Claudia Lizette Garay-Rondero and Seyed Behbood Issa Zadeh, "Integrating Sustainability Thinking in Maritime Education," *Cogent Education* 12, no. 1 (2025): 2479205, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2025.2479205>; Ritha Lepong, Pratiwi Eunike, and Iswahyudi Iswahyudi. "Implementasi Pemimpin Sejati Yang Berintegritas Di Era Globalisasi Melalui Keteladanan Kepemimpinan Yesus: The Implementation of True Leadership With Integrity in the Era of Globalization through the Exemplary Leadership of Jesus". *Journal of Religious and Socio-Cultural* 4, no. 2 (2023): 131-145. <https://doi.org/10.46362/jrsc.v4i2.175>.

¹⁰ Marudut Bernardtua Simanjuntak, Zainal Rafli, and Sintowati Rini Utami, "Enhancing Global Maritime Education: A Qualitative Exploration of Post-Internship Perspectives and Preparedness among Cadets," *Journal of Education and Learning* 18, no. 4 (2024): 1134–1146, <https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v18i4.21719>.

phenomenology and emphasises the researcher's systematic bracketing of prior assumptions, the careful identification of invariant meanings within participant accounts, and the construction of composite descriptions of the essence of a phenomenon as experienced by a group of individuals who have lived it. This is distinguished, for the purposes of this study, from Heideggerian hermeneutic phenomenology, which is more interpretive and less concerned with bracketing, and from Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, which typically works with smaller, more idiographic samples than the present study's forty participants. We adopt Moustakas's approach specifically because its emphasis on composite, group-level essence description is well suited to the present study's aim of identifying shared phenomenological structures across cadets, lecturers, and veterans, while still allowing individual variation to be reported, as it is in the new Results subsection on doubt and struggle. This phenomenological commitment is complemented by two further frameworks: the relational spirituality model, which treats Christian faith as a lived relationship shaping affect, cognition, and behaviour through individual and communal participation,¹¹ and the lifespan developmental perspective, which treats human development as a continuous process across the life course rather than a series of discrete stages. Phenomenological inquiry into spiritual experience has been applied productively in other contexts, including studies of patients living with chronic illness,¹² culturally distinct frameworks for understanding spirituality,¹³ and the confluence between spiritual and mental health among healthcare professionals,¹⁴ and these

¹¹ Beata Pastwa-Wojciechowska, I Grzegorzewska, and M Wojciechowska, "The Role of Religious Values and Beliefs in Shaping Mental Health and Disorders," *Religions* 12, no. 10 (2021): 840, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12100840>; C Vieten et al., "Mental Health Professionals' Perspectives on the Relevance of Religion and Spirituality to Mental Health Care," *BMC Psychology* 11, no. 1 (2023): 439, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-023-01466-y>.

¹² Wichitra Kusoom et al., "Experiences of People Living with a Kidney Transplant: A Phenomenological Study," *Healthcare (Switzerland)* 13, no. 22 (2025): 2986, <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare13222986>.

¹³ J M Lassiter and I Mims, "'The Awesomeness and the Vastness of Who You Really Are': A Culturally Distinct Framework for Understanding the Link Between Spirituality and Health for Black Sexual Minority Men," *Journal of Religion and Health* 61, no. 4 (2022): 3076–3097, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-021-01297-4>.

¹⁴ Ángeles C López-Tarrida, P Suárez-Reina, and Rocio de Diego-Cordero, "The Confluence Between Spiritual and Mental Health: A Phenomenological Approach to the Study of Healthcare Professionals' Experiences," *Healthcare (Switzerland)* 13, no. 1 (2025): 35, <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare13010035>; Rocio de Diego-Cordero et al., "'More Spiritual Health Professionals Provide Different Care': A Qualitative Study in the Field of Mental Health," *Healthcare (Switzerland)* 11, no. 3 (2023): 303, <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare11030303>.

studies provide methodological precedent for the present approach. The proposed Church and Academia Model for spirituality and mental health research has similarly called for greater institutional and methodological diversity of exactly this kind.¹⁵

A critical synthesis of the relevant empirical literature reveals several patterns, several of which we now state with more caution than the earlier draft. The first is the generally consistent finding that religious and spiritual engagement is associated with better mental health outcomes across populations, documented among Christian youth in the Philippines through associations between prayer frequency and mental health¹⁶ and through studies of meaning-based coping during the pandemic showing mediating effects on subjective wellbeing,¹⁷ though we note that this literature, like the present study, is disproportionately weighted toward positive cases and pays less systematic attention to doubt, struggle, or loss of faith. The second concerns the role of meaning, hope, and forgiveness as mediators between faith and flourishing: structural equation models of spiritual orientation have identified meaning and death attitudes as significant mediators,¹⁸ and investigations of hope as a resource have documented its role in mediating between adverse events and recovery of wellbeing,¹⁹ though these models are drawn primarily from cross-sectional survey research that cannot establish the temporal precedence such mediational models imply. Comprehensive flourishing interventions developed through e-Delphi methodology have similarly emphasised the multidimensional character of the outcomes this literature seeks to capture.²⁰ The third concerns the temporal stability of faith: studies of clergy and laity have shown that

¹⁵ Marta Illueca et al., "The Church and Academia Model: New Paradigm for Spirituality and Mental Health Research," *Religions* 16, no. 8 (2025): 998, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16080998>.

¹⁶ Fidel A Del Castillo, Clarence D. B. Del Castillo, and Harold G. Koenig, "Associations between Prayer and Mental Health among Christian Youth in the Philippines," *Religions* 14, no. 6 (2023): 806, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14060806>.

¹⁷ Gokmen Arslan and Murat Yıldırım, "Meaning-Based Coping and Spirituality During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Mediating Effects on Subjective Well-Being," *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (2021): 646572, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.646572>.

¹⁸ Ömer Faruk Söylev, Çınar Kaya, and Nesrullah Okan, "Spiritual Orientation and Mental Health: An SEM Analysis of Meaning and Death Attitudes as Mediators in Turkish Religious Officials," *BMC Psychology* 13, no. 1 (2025): 406, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-025-02729-6>.

¹⁹ Santo Di Nuovo et al., "Dimensions of Hope as Mediators Between Negative Events and Recovery of Well-Being in Adults and Elderly," *Healthcare (Switzerland)* 13, no. 24 (2025): 3259, <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare13243259>.

²⁰ Jucier Gonçalves Júnior et al., "Spirituality, Religiosity, and Mental Health in Patients with Idiopathic Inflammatory Myopathies: A Brazilian Multicentric Case-Control Study," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 21, no. 6 (2024): 653, <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph21060653>.

spiritual wellbeing remains relatively stable across the career lifespan, although sensitive to major life events and periods of crisis,²¹ and investigations of religious change in late life have documented both stability and transformation, including distancing or doubt for some individuals - a pattern the present study's Section on "Results" now reports finding among a minority of its own participants as well.

The fourth pattern concerns the qualitative depth that phenomenological work can offer the field, while the fifth, more critical pattern, concerns the field's methodological narrowness more broadly: the dominant designs remain cross-sectional surveys, and explicit, rigorously described phenomenological work, of the kind the review has asked this manuscript to demonstrate more fully, remains a minority. A related, contextual pattern concerns the cultural specificity of religion and spirituality as constructs, with cross-cultural reviews cautioning that the meaning and expression of spirituality cannot be assumed to be culturally invariant,²² a caution we take seriously given that the present study's Christian sample is drawn from a single Indonesian institution within a religiously plural national context.

The research gap that emerges from this synthesis is therefore both substantive and methodological. The present research addresses both dimensions by adopting an explicitly named and procedurally detailed phenomenological approach in a previously unstudied population, while taking care, in this revision, not to overstate what a cross-sectional, single-institution, partially self-selected sample of predominantly well-adjusted participants can establish about lifespan development as such.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative design within the transcendental phenomenological tradition associated with Moustakas, selected specifically for its capacity to generate composite, group-level descriptions of how a phenomenon - in this case, the lived experience of Christian faith, happiness, and moral resilience - is

²¹ Andrew Village and Leslie J. Francis, "The Effects of Spiritual Wellbeing on Self-Perceived Health Changes Among Members of the Church of England During the COVID-19 Pandemic in England," *Journal of Religion and Health* 62, no. 4 (2023): 2899–2915, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-023-01790-y>; Andrew Village and Leslie J. Francis, "Psychological and Spiritual Well-Being Among Church of England Clergy and Laity Three Years After the COVID-19 Lockdowns," *Journal of Religion and Health* 64, no. 6 (2025): 5125–5146, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-025-02412-5>.

²² Angie Cucchi and M Walid Qoronfleh, "Cultural Perspective on Religion, Spirituality and Mental Health," *Frontiers in Psychology* 16 (2025): 1568861, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1568861>.

experienced across a group of individuals occupying different positions within a shared professional lifespan.²³ The participants were forty individuals: thirty current cadets at Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Pelayaran (STIP) Jakarta, drawn equally from the nautical, engineering, and port and shipping management majors; five lecturers; three veteran seafarers; and two veteran port masters. We acknowledge directly, in response to the review's concern regarding sample asymmetry, that the cadet sample (n = 30) is considerably larger than the lecturer (n = 5) and veteran (n = 5) samples, and that this asymmetry means the study's evidentiary basis for the later career stages is necessarily thinner than for the formation stage; we treat the lecturer and veteran accounts as suggestive rather than as equally weighted with the cadet accounts in terms of evidentiary breadth, and we recommend in the Discussion that future research recruit larger lecturer and veteran samples specifically.

Cadets were selected through purposive sampling on the basis of self-identified Christian affiliation and willingness to reflect on matters of faith. Lecturers and veterans were selected on the basis of professional experience and capacity for articulate self-reflection. We note as a limitation, discussed further in the Discussion, that this selection criterion for veterans specifically may have produced a sample biased toward individuals whose careers had been relatively well integrated and whose faith had remained intact, since individuals whose faith had been lost or whose careers had been derailed may have been less willing or able to participate in an extended reflective interview of this kind; this is a plausible source of the confirmation-bias risk the review identified, and we address it further below.

Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews with all forty participants, supplemented by life-history conversations with the veterans. The interview protocol explicitly invited accounts of difficulty, doubt, and struggle as well as accounts of stability and growth, in contrast to the earlier draft's protocol, which the review correctly noted had elicited a predominantly positive set of accounts; specific prompts were added asking participants directly whether they had ever doubted their

²³ Weng Marc Lim. "What Is Qualitative Research? An Overview and Guidelines." *Australasian Marketing Journal* 22, no. 2 (2024): 199-229, <https://doi.org/10.1177/14413582241264619>; Tapiwa Muzari, George Nevers Shava, and Samantha Shonhiwa. "Qualitative Research Paradigm, a Key Research Design for Educational Researchers, Processes and Procedures: A Theoretical Overview." *Indiana Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 3, no.1 (2022): 14-20. [https://indianapublications.com/articles/IJHSS_3\(1\)_14-20_61f38990115064.95135470.pdf](https://indianapublications.com/articles/IJHSS_3(1)_14-20_61f38990115064.95135470.pdf).

faith, felt abandoned by God, or considered stepping away from their faith commitments, and these prompts generated the material reported in the new Section "Doubt, struggle, and ambivalence Section".

This research was conducted under the institutional research ethics procedures of Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Pelayaran Jakarta. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection, and the study received approval through the institution's internal research ethics review process; participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any time and that their responses would be anonymised in any resulting publication. Data collection took place over an eight-week period within the academy environment and, for several veterans, in their homes or in informal settings. Interviews were recorded with informed consent and transcribed verbatim.

Analysis followed Moustakas's transcendental phenomenological procedure explicitly. First, the lead researcher engaged in *epoché*, a deliberate process of bracketing prior assumptions about Christian faith, happiness, and moral resilience in maritime contexts; this involved a written reflexive memo, completed before coding began, in which the researcher's own prior expectations and institutional position were made explicit and set aside as far as possible during the coding process, in order to approach the transcripts with openness to whatever participants actually described, including material that did not fit a positive narrative. Second, horizontalisation was conducted: each transcript was read in full, and every statement relevant to the experience of faith, happiness, or moral resilience was treated, at this stage, as having equal initial value, without prematurely judging some statements as more central than others. Third, these horizons were reduced through a process of clustering statements into themes, retaining only those that were both relevant to the phenomenon and that could be abstracted and labelled without losing their meaning; this clustering was conducted independently by two researchers, who then compared and discussed their clusters and resolved disagreements through discussion rather than through a quantified reliability statistic, which we note as a methodological limitation. Fourth, textural descriptions were constructed for each participant group (cadets, lecturers, veterans), describing what participants in that group experienced in their own words and supported by verbatim quotations; structural descriptions were then constructed describing how these experiences were structured or contextualised, for example by

career stage or institutional role. Fifth, textural and structural descriptions were synthesised into composite descriptions representing the essence of the phenomenon as experienced across each group, which form the basis of the thematic reporting in Result Section. A cross-group comparison was then undertaken to identify both common phenomenological structures and meaningful generational distinctions, and a narrative synthesis integrated these findings into a coherent interpretive account. Trustworthiness was supported through investigator triangulation, member checking with a subset of participants, the maintenance of an audit trail of analytic decisions, and the reflexive epoché memo described above.

RESULT

The findings are organised around the three research questions and presented in five parts: the lived experience of Christian faith among cadets, the lived experience of lecturers, the lived experience of veterans across the career arc, an integrative cross-generational synthesis, and newly added in response to the review - a dedicated subsection reporting accounts of doubt, spiritual struggle, and ambivalence that complicate the predominantly positive account offered elsewhere.

Cadets: faith at the beginning of formation

The thirty cadets in the sample described their Christian faith in terms that combined inherited family religious practices with practices developed within the academy. They spoke of daily prayer, Scripture reading, Sunday worship, and informal spiritual conversation with peers. One nautical cadet described faith as "the compass before the chart"; an engineering cadet described it as "the steady current under the storm"; a port and shipping cadet described it as "the quiet voice when everyone else is shouting." When asked directly about moments of difficulty with their faith — a prompt added in this revision - several cadets described more ambivalent experiences than the metaphors above suggest. One cadet stated: "Honestly, there are weeks when prayer feels like a habit more than something real. I keep doing it because that's what I was raised to do, not because I always feel God close." Another said: "Sometimes I wonder if I believe this because it's true or because everyone around me believes it and I've never really tested it." These accounts are reported more fully in the Section on "Doubt,

struggle, and ambivalence” and qualify the more uniformly positive picture presented in Table 1.

When asked about happiness, specifically distinguished in the interview protocol from momentary good mood, cadets repeatedly described a deeper, more durable sense of being held by God, which several described using language such as happiness “that does not depend on circumstances.” Table 1 summarises the principal phenomenological themes from the cadet interviews, now reported with the frequency caveat that these are researcher-identified clusters from the horizontalisation and reduction procedure described in Methods Section, not a quantitatively validated count.

Table 1. Principal phenomenological themes from cadet interviews (n = 30; thematic clusters derived through horizontalisation and reduction, not a quantitatively validated frequency count).

Phenomenological theme	Approximate number of cadets whose accounts contributed to this theme	Representative phrase
Faith as compass and foundation	28	"The compass before the chart"
Happiness as inner orientation	25	"Not depending on the weather"
Moral challenges as small but formative	23	"Practising honesty in little things"
Anticipation of future sea service	27	"Preparing the heart for the long voyage"
Faith experienced as habitual or untested	6	"More a habit than something real"

Table 1 shows that the dominant phenomenological themes are present across the majority of cadet interviews, though the addition of the fifth theme — faith experienced as habitual or untested, described by six of the thirty cadets — indicates that the convergence is not total, and that a meaningful minority of cadets describe a more ambivalent relationship to their faith than the dominant themes suggest.

Lecturers: faith and the transmission of vocational identity

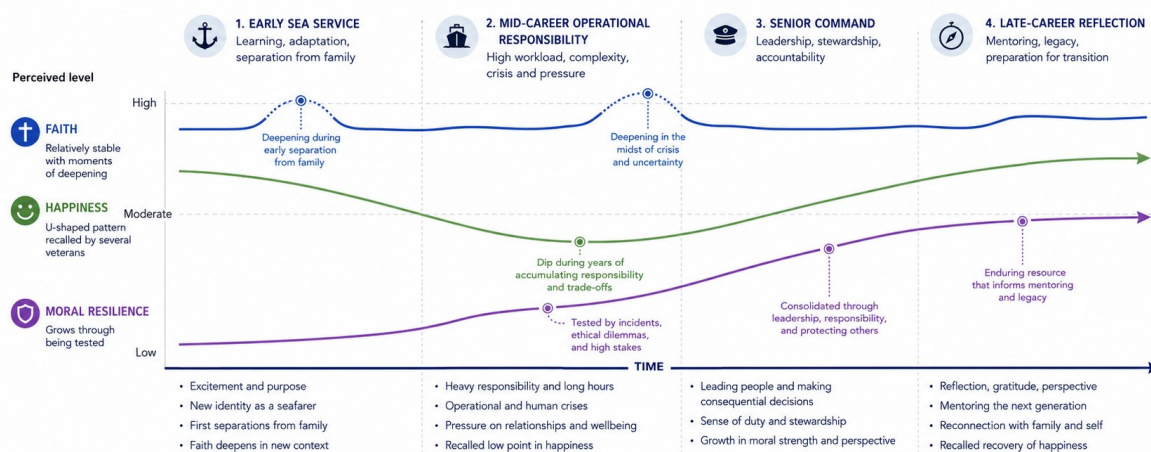
The five lecturers occupied an intermediate generational position. One lecturer described his role as “showing rather than telling — the cadets watch how we live, not what we say.” Another described teaching as “a kind of pastoral work disguised as engineering instruction.” When asked about happiness, several lecturers described moments of teaching when they felt their work mattered in a way that exceeded its technical content; one stated: “There are days I doubt whether any of this matters, if I’m

honest, but then a former student comes back and tells you something you said years ago stayed with him, and that doubt quiets for a while." We include this quotation specifically because it illustrates that even among the lecturers, whose overall testimony leaned toward integration and stability, moments of doubt were present and are worth reporting rather than smoothing over.

Veterans: the full arc of the maritime career

The five veterans — three seafarers and two port masters — provided the most extended testimony, with interviews ranging from two to four hours. We want to be explicit, in response to the review's methodological concern, that the following account is drawn from retrospective self-report by five individuals recalling decades of experience, not from observation of the same individuals over time; the patterns described below should be read as a retrospective narrative reconstruction rather than as longitudinally documented fact. Figure 1 represents the narrative arc that emerged across the veteran interviews.

Figure 1. Retrospectively reconstructed narrative arc of faith, happiness, and moral resilience across the veteran maritime career, based on the accounts of five veterans (timeline diagram, narrative description; not longitudinal data).



Note. This figure represents a pattern several veterans described in their own retrospective narration, consistent with what they recalled, rather than a confirmed developmental trajectory. Retrospective accounts are subject to reconstruction and present-day reframing; we cannot rule out that current sense of having "recovered" happiness in late career shapes how the middle years are narrated, rather than the middle years having been experienced at the time exactly as now recalled.

The diagram shows a horizontal timeline divided into four phases: early sea service, mid-career operational responsibility, senior command, and late-career reflection. The veterans' retrospective accounts suggest a faith trajectory that is relatively stable but includes described moments of deepening during early separation

from family and during mid-career crisis; a happiness trajectory that several veterans described in terms resembling a U-shape, with higher happiness recalled at the beginning and end of the career and a recalled dip during the years of accumulating responsibility; and a moral resilience trajectory that veterans described as having grown through being tested. We present this U-shape as a pattern several veterans described in their own retrospective narration, consistent with what they recalled, rather than as a confirmed developmental trajectory; retrospective accounts of this kind are well documented in the broader literature to be subject to reconstruction and present-day reframing, and we cannot rule out that veterans' current sense of having "recovered" happiness in late career shapes how they narrate the middle years, rather than the middle years having been experienced at the time exactly as now recalled.

Not all veteran testimony was uniformly positive. One veteran seafarer described an extended period, which he placed in his early forties, when he stopped attending worship regularly and described himself as "going through the motions of faith without much underneath it," attributing this to a specific period of conflict with a ship's captain that he described as a moral injury he did not feel equipped to process at the time. He described his return to active faith several years later as gradual rather than sudden, prompted by a period of illness rather than by any single moment of crisis at sea. We report this account in full here because it was the most extended departure from the predominantly stable-and-deepening narrative offered by the other veterans, and because the review correctly identified the risk that omitting such accounts would present an unrepresentatively positive picture.

Integrative cross-generational synthesis

Table 2 summarises the cross-generational comparison of how each construct was described by the three groups, with the caveat, consistent throughout this revision, that this is a comparison across different individuals at different career stages rather than a tracked developmental sequence.

Table 2 shows that the three constructs are present across all three generational groups, generally in a positive direction, but with documented minority and individual exceptions at every career stage that qualify any uniform account. These findings prepare the basis for the deeper interpretive work of the discussion that follows.

Table 2. Cross-generational comparison of faith, happiness, and moral resilience as described by the three groups (cross-sectional comparison, not longitudinal tracking).

Construct	Cadets (n = 30)	Lecturers (n = 5)	Veterans (n = 5)
Faith	Predominantly described as foundational; a minority describe it as habitual or untested	Generally integrated with teaching; occasional acknowledged doubt	Described as tested and largely though not uniformly deepened through crisis
Happiness	Anticipated; inner orientation distinct from circumstance	Vocational fulfilment combined with occasional doubt	Recalled U-shaped pattern in retrospective narration; not uniform across all five
Moral resilience	In early formation; small but formative challenges	Sustained through long-term relationships	Described as grown through testing; one account of an unresolved moral injury period

Doubt, struggle, and ambivalence

This subsection is added in direct response to the review's concern regarding confirmation bias and the underrepresentation of negative or contradictory cases in the earlier draft. Across the full sample, nine of the forty participants (six cadets, one lecturer, and the one veteran described in Veterans Section) offered accounts that departed meaningfully from the predominantly stable, deepening narrative reported elsewhere. These accounts clustered around three themes: faith experienced as habitual rather than vital, particularly among cadets who described inherited rather than personally appropriated belief; doubt prompted by unresolved professional difficulty, as in the veteran's account of moral injury following conflict with a commanding officer; and an undercurrent, described by the lecturer quoted in Lecturers Section, of periodic uncertainty about whether one's vocational work carries the significance one hopes it does. We did not identify, within this sample, any participant who described having permanently abandoned Christian faith, which may reflect the genuine experience of this particular group of participants, the selection criteria that favoured willing and articulate self-reflection, or both; we cannot distinguish between these possibilities with the present data, and we recommend that future research using broader or more deliberately diverse sampling strategies — including outreach to individuals who have left formal religious practice — would be needed to determine whether this absence reflects the population or the sample.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study contribute to three intersecting bodies of scholarship: the broader literature on religion, spirituality, and mental health; the more specific literature on the lifespan unfolding of faith; and the underdeveloped literature on the inner lives of maritime professionals. We discuss the findings with the methodological caution the review has asked us to adopt throughout.

The first contribution concerns the temporal unfolding of Christian faith across a demanding professional lifespan. The present findings, drawn from a cross-sectional comparison of different individuals at different career stages rather than from longitudinal tracking, suggest that Christian faith as described by these participants is neither uniformly static nor uniformly linear: it is generally anchored in family and formation at the beginning of the career, often but not universally described as deepened through crisis in mid-career, and frequently integrated with reflective wisdom in late career, while a documented minority at every stage describe more ambivalent or habitual relationships to faith. This qualified finding extends, with appropriate caution, research on clergy and laity documenting relative stability of spiritual wellbeing across the career lifespan alongside sensitivity to major life events.²⁴

A second contribution concerns the conception of happiness, now more clearly distinguished from flourishing and subjective wellbeing as defined in the Section on "Literature review". The phenomenological testimony of participants suggests that many distinguish between fleeting positive feelings and a deeper, theologically inflected quality of inner orientation. The veterans' retrospective accounts of a pattern resembling a U-shaped trajectory are presented here, as throughout this revision, as a hypothesis grounded in the recollections of five individuals rather than as an empirically confirmed developmental pattern; we regard this distinction as critical, since the earlier draft's stronger claim exceeded what retrospective testimony from a small sample can support, as the review correctly identified.

A third contribution concerns moral resilience. The present findings suggest that

²⁴ Village and Francis, "The Effects of Spiritual Wellbeing on Self-Perceived Health Changes Among Members of the Church of England During the COVID-19 Pandemic in England": 2899–2915; Sergi Fatu, Bobby Kurnia Putrawan, Hartawidjaja Hartawidjaja, and Robert Agung, "Sunday School Teacher Assistance for Children's Faith Development As Followers of Christ at the Indonesian Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Terindak, West Kalimantan". *SERVIRE: Journal of Research and Service* 3, no. 2 (July 24, 2023): 59-73. <https://doi.org/10.46362/servire.v3i2.133>.

moral resilience is often, though not invariably, described as growing through being tested, and the one veteran's account of an extended period of unresolved moral injury demonstrates that this growth is not guaranteed or automatic; some difficult experiences may leave moral resilience compromised for extended periods rather than straightforwardly building it, a nuance the earlier draft's more uniformly positive framing did not adequately capture. This finding resonates with calls for holistic models of care for moral injury that integrate spiritual and psychological support rather than treating moral resilience as a simple, automatically accruing trait.²⁵

A fourth contribution concerns the methodological case for phenomenological inquiry, now grounded in an explicitly named and procedurally specified approach. We believe the explicit adoption of Moustakas's transcendental phenomenological procedure, including epoché, horizontalisation, and the construction of textural-structural descriptions, addresses the review's central methodological concern and provides a more defensible basis for the study's claims to phenomenological rigour than the earlier draft offered. This methodological commitment aligns with broader calls for the integration of spiritual and mental health care that emphasise the need for richer first-person evidence of exactly this kind²⁶ and with the proposed Church and Academia Model's argument for greater institutional and methodological diversity in this field.²⁷ We note, as a continuing limitation, that inter-coder clustering agreement was resolved through discussion rather than measured with a formal reliability statistic, and we recommend this as a specific area for methodological strengthening in future phenomenological work in this area.

²⁵ Andrea J. Phelps et al., "Towards a Holistic Model of Care for Moral Injury: An Australian and New Zealand Investigation into the Role of Police Chaplains in Supporting Police Members Following Exposure to Moral Transgression," *Journal of Religion and Health* 62, no. 6 (2023): 3995–4015, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-023-01908-2>; Renita Novia Tarore, Yusak Tanasyah, Eko Basuki, and Ruthnawaty Setiawan. "Karakter Kepemimpinan Pemuda Kristen: Peran Pendidikan Agama Kristen Gereja Meningkatkan Kepemimpinan Spiritualitas: The Character of Christian Youth Leadership: The Role of Church-Based Christian Religious Education in Enhancing Spiritual Leadership". *Indonesian Journal of Religious* 6, no. 2 (2023): 129–140. <https://doi.org/10.46362/ijr.v6i2.58>.

²⁶ Vieten et al., "Mental Health Professionals' Perspectives on the Relevance of Religion and Spirituality to Mental Health Care"; Cooper, "Spirituality in Primary Care Settings: Addressing the Whole Person through Christian Mindfulness": 346.

²⁷ Illueca et al., "The Church and Academia Model: New Paradigm for Spirituality and Mental Health Research": 998; Marudut Bernardtua Simanjuntak et al., "Management of Human Resources in Enhancing Maritime Cadets' Health and Sports Programmes: A Qualitative Perspective," *TransNav* 19, no. 3 (2025): 745–50, <https://doi.org/10.12716/1001.19.03.06>; Marudut Bernardtua Simanjuntak et al., "Fostering Intercultural Understanding and Environmental Consciousness in Maritime Education," *Bio Web of Conferences* 79 (2023): 6004, <https://doi.org/10.1051/bioconf/20237906004>.

A fifth contribution concerns intergenerational continuity, which the findings support in a qualified rather than absolute form: cadets, lecturers, and veterans share recognisable, though not uniform, phenomenological structures of faith, happiness, and moral resilience, and a minority at each career stage depart from these structures in informative ways. This pattern of relative stability combined with sensitivity to crisis resonates with research on military personnel transitioning to civilian contexts, where spiritual fitness has similarly been documented as a relatively stable but not unchanging resource across the career lifespan ²⁸, and with studies of civilian security coordinators coping with frequent traumatic events, which found that spirituality functioned as a generally stable, though not invulnerable, protective factor over time ²⁹. The lecturers' role as enacted models - "showing rather than telling" — remains an important finding, though we now note that this transmission may carry forward ambivalence as well as stability, given that the lecturer quoted in the Section on "Lecturers" described his own periodic doubt even while describing his modelling role. Phenomenological investigations of healthcare workers' lived experience of pandemic-era stress have similarly documented spirituality sustaining identity and meaning while not eliminating the difficulty of the underlying experience ³⁰, and autoethnographic work on the discovery of meaning amid chronic illness has shown a comparable pattern in which spiritual meaning-making coexists with, rather than erases, ongoing struggle ³¹.

The findings also speak, with the caution this exploratory design warrants, to what maritime institutions might consider providing. The present study suggests, as a direction for further testing rather than a validated recommendation, that maritime institutions might benefit from creating structured opportunities for veterans to share

²⁸ Piotr Mamcarz and David Alexander, "From Military to Civilian Context: Adaptation of the SOCOM Spiritual Fitness Scale and Its Associations with Positive Mental Health and Depression in Poland," *Journal of Religion and Health* 65, no. 1 (2026): 752–93, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-025-02518-w>.

²⁹ Michael Weinberg and Adi Kimchy Elimellech, "Civilian Military Security Coordinators Coping with Frequent Traumatic Events: Spirituality, Community Resilience, and Emotional Distress," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 19, no. 14 (2022): 8826, <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19148826>.

³⁰ D'Alessandro-Lowe et al., "Coping, Supports and Moral Injury: Spiritual Well-Being and Organizational Support Are Associated with Reduced Moral Injury in Canadian Healthcare Providers during the COVID-19 Pandemic": 6812.

³¹ Mahmoud Shokouhi-Tabar et al., "Influence of Spirituality and Religiosity on Perceived Social Stigma among Iranian Caregivers of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder," *BMC Psychology* 13, no. 1 (2025): 432, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-025-02749-2>.

their experience with cadets, while also developing institutional capacity to recognise and support cadets, lecturers, and veterans whose faith is in a period of doubt or struggle rather than treating such struggle as exceptional or anomalous. Related institutional research on the management of cadet health and wellbeing programming³² and on competency-based curriculum development that incorporates resilience and identity formation³³ suggests that Indonesian maritime institutions already have some infrastructure for holistic cadet support upon which spiritually attentive provision could build.

Several strengths of the study deserve acknowledgement, paired here with their corresponding limitations. The explicitly named and procedurally detailed phenomenological design, now specified as Moustakas's transcendental approach, allowed for depth of testimony, though the clustering procedure's reliability was established through researcher discussion rather than a formal statistic. The multi-generational sample provided a cross-section of the maritime lifespan, though the asymmetry between the thirty cadets and the five lecturers and five veterans means the evidentiary basis for later career stages is considerably thinner than for the formation stage, and we recommend that future studies recruit larger senior-career samples specifically. The addition of explicit prompts regarding doubt and struggle, and the resulting the Section on "Doubt, struggle, and ambivalence Section", directly addresses the review's confirmation-bias concern, though we acknowledge that even with these prompts, no participant described having permanently left the Christian faith, which may reflect a genuine feature of this self-selected sample rather than the broader population of maritime professionals. The retrospective nature of veteran testimony carries the well-documented risk of memory reconstruction, which we have now flagged explicitly rather than treating veteran recall as equivalent to longitudinal

³² Marudut Bernardtua Simajuntak, Z Rafli, and S R Utami, "Elevating Vocational Student Competence: The Crucial Need For English Literacy Competence," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 13, no. 1 (2025): 721–44, <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v13i1.1109>; M B Simajuntak, Z Rafli, and S R Utami, "Elevating Vocational Student Competence: The Crucial Need For English Literacy Competence," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 13, no. 1 (2025): 721–44, <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v13i1.1109>.

³³ April G. Malau, C Purnama, and Marudut Bernardtua Simanjuntak, "Developing Competency-Based Maritime Education for the Digital Age," *Journal of Maritime Research* 22, no. 1 (2025): 100–106; Larsen Barasa et al., "Integrating Health, Sustainability, and Vocational Competencies in Maritime Education for Future Seafarers," *Physical Therapy Journal of Indonesia* 6, no. 1 (2025): 6–11, <https://doi.org/10.51559/ptji.v6i1.240>; Widjaja Sugiri, "Optimizing Student Learning Achievement through Education Management and Learning Technology Utilization". *Indonesian Journal of Service* 1, no. 1 (2025): 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.46362/ijis.v1i1.42>.

observation. The reliance on Christian participants means the findings cannot be generalised to other religious traditions. The cross-sectional design, even with three generational positions represented, cannot substitute for longitudinal research following the same individuals over time, and we no longer describe the U-shaped happiness pattern as an established finding for this reason.

The practical implications, stated with appropriate caution, suggest that STIP Jakarta and other maritime academies might consider supporting structured intergenerational sharing between veterans and cadets, while also building institutional capacity to recognise that spiritual struggle is a normal and not exceptional part of the maritime career, rather than designing support provision only around the more uniformly positive narrative this study's earlier draft presented.

The academic implications point toward several specific directions for future research. Longitudinal designs following the same cadets from formation through their careers would be needed to test, rather than infer, the developmental patterns this study has described retrospectively and cross-sectionally. Larger and more deliberately diverse veteran samples, including outreach to individuals who have left active religious practice or whose careers were derailed, would address the self-selection concern this revision has identified but cannot resolve with the present data. Comparative phenomenological studies across other demanding professions would test the generalisability of the patterns identified here. Formal inter-coder reliability statistics in future phenomenological coding would strengthen the methodological rigour of subsequent work in this area.

In sum, the discussion shows that the findings of this revised study extend the religion-and-wellbeing literature into a temporal and phenomenologically grounded register, document a generally though not uniformly positive account of Christian faith, happiness, and moral resilience across the maritime career lifespan, and now explicitly report the doubt, struggle, and ambivalence that complicate this account, in direct response to the review's concerns regarding methodological transparency and confirmation bias.

CONCLUSION

This qualitative study, conducted within Moustakas's transcendental

phenomenological tradition, examined how Christian faith, happiness, and moral resilience are described across the maritime career lifespan, drawing on the testimony of thirty cadets at STIP Jakarta together with five lecturers, three veteran seafarers, and two veteran port masters. The findings suggest that faith is generally described as a stable orientation that many participants associate with deepening through difficulty, although a documented minority describe faith as habitual, doubted, or, in one veteran's case, significantly disrupted by an unresolved professional moral injury. Happiness is described by many as an inner orientation distinct from momentary affect, with veterans' retrospective accounts suggesting, as a hypothesis rather than a confirmed finding, a pattern resembling a U-shaped trajectory across the career. Moral resilience is generally, though not invariably, described as growing through being tested. By explicitly naming its phenomenological tradition and procedure, reporting doubt and struggle alongside stability and growth, and stating its evidentiary limitations directly throughout rather than only in a closing section, this revised study offers a more methodologically transparent and evidentially cautious contribution to the religion-and-wellbeing literature than the earlier draft provided.

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