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# FRIENDSHIPS AND LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG ADULTS WITH HERMIT-LIKE PERSONALITY TRAITS: A PSYCHOSOCIAL PERSPECTIVE\*\*

**Abstract.** *The article explores the relationship between friendships and life satisfaction among adults who have pronounced hermit-like personality traits. Data from 190 participants were analysed, among whom 24 met the criteria for a hermit-like profile. The results show the number of friends (both offline and online) was not a significant predictor of life satisfaction. Instead, participants' well-being was associated with reflective self-regulation and selective social connectedness. Demographic variables, including age, education, occupation, and marital status, proved not to be significant predictors. The findings reveal that life satisfaction in individuals with hermit-like characteristics stems from a balance between introspective solitude and authentic relationships more than the breadth of their social networks.*

**Keywords:** *hermit-like personality traits, introspective solitude, selective social connectedness, offline and online friendships, life satisfaction, psychosocial well-being.*

## INTRODUCTION

### The Triple Theoretical Framework and Its Psychosocial Significance

The presented research focuses on examining how friendships relate to overall life satisfaction among individuals characterised as possessing hermit-like personality features, with close attention to the way psychological dispositions (introspective solitude and selective sociality) inform their sense of connectedness and personal well-being. As a voluntary, reciprocal, and emotionally

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significant relationship, friendship has been shown to be a key predictor of life satisfaction and subjective well-being (Demir et al. 2013; Helliwell and Huang 2013). However, understanding remains limited of how these patterns emerge among individuals who are inclined to introspection and voluntary solitude, particularly those exhibiting more pronounced hermit-like traits, which serves as the theoretical and empirical foundation for this study (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Ryan and Deci 2000; Burger 1995; Coplan and Bowker 2014, 3–13; Demir 2015, 117–21). Previous findings confirm that individual differences in motivational needs and emotional regulation determine the way friendships are formed and maintained, along with the level of satisfaction they provide (Ryan and Deci 2000; Gross and John 2003; Demir 2015, 122–26). Yet, less is known about how these patterns manifest in individuals inclined to introspection and voluntary solitude, as in, those who possess more pronounced hermit-like traits, which represents the theoretical and empirical starting point of this study. Such individuals structure their social environments selectively, not due to social withdrawal, but to preserve their emotional balance and inner clarity (Burger 1995; Long and Averill 2003; Coplan and Bowker 2014).

Accordingly, in the following section focus is given to three interrelated concepts: friendship in both offline and online contexts as a predictor of life satisfaction, life satisfaction as an outcome, and hermit-like traits as an intrapersonal regulator of these relationships (Eid and Larsen 2008, 57–59; Demir 2015, 134–35; Demir and Özdemir 2010). The described integration is viewed through a psychosocial lens which relates interpersonal dynamics to intrapersonal factors, including the need for autonomy and solitude, thereby clarifying why individuals have varying experiences when it comes to life satisfaction.

### **Friendships in Offline and Online Contexts as Social and Emotional Resources**

Friendship is a voluntary and, above all, reciprocal relationship that provides emotional support, a sense of belonging, and a consistent sense of identity throughout the lifespan (Eid and Larsen 2008, 57–60; Demir 2015, 1–9; Hartup and Stevens 1997). The quality of such relationships contributes more strongly to subjective well-being than the frequency of contact or size of one's social network (Diener and Seligman 2002; Demir and Özdemir 2010; Helliwell and Huang 2013; Van der Horst and Coffé 2012; Demir 2015, 120–24). This finding is reinforced by research showing that emotional intimacy, rather than the structural aspects of social networks, most effectively predicts psychological resilience and life satisfaction (Chopik 2017; Demir and Davidson 2013; Pezirkianidis et al. 2023).

Friendship quality is widely acknowledged to be essential throughout life. In adolescence, such relationships support the development of individuals' identity and emotional well-being (Berndt 2002; La Greca and Harrison 2005; Hodges et al. 1999; Van Harmelen et al. 2017; Miething et al. 2016). In adulthood, the

quality of interactions outweighs their quantity with regard to predicting life satisfaction (Demir and Özdemir 2010; Helliwell and Huang 2013; Kaufman et al. 2022; Powdthavee 2008), whereas in late adulthood friendships serve as a protective factor against loneliness and the decline of emotional well-being (Carstensen 2006; Rowe and Kahn 1997; Chappell and Badger 1989; Van der Horst and Coffé 2012; Wood and Robertson 1978; Adams 1986; Adams 1988; Ishii-Kuntz 1990; Şener et al. 2008).

Recent studies indicate that while the digital context is changing the way friendships are expressed, it has not altered their fundamental functions. Online interactions can help to maintain one's connections and expand social capital, but cannot substitute for the emotional depth and intimacy of close relationships (Bond et al. 2012; Ellison et al. 2007; Amichai-Hamburger et al. 2013; Ishii 2017; Lönnqvist and Deters 2016; Demir 2015, 118–19). It can therefore be inferred that virtual friendships serve to complement, rather than replace, offline relationships, while the experience of meaning and belonging remains strongly linked to authentic, face-to-face human interaction (Helliwell and Huang 2013; Demir 2015, 120–24; Helliwell and Putnam 2004; Đumić and Veljković 2024). This is further supported by evidence showing that digital connectedness is most beneficial when it reinforces real-life relationships, whereas predominantly online networking without emotional closeness might actually reduce life satisfaction (Verduyn et al. 2020; Ellison et al. 2014). In addition, Ryff and Singer (2002, 541–54) conceptualised relationship quality as a foundation for psychological and physiological well-being, while a lack of social support is a risk factor for emotional and bodily dysfunctions. This suggests that genuine, emotionally intimate friendships continue to be a key source of stability, psychological resilience, and overall life satisfaction amid contemporary social transformations.

### **Life Satisfaction and Subjective Well-being as Core Relational Outcomes**

Life satisfaction can be described as a cognitive evaluation of one's own life which, together with affective balance, constitutes subjective well-being – a broader construct that encompasses life satisfaction, the frequency of positive emotions, and low levels of negative affect (Diener and Seligman 2002; Diener 2013; Diener et al. 2002, 63–73; Proctor 2014, 6437–41). Subjective well-being includes not simply hedonic aspects, referring to pleasure and enjoyment, but also eudaimonic dimensions, which involve a sense of meaning, personal growth, and self-realisation (Deci and Ryan 2001). Self-Determination Theory states that there are three basic psychological needs – autonomy, competence and relatedness – which form the foundation of psychological health and life satisfaction (Deci and Ryan 2002). It is thus clear that subjective well-being is not an isolated intrapsychic phenomenon, but is largely shaped by the relationships one has with others. High-quality interpersonal relationships add to self-esteem, psychological resilience, and vital optimism (Helliwell and Putnam 2004; Demir

et al. 2013), whereas their absence may lead to feelings of social deprivation (Baumeister and Leary 1995). The classical framework of loneliness (Weiss 1973, 17–39) differentiates emotional from social forms of loneliness, stressing that an individual can experience solitude without necessarily feeling lonely – an observation of considerable salience while interpreting hermit-like dispositions. Empirical evidence consistently demonstrates that the quality of social relationships, not their quantity, is the most powerful predictor of subjective well-being and overall life satisfaction (Hawkey and Cacioppo 2010). Individuals who maintain deep, emotionally fulfilling and stable relationships, regardless of their number, tend to exhibit higher levels of happiness and psychological adjustment (Diener and Seligman 2002; Pezirkianidis et al. 2023; Langheit and Poulin 2024). Genuine and dependable relationships have thus been shown to help safeguard psychological equilibrium, a particularly significant factor for individuals who prefer selective, albeit deeply meaningful social ties. Conversely, longitudinal research reveals that dimensions of social trust and perceived support play a crucial role in sustaining life satisfaction over time. When individuals feel a strong sense of trust, safety, and emotional support in their relationships, their subjective well-being tends to remain consistent, even amid life changes and stressful circumstances (Zhang 2020; Mao et al. 2024; Tay and Diener 2011). Within this framework, friendships may be viewed as a vital source of social stability and psychological resilience. They add to life satisfaction by offering emotional and practical support, reaffirming a sense of safety during stressful times, nurturing belonging, and sustaining inner balance (Phillipson 1997; Hartup and Stevens 1999; Şener et al. 2008; Powdthavee 2008). Qualitative aspects of friendship (its closeness, trust stability) have been proven to be crucial determinants of life satisfaction, independent of the breadth of an individual's social network (Helliwell and Huang 2013; Van der Horst and Coffé 2012; Ishii-Kuntz 1990; Kang 2023). Such evidence underscores that subjective well-being arises from the quality of emotional bonds rather than their quantity, which becomes especially meaningful for understanding individuals who structure their social interactions selectively, emphasising authenticity and emotional depth.

### **Hermit-like Traits: Introspective Solitude, Selective Sociality, and Emotional Regulation**

Although high-quality social relationships are among the strongest predictors of subjective well-being, for some individuals a sense of fulfilment, meaning, and inner balance is cultivated while they are alone. In this context, they find ways to restore their psychological energy, integrate experiences, and achieve affective clarity (Burger 1995; Long and Averill 2003; Nguyen et al. 2018; Nguyen et al. 2022). Their approach to social relationships is marked by selectivity and the deliberate management of emotional energy and engagement, prioritising authentic and stable connections over superficial ones that might disturb their inner peace (Coplan and Bowker 2014, 3–22; Carstensen 2006; Demir et al. 2013;

Helliwell and Huang 2013; Bandura 1997; Snyder et al. 2002, 257–76), rather than reflecting deficient social skills (Burger 1995), and this pattern is linked to higher life satisfaction (Carstensen 2006; Demir et al. 2013; Helliwell and Huang 2013).

In this sense, hermit-like traits do not represent social withdrawal but an alternative way of accomplishing psychological well-being that combines introspective solitude and a sense of peace with emotional self-regulation and autonomy (Nguyen et al. 2018), along with a preference for environments that facilitate autonomy and a focus on one's inner processes. From this perspective, self-chosen solitude corresponds with core psychological needs for autonomy, perceived competence, and connectedness, which can be fulfilled not through the physical presence of others but when there is a sense of internal coherence and emotional stability, elements that according to Self-Determination Theory promote psychological well-being and maintain inner equilibrium (Deci and Ryan 2002, 261–78). In the framework of affective self-regulation, the role of solitude is particularly emphasised when it is chosen and time-limited, serving as a space for mental restoration, cognitive consolidation, and emotional 'clearing' following intense social interactions. Empirical evidence indicates that spending time alone can reduce affective overload and facilitate emotion regulation, with the positive effect most evident among individuals who experience solitude as an active self-regulation strategy (Nguyen et al. 2018). Similarly, research on voluntary solitude highlights benefits for creativity, insight, authenticity, and the experience of personal identity, especially when the individual maintains a clear sense of purpose and control over their time (Long and Averill 2003; Diener and Seligman 2002; Nguyen et al. 2018; Proctor 2014).

The digital environment offers individuals who possess hermit-like traits additional mechanisms for regulating the frequency and intensity of their social interactions. Selective use of online channels enables social connections to be maintained while preserving psychological distance and autonomy. However, findings consistently demonstrate that lasting well-being still primarily relies on the quality of relationships formed through genuine, face-to-face contact (Đumić and Veljković 2024), whereas digital communication is mostly used instrumentally, to sustain and organise relationships that already carry emotional significance (Lönqvist and Deters 2016; Ellison et al. 2007; Bond et al. 2012; Amichai-Hamburger and Vinitzky 2010).

When viewed via the lens of the Big Five personality model, a hermit-like profile reveals a pattern chiefly marked by lower levels of extraversion, indicating a preference for calm environments and a smaller need for frequent social stimulation (McCrae and Costa 1999). In addition, individuals with this profile often exhibit greater openness to experience, marked by introspection, intellectual curiosity and an inclination for abstract thinking, qualities that foster an intrinsic motivation for solitude and self-reflection (Nguyen et al. 2018). Among some individuals, moderate to high conscientiousness contributes to better time management and the preservation of personal boundaries (Bandura 1997, 10–21).

While emotional stability varies, it tends to be higher when one chooses to be alone and basic psychological needs are fulfilled (Deci and Ryan 2002, 3–33).

Nevertheless, it is essential to distinguish hermit-like characteristics from social anxiety or involuntary isolation since the preference for solitude arises from an intrinsic motivation for self-regulation and genuine connection rather than from social insecurity or avoidance of interpersonal contact (Burger 1995; Coplan and Bowker 2014, 3–22; Carstensen 2006).

In this study, hermit-like traits are employed as a construct to identify participants with a pronounced preference for solitude and selective sociality, thereby enabling an examination of the relationship between forms of friendship and life satisfaction within this specific group.

### **Integration of Constructs – a Psychosocial Perspective**

Building on the outlined theoretical frameworks, it becomes clear that the interplay between personality, social context, and subjective well-being may be seen as a dynamic system where intrapersonal and interpersonal processes are closely interconnected. From this standpoint, the psychosocial perspective offers a framework for investigating how individual dispositions such as hermit-like characteristics influence both the experience and organisation of friendships, as well as their connection to overall life satisfaction. Within this framework, friendship is viewed not merely as an external social resource but in addition as an intrinsic regulator of emotional stability and identity coherence (Demir 2015, 1–9; Helliwell and Huang 2013; Coplan and Bowker 2014, 3–22). In other words, these processes are integrated within the given perspective, in turn revealing that the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (see Deci and Ryan 2002) are inseparably linked to the way individuals construct and experience their social relationships. For those with more pronounced hermit-like traits, psychological well-being is not derived from a broad social network but from selective yet emotionally meaningful connections that allow for the simultaneous preservation of autonomy and a sense of belonging (Carstensen 2006; Demir et al. 2013; Helliwell and Putnam 2004). Ultimately, the integration of these constructs suggests that life satisfaction results from a balanced relationship between internal psychological structure and social connectedness. In this sense, solitude and friendship are not seen as opposites but as mutually reinforcing mechanisms that collectively strengthen psychological resilience and promote subjective well-being (Long and Averill 2003; Kaufman et al. 2022; Alsarrani et al. 2022). Such an interpretation reinforces the idea that, within the contemporary social context, achieving a balanced integration of introspective solitude and meaningful friendships is a core aspect of psychosocial adaptation and a foundation for lasting life satisfaction.

## METHOD

### Research Design

The research was conducted between 20 November 2024 and 30 April 2025, involving a total of 190 participants. The study utilised a quantitative research design and collected data through a Google Docs questionnaire focused on the relationship between friendships and life satisfaction in individuals who have pronounced hermit-like characteristics. For this purpose, the Pearson-Marr Archetype Indicator (PMAI; Pearson and Marr 2007a) was adopted to identify dominant archetypal personality patterns. The PMAI consists of 12 archetypal scales comprising 72 statements, with each rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”), measuring the extent to which participants relate to descriptions representing various archetypal personality patterns (McPeck 2008; Pearson and Marr 2007a). According to validation studies, the PMAI demonstrates satisfactory reliability, with average test-retest coefficients of around 0.72 and internal consistency values (Cronbach’s  $\alpha$ ) averaging approximately 0.68 (McPeck 2008; Blandin et al. 2021). In this study, reliability analysis indicated the combined scale of archetypes (Sage, Seeker, Orphan, Creator) linked to the hermit-like pattern demonstrated high internal consistency ( $\alpha = 0.81$ ), suggesting that the items reliably assess a common latent dimension of introspective solitude and selective social engagement.

### Operationalisation of Hermit-Like Trait Criteria

Since the hermit-like profile is not predefined in the PMAI instrument, it was operationalised in this study using a secondary approach based on the theoretical overlap between archetypal patterns from the Pearson-Marr Indicator (PMAI) and personality traits from the Big Five model (McCrae and Costa 1999). The PMAI assesses 12 archetypes, yet only certain archetypes are conceptually linked to characteristics like introversion, introspectiveness and self-regulation, corresponding to a configuration of lower extraversion, greater openness to experience, and low to moderate conscientiousness within the Five-Factor framework. Based on theoretical analysis of archetype profiles (Pearson and Marr 2007a; Blandin et al. 2021), hermit-like dispositions were defined as elevated scores for the Sage, Seeker, Orphan and Creator archetypes along with lower scores for the Lover, Jester and Ruler archetypes. The described pattern reflects high introspectiveness, reflectiveness and autonomy, indicating a preference for meaningful, yet selective social interactions. Conceptually, it aligns with lower extraversion, greater openness to experience, and moderate conscientiousness in the Big Five framework (McCrae and Costa 1999).

The selection criteria for the hermit-like profile were established such that participants were included in the group if they scored in the top 40% of the range ( $\geq 60$ th percentile) for the combined sum of the Sage, Seeker, Orphan and Creator archetypes, while simultaneously scoring below the median ( $\leq 50$ th percentile)

for the socially oriented archetypes Lover, Jester and Ruler. This approach is grounded in psychometric standards commonly applied in personality research to differentiate pronounced, yet non-extreme traits within a normal distribution. In the tradition of personality assessment, including instruments such as the Big Five, MBTI, and PMAI, a threshold above the 60th percentile generally indicates a high, albeit not clinically extreme, level of trait expression (Costa and McCrae 1992; Myers and Myers 1980; Pearson and Marr 2007b). Since hermit-like dispositions reflect stable personality traits rather than transient states, this criterion aligns with established logic in personality measurement, where high introspectiveness and selective sociability are conceptually associated with greater openness to experience and lower extraversion (McCrae and Costa 1999, 138–153; Hills and Argyle 2001; Lönnqvist and Deters 2016). In line with standard methodological approaches in archetypal research, the top third of the distribution (60th–70th percentile and above) is typically interpreted as the dominant zone of archetype expression (Pearson and Marr 2007b), achieving a balance between theoretical clarity and empirical representativeness of the sample. The  $\geq 60$ th percentile cutoff therefore permits the inclusion of participants who exhibit elevated introspectiveness and emotional autonomy while still staying within the range of normal psychological functioning.

#### Variables and Operationalisations

*Demographic variables.* Data on participants' age, gender, educational level, occupation, and marital status were collected. Social connection variables were also recorded, including the number of close offline friends and the range of online connections across Facebook and Instagram, along with basic patterns of social media use.

*Overall life satisfaction.* Life satisfaction was measured with a single global item on a 1-to-5 scale, where 1 indicated “very low well-being” and 5 “extremely high well-being”. Each scale point was accompanied by a brief description to assure clarity and consistency in responses.

#### Participants and Research Procedure

Participants were recruited through self-selection using a practical or convenience sampling method. Inclusion criteria included being of legal age and an active user of social media. Questionnaires were distributed via online platforms. Participants completed the questionnaires anonymously, and the study adhered to ethical guidelines. After the data collection, the responses were processed and analysed using statistical methods appropriate to the nature of the data and the predefined criteria.

#### Sample and Selection Criteria

According to the selection criteria for a hermit-like profile, 24 participants met the requirements, representing 12.6% of the total sample ( $N=190$ ). The

mentioned proportion aligns with theoretical expectations regarding the distribution of introverted and introspective traits in the general population, and supports the validity of the applied criterion-based approach as well as the stability of the hermit-like disposition construct in this study (McCrae and Costa 1999; Pearson and Marr 2007b; Blandin et al. 2021). Given the relatively small subsample of participants meeting the hermit-like profile criteria ( $N=24$ ), the research should be considered exploratory and provides a theoretical basis for future studies with larger samples.

The demographic profile of the subsample with hermit-like traits ( $N=24$ ) indicates the majority of participants were aged 25–44 years ( $n=18$ ; 75.0%). In terms of gender, the sample was predominantly female, comprising 70.8% of participants ( $n=17$ ). Educational attainment was evenly distributed between secondary education ( $n=9$ ; 37.5%) and a university degree ( $n=9$ ; 37.5%), with smaller proportions holding undergraduate or postgraduate/doctoral qualifications. Concerning marital status, half of the participants were married ( $n=12$ ; 50.0%).

### **Research Problem**

In contemporary society, a portion of social connections is shifting to digital environments, adding to the importance of online interactions relative to direct, face-to-face contacts. This raises the question of the extent to which the number of offline and online friends contributes to perceived life satisfaction among individuals with hermit-like traits, characterised by a tendency for introspective solitude, selective sociability, and self-regulation. In this context, the study aimed to examine the relative contribution made by offline and online friendships to life satisfaction, along with the potential interactive effects between these two forms of social connections in a population exhibiting pronounced hermit-like profiles.

*Research focus:* The research investigates how the quantity of offline and online friends affects life satisfaction in individuals who possess hermit-like traits, while also evaluating differences in the prevalence of these two friendship types and examining whether their interaction contributes to predicting life satisfaction.

*Dependent variable:* Life satisfaction, measured with a single global item on a 1–5 scale, where 1 indicates “very low well-being” and 5 indicates “extremely high well-being”.

*Main research question:* What role do friendships play in the life satisfaction of individuals with hermit-like traits?

### **Hypotheses:**

**Hypothesis 1:** Individuals with hermit-like personality traits who have a greater number of close offline friends report higher life satisfaction.

**Hypothesis 2:** Individuals with hermit-like personality traits who have a large number of online friends do not report significantly higher life satisfaction.

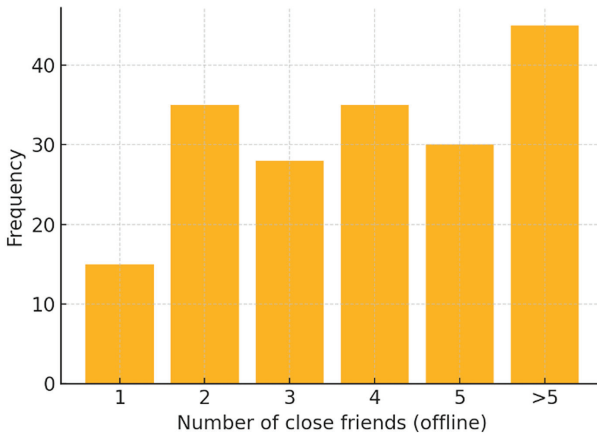
**Hypothesis 3:** There is a significant difference between the number of online and offline friends among individuals with hermit-like personality traits.

**Hypothesis 4:** There is an interaction effect between the number of offline and online friends in predicting life satisfaction among individuals with hermit-like personality traits.

## RESULTS OF THE STUDY

In this chapter, the study's findings on the relationships between online and offline friendships and life satisfaction in individuals exhibiting a hermit-like archetype are outlined. Descriptive patterns of participants' social networks are first presented, providing an overview of their social connections in both contexts. The distributions of self-reported life satisfaction are then examined and analysed according to the observed demographic variables in order to identify any links with the level of social engagement in online and real-life environments. These findings give the foundation for subsequent analysis and an evaluation of the study's hypotheses.

*Figure 1: DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER OF CLOSE OFFLINE FRIENDS AMONG PARTICIPANTS WITH HERMIT-LIKE TRAITS*

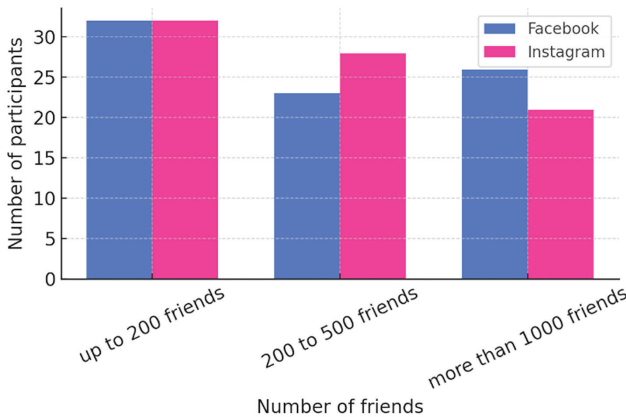


Source: the authors.

The first chart illustrates the distribution of close offline friends. Most participants reported having more than five close friends, indicating a well-maintained network of significant social relationships. A smaller share had between three and five friends, while the fewest reported only one or two close friends. Such a distribution suggests that individuals with pronounced hermit-like traits do not avoid social relationships but maintain a smaller, yet stable, circle of social connections, consistent with the concept of selective sociability. The findings indicate that an introspective tendency for solitude among such individuals does

not imply social isolation, but consciously structured, high-quality relationships that may contribute to subjective well-being. Still, further analysis is needed to determine the actual relationship between the number of close friends and life satisfaction.

Figure 2: DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER OF FRIENDS ON SOCIAL MEDIA



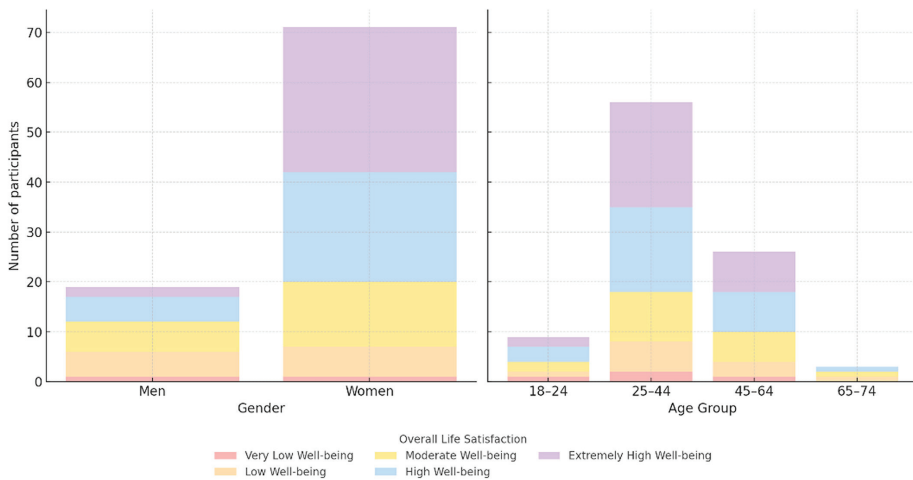
Source: the authors.

The second chart clearly shows the distribution of friends on Facebook and Instagram reflects the patterns expected among participants who possess hermit-like traits. Most participants are in the 200–500 friends category on both platforms, demonstrating that the majority maintain a moderate level of online social contacts. The under-200 friends category shows a similar proportion of users on both Facebook and Instagram, confirming a consistent pattern of network use among individuals who prefer fewer digital connections. Oppositely, the smallest number of participants is found in the category with over 1,000 friends, which aligns with a hermit-like personality profile, characterised by selective sociability and a preference for qualitatively richer rather than numerous relationships. The described pattern indicates that participants generally treat the two platforms similarly in terms of network size, yet deliberately steer clear of excessively large networks, preserving a moderate level of online engagement that meets their preferences for autonomy and self-management.

Figure 3 shows that participants with pronounced hermit-like traits predominantly report positive levels of life satisfaction, with notable differences across gender and age. Among female participants, over two-thirds (71.8%) indicate high or very high life satisfaction, while 19.7% report moderate satisfaction. Low and very low satisfaction levels were recorded in less than 9% of women. This pattern reveals that women exhibiting hermit-like traits sustain elevated subjective well-being, the outcome of a harmonious balance between inward-focused reflection and deliberate, selective social involvement. For male participants, the

distribution is somewhat more even. Approximately 42% report high life satisfaction, 32% moderate satisfaction, and 26% very high well-being. No participant, regardless of gender, reported very low life satisfaction, suggesting consistent emotional and psychological stability among both men and women.

Figure 3: OVERALL LIFE SATISFACTION BY GENDER AND AGE GROUP

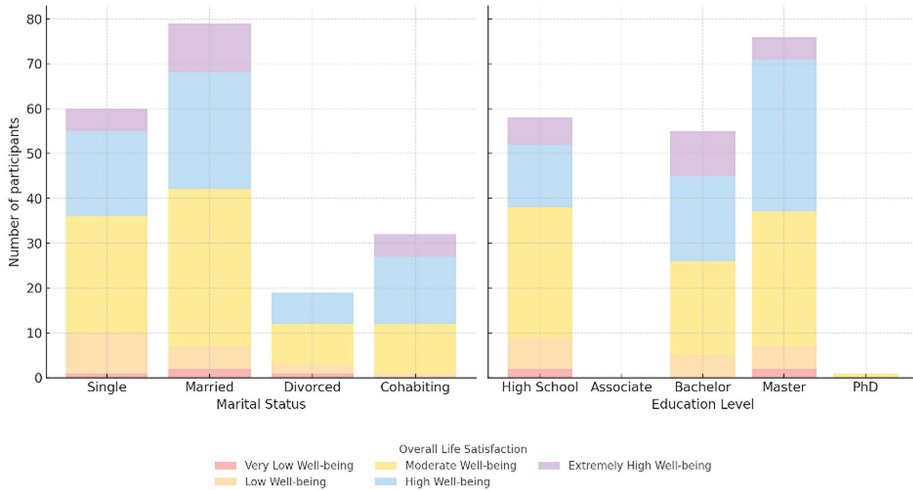


Source: the authors.

As concerns age, the highest proportion of high and very high well-being was observed in the 25–44 age group (68.9%), which also had the widest distribution of moderate satisfaction (23.4%). Participants aged 45–64 exhibited a slight decline in life satisfaction, with 53.8% reporting high or very high well-being, while the remaining participants reported moderate levels. In the youngest group (18–24 years), moderate to high well-being prevailed (71.4%), reflecting an active phase of forming and adapting identity. The oldest group (65–74 years) showed a marked decrease in life satisfaction, with more than 80% of participants indicating low well-being, and almost none of them selecting moderate and high levels.

Overall, the results indicate that individuals with hermit-like traits maintain stable and positive levels of life satisfaction irrespective of gender, while a gradual drop in satisfaction intensity is observed with age. The mentioned pattern confirms that introspective solitude and selective sociability in these individuals function as adaptive mechanisms for psychological balance rather than forms of social withdrawal. These tendencies give further support to the notion that the hermit-like profile is characterised by mature regulation of emotional energy and a qualitatively rich yet socially selective network of relationships, enabling subjective well-being to be maintained across different life stages.

Figure 4: OVERALL LIFE SATISFACTION ACROSS MARITAL STATUS AND EDUCATION LEVEL



Source: the authors.

Figure 4 shows that participants with higher levels of education generally report greater life satisfaction, with the biggest shares of satisfied individuals coming from the groups with a master’s degree (41%) and postgraduate/doctoral education (34%). These participants most frequently indicate high or very high levels of satisfaction, whereas low levels of well-being are rare. The described pattern suggests a link between educational attainment and intrinsic stability arising from self-realisation and a sense of competence, characteristics consistent with a hermit-like profile. Participants with a secondary education (27%) and vocational training (24%) display a more varied distribution of perceived life satisfaction. Although some report lower satisfaction (around 12%), a significant proportion falls into the moderate (35%) and high satisfaction (25%) categories. This indicates that even among individuals with lower education, stable patterns of subjective well-being exist, supporting the notion that intrinsic motivation, emotional maturity, and the quality of close relationships can compensate for structural differences in social status. Even though participants with a doctoral degree (PhD) make up a smaller portion of the sample, they exhibit a balanced distribution of satisfaction without notable dips toward lower levels, which may reflect a high degree of self-regulation and adaptive reflection.

The results also indicate a clear relationship between marital status and subjective life satisfaction. The largest proportion of participants comes from the married group (42%), and they display the biggest share of higher well-being levels (over 60%). This confirms that stable and supportive partnerships can act as a protective factor for psychological stability, particularly for individuals who otherwise prefer introspection and emotional self-sufficiency. Among

unmarried participants (26%), there is a wider range of life satisfaction. Some report lower levels (around 15%), while nearly 45% indicate moderate to high well-being, demonstrating that for individuals without a steady partner, introspective solitude can still serve as a constructive space for self-reflection and personal growth. Divorced participants (15%) more frequently report lower satisfaction levels (around 40%), which may result from emotional and social adjustments following a relationship breakup; however, about 20% still exhibit high well-being, suggesting successful adaptation and restoration of personal balance. Participants in cohabiting relationships (17%) show a balanced profile with predominantly higher satisfaction levels (around 50%), which suggests that independent, flexible partnerships founded on voluntary choice can provide support comparable to that of formal marriage.

The presented results indicate that while education and close partnerships play a role, they are not the determining factors in attaining life satisfaction for individuals who possess hermit-like traits. Their psychological well-being stems from internal regulation, reflectiveness, and selective investment in relationships that support a sense of meaning and authenticity. Advanced education, emotional maturity, and stable relationships function not as external contributors to satisfaction, but as supportive contexts that enable the expression of underlying intrinsic resources, emphasising the hermit-like profile's adaptive and integrative qualities within modern social settings.

### Evaluation of the Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: *Individuals with hermit-like personality traits who have a greater number of close offline friends report higher life satisfaction.*

Hypothesis 2: *Individuals with hermit-like personality traits who have a large number of online friends do not report significantly higher life satisfaction.*

First, tests of normality of the data distribution were conducted to determine the appropriate statistical methods for data analysis. Since the data were not normally distributed, nonparametric tests were used, which are more suitable for data that do not follow a normal distribution.

Table 1: NORMALITY TEST OF DATA DISTRIBUTION

Variable	Shapiro-Wilk test	p-value
Number of offline friends	0.8648	< 0.001
Number of online friends	0.9455	< 0.001
Life satisfaction	0.8826	< 0.001

Source: the authors.

Table 1 shows the data for all variables significantly deviate from a normal distribution ( $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the use of nonparametric statistical methods is justified in subsequent analysis.

Table 2: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE NUMBER OF OFFLINE AND ONLINE FRIENDS AND LIFE SATISFACTION

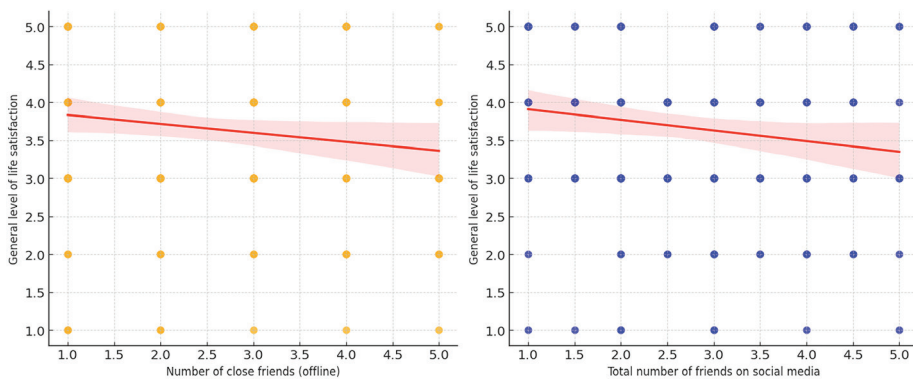
Hypothesis	Coefficient	p-value
H1: Offline friends – life satisfaction	-0.116	0.110
H2: Online friends – life satisfaction	-0.166	0.022

Source: the authors.

Table 2 indicates the relationship between the number of close offline friends and life satisfaction is not statistically significant ( $\rho = -0.116$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). This result does not support Hypothesis 1. In contrast, a higher number of online friends shows a weak but statistically significant negative correlation with life satisfaction ( $\rho = -0.166$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Support is thus provided for Hypothesis 2, suggesting that having more online friends does not correspond to greater life satisfaction and may even be inversely related.

These results are illustrated in Figure 5, which depicts the relationship between the number of offline and online friends and overall life satisfaction among individuals with hermit-like personality traits. The left-hand panel displays a slight negative trend between the number of close offline friends and life satisfaction ( $\rho = -0.12$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ), indicating that having more close real-life relationships does not necessarily correspond to higher subjective well-being. The right panel illustrates a somewhat stronger negative association between the number of online friends and life satisfaction ( $\rho = -0.17$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), suggesting that a larger number of digital contacts may be linked to lower perceived life satisfaction.

Figure 5: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OFFLINE AND ONLINE FRIENDSHIPS AND LIFE SATISFACTION



Source: the authors.

Hypothesis 3: *There is a significant difference between the number of online and offline friends among individuals with hermit-like personality traits.*

Table 3: WILCOXON TEST RESULTS FOR COMPARING THE NUMBER OF OFFLINE AND ONLINE FRIENDS

Test	Statistic	p-value
Wilcoxon	3540.0	0.00048

Source: the authors.

Table 3 shows a statistically significant difference between the number of offline and online friends ( $p < 0.001$ ). Accordingly, Hypothesis 3 is confirmed, in turn suggesting that individuals who possess hermit-like traits maintain differing quantities of friendships in offline vs. online environments.

Hypothesis 4: *There is an interaction effect between the number of offline and online friends in predicting life satisfaction among individuals with hermit-like personality traits.*

Table 4: REGRESSION MODEL RESULTS FOR PREDICTING LIFE SATISFACTION

	Coefficient	p-value
Life satisfaction (constant)	4.542	< 0.001
Number of close friends (offline)	-0.255	0.152
Number of online friends	-0.287	0.046
Interaction (online x offline)	0.072	0.181

Source: the authors.

Table 4 shows the number of online friends is a statistically significant negative predictor of life satisfaction ( $p = 0.046$ ), confirming the previous finding of a negative relationship between online contacts and subjective well-being. The effect of the number of close offline friends was not significant ( $p = 0.152$ ), while the p-value for the interaction effect ( $p = 0.181$ ) indicates the combined influence of offline and online friendships on life satisfaction is not statistically significant. The positive interaction coefficient (0.072) suggests a possible, albeit negligible, trend toward a synergistic effect. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 cannot be confirmed.

Since earlier analyses failed to demonstrate a significant impact of offline and online friend counts on life satisfaction in individuals with hermit-like traits, the next step involved performing hierarchical regression analysis. The aim was to examine whether certain demographic variables (gender, age, education level, occupation, marital status) significantly predict life satisfaction and whether they provide additional explanatory power beyond the social variables already considered.

*Table 5: HIERARCHICAL REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF LIFE SATISFACTION WITH DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES*

	Coef.	Std.Err.	t	p>t	95% CI lower	95% CI upper
<b>Life satisfaction (constant)</b>	1.318	1.251	1.054	0.311	-1.384	4.02
<b>Offline_friends</b>	0.101	0.085	1.192	0.254	-0.082	0.283
<b>Online_friends</b>	0.171	0.123	1.398	0.185	-0.094	0.436
<b>Gender</b>	-0.00	0.00	-1.922	0.077	-0.00	0.00
<b>Age_25-44</b>	0.00	0.00	0.769	0.455	-0.00	0.00
<b>Age_45-64</b>	-0.02	0.16	-1.36	0.375	-0.00	0.00
<b>Age 65+</b>	-0.00			0.811	-0.00	0.00
<b>PhD</b>	1.373	0.17	0.86	0.22	-0.929	3.765
<b>Undergraduate studies</b>	1.50	0.709	-0.43	0.054	-0.031	3.032
<b>Secondary school</b>	1.135	0.70	-1.52	0.129	-0.377	2.648
<b>Higher school</b>	0.661	0.804	0.822	0.426	-1.076	2.399
<b>Information technology</b>	0.00	0.00				
<b>Public administration and defence</b>	0.00	0.00			0.00	0.00
<b>Media and communications</b>	0.00	0.00			0.00	0.00
<b>Education and science</b>	0.00	0.00			0.00	0.00
<b>Agriculture and food industry</b>	0.00	0.00			0.00	0.00
<b>Law and legal services</b>	0.00	0.00			0.00	0.00
<b>Social care</b>	0.00	0.00			0.00	0.00
<b>Trade</b>	0.00	0.00			0.00	0.00
<b>Art, entertainment and culture</b>	0.00	0.00			0.00	0.00
<b>Service activities</b>	0.00	0.00			0.00	0.00
<b>Health care</b>	0.00	0.00			0.00	0.00
<b>Student</b>	0.336	0.659	0.51	0.618	-1.087	1.759
<b>Married</b>	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Divorced</b>	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>In an extramarital union</b>	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00

Source: the authors.

In the extended regression model (Table 5), which included demographic variables alongside the number of offline and online friends, none of the analysed variables emerged as significant predictors of life satisfaction among individuals with hermit-like traits. For certain predictors, the model was unable to estimate effects because of the restricted variability within the subsample (N = 24). Some variables were entirely unrepresented, preventing the model from incorporating them into the calculations. The table thus shows multiple empty cells or 0.00

values, a common consequence of limited data variability in small samples. Put differently, this does not mean these results are actually zero; instead, it reflects that their contribution could not be statistically estimated.

The statistical metrics from the hierarchical regression model indicate that the proportion of variance in life satisfaction accounted for by the model is low. The coefficient of determination is  $R^2 = 0.118$ , revealing the model accounts for approximately 11.8% of the variance in life satisfaction among individuals with hermit-like traits. The adjusted coefficient of determination (Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.027$ ) shows that adding demographic variables to the existing social predictors did not increase the model's explanatory power, which means the additional variables do not contribute to a significant improvement in predictive strength. The results of the F-test ( $F = 1.31$ ,  $p = 0.276$ ) confirm the overall model is not significant, and therefore the included predictors do not explain life satisfaction better than a model without them.

In the next step, the coefficients of determination ( $R^2$ ) of the basic and extended models were compared to assess whether, and to what extent, the prediction of life satisfaction improved.

*Table 6: COMPARISON OF THE COEFFICIENT OF DETERMINATION ( $R^2$ ) BETWEEN THE BASE AND EXTENDED MODEL*

Model	R-squared	Change in R-squared
Base model	0.013	
Extended model	0.118	0.105

Source: the authors.

In the second step of the hierarchical regression, the change in the model's explanatory power was examined after demographic variables were added to the existing social predictors (see Table 6). The basic model, which included only the number of offline and online friends, accounted for a very small portion of the variance in life satisfaction ( $R^2 = 0.013$ ), meaning that the two main variables and their interaction together explained only 1.3% of the variance in life satisfaction. After including the demographic variables, the total explained variance of the model increased to  $R^2 = 0.118$ , representing a change of  $\Delta R^2 = 0.105$ . Nonetheless, given the small sample size ( $N = 24$ ) and limited data variability, this increase in explained variance cannot be considered statistically reliable and should be viewed as indicative rather than a confirmed contribution of demographic variables.

## DISCUSSION

Individuals who possess more pronounced hermit-like traits are often perceived as introverted and oriented to introspective processes; however, their need for social relationships is not diminished, but selectively regulated. As emphasised by Burger (1995) and Long and Averill (2003), such individuals do

not avoid contact due to social anxiety but consciously choose environments and relationships that support their inner stability, autonomy, and sense of authenticity. While their friendships are typically fewer in number, they are emotionally deeper and longer-lasting, reflecting a psychosocial balance between the need for solitude and the need for belonging (Burger 1995; Long and Averill 2003; Coplan and Bowker 2014, 3–22; Carstensen 2006). Consistent with self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan 2002, 261–278) and the findings of Helliwell and Putnam (2004), life satisfaction primarily arises from relationships that simultaneously support autonomy and social connectedness, thereby nurturing intrinsic foundations of well-being. In this context, it is the quality, not the quantity, of friendships that emerges as the principal determinant of subjective well-being among individuals with hermit-like traits (Helliwell and Huang 2013; Demir 2015, 120–124; Kaufman et al. 2022). This supports the psychosocial premise of the present study, suggesting that life satisfaction in these individuals develops at the intersection of intrapersonal mechanisms of self-regulation and interpersonal experiences of connectedness forming a distinct dynamic of their emotional and social functioning.

The research results indicate that most participants with hermit-like traits maintain a stable but relatively small circle of close offline friendships, while also keeping a modest number of online connections, typically up to 200 friends, with online friend count having no positive effect on life satisfaction. The described pattern reflects the selective sociability typical of such individuals and supports the notion that those with pronounced introspective tendencies do not seek fulfillment through the quantity of relationships but through emotionally deeper bonds that nurture their sense of meaning and authenticity (Burger 1995; Long and Averill 2003; Coplan and Bowker 2014, 5–8). The weak or negative correlation between the number of online friends and life satisfaction can be interpreted as an indicator of psychological self-regulation. Such individuals often consciously limit digital interactions to preserve their mental clarity and emotional balance (Nguyen et al. 2018; Verduyn et al. 2020). Confirmation is thus provided of the notion that while digital connections help maintain network ties, they cannot replace the emotional depth found in face-to-face relationships (Ellison et al. 2014; Helliwell and Huang 2013; Đumić and Veljković 2024). These findings are consistent with previous studies suggesting that for individuals with high introspectiveness and a preference for solitude online friendships play a complementary rather than a central role in perceived well-being (Amichai-Hamburger and Vinitzky 2010; Lönnqvist and Deters 2016). In a broader psychosocial sense, their emotional well-being stems from a balance between inner self-regulation and authentic connection, rather than external social visibility. Namely, life satisfaction among individuals with hermit-like traits depends more on who they are connected with and how they experience those relationships than on the sheer size of their social network. This interpretation supports the central premise of this study, suggesting that life satisfaction in these individuals emerges from the

interplay between intrapersonal reflectiveness and the interpersonal quality of relationships, which together form the core of their psychosocial adaptation.

When the results of this study are compared with earlier research, partial correspondence may be observed with the findings of Tariq (2011), which showed that close friendships positively influence self-esteem and reduce anxiety, and that a greater number of close relationships can enhance overall life satisfaction. Still, this association was not confirmed in the present study, suggesting that among individuals who possess hermit-like traits, life satisfaction does not arise from the number of social connections but instead from their quality and intrinsic function. Their sense of well-being likely depends on the authenticity and emotional depth of their relationships, a view supported by Fehr and Harasymchuk (2018, 103–29) who state that relationship quality serves as a stable source of subjective well-being across all life stages. Similarly, Ishii-Kuntz (1990) noted that the frequency of interactions has no significant effect on psychological well-being, whereas relationship quality exerts a lasting positive influence. Within the hermit-like profile, these results reveal that individuals of this type channel their emotional energy into carefully selected relationships that help maintain their inner equilibrium and mental clarity, consistent with the concept of introspective solitude as a mechanism of self-regulation (Nguyen et al. 2018). The mentioned further supports Kaufman et al. (2022), who argue that the quality of friendships is a stronger predictor of life satisfaction than their quantity, especially for individuals who value introspection and emotional autonomy. Jeske (2016, 233–42) further warns that the impact of friendships on well-being depends on their nature, indicating that simply having many friends does not automatically add to life satisfaction if the relationships are not emotionally meaningful or consistent with one's personal values. From the psychosocial perspective of this study, one may conclude that individuals with hermit-like traits achieve well-being through internal integration and a sense of meaning derived from high-quality relationships, rather than through the expansion of their social networks.

The results also show that the number of friends on social media does not have a significant role in predicting life satisfaction among individuals with hermit-like traits, which aligns with the findings of Lönngqvist and Deters (2016) who demonstrated that the total number of online connections alone does not determine subjective well-being once personality traits are taken into account. These results reveal that even though digital environments can broaden social interactions, they cannot substitute for the emotional depth and authenticity found in face-to-face offline relationships (Helliwell and Huang 2013). Based on theoretical insights, it can be inferred that for people with hermit-like characteristics online interactions serve as relatively secure environments for managing social engagement, enabling them to regulate interaction intensity and personal exposure (Đumić and Veljković 2024), which can be linked to their general tendency for autonomy and self-direction in interpersonal relationships (Nguyen

et al. 2018). The digital environment thus acts as an extension of their inherent need to balance social connection and solitude, providing a platform where social interactions can be synchronised with their personal rhythm. However, since digital relationships do not possess the same affective density as in-person encounters their contribution to life satisfaction remains limited (Verduyn et al. 2020). Ishii (2017), in the Japanese context, shows that the number of online and offline friends can hold varying significance depending on culture and social norms, suggesting that the impact of networked relationships is not universal. These findings confirm that digital networking plays a supplementary rather than central role, supporting but not determining their psychosocial well-being.

In addition to the observed patterns in social relationships, it is interesting to note differences associated with demographic characteristics. Descriptively, an age-related pattern in life satisfaction is evident, yet in the hierarchical regression age did not emerge as a significant predictor, distinguishing this result from studies linking older age to lower life satisfaction (Şener et al. 2008). In line with socioemotional selectivity theory (Carstensen 2006), as people age, there is a tendency to limit the number of relationships, prioritising emotionally fulfilling connections. For individuals with hermit-like traits, this tendency appears earlier since their selective approach stems from a stable personal disposition rather than age, promoting psychological clarity and efficient emotional management across various areas of life. Miething et al. (2016) also show that while the quality of friendships enhances well-being, its impact lessens with age as intrapersonal mechanisms become more stable. In this context, the hermit-like profile can be viewed as a developmentally mature personality configuration, in which introspective solitude and selective sociality function as strategies for emotional balance. Similarly, marital status was not a significant predictor of life satisfaction, although descriptively, participants in stable partnerships reported slightly higher levels of well-being, in line with earlier research highlighting the safeguarding effect of partner support (Adams 1986). In the context of hermit-like traits, romantic partnership likely represents a secure framework for emotional connectedness, although not a source of social expansion. Their well-being is grounded in self-determined emotional autonomy and selective social engagement, and accordingly while the quality of a partnership contributes to life satisfaction, it is not a prerequisite for it (Demir et al. 2013; Ryff and Singer 2002, 227–44; Helliwell and Putnam 2004). Similarly, education level and professional occupation were not found to be significant, suggesting that external status factors play less of a role in shaping subjective well-being for these individuals, whereas internal regulation, reflectiveness, and the authenticity of relationships remain key (Lönngqvist and Deters 2016; Jeske 2016; Kaufman et al. 2022). Therefore, even though the hierarchical regression analysis indicated that demographic variables account for a somewhat greater share of the variance in life satisfaction compared to the number of friends, this effect did not reach statistical significance. The mentioned result does not reflect the diminished importance

of friendships but instead the limitation of a quantitative approach that fails to capture the qualitative and intrinsic dimensions of social relationships. As Kaufman et al. (2022) emphasise, it is the quality of friendships, the sense of mutual importance, trust, and emotional resonance, that has a decisive effect on life satisfaction, even when controlling for sociodemographic factors. A similar pattern is noted by Eid and Larsen (2008, 1–9), who explain that emotional processes and affect regulation styles are stronger predictors of subjective well-being than objective variables. For individuals who possess hermit-like traits, this means that their life satisfaction stems from internal regulatory mechanisms such as self-reflection, the meaningful structuring of relationships, and psychological autonomy, which lie beyond the reach of standard demographic indicators. In other words, their well-being is based on a stable interaction between internal psychological structure and the quality of relationships rather than on quantitative measures of social involvement.

Taken together, these findings offer valuable insights into the psychosocial interplay between introspective solitude, selective social engagement, and subjective well-being. Nonetheless, the results should be interpreted with caution due to specific methodological constraints, such as the relatively small subsample of individuals with hermit-like traits, restricted variability, and non-normal data distributions. The results are consequently primarily exploratory and theoretically grounded, offering a framework for future research considering larger and more diverse samples. Future studies could employ longitudinal designs and incorporate qualitative methods, such as narrative interviews or diary studies, to gain a deeper understanding of the subjective experience of meaningful relationships among individuals with hermit-like characteristics. Moreover, cross-cultural comparisons could shed light on how cultural norms, digital practices, and patterns of social support influence the balance between solitude and connectedness (Ishii 2017; Verduyn et al. 2020). Such an approach would provide additional evidence that the well-being of individuals with hermit-like traits arises from a balance between intrapersonal reflection and interpersonal intimacy, reinforcing the psychosocial perspective as the most encompassing framework for their understanding.

## CONCLUSION

The study provides further insight concerning how friendships relate to life satisfaction in individuals exhibiting hermit-like traits, offering a foundation for a clearer understanding of how intentionally chosen solitude and selective social engagement influence subjective well-being. The results indicate the quantity of offline or online friends does not significantly forecast life satisfaction, underscoring that for individuals with a pronounced need for autonomy the depth and quality of relationships are more influential than the sheer number of them. It was also evident that a larger network of digital contacts does not add to a sense of fulfilment, and might even pose a burden that disrupts psychological clarity and

emotional stability. This pattern suggests that the well-being of individuals with hermit-like traits is grounded in the balance between introspective solitude and authentic connectedness, with close relationships serving as a stable yet selectively chosen resource of emotional support. Demographic variables, including age, education, employment, and marital status, did not emerge as significant predictors of life satisfaction, indicating that individuals with hermit-like traits derive their sense of meaning and stability chiefly from intrinsic psychological mechanisms, such as self-regulation and reflective awareness, rather than external social or status factors. These results reaffirm that the hermit-like profile does not signify social withdrawal but is instead a mature strategy of emotional autonomy and balanced social engagement.

Ultimately, this study contributes to understanding of the psychosocial dynamics between solitude and connectedness in the contemporary context. It demonstrates that life satisfaction among individuals who possess hermit-like traits does not stem from the breadth of their social network, but from its authenticity and meaningfulness. Future research is therefore recommended to more closely examine the qualitative dimensions of friendships, how they support psychological self-regulation and internal coherence, and the way this balance shapes subjective well-being in an era of growing digital connectivity, both for individuals with this profile and for other less common profiles in the general population. From a broader theoretical perspective, the findings point to the need to redefine the concept of social connectedness within contemporary well-being frameworks. The study shows that introspective solitude and selective sociality can function as complementary, rather than opposing, mechanisms of psychological balance. Thus, hermit-like traits can be viewed as an adaptive form of psychosocial functioning, expanding our understanding of the diverse pathways to life satisfaction in a society that encourages constant connectivity.

#### **DATA AVAILABILITY**

The data are subject to an ethical-legal obligation of deletion, which renders their long-term preservation inadmissible. Consequently, they cannot be archived in a repository that provides long-term or permanent preservation of research data.

#### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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## **PRIJATELJSTVA IN ZADOVOLJSTVO Z ŽIVLJENJEM PRI ODRASLIH S PUŠČAVNIŠKIMI OSEBNOSTNIMI LASTNOSTMI: PSIHOSOCIALNA PERSPEKTIVA**

**Povzetek.** Ta raziskava raziskuje povezanost prijateljstev in zadovoljstva z življenjem med odraslimi z izrazitimi puščavniškimi osebnostnimi lastnostmi. Analizirani so bili podatki 190 udeležencev, od katerih jih je 24 izpolnjevalo kriterije za puščavniški profil. Rezultati so pokazali, da število prijateljev, tako v dejanskem kot tudi v spletnem okolju, ni pomemben pokazatelj zadovoljstva z življenjem. Dobrobit udeležencev je bila povezana z reflektivno samoregulacijo in selektivno socialno povezanostjo. Demografske spremenljivke, kot so starost, izobrazba, poklic in zakonski stan, se niso izkazale za pomembne pokazatelje. Ugotovitve nakazujejo, da zadovoljstvo z življenjem pri posameznikih s puščavniškimi značilnostmi izhaja iz ravnovesja med introspektivno samoto in pristnimi odnosi, ne pa iz širine socialnega omrežja.

**Ključni pojmi:** puščavniške osebnostne lastnosti, introspektivna samota, selektivna socialna povezanost, spletna in dejanska prijateljstva, zadovoljstvo z življenjem, psihosocialno dobro počutje.