
6. Children's Well-being: A Multidimensional Approach

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Abstract:

In the last decades, the development of well-being studies has converged with the development of Positive Psychology and with the development of studies on Poverty and Quality of life. Without losing the reins of what is basic and fundamental in the analysis of subjective well-being, our guiding principles are based on human rights, grounded in the person's vision as an integral being in its physical, psychological, psychosocial, social, moral and spiritual aspects, that is the principle of indivisibility of the individual with his vital milieu, his culture, his opportunities and his needs. Well-being is built in the day-to-day interaction of the person with the environment.

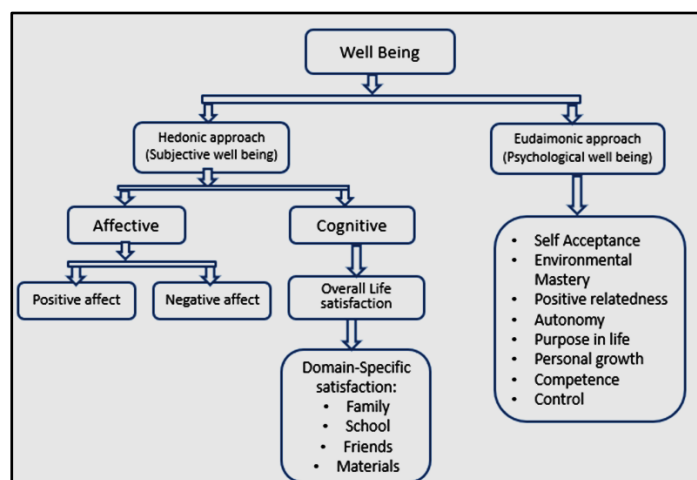
Therefore, following the Multidimensional model of well-being that approximates General Well-being, considering the different dimensions and indicators is relevant. Well-being, from a perspective of complexity, is associated with the contexts in which people live and the values that societies sustain. In this article, the indicators of well-being have been expanded on the four dimensions that constitute the multidimensional approach: subjective, psychological, and psychosocial and socio-community which are interrelated and interdependent. This article is an important step forward for well-being researchers in a region of the world that still need a lot of new scientific knowledge about the well-being of their younger population, where many new actions should be undertaken to improve children's well-being.

Keywords: Well-being, multidimensional, subjective well-being, socio-community well-being.

6.1 Introduction:

Despite decades of scholarly and policy interest in well-being, no commonly agreed definition of the notion exists. The hedonic and eudemonic methods are frequently distinguished. Scholars influenced by the hedonic approach define happiness as subjective well-being and the sense of pleasure and displeasure includes all perceptions about the good and bad aspects of life. Although there are a variety of techniques to assess the pleasure/pain continuum in children's experiences, the majority of research in the new hedonic psychology has relied on subjective well-being assessments and it includes three components namely life satisfaction, high level of happiness, and low level of neuroticism.

According to the eudemonic viewpoint, not all desires, not all desirable outcomes, would lead to happiness if they were realized. It emphasizes purpose and self-realization, and well-being is defined as a children's ability to operate fully. The focus is on psychological well-being rather than social well-being. A multidimensional approach to measure psychological well-being as developed by Ryff and Keyes (1995) includes six aspects of human actualization namely autonomy, personal growth, self-acceptance, life purpose, mastery, and positive relatedness.



Source: Rees et al., 2013; p. 8

6.2 Measuring Well Being:

In the literature, both objective and subjective metrics are being used to measure well-being. Measurements of social reality without getting distorted by personal perceptions and judgments are known as objective measures. Subjective measures, on the other hand, are intended to be influenced by subjective perceptions, evaluations, and predilections.

In research studies of children's well-being, objective metrics such as Gross Domestic Product, household wealth and income, distribution of the income, the percentage of children getting an education, their educational achievement, life expectancy, and malpractices are well-established. Objective metrics provide useful information regarding well-being at the macro-level. According to Pollard and Lee (2003), the rise of the "developmental perspective" in analyzing childhood well-being has influenced child well-being research utilizing objective indicator-based measures. They claim that a developmental approach favors measurements associated with impairments, such as poverty, ignorance, and physical diseases. Usually, such indicators ignore children's potential, qualities, and abilities even though they are required to address a few major issues such as injustice and social exclusion that have a negative impact on children's health and well-being.

Monitoring a country's children's well-being is just as important as observing a nation's economy (Moore, 2020). In spite of knowing the fact that economic variables like household income or per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) provide a rough measure of well-being for a number of reasons (Frones, 2007; Main, 2019), these are frequently used as proxies for wellbeing in general and children wellbeing in particular (Cooper & Stewart, 2013; Pickett & Wilkinson, 2015). "There is no evident association between levels of child well-being and GDP per capita," according to UNICEF (2013). The increases in GDP in wealthy countries do not provide a guarantee of the improvements in children's well-being (Gross-Manos, 2017). From a wealth-based perspective, it is vital to advance toward quantifications that allow for the inclusion of non-economic factors, such as the amount to which children feel loved, cherished, and integrated into the homes and society into which they are born, as defined by UNICEF (2007). Moreover, measuring any single dimension of well-being cannot provide a proxy of the well-being of

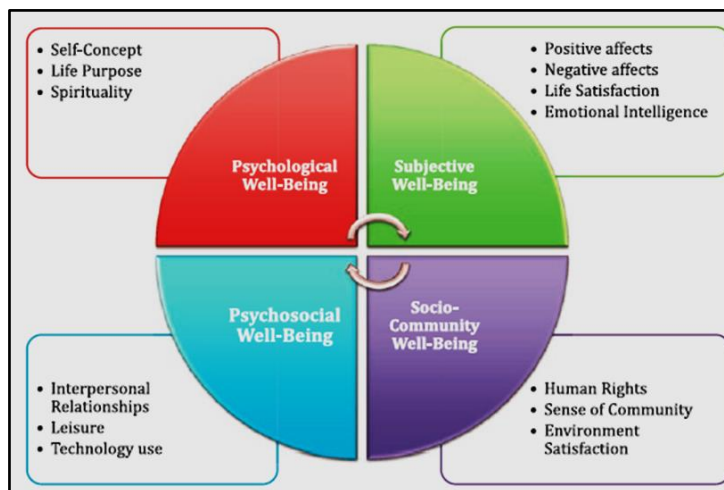
children (Beaumont, 2013; Conti and Heckman, 2012). There is a need to adopt a multidimensional perspective (Turbeville et al., 2019; Matallana et al., 2020).

According to Sandel (2011), a measure of child well-being should take into account a variety of factors such as the children's health, their education, and recreation. This metric aims to find this social progress vector, which does not always correspond to an increase in a country's economy (Bilbao-Ubillos, 2013), but rather to its level of well-being and quality of life (Jiang et al., 2013). Another metrics that are used to measure children's well-being is subjective measures. Subjective assessments are based on individual perception, and the subject determines what is important in evaluating their lives. Despite several methodological concerns such as problems in measurement, divergence, and being prone to biases (Veenhoven, 2002), it provides valuable information in addition to objective assessments of children's quality of life. There is a growing understanding that subjective well-being is an essential complement to objective well-being. There is a need of integrated approach in which subjective as well as objective indices of well-being are included. A shift from an individual to a psychosocial and communal perspective, are also required.

Several researchers have been trying to figure out what facets influence well-being throughout the previous few decades. Kim, et al., (2016) proposed a more holistic conceptual model of well-being that took into account the physical, mental, social, spiritual, and moral domains of child development. Coffey, et al., (2016) proposed to evaluate the psychometric legitimacy of the models of well-being which is associated with Positive Psychology, and it recommended five dimensions for its study namely positive feelings, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement. The study found that four of the five dimensions were well-fitting, but the meaning dimension did not. The I COPPE Scale, which comprises of interpersonal, communal, occupational, physical, psychological, and economic well-being, was created and validated by Prilleltensky et al., (2015). To measure life satisfaction in various areas, Casas and Bello (2012) developed the General Domain Satisfaction Index (GDSI). Family and home, material factors, interpersonal relationships, neighbourhood, health, time management, school or institution, and personal satisfaction are among the 29 components of the index.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) published a report on *Multidimensional Progress: Well-being over Income* (UNDP, 2016) which highlighted the prevention of relapse into poverty and the need to build resilience through social protection during the whole life cycle, child and elderly care systems, access to financial and physical home resources and better quality of work.

In a study conducted by Vera-Villarroel et al. (2015), people with low socioeconomic status reported lower levels of psychological well-being than the middle and upper socioeconomic groups.



Source: Sarriera and Bedin, 2017; p. 11

6.3 Subjective Well-Being:

6.3.1 Cognitive and Affective Dimensions:

Children's cognitive and affective appraisals of their lives, which express their views and feelings about how satisfying their lives are referred as subjective well-being (Diener, 2012). Subjective well-being can be defined as the result of the interaction between internal and exterior components of children's interactions with others and the environment (Casas, 2011).

Subjective well-being, which is commonly associated with happiness and is technically defined as more positive affect, less negative affect, and better life satisfaction, is the focus of the hedonic viewpoint.

6.3.2 Emotional Intelligence:

Understanding and regulating one's own emotions aids in the development of empathy and social skills necessary for interpersonal connections. Emotional education is a fundamental prevention strategy that tries to decrease or avoid vulnerabilities and dysfunctions while increasing personal and social potential. A lack of understanding and control over one's emotions can lead to dangerous behaviour and interpersonal issues. Higher levels of emotional intelligence were linked to higher levels of positive affect, lower levels of negative affect, and greater life satisfaction, according to Schutte and Malouff (2011).

6.4 Psychological Well-Being:

6.4.1 Self-Concept, Spirituality and Life Purpose:

Self-concept evaluates a person's understanding of himself, while self-efficacy evaluates one's belief in his ability to attain a desired result. High self-esteem is also linked to more pleasant emotions and a happier existence. Self-efficacy and self-esteem are both mediated by the self-concept. Spirituality has been linked to adolescent well-being in research (Sarriera, et al., 2014), and life purpose has a positive relationship with life satisfaction (Datu & Mateo, 2014).

6.5 Psychosocial Well-Being:

6.5.1 Interpersonal Relationships:

Relationships in the family serve as the foundation for future relationships, as well as influencing development and well-being (Duek, 2010; Gray et. al., 2013). The sharing of experiences between peers contributes to the creation of subjectivity, and the relationship between peers is emphasised as a crucial role in attributing meaning to ordinary occurrences.

Children's social, emotive, and cognitive development are aided by friendship bonds. Children can be empowered by a strategy that examines interpersonal connections, their quality, and development by assisting them in assessing their interpersonal relationships, encouraging them to form new friendships, and fostering positive interactions with their friends and family.

By focusing on emotional education and discussing various feelings, behaviours, and interactions, one can cultivate more assertive and good interpersonal relationships, hence boosting well-being.

6.5.2 Leisure and Technology Use:

Social interaction and development of physical and intellectual abilities are predictors of subjective well-being (Sarriera, et al., 2014) As for the leisure structure, the ability to organize was the variable that contributed most to the well-being when compared to the availability and use of time (Sarriera, et al., 2014). In their spare time, children use technology as one of their primary tools. According to a study conducted by Sarriera, and Bedin (2015), teenagers with high levels of well-being had access to the internet and cell phone. When interpersonal relationships and social support are mediated, media use may be linked to well-being.

6.6 Socio-Community Well-Being:

6.6.1 Human Rights and Material Resources:

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948) affirms in its first article "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood".

In terms of children's well-being and rights, data from the Child Well-Being and Associated Psychosocial Factors study (Sarriera, et al., 2014) revealed that knowledge and awareness of their rights explained 21% of the total variance in children's well-being. Other research on the topic has found that the protection of rights is linked to the well-being of children (Bradshaw, Hoelscher, & Richardson, 2007).

The United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989 and to which India is a signatory, provides a normative framework for the understanding of well-being by legitimizing parameters that contribute to its improvement (Bradshaw et al., 2007). When the goal is to promote well-being, children's knowledge of their rights and how to guarantee that they are respected becomes critical.

6.6.2 Belonging to Community and Satisfaction with the Environment:

The sense of belonging to the community is related to the sense of belonging and importance that people in a certain territory have when they share similar ideals (Chavis, et.al., 1986). Affective relationships, needs fulfilment, influence and participation, social identity, and people of a community caring for one another and wanting to achieve their goals through unity and dedication are some key indicators. Aside from the major and vital relationship components of personal and communal well-being, as well as the resources that each community makes accessible for the fulfilment of its members, the environment is another important feature. Sustainability, physical and climatic conditions, nature and environmental purity, the presence of trees and animals, recreational places and parks, all of this add another dimension that increases the well-being and pleasure of those who live in a certain setting.

In comparison to prior generations, the current generation's children have significantly less direct and daily contact with nature (Charles & Louv, 2009). Degradation of the socio-environment and inefficient use of natural resources have a variety of effects on health, well-being, and lifestyle (Moore & Marcus, 2008).

The relationship between child well-being and contact with nature has been studied in the field of psychology, with findings indicating that natural environments and contact with nature around the place of living and schooling have therapeutic effects, neutralise stress, and promote positive environmental attitudes (Corraliza, et. al., 2012). It is vital to understand the interactions that people have with the environment in which they are placed in order to gain a better knowledge of well-being.

6.7 Conclusion:

Power is linked to well-being. Power is defined as having access to not only material items, but also psychosocial resources and the social regulatory structure, which provides the opportunity and ability to create well-being. In India, children are affected by socioeconomic determinants, with some having more chances than others, despite the fact that they all want to be happy. In India, reducing social inequalities is critical to achieving well-being.

The multidimensional instruments developed in the last decade with proposals which has already been discussed in the article above, developed from the hedonic and eudemonic approaches to new dimensions based on the advances of Positive Psychology and the need to develop multidimensional instruments with new dimensions or complement the domains of well-being. Instruments that aim to broaden the dimensions and indicators most linked with well-being will be useful tools for planning Psychosocial Interventions for the promotion of well-being, particularly for the most vulnerable groups. An optimistic picture of people's well-being being based on socially organised groups, communities, and societies can be seen, whether through public policies that seek social protection for the most vulnerable, or increased opportunities for resource access, the formation of community support networks, and environmental sustainability concerns. Some major issues regarding multidimensional well-being and poverty have been addressed specifically in India, such as overcoming the limitations of traditional methods of assessing well-being and poverty, which are usually centralised in the two most commonly used traditional methods, namely income-based and unmet basic needs. The government has established a number of poverty-reduction programmes that emphasise tactics for generating increased income. However, by focusing solely on revenue, programmes often overlook the impact they might have on happy family connections, free time availability and use, community happiness, and other important factors. We must not lose sight of the fact that people experience happiness as whole persons, not as fragmented individuals (Rojas, 2015). In addition, important variables for well-being in India are identified, such as a sense of community, differences between rural and urban contexts, social disadvantages, multidimensional poverty, and access to the public health system, socioeconomic status, self-efficacy,

knowledge of rights, self-esteem, and social support, all of which are considered essential in more collectivist societies. We recognise that, in addition to the importance of subjective, psychological, and psychosocial well-being, socio-community well-being takes on new significance in India, given the country's poverty and inequality. We believe that those who work to strengthen their sense of community, strengthen their beliefs and popular knowledge, work to build community health (Sarriera, et al., 2015), and integrate family and community are the best guarantee of the possibilities for change and social justice to improve children's well-being and quality of life.

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