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The Role of Education and Social Policy in Enhancing Individual Well-Being

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Abstract

Individual well-being is a multidimensional construct influenced by psychological, social, and economic factors. Education and social policy are considered key determinants; however, their combined effect on well-being remains underexplored, particularly in developing country contexts. This study aims to examine the relationship between education and individual well-being, assess the impact of social policy awareness, and analyze their combined effect on overall well-being. A quantitative, descriptive, and cross-sectional research design was employed. Primary data were collected from 80 respondents using a structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, independent sample t-test, and multiple regression analysis were used to analyze the data. The findings indicate that education has a positive but relatively uniform influence on well-being across different levels. Social policy awareness shows a stronger descriptive association, with higher awareness linked to better well-being outcomes. However, correlation and regression analyses revealed weak and statistically insignificant relationships between the variables. Additionally, no significant gender differences were observed. The study concludes that while education and social policy contribute to well-being, their independent effects are limited. Individual well-being is influenced by a broader set of multidimensional factors, highlighting the need for integrated and holistic policy approaches.

Keywords: Education, Social Policy, Well-Being, Quantitative Study, Public Policy

1. Introduction

Personal welfare has become the focus of concern in the modern social science studies and takes social, psychological and economic aspects that individually define the quality of life. Emotional stability and life satisfaction are the components of psychological well-being, whereas interpersonal relationships and engagement with the community are the elements of social well-being, and access to resources and financial security are the aspects of economic well-being (Diener et al., 2017). More and more scholars have underlined the importance of well-being as not a lack of illness but a complex construct that is a result of various structural and personal factors (Diener et al., 2018). It is well known that education is one of the key determinants of well-being since it provides people with knowledge, skills, and opportunities to develop personally and professionally. Education improves the level of cognition, better lifestyles, and better socio-economic status (Barry et al., 2017). Moreover, education builds the resilience and adaptability, which allow people to act in the complicated social and economic contexts (Di Fabio, 2017). Social policies are also important in determining the well-being of individuals besides education. Healthcare, employment, and welfare systems policies are important support mechanisms that minimize inequalities and improve living standards. It has been demonstrated that public policy interventions can be used to deal with disparities in well-being, as they offer equal access to resources and opportunities (Assari, 2018). In addition, economic security, which is facilitated by proper policy frameworks, is another fundamental element of the overall well-being (Brüggen et al., 2017). The well-being outcomes are also affected by the wider socio-economic environment, such as political and ideological systems. As an example, neoliberal systems can have an adverse impact on well-being by encouraging competition and social isolation (Becker et al., 2021). On the same note, the increasing power of online spaces has brought new levels of well-being, and ethical issues associated with digital interaction and mental health have become a matter of concern (Burr et al., 2020). These changing contexts introduce the multidimensional nature of well-being as a concept. Well-being is now a priority in sustainable development agendas at the global level, and in particular via the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which focus on the three-fold nature of social, economic, and environmental factors (Henderson and Loreau, 2023). Also, professional and academic well-being and mental health have become a growing focus, indicating the necessity of institutions that support them (Hammoudi Halat et al., 2023). Collectively, the above views have highlighted the interrelated aspects of education and social policy in the promotion of the individual well being and the overall quality of life.

Although there is an increasing literature on well-being, the existing literature is more likely to focus on the impact of either education or social policy as opposed to considering the effect of their interaction. As an example, the study of educational policies has been dominated by the discussion of their consequences on social disparity and wellbeing of particular groups without much attention to the interactions of policies in general (Högberg, 2019). On the same note, education has been observed to have a positive impact on physical, mental, and social health, yet such studies have not been tied with policy frameworks (Kumar & Subhashini, 2017). In addition, a large part of the current study is focused in developed nations and therefore is not applicable to developing areas where the socio-economic issues are divergent. The present COVID-19 pandemic has also demonstrated the lack of knowledge regarding the effect of policy measures on emotional well-being during crisis situations (Lades et al., 2020). Also, job and industry-specific research including those related to healthcare workers are important yet limited (Lawn et al., 2020). The other major gap is the fact that the primary data are scarcely utilized especially empirical research that uses questionnaires to investigate the direct correlation between education, social policy, and well-being. The emerging studies on other determinants of well-being like social media, body image further demonstrate the intricacy of the well-being yet are not integrated with structural determinants including education and policy (Merino et al., 2024). These constraints suggest that there is a need to have an inclusive and an integrated empirical research in this field.

Considering the lacks, the joint effect of education and social policy on the individual well-being is urgently required to be researched. Happiness and quality of life have been traditionally linked to education as their basis, which promotes the personal growth and development of the community (Michalos, 2017). Simultaneously, psychosocial determinants are also highly relevant to well-being in younger groups like university students (Morales-Rodriguez et al., 2020). Well-being also involves life-course perspectives and social role because family obligations and parenthood are some factors that may lead to differences in well-being results (Nomaguchi and Milkie, 2020). In addition, well-being is becoming identified as a multidimensional concept, which moves beyond happiness and life satisfaction and is a broader social and economic phenomenon (Ruggeri et al., 2020). This research is hence warranted in its quest to give a detailed

examination of the combined effect of education and social policy on the well-being of individuals. These interrelated factors will inform the research that aims to add to the evidence based intervention that can inform policy makers, educators and social planners especially in the developing country setting.

1.1 Research Objectives

1. To examine the relationship between education level and individual well-being.
2. To assess the impact of social policies on well-being.
3. To analyze the combined effect of education and social policy on overall well-being.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The study is based on a quantitative, descriptive and cross-sectional research design in order to investigate how education, social policy and the well-being of the individuals are related. The descriptive method assists in the determination of patterns and associations between variables, whereas the cross-sectional method permits data to be collected at a specific point in time. This design can be used to analyze the existing conditions without controlling variables.

2.2 Data Collection Method

The structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data on the study. The questionnaire contained the demographic questions with the items of education level, social policy awareness, and well-being. The answers concerning well-being and policy awareness were measured on a Likert scale, which guaranteed consistency and the simplicity of analysis. The questionnaire was administered online and offline.

2.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

A convenience sampling method was used to select a sample of 80 respondents, on whom the study was done. This technique was selected because of time and accessibility limitations, which meant that one could choose data collected among easily available participants. The sample was composed of people whose educational backgrounds were different to diversify the responses

2.4 Variables of the Study

The study has independent and dependent variables. The independent variables include education level and awareness or access to social policies that are likely to determine results. Individual well-being is the dependent variable that is measured using a Likert scale of psychological, social, and economic life satisfaction.

2.5 Data Analysis Tools

The data obtained were entered into Excel. Demographic characteristics and general trends in the data were summarized with the help of descriptive statistics, such as mean and percentage. The Pearson correlation analysis was used to test the correlation between the key variables. The independent sample t-test was used to determine the differences in well-being between gender groups. Also, the multiple regression analysis was used to determine the impact of independent variables on individual well-being.

3. Results

3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The participants were divided into 80 individuals (46.3 males and 46.3 females) and 6 (7.5) other individuals. The age structure showed that the highest percentages were between 2635 and 3645 (27.5% each), 46 years and above (25%), and 1825 (20%). The sample was diverse with doctorate holders being the largest (32.5%), school-level (26.3%), undergraduate (21.3%), and postgraduate (20) in terms of educational attainment (Table 1)

Table 1. Demographic Profile (n = 80)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	37	46.3
	Female	37	46.3
	Other	6	7.5
Age Group	18–25	16	20.0
	26–35	22	27.5
	36–45	22	27.5
	46+	20	25.0
Education	School	21	26.3
	Undergraduate	17	21.3
	Postgraduate	16	20.0
	Doctorate	26	32.5

The demographic features are graphically presented in Figure 1 to help understand the sample composition better.

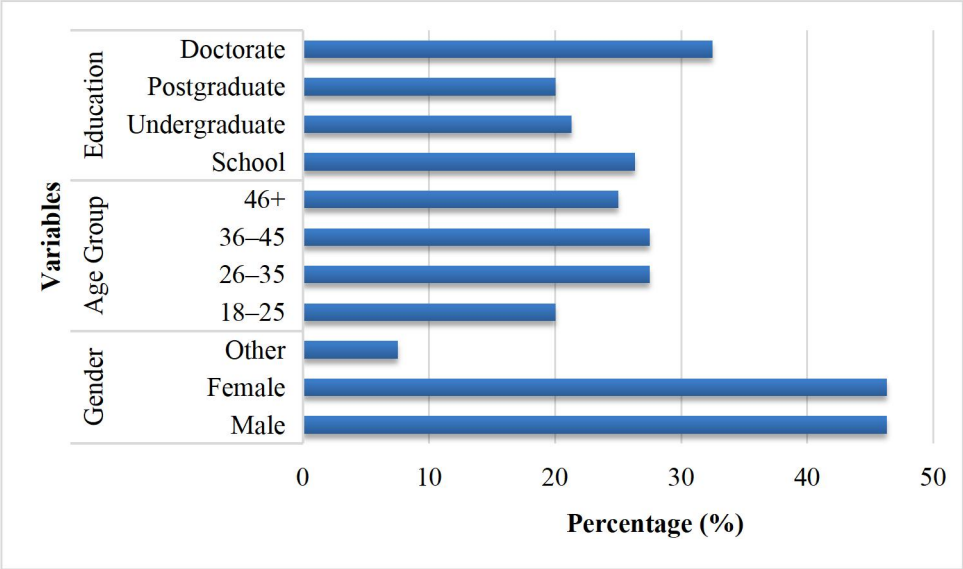

Figure 1. Demographic Distribution of Respondents

The visual distribution gives a brief overview of category-wise differences, which supports the general structure of the sample and helps to interpret the sample comparatively.

3.2 Influence of Education on Individual Well-Being

The average scores on well-being by educational level show no significant difference, and this implies that the impact of education is relatively homogenous. The highest mean score was reported by the undergraduate individuals (3.56), then school-level (3.55), doctorate (3.52), and postgraduate (3.44). The results indicate that education is positively related to well-being, but the variation between educational types is not very high (Table 2).

Table 2. Education Level and Mean Well-Being Scores

Education Level	Mean Score
School	3.55
Undergraduate	3.56
Postgraduate	3.44
Doctorate	3.52

Figure 2 shows the mean score of well-being by category of education in order to note the comparative trends.

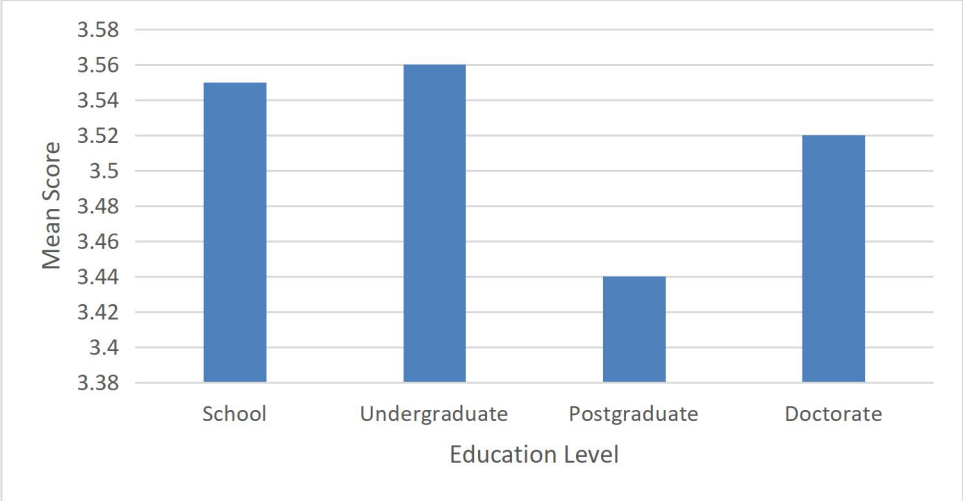

Figure 2. Mean Well-Being Scores Across Education Levels

The identified trend implies that there are only slight variations between categories, which implies that well-being does not change significantly regardless of the level of education.

3.3 Impact of Social Policy Awareness on Well-Being

There was also a distinct trend between the levels of social policy awareness and well-being, with the more aware people showing better results. The average well-being of high awareness was 3.83 as opposed to 3.10 of moderate awareness and 2.40 of low awareness, which means that the awareness and access to social policies are more descriptive variable on well-being than education alone (Table 3).

Table 3. Social Policy Awareness and Well-Being

Awareness Level	**Mean Score**
Low	2.40
Moderate	3.10
High	3.83

The correlation between the levels of policy awareness and well-being is also analyzed in terms of comparative representation of mean scores in categories (Figure 3).

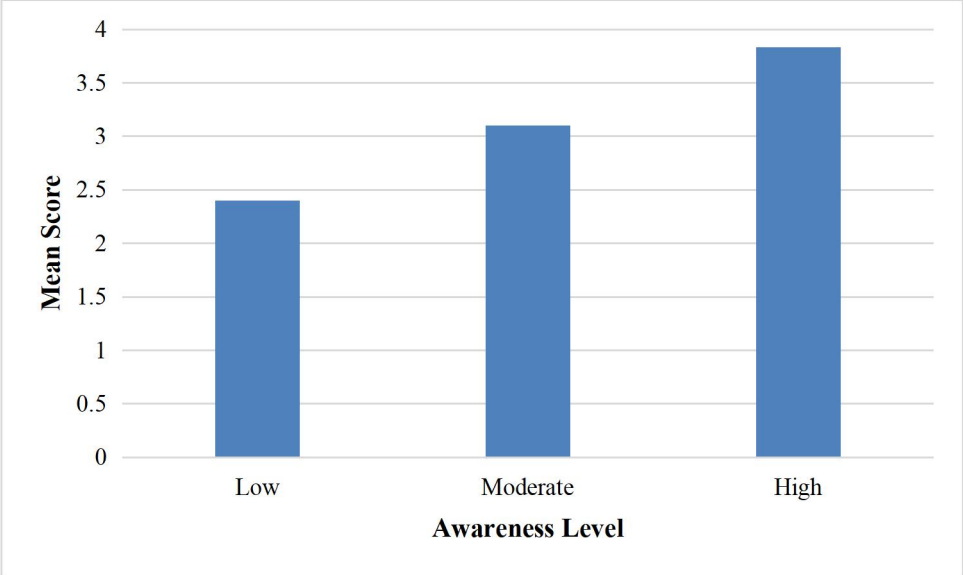

Figure 3. Mean Well-Being Scores Across Levels of Policy Awareness

There is an upward trend observed at the levels, which implies that the greater the awareness, the better the well-being outcomes.

3.4 Relationship Between Variables (Correlation Analysis)

The results of the correlation analysis showed that the positive relation between education and well-being was very weak (r = 0.05, p = 0.65) and the positive correlation between social policy awareness and well-being was almost negligible (r = 0.01, p = 0.95) (Table 4). The two relationships were not statistically significant, which shows that the two variables do not have a strong linear relationship in the current study.

Table 4. Correlation Results

Variables	r-value	p-value	Significance
Education vs Well-being	0.05	0.65	Not Significant
Policy Awareness vs Well-being	0.01	0.95	Not Significant

3.5 Gender Differences in Well-Being (t-Test Analysis)

The comparison of the well-being scores across the gender groups revealed that females had a marginally higher mean well-being score (3.54) than males (3.42). Nevertheless, the male and female groups did not differ significantly (t = -1.20, p = 0.23), which indicates that gender is not a significant determinant of well-being (Table 5).

Table 5. Independent Sample t-Test

Group	Mean Well-Being
Male	3.42
Female	3.54
t-value	-1.20
p-value	0.23

3.6 Predictive Effect of Education and Social Policy (Regression Analysis)

The results of regression analysis revealed that education (β= 0.04) and social policy awareness (β= 0.001) have very weak positive impacts on well-being. The model shows very low explanatory power (R2 = 0.002), meaning that these variables explain only 0.2% of the variation in well-being. This underscores the low predictive ability of the model (Table 6).

Table 6. Regression Analysis

Variable	β
Constant	3.31
Education Score	0.04
Policy Score	0.001
R2	0.002

4. Discussion

The study results show that personal well-being is moderately similar in various demographic and educational groups. The results of the analysis indicated that education positively but comparatively homogenous affect well-being because mean scores did not differ significantly in relation to educational levels. This is a sign that, despite the fact that education can assist in improving the quality of life, it may be more rooted compared to separate at the next stage of performance. On the other hand, the awareness of the social policy demonstrated a more explicit gradient, as the higher awareness was associated with the higher scores of well-being. This brings out the significance of accessibility, awareness and use of policy frameworks in improving individual outcomes. Nonetheless, the results of the inferential statistical analysis demonstrated weak correlations between the variables. The correlation and regression outcomes showed that both have insignificant correlations and predictive power, which implies that education and social policy awareness do not suffice to describe the differences in well-being. These results support the notion that

well-being is a multidimensional construct that is determined by an extended set of variables, such as psychological, social, and environmental circumstances. Also, there are no notable gender variations, which indicate that well-being can be influenced more by structural and contextual determinants than by demographic attributes.

The current results partly agree with the available literature and also present significant differences. The existing studies have stressed that well-being is strongly affected by the wider socio-economic disparities and structural factors, which makes it multidimensional (Ryff, 2017). Equally, researchers have highlighted the significance of considering well-being as a part of the public health system, implying that the intervention at the policy level is instrumental in determining the outcomes of individuals (World Health Organization, 2024). The studies that have been conducted on mental health and occupational well-being have revealed that there are stronger correlations between institutional support and well-being, especially in vulnerable groups like healthcare workers (Sovold et al., 2021). Conversely, weak statistical relationships were only observed in the current study, which can be explained by the difference in sample size, context, or choice of variables. Also, the psychological well-being as a core aspect of the health of the population has been discussed by previous researchers, and it is necessary to implement complex interventions that are not based on individual determinants (Trudel-Fitzgerald et al., 2019). The impact of digital space and social relationships on subjective well-being has also been pointed out by other studies, indicating that the impact of such factors as social media use could have a strong effect on the experiences of individuals (Verduyn et al., 2017). Moreover, economic and entrepreneurial activities have been associated with improved well-being due to a higher level of autonomy and financial stability (Wiklund et al., 2019). In comparison to these studies, the current research proves that education and social policy are significant but they might not have a strong measurable impact, which proves the argument that well-being is a combination of interrelated factors.

This study has significant implications on the policy, education and social planners. The fact that the descriptive effect of social policy awareness is relatively stronger implies that the level of welfare scheme accessibility and awareness may have a significant positive impact on the well-being of individuals. The policymakers should thus work on enhancing communication strategies, outreach programs and implementation efficiency so that the individuals can be able to maximize the benefits of the policies available. Educationally, the results reveal that education may not be adequate to significantly vary the outcomes of well-being. This shows the necessity of the incorporation of well-being-oriented strategies into the educational systems, including life skills training, mental health support, and value-based education. Further, the results show that the interventions of education, policy support, and social interventions should be combined in an even more holistic approach in order to achieve a meaningful change in well-being.

The study has a number of limitations that must be mentioned despite its contributions. To begin with, the sample size of 80 respondents is quite small and this might restrict the applicability of the results. Second, convenience sampling limits the sample representativeness, which may cause bias. Third, the use of self-reported measures is prone to response bias and might not be able to fully represent the complexity of well-being.Moreover, the research only included two main independent variables, which included education and social policy awareness, and the rest of the determinants, including income, health status, personality traits, and environmental conditions, were not included. Such a narrow scope of variables might be the reason why the explanatory power of the regression analysis was low.

Future research should aim at addressing these limitations by employing more varied and bigger samples that will be more generalizable. The scope of variables can be extended further to consider economic, psychological and environmental factors to gain an insight into the well-being. It may also be longitudinal studies that may can be used to examine the alterations in the well-being over time as well as to establish causal relationships. Moreover, cross-regional comparative analysis, particularly between the developed and developing nations, can be of help in offering valuable data on the contextual differences in the determinants of well-being. The solidity of future research could be improved further with the introduction of complex statistical procedures, such as structural equation modelling or factor analysis. Overall, there is the need to take an interdisciplinary and multidimensional approach to knowledge promotion in this area.

5.Conclusion

The research was done to examine the significance of education and social policy in enhancing individual well-being depending on the basis of a quantitative study. The results reveal that personal well-being is moderately steady within various demographic and educational groups. Education was observed to have a positive yet comparatively homogenous effect on well-being, indicating that, whereas it has a contribution to

the overall quality of life, it is not significantly different in its effect on well-being at different levels of attainment. Conversely, the descriptive effect of social policy awareness on well-being was stronger. Better well-being outcomes were reported in individuals with greater awareness and access to social policies, and this suggests the role of effective dissemination and implementation of policies. Nevertheless, the inferential statistical analysis showed weak and statistically insignificant relationships between the variables. The correlation and regression findings revealed that education and social policy awareness have a low predictive value in the variation of well-being. These results indicate that individual well-being is a multidimensional construct that cannot be explained by education and policy only, but by a variety of factors. Lack of major gender disparities also highlights the importance of more structural and contextual factors. In general, the paper highlights that a comprehensive strategy should be implemented that would involve education, sound social policies, and other socio-economic interventions to improve individual well-being in a significant and sustainable way.

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