

A Study of Psychological Well-being of Students in Relation to the Socio-Economic Context of the School

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Abstract : The purpose of the present paper is to study socio-economic context of Grade X students of private-aided and private un-aided SSC board schools of Greater Mumbai and its relationship with their psychological well-being. The sample of the study included 456 students of standard X selected through probability sampling technique. Psychological Well-Being Scales Questionnaire by (Carol Ryff, 1995) were used to measure psychological well-being of students of standard X studying in Maharashtra State Board of Secondary Education. The result indicated that students from schools with lower SES context had a higher psychological well-being as compared to those from schools with middle and high SES-context.

IndexTerms: Socio-Economic Context, Psychological well-being

I. INTRODUCTION

Well-being as a construct in recent times has sanctioned a flourishing place in the field of psychology and social sciences (e.g. Huppert, 2005; Layard, 2005; Marks & Shah, 2005; Marmot, Ryff, Bumpass, Shipley, & Marks, 1997; Mulgan, 2006). Positive mental health is defined as “a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community” (WHO, 2001). It is seen that focusing on positive concepts like wellbeing, can do more to diminish mental and behavioural problems (Huppert, 2005). Research studies have shown that people high on positive emotions evaluate and perceive others more positively along with being more happy optimistic, confident, productive, socially engaged and tend to have higher incomes. (Forgas, 2002, 2006; Sedikides, 1995; Diener, 2000; Judge,). A study by Kasser and Ryan (1996) showed that enhanced subjective wellbeing was positively correlated with individual personal goals being more intrinsic in nature. Similarly people high on subjective wellbeing have attributional styles that are more self-enhancing than those who are low on subjective wellbeing (Ryan and Deci, 2001). The concept of subjective well-being holds importance and is a major goal in the lives of individuals (Diener 1999) as it not only focuses on strengths, resources, problems and needs but provides a comprehensive picture of health rather than the traditional biological attribution of health.

Well-being has traditionally been defined from two perspectives (Ascorra et al., 2014; Marrero, González, & Carballeira, 2014; Morales et al., 2014; Park, Petersen, & Sun, 2013; Vazquez, 2013; Vera-Villaruel & Celis-Atenas, 2014). The subjective well-being (SWB) approach posits positive and negative affect and life satisfaction as main components (Chaves, Vazquez, & Hervas, 2013; Chavarría & Barra, 2014; Figueiredo, Zanon, & Koller, 2014; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Moyano, Martínez, & Muñoz, 2013; Von Humboldt & Leal, 2014). Psychological well-being (PWB) is represented by Ryff's six-dimension structure of positive psychological functioning. Based on a review of mental health, clinical and life span developmental traditions and translating them to a scale, Ryff (1989) proposed autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance as core dimensions of well-being (Chitgian-Urzúa, Urzúa, & Vera-Villaruel, 2013; Leal-Soto, Dávila, & Valdivia, 2014; Pérez-Aldeguer, 2014; Vera-Villaruel, Urzúa, Pavez, Celis-Atenas, & Silva, 2012). This theoretically founded set of facets represents the core components of human flourishing. Socio-economic status is a consistent and reliable predictor of a vast array of outcomes across the life span, including physical and psychological well-being. It is not only confined to income but academic achievement, financial security as well as the subjective perceptions of social status and class. It defined the correlation of quality of life a person is living and the privileges they can afford all those leisure factors leads to well-being among the people. School with high SES context have better education facilities, infrastructure, teaching resources, security for the students that leads to better social being in contrast to the schools with low SES context.

The impact of Socio-Economic Status on Well-being studies the perception of the individual towards his/her Well-being in terms of their stand in the socioeconomic strata of the society. Finally, some researchers posit an asymptotic association between income and well-being. After a certain level income can fulfill basic needs of survival and security, increases in earning do not likely reinforce well-being; however, a logarithmic transformation of income is linearly related to well-being, suggesting that higher increases are needed to reinforce well-being when people receive higher salaries (Diener et al, 2009). Thus the results of the study suggest the inverse relation in PWB of students with the lower, middle and upper socio - economic context.

In conclusion, this study contrasts the direct and indirect "positive" effect of SES on PWB, the total or partial mediational role of satisfaction with status and income on PWB, comparisons of class differences in PWB dimensions (expected to be higher in autonomy, purpose of life and growth) as well as an linear association between SES and PWB.

Rationale of the Study

Psychological problems are globally prevalent issues that affect children's health and development. According to the World Health Organization (2012), one out of five children and adolescents suffers from mental disorders. Child Mind Institute (2016) showed that mental health disorders are common health issues faced by school-aged children, and 80percent of chronic mental disorders initially manifest in childhood. Mental health problems can also cause a series of negative consequences, such as stigma, isolation, discrimination, and insufficient health care and education facilities (Kieling et al., 2011). Low socio economic status (SES) likely triggers mental health problems at different ages throughout an individual's lifetime, but the effects of low SES on young children are more significant than those on adults (McLaughlin et al., 2011). A child's psychological well-being is essential for future development (Nastasi and Borja, 2016). Hence, the relationship and influencing mechanisms between SES and children's psychological well-being should be investigated.

Need of the Study

Historically, wellbeing research has largely focused on adults in developed countries. There has been little research on the self-reported (i.e., subjective) wellbeing of children and or adolescents, particularly in developing countries. Similarly, there has been minuscule research, which focuses comparisons of subjective wellbeing among different adolescent groups (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity, parental education, economic status and physical activity etc.) There are an estimated 1.2 billion young people aged 10–19 in the world, comprising the largest generation of adolescents in history. Approximately 70 per cent of these young people live in developing countries where complex economic, social, political and environmental contexts create a wide range of challenges for adolescents to surmount as they journey to adulthood. Many of these disadvantaged adolescents have few personal resources and little social support to confront the conditions that propagate poverty, inequity, and gender discrimination.

From a broad perspective, the measurement and promotion of adolescent well-being is a desirable social and political objective. Psychological wellbeing of adolescents means being content with life and understanding an abundance of positive emotions, when joined with the absence of psychopathology, is linked with greatest academic function, social skills and support and physical health, being a stage that lays strong foundation for future personality, and a critical period during human development in which life goals, values, direction and purpose in life are created , guaranteeing psychological wellbeing of adolescents is a socio psychological necessity.

I. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Population and Sample

The population of the present study consisted of students studying in standard X in schools affiliated to MSBSE. It included schools of different types of management i.e. municipal schools, private-aided and private-unaided schools situated in Greater Mumbai and with English as the medium of instruction.

A sample is a small proportion of a population selected for observation and analysis. In accordance to the design of the study, the sample consisted of 456 students including males and females from the secondary school in Greater Mumbai and out of which 6 has been rejected because of incomplete data. Thus the response rate was 98.9 %.

3.2 Data and Sources of Data

In order to select the sample of the study, the researcher will adopt a four stage sampling procedure. At the first stage, English medium schools affiliated to the MSBSE and situated in Greater Mumbai were selected using stratified random sampling where the strata include geographical location of the schools namely, South Mumbai, North Mumbai and Central Mumbai. At the second stage, schools were selected using stratified sampling where the strata include the type of management of schools namely Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, private-aided and private-unaided. At the third stage, individual classrooms from the selected schools were selected using simple random sampling (lottery method) technique. At the fourth stage, individual students were selected from the classroom using cluster sampling technique. The participants responded and returned the questionnaire to the researchers immediately. This guaranteed maximum retrieval. The responses were scored as described under "Instrument" in the next section.

3.3 Theoretical framework

Operational Definition of the Terms

1. **Socio-Economic Context of the School:** It is conceptualized as the average score on the combination of economic, social, and work status, measured by income or wealth, education, and occupation of students in a school.
2. **Psychological Well-Being:** It refers to the dynamic concept that includes subjective, social, and psychological dimensions as well as health-related behaviours that is affected in a complex way by the person's physical health, psychological state, personal beliefs, social relationships and their relationship to salient features of their environment.

Objective of the Study

"To study Psychological well-being of the students on the basis of Socio-Economic Context of the school"

Review of Related Literature

Studies Conducted in India

Manjuvani E. (1990) carried out a study on influence of home and school environment on the mental health status of children. The major findings of the study were: 1. The home environment was a major significant contributor to all the three components of mental health. 2. The school environment contributed to liabilities and the mental health index. Joshi (2002) has observed that an upwardly mobile society that enables its citizens to achieve a high level of material comfort may not provide mental and spiritual succour. According to him individuals in a society can attain fulfilment, happiness and sense of achievement without owning a Mercedes. Hence, a society's development indices should not be counted as high, even if it is affluent, if it fails to impart human values to its individuals. Therefore, he contends that any development parameter should reflect the influences of body, mind, intellect and soul, which are the four components of human personality. Katja et al (2009) indicated that school satisfaction, body satisfaction, and self-rated good health explained 50% of the variance in global satisfaction among female respondents. For males, most significant predictors for global satisfaction included, in addition to those observed among girls, low-intensity drinking which explained 31% of the variance. The most significant associations for global ill-being for females were school dissatisfaction, high intensity drinking, and self-rated moderate health, explaining 34% of the variance. In global ill-being, the variables of body dissatisfaction and regular drinking explained only 14% of the variance for boys. The results support the need to enhance adolescent positive attitudes toward life and school, self-perception, and adolescent coping with negative emotions. Philip (2010) conducted a study of the relative effectiveness of school types by board affiliation in developing psycho-social characteristics among students. These psycho-social characteristics included their creativity, emotional intelligence, political awareness, individual modernity and general adjusted for students' socio-economic status and academic achievement. The sample consisted of 997 students studying in F.Y.J.O and who have completed their standard X from schools affiliated to the SSC, CBSE, ICSE and IGCSE. The study found that (i) SSC schools are

effective in enhancing emotional intelligence of students but ineffective in enhancing their creativity, political awareness, individual modernity and general role attitude, (ii) CBSE schools are effective in enhancing creativity, individual modernity and general role attitude of students but ineffective in enhancing their emotional intelligence and political awareness, (iii) ICSE schools are effective in enhancing creativity, political awareness and individual. Pareek and Jain (2012) had done a study to explore the effect on subjective well-being of adolescents in the light of their measures of altruism and forgiveness. Moreover, attempt is also made to see the effect in context of gender differences. By the findings, it can be said that female adolescents are high on subjective well-being, with a high life satisfaction and have altruistic behaviour to enhance it very much. The altruism enhances their subjective well-being in a very effective way. Thus the result which came out in this combined analysis can be attributed to reflect the strength of the relationship in females between altruism and subjective well-being.

Studies Conducted Aboard

Ryan, Howell, and Colleen (2008) found that the average economic status SWB effect size was strongest among low-income developing economies ($r = .28$) and for samples that were least educated ($r = .36$). The relation was weakest among high-income developing economies ($r = .10$) and for highly educated samples ($r = .13$). Controlling for numerous covariates, the partial r effect size remained significant for the least-educated samples ($p = .18$). Moderator analyses showed the economic status-SWB relation to be strongest when (a) economic status was defined as wealth (a stock variable), instead of as income (a flow variable), and (b) SWB was measured as life satisfaction (a cognitive assessment), instead of as happiness (an emotional assessment). Biswas-Diener, Vitterso, and Diener (2010) results found that although Danes are higher in life satisfaction, Americans are higher in positive and negative affect—they are more —emotional. The Danes outscored Americans in enjoying life, and on Cantril's Ladder of life evaluation. It appears that while rich Americans and Danes are equally happy, poor Danes are happier than their American counterparts, and this is part of the explanation for the high scores of Denmark on subjective well-being. Diener et al (2010) found that income influences life satisfaction, but less so affect. Positive feelings such as enjoying life were more strongly predicted by —psychosocial wealth, factors such as social support and learning new things. Linssen et al (2011) had tested the impact of income levels and amount of money spent on expensive services and goods on subjective well-being. The results of the multi-level regression analyses show that individuals who spent more on conspicuous consumption report lower levels of subjective well-being. Surprisingly an individual's relative income position does not affect feelings of well-being. Motivated by positional concerns, people do not passively accept their relative rank but instead consume conspicuous goods to keep up with the Joneses. Conspicuous consumption always comes at the account of the consumption of basic needs. Khan (2012) found that Gender, socio-economic status, marital status and religious beliefs of the students were significantly influencing the outcome variables. Significant positive relationship was found between positive psychological strengths and subjective well-being, mentoring from teachers and educational encouragement from parents, siblings and friends. Regression analysis revealed that mentoring on the part of the teachers significantly predicted positive psychological strengths and subjective well-being. Educational encouragement from the parents, siblings and friends, significantly predicted the positive psychological strengths and subjective well-being. Role of mentoring and educational encouragement from parents, siblings and teachers was found to be imperative in developing positive psychological strengths and subjective well-being in contemporary adolescents, as well as preparing skills to face challenges of life in a complex world. Becchetti and Pisani (2013) investigated the determinants of life satisfaction of the young—by means of an econometric analysis which focused specifically on the relationship between household wealth and life satisfaction of secondary school students living in three Italian cities: Rome, Milan and Genoa. The study found that family home ownership, mortgages and (class) relative wealth significantly affect the life satisfaction of students. Other significant controls are geographical residence (those living in Milan are significantly less satisfied with life), the mother's occupation, and trust in family and friendships. The characteristics of household wealth variables make it hard to conceive any inverse causality (and endogeneity highly unlikely), thus suggesting a direct causality nexus for these factors. The study had explained why this research provides important insights that should be taken into account when developing policies to promote the subjective wellbeing of the young.

3.4 Statistical tools and econometric models

3.4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The present study adopted the quantitative approach of research as it deals with numerical data and statistical techniques of data analysis. The present investigation was descriptive in nature as it describes the current status of school culture.

A one way ANOVA is used to compare two means from two independent (unrelated) groups using the F-distribution. It is a quantitative method of research in which you have a group of individuals randomly split into smaller groups and completing different tasks i.e. the present study was aimed of comparing the psychological well-being on the basis of socio-economic context of their school in form of three groups: low, medium and high school SES context. The descriptive research method of causal-comparative included under the quantitative paradigm was used for the present research.

3.4.2 Instruments

For the purpose of the present study, the researcher has made use of the following tools in the present study: Psychological Well-Being Scales Questionnaire by Carol Ryff (1995), Socio-Economic Status Inventory (Patel, 1997)

To measure Psychological well-being of students, the researcher made use of Psychological Well-Being Scales the PWB (Carol Ryff, 1995). The Inventory was developed by Carol Ryff. The scoring was done using six-point rating scale. In a 20-item scale was used for each of the six constructs, with approximately equal numbers of positively and negatively worded items. The internal consistency coefficients were quite high (between 0.86 and 0.93) and the test-retest reliability coefficients for a subsample of the participants over a six week period were also high (0.81-0.88).

The researcher has use Socio-Economic Status inventory that has been developed by Patel (1997). Total numbers of items in the tool were 36. The items pertained to education, occupation, income, possessions and facilities, and cultural and entertainment activities that the family had, i.e., the student and his/her family. Each response was assigned a score between 0 to 4 according to what it suggested about the socio-economic status of the respondent. The split- half method was used to determine the internal reliability coefficient, which was 0.96. The test- retest reliability was 0.77. The SES context has been found by using percentile method (Quartiles) by finding mean of the data and low SES is being found taking 25% of mean and high SES context is found by taking 75% of SES and 50% of mean represent medium SES.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results of Descriptive Statics of Study Variables

Table 4.1: Relevant Statistics for ANOVA

	Socio-Economic Context			TOTAL
	LOW SES	AVERAGE SES	HIGH SES	
N	64	229	158	451
Mean PWB	178.0156	153.7598	146.5	154.6585

Table 4.2: ANOVA for Psychological well-being by socio-economic context

Source	SS	df	MS	F	P
[between groups]	45617.1399	2	22808.5699	16.62	<.0001
Error	614832.2748	448	1372.3935		
Total	660449.4146	450			

H₀ : There is no significant difference in the psychological well-being of the student on the basis of socio-economic context of the school.

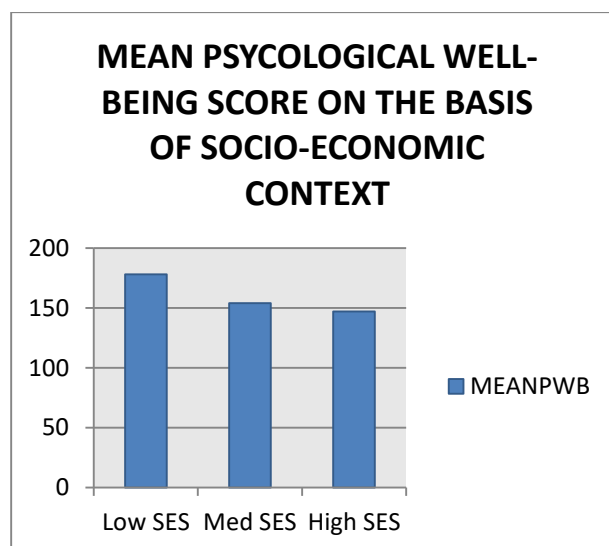
Table 4.2 The F-ratio is significant at < 0.0001 level. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected with reference to the between the group ($P < 0.0001$). Hence the F-ratio is significant for psychological well-being score on the basis of socio-economic context of the school.

This hypothesis was tested using one-way ANOVA in which the two independent (unrelated) groups using the F-distribution. The following table shows the relevant statistics of psychological well-being of students with the socio-economic context.

TABLE 3
Mean Difference of PWB with SES

Groups	N	Mean	df	t-ratio	LoS
LOW SES	64	178.0156	291	5.06379	0.01
MED SES	229	153.7598			
MED SES	229	153.7598	385	2.7048	N.S
HIGH SES	158	146.5			
HIGH SES	158	146.5	230	6.4791	0.01
LOW SES	64	178.0156			

The following figure shows the differences in the Mean Psychological Well-being scores of students on the basis of their Socio- economic status.



CONCLUSION:

This is one of the few studies confirming differences in PWB associated with SES context of the school. As compared with the results of previous researches there is a contradictory result regarding to psychological well-being in relation to SES context of the school. There is a significant difference in PWB on the basis of the

SES context of the school. Schools with low SES context have been found to be high on PWB. This implies students from low SES context live a better and contented life than those from middle and high SES context.

DISCUSSION:

The reasons for such a finding could be that schools with lower SES-context may be providing better socio-emotional and educational support to their students. Whereas in case of students from schools with middle and higher SES context, the need for such a support might be fulfilled better at home rather than in school. Thus, students from schools with lower SES-context are found to have higher Psychological well-being.

The study confirms a negative association between psychological well-being of the students with socio-economic context of school. The result of the quantitative study is way more contradictory compared to similar researches done in the past and the outcomes are more realistic keeping in mind the present scenario of the metropolitan cities, life and psychological mind-set of the 21st-century students and their families

The results are at odds with the idea that SES should be strongly related to PWB but the study indicates that there are Low levels of PWB in student belonging to a family of higher occupational status, education level in the upper classes; and people with a high self-perception of their purchasing power and social status in consistent with students belonging from middle and lower SES context. The possible reason could be the fact that children from low-economic status are likely to have higher social and emotional well-being. Moreover psychological well-being is not only confined to SES but there are other factors like chaotic home environment, harsh or inconsistent parenting style, neglect, parental stress, poor access to effective interventions that leads to behaviour problems among school students belonging to upper as well as lower class. Hence the result align with Linssen et al(2011) that shows individuals who spent more on conspicuous consumption report lower levels of subjective well-being. Hence an individual's relative income or position does not affect the feelings of well-being in them.

Hence ANOVA analyses indicate that SES predicted PWB through the indirect effects of sense of status and satisfaction with purchase power or income. These results are in line with a "realistic" appraisal and reflect effects of social reality on well-being.

IMPLICATIONS:

McAllister (2005) defined well-being as "The absence of illness or pathology with subjective and objective dimensions" and states that well-being can be measured at an individual or societal level, accounting for the elements of life satisfaction that cannot be influenced by economic growth. Hence it is vital that schools from various socio-economic context must keep other realistic factors in mind that is hampering child's well-being that include safe and secure surrounding both at school as well as neighbouring households, restricting exposure of toxic substances like drugs, cigarette etc. away from school surroundings that affects their well-being, vigilant action to be taken against bullying, orienting parents about the importance of healthy and positive household environment as well having a school counsellor for dealing with the students issues. However, it is critical to realize that happiness is not confined to the economic status of the family but it is more confined to one state of life. Hence behaviour problems occur at all levels of society. These problems are not restricted to the poor. In fact, the majority of children with a low level of well-being are not from lower socio-economic background. Consequently, efforts to reduce behaviour problems should not be restricted to families of lower SES but for the family with higher SES as well behaviour problems occur at all levels of society.

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