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## Initial Discussion on the Past Studies of Well-Being

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### Abstract

Well-being is a thing that many contemporary scholars have often discussed. Many past studies addressed issues of well-being from various aspects, such as factors affecting the well-being; the need for well-being; and the creation of the Life Welfare Index (IKH). The objective of this study is to identify past studies on the well-being according to certain themes. This study uses qualitative and data are obtained through document analysis. A total of 30 recent studies on living well-being have been analyzed. The findings show that there are various themes discussed about the well-being that has been discussed since the early 60's. Analysis shows that 30 articles review discussions are focused on the following themes; the well-being among university students, the well-being of teenagers, the well-being of rural communities, the well-being of the fishermen's community and the influence of religious elements in the well-being. The methodology used by the investigators of such studies is qualitative and quantitative. This study suggests that more research is being carried out by academics related to the well-being, especially the relevance of living wellness with religious factors and Maqasid Syariah.

**Keywords:** Well-being, Life Welfare Factor, Life Welfare Index (IKH), Document Analysis, Religious Elements.

### Introduction

Academicians have started discussing on the well-being of humans as early as the 60's. Recently, discussions on the well-being have been said to be due to the government's expectations to improve the living standards of the society in line with the goal of achieving the 2020 vision. According to Azizah et. al. (2013), the improvement of well-being is one of the six National Key Result Areas (NKRAs) which have become an agenda for national development.

Well-being is very important for every country. Well-being is a prerequisite for generating a more ambitious environment for the realization of true happiness and peace in a community as well as a country (Mohamed & Aishah, 2008). Zulfikri (2015), Malaysia has implemented various community development programs aimed at improving the well-being of its people. In fact, not

only is Malaysia focusing on the development of well-being, but most developed countries make it one of the agenda in their country's development (Azizah et al., 2014).

How can one define the term well-being? Many past studies have been clearly discussed about the concept and definitions of well-being. Well-being is a dynamic process and gives value to people about how their lives are progressing whether their lives are improving or declining (Azizah et al., 2014). In addition, according to Renwick (2006), well-being can be defined as something that can bring joy, happiness and meaningful life to someone.

In addition, Ahmad & Razaq (2016) argues that well-being refers to the one's well-being, family well-being, community well-being, economic well-being, social well-being and educational well-being. The concept of living well-being is a dynamic process that gives value to humans about how they grow either better or worse, but are traditionally measured through economic indicators, such as income levels (Fabrica & David, 2010; Azizah et al., 2014). In another study, Norizan (2003) said that the well-being of one's life is a subjective in one's quality of life because it highlights human satisfaction and kindness.

### **Objectives**

The objective of this study is to identify past studies related to the well-being according to certain themes, namely:

1. The well-being of adolescents
2. The well-being of university students
3. The well-being of rural communities
4. The well-being of the fishermen communities
5. The influence of religious elements in well-being.

### **Operational Definition**

Well-being is a term used to refer to the living conditions of an individual, society or community and a country – whether it is improving or declining. Well-being can only be measured by certain parties for a certain period of time.

The factors of well-being refer to the factors that are taken into account in measuring well-being. This factor may change according to the study conducted. Many factors can affect the well-being of individuals, communities or countries.

Well-being index is a study conducted by a research group and the result of it forms the highest domains in well-being. Normally, these well-being index reports will be published to the public.

### **Methodology**

This study uses qualitative methods and data is analyzed using document analysis, one of the techniques in qualitative methods. This method is also referred to as Systematic Review, where data is obtained through writings from the initials articles published. Selection of articles is according to the suitability of prescribed themes. A total of 30 articles were used in this study. Information and data obtained from these articles have been collected and analyzed briefly, accurately in order to facilitate future reference.

### **Research Findings**

The discussion on the findings is divided into five selected themes, namely:

### 1. The well-being of adolescents

A study on youth wellness was conducted by Hassan & Rajoo (2012) on 120, 18-22 year olds at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) main campus and the Senai industrial area. Overall, in terms of well-being, the subjects who earn a high level of well-being are 74%, while 26% of the other subjects have a low level of well-being. The study found that there were significant differences in well-being between studying teens and working teens (the significant value of  $t = 0.028$  was less than 0.05). Because the mean of the well-being of teenagers working is higher than that of teenagers who are studying, it can be concluded that the well-being of teenage students and teenage workers have differences. Education affects little stimulus for well-being.

In addition, this research also found that there is a significant positive relationship between self-concept and well-being among late teens. The results of the study are supported by past studies conducted by Anderson (1977), Ginandes (1977), Leung & Leung (1992) and Neto (1993). Self concept can be formed through the influence of parents as well as the identification, role, and experiences of an individual's life. Therefore, for individuals with a positive self-concept, the individual's well-being thus will improve.

A study conducted by Das et. al. (2014) on 117 students in Kota Kinabalu to study the impact of internet usage on teen's well-being found that internet usage contributed 44% ( $R^2 = 44$ ) variance to subjective well-being (positive and negative effects) [ $F(2,114) = 10.680, p < .05$ ]. The regression analysis of internet use on the development of life satisfaction and happiness does not record significant results as a predictor and internet usage only contributes to a slight percentage of satisfaction of life and happiness.

Rohani (2016) has conducted a study of 400 teens who skip schools comprising three states in the north of Peninsular Malaysia. 63.3% or 249 respondents were male students, while 151 or 37.8% were female students. The results of the study show that spiritual well-being has the strongest influence on the creation of self-esteem among the students who often play truancy. Spiritual well-being, however, is found to have no effect as an intermediary variable in relation to the pressures of life, social resources, coping skills and self-esteem.

Another study was conducted by Naqib & Anuar (2016) involving a total of 200 form four students, involving schools in Kapit District, Sarawak. This study found that the value of Pearson's correlation coefficient on the relationship between the student's leisure time and individual social well-being was .358 ( $r = .358$ ) and the probability value was .000 tested at the confidence level .05. This implies the existence of a weak positive linear relationship between the student's leisure time with individual social well-being.

### The well-being of University Students

Munirah et. al. (2016) carried out a study on the well-being index among the students of Public Higher Learning Institutions (IPTA). According to this study, a total of 49% of the respondents were at moderate level and 45.1% were still at a good level for the living welfare index among IPTA students. The researcher stated that the value of the Living Well-Being Index will increase and remain at a good level if social engagement is enhanced. The results of the study are parallel to the presentation presented by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, namely the Malaysian Youth Index 2015, at a moderate level with a score of 70.22.

Emilly & Dahlan (2014) conducted a study on the good values of well-being among university students. This study was conducted on 205 Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) students, comprising

of 131 female students and 74 male students. This study has been using short Schwartz's value survey to measure 10 key values, namely power, perception, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism / universality, generosity, tradition, conformity and safety as the guiding principle of life (Lindeman & Verkasalo, 2005) as well as The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule to measure emotions among students.

Researchers believe that understanding the concept of values and well-being, especially the youths in Higher Education Institutions (IPTA) is very important. This is because, according to Cole & Hall (1970); Ali (1993) the well-being of one's life is a state of emotion that can affect the pattern of an individual's life.

Based on this study, the findings show that the values of power, achievement, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, generosity, tradition, conformity and security show a significant relationship with well-being. While the value of hedonism alone shows no relation to the well-being of the students.

In addition, research done on students living in urban and rural areas, found that the well-being of students living in cities is higher (better) than those living in rural areas. It is associated with life in the cities that is not bound by the noble values and the norms of its society. Such attachment causes students living in rural areas to feel that they are restrained from doing things they love doing.

Amat & Mahmud (2009) conducted a study of 170 second year and third year students to identify the relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction among students of Higher Educational Institutions (IPTA). The results of the Pearson correlation coefficient have shown significant correlation between self-esteem score and life satisfaction score among IPT students ( $r = .243$ ,  $p = .001$ ). This positive relationship is said to be likely to help build a better life's satisfaction in one's life.

Research conducted by Edianie (2009) on 387 Private Institutions of Higher Learning (IPTS) students in the state of Kelantan, focuses on the psychological well-being among IPTS students. The findings showed that Ryff's psychological well-being scores for IPTS students in Kelantan were at a moderate level of mean = 206.23. This explains that 94.1% or 364 students are at moderate level and the remaining 23 or 5.9% of respondents are at high level. Mean score for male students (mean = 111.49) is said to be higher than female students (mean = 110.55), with a significant difference of  $t(385) = 2.07$ ,  $p < .05$ . while the level of psychological well-being of those from the science stream students (mean = 210.71) is higher than literary stream students (mean = 202.41), with significant differences of  $t(385) = 5.02$ ,  $p < .05$ .

### **The well-being of Rural Communities**

There are many studies conducted regarding the well-being of the rural communities. One of the studies carried out was by Bunyau & Wahab (2013), regarding the well-being of rural communities. This study was conducted on 277 participants involved in the Ikhtiar Malaysia Scheme (AIM) in Telupid district, Sabah. Researchers used the approach proposed by Midgley (1995) to measure the well-being of the community. According to Midgley, one's well-being can be referred as the benefits received as a result of the contributions they make to develop their own potential. Three important indicators of well-being according to Midgley are the management of social problems, the fulfillment of social needs, and the provision of social opportunities.



An overview of social problem control in this study covers aspects of social problems occurring among AIM participants, control over social problems and control over children's behavior. In the first part of the study, the researcher found that a large number of participants chose positive statements on the social problems faced by them and only a small number chose negative statements. In the second part, the researcher found that there was a control involving the AIM participants on the social problems that had occurred. There are various social problems and most of the participants are not at risk of any social problems.

In term of indicators of social needs fulfillment, it is divided into two. First is the facilities and services provided to them, such as family welfare, healthcare, social security, financial assistance and advisory services which show a large number of participants reaching a satisfactory level. The second is the aspect of social needs fulfilled by each participant, such as income, living expenses, relationships, life status, children's education, healthcare aspects and job opportunities.

Next, the last indicator, namely the provision of social opportunities, in this study, researchers found that there were some social opportunities that have been identified and existed through the implementation of the AIM program. However, only a small number of participants have the opportunity to experience and enjoy all the opportunities offered. This is because such opportunities are not widely spread and shared and it is only available or offered to communities living in major areas such as in the urban areas.

Samruhaizad & Jamaluddin (2012) conducted a study on the quality of life of suburban residents. Researchers point out that the quality of life of suburban communities is different from the quality of life of the people living in the cities. The results of the study show that the outbreak has a considerable impact on depressed suburban populations with drastic changes in the environment. As a result, the residents feel their quality of life has also decreased compared to their lives before the subterranean outbreak development has been implemented.

Lyndon et. al. (2011) conducted a study on the quality of life of the Bidayuh community involving the participation of the People's Welfare Development Scheme (SPKR). The findings show that there are 23 themes described by the Bidayuh community on how they view quality of life. For those who live in the countryside, the position of these themes in terms of frequency is different from the respondents living in the city. The theme fraction has been divided into seven categories under three groups. The main groups include safety and stability categories, communities, resources and the environment. For the middle group, it includes the physical and psychological well-being categories and family relationships. The category of participation, capability and empowerment is a less-than-attentive group.

### **The well-being of the Fishermen Communities**

Studies on the well-being of the fishermen community have been carried out by researchers throughout Malaysia. Various research findings have been obtained according to the research conducted. Among them are Shaladdin et. al. (2006) which studies the livelihood analysis of coastal fishermen. The study aims to identify the determinants of the well-being of coastal fishermen in the district of Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu. A total of 120 sets of questionnaires were distributed to respondents and only a total of 102 sets of questionnaires were given back.

The findings show that enforcement factors, infrastructure, health, boats and fishery equipment, residential homes and capture marketing are factors that show a mean score greater than 12. This shows that the level of well-being for these factors is quite good because the median for this moment is 12.

In terms of dimensions, fishermen's attributes dimension consists of income, expenditure, savings, residential property, residential land, vehicle and education have a significant correlation with fishery's well-being, at 0.01 (2-tailed), at the same time all the factors have positive values. In conclusion, the increase in these factors will increase the well-being of fishermen. In fact, all the factors for the dimension of the role of the government with well-being shows a very significant correlation of  $p < 0.01$  with the well-being unless the enforcement is insignificant and the value of the correlation coefficients is negative.

In addition, the role of the community is also considered as a moderator in the relationship of determining factors with the well-being of life. As a result of the semi-partial analysis of each determinant factor with well-being, it is found that the role of the community has served as a moderator or simplifies the relationship between the determinant factor and the well-being of life.

The level of wellbeing of coastal fishermen in Kuala Terengganu area is particularly low, such as the level of well-being of fishermen according to the determinant factor found that the mean score of 9 out of 15 factors is below the value of 12, the well-being for fishermen attributes is also low, ie the mean score is 99.39 compared to the median value of 108. Well-being for government role dimensions is slightly higher than the median value, which is 72.25 as compared to the median 72. However, overall, the mean score is lower than the median value, which is 171.63 as compared to 180.

Yusof et. al. (2011) conducted a survey on 83 fishermen who are also heads in their households. The findings show that most respondents agreed that the increases and changes in their monthly income is what helps improve their standard of living and well-being. The impact of development has resulted in increased infrastructure and more public amenities and helped improve their lives. From the findings, the level of satisfaction with the facilities provided is satisfactory.

In addition, Aisyah (2012) in her study involving people living in the areas of People's Welfare Development Scheme (SPKR) program in the State of Terengganu, involving 147 fishermen receiving the aid. It is said that a majority of 51% of fishermen in the program area say that the level of employment and satisfaction over the previous five years is the same. Mostly, 87.8% of fishermen have no side incomes due to the absence of other skills and are only able to work in the sea for self-support and families. In fact, most fishermen's wives, about 89.8% of them only work as housewives.

Another study conducted by Aisyah & Hayati (2014) find that there was no significant change in their income level over the past 10 years because their quality of life is still moderately poor despite the government had provided assistance to the estuaries' fishermen community on the east coast. The results of this study give an overview of the effectiveness of government assistance on the progress and well-being of the fishermen community, especially the estuary fishermen of the estuary in the east coast.

In another study, Norizan et. al. (2017) has conducted a study on the quality of life of fishermen in the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia, involving fishermen from Selangor, Perak, Kedah and Johor. This study involved 306 respondents who answered the questionnaires and 24

respondents involved in the Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) sessions. The findings show that there are seven indicators affecting the quality of the fishermen's lives, namely settlement areas, income, savings, fishing gears, housing, health and family environment. This study also says that the main factors affecting the quality of fishermen's lives are income, government aid, education, religion and local enforcement.

### **The Influence of Religious Elements to well-being**

The influence of religious elements is often associated as one of the factors that influence the well-being of individuals, communities or countries as a whole. Wahid et. al. (2010) conducted a study on the effect of the factors on the quality of an individual's life. According to them, religious factors are important because they affect mental health, altering individual attitudes to positive life that eventually help change the economy and the individual's lifestyles in the long run. There are some earlier studies on the relationship between commitment to religion and the level of individual satisfaction (the well-being of the individual).

Mohamed & Aishah (2008) in their study say the process of development begins with moral, spiritual and mental developments of human beings that will be their own physical, environment and economical agents. There are five criteria use to measure the well-being and prosperity of humanity, namely religion, intellect, self, race and wealth. All five of these criteria which are also considered as syariah compliance are the elements of human needs and if human development is needed, they should be developed into five aspects. The development of five aspects will reinforce the value of a prosperous and peaceful life civilization.

In addition, a study conducted by Ali, 1993 (in Hassan & Rajoo, 2012) has reviewed the state of religious appreciation and the well-being of life among adolescents. This study involved 211 students. The results of the study found that the appreciation of religion, the relationship with family and the relationships with peers were found to be positively related to the well-being of life. Acts of worship is said to play an important role in the process of character formation. Most teenagers choose religion as the most important factor that can determine the well-being of their lives.

Ibrahim et. al. (2012) conducted a study of about 200 problematic teenagers aged 12-21 years and involved three selected moral rehabilitation schools in Malaysia. The study found that 89.5% of respondents had a moderate level of religious knowledge and illustrated that adolescents involved in the study were not strong enough to help protect themselves from being involved in negative activities that could damage their well-being. Researchers also say that adolescents who have undergone rehabilitation and released treatment are expected to practice religious teachings and values that are constantly being studied to create a new and more prosperous life than to conduct behavior that is contrary to the values and norms community.

A study conducted by Sodiq (2015) on the concept of well-being in Islam believe that the concept of well-being is provided by Allah and it is given to anyone (male or female) who wants to do good deeds accompanied by true faith in Allah S.W.T. Researchers also state three indicators to measure the well-being and happiness of his respondents and found that mental formation (tauhid), use and loss of fear and all forms of anxiety other than to Allah S.W.T are among the factors that contributes to one's well-being and happiness.

Abdul Hamid (2012) has made a special study on al-Ghazali's analysis on social well-being. According to the researcher, Imam al-Ghazali has narrated more about the well-being of his life



in his book *Ilya Ulumuddin*, where according to Imam al-Ghazali, the concept of well-being would only exist when mankind has five purposes in life; religion, soul, intellect, wealth and ancestry. In fact, through these five purposes, there are three levels of human need, namely, prestige (necessity), *hajiyat* (convenience) and *tahsinat* (luxury). These are all referred to as the *Sharia Maqasid*.

### Conclusion and Suggestion

Well-being is one of the goals in the planning and implementation of community development programs (Haris, 2012; Bunyau & Wahab, 2013). According to Norizan (2003), the well-being of life can be divided into two, namely objective quality of life and subjective quality of life. The objective quality of life is the necessity of life that can be enjoyed by individuals and can be viewed externally. Objective quality of lives include income, housing, health and education. On the contrary, subjective quality of life is the satisfaction and enjoyment of the individual's feelings. For example, the feelings of fun and grateful to have a good job, successful children and a happy family.

Finally, this study hopes that there will be more research, studies and writings discussing on the well-being of life in a broader field and does not only focus on the above discussion. In fact, it is hoped that there will be a specific study pertaining to the well-being and *Maqasid Syariah* can be implemented in future. Further discussion of religious elements as a factor in determining well-being should also be carried out in an in-depth manner.

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