Conceptualisations of wellbeing and quality of life: A systematic review of participatory studies

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Abstract

There is a growing movement across the world to make better use of wellbeing measures to guide policy. This stems from the realisation that reliance on economic indicators, such as income, GDP, and unemployment, may not be adequately capturing the aspects of life that people value. But how should we be measuring wellbeing or quality of life? A mounting body of research over the past two decades has highlighted the value of participatory wellbeing frameworks, which are created by consulting with the target population and asking the question “What does wellbeing mean for you?”. However, up to now there is very little consolidated understanding of the work conducted in this space. This systematic review seeks to fill this gap, identifying 130 participatory wellbeing studies which span every region of the world and all life stages. The review identifies a wide range of theories, methods, and participatory techniques that have been utilised to develop participatory wellbeing frameworks which can be replicated for similar studies going forward. By thematically analysing understandings of wellbeing into 30 overarching areas, the findings show that communities and population groups throughout the world have wide-ranging and diverse conceptualisations of wellbeing. In sum, we highlight that while there are some similarities in what wellbeing means to people from different population groups, nuances exist within every group. Given this diverse understanding of wellbeing throughout the world, it is vital that research, policy and development initiatives take this into account. Doing so will help support policy and programs to address the aspects of life that are important to individuals, and subsequently improve the lives of people throughout the world in a more meaningful way.

Keywords: Wellbeing; Quality of life; Happiness; Good life; Conceptualisations; Understandings; Participatory; Wellbeing framework

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Introduction

There has been growing movement over the past two decades within societies across the world to make better use of wellbeing measures to guide policy. This has been, most notably, influenced by the “Beyond GDP” movement and its agenda to encourage governments throughout the world to reduce their reliance on traditional measures of progress such as GDP and unemployment, and look to indicators that more closely capture the human experience (Stiglitz, Sen, & Fitoussi, 2009). The Capability Approach has also been highly influential in this regard in the field of development studies, with Sen (1993, 1999) arguing that to improve the lives of individuals in a meaningful way, we must ensure programs and policies enrich the aspects of lives that individuals value, or their “valued capabilities”. These notions have led to a number of governments, organisations and communities throughout the world utilising measures of wellbeing to guide policy and measure progress. Examples include the Organisation of Economic Development (OECD) (Exton & Shinwell, 2018), the New Zealand Government (Dalziel, Saunders, & Savage, 2019), Bhutan (Ura & Galay, 2004) and smaller communities such as Jacksonville in the USA (Jacksonville Community Council, 2010).

But how do we know what dimensions, domains and indicators should be incorporated into these wellbeing measurement frameworks? Alkire (2008) outlines a range of methods which can be used to identify dimensions of multidimensional poverty. These include existing data, normative assumptions, public consensus, ongoing deliberative participation, and existing empirical evidence. All these approaches come with benefits and drawbacks, and their suitability may depend on the research context and resources available. However, if one is seeking to develop a wellbeing framework that closely reflects the views and values of the population of interest, the utilisation of participatory approaches, through engagement and consultation with the community, are an effective tool to identify appropriate dimensions, domains and indicators (White & Pettit, 2004).

Participatory approaches use bottom-up processes which view participants not simply as research subjects, but as experts on the subject matter as well as partners within the research process (Chambers, 1994; J. Holland & Chambers, 2013). While the literature highlights that there can be drawbacks in utilising participatory approaches, such as burden on participants, confidentiality of data, ability to access a wide and representative sample, potential hijacking by local elite, and required resources (Alkire, 2008; Gough & McGregor, 2007; S. Holland, Renold, Ross, & Hillman, 2010; Lund & Saito-Jensen, 2013), they can result in benefits that go beyond the results of the study itself. For example, a review by Jagosh et al. (2012) suggests that participatory research has the potential to create systems-level change through participants being empowered to advocate for change. This may mean that the findings of such studies have greater utility and may be more likely to be implemented into policy. Furthermore, this increased empowerment may have benefits that go beyond the scope of a research project by improving the lives and wellbeing of participants and the community more generally (Titterton & Smart, 2008).

This study conducted a systematic review of participatory wellbeing frameworks throughout the world to better understand where they have been developed, with whom, what methods have been applied, and what wellbeing dimensions are raised. A participatory wellbeing framework, as defined in this review, results in a set of dimensions, themes or indicators that capture how a particular group conceptualises wellbeing, or what they feel they themselves need to live a good life. To be identified as participatory, the target population must be consulted with during the development of the framework to identify the conceptualisations of wellbeing or a ‘good life’ for that population group. It should be noted that there are some limitations, and even objections, to the use of participatory approaches in defining wellbeing. These include adaptive preferences (Khader, 2011; Martha C. Nussbaum, 2001), anthropocentrism (Srinivasan & Kasturirangan, 2016), elite capture (Alkire, 2008), and potential stigma in raising certain topics (Matthys, Acharya, & Khatri, 2021). However, despite these limitations, participatory wellbeing studies have an important role to play in ensuring that the voices of individuals and communities are incorporated into the development of wellbeing frameworks.

The current study provides a significant contribution to the literature in two ways. Firstly, while there are a small number of systematic and scoping reviews assessing the literature on aspects of wellbeing (e.g. Barrington-Leigh & Escande, 2018; Carrillo et al., 2021; Charlemagne-Badal, Lee, Butler, & Fraser, 2015; Cummins, 1996; Dex & Hollingworth, 2012; Miranti & Rowe, 2017), to date there has been no systematic review that examines participatory wellbeing studies globally and throughout the life course. Therefore, this review provides researchers, development practitioners and policy-makers with a useful reference point to begin exploring the work previously conducted in this space. This offers a deeper understanding of why participatory wellbeing studies have been conducted, where they have been conducted, with whom, and the methods used. This systematic review will therefore allow researchers and practitioners to better understand the studies already undertaken, and to draw on previous methodologies to improve the standard of studies going into the future.

The second key contribution of this study is to provide a detailed understanding of the dimensions of wellbeing important to individuals throughout the world, enabling greater insight into the diversity of how wellbeing is conceptualised. While a number of studies (including those contained within this review) have examined wellbeing conceptualisations for a particular context, or even compared understandings of wellbeing across multiple contexts, there has been no study to date that takes a macro-perspective to assess the varied conceptualisations of wellbeing throughout the world. By drawing on existing studies, we provide an insight, at a very broad level, on what matters to individuals. Furthermore, it provides greater insight into the extent of variation in what matters to people throughout different population groups. If the conceptions of wellbeing for different population groups throughout the world are found to be highly nuanced, this will highlight the potential value of participatory approaches to ensure that wellbeing measurement frameworks accurately and adequately reflect what matters to individuals.

This paper will firstly outline the methodology of this review, before going on to highlight the review results. In particular, we will assess the authors' motivations behind the development of the 130 participatory wellbeing studies, where they have been developed, how they have been developed, with whom, and the wellbeing dimensions emerging from eligible studies. Our results show that a variety of methods have been applied for participatory wellbeing studies, including a number of data collection methodologies and diverse participatory approaches. Further to this, by thematically analysing wellbeing dimensions raised in eligible studies and reducing them down to a list of 30 high-level wellbeing areas, we highlight that while there are strong similarities in what wellbeing means to different population groups, nuances exist within every community. This emphasises that wellbeing is understood in diverse and unique ways across the world, and that care needs to be taken when developing wellbeing frameworks to ensure that such frameworks adequately reflect what matters to a particular population group. This systematic review was pre-registered through the Open Science Foundation (Author, 2020).

Methods

Eligibility criteria

This review sought to analyse papers which developed a participatory wellbeing framework, defined as a set of dimensions or indicators which reflect what wellbeing, a good life, or quality of life means to individuals in a community or population group.

Inclusion criteria

Data collection methods that interact directly with the population group must have been utilised for the study, such as interviews, focus groups, surveys, or pictorial/visual representations (White & Pettit, 2004). Studies that also consulted with other individuals related to the target population (e.g. parents may have been included in consultations for child participatory wellbeing studies) were considered in-scope, as long as the target population were the primary participants.

The data collection process must have included at least one open-ended question regarding what wellbeing (or other positively-phrased similar terminology, including ‘good life’, ‘quality of life’ or ‘happiness’) means to the participants. Studies which sought to validate a pre-defined list of wellbeing dimensions were in-scope, however thematic analysis must have been applied for this validation exercise using an open-ended wellbeing question.

Studies were not excluded based on quality assessment by the authors or peers. Papers of any language were considered eligible to be included in the review.

Exclusion criteria

Studies that sought to examine what ill-being, poverty or deprivation meant to individuals were not included in the review. Studies which asked individuals about wellbeing in particular aspects of their lives, such as wellbeing at school or wellbeing as a parent, were not-in-scope as the understandings of wellbeing needed to be global in nature. Finally, studies which asked participants to rank wellbeing areas according to a pre-defined list were not in scope. Theses, entire books, protocols, conference proceedings and presentations were excluded.

Search strategy

Seven databases were searched for this study; Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts (ASSIA), PubMed, PsycInfo, Social Sciences Citation Index, EconLit, International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS) and Sociological Abstracts. These databases were chosen for their relevance to the research topic, and to cover the various disciplines that are in-scope (social sciences, psychology, economics and health). Google and Google Scholar were used to complement the database searches with grey literature, with the first 100 search results from each being screened. Papers published between January 2000 and January 2020 were eligible for inclusion in the review.

The key search terms covered the concepts of a) wellbeing, b) frameworks, and c) participatory approaches. A summary of the search terms is presented in Table 1, with the exact search strategy for each database outlined in Appendix 1.

Search concept	Search term
Wellbeing	“quality of life” OR “well-being” OR wellbeing OR “HRQOL” OR capability OR capabilities OR "good life" ¹
Framework	framework AND (dimension OR indicator OR domain OR theme)

¹ Studies that focus on understandings of the term ‘happiness’ were considered in-scope of the review. Future systematic reviews on this topic could adapt this search strategy by incorporating ‘happiness’ as a search-term. Future studies may also wish to incorporate the term ‘flourishing’

Participatory approach ²	"participatory method" OR "participatory technique" OR "participatory research" OR "participatory framework" OR "participatory approach" OR "participatory process" OR "participatory wellbeing" OR "participatory well-being" OR "participatory assessment" OR "participatory study" OR "participatory exercise" OR "participatory activity" OR "participatory evaluation" OR "self-perceive" OR "self perceive" OR "self-rate" OR "self rate"
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Table 1 Search terms

Note: HRQOL is a commonly used acronym for 'Health-related quality of life'

Selection process

After removing duplicates, two reviewers (KS and PC) screened non-blinded title, abstracts and full-texts of studies to assess eligibility, with reviewers resolving discrepancies in eligibility by consensus. If no consensus could be reached, a third reviewer (NB) resolved the discrepancies. The reference lists of the full-texts considered eligible were screened to incorporate additional studies (citation chasing, or iterative searching), which then subsequently went through the title, abstract and full-text screening process. While the original search strategy was conducted in English only, references listed in any language were in scope to be included through the iterative searching. Google and Google Scholar results were screened by one reviewer (KS), with results considered potentially eligible subsequently going through the title, abstract and full-text screening process.

Data collection process

Two reviewers (KS and MY) independently extracted data from all studies deemed eligible. This included publication information (such as authors, year of publication and journal), and study information. The study information extracted included:

- Country where the study was conducted and details on the specific context
- Details on the population group of interest (including any sub-groups)
- Whether individuals outside of the population of interest were included in consultations
- Purpose of the study and research questions
- Theoretical justification
- Participatory approach
- Data collection methodology (e.g. interviews, focus groups, surveys etc.)
- Sample size
- The wellbeing question posed in the research (e.g. "what does a good life mean to you?", or "what does wellbeing mean to you?")
- Wellbeing dimensions or themes
- Wellbeing sub-domains/sub-themes/indicators
- Analytical technique to derive wellbeing dimensions/sub-domains (i.e. either through a data-driven approach, or validation of an existing framework alongside thematic analysis)

The participatory approach variable required a set of specific response options during the extraction process, adapted from a widely used scale of public participation (IAP2, 2018). These comprised of the categories 'inform', 'enrich' (added for the purposes of this study), 'consult', 'involve', 'collaborate' and 'empower'. These are explained in detail in Appendix 2.

The theoretical justification variable was also coded using a set of response options, developed using Gasper's (2010) summary of Phillips (2006) as a starting point, and additional response options being added by reviewers as necessary. Upon completion of the first round of data extraction, the theoretical justifications for all papers were extracted again using the full list, outlined in Appendix 2. A study could have multiple theories attached to it. The study purpose was extracted as free text, with the first author (KS) undertaking a thematic analysis of the responses, and developing a set of possible codes,

² Future systematic reviews on this topic could adapt this search strategy by incorporating terms such as 'Conceptualisation' and 'Understanding'

summarised in Appendix 2. Data on ‘geographic level’, and ‘key terms to elicit wellbeing meanings’ were also thematically analysed by the first author (KS) and categorised following data extraction.

Any discrepancies in data extraction between the two reviewers were initially sought to be resolved through consensus. If no consensus could be reached, a third reviewer (NB) resolved discrepancies.

Coding of wellbeing areas

To code the conceptualisations of wellbeing raised in eligible studies, thematic analysis was undertaken using an iterative process³. The first step involved two authors (KS and MY) independently reviewing the conceptualisations of wellbeing raised in 20% of eligible studies (randomly selected) and identifying key areas of wellbeing. The list of wellbeing areas was drawn primarily from wellbeing dimensions provided in the papers as much as possible. Where dimensions were not explicitly provided in the paper, the authors derived keywords or wellbeing themes from analysing the analysis and discussion sections of the publications. Through consensus and discussion, a preliminary list of 30 wellbeing areas, which were broadly reflective of the understandings of wellbeing in all eligible studies was developed.

The second step encompassed coding the conceptualisations of wellbeing raised in each study to this list of 30 wellbeing areas. The lead author (KS) coded all studies, with two authors (MY and PC) cross-coding 50% of studies each. A single theme, dimension or indicator could be coded to more than one wellbeing area. The coding was contrasted, and any discrepancies were resolved by consensus. Minor adjustments to the 30 wellbeing areas were made where necessary, to ensure this list of 30 wellbeing areas adequately reflected the conceptualisations of wellbeing reported in eligible studies.

The third step entailed reviewing the coding of all studies to ensure any necessary changes following minor adjustments made to the list of 30 wellbeing areas. Finally, reliability and consistency checks were conducted to ensure that all three authors agreed with the coding scheme, and that identical keywords (with identical meanings) were consistently coded to the same wellbeing area. This involved back-coding the conceptualisations of wellbeing in all studies to the 30 wellbeing areas, so that a list of keywords for each wellbeing area was identified. The keywords were reviewed by the three authors to ensure reliability of the 30 wellbeing areas, and minor adjustments to the coding scheme were made. The final consistency check entailed the first author (KS) ensuring that all keywords were consistently coded to the relevant wellbeing area.

Results

Study selection

The PRISMA flow diagram for the review is outlined in Figure 1, highlighting that 130 studies were considered eligible for the review. After taking into account papers which drew on the same data, there were 121 unique studies which formed part of the review. As some of the 121 unique studies produced more than one set of wellbeing dimensions for different contexts, there were 134 unique frameworks, or collections of wellbeing dimensions assessed in the review. Appendix 3 provides a list of all references, including summary information on each.

³ One study (Amazonas, Kawa, Zanetti, Linke, & Sinisgalli, 2019) was excluded from this analysis due to lack of contextual information in the paper to permit accurate coding.

Figure 1: PRISMA flow diagram

Why have participatory wellbeing studies been undertaken?

A range of different purposes for participatory wellbeing studies were identified within the papers. As highlighted in Figure 2, by far the most common stated purpose was from an anthropological perspective, to simply define what wellbeing means to that population group (46%). For example, Camfield (2006) sought to identify the elements important for subjective wellbeing in four developing countries to make up for the over-concentration of such research in rich Western countries, while

Kono and Walker (2020) conducted their study to develop and validate a theory on how Japanese university students pursue *ikigai*, or a life worth living.

Another common stated purpose for undertaking the study was methodology piloting and validation (15%). This relatively large proportion is not surprising, given that measuring wellbeing through participatory approaches is still in its relative infancy. Many such studies assessed the suitability of using the Schedule for the Evaluation of Individual Quality of Life (SEIQoL)⁴, which explores wellbeing through a health lens (e.g. Bayle, Kemoun, Migaud, & Thevenon, 2000; LeVasseur, Green, & Talman, 2005; Prince & Gerber, 2001; Smith, Taylor, & Mitchell, 2000). Many others piloted various qualitative methodologies as an approach to elicit wellbeing conceptualisations (Amazonas et al., 2019; Armstrong, Boyden, Galappatti, & Hart, 2004; Crivello, Camfield, & Woodhead, 2009).

Figure 2: Purpose of studies (%)

A range of theoretical justifications for the studies were provided by authors, covering a wide range of disciplines including the health sciences, psychology, environmental science, the social sciences, and development. Figure 3 outlines the various theoretical justifications for the studies, with ‘general wellbeing’ being the most common justification (defined as those studies which refer to the value of applying wellbeing measures more generally), utilised in 34% of studies (e.g. Maulana, Obst, & Khawaja, 2018). Studies could be classified under more than one theoretical justification. While happiness and subjective wellbeing are highly related, these theories were separated given that many such studies strongly classified their approach with either happiness or subjective wellbeing. These theoretical justifications are specified in greater detail in Appendix 2.

⁴ SEIQoL is a self-administered survey whereby participants are asked to write down the five areas of life they consider most important in determining their quality of life (O’Boyle, Browne, Hickey, McGee, & Joyce, 1995). The SEIQoL tool has predominantly been applied within the medical sciences.

Figure 3: Theories for studies (%)

Note: Graph outlines the percentage of studies utilising each theoretical justification. The total sum of percentages is greater than 100% as multiple theories could be selected for each study

Where have participatory wellbeing studies been conducted?

Participatory wellbeing studies have been undertaken in all five inhabited regions of the world (Europe, Americas, Asia, Africa and Oceania)⁵, as well as two studies which did not look at any specific region of the world, but rather examined wellbeing conceptualisations at a global level (Biggeri, Libanora, Mariani, & Menchini, 2006; Bintliff, Stark, Brown, & Alonso, 2018). Figure 4 highlights that a large portion of studies (42%) have been undertaken in Europe. These predominantly took place in the United Kingdom (19 of 51 European studies). 23% of studies were conducted in the Americas, most notably in the United States and Canada (10 and 9 of 28 studies in the Americas respectively), 19% of studies were conducted in Asia (with a reasonable spread across countries), 16% of studies were conducted in Africa (with countries represented being Burundi, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Malawi, Kenya, Namibia, Uganda, South Africa and South Sudan), and 12% of studies were conducted in Oceania (predominantly in Australia, with 12 of 15 Oceanic studies undertaken there).

It is important to highlight that while a broad range of countries were represented in the review, there was a strong bias toward certain English-speaking countries (United Kingdom, Australia, United States and Canada). While this may have in-part been caused by the fact that the search strategy was conducted in English, it should also be noted that there has been a strong movement within these countries toward the use of wellbeing measures for policy (Barrington-Leigh & Escande, 2018; Exton & Shinwell, 2018). All up, participatory wellbeing studies were conducted in 50 separate countries, as outlined in Appendix 4.

⁵ The regional analysis was conducted for descriptive purposes only, recognising that within each region there is a high level of cultural and economic disparity

Figure 4: Regions where participatory wellbeing studies have been conducted (%)

The total sum of percentages is greater than 100% as some studies were conducted in multiple regions. One study was excluded from this analysis (Fossas, 2019) as the geographic context of the study was not clear

The studies in scope of the review represented different levels of geography where participatory approaches have been undertaken. Figure 5 shows that 23% of studies are considered “place-based”, in that they sought to reflect the understandings of wellbeing within a small geographic community (e.g. village, suburb, town or city). Examples of such papers include a study to examine meanings of wellbeing for street children in Kampala (Biggeri & Anich, 2009), and a study to understand quality of life perceptions of older adults in a London borough (Graham Beaumont & Kenealy, 2004). 27% of studies did not seek to represent the views of a particular geographic community, but rather a global representation of wellbeing understandings for individuals with a particular characteristic, such as an illness (e.g. Carlson, Bultz, & Morris, 2005; Pitkänen, Hätönen, Kuosmanen, & Välimäki, 2009).

Figure 5: Geographic level of studies (%)

The distribution of studies by country income level is represented in Figure 6, based on World Bank 2020-2021 income classifications (The World Bank, 2021). It shows that participatory wellbeing frameworks are heavily biased toward high income countries, with 75% of studies based in a high-income country, and only 9% in a low-income country. In terms of the absolute number of countries within each category, there were 7 different countries in the “low income” category, 7 different

countries in the “lower-middle income” category, 12 different countries in the “upper-middle income” category, and 24 different countries in the “high-income” category.⁶

Figure 6: Percentage of studies by country income level, based on World Bank income classifications (The World Bank, 2021)

The total sum of percentages is greater than 100% as some studies were conducted with multiple countries in different income levels. Three studies were excluded from this analysis (Biggeri & Anich, 2009; Bintliff et al., 2018; Fossas, 2019) as they either examined wellbeing at a global level (with no specific countries identified), or they did not clearly specify a country

With whom have participatory wellbeing studies been developed?

Participatory wellbeing studies have been developed with individuals at all stages of the life course, from early childhood to those at the end of life. As shown in Figure 7, studies were predominantly undertaken with adults (36%), however a large portion of studies were conducted with children and young people (28%, self-identified in the papers but loosely defined as those aged under 18), and older adults (17%). Studies that examined a general community (i.e. those that did not have a focus on age) included those focussed on specific geographic communities or those with particular characteristics (such as those with an illness), making up 15% of studies.

⁶ The 27% of studies which did not seek to reflect the views of a geographic community were coded according to the country of data collection.

Figure 7: Studies by stage of life course (%)

The total sum of percentages is greater than 100% as some studies were conducted with individuals at multiple life stages.

Beyond life stage and country, some studies were conducted with population groups of specific characteristics. These included those with an illness (n=28), Indigenous population groups (n=6), those who had experienced conflict or displacement (n=5), university students (n=5), those who are experiencing homelessness (n=3), those who are experiencing another form of material disadvantage (n=4), and those with disability (n=3). The studies associated with population groups having these characteristics are identified in the full list of studies in Appendix 3.

While the majority of studies (85%, n=103) were conducted exclusively with the population of interest, some studies also sought the views of those outside of the target group (15%, n=18) (e.g. Banerjee, Willis, Graham, & Gurland, 2010; Parry et al., 2010). These studies incorporated the views of parents, carers, men (for studies focussed on women), policy officials and professionals.

How have participatory wellbeing studies been undertaken? Methodologies and participatory approaches

A wide range of approaches have been used to undertake participatory wellbeing studies which can be replicated for future projects. In this section, we examine the data collection methodology, the question used to elicit wellbeing meanings, the participatory technique, and finally the analysis approach undertaken to develop the dimensions and sub-domains of wellbeing.

The data collection methodologies employed were predominantly interviews and focus groups (each used in 42% of studies), followed by surveys (used in 37% of studies), and finally creative pieces including drawings, photographs and essays (used in 14% of studies). Many studies (32%) used a mix of these approaches. In particular, creative pieces were almost always accompanied by interviews or focus groups.

Figure 8: % of studies using given data collection methodology

The total sum of percentages is greater than 100% as some studies were conducted using multiple methodologies

A variety of survey, interview and focus group questions were used to elicit the meanings of a good life, or wellbeing, for participants. As highlighted in Figure 9, the most common terms used were ‘quality of life’, ‘good life’, ‘happiness’, ‘wellbeing’, ‘important life aspects’ and ‘wellness’. Three studies used a cultural/linguistic variation of the term ‘wellbeing’, such as ‘nallam irukka’ for a study in Sri Lanka (Armstrong et al., 2004), ‘ikigai’ for a study in Japan (Kono & Walker, 2020), and ‘mabu liyan’ for a study with the Yawuru people in Australia (Yap & Yu, 2016). It is well documented that the choice of method can bias how participants respond in social research studies (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, & Podsakoff, 2012). Therefore, it is possible that these different terminologies may result in some wellbeing dimensions being more likely to be raised than others. This can be explored through future research.

Figure 9: % of studies using given key term within question to elicit wellbeing meanings

The total sum of percentages is greater than 100% as some studies used multiple questions

As explained in the Methodology section and further described in Appendix 2, a scale comprised of six categories was used to describe the participatory approach utilised in studies, which is further articulated in Appendix 2. As shown in Figure 10, the vast majority of studies (62%, n=75) sat on the lowest end of the participatory scale in the ‘Inform’ category. These studies comprised of one stage of data collection, whereby researchers did not seek to further clarify wellbeing meanings following data collection, or did not ask participants to come to a final consensus during focus group discussions.

Following that, 11% (n=13) of studies came under the ‘Enrich’ category, meaning that the researchers for these studies made a greater effort to reduce power imbalances between participants and researchers and data may have been collected and reviewed through multiple stages. 19% (n=23) of studies utilised a consultative methodology, whereby the data collection process was more of a two-way process, with researchers clarifying wellbeing meanings with participants following data collection or groups being asked to come to a final consensus. Very few studies (5%, n=6) used an ‘involve’ methodology, whereby participants are directly involved in the research design, analysis or planning process. Only 3% (n=4) of studies utilised a collaborative methodology, whereby the research team and individuals from the population of interest work together in an equal partnership to undertake the study. Finally, no study in the review used an ‘empower’ methodology, which is defined as entirely community-led.

Figure 10: Participatory approach utilised in studies (%)

In order to be eligible for the review, some thematic analysis must have been used to derive wellbeing dimensions and/or sub-domains. However, some studies also incorporated validation of resulting dimensions to existing frameworks when deriving wellbeing dimensions and sub-domains. Overall, 86% (n=104) used pure thematic analysis, while 14% (n=17) also incorporated some framework validation. This included studies which validated their resulting dimensions to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment framework (Abunge, Coulthard, & Daw, 2013; Beauchamp, Woodhouse, Clements, & Milner-Gulland, 2018; Pereira, Queiroz, Pereira, & Vicente, 2005), as well as one study which validated results to Nussbaum’s (2011) list of central capabilities (Andresen & Fegter, 2011).

What wellbeing areas are raised?

The thematic analysis of wellbeing dimensions, domains, themes and indicators raised within the participatory wellbeing frameworks identified 30 broad wellbeing areas. These wellbeing areas span a broad range of topics including relationships, emotional wellbeing, self-concept, happiness, physical health, spirituality, independence and autonomy, material needs, community, connection to culture, and environment. A full list of the 30 areas alongside a brief description and example keywords is shown in Table 2.

Wellbeing area	Description	Example keywords
Family relationships	Relationships with children, parents, siblings and other family members. Does not include relationship with spouse	Parental love; Happiness in the family; Family harmony; Family relations; Family and kinship

Other relationships	Relationships with anyone other than the family or spouse, including friends and neighbours	Friendship; Supportive friends; Neighbours; Peers; Human contacts
Emotional wellbeing	The presence of a positive mood, or absence of a negative mood. This also includes the broad domain of 'Health'	Health; Emotions; Stress; Nervousness; Anxiety; Psychological
Physical health	Being physically healthy, free of illness or engaging in physical activity	Health; Exercise; Good nutrition; Physical strength; Walking; Illness
Financial security and money	Being financially secure and having money for socially-perceived necessities	Finances; Money; Financial welfare; Income; Not poor
Recreation and leisure	Activities, recreation and leisure time	Entertainment; Leisure; Activities; Hobbies; Gardening; Relaxation; Recreation
Community and belongingness	Integration with a community, social cohesion, supports, and a sense of belonging	Unity; Community; Support networks; Social life; Belongingness; Reciprocity
Education and knowledge	The value of learning, acquiring knowledge and formal education	Education; Learning; School; Academic
Home	The importance of housing and home	Home; Accommodation; A good house
Independence and autonomy	Freedom, independence and autonomy	Decision-making; Independent; Freedom; Choice; Agency; Autonomy
Decent work	Access to and satisfaction with employment	Job; Guaranteed work; Job satisfaction; Availability of jobs
Intimate relationships	Relationship with spouse or intimate partner	Love; Supportive partner; Spouse; Being in love
Basic material needs	The basic needs (excluding housing) that are essential for life	Essential needs; Material basics; Clothes; Food
Happiness	Notions related to happiness or joy	Happiness; Pleasure; Joy; Enjoying life
Treated with dignity and respect	Feeling respected and having a sense of dignity	Respect; Dignity; Voice; Social status; Good appearance; Reputation
Nature, environment and non-human species	The importance of nature, environment and non-human species	Nature; Pets; Environment; Clean neighbourhood; Looking after Country ⁷
Religion and spirituality	The importance of religion or spirituality	Spirituality; God; Praying; Faith; Religion; Church
Achievement and personal growth	Achievement in life and personal growth	Achievement; Progress; Life skills; Growth; Personal development; Competition; Success
Personal values and pro-social behaviours	Living up to personal values and exhibiting pro-social behaviours	Social justice; Developing values and morals; Good behaviour; Honest; Respectful; Other-regarding
Satisfaction and contentment	Feelings of satisfaction and contentment, or assessments of one's life expressed through life evaluations	Feeling settled; Satisfaction; Acceptance; Serenity; Peace of mind; Life satisfaction; Tranquillity
Personal safety	Being safe and free from violence in all its forms	Safety; Bodily integrity; Safe and secure; Danger avoidance; Safe neighbourhood
Vital services and supports	Access to services and supports deemed as essential (except education)	Medical care; Government and social policy; Council services; Care assistance

⁷ <https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/welcome-country#toc-what-is-country->

Life events and experiences	Important life events and experiences	Birthday celebrations; Get married and have a family; Travel; Mark events with rituals
Wealth and assets	Economic prosperity through having access to wealth and assets	Wealth; Land; Assets; Debt; Economic status
Sense of purpose and meaning	Sense of purpose or meaning in life, including having self-perceived important roles	Purpose; Giving meaning to the day; Feeling useful; A fulfilling life; Household responsibility
Identity and self-concept	Feelings about oneself	Self-esteem; Self-worth; Identity; Positive self-image; Self-concept
Aspirations for future	Optimism and aspirations for the future	Having goals; Looking forward; Hope; Life aspirations
Civic engagement	Political and civic engagement	Volunteering; Participating; Politics; Civic life
Mobility	Transportation and the ability to get around	Transport; Getting about; Motor car
Connection to culture	Being connected to one's culture	Culture; Traditional knowledge stories; Looking after Country; Engage in cultural traditions

Table 2: Description of 30 wellbeing areas identified through thematic analysis

Figure 11 illustrates the percentage of studies for which each of these 30 wellbeing areas are raised. This analysis highlights areas such as family relationships (90%), other relationships (90%), emotional wellbeing (87%), physical health (83%), financial security and money (71%), recreation and leisure (70%), and community and belongingness (67%) are most commonly noted as being important for a good life in many communities included in the review. While more novel areas of wellbeing, such as connection to culture (9%), mobility (17%), civic engagement (23%), aspirations for future (23%), identity and self-concept (25%), and sense of purpose and meaning (27%) are raised less-often, they are still reported in a considerable number of studies. Indeed, when analysing the six least-raised areas as a group (connection to culture; mobility; civic engagement; aspirations future; identity and self-concept; and sense of purpose and meaning), we find that at least one of these wellbeing areas is raised in two-thirds (66%) of studies. This emphasises that while there are similarities in what matters to people throughout the world, the vast majority of studies also include more novel wellbeing areas.

Figure 11: Studies identifying each wellbeing area (%)

The median number of wellbeing areas coded within each framework was 14. Figure 12 outlines the number of wellbeing areas coded within the frameworks, highlighting that all frameworks identified between 6 and 26 wellbeing areas. It is important to note that even at the lower end of the spectrum, a minimum of six wellbeing areas suggests that wellbeing is considered by individuals and communities to be multi-dimensional.

Figure 12: % of frameworks identifying given number of wellbeing areas

Discussion

The present results are significant in at least three major respects, namely the range of methodologies and approaches applied to undertake participatory wellbeing studies; the utility of a list of thirty overarching wellbeing areas; and the diversity and nuance of conceptualisations of wellbeing.

Firstly, the development of participatory wellbeing studies can entail a wide range of techniques and approaches. Certain methods may be more appropriate in particular contexts. Researchers, community development workers and policymakers conducting work within this space can use the studies identified in this review as a reference to help guide the development of their own methodology. Thus, this study provides a comprehensive reference which researchers can use to improve the quality of their studies.

One particularly interesting finding was the fact that most studies sat at the lowest end of the participatory scale, within the “inform” category. This raises a critical question about the central tenet of participatory approaches, in that they seek to transform power relations through research methodologies, and also points to the shortfall in realising the full potential in participatory research across the continuum. There can be drawbacks to incorporating higher levels of participation into studies, and valid reasons not to. For example, focus groups can be dominated by certain individuals, including elites (Alkire, 2008); individuals may have adaptive preferences making consultation challenging to understand the true conceptualisations of wellbeing for individuals and communities (Khader, 2011; Martha C. Nussbaum, 2001); and there may be stigma or taboos in raising certain areas of wellbeing (Matthys et al., 2021). However despite these limitations, when implemented appropriately, participatory techniques can come with a number of benefits (Jagosh et al., 2012). Thus, researchers, development practitioners and policy-makers may wish to consider ways they can increase the level of participation in their studies and projects. The list of eligible studies identified in this review, and in particular, their methodology, can help support researchers, organisations and policymakers to achieve this.

The review also highlighted several gaps where we still have little understanding of what matters to certain population groups. There is an over-representation of studies in English-speaking countries (Australia and United Kingdom in particular, given their population size), and very few studies in some geographic areas, such as Africa. Only 25% of studies were conducted in low, lower-middle, or upper-middle income countries. While this over-representation may have been influenced by the search strategy being conducted only in English (keeping in mind that some non-English papers were identified through the iterative searching process), it still highlights that there is a relative dearth in published English-language papers (which tend to be the most cited in academic journals and are therefore more likely to have increased exposure). In contrast, representation across the life-course

was reasonably good, with age groups from young children to older adults represented. However, greater emphasis could be placed on conducting research with more minority population groups. For example, we did not find any studies that were conducted with population groups identifying as LGBTQI+.

A second important outcome of this study is the identification of the thirty wellbeing areas, which at a very broad level, summarise how wellbeing is conceptualised throughout the world and over the life-course. While certain population groups may be more likely to raise particular areas as important to their wellbeing, and there are differences in how each of these areas are conceptualised (see below), this list of thirty wellbeing areas can be used by researchers, development practitioners and policymakers to better understand how wellbeing *may* be understood in their communities or populations of interest. In situations where participatory research is not feasible, researchers may wish to draw upon this list to consider what areas of wellbeing are important to measure in their research; development practitioners can use these findings to help support the development and enhancement of programs; and policymakers can make use of this list to consider how policy can help improve the lives of individuals and communities in a meaningful way.

Thirdly, the study illustrates a high level of diversity in how population groups conceptualise wellbeing. As shown in the findings, there are similarities in what matters to people throughout the world, with aspects such as relationships, financial security and emotional wellbeing highlighted in the vast majority of frameworks. However, nuances exist within every group and also within each wellbeing area. When analysing the more novel wellbeing areas as a group (sense of purpose and meaning; civic engagement; aspirations for future; identity and self-concept; mobility; and connection to culture), at least one of these areas was raised in two-thirds of frameworks. This indicates that a large portion of population groups have a more nuanced understanding of wellbeing. This is an important finding and emphasises the importance and utility of applying participatory methods, as we may only become aware of these more novel wellbeing areas when using such approaches.

Furthermore, the thematic analysis has simply described the wellbeing conceptualisations at an overarching level. While there are similarities in the way each of these 30 wellbeing areas are conceptualised between different population groups, each is nuanced in its own way. For example, ‘personal values and prosocial behaviours’ is understood in varying ways by different population groups, including good tarbia (manners and relationships with others) for war affected children in Kabul (De Berry et al., 2003), having good conduct for women in rural Malawi (Greco, Skordis-Worrall, Mkandawire, & Mills, 2015), and developing values and morals for children in Australia (ARACY, 2012). ‘Connection to culture’ is conceptualised as having culture and knowledge for individuals in Italy and Cuba (Galati, Manzano, & Sotgiu, 2006), while it is more specifically about singing and dancing together, a tradition known as Akazehe, for conflict-affected women in Burundi (Bragin, Onta, Janepher, Nzeyimana, & Eibs, 2014). Thus, while this data can be used for further analysis to better understand at a broad level how wellbeing may be understood differently for population groups of different cultural, economic or socio-demographic backgrounds, there is also a large degree of variation in how each of the 30 wellbeing areas are understood. This again emphasises the importance and value of participatory approaches to better capture these nuanced conceptualisations of wellbeing.

Limitations

When interpreting these results, there are a number of limitations of the study that should be kept in mind. Firstly, this study is not representative of the global population, but rather only studies that have been undertaken and published. While it is not the intention of the paper to advocate for using this list as a definitive account of what wellbeing means to people throughout the world, the scope and coverage of the systematic review provide a good guide as to what wellbeing does mean to people based on eligible existing studies. It is important to note that some bias may be present through the

over-representation of certain population groups (for example, those living in high-income countries), and disciplines (with studies from a medical science background heavily represented).

Secondly, it is important to be aware that we are taking a macro-level perspective through the thematic analysis of wellbeing areas. Because of this, we may miss some distinctiveness and nuance as to what actually matters to population groups at the more granular level. This may be particularly pertinent for non-English papers as the authors were reliant on translations.

Thirdly, the way the question is asked likely matters. While the question eliciting conceptualisations of wellbeing in eligible studies needed to be global in nature, participants may have been primed to some extent by the focus of the study. For example, if a study sought to explore understandings of wellbeing for school students, participants may have implicitly framed their responses based on their identity as a 'school student' (see McConnell, 2010). Furthermore, asking about one's quality of life, while seemingly synonymous with what makes a good life or what brings about happiness, is likely to elicit different responses and wellbeing meanings. Further research drawing on this data can examine the extent of this.

Finally, it should be noted that thematic analysis of the wellbeing conceptualisations entailed analysing what was reported by authors (and subsequently, how they themselves interpreted the raw data), as opposed to analysing what was reported by population groups directly. While some authors provided a detailed description of wellbeing dimensions and themes, others simply gave a list with little description. One paper was not used in the analysis of wellbeing dimensions as there was insufficient context provided around the results to enable coding. The process of cross-coding by two authors, as well as consistency and reliability checks, helped to ensure that the coding of wellbeing areas aligned with how wellbeing conceptualisations were reported by eligible studies.

Conclusion

This study provides a unique insight into participatory wellbeing studies, their methodology, and the wellbeing dimensions elicited from these studies. The findings highlight that participatory wellbeing studies apply a broad range of methodologies and approaches from which researchers, development practitioners and policymakers can draw on to help develop and enhance their own studies in similar fields. In particular, the participatory wellbeing studies eligible in the review primarily saw participants as simply informants as opposed to active research participants, with a few exceptions. Thus, those undertaking research within this field may wish to draw on the methodologies with higher levels of research participation which are contained in this review.

Furthermore, the list of thirty wellbeing areas, which at a very broad level summarise how wellbeing is conceptualised by population groups throughout the world and over the life course can be useful in and of itself. For example, in cases where participatory research is not feasible, this list can be used to inform wellbeing measurement, as well as program and policy development.

Finally, the study identified that while there are similarities in how different population groups understand wellbeing, with certain dimensions such as relationships, emotional wellbeing and financial security being commonly cited, the vast majority of studies also cited more novel dimensions that are less commonly used in wellbeing frameworks.

In sum, this review highlights the importance of considering a broad range of wellbeing areas when developing a wellbeing framework, and if possible, utilising participatory approaches. Doing so will help to ensure that wellbeing frameworks more closely reflect how population groups around the world truly conceptualise and understand wellbeing.

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Appendix 1: Search strategies by database

Database	Search terms
ASSIA	(“quality of life” OR “well-being” OR wellbeing OR “HRQOL” OR capability OR capabilities OR "good life") AND framework AND (dimension OR indicator OR domain OR theme) AND ("participatory method" OR "participatory technique" OR "participatory research" OR "participatory framework" OR "participatory approach" OR "participatory process" OR "participatory wellbeing" OR "participatory well-being" OR "participatory assessment" OR "participatory mechanism" OR "participatory exercise" OR "participatory study" OR "participatory studies" OR "participatory activity" OR "participatory activities" OR "participatory evaluation" OR "self rate" OR "self-rate" OR "self-perceive" OR "self perceive" OR "self assess" OR "self-assess" OR "self generate" OR "self-generate" OR "person generate" OR "person-generate")
PubMed	(“quality of life” OR “well-being” OR wellbeing OR “HRQOL” OR capability OR capabilities OR "good life") AND framework AND (dimension OR indicator OR domain OR theme) AND ("participatory method" OR "participatory technique" OR "participatory research" OR "participatory framework" OR "participatory approach" OR "participatory process" OR "participatory wellbeing" OR "participatory well-being" OR "participatory assessment" OR "participatory mechanism" OR "participatory exercise" OR "participatory study" OR "participatory studies" OR "participatory activity" OR "participatory activities" OR "participatory evaluation" OR "self rate" OR "self-rate" OR "self-perceive" OR "self perceive" OR "self assess" OR "self-assess" OR "self generate" OR "self-generate" OR "person generate" OR "person-generate")
PsycInfo	((quality adj2 life) OR well-being OR wellbeing OR HRQOL OR capability OR capabilities OR (good adj life)) AND framework AND (dimension OR indicator OR domain theme) AND ((participatory adj (method OR technique OR research OR framework OR approach OR process OR wellbeing OR well-being OR assessment OR mechanism OR study OR studies OR exercise OR activity OR activities OR evaluation)) OR self-perceive OR (self adj perceive) OR self-rate OR (self adj rate) OR self-assess OR (self adj assess) OR self-generate OR (self adj generate) OR person-generate OR (person adj generate))
Social Sciences Citation Index	(“quality of life” OR “well-being” OR wellbeing OR “HRQOL” OR capability OR capabilities OR "good life") AND framework AND (dimension OR indicator OR domain OR theme) AND ("participatory method" OR "participatory technique" OR "participatory research" OR "participatory framework" OR "participatory approach" OR "participatory process" OR "participatory wellbeing" OR "participatory well-being" OR "participatory assessment" OR "participatory mechanism" OR "participatory exercise" OR "participatory study" OR "participatory studies" OR "participatory activity" OR "participatory activities" OR "participatory evaluation" OR "self rate" OR "self-rate" OR "self-perceive" OR "self perceive" OR "self assess" OR "self-assess" OR "self generate" OR "self-generate" OR "person generate" OR "person-generate")
EconLit	(“quality of life” OR “well-being” OR wellbeing OR “HRQOL” OR capability OR capabilities OR "good life") AND framework AND (dimension OR indicator OR domain OR theme) AND ("participatory method" OR "participatory technique" OR "participatory research" OR "participatory framework" OR "participatory approach" OR "participatory process" OR "participatory wellbeing" OR "participatory well-being" OR "participatory assessment" OR "participatory mechanism" OR "participatory exercise" OR "participatory study" OR "participatory studies" OR "participatory activity" OR "participatory activities" OR "participatory evaluation" OR "self rate" OR "self-rate" OR "self-perceive" OR "self perceive" OR "self assess" OR "self-assess" OR "self generate" OR "self-generate" OR "person generate" OR "person-generate")
IBSS	(“quality of life” OR “well-being” OR wellbeing OR “HRQOL” OR capability OR capabilities OR "good life") AND framework AND (dimension OR indicator OR domain OR theme) AND ("participatory method" OR "participatory technique" OR "participatory research" OR "participatory framework"

	OR "participatory approach" OR "participatory process" OR "participatory wellbeing" OR "participatory well-being" OR "participatory assessment" OR "participatory mechanism" OR "participatory exercise" OR "participatory study" OR "participatory studies" OR "participatory activity" OR "participatory activities" OR "participatory evaluation" OR "self rate" OR "self-rate" OR "self-perceive" OR "self perceive" OR "self assess" OR "self-assess" OR "self generate" OR "self-generate" OR "person generate" OR "person-generate")
Sociological Abstracts	(“quality of life” OR “well-being” OR wellbeing OR “HRQOL” OR capability OR capabilities OR "good life") AND framework AND (dimension OR indicator OR domain OR theme) AND ("participatory method" OR "participatory technique" OR "participatory research" OR "participatory framework" OR "participatory approach" OR "participatory process" OR "participatory wellbeing" OR "participatory well-being" OR "participatory assessment" OR "participatory mechanism" OR "participatory exercise" OR "participatory study" OR "participatory studies" OR "participatory activity" OR "participatory activities" OR "participatory evaluation" OR "self rate" OR "self-rate" OR "self-perceive" OR "self perceive" OR "self assess" OR "self-assess" OR "self generate" OR "self-generate" OR "person generate" OR "person-generate")
Google	(“quality of life” OR “well-being” OR wellbeing OR “HRQOL” OR capability OR capabilities OR "good life") AND framework AND (dimension OR indicator OR domain OR theme) AND ("participatory method" OR "participatory technique" OR "participatory research" OR "participatory framework" OR "participatory approach" OR "participatory process" OR "participatory wellbeing" OR "participatory well-being" OR "participatory assessment" OR "participatory mechanism" OR "participatory exercise" OR "participatory study" OR "participatory studies" OR "participatory activity" OR "participatory activities" OR "participatory evaluation" OR "self rate" OR "self-rate" OR "self-perceive" OR "self perceive" OR "self assess" OR "self-assess" OR "self generate" OR "self-generate" OR "person generate" OR "person-generate")
Google Scholar	(“quality of life” OR “well-being” OR wellbeing OR “HRQOL” OR capability OR capabilities OR "good life") AND framework AND (dimension OR indicator OR domain OR theme) AND ("participatory method" OR "participatory technique" OR "participatory research" OR "participatory framework" OR "participatory approach" OR "participatory process" OR "participatory wellbeing" OR "participatory well-being" OR "participatory assessment" OR "participatory mechanism" OR "participatory exercise" OR "participatory study" OR "participatory studies" OR "participatory activity" OR "participatory activities" OR "participatory evaluation" OR "self rate" OR "self-rate" OR "self-perceive" OR "self perceive" OR "self assess" OR "self-assess" OR "self generate" OR "self-generate" OR "person generate" OR "person-generate")

Appendix 2: Data extraction categories

Life stage	
Children and young people	Studies that focus on children and/or young people, aged 0-18.
Young adults	Studies that focus on young adults, aged over 18. The exact range is undefined, and is left for authors to define, however a rough guideline is those younger than 29.
Adults	Studies for which the population group is targeted towards adults only (i.e. studies that exclusively do not focus on children, young people, young adults or older adults)
Older adults	Studies which articulate a focus on older adults, with no strict age range applied.
General community	This is for studies that do not necessarily focus on a specific life stage, but rather a general community. This is predominantly for studies that are focussed on a geographic community (which may or may not include children or young people as participants), and those with a specific health condition.
Theoretical	
Capability approach	Studies that highlight the Capability Approach as a key theory
Quality of life (QoL)	Studies that use the frame/terminology of 'quality of life'
Health-related quality of life (HRQoL)	Studies that use QoL within a health context. Studies that focus on QoL for a specific illness should be classed as HRQoL, not QoL. As noted by Phillips (2006), many definitions of HRQoL are not dissimilar to QoL. Thus, for that reason, studies that define QoL within the health context are considered HRQoL.
Subjective wellbeing	Studies that highlight subjective wellbeing or life satisfaction as a theoretical basis. Note that while there is a strong crossover between subjective wellbeing and happiness, these were coded separately.
Happiness	Studies that cite happiness as a theoretical basis. Note that while there is a strong crossover between subjective wellbeing and happiness, these were coded separately.
Psychosocial wellbeing	Studies that use psychosocial wellbeing, mental health or trauma as a theoretical basis.
Sustainability	Studies for which draw on theories of sustainability, environment or ecology as a motivator for measuring human wellbeing.
Indigenous wellbeing	Studies framed through an Indigenous lens. The motivation for such studies is often that wellbeing is perceived differently by an Indigenous community, in contrast to non-Indigenous conceptions of wellbeing.
Children's voice	Studies that cite the child right's movement and note the importance of hearing the views of children themselves. Being a participatory child wellbeing study does not necessarily mean that it will be coded to this theoretical justification, as they must highlight child rights/voice as a theoretical motivation.
General wellbeing	Studies that note the importance of measuring wellbeing more generally, without reference to a specific theory
Type of participation	
Inform	Participants inform the researchers regarding perceptions of wellbeing through a single stage process. Researchers do not seek to further clarify wellbeing meanings following the original data collection. No participants are involved in the research design/analysis/planning process.
Enrich	Greater effort is made on the part of the researcher to reduce power imbalances between participants and researchers. Data collection is generally collected through multiple stages. Participants may also go through a more rigorous data collection process. Participants are not asked for feedback on the resulting framework or themes arising from the analysis.

Consult	Development of the framework is a two-way process, whereby researchers further clarify wellbeing meanings with participants. This could include studies utilising focus groups whereby groups are asked to come to a final consensus on wellbeing meanings. Participants usually have some involvement in the analysis phase of the research (i.e. helping to develop final wellbeing dimensions/themes), but they are not included as part of the research team.
Involve	Individuals in the community or population group of interest are directly involved in the research design/analysis/planning process. The study is researcher-led.
Collaborate	The study is co-led by researchers external to the community alongside people within the community, as equals.
Empower	The study is led entirely by those in the community. The community may contract external researchers to assist.
I Approach for dimension/sub-domain derivation	
Data-driven	The final set of wellbeing dimensions is developed solely through analysis of the data and is not influenced by any pre-defined framework.
Framework validation/data-driven	Study seeks to collect data to validate a pre-defined framework. However, to be eligible for the study, dimensions and/or sub-domains must be derived through a data-driven approach.

Appendix 3 – Included studies

Study reference	Theoretical justification	Purpose	Country of data collection	Geographic level	Life stage	Special population group
Abunge, C., Coulthard, S., & Daw, T. M. (2013). Connecting Marine Ecosystem Services to Human Well-being: Insights from Participatory Well-being Assessment in Kenya. <i>Ambio</i> , 42(8), 1010-1021. doi:10.1007/s13280-013-0456-9	Capability Approach/Sustainability	Ecosystem and wellbeing	Kenya	Place-based	General community	-
Al-Janabi, H., Flynn, T. N., & Coast, J. (2012). Development of a self-report measure of capability wellbeing for adults: the ICECAP-A. <i>Quality of Life Research</i> , 21(1), 167-176. doi:10.1007/s11136-011-9927-2	Capability Approach	Measurement tool	United Kingdom	Subnational	Adults	-
Alfaro-Inzunza, J., Lorena Ramírez-Casas Del, V., & Varela, J. J. (2019). Notions of Life Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction in Children and Adolescents of Low Socioeconomic Status in Chile. <i>Child Indicators Research</i> , 12(6), 1897-1913. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s12187-018-9618-4	Subjective wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Chile	National	Children and young people	Disadvantage
Amazonas, I. T., Kawa, N. C., Zanetti, V., Linke, I., & Sinisgalli, P. A. (2019). Using Rich Pictures to Model the 'Good Life' in Indigenous Communities of the Tumucumaque Complex in Brazilian Amazonia. <i>Human Ecology</i> , 47(3), 341-354. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10745-019-0076-5	Indigenous wellbeing/Sustainability	Methodology piloting and validation	Brazil	Place-based	Young adults	Indigenous
Andresen, S. & Fegter, S. (2011). Children Growing Up in Poverty and Their Ideas on What Constitutes a Good Life: Childhood Studies in Germany. In (Vol. 4, pp. 1-19). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.	Children's voice/Capability Approach	Define wellbeing	Germany	National	Children and young people	Disadvantage
Andresen, E. M., Fried-Oken, M., Peters, B., & Patrick, D. L. (2016). Initial constructs for patient-centered outcome measures to evaluate brain-computer interfaces. <i>Disabil Rehabil Assist Technol</i> , 11(7), 548-557. doi:10.3109/17483107.2015.1027298	HRQoL	Measurement tool	USA	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Angermeyer, M. C., Holzinger, A., Kilian, R., & Matschinger, H. (2001). Quality of Life — as Defined By Schizophrenic Patients and Psychiatrists. <i>International Journal of Social Psychiatry</i> , 47(2), 34-42. doi:10.1177/002076400104700203	HRQoL	Define wellbeing	Germany	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Armstrong, M., Boyden, J., Galappatti, A., & Jason, H. (2004). Piloting methods for the evaluation of psychosocial programme impact in Eastern Sri Lanka: Final Report for USAID. Retrieved from: https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/sites/default/files/documents/2685.pdf	Psychosocial wellbeing	Methodology piloting and validation	Sri Lanka	Place-based	Children and young people	Conflict/displacement
ARACY (2012). The Nest Consultation. Retrieved from: https://www.aracy.org.au/publications-resources/command/download_file/id/313/filename/The-Nest-consultation-report-Findings-from-consultation.pdf	Children's voice/General wellbeing	Policy framework	Australia	National	Children and young people; Young adults	-
Banerjee, S., Willis, R., Graham, N., & Gurland, B. J. (2010). The Stroud/ADI dementia quality framework: a cross-national population-level framework for assessing the quality of life impacts of services and policies for people with dementia and their family carers. <i>Int J Geriatr Psychiatry</i> , 25(3), 249-257. doi:10.1002/gps.2330	HRQoL	Policy framework	USA, Dominican Republic, New Zealand, Spain, Japan, Turkey	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Bartlett, J. G. (2005). Health and well-being for Metis women in Manitoba. <i>Can J Public Health</i> , 96 Suppl 1, S22-27.	Indigenous wellbeing	Monitoring & Evaluation	Canada	Subnational	Adults	Indigenous/women
Bayle, B., Kemoun, G., Migaud, H., & Thevenon, A. (2000). Comparison of two modes of administration of a personalized quality of life scale in a longitudinal study of total hip arthroplasty. <i>Joint, bone, spine : revue du rhumatisme</i> , 67, 101-106.	HRQoL	Methodology piloting and validation	France	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness

Study reference	Theoretical justification	Purpose	Country of data collection	Geographic level	Life stage	Special population group
Beauchamp, E., Woodhouse, E., Clements, T., & Milner-Gulland, E. J. (2018). "Living a good life": Conceptualizations of well-being in a conservation context in Cambodia. <i>Ecology and Society</i> , 23(2). doi:10.5751/ES-10049-230228	General wellbeing/Sustainability	Ecosystem and wellbeing	Cambodia	Subnational	General community	-
Biggeri, M., Libanora, R., Mariani, S., & Menchini, L. (2006). Children Conceptualizing their Capabilities: Results of a Survey Conducted during the First Children's World Congress on Child Labour. <i>Journal of Human Development</i> , 7(1), 59-83. doi:10.1080/14649880500501179	Children's voice/Capability Approach	Define wellbeing	Global	International	Children and young people	-
Biggeri, M., & Anich, R. (2009). The Deprivation of Street Children in Kampala : Can the Capability Approach and Participatory Methods Unlock a New Perspective in Research and Decision Making ? <i>Mondes en développement</i> , n° 146, 73-93. doi:10.3917/med.146.0073	Children's voice/Capability Approach	Define wellbeing	Uganda	Place-based	Children and young people	Homeless
Biggeri, M., & Ferrannini, A. (2014). Opportunity Gap Analysis: Procedures and Methods for Applying the Capability Approach in Development Initiatives. <i>Journal of Human Development and Capabilities</i> , 15(1), 60-78. doi:10.1080/19452829.2013.837036	Capability Approach	Monitoring & Evaluation	Uganda	Place-based	Young adults	Disability
Bintliff, A., Stark, C., Brown, L., & Alonso, A. (2018). Lifelong Wellbeing for Survivors of Sex Trafficking: Collaborative Perspectives From Survivors, Researchers, and Service Providers. <i>Dignity: A Journal on Sexual Exploitation and Violence</i> , 3. doi:10.23860/dignity.2018.03.03.03	General wellbeing/Psychosocial wellbeing/Capability Approach	Policy framework	Global	Non-geographic	Adults	Trauma
Borglin, G., Edberg, A.-K., & Rahm Hallberg, I. (2005). The experience of quality of life among older people. <i>Journal of Aging Studies</i> , 19(2), 201-220. doi:10.1016/j.jaging.2004.04.001	QoL	Define wellbeing	Sweden	Place-based	Older adults	-
Bourke, L., & Geldens, P. M. (2007). Subjective wellbeing and its meaning for young people in a rural Australian center. <i>Social Indicators Research</i> , 82(1), 165-187. doi:10.1007/s11205-006-9031-0; Bourke, L., & Geldens, P. (2007). What does wellbeing mean? Perspectives of wellbeing among young people and youth workers in rural Victoria. <i>Youth Studies Australia</i> , 26(1), 41-49.	Subjective wellbeing/General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Australia	Place-based	Young adults	-
Bowling, A. N. N., & Gabriel, Z. (2007). Lay theories of quality of life in older age. <i>Ageing and Society</i> , 27(6), 827-848. doi:10.1017/S0144686X07006423; Bowling, A., Gabriel, Z., Dykes, J., Dowding, L. M., Evans, O., Fleissig, A., . . . Sutton, S. (2003). Let's Ask Them: A National Survey of Definitions of Quality of Life and Its Enhancement among People Aged 65 and Over. <i>The International Journal of Aging and Human Development</i> , 56(4), 269-306. doi:10.2190/BF8G-5J8L-YTRF-6404; Bowling, A., & Gabriel, Z. (2004). An Integrational Model of Quality of Life in Older Age. Results from the ESRC/MRC HSRC Quality of Life Survey in Britain. <i>Social Indicators Research</i> , 69(1), 1-36. doi:10.1023/B:SOCI.0000032656.01524.07; Gabriel, Z., & Bowling, A. N. N. (2004). Quality of life from the perspectives of older people. <i>Ageing and Society</i> , 24(5), 675-691. doi:10.1017/S0144686X03001582	QoL	Define wellbeing	United Kingdom	National	Older adults	-
Bragin, M., Onta, K., Janepher, T., Nzeyimana, G., & Eibs, T. (2014). To be well at heart: Women's perceptions of psychosocial wellbeing in three conflict affected countries. <i>Intervention</i> , 12, 187-209. doi:10.1097/WTF.0000000000000030	Psychosocial wellbeing	Monitoring & Evaluation	Burundi, Nepal, Uganda	International	Adults	Conflict/displacement

Study reference	Theoretical justification	Purpose	Country of data collection	Geographic level	Life stage	Special population group
Bragin, M., Taaka, J., Adolphs, K., Gray, H., & Eibs, T. (2015). Measuring Difficult-to-Measure Concepts in Clinical Social Work Practice Operationalizing Psychosocial Well-Being Among War-Affected Women: A Case Study in Northern Uganda. <i>Clinical Social Work Journal</i> , 43(4), 348-361. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10615-014-0507-0	Psychosocial wellbeing	Monitoring & Evaluation	Uganda	Subnational	Adults	Conflict/displacement
Britton, E., & Coulthard, S. (2013). Assessing the social wellbeing of Northern Ireland's fishing society using a three-dimensional approach. <i>Marine Policy</i> , 37(1), 28-36. doi:10.1016/j.marpol.2012.04.011	Sustainability/General wellbeing	Ecosystem and wellbeing	Ireland	Subnational	General community	-
Bromberg, M. B., & Forshe, D. A. (2002). Comparison of instruments addressing quality of life in patients with ALS and their caregivers. <i>Neurology</i> , 58(2), 320-322. doi:10.1212/WNL.58.2.320	HRQoL	Methodology piloting and validation	USA	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Camfield, L. (2006). The Why and How of understanding 'subjective' wellbeing: Exploratory work by the WeD group in four developing countries. Retrieved from Bath: http://www.bath.ac.uk/soc-pol/welldev/research/workingpaperpdf/wed26.pdf	QoL/General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Peru, Thailand	International	General community	-
Camfield, L., & Ruta, D. (2007). 'Translation Is Not Enough': Using the Global Person Generated Index (GPGI) to Assess Individual Quality of Life in Bangladesh, Thailand, and Ethiopia. <i>Quality of Life Research</i> , 16(6), 1039-1051. doi:10.1007/s11136-007-9182-8	QoL/General wellbeing	Methodology piloting and validation	Bangladesh, Thailand, Ethiopia	International	General community	-
Camfield, L., & Tafere, Y. (2009). 'Children with a good life have to have school bags': Diverse understandings of well-being among older children in three Ethiopian communities. Retrieved from Oxford: https://www.younglives.org.uk/sites/www.younglives.org.uk/files/YL-WP37-Camfield-WellbeingInEthiopia.pdf	General wellbeing/Children's voice	Define wellbeing	Ethiopia	International	Children and young people	-
Carlquist, E., Ulleberg, P., Delle Fave, A., Nafstad, H. E., & Blakar, R. M. (2017). Everyday Understandings of Happiness, Good Life, and Satisfaction: Three Different Facets of Well-being. <i>Applied Research in Quality of Life</i> , 12, 481-505. doi:10.1007/s11482-016-9472-9	Happiness/Subjective wellbeing/General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Norway	National	Adults	-
Carlson, L. E., Bultz, B. D., & Morris, D. G. (2005). Individualized quality of life, standardized quality of life, and distress in patients undergoing a phase I trial of the novel therapeutic Reolysin (reovirus). <i>Health and Quality of Life Outcomes</i> , 3(1), 7. doi:10.1186/1477-7525-3-7	HRQoL	Methodology piloting and validation	Canada	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Chaplin, L. N. (2009). Please May I Have a Bike? Better Yet, May I Have a Hug? An Examination of Children's and Adolescents' Happiness. <i>Journal of Happiness Studies</i> , 10, 541. doi:10.1007/s10902-008-9108-3	Happiness	Measurement tool	USA	National	Children and young people	-
Cheyne, A., & Kinn, S. (2001). A Pilot Study for a Randomised Controlled Trial of the use of the Schedule for the Evaluation of Individual Quality of Life (Seiqol) in an Alcohol Counselling Setting. <i>Addiction Research & Theory</i> , 9(2), 165-178. doi:10.3109/16066350109141747	HRQoL	Monitoring & Evaluation	United Kingdom	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Clark, D. A. (2003). Concepts and Perceptions of Human Well-being: Some Evidence from South Africa. <i>Oxford Development Studies</i> , 31(2), 173. doi:10.1080/13600810307428	Capability Approach	Policy framework	South Africa	Subnational	General community	Disadvantage
Collomb, J.-G. E., Alavalapati, J. R., & Fik, T. (2012). Building a Multidimensional Wellbeing Index for Rural Populations in Northeastern Namibia. <i>Journal of Human Development and Capabilities</i> , 13(2), 227-246. doi:10.1080/19452829.2011.645532	General wellbeing	Measurement tool	Namibia	Subnational	General community	-
Corring, D., & Cook, J. (2007). Use of Qualitative Methods to Explore the Quality-of-Life Construct From a Consumer Perspective. <i>Psychiatric services</i> , 58, 240-244. doi:10.1176/appi.ps.58.2.240	HRQoL	Define wellbeing	Canada	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Costantini, M., Mencaglia, E., Giulio, P. D., Cortesi, E., Roila, F., Ballatori, E., . . . Pastore, L. (2000). Cancer patients as 'experts' in defining quality of life domains. A multicentre survey by	HRQoL/QoL	Monitoring & Evaluation	Italy	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness

Study reference	Theoretical justification	Purpose	Country of data collection	Geographic level	Life stage	Special population group
the Italian Group for the Evaluation of Outcomes in Oncology (IGEO). Qual Life Res, 9(2), 151-159. doi:10.1023/a:1008967104082						
Crivello, G., Camfield, L., & Woodhead, M. (2009). How Can Children Tell Us About Their Wellbeing? Exploring the Potential of Participatory Research Approaches within Young Lives. Social Indicators Research, 90(1), 51-72. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11205-008-9312-x	Children's voice/General wellbeing	Methodology piloting and validation	India	Place-based	Children and young people	Boys
De Berry, J., Fazili, A., Farhad, S., Nasiry, F., Hashemi, S., & Hakimi, M. (2003). The Children of Kabul: Discussions with Afghan Families. Retrieved from: https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/children-kabul-discussions-afghan-families	Psychosocial wellbeing/General wellbeing	Policy framework	Afghanistan	Place-based	Children and young people	Conflict/displacement
de la Rie, S., Noordenbos, G., Donker, M., & van Furth, E. (2007). The patient's view on quality of life and eating disorders. International Journal of Eating Disorders, 40(1), 13-20. doi:10.1002/eat.20338	HRQoL	Define wellbeing	Netherlands	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Delle Fave, A., Brdar, I., Wissing, M. P., Araujo, U., Castro Solano, A., Freire, T., . . . Soosai-Nathan, L. (2016). Lay Definitions of Happiness across Nations: The Primacy of Inner Harmony and Relational Connectedness. Frontiers in Psychology, 7, 30. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00030	Happiness	Define wellbeing	Argentina, Brazil, Croatia, Hungary, India, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, South Africa, USA	International	Adults	-
Dew, A., Barton, R., Gilroy, J., Ryall, L., Lincoln, M., Jensen, H., . . . McCrae, K. (2019). Importance of Land, family and culture for a good life: Remote Aboriginal people with disability and carers. Australian Journal of Social Issues. doi:10.1002/ajs4.96	General wellbeing	Policy framework	Australia	Place-based	Adults	Indigenous/disability
Douma, L., Steverdink, N., & Hutter, I. (2017). Exploring Subjective Well-being in Older Age by Using Participant-generated Word Clouds. Gerontologist, 57(2), 229-239. doi:10.1093/geront/gnv119	Subjective wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Netherlands	Non-geographic	Older adults	-
Dunkel, F. V., Hansen, L. M., Halvorsen, S. J., & Bangert, A. (2017). Women's perceptions of health, quality of life, and malaria management in Kakamega County, Western Province, Kenya. GeoJournal, 82(4), 841-865. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10708-016-9701-7	HRQoL/QoL	Community and human development	Kenya	Place-based	Adults	Women
Exenberger, S., Banzer, R., Jayakumar, C., Höfer, S., & Juen, B. (2019). Eastern and Western Children's Voices on their Well-Being. Child Indicators Research, 12(3), 747-768. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s12187-018-9541-8	Subjective wellbeing/Happiness /Children's voice	Define wellbeing	Austria, Germany, India	International	Children and young people	Out-of-home-care
Fattore, T., Mason, J., & Watson, E. (2009). When Children are Asked About Their Well-being: Towards a Framework for Guiding Policy. Child Indicators Research, 2(1), 57-77. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s12187-008-9025-3; Fattore, T., Mason, J., & Watson, E. (2007). Children's conceptualisation(s) of their well-being. Social Indicators Research, 80(1), 5-29. doi:10.1007/s11205-006-9019-9	Children's voice/General wellbeing	Monitoring & Evaluation	Australia	Subnational	Children and young people	-
Foley, K. R., Foley, K. R., Blackmore, A. M., Blackmore, A. M., Girdler, S., Girdler, S., . . . Leonard, H. (2012). To Feel Belonged: The Voices of Children and Youth with Disabilities on the Meaning of Wellbeing. Child Indicators Research, 5(2), 375-391. doi:10.1007/s12187-011-9134-2	Children's voice/General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Australia	Non-geographic	Children and young people	Disability
Fossas, A. (2019). Psychological Maturity Predicts Different Forms of Happiness. Journal of Happiness Studies, 20(6), 1933-1952. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10902-018-0033-9	Happiness	Monitoring & Evaluation	Not specified	Non-geographic	Adults	-
Fry, P. S. (2000). Whose Quality of Life is it Anyway? Why Not Ask Seniors to Tell US about IT? The International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 50(4), 361-383. doi:10.2190/DD41-W8F4-W6LK-FY8Q	QoL	Define wellbeing	Canada	Subnational	Older adults	-

Study reference	Theoretical justification	Purpose	Country of data collection	Geographic level	Life stage	Special population group
Gabhainn, S., & Sixsmith, J. (2005). Children's Understandings of Well-being. Retrieved from Dublin, Ireland: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Saoirse-Gabhainn/publication/235642816_Children%27s_Understandings_of_Well-being/links/0c960528cf4b7d2624000000/Childrens-Understandings-of-Well-being.pdf	General wellbeing	Monitoring & Evaluation	Ireland	Subnational	Children and young people	-
Galati, D., Manzano, M., & Sotgiu, I. (2006). The subjective components of happiness and their attainment: a cross-cultural comparison between Italy and Cuba. <i>Social Science Information</i> , 45(4), 601-630. doi:10.1177/0539018406069594; Sotgiu, I., Sotgiu, I., Galati, D., Galati, D., Manzano, M., Manzano, M., . . . Rognoni, E. (2011). Happiness Components and their Attainment in Old Age: A Cross-Cultural Comparison Between Italy and Cuba. <i>Journal of Happiness Studies</i> , 12(3), 353-371. doi:10.1007/s10902-010-9198-6	Happiness	Define wellbeing	Italy, Cuba	International	General community	-
Giacomoni, C., Souza, L., & Hutz, C. (2014). O conceito de felicidade em crianças. <i>Psico-USF (Bragança Paulista)</i> , 19, 143-153. doi:10.1590/S1413-82712014000100014	Happiness	Define wellbeing	Brazil	Place-based	Children and young people	-
Graham Beaumont, J., & Kenealy, P. M. (2004). Quality of life perceptions and social comparisons in healthy old age. <i>Ageing and Society</i> , 24(5), 755-769. doi:10.1017/S0144686X04002399	HRQoL	Monitoring & Evaluation	United Kingdom	Place-based	Older adults	-
Granerud, A., Imingen, I., & Eriksson, B. (2017). Everyday Life and Wellbeing among the Oldest Elderly in Norway—A Qualitative Study. <i>Open Journal of Social Sciences</i> , 05, 97-111. doi:10.4236/jss.2017.57007	QoL/General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Norway	National	Older adults	-
Greco, G., Skordis-Worrall, J., Mkandawire, B., & Mills, A. (2015). What is a good life? Selecting capabilities to assess women's quality of life in rural Malawi. <i>Soc Sci Med</i> , 130, 69-78. doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2015.01.042	Capability Approach	Monitoring & Evaluation	Malawi	Place-based	General community	Women
Greiner, R., Larson, S., Herr, A., & Bligh, V. (2005). Wellbeing of Nywaigi traditional owners: The contribution of country to wellbeing and the role of natural resource management. Retrieved from Townsville: https://publications.csiro.au/rpr/download?pid=procite:a3fd9102-b143-4058-a1c0-2972b017c60a&dsid=DS1	Indigenous wellbeing/Sustainability/General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Australia	Place-based	General community	Indigenous
Grewal, I., Lewis, J., Flynn, T., Brown, J., Bond, J., & Coast, J. (2006). Developing attributes for a generic quality of life measure for older people: Preferences or capabilities? <i>Social Science & Medicine</i> , 62(8), 1891-1901. doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2005.08.023	QoL/Capability Approach	Measurement tool	United Kingdom	National	Older adults	-
Gribbin, G. M., Kenny, R. A., McCue, P., Toff, W. D., Bexton, R. S., & McComb, J. M. (2004). Individualised quality of life after pacing. Does mode matter? <i>EP Europace</i> , 6(6), 552-560. doi:10.1016/j.eupc.2004.07.011	HRQoL	Monitoring & Evaluation	United Kingdom	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Hsu, H.-C. (2007). Exploring elderly people's perspectives on successful ageing in Taiwan. <i>Ageing and Society</i> , 27(1), 87-102. doi:10.1017/S0144686X06005137	General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Taiwan	National	Older adults	-
Jayasinghe, & De Silva, N. (2015). Calculating the Global Person Generated Index to identify the impacts of remittances on the wellbeing of families left behind by migrants. <i>International Journal of Advancements in Computing Technology</i> , 4, 40-42.	General wellbeing	Monitoring & Evaluation	Sri Lanka	Place-based	General community	-
Jongudomkarn, D., & Camfield, L. (2005). Exploring the Quality of Life of People in North Eastern and Southern Thailand. Retrieved from: http://www.bath.ac.uk/soc-pol/welldev/research/workingpaperpdf/wed11.pdf	QoL	Define wellbeing	Thailand	National	General community	-
Kim, M. S., Kim, H. W., Cha, K. H., & Lim, J. (2007). What makes Koreans happy?: Exploration on the structure of happy life among Korean adults. <i>Social Indicators Research</i> , 82(2), 265-286. doi:10.1007/s11205-006-9033-y	Happiness/Subjective wellbeing	Measurement tool	South Korea	National	Adults	-

Study reference	Theoretical justification	Purpose	Country of data collection	Geographic level	Life stage	Special population group
Kinghorn, P., Robinson, A., & Smith, R. D. (2015). Developing a Capability-Based Questionnaire for Assessing Well-Being in Patients with Chronic Pain. <i>Social Indicators Research</i> , 120(3), 897-916. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11205-014-0625-7	Capability Approach	Measurement tool	United Kingdom	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Kono, S., & Walker, G. J. (2020). Theorizing Ikigai or Life Worth Living Among Japanese University Students: A Mixed-Methods Approach. <i>Journal of Happiness Studies</i> , 21(1), 327-355. doi:10.1007/s10902-019-00086-x	Subjective wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Japan	National	Young adults	University students
Kral, M. J., Idlout, L., Minore, J. B., Dyck, R. J., & Kirmayer, L. J. (2011). Unikkaartuit: Meanings of Well-Being, Unhappiness, Health, and Community Change Among Inuit in Nunavut, Canada. <i>American Journal of Community Psychology</i> , 48(3-4), 426-438. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10464-011-9431-4	Indigenous wellbeing	Community and human development	Canada	Place-based	General community	Indigenous
Kühhas, B., Taaka, J., & Bragin, M. (2018). Participatory indicators of psychosocial well-being with internally displaced persons in Wau, South Sudan. Retrieved from Brussels: https://southsudan.ion.int/sites/default/files/2018%20-%20Study%20to%20Develop%20Participatory%20Indicators%20of%20PS%20Wellbeing%20In%20Wau%20South%20Sudan_Final.pdf	Psychosocial wellbeing	Monitoring & Evaluation	South Sudan	Place-based	Young adults; Adults	Conflict/displacement
Laliberte Rudman, D., Yu, B., Scott, E., & Pajouhandeh, P. (2000). Exploration of the Perspectives of Persons With Schizophrenia Regarding Quality of Life. <i>American journal of occupational therapy</i> , 54, 137-147. doi:10.5014/ajot.54.2.137	HRQoL	Measurement tool	Canada	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Lara, E., Martín-María, N., Forsman, A. K., Cresswell-Smith, J., Donisi, V., Ådnanes, M., . . . Miret, M. (2019). Understanding the Multi-Dimensional Mental Well-Being in Late Life: Evidence from the Perspective of the Oldest Old Population. <i>Journal of Happiness Studies</i> , 1-20. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10902-019-00090-1	Psychosocial wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Finland, Italy, Norway, Spain	International	Older adults	-
Lee, M. A., Walker, R. W., Hildreth, A. J., & Prentice, W. M. (2006). Individualized assessment of quality of life in idiopathic Parkinson's disease. <i>Movement Disorders</i> , 21(11), 1929-1934. doi:10.1002/mds.21099	HRQoL	Methodology piloting and validation	United Kingdom	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Leung, K.-K., Wu, E.-C., Lue, B.-H., & Tang, L.-Y. (2004). The Use of Focus Groups in Evaluating Quality of Life Components among Elderly Chinese People. <i>Quality of Life Research</i> , 13(1), 179-190. doi:10.1023/B:QURE.0000015291.79826.a8	QoL	Measurement tool	Taiwan	Subnational	Older adults	-
LeVasseur, S. A., Green, S., & Talman, P. (2005). The SEIQoL-DW is a valid method for measuring individual quality of life in stroke survivors attending a secondary prevention clinic. <i>Quality of Life Research</i> , 14(3), 779-788. doi:10.1007/s11136-004-0795-x	HRQoL	Methodology piloting and validation	Australia	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Lhussier, M., Watson, B., Reed, J., & Clarke, C. L. (2005). The SEIQoL and functional status: how do they relate? <i>Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences</i> , 19(4), 403-409. doi:10.1111/j.1471-6712.2005.00362.x	HRQoL	Methodology piloting and validation	United Kingdom	Non-geographic	Older adults; Adults	Illness
López-Pérez, B., Sánchez, J., & Gummerum, M. (2016). Children's and Adolescents' Conceptions of Happiness. <i>Journal of Happiness Studies</i> , 17(6), 2431-2455. doi:10.1007/s10902-015-9701-1	Happiness	Define wellbeing	Spain	National	Children and young people	-
Lu, L. (2001). Understanding Happiness: A Look into the Chinese Folk Psychology. <i>Journal of Happiness Studies</i> , 2, 407-432. doi:10.1023/A:1013944228205	Happiness	Define wellbeing	Taiwan	National	Young adults	University students
Lu, L., & Gilmour, R. (2004). Culture and conceptions of happiness: individual oriented and social oriented swb. <i>Journal of Happiness Studies</i> , 5(3), 269-291. doi:10.1007/s10902-004-8789-5	Happiness/Subjective wellbeing	Define wellbeing	USA	National	Young adults	University students

Study reference	Theoretical justification	Purpose	Country of data collection	Geographic level	Life stage	Special population group
Martin, F., Rodham, K., Camfield, L., & Ruta, D. (2010). Reliability and Validity of the Thai "Global Person Generated Index", an Individualised Measure of Quality of Life. <i>Applied Research in Quality of Life</i> , 5(3), 219-232. doi:10.1007/s11482-010-9106-6	QoL	Methodology piloting and validation	Thailand	Subnational	General community	-
Maulana, H., Obst, P., & Khawaja, N. (2018). Indonesian perspective of wellbeing: A qualitative study. <i>The Qualitative Report</i> , 23(12), 3136.	General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Indonesia	National	Adults	-
Mountain, L. A., Campbell, S. E., Seymour, D. G., Primrose, W. R., & Whyte, M. I. (2004). Assessment of individual quality of life using the SEIQoL-DW in older medical patients. <i>QJM: An International Journal of Medicine</i> , 97(8), 519-524. doi:10.1093/qjmed/hch081	HRQoL	Methodology piloting and validation	United Kingdom	Non-geographic	Older adults	Illness
Navarro, D., Montserrat, C., Malo, S., González, M., Casas, F., & Crous, G. (2017). Subjective well-being: what do adolescents say? <i>Child & Family Social Work</i> , 22(1), 175-184. doi:10.1111/cfs.12215	Subjective wellbeing/Children's voice	Define wellbeing	Spain	National	Children and young people	-
González-Carrasco, M., Vaqué, C., Malo, S., Crous, G., Casas, F., & Figuer, C. (2019). A Qualitative Longitudinal Study on the Well-Being of Children and Adolescents. <i>Child Indicators Research</i> , 12(2), 479-499. doi:10.1007/s12187-018-9534-7	Subjective wellbeing/Children's voice/General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Spain, South Korea, Mexico	International	Children and young people	-
Navarro, R., Seung-ha, L., Jiménez, A., & Cañameres, C. (2019). Cross-Cultural children's Subjective Perceptions of Well-Being: Insights from Focus Group Discussions with Children Aged under 9 years in Spain, South Korea and Mexico. <i>Child Indicators Research</i> , 12(1), 115-140. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s12187-017-9502-7	Subjective wellbeing/Children's voice/General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Spain, South Korea, Mexico	International	Children and young people	-
Neudert, C., Wasner, M., & Borasio, G. D. (2001). Patients' assessment of quality of life instruments: a randomised study of SIP, SF-36 and SEIQoL-DW in patients with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. <i>Journal of the Neurological Sciences</i> , 191(1), 103-109. doi:10.1016/S0022-510X(01)00612-8	HRQoL	Methodology piloting and validation	Germany	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Newton, J., & Ponting, C. (2013). Eliciting Young People's Views on Wellbeing Through Contemporary Science Debates in Wales. <i>Child Indicators Research</i> , 6(1), 71-95. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s12187-012-9159-1	Children's voice/General wellbeing	Monitoring & Evaluation	United Kingdom	National	Children and young people; Young adults	-
Nic Gabhainn, S., & Sixsmith, J. (2006). Children Photographing Well-being: Facilitating Participation in Research. <i>Children & Society</i> , 20, 249-259. doi:10.1111/j.1099-0860.2005.00002.x;	Children's voice/General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Ireland	National	Children and young people	-
Sixsmith, J., Nic Gabhainn, S., Fleming, C., & O'Higgins, S. (2007). Children's, parents' and teachers' perceptions of child wellbeing. <i>Health Education</i> , 107(6), 511-523. doi:10.1108/09654280710827911	Children's voice/General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Ireland	National	Children and young people	-
Nott, B. D., & Vuchinich, S. (2016). Homeless Adolescents' Perceptions of Positive Development: A Comparative Study. <i>Child & Youth Care Forum</i> , 45(6), 865-886. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10566-016-9361-2	General wellbeing/Children's voice	Community and human development	USA	Place-based	Children and young people	Homeless
O'Higgins, S., Sixsmith, J., & Saoirse Nic, G. (2010). Adolescents' perceptions of the words "health" and "happy". <i>Health Education</i> , 110(5), 367-381. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/09654281011068522	General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Ireland	National	Children and young people	-
Oranga Tamariki (Ministry for Children). (2019). What makes a good life? Children and young people's views of wellbeing. Retrieved from: https://www.occ.org.nz/assets/Uploads/What-makes-a-good-life-report-OCC-OT-2019-WEB2.pdf	General wellbeing/Children's voice	Policy framework	New Zealand	National	Children and young people	-

Study reference	Theoretical justification	Purpose	Country of data collection	Geographic level	Life stage	Special population group
Parry, O., Warren, E., Madoc-Jones, I., Baker, S.-A., Hughes, C., Pithouse, A., & Crowley, A. (2010). Voices of Children and Young People in Wales. Retrieved from: https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/3725/1/110328voicescyp.pdf	Children's voice/General wellbeing	Policy framework	United Kingdom	National	Children and young people; Young adults	-
Paschoal, S. M., Filho, W. J., & Litvov, J. (2007). Development of elderly quality of life index - EQOLI: theoretical-conceptual framework, chosen methodology, and relevant items generation. Clinics (Sao Paulo), 62(3), 279-288. doi:10.1590/s1807-59322007000300012	QoL	Measurement tool	Brazil	Non-geographic	Older adults	-
Percy, M. S. (2003). Feeling loved, having friends to count on, and taking care of myself: Minority children living in poverty describe what is "special" to them. Journal of Children and Poverty, 9(1), 55-70. doi:10.1080/1079612022000052724	General wellbeing/ Children's voice	Define wellbeing	USA	Place-based	Children and young people	Disadvantage
Pereira, E., Queiroz, C., Pereira, H. M., & Vicente, L. (2005). Ecosystem Services and Human Well-Being: a Participatory Study in a Mountain Community in Portugal. Ecology and Society, 10(2), 14. doi:10.5751/ES-01353-100214	Sustainability/General wellbeing	Ecosystem and wellbeing	Portugal	Place-based	General community	-
Pflug, J. (2009). Folk Theories of Happiness: A Cross-Cultural Comparison of Conceptions of Happiness in Germany and South Africa. In (Vol. 92, pp. 551-563). Dordrecht: Springer.	Happiness	Define wellbeing	Germany, South Africa	International	Adults	University students
Pitkänen, A., Hätönen, H., Kuosmanen, L., & Välimäki, M. (2009). Individual quality of life of people with severe mental disorders. Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing, 16(1), 3-9. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2850.2008.01308.x	HRQoL	Define wellbeing	Finland	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Prince, P. N., & Gerber, G. J. (2001). Measuring Subjective Quality of Life in People with Serious Mental Illness Using the SEIQoL-DW. Quality of Life Research, 10(2), 117-122.	HRQoL	Methodology piloting and validation	Canada	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Punch, J. L., Hitt, R., & Smith, S. W. (2019). Hearing loss and quality of life. J Commun Disord, 78, 33-45. doi:10.1016/j.jcomdis.2019.01.001	HRQoL	Measurement tool	USA	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Puts, M. T. E., Shekary, N., Widdershoven, G., Heldens, J., Lips, P., & Deeg, D. J. H. (2007). What Does Quality of Life Mean to Older Frail and Non-Frail Community-Dwelling Adults in the Netherlands? Quality of Life Research, 16(2), 263-277. doi:10.1007/s11136-006-9121-0	QoL	Define wellbeing	Netherlands	National	Older adults	-
Rasolofson, R. A., Nielsen, M. R., & Jones, J. P. G. (2018). The potential of the Global Person Generated Index for evaluating the perceived impacts of conservation interventions on subjective well-being. World Development, 105, 107-118. doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2017.12.032	General wellbeing/Sustainability	Monitoring & Evaluation	Madagascar	Place-based	General community	-
Redmond, G., Skattebol, J., Saunders, P., Lietz, P., Zizzo, G., O'Grady, E., . . . Roberts, K. (2016). Are the kids alright? Young Australians in their middle years: Final report of the Australian Child Wellbeing Project. Retrieved from: www.australianchildwellbeing.com.au	Children's voice/General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Australia	National	Children and young people	-
Richard, L., Laforest, S., Dufresne, F., & Sapinski, J. P. (2005). The Quality of Life of Older Adults Living in an Urban Environment: Professional and Lay Perspectives. Canadian Journal on Aging/Revue canadienne du vieillissement, 24(1), 19-30. doi:10.1353/cja.2005.0011	QoL	Define wellbeing	Canada	Place-based	Older adults	-
Ring, L., Lindblad, Å. K., Bendtsen, P., Viklund, E., Jansson, R., & Glimelius, B. (2006). Feasibility and validity of a computer administered version of SEIQoL-DW. Quality of Life Research, 15(7), 1173-1177. doi:10.1007/s11136-006-0052-6	QoL	Methodology piloting and validation	Sweden	Non-geographic	Adults	University students
Robleda, S., & Pachana, N. A. (2019). Quality of Life in Australian Adults Aged 50 Years and Over: Data Using the Schedule for the Evaluation of Individual Quality of Life (SEIQoL-DW). Clinical Gerontologist, 42(1), 101-113. doi:10.1080/07317115.2017.1397829	QoL	Define wellbeing	Australia	National	Adults; Older adults	-
Rojas, V., & Cussianovich, A. (2013). "Le va bien en la vida": Permanencias en el bienestar subjetivo de un grupo de adolescentes en Perú. Retrieved from Lima: http://www.grade.org.pe/upload/publicaciones/archivo/download/pubs/dt.pdf .	General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Peru	National	Children and young people	-

Study reference	Theoretical justification	Purpose	Country of data collection	Geographic level	Life stage	Special population group
Rusner, M., Carlsson, G., Brunt, D. & Nyström, M. (2010). A dependence that empowers-the meaning of the conditions that enable a good life with bipolar disorder. <i>International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being</i> , 5(1), 4653-4611. doi:10.3402/qhw.v5i1.4653	HRQoL/General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Sweden	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Sargeant, J. (2010). The altruism of pre-adolescent children's perspectives on 'worry' and 'happiness' in Australia and England. <i>Childhood</i> , 17, 411-425. doi:10.1177/0907568209341087	Children's voice/Happiness	Define wellbeing	Australia, United Kingdom	International	Children and young people	-
Savahl, S., Malcolm, C., Slembrouk, S., Adams, S., Willenberg, I. A., & September, R. (2015). Discourses on Well-Being. <i>Child Indicators Research</i> , 8(4), 747-766. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s12187-014-9272-4	Children's voice/ General wellbeing/ Subjective wellbeing	Define wellbeing	South Africa	Subnational	Children and young people	-
Scott, K. (2012). Chapter 8: Developing a wellbeing framework. In <i>Measuring wellbeing: Towards sustainability?</i> New York: Routledge.	General wellbeing/ QoL	Policy framework	United Kingdom	Place-based	General community	-
September, R., & Savahl, S. (2009). Children's Perspectives on Child Well-Being. <i>The Social Work Practitioner-Researcher</i> , 21(1), 23-40.	General wellbeing/Children's voice	Define wellbeing	South Africa	Subnational	Children and young people	-
Smith, H. J., Taylor, R., & Mitchell, A. (2000). A comparison of four quality of life instruments in cardiac patients: SF-36, QLI, QLMI, and SEIQoL. <i>Heart</i> , 84(4), 390-394. doi:10.1136/heart.84.4.390	HRQoL	Methodology piloting and validation	United Kingdom	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Smith, S. C., Murray, J., Banerjee, S., Foley, B., Cook, J. C., Lamping, D. L., . . . Mann, A. (2005). What constitutes health-related quality of life in dementia? Development of a conceptual framework for people with dementia and their carers. <i>International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry</i> , 20, 889-895. doi:10.1002/gps.1374	HRQoL	Define wellbeing	United Kingdom	Non-geographic	Older adults	Illness
Sutton, E. J., & Coast, J. (2014). Development of a supportive care measure for economic evaluation of end-of-life care using qualitative methods. <i>Palliat Med</i> , 28(2), 151-157. doi:10.1177/0269216313489368	HRQoL	Monitoring & Evaluation	United Kingdom	Non-geographic	Older adults	Illness
Tafarodi, R. W., Tafarodi, R. W., Bonn, G., Bonn, G., Liang, H., Liang, H., . . . Padhye, A. (2012). What Makes for a Good Life? A Four-Nation Study. <i>Journal of Happiness Studies</i> , 13(5), 783-800. doi:10.1007/s10902-011-9290-6	General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Canada, India, Japan, China	International	Young adults; Adults	-
The Children's Society (2006). <i>Good childhood? A question for our times</i> ;	General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	United Kingdom	National	Children and young people	-
The Children's Society (2008). <i>Happy and they know it? Developing a well-being framework based on children and young people consultation</i> .	General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	United Kingdom	National	Children and young people	-
Thoilliez, B. (2011). How to Grow up Happy: An Exploratory Study on the Meaning of Happiness from Children's Voices. <i>Child Indicators Research</i> , 4(2), 323-351. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s12187-011-9107-5	Happiness	Define wellbeing	Spain	National	Children and young people	-
Thomas, Y., Gray, M. A., & McGinty, S. (2012). An Exploration of Subjective Wellbeing Among People Experiencing Homelessness: A Strengths-Based Approach. <i>Social Work in Health Care</i> , 51(9), 780-797. doi:10.1080/00981389.2012.686475	Subjective wellbeing	Define wellbeing	Australia	Subnational	Adults	Homeless
Tovbin, D., Gidron, Y., Jean, T., Granovsky, R., & Schnieder, A. (2003). Relative Importance and Interrelations between Psychosocial Factors and Individualized Quality of Life of Hemodialysis Patients. <i>Quality of Life Research</i> , 12(6), 709-717. doi:10.1023/A:1025101601822	HRQoL	Define wellbeing	Israel	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Vujčić, M. T., Brajša-Žganec, A., & Franc, R. (2019). Children and Young Peoples' Views on Well-Being: A Qualitative Study. <i>Child Indicators Research</i> , 12(3), 791-819. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s12187-018-9559-y	Children's voice/Subjective	Define wellbeing	Croatia	National	Children and young people; Young adults	-

Study reference	Theoretical justification	Purpose	Country of data collection	Geographic level	Life stage	Special population group
	wellbeing/General wellbeing					
Ward, L., Barnes, M., & Gahagan, B. (2012). Well-being in old age: findings from participatory research. Retrieved from: https://research.brighton.ac.uk/en/publications/well-being-in-old-age-findings-from-participatory-research	General wellbeing	Define wellbeing	United Kingdom	Place-based	Older adults	-
Wee, H. L., Chua, H. X., & Li, S. C. (2006). Meaning of Health-related Quality of Life among Children and Adolescents in an Asian Country: A Focus Group Approach. <i>Quality of Life Research</i> , 15(5), 821-831. doi:10.1007/s11136-005-5092-9	HRQoL	Methodology piloting and validation	Singapore	National	Children and young people	-
Wettergren, L., Björkholm, M., Axdorph, U., Bowling, A., & Langius-Eklöf, A. (2003). Individual Quality of Life in Long-Term Survivors of Hodgkin's Lymphoma: A Comparative Study. <i>Quality of Life Research</i> , 12(5), 545-554. doi:10.1023/A:1025024008139	HRQoL	Monitoring & Evaluation	Sweden	Non-geographic	Adults	Illness
Wheeler, K. J., & Early, J. O. (2018). Using Photovoice to Explore Quality of Life Factors of Adults With Crouzon Syndrome. <i>Qual Health Res</i> , 28(3), 357-370. doi:10.1177/1049732317742624	HRQoL	Policy framework	USA	National	Adults	Illness
Wilhelmson, K., Andersson, C., Waern, M., & Allebeck, P. (2005). Elderly people's perspectives on quality of life. <i>Ageing and Society</i> , 25(4), 585-600. doi:10.1017/S0144686X05003454	QoL	Define wellbeing	Sweden	Place-based	Older adults	-
Wilson Fadji, A., Meiring, L., & Wissing, M. P. (2019). Understanding Well-Being in the Ghanaian Context: Linkages between Lay Conceptions of Well-Being and Measures of Hedonic and Eudaimonic Well-Being. <i>Applied Research in Quality of Life</i> . doi:10.1007/s11482-019-09777-2	Subjective wellbeing	Methodology piloting and validation	Ghana	National	Adults	-
Xavier, F. M. F., Ferraz, M. P. T., Marc, N., Escosteguy, N. U., & Moriguchi, E. H. (2003). Elderly people's definition of quality of life. <i>Revista brasileira de psiquiatria</i> , 25(1), 31.	QoL	Define wellbeing	Brazil	Place-based	Older adults	-
Yap, M., & Yu, E. (2016). Operationalising the Capability Approach: Developing Culturally Relevant Indicators of Indigenous Wellbeing--An Australian Example. <i>Oxford Development Studies</i> , 44(3), 315-331.	Capability Approach/Indigenous wellbeing	Monitoring & Evaluation	Australia	Place-based	General community	Indigenous

Appendix 4: List of countries by frequency

Country	Frequency	Country	Frequency
Afghanistan	1	Kenya	2
Argentina	1	Madagascar	1
Australia	12	Malawi	1
Austria	1	Mexico	2
Bangladesh	2	Namibia	1
Brazil	5	Nepal	1
Burundi	1	The Netherlands	3
Cambodia	1	New Zealand	3
Canada	9	Norway	4
Chile	1	Peru	2
China	1	Portugal	2
Croatia	2	Singapore	1
Cuba	1	South Africa	5
Dominican Republic	1	South Korea	2
Ethiopia	3	South Sudan	1
Finland	2	Spain	6
France	1	Sri Lanka	2
Germany	5	Sweden	5
Ghana	1	Taiwan	3
Hungary	1	Thailand	4
India	4	Turkey	1
Indonesia	1	Uganda	4
Ireland	4	United Kingdom	19
Israel	1	United States of America	10
Italy	4	Global	2
Japan	3	Not specified	1