

# Subjective Well Being and Positive Youth Development: An Integral Framework

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## Abstract:

Subjective well-being is consolidation of happiness and life satisfaction. Positive youth development focuses on optimal quality of human development. This study has shown that subjective well-being influences positive youth development, even though there is debate on relationship between both variables. This paper develops a conceptual model explaining the link between subjective well-being and positive youth development in the context of growth of India. Integral positive psychology and developmental perspectives, this model explains the direct influence of subjective well-being on positive youth development and of their common relationships with development of youth of India (in context of positive psychology) and growth of country. Both of which are influenced by personal and societal situations. The interaction between individual and society places a key role in growth of India and followed by positive development of youth. Another purpose of this study is to discuss strategies for promoting positive youth development with the help of subjective well-being.

Keywords: Subjective Well-Being, positive psychology, Positive youth development

## Subjective Well-Being and its components

A leading thinker of late nineteenth century, philosopher and the father of pragmatism and American psychology once said, "Action may not always bring happiness, but there is no happiness without action". Subjective well-being is a mental and emotional state, including pleasant and positive emotions ranging from intense joy to contentment. Happiness, Life satisfaction, well-being and eudemonia also used in context of subjective well-being. It is relatively subjective in nature. In recent years, new concepts of subjective well-being from different professional fields focused on solutions of many solutions of different problems in youths worldwide: in management, psychology, economics, organizational behavior, marketing and public policies.



Schooler and Kahn (1982) noted that work nature of supervision, routinization and complexity are linked casually to an individual's depression and sense of control. Our workers subjective well-being in form of conceptualization follows the commonly used model in studies of positive psychology and happiness; consist of affective and evaluative parts (Diener, 1984, 1994). Some researchers reported that better well-being and positive affective organizational commitment are linked positively. (Begley & Czajka, 1993). Harter et al. (2003) noted that the negative emotions like resentment and boredom are the result of unclear expectations and lacking of basic equipments and materials. Evidences shows that the measures of job satisfaction and job affect are distinct but related concepts, the findings comes from meta- analysis of between measures of workers job satisfaction and job affect and shows moderately correlated. The range of this uncorrelated magnitude is from .26 to .34. (Kaplan et al., 2009). Affective happiness at work consist measures of infrequent negative emotions and frequent positive emotions. Popular scale of this infrequent and frequent affect (PANAS; Watson et al., 1988) and the job related affect (VAN Katwyk et al., 2000).

Carl G. Jung explained the components of happiness in five different ways such as; to maintain good mental and physical health, to maintain good intimate and personal relationships, to perceive beauty in nature and its art, to have some reasonable standards to maintain satisfactory work and living and to have a religious and philosophical view in copings hazards of life. Martin Seligman the promoter of positive psychology, identifies five elements of happiness and emotional wellbeing such as; accomplishment, meaning, engagement, relationships and positive emotions. Meaning, order and affiliation can be components of happiness in terms of coherent life. These three combinations describe the continent of coherence. One of the most important aspects to create happiness in youth in their lives considers as what commonly they govern feeling life as happy. Duckworth (2005) noted that positive emotions and mental state primarily explains what people do correct to maintain and obtain optimum happiness. The pursuit of happiness can be explained by two major theoretical concepts that focus of what are things that make people happy are hedonic well-being and eudemonic well-being (Robbins, 2008). This is attributed that extroverts reacts more assertively to positive stimuli and positive emotions as compared to introverts. Extroverts respond more openly with the environment and with the people. (Furnham & Christoforou, 2007; Carr, 2004).

In terms of subjective well-being of youth for the growth of society and Nation, excitement and enthusiasm leads to one such aspects of happiness. More assertive, more satisfaction with work and more zeal towards day-to-day life events indicated the level of happiness and life satisfaction among youths. Any person can probably think of



their own satisfaction of work, relation and personal need can be hampered by present and future aspects. Many frameworks of happiness and life satisfaction explains that happiness in youths occur due to excitement and maturity in commitments.

Many researchers and psychologist indicates that happiness is not a state, but an attitude. It is governed by our self-control not by any outside source. The deep sense of subjective well-being and satisfaction person can carve with improving a relationship, happiness is not a way of living, itself a life. Harter et al. (2003) hypothesized that youth engagement such and a combination of emotional and cognitive variables accelerates higher frequency of positive affect such as joy, fulfillment, interest and commitment that relates to productivity. Subjective well-being is an exclusive experience that leads people to great lengths of fleeting moments of joy. In another term it can be mystery like religion and never be rationalized. Positive affect is linked to health. In terms of economics, strange paradox indicates a strong correlation between money and happiness. Another link of happiness indicates strong correlation between creativity and problem solving.

### **Positive Youth Development and its Determinants**

Youth and their behavior is complex and they play an emerging key role in development as defined by a neurobiological process. Development process of youth behavior can be defined on the basis of psychological and social principles. B. Bradford Brown provided a concept of adolescent risk-taking and psychosocial development.

Brown began with the primary psychosocial task a youth can perform in their life and that can contribute to self and societal growth. Simply, these are the four key tasks:

1. To stand out: in development of identity and to pursue autonomy.
2. To fit in: to gain acceptance from peer group and to gain affiliation from others.
3. To measure up: to find out ways to achieve and to become competent.
4. To take hold: to be always committed to particular activities, believes and goals.

Youths of our society are engaging in may risk taking activities. These risk taking activities can be identified in two ways: First, youths may turn to risk taking activities to help themselves in coping with the failure to succeed in one of these areas. Second, many risk behaviors can increase or decrease the fruitful accomplishment of these tasks. This work was originally done by Erik Erikson, the task youth performed can be understood as a process of making distance to oneself from society, especially for parents to understand about their adolescents that a clear sense about child how one is as a person and how one behaves in society.

Researchers have identifies about other components that play an integral role in identity formation, such as identification on the basis of ethnicity, sexual orientation and



gender. Youths have criteria of possible identities, evaluation and diversion of personal self in particular goals. This process is challenging in particular group of immigrant's youths. Researches shows those youths are basically of two types on the basis of their growth and development. First, immigrants, that move to another place for studies and for self-development from one place to another place and second, stay and study and make their carrier from where they belongs. These two types of categories of youths play a vital role in development of our society. Those who move from one place to another they try to maintain a space and adjustment on new place or society and they find new contacts and form new interpersonal relationships. Researches identifies that these kinds of youths are good in communication, adjustments, interpersonal relationships, interactions and speaking. Other than these youths who stay at their place for personal growth are more concerned about their family, interpersonal relationships, society and can manage in different ups and downs. They can help their communities on the basis of their skills and relations. The development of autonomy is closely associated with identity formation and generally classify as interpersonal and psychological variable. Brown suggested that there is a universal process of development of a healthy autonomy and relational self. Researches shows that young people developed their autonomy at early stage of developmental milestone or too late. Late development of autonomy can results in poorer outcomes as compare to early developments.

The field of positive youth development identifies good in young people focuses on child's unique interests, talents, strengths and future potentials (Damon, 2004). As much as parents want their child to develop more healthy and sound mind and body those with perfect school attendance and good grades. Real youths are mixer of good, average, and poor performances. Some adolescents are depressed, anxious and some have eating disorders; some take drugs and are engage in risk taking activities; some become pregnant; some become dropouts and some become failure in finding out the pursuit of time. Positive perspective do not label a child as schizophrenic, depressed, drug user, school dropout etc. Abraham Lincoln, John Nash, Peter Jennings and Edgar Allan Poe labeled with these terms but they performed their life so appropriately. The thing is the problems with these labels can be shorthand with positive things that they have as a strengths and good them. Attention focused on positive side of an adolescent helps them to identify the possibilities and to overcome with these shortcomings of life. Positive youth development stands for approaches that focus on problems of young people and help them to overcome with antisocial conduct, learning disabilities, low motivation, affective disorder, P achievement, drug use and smoking.



The positive youth development helps in recognition of the existence of adversities and developmental changes that effects child in various ways. As far as the nation's youths are concerned priority should be the solution of problems of youths.

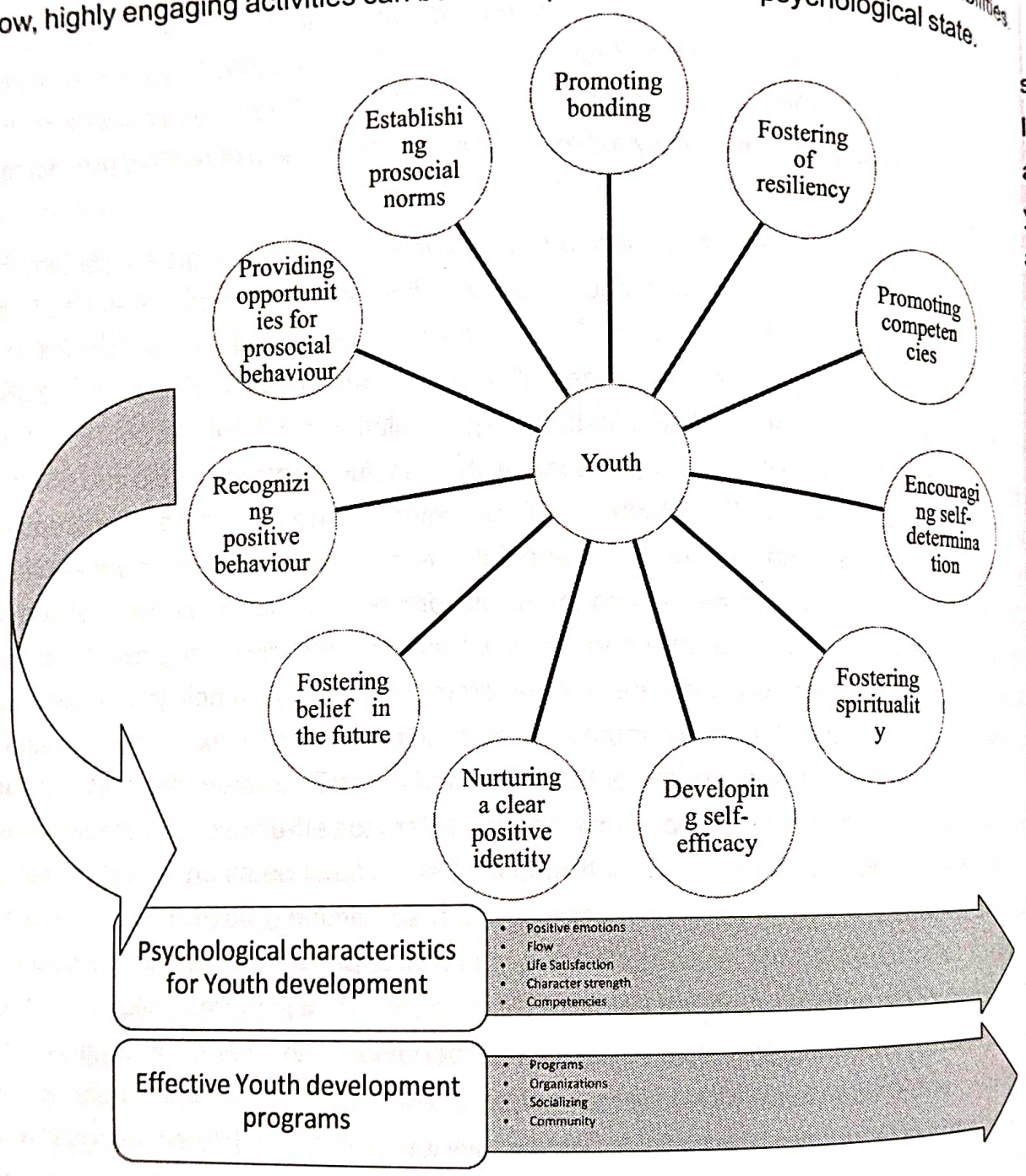
### **An integral framework**

As an applied field youth development is a priority of society. For the concern of nation's youth, the reduction of problems of youth has been the priority, for good reason. Attention to positive outcomes is addition to reduction of negative outcomes. Studies at Search Institute in Minneapolis found that a term development assets which include internal factors such as sense of purpose, positive values and commitment to learning and external factors such as adult role model and family support (Benson, Leffert, Scales, & Blyth, 1998; Leffert et al., 1998; Scales, Benson, Leffert, & Blyth, 2000). Development of the below framework help us to improve youth development with the help of positive psychology principle: Happiness.

Childs bonding and attachment process works as an internal growth pattern for connections with society. The interaction between child and its caregiver helps to form interpersonal bonding and its behavior. Good bonding helps to promote trust on self and others. And poor bonding create fundamental emptiness and mistrust on self and others. Bonding with caregivers helps child to establish good relation in school with peers, culture and community. Individual's capacity to adapt with stressful events in flexible and healthy way refers to as resilience. Development of competencies helps to cover five areas of functioning of youths such as cognitive, behavioral, emotional, social and moral abilities. Competencies help to adjust with environment with different attribute of above mentioned types. Our ability to think and take consistent decisions with wise thoughts about one refers to self- determination. Self- determination is the innate psychological needs for competence, relatedness and autonomy. Spirituality refers to development of youth in moral commitment, moral reasoning or belief in moral order. The perception that one can achieve desired goal with the help of one's action refers to self-efficacy. Concept of self-efficacy was proposed by Bandura "self-efficacy beliefs function as an important set of proximal determinants of human motivation, affect, and action. They operate on action through motivational, cognitive, and affective intervening processes." Clear and positive identity is a coherent sense of self in internal organizations. It is more similar to identity development. According to learning principles, behavior is the result of large part of reinforcement. It affects a individual motivation to perform the same work in future for longer period of time. An opportunity for prosaically involvement in different activities and events helps to encourage youths in positive direction. It is important that youth can interact with positivity to the group like peer, family, school, neighbor or even larger group.



The most basic assumption of positive psychology is that the excellence and well-being of human goodness are as authentic as distress, disorder and disease. Happiness and well-being is not the invention of positive psychology but is the scientific study. With the help of a framework of positive psychology especially with the concept of happiness and youth development one can contribute in the understanding of these concepts for promotion of youth development. Within the framework of positive psychology concept understanding of contentment, joy and love can linked with the building of psychological skill and abilities. Flow, highly engaging activities can be accompanied with this psychological state.



Framework for Subjective Well-Being and Positive Youth development for growth of Society

Life satisfaction can be characterized by hope, resiliency, and self-reliance, health promoting habit, self-esteem and prosocial behavior. And absence of negative things such as depression, anxiety, loneliness, teenage pregnancy, violence, school discipline problem and drug and alcohol abuse. Character strength includes positive characteristics such as gratitude, hope, humor, kindness and curiosity. Skills and abilities in cognitive, moral, behavioral social domains are considered as competencies.

Different programs can be introduced in to inculcate youth growth in positive sense. Semi structured and structured activities such as drug prevention intervention, learning requirement equipment in schools. Need of organizations that provide activities and relationships to improve well-being in people. Social institutions for development of youths with family, schools, museums, libraries can improvise. The social norms, resources, and relationships help to influence youth development with the help of community programs.

### **Conclusion**

Positive youth development and happiness are of great importance to growth of society. As conclusion we have made two arguments: first, psychological characteristics such as strength of character, life satisfaction, competencies, emotions etc. are associated with well-being and reduce problems. Second, youth development programs can encourage these positive qualities and increase the outcomes of occurrence of these characteristics. Positive youth development can help adolescents to explore his or her full potential to lead a satisfying life.

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