

IMPACT OF WISDOM ON MENTAL AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses how wisdom can shape the mental and social health of college students. One of the factors that helps a student overcome the academic and social obstacles encountered in the academic and social arenas is wisdom, which is usually defined as emotional control, good judgment, and empathy. The study was meant to evaluate the effect of wisdom on well-being, covering three domains of wisdom, which include cognitive, affective, and reflexive. The survey was conducted on 200 university students whereby data was gathered using questionnaires that measured wisdom, mental, and social well-being. The findings proved that wisdom was a positive indicator of mental and social well-being among college students. These results indicate that the development of wisdom might positively influence the overall well-being of students, making them better able to cope with stress, establish relationships, and leave a positive impact on their social environments. The paper highlights the need to incorporate wisdom-building interventions in mental health initiatives in universities to facilitate student prosperity.

I. INTRODUCTION

The effects of wisdom on mental and social health in the students of universities are far-reaching and comprehensive. The concept of wisdom, which may be defined as the ability to control emotions, empathy, and reason, is very important when it comes to dealing with very complicated academic and social environments of university life (Akash & Suganya, 2024). Wise students are more prepared to manage stress and build meaningful associations and make wise decisions, which help to make them healthier mentally. Furthermore, wisdom results in a friendly and united society, which improves society as a whole. Wisdom enables universities to ensure that students perform better in life individually and in groups (Akash & Suganya, 2024; Fan & Cui, 2024).

Intelligence and soundness of mind are different terms that are closely related to each other. Wisdom refers to the ability to make sound judgements, which are informed by knowledge, experience and deep perception. It is connected with such mental skills as the ability to understand complicated cases, to reflect on life, to control emotions in an empathetic and compassionate manner. Wisdom is also related to sharp sight, emotional strength, and a sane attitude at tough times. It is dynamic and is determined by life experiences and personal development. Mental well-being on the other hand refers to the emotional and psychological well-being of an individual. It includes such positive emotions as happiness, contentment, and life satisfaction, a sense of purpose, personal growth, and healthy relationship. Mental well-being concerns the person with regards to daily emotional conditions, coping with stress, and interactions with the environment. It may vary based on the situation, though it is an essential element of leading a good life (Arif, 2025; Ranisha et al., 2024).

Social well-being and wisdom are also similar terms but different. Wisdom is a combination of knowledge, experience, and good judgment, and may also include emotional intelligence, empathy, and thought (Cegarra-Sánchez et al., 2023). It is the understanding of the complexities of life, informed living, and very often it has a moral or ethical aspect to it (Ranisha et al., 2024). According to researchers such as Sternberg (1998), wisdom is the ability to give a balance between the personal interests and higher-good. Social well-being on the other hand refers to an individual and his/her perception and experience regarding his/her social relations, interaction with the community and belongingness. Social well-being is seen in areas like social cohesion, social contribution and social acceptance (Keyes, 1998). It is an expression of the quality of the social networks and the capability of establishing decent connections with others.

Wisdom is a key determinant of cognitive, emotional, and interpersonal functioning of people and thus a critical component of the process of explaining psychological and social adaptation of students. Previous studies also indicate that wisdom helps to have improved emotional regulation, decision-making, and general psychological resilience, which are the pillars of the mental well-being (Akash & Suganya, 2024). On the same note, wisdom makes relationships more socially connected and improves healthier relationships by protecting against negative biases through empathy, thoughtfulness, and fair judgment (Cegarra-Sánchez et al., 2023; Keyes, 1998). Regardless of these already known connections, there is scarce empirical evidence that has investigated how various components of wisdom such as cognitive, reflective, and affective dimensions of wisdom work together to exert their effects on mental and social well-being of university students in the local setting. Thus, the given study is required to fill the gap by examining the predictive opinion of wisdom on the psychological and social functioning of students, which will help to enhance a comprehensive knowledge of positive psychological determinants contributing to the well-being at the period of emergent adulthood. Based on literature review, the following hypotheses were formulated;

1. Wisdom will positively predict mental well-being among university students.
2. Wisdom will positively predict social well-being among university students.

II. METHOD

Participants

The paper sets out to identify the influence of wisdom on the social and mental well-being of university students. The sample size of the study was 200 participants who were chosen, and they were of various academic disciplines. The sample consisted both females and males. Participants were evenly distributed across first to fourth-year students. Purposive sampling is best used when you want to focus in depth on relatively small samples.

Measures

The study employed a self-administered questionnaire, specifically designed to measure three main constructs: wisdom, mental well-being, and social well-being among university students. The Abbreviated Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS) was created by Ardel (2003). The scale has three dimensions of wisdom, cognitive, reflective, and affective (compassionate) wisdom. This study used the 3D-WS, which had 12 questions to be rated using a Likert scale (1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree). The Mental well-being aspect of the questionnaire was assessed by using the Short warwick Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (SWEMWBS) which was created by NHS Health Scotland, University of Warwick and University of Edinburgh (2007). The scale is mostly applied to assess the mental well-being of the individual during the last two weeks. There are 7 items of the SWEMWBS which revolve around the areas of optimism, usefulness, and problem-solving. Each item was evaluated by the respondents on a 5-point Likert scale, with the lowest level being "None of the time" (1) and the highest level being "All of the time" (5). Social well-being section was based on the Social Well-being Scale (1998) developed by Keyes which assesses the social integration, social contribution and quality of social relationships. The items in this section will aim to capture the individual perceptions of the students in terms of their social interaction and connectedness with the surrounding. The questionnaire was made according to the consultation of academic supervisors, as well as the psychologists, who

made sure that it was suitable to the target group of university students. Each of the chosen items has been tested in past research to warrant its relevance and reliability to measure the corresponding constructs. The questionnaire was applied in the form of a Likert-type response scale where the responses given were strongly disagree, strongly agree, none of the time, and all of the time respectively in the wisdom and social well-being section and the mental well-being section respectively.

Procedure

The given self-administered questionnaire was sent to the sampled respondents. This was done by giving instructions so that the participants knew how to fill in the questionnaire. The data was gathered within a given time. The participants took the questionnaire once in a sitting, hence to ensure consistency in responding. Data collected were analysed by applying suitable statistical procedures such as regression analysis that were used to determine the relationships between wisdom, mental and social well-being. These findings were then explained using the objectives and hypotheses of the research. Ethical principles were adhered to. All the participants participated in the study by providing informed consent; the responses were confidential. The involvement was done on a voluntary basis and the respondents were given the freedom to drop out of the study.

III.RESULTS

Table 1: Pearson Correlation among Study Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Wisdom	--	.72**	.67**	.73**	.27**	.52**
2. Cognition Wisdom		--	.23**	.27**	.20**	.39**
3. Reflexive Wisdom			--	.26**	.34**	.39**
4. Affective Wisdom				--	.35**	.33**
5. Mental Well-being					--	.46**
6. Social Well-being						--

**p< .01

Table 1 shows Wisdom has significant positive relationship with cognitive wisdom $r = .72, p < .01$, reflective wisdom $r = 0.67, p < .01$, affective wisdom $r = 0.73, p < .01$, mental well-being $r = .27, p < .01$, social well-being $r = .52, p < .01$. Cognitive wisdom has significant positive relationship with reflective wisdom $r = .23, p < .01$, affective wisdom $r = .27, p < .01$, mental well-being $r = .20, p < .01$, social well-being $r = .39, p < .01$. Reflective wisdom has significant positive relationship with affective wisdom $r = .26, p < .01$, mental well-being $r = .34, p < .01$, social well-being $r = .39, p < .01$. Affective wisdom has significant positive relationship with mental well-being $r = .05, p < .01$, social well-being $r = .33, p < .01$. Mental well-being has positive significant relation with social well-being $r = .46, p < .01$.

Table 2: Regression Coefficients for the Impact of Wisdom on Mental Well-Being

Variables	B	SE	t	p	95% CI
(Constant)	14.49	2.19	6.63	.00	[10.18, 18.79]
Wisdom	.56	.23	3.22	.01	[.12, 1.23]
Cognitive Wisdom	.26	.13	2.07	.04	[.01, .50]
Reflective Wisdom	.12	.13	.99	.32	[-.36, .12]
Affective Wisdom	.64	.14	4.65	.00	[.36, .91]

Table 2 shows the impact of wisdom on mental well-being. The R^2 value of 0.136 reveals that the predictors explained 13.6% variance in the outcome variable with $F(4, 200) = 10.27, p < .01$. The finding revealed that wisdom ($B = .56, p < .05$), cognitive wisdom ($B = .26, p < .05$) and affective wisdom ($B = .64, p < .05$) positively predict mental well-being, whereas reflective wisdom ($B = .12, p > .05$) has non-significant effect on mental well-being.

Table 3: Regression Coefficients for the Impact of Wisdom on Social Well-Being

Variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	95% CI
(Constant)	60.39	4.5	13.44	.00	[51.53, 69.27]
Wisdom	1.11	.49	8.21	.00	[.45, 1.66]
Cognitive Wisdom	1.12	.26	4.34	.00	[.61, 1.63]
Reflective Wisdom	.72	.26	2.81	.01	[.22, 1.23]
Affective Wisdom	1.26	.28	4.43	.00	[.7, 1.82]

Table 3 shows the impact of wisdom on social well-being. The R² value of .283 reveals that the predictors explained 28.3% variance in the outcome variable with *F* (4, 200) = 25.6. The finding revealed that wisdom (*B* =, *p* < .05), cognitive wisdom (*B*= 1.12, *p* <0.05), reflective wisdom (*B*= 0.72, *p* < 0.05) and affective wisdom (*B*= 1.26, *p* < 0.05) positively predict social well-being.

IV.DISCUSSION

The primary aim of this study was to explore the relationship between wisdom and mental and social well-being of university students. These results suggest that wisdom greatly influences the well-being of the mind as well as the interactions of social life since, students who are wiser show higher emotional well-being, resilience, and satisfaction with their lives. Cronbach alpha was used to perform reliability analysis to determine internal consistency and the value of alpha was high, which is a good sign of a reliable scale. The skewness and kurtosis were used to check normalcy and Q-Q plots were plotted (Kamath et al., 2025) to check that the data met parametric statistics. The first hypothesis was that wisdom would be a positive predictor of mental well-being among students in universities which was supported by the results which confirmed the positive predictive effect of cognitive as well as affective aspects of wisdom on mental well-being. Affective wisdom, focused on empathy and emotional regulation, was the most affected, which is consistent with Grossmann et al. (2020) who also highlight the significance of emotional regulation in well-being. Such findings strike a chord with Webster (2007) focus on the relevance of emotional intelligence to alleviate challenges to mental well-being. It was also supported by the second hypothesis that proposed that wisdom will be a positive predictor of social well-being among the university students as all the three dimensions of wisdom were found to positively influence social well-being, namely; cognitive, reflective, and affective. The role of cognitive and affective wisdom was especially significant, which emphasized the role of knowledge, decision-making, and empathy in building social relationships. This is in line with the theory of wisdom offered by Sternberg (2019) as a compromise between individual interests and social good. Moreover, Grossmann et al. (2010) observe that intelligent people are cooperative and they are capable of resolving conflicts thus improving their social life.

V. CONCLUSION

This research sheds more light on the impact of a positive correlation between wisdom and mental as well as social well-being among university students. The results suggest a positive relationship between increased amounts of wisdom, which includes cognitive, reflective and affective components, and mental well-being, and social well-being. In light of all the challenges that students go through in their higher education, integrating wisdom can be an important aspect in supporting the mental health of students and social life, thereby making the university experience healthier. Limitations of the study include, the data used is self-reported, this can be biased, and the cross-sectional nature of the study, which does not allow the researcher to determine causality between wisdom and well-being. The sample was also selected in single universities, which might not be generalizable. To improve the effectiveness of longitudinal assessment of the causal relationships and investigate the different cultural backgrounds to enhance the relevance of the results, future research should involve the use of longitudinal designs. The sample size could be broadened, and the qualitative approach could also serve to gain a better understanding of the peculiarities of wisdom and well-being.

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