

Personal Profiles and the Life Satisfaction of Out-of-School Youth: A Study of Well-being

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ABSTRACT

Out-of-school youth (OSY) comprise a diverse population facing challenges that profoundly impact their sense of well-being and life satisfaction. This study delves into the intricate relationship between OSY profiles and their sense of fulfillment. Factors like socioeconomic background such as age, gender, income, and parents' educational attainment all contribute significantly to shaping an OSY's well-being. OSYs from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, with limited education, or facing difficulties like financial constraints are more likely to experience lower life satisfaction. These factors can create a sense of hopelessness and limit access to resources and opportunities that contribute to a fulfilling life.

Furthermore, mental health and social support networks play a crucial role in influencing OSY life satisfaction. Mental health struggles, such as anxiety or depression, can significantly hinder an OSY's ability to experience positive emotions and engage in meaningful activities. Conversely, strong social connections with family, friends, or support groups can foster a sense of belonging and purpose, providing a crucial buffer against challenges and promoting life satisfaction.

Understanding this interplay between OSY profiles and well-being is critical for developing targeted interventions that empower them to navigate challenges and achieve greater life satisfaction. By recognizing the diverse needs of this population, we can tailor interventions to address specific areas of concern. Mental health services can equip OSYs with tools to manage emotional challenges while fostering social support systems that can provide a sense of belonging and connection. Additionally, providing access to educational and vocational training opportunities empowers OSYs to develop valuable skills, increase future job prospects, and ultimately build a path toward a more fulfilling life.

In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of recognizing the complex interplay between OSY profiles, well-being, and life satisfaction. By implementing targeted interventions that address mental health, social support, and access to future opportunities, we can empower OSYs to overcome challenges and pave the way for a brighter and more fulfilling future.

Keyword: - Personal profiles, life satisfaction, Out-of-school youth, and well-being.

1. INTRODUCTION

Life paths are determined by the developmental stages of adolescence and young adulthood. In this day and age, education plays a vital role in equipping youths with the skills and knowledge for future success. However, a significant number of youths find themselves outside the formal education system, classified as “out-of-school youth.

The number of out-of-school youth has increased over the years. The group comprises individuals aged 15 to 24 who are not currently enrolled in any formal program. Despite the availability of free education in public schools, many families cannot afford to send their children to school, which means they still need to be educated and work at an early age. Hence, the majority of children end up on the streets, either by selling things or begging strangers for change, while some (specially girls) become mothers at a young age. This raises concerns about their well-being and overall life satisfaction.

In relation, various articles have examined stigma, depressive symptoms, and other factors as contributing to school dropouts. However, based on a study by UIS (2019), there is a lack of research on well-being and life satisfaction as consequences of early school leaving. Therefore, there is a lack of literature on this topic. Also, there was a population gap in this study because part of the population was excluded.

This study explores the complex relationship between the profile and well-being of out-of-school and their life satisfaction. The way they are influenced by their age, gender type, socio-economic background, and departure from school has an impact on their emotional and psychological state and perception of life. Understanding these relationships is critical to developing effective interventions and support systems. By recognizing the specific challenges that out-of-school youth face, we can create programs that address their well-being and increase their sense of life satisfaction. This enables them to navigate their situation more effectively and achieve positive life outcomes.

The study contributes to the existing understanding of youth development and health. By focusing on out-of-school youth, the researcher provides insight into a potentially marginalized group and explores how their individual experiences impact overall life satisfaction.

2. METHODOLOGY

Descriptive-correlational design is utilized in this research. Planning involves evaluating the correlation between dependent and independent variables to determine their likelihood of occurring, which allows for future events to be predicted using existing information (Cochran, 2011).

The survey respondents are one hundred (100) out-of-school youths from the municipality of Arakan which is 33% of the total population of the OSYs in the said municipality. These out-of-school youths are 15 to 24 years old, and 64 were male, while 36 were female.

Using the data from the focal person of the youth, the researcher reached those out-of-school youths through visitation and looked for them through the social media platform. However, the majority of them went to other places to work and some were dead. Some respondents were in the area but declined the opportunity to be interviewed and surveyed. Therefore, the respondents were chosen at random to participate in the study. The utilization of this technique enables the selection of the sample to be random. Each sample has an equal chance of being chosen for full representation. All survey respondents are chosen based on their compliance with specific criteria.

The study was done around the barangays of Arakan such as: Doroluman, Naje, Makalangot, Badiangon, Meocan, Malibatuan, and Napalico. In the province of Cotabato, there is a community called Arakan. There are 28 barangays located in the municipality, with an area of 693 square kilometers. Twenty-two square kilometers or 267.65 square kilometers, which is 7.44 percent of the total area of Cotabato. It had a population of 50,558 as of the 2020 census. As of September 2022, Pag-asa Youth Association of the Philippines, Inc. has shown data indicating that there are still 302 active OSY members and 90 inactive members among the thousands of youths in the municipality. In addition, 28 associations actively participated in the activities of OSY.

Those out-of-school young people are those with incomplete education and those who do not go to school or have studied but finished before obtaining compulsory education or primary education. It concerns young people or children from poor families who do not have the opportunity to go to school. A random selection process was used to select participants for the study, which was conducted in various barangays within Arakan Municipality.

One (1) set of three (3) questionnaire sections was used in this study. Part 1 is an open-ended questionnaire where the respondent is expected to give details about the information being asked such as their age, gender, monthly indication, and the highest educational attainment of their parent.

PERMA Profiler, which was developed in 2016 and taken from Butler and Kern's research, forms part 2 of the research questionnaire. This question-and-answer survey measures the respondents' quality of life. The PERMA Profiler is a comprehensive questionnaire from the University of Pennsylvania that assesses each component of Seligman's (2012) well-being.

The third survey examines the impact of various factors or variables on the life satisfaction of out-of-school youth using 7-point Likert scale questionnaires, where 7 is strongly agree, and 1 is disagree.

In analyzing the gathered data for this study, descriptive and inferential statistics were employed.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Profile of the Respondents

Tables 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 distributed the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents were determined by age, gender, income, and higher education level among parents. These tables summarized the characteristics of the respondents in the study across three categories: age, gender, and income. It provides both the frequency count (F) and the percentage (%) distribution for each category and sub-category.

Table 2.1 shows the distribution of respondents across five ages. It has an average of 20.3; SD is 2.84 and a range of 9. The largest proportion of OSY, 40%, falls within the 19-22 age group, followed by 28% in the 23 and above category. This suggests a significant number of young adults are leaving school after secondary education or even college. The percentage then drops for the younger age groups, with 25% between 16-18 and only 7% at 15 and below. This means that many young adults leave school after completing high school but before entering or completing college. There are several reasons behind this distribution such as socioeconomic factors, academic challenges, and life circumstances. In support, Behr et.al (2020) said that one factor influencing dropout students' is academic satisfaction, including students' relationships with lecturers. Wiers-Jessen, et al (2020) research also supports that satisfaction with lecture quality affects dropout rates in college.

There are more men (64 or 64.0%) than women (36 or 36.0%). This means that most out-of-school youth tend to drop out of school. In this regard, Paqueo (2022) argued that boys lagged behind girls in almost all educational outcomes, from dropout rates to graduation rates. A PIDS study from 2022 on "Boys are Still Left Behind in Basic Education" discovered that boys are more likely to drop out of school, graduate on time, and earn less college than girls.

Paqueo (2022) listed many positive reasons why boys are less motivated than girls to participate and do better in school. His statement emphasized the pressures stemming from impoverished boys leaving school early to work to boost household income.

Then, the table shows also the income distribution of the respondents across four categories: The majority of respondents fall into the lowest income category (P 5,000 or below - 78, or 78.0%), and a smaller proportion falls into the higher income categories (P 5,001 - P 15,000+). Seventy-eight percent of the individuals earned 5,000 or less, while 14 percent earned from 5,001 to 10,000, 6 percent received 10,001 and 15,000, and two percent obtained more out of their respective incomes P15, 001, and above. The quality of life is strongly influenced by economic factors, as Boyce et al. (2010) point out, in addition to the need for food and housing. However, the majority of respondents with an income of up to 5000 are satisfied with their lives. This shows that when basic needs are met, the effect of income on life satisfaction decreases (Wolbring et al., 2013).

Table 2.1 Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of the Selected Variables

Age	F	%	Value
15 and below	7	7.0	
16-18	25	25.0	
19-22	40	40.0	
23 and above	28	28.0	
Total	100	100.0	
Mean			20.3
Range			2.84
Standard Deviation			9
Gender			
Male	64	64.0	
Female	36	36.0	
Total	164	100.0	

Income		
P 5,000 – below	78	78.0
P 5,001 - P 10,000	14	14.0
P10,001 – P 15,000	6	6.0
P15,001- above	2	2.0
Total	100	100

As to the educational attainment of both parents, tables 2.2 and 2.3 revealed different results: as to the education of the father, two percent of the population shows that the father did not attend school, 2% went to Grade 1 and another 2% went to Grade 2. Six percent of the population claimed that their father attended Grade 3 while one percent in Grade 4. Three percent of the respondents said that their fathers enrolled in Grades 5 and 10 received their elementary diplomas.

Forty-eight percent of the population marked that their father enrolled in High School: 11% of the respondents' fathers stepped in the 1st level as a high school student, 15% continued until the 2nd year level, 10% enrolled in 3rd year, and 12% of the population revealed that their father got their diplomas as a high school graduate.

To continue, the table shows that twenty percent of the population said that their father pursued their schooling until college was: 8 percent labeled themselves as a freshmen student, 7 percent were enrolled until 2nd-year college, 3 percent were in 3rd-year college, and 2 percent gained their baccalaureate degree.

Lastly, the distribution of respondents according to the father's educational level is on average 7.39; a range of 14 with a standard deviation of 3.56.

Table 2.2 Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of the Father's Educational Attainment

Fathers' Highest Educational Attainment	F	%
Did not attend school	8	8.0
Grade 1	2	2.0
Grade 2	2	2.0
Grade 3	6	6.0
Grade 4	1	1.0
Grade 5	3	3.0
Grade 6	10	10.0
Total	24	24.0
1 st year High School	11	11.0
2 nd year High School	15	15.0
3 rd year High School	10	10.0
4 th year High School	12	12.0
Total	48	48.0
1 st year College	7	7.0
2 nd year College	7	7.0
3 rd year College	2	2.0
4 th year College	2	2.0
Total	18	18.0

Total	100	100
Mean: 7.39		
Range: 3.56		
Standard Deviation: 14		

While, table 2.3 presents the results of the gathered information about the educational background of the mother, in which: 2 percent of the population mothers did not attend school, the same percentage shown that the mothers finished Grade 4, 6 percent enrolled in Grade 5 and 9 percent have their diploma as an elementary graduate.

Furthermore, fifty-three percent of 100 respondents enrolled in High School: ten percent in first-year high school, twelve percent in 2nd year, 12% also as third-year high school students, and 21% received their high school diplomas as graduates.

The remaining 27 percent of the respondents' mothers continue their education as a college student: 12% of the respondents' mothers went to college as first-year college students, 5% enrolled as 2nd year, 4% as 3rd-year students, and 6% aimed a baccalaureate degree.

In total, the distribution of respondents according to the educational level of the father is on average 8.98; area 14; and a standard deviation of 14.

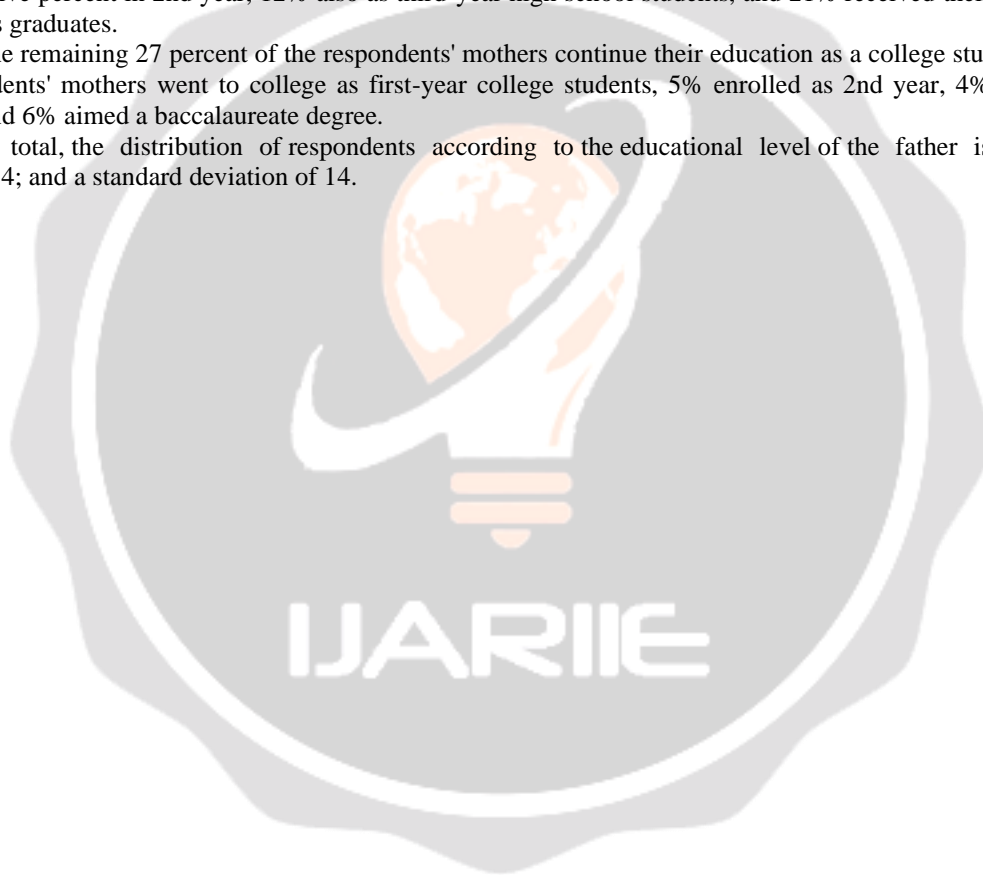


Table 2.2 Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of the Mother's Educational Attainment.

Mothers' Highest Educational Attainment	F	%
Did not attend school	2	2.0
Grade 1	0	0
Grade 2	0	0
Grade 3	0	0
Grade 4	2	2
Grade 5	6	6.0
Grade 6	8	8.0
Total	16	16.0
1 st year High School	10	10.0
2 nd year High School	12	12.0
3 rd year High School	12	12.0
4 th year High School	21	21.0
Total	55	55.0
1 st year College	12	12.0
2 nd year College	5	5.0
3 rd year College	4	4.0
4 th year College	6	6.0
Total	27	27.0
Total	100	100
Mean: 8.98		
Range: 2.76		
Standard Deviation:14		

This information demonstrates that the life satisfaction and well-being of out-of-school youths are not solely determined by their personal and family backgrounds.

Well-being of the Out-of-School Youth

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of the Out-of-School Youth Well-Being

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description
Positive Emotion	5.24	1.01070	Often
Accomplishment	5.51	0.82265	Frequently
Relationship	5.32	1.18212	Frequently
Meaning	5.64	2.16731	Frequently
Well-being	5.44	0.88472	Frequently
Valid N (listwise)			

In Table 3, descriptive data was presented on the well-being of outwardly educated children. It summarized the well-being of out-of-school youths (OSYs) based on five key aspects: Positive Emotion, Accomplishment, Relationship, Meaning, and overall Well-being. It provides both the average score (mean) and the variability of scores (standard deviation) for each aspect. Additionally, it offers a descriptive interpretation of the mean scores based on a pre-defined scale.

The results represented the average score for each well-being aspect. All means fall between 5.24 and 5.64, indicating that OSYs generally report experiencing these aspects "Frequently" according to the provided scale. This means that OSY has experienced positive emotions, a sense of achievement, and good relationships, and regularly evaluates the purpose of life. The statement suggests that the success or failure of an individual is not a guarantee of their well-being. There are a few reasons why OSYs might report high well-being despite being out of school. Perhaps they found alternative sources of fulfillment, like strong social connections, meaningful work experiences, or engaging hobbies. Additionally, the study might have involved OSYs who were happy with their decision to leave school and were pursuing their paths.

Equipping parents, teachers, and other caregivers with the knowledge and tools to identify and help the mental health of the youths' needs is essential to support the idea of Georgiades et al. (2019) in ensuring children's and youth's mental health and well-being as one of the greatest challenges facing society today (Georgiades et al., 2019).

In summary, these findings suggest that we need to take into account a more comprehensive view of health that goes beyond academic qualifications. By recognizing the factors that affect OSY's well-being, programs, and support systems can be designed to meet their specific needs and promote positive life outcomes.

Life Satisfaction of the Out-of-School Youth

As can be seen in Table 4, the life satisfaction of out-of-school youth was distinguished by different levels of satisfaction. This shows that life satisfaction does not seem to be an easily understood concept. It encompasses the entirety of a person's existence and all its components.

The life satisfaction of out-of-school youth who received supports is depicted on the table. One percent (1%) of the respondents stated that they are not satisfied with their life. In addition, 14 (14.0%) of the respondents stated that they are slightly dissatisfied with their life. While 2 (2.0%) of the respondents reported being neutral about their life satisfaction. There were many possible reasons for dissatisfaction felt by the OSYs, it can be a lack of education and employment opportunities.

Out-of-school youths often face challenges finding stable employment due to limited education or job skills. This lack of opportunity can lead to financial strain, feelings of hopelessness, and dissatisfaction with their current situation. They are unsatisfied because of limited social connections. OSYs might lack a clear path for their future and this uncertainty leads to anxiety and dissatisfaction with their current circumstances or they have mental health concerns. These conditions can significantly impact a person's overall well-being and life satisfaction.

As supported by the statements above, research conducted by Liem et al. (2010) has revealed that teenagers who did not finish high school were more prone to experiencing depression symptoms, unhappy with their lives, and experienced greater psychological distress than those who finished school. This can lead to stigma similar to that of people with mental health problems (Mashiach-Eizenberg et al., 2013).

Additionally, it was found that the majority of OSY were content with their life. Thirty-four (34.0%) of the respondents also reported being slightly satisfied with their life. Then, 40 (40.0%) of the respondents reported being satisfied. Lastly, 9 (9.0%) of the respondents reported being extremely satisfied with their life satisfaction. Overall, a majority of the respondents (74%) reported being at least somewhat satisfied with their life satisfaction (satisfied or extremely satisfied).

This indicates that they might have found fulfillment outside of traditional academic achievement when they are happy with their decisions. After all, life satisfaction is a subjective assessment of our life as a whole (Wolfgang, 2015). Generally, life satisfaction encompasses the entirety of one's existence and all its components. Besides, life satisfaction is multidimensional and manifests in health, socioeconomic status, stressful events and circumstances, social relationships, depressive symptoms, and self-esteem, among others (Gaziel et al., 2015).

Table 4. Level of Life Satisfaction of the Out-of-School Youths.

	Frequency	Percent
Dissatisfied	1	1.0
Slightly Dissatisfied	14	14.0
Neutral	2	2.0
Slightly Satisfied	34	34.0
Satisfied	40	40.0
Extremely Satisfied	9	9.0
Total	100	100.0

Significant Relationship Between Profile and Life Satisfaction of the Respondents

Table 5 shows the correlation between various profile characteristics and life satisfaction of the respondents. The profile lists the different characteristics of the respondents that were examined about life satisfaction. The Pearson Correlation, this column between each profile characteristic and life satisfaction. When the correlation coefficient is closer to 1, it indicates a more positive relationship while when it is close to -1, it implies fewer negative relationships. There is no correlation between 0. A statistical significance level of 0.05 is commonly acknowledged, which suggests that the association observed was less than 5% likely by chance. This column indicates the sample size, which is 100 for all profile characteristics in this table.

Table 5. Significant Relationship Between Profile and Life Satisfaction of the Respondents

		Life Satisfaction
Age	Pearson Correlation	.195
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.052
	N	100
Gender	Pearson Correlation	.027
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.787
	N	100
Father's HEA	Pearson Correlation	.185
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.065
	N	100
Mother's HEA	Pearson Correlation	.248*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.013
	N	100
Income	Pearson Correlation	.042
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.677
	N	100

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Mother's HEA (Higher Educational Attainment) has a statistically significant positive correlation (.248, $p=.013$) with life satisfaction. This means that respondents with mothers who have higher educational attainment tend to report higher life satisfaction. The view that women are responsible for educating new generations is present in this context. It is believed that the education of mothers is the key to society's development, as they inspire their children with happiness to live

and contribute to our community. Their educational attainment often leads to better jobs and income, providing resources that can contribute to their child's overall well-being.

Aside from that, mothers with higher education exhibited parenting practices that promote emotional well-being in their children. Through her educational achievement, she can inspire her child to pursue their own goals and lead a fulfilling life. This is supported by Chen et al.(2022), a mother who has gained enough knowledge and resources can adopt positive parenting habits that promote safety and health, provide optimal healthcare for herself and her children, etc. through education. Families, schools, and communities that provide better opportunities for their children's growth have a higher likelihood of success.

Despite being statistically weak, there is still a positive correlation between age (.195, $p=.052$) with life satisfaction. This study indicates that older participants have a slightly higher sense of life satisfaction. Next, the father's HEA (.185, $p=.065$) and income (.042, $p=.677$) show a trend towards a positive correlation with life satisfaction, but the relationships are not statistically significant. More so, gender (.027, $p=.787$) shows no statistically significant correlation with life satisfaction. The same statement as Mayunabo (2016) that "different gender does not have an impact on life satisfaction".

Significant Relationship Between Well-Being and Life Satisfaction of the Out-Of-School Youths

Table 6 focuses on the relationship between out-of-school youths' well-being and their life satisfaction. The Pearson correlation coefficients are utilized to evaluate the strength and direction of this association for various domains of well-being.

All four aspects of well-being in the table (Positive Emotion, Accomplishment, Relationship, and Meaning) show statistically significant positive correlations with life satisfaction. This is indicated by the "." following the correlation coefficient and a significance level of ".000" in the "Sig. (2-tailed)" column. The strength of the correlation is represented by the coefficient value, ranging from .482 to .588. Generally, values closer to 1 indicate a stronger positive correlation, meaning higher scores in well-being are associated with higher life satisfaction.

Positive Emotion has a Pearson Correlation of 0.558. This suggests a moderately strong positive correlation. Youths who report experiencing more positive emotions tend to have higher life satisfaction. As Fredrickson (2011) said positive emotions are used as indicators of success and help improve the overall well-being of the OSYs.

Accomplishment has a Pearson Correlation of 0.588. This shows the strongest positive correlation among the aspects listed. Youths who report a sense of accomplishment tend to have the highest life satisfaction scores. Achievement is frequently defined as the advancement of one's life path or the attainment of goals that are related to life. As Kern, et al (2015) emphasized that a sense of achievement is associated with life satisfaction.

The relationship has a Pearson Correlation of 0.546. This indicates a moderately strong positive correlation. Youths with positive relationships tend to report higher life satisfaction. Having good relationships is commonly acknowledged as a key to experiencing happiness. As Reis (2012) points out, the most common reasons for happiness among people are positive relationships and peer support especially parent-child relationships (Stafford, 2015). Furthermore, sharing good news or celebrating successes can promote stronger bonds and healthier relationships, as per research conducted by Siedlecki et al. (2014). Engaging in enthusiastic responses to others promotes closeness, well-being, and satisfaction, particularly in the realms of personal relationships.

Meaning has a Pearson Correlation of 0.482. This shows a moderate positive correlation. Youths who find meaning in their lives tend to have higher life satisfaction scores. As per Frankl's (2013) analysis, the reason for existence is subjective and can differ based on personal encounters.

Out-of-school youths exhibit a strong correlation between various factors of well-being and life satisfaction, as shown in Table 6. This means that the null hypothesis is rejected. As the importance of human life continues to increase, happiness is likely to maintain its position through the influence of psychological,

physiological, and social factors. This suggests that interventions or programs that target these aspects of well-being could be beneficial in improving life satisfaction for this population.

In addition, for those living with a life of stress, happiness and satisfaction are the keys to achieving that good. The relationship between happiness and well-being can be a mediator in terms of life satisfaction. In support of this, Cho et al.(2014) states that the correlation between well-being and life satisfaction is strong. Thus, this concept is put forth: Well-being positively affects life.

Table 6. Significant Relationship Between Well-Being and Life Satisfaction of Out-Of-School Youths

Correlations		
		Life Satisfaction
Positive Emotion	Pearson Correlation	.558**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100
Accomplishment	Pearson Correlation	.588**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100
Relationship	Pearson Correlation	.546**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100
Meaning	Pearson Correlation	.482**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4. CONCLUSIONS

An overview of the relationship between life satisfaction and well-being among out-of-school youth is given by the study. The first-ever empirical evidence indicates that OSY's life satisfaction and well-being have an impact on each other and are closely linked. The results indicate that the mother's life satisfaction is influenced by their highest educational level.

The impact of this study was observed in the perception of purpose in youths who have completed their schooling years. These factors greatly affect the well-being and life satisfaction of respondents. The correlation exists between all variables. Moreover, happiness contributes to the overall health and growth of OSY students by increasing their life satisfaction.

The research highlights the significance of the mother's mental health and HEA for well-being and life satisfaction. Measuring and studying the effects of these structures over time would be more advantageous. Moreover, we establish the importance and significance of examining well-being and its profile through the direct and indirect effects of various life satisfaction factors. The conclusions of this examination also serve as practical guidance and evidence for decision-makers to construct work systems that encompass a more comprehensive view of employee well-being, emphasizing the significance of their well-being and satisfaction.

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