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Perspectives on Well-being of Older Adults and Young People in Taiwan- A Q-Methodology Study

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Abstract

Well-being has been described as a multifaceted concept that is not easy to summarize in a single measure, especially across different generations. Questions remain regarding the factors constituting well-being across generations and whether these factors are weighed differently. This study explores these generational discrepancies in well-being perceptions using Q-methodology. Participants ($N = 176$) in Taiwan, categorized as older adults (53) and young adults (123), ranked statements representing various well-being factors. Analysis identified five distinct viewpoints across both generations, which were (1) physical health and spiritual harmony, (2) interpersonal relationships, sufficient income, and health (3) personal health, financial stability, inner peace, and goals (4) fulfillment and life satisfaction, and (5) personal achievement-centric well-being, signifying the multifaceted nature of well-being priorities across age groups. Notably, older adults showed a strong consensus on viewpoints emphasizing physical well-being and social connections, while younger adults placed greater weight on a broader range of well-being factors including financial security, inner peace, and goal achievement. Cultural influences were also evident in the rankings. These findings highlight the need for well-being measures and policies that cater to the diverse needs of different generations. Future research should explore the prevalence of these viewpoints, their connection to individual characteristics, and how they evolve over time and in different socio-economic contexts, potentially reflecting changing societal values.

Keywords Well-being · Q-methodology · Older Adults · Young People · Generational Differences

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Introduction

Well-being has received a notable surge in interest as topic of research and as outcome measure for policy evaluations, recognizing it as a crucial aspect of the human experience, intricately linked to overall quality of life. Well-being was also found to be a multifaceted concept that is not easy to summarize in a single measure valid for use around the world. Extensive research has explored well-being from diverse perspectives, such as psychological status (Levine et al., 2021), quality of life assessment (Bidzan-Bluma et al., 2020; Recabarren et al., 2019), physical health (Herbert et al., 2020), life satisfaction (Kardas et al., 2019), and the experience of joy (Rahm & Heise, 2019). Apart from these different perspectives, or definitions, cultural disparities between the East and the West may additionally contribute to differences in the understanding and assessment of well-being.

Given the advent of increased longevity, several previous studies have shed light on the older population, including a quite comprehensive body of research on the quality of life of older adults. Older adults are a diverse group with a wide range of personality (Lindner et al., 2022), lifestyles (Bielak et al., 2019), cultural backgrounds (Na et al., 2017), life experiences (Washburn & Williams, 2020), and social capital (Jiang & Song, 2022). Recognizing older adults as a heterogeneous population underscores the importance of acknowledging and respecting the diversity inherent in their perspectives on what constitutes well-being (Hackert et al., 2019).

Understandings of well-being can also differ between generations (Botha & Vera-Toscano, 2022). The generational cohort theory emphasizes these differences, highlighting how generational identities are molded by shared developmental history, leading to similar interests and perspectives within the same age bracket (Mannheim, 2005). Consequently, varied interests and expectations exist among different age groups, with each generation navigating unique experiences, contributing to differences from preceding generations (Gravett, 2007). Due to rising generational conflicts between younger and older generations (Mahmoud et al., 2021), defining and assessing well-being uniformly across generations also poses a challenge. There is a need for better insight into what factors hold to be constitutive of well-being across generations and, also, whether factors are perhaps weighed differently by generations. As argued by Ryder (1985), studying such generational differences can contribute to a better understanding of social change.

A growing body of research has identified significant generational differences across various cultures and nations, encompassing aspects such as workplace behavior and attitudes (Appelbaum et al., 2022), mental health trends (Botha et al., 2023), and subjective well-being(SWB) determinants (Botha & Vera-Toscano, 2022). These disparities contribute to the phenomenon known as the "generation gap", which can lead to conflicts within families and workplaces (Aggarwal et al., 2017), affecting the wellbeing of a society as a whole. The recognition of these intergenerational differences has prompted numerous studies aimed at uncovering the key factors driving this phenomenon, with the ultimate goal of mitigating conflicts and fostering better understanding among different generations. Research across Western nations has consistently identified significant variations in generational characteristics, leading

to a diverse spectrum of values and perspectives among different age cohorts (Pham et al., 2020; Sarraf, 2019; Torabian et al., 2022).

In response to recent economic, societal, and technological transformations, Taiwan and other advanced Asian economies are experiencing a syncretic evolution of values, where traditional cultural norms are integrating with modern ideals to form novel societal paradigms. Cultural value conflicts such as obedience of the hierarchy in the workforce (Chuang & Wang, 2018) and filial piety beliefs in the family (Chen et al., 2022) have been strongly debated, as well as diverse work-life balance expectations among different generations (Gao et al., 2019). Drawing from intergenerational solidarity theory (Bengtson & Roberts, 1991) and social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 2004), these differences in values and approaches, when not properly understood or addressed, can escalate into generational conflicts, impacting both personal relationships, organizational effectiveness and solidarity in society. This is particularly significant in East Asian societies, where cultural values emphasize familial harmony and collective well-being (Choi et al., 2021).

By aiming to contribute to the understanding of generational gaps in perspectives on well-being, the current research hopefully not only benefits generations today but also hold promise for future ones, underscoring the lasting significance of scientific knowledge in fostering intergenerational understanding. In light of the swiftly evolving demographics as a result of rising life expectancy and ageing populations, which will require policymakers to make decisions about how to deal with the growing need for time and financial contributions from younger to older generations, it is essential to understand what is important for the well-being of both the younger and older generations and how policies might affect their well-being. In addition, better mutual understanding between younger and older adults about what constitutes well-being for each, may foster empathy and solidarity between generations. Most existing research into well-being has been conducted in a Western context and it remains unclear whether available well-being measures are valid in culturally distinct contexts. Therefore, this paper aims to contribute to well-being literature and policy by exploring and comparing what younger and older people in an Eastern context find important for a good life, more specifically, in Taiwan. Such insights can play a pivotal role in developing more comprehensive and culturally sensitive well-being measures that can be useful for shaping future policies, improving the overall quality of life of the populations in Eastern countries.

Background

Many nations have utilized indicators of well-being to examine the population's overall quality of life or to assess the benefits of policies. The promotion and sustenance of well-being have been widely recognized as crucial for establishing and sustaining healthy and productive societies (Diener & Suh, 1997; Durand, 2015). But measures of well-being used varied considerably, being either objective (e.g., income) or subjective (e.g., how life is perceived), single- or multi-dimensional, and with different theoretical underpinnings (e.g., capabilities, life satisfaction).

Therefore, it is relevant to provide some background to definitions and constituents of well-being and their measurement.

Prominent psychological theories and models have contributed to our understanding of well-being, as well as the formation of assessment tools to measure emotional well-being. In Western psychological discourse, as exemplified by scholars like Ryff and Keyes (1995) and Seligman (2011), discussions on well-being, joy, and fulfillment often center around dimensions highlighted in instruments such as the Psychological Well-being Scale and the PERMA Scale. The multifaceted nature of eudaemonic well-being encompasses various dimensions, including positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, achievement, autonomy, and a sense of control (van Dierendonck & Lam, 2023). Additional factors such as socioeconomic status also play significant roles, as demonstrated in longitudinal studies (Ryff, 2018, 2024). This comprehensive framework has spurred numerous studies aimed at uncovering the determinants of well-being and has inspired a range of interventions designed to enhance positive functioning (Klausen, 2020). Happiness, often used as a subjective index to measure quality of life, encompasses both individual and social well-being (Jiang et al., 2022; Lozano & Solé-Auró, 2021). To assess this multifaceted concept, tools like the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire have been developed, which approach well-being through positive indicators such as energy, vitality, and positivity (Hills & Argyle, 2002). Past research investigating SWB throughout the lifespan discovered robust and consistent associations between life meaning and all SWB measures across different regions and age groups (Jebb et al., 2020).

Other theories that assist our understanding of well-being focus on the individual's quality of life. In classic empirical literature, SWB is often defined by three components: life satisfaction, positive affect, and absence of negative affect, all of which measure an individual's life evaluation (Diener, 1984). Aligned with the perspective of life satisfaction, there are scales like the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), which measure satisfaction with life at the moment and thoughts about whether one wishes to change their current state (Diener et al., 1985; Pavot & Diener, 1993) and the 10-item Well-being instrument (WiX) (Voormolen et al., 2024; Bom et al., 2024). Instruments measuring well-being in terms of quality of life include the World Health Organization's WHOQOL (WHOQOL Group, 1994), WHO-5 (Staehr-Johansen, 1998), the OECD's Subjective Well-being Scale (OECD Publishing, 2013), the Well-being of Older People instrument (WOOP) (Hackert et al., 2021), and the EQ-5D (Herdman et al., 2011). These scales, in addition to addressing psychological health, encompass physical dimensions such as pain, self-care ability, sleep, rest, living environment, and other aspects that receive comparatively less attention in measures based on psychological theories.

However, most of the existing measures of well-being were developed in a Western context. Lu and Shih (1997) suggested that culture plays a significant role in shaping the concept of happiness, thereby influencing its subjective experiences. Using the Oxford Happiness Inventory as a foundation, Lu (1998) developed the 48-item Chinese Happiness Inventory. The adaptation of the original 8-item Oxford Happiness Inventory for use in Taiwan demonstrates that while the concept of happiness may be universal, its measurement requires cultural sensitivity (Lung & Shu, 2020). This modification process underscores the importance of considering

linguistic and cultural nuances when applying well-being assessment tools across diverse populations, as these factors can influence the interpretation and relevance of specific measurement items (Grigoriadou et al., 2024; Lung & Shu, 2020).

In sum, the present study focused on the discourse surrounding well-being by investigating and comparing the priorities for a good life among younger and older individuals within an Eastern cultural context, Taiwan. Through close investigations, these findings hold significance in crafting age and culturally relevant well-being metrics, as well as understanding generational disparities.

Methods

This study employs Q methodology, a mixed-method approach ideal for systematically capturing subjective perspectives on well-being (Watts & Stenner, 2012). In the past decade, Q-methodology has gained traction in the health and social sciences. Researchers have utilized this approach to investigate a variety of complex and morally laden topics, including, for example, principles for healthcare priority setting (van Exel et al., 2015), views of the end of life for people with dementia (Hill et al., 2017), organ donations (Truijens & van Exel, 2019), and vaccination (Patty et al., 2017). By combining qualitative depth with quantitative precision, Q methodology enables systematic categorization of subjective experiences, making it particularly suitable for capturing the complex interplay of psychological, social, and cultural factors that traditional surveys might miss. From what is known, Q methodology has been widely utilized in Taiwan to explore a variety of issues, including perceptions of barriers to mobile payment adoption (Liu & Liou, 2019) and subjective needs of community-dwelling older adults for cognitive enhancement programs (Lu, 2017). Q-methodology has also been used to investigate views on well-being, as individual experiences, values, and cultural backgrounds significantly influence how well-being is perceived, and which aspects are prioritized. In a study among people aged 65 and older in the Netherlands, Hackert and colleagues (2021) found five views of what contributes to well-being. These views emphasized the importance of (1) health, financial security and a life partner; (2) physical health, family and other social relations and a support network; (3) mental health, being independent and able to help others; (4) mental health, religion and support to cope with physical frailty; and (5) having a life partner and a comfortable living environment and being able to adapt. Another Q-methodology study from the Netherlands (van der Deijl et al., 2023) also found five views on what constitutes a good life among adult members of the general public. These views focused on the importance of (1) health and feeling well as conditions for all other important aspects of life; (2) having sufficient income, living according to own values and feeling at home in their environment; (3) individual freedom, personal autonomy and respect for everyone's values; (4) friendship, a life partner, family, being appreciated and having a sense of purpose; and (5) individualism, independence and accomplishment and enjoyment. In this study, we employ the checklist for documenting a Q-methodology study suggested by Dieteren et al. (2023). This ensures that we comprehensively detail our

decisions regarding study design, data collection, data analysis, and the presentation of results.

Development of Statement Set A comprehensive set of 226 statements was developed on aspects that could be considered relevant for well-being, drawing from diverse sources, including established well-being scales, literature, and interviews with experts and lay people. These statements were systematically categorized into domains (Table 1) to ensure all potentially relevant aspects were captured in the statement set. Consultation with experts and iterative discussions within the team resulted in a final set of 41 statements. (see Table 1 for details).

These 41 statements were then printed on numbered cards, maintaining uniformity in size and style, and a forced-choice sorting grid was defined following a quasi-normal and symmetrical distribution, ranging from 9 (indicating the most important aspects for well-being, on the right side of the grid) to 1 (representing the least important aspects to well-being, on the left side of the grid) (see Fig. 1).

A pilot study was conducted with eight participants from the two age groups. The aim was to ensure that the set of statements covered all aspects contributing to well-being for both age groups and that the research materials were clear and practical. Participants ranked the statements using the sorting grid and reflected on the comprehensiveness of the statement set and the feasibility of the sorting procedure. Based on insights gathered during these individual interviews, minor adjustments were made in terms of content, wording of statements, and instructions. The entire process (see Fig. 2) resulted in the final set of 41 statements (see Table 1).

Participants Recruitment Participants were recruited using two different methods. Older participants ($n = 53$, 65–80 years) were selected from six elderly community centers to ensure diverse representation in terms of age, educational background (from secondary school to postgraduate), and gender. Younger participants ($n = 129$, 18–30 years) were recruited from multiple universities with different academic backgrounds. All participants were able to live independently, read and write, and communicate effectively. As a token of appreciation, participants received a small gift certificate.

Data Collection The data collection methods differed between older and younger participants. Older participants were interviewed individually by four trained researchers. Participants received an introduction letter, a consent form, statement cards, and a ranking grid. After a brief explanation of the study and a ranking exercise, participants completed a background questionnaire. They then sorted the 41 statements into three piles (important, neutral, unimportant) and arranged them on the ranking grid. The entire process, including participant adjustments and explanations of extreme placements, took approximately 40–50 min per person, with consent-recorded interviews.

The younger participants completed the ranking process online using Q-Method software (Lutfallah & Buchanan, 2019), which provided step-by-step instructions

Table 1 Sources for the set of statements

Domains	Aspects	Claims	Source
Physical health	Health	Both physical condition and sleep quality are well	b, e
		Being able to enjoy excellent health care services	c
	Mobility	Having flexible mobility	b
	Cognition	Able to think clearly and remain focused	b, c
Mental health	Positive/Enthusiastic	Feeling positive and optimistic, and living a life filled with satisfaction and love	a, d, e
	Happy/Joyful	Feeling happy and laughing often	d, e
	Satisfaction/Love	Having a good sex life	c, d
		Maintaining a sense of gratitude and knowing how to cherish	g
	Anxiety/Depression	Not feeling anxious and depressed	d
	Peaceful	Feeling peaceful and relaxed	d
	Savor one's life	Thoroughly savoring life	a
	Loneliness	Not feeling lonely	d
Social connection	Interpersonal relationship	Having a good relationship with friends and family and feeling satisfied with their support	b, c, d
		Being complimented by other people	g
		Seeing children achieve success	g
		Having a life partner	b
		Participating in social media	g
		Making new friends	g
	Comparison	Having a better life than others	a
	Interest/Social engagement	Engaging with and having an interest in people and things in life	a

Table 1 (continued)

Domains	Aspects	Claims	Source
Autonomy/Self-identity/Accomplishment /Worthiness/Learning/ Stress	Autonomy/Sense of control	Being able to take control of one's living, manage time effectively, and accomplish what needs to be done	a, d, e
		Being able to access the necessary information in daily life	c
	Worthiness	Feeling a sense of self-worth through helping others and having a positive influence on many aspects (people/events) of life	a, b, e
	Sense of accomplishment	What I want to do is closely aligned with what I am doing. Life has meaning and purpose, and I am moving towards my goals	a, e
		Feeling a sense of accomplishment and worthiness in what was achieved	a, e
	coping/stress	Being able to accept and let go when facing stress	g
	Self-identity	Considering oneself as important	b
		Even when in disagreement with the majority, having confidence in one's own beliefs	f
		One's perspective on things matures and evolves year by year	f
	Learning/Growth	Learning new skills and new things	b
	Appearance	Considering myself to be attractive	a, d, e
Finance	Finance	Enjoying material pleasures	g
		Having sufficient financial capability to meet one's needs	b, c
Environment	Environment	Living in a country where the things I care about can be heard and voiced	b
		Being able to adapt to a new environment	b
		Living in a stable and less turbulent area	b
		Residing in an environment with abundant natural resources	g
Past/Future	Past/Future	Looking back on one's past with a sense of joy and contentment	b
	Future/Optimism/Planning	Having a plan for the future, and feeling optimistic and secure	a, b, c, d

Table 1 (continued)

Domains	Aspects	Claims	Source
Religion	Religion	Having one's own faith or life philosophy	b
		Finding spiritual solace through religion	g

a = Lu & Gilmour (2006); b = Hackert et al. (2019); c = WHOQOL Group (1998); d = OECD (2013); e = Hills and Argyle (2002); f = Li (2014); g = expert opinion and pilot interviews

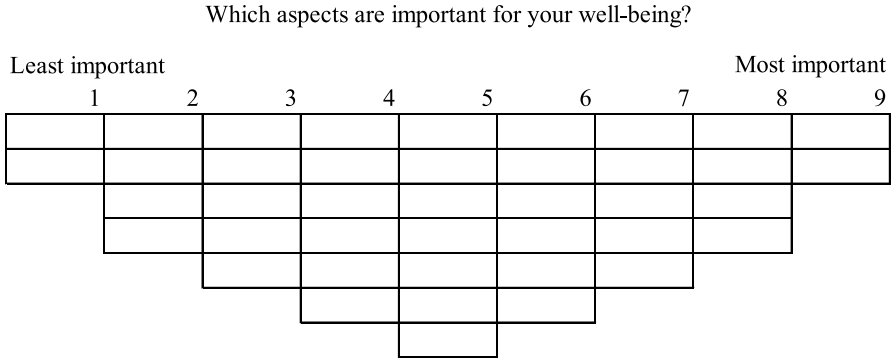

Fig. 1 The sorting grid

and an intuitive interface. They completed a demographic survey before ranking and then explained their ranking. The average processing time was 13 min. Six participants who completed the exercise in less than five minutes and did not provide any reason were excluded from the analysis. The use of different data collection methods was due to the digital divide between age groups; older participants were less familiar with digital tools, while younger participants were more familiar with online platforms.

Ethics The data collection of this study was performed in line with the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki. Approval was granted by the Research Ethics Committee of National Taiwan Normal University.

Data Analysis To unveil underlying patterns in the rankings of the statement set, a by-person factor analysis was carried out using the open-source web-based Ken-Q Analysis software version 2.0.1 (Banasick, 2023). Despite differences in data collection method among the older and younger participants, the analysis was completed on the pooled dataset. Factor analysis (i.e., centroid factor analysis for extraction, varimax rotation) was used to identify distinct perspectives within the data, employing techniques standard in Q methodology to ensure robust and interpretable results (Dieteren et al., 2023).

To determine the number of factors to retain for interpretation, the following criteria were used: (i) the Scree test, (ii) the Kaiser-Guttman criterion (eigenvalues > 1), (iii) the presence of at least two respondents who significantly loaded on one factor only (referred to as 'exemplars' for that factor, as they best exemplify the viewpoint represented by the factor), and (iv) achieving the most interpretable and coherent data reduction (Watts & Stenner, 2012; Zabala, 2014).

The factor array indicates how a hypothetical ideal-type individual, perfectly aligned with a factor, would have ranked the statement set. This array was computed as the weighted average ranking of the statements by participants statistically significantly associated with the factor ($p < 0.05$), using their factor loadings as weights. Next, each factor array, along with the qualitative data from participants statistically

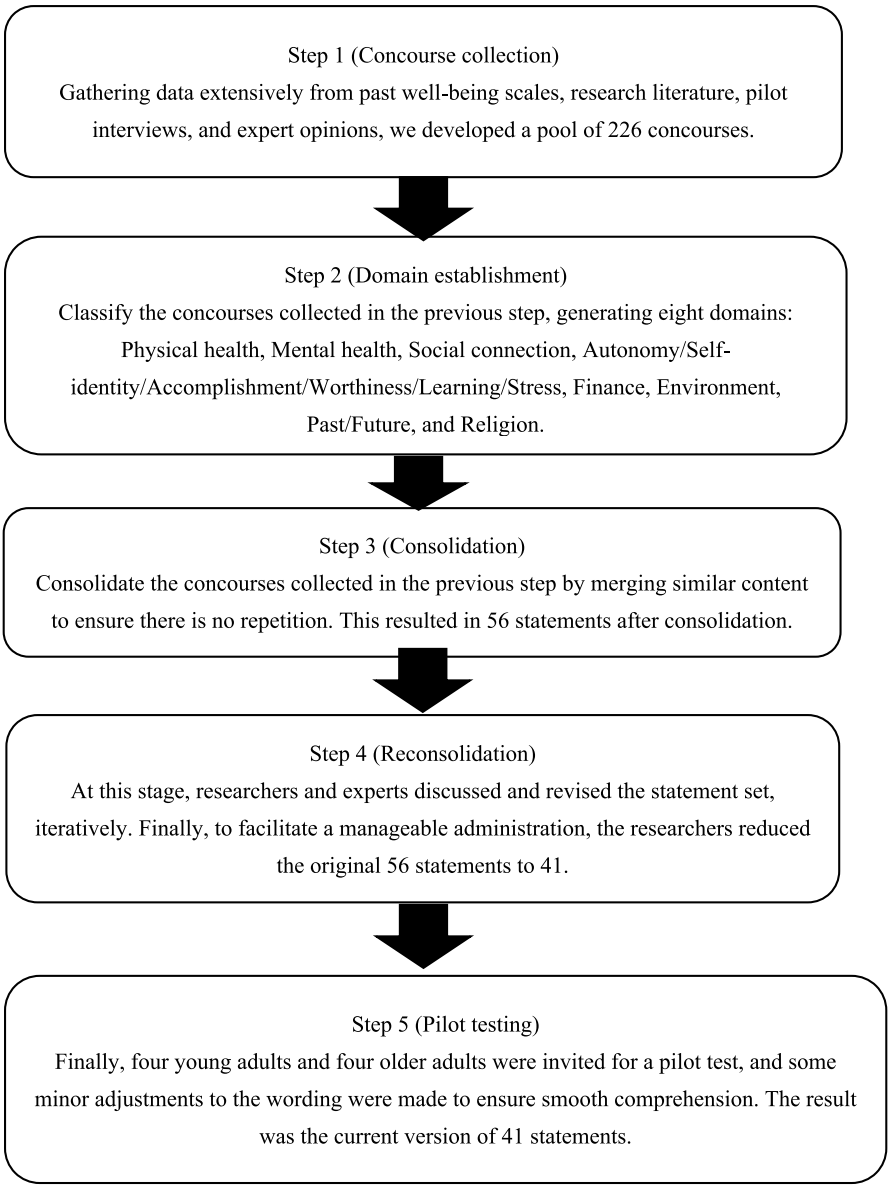

Fig. 2 The development process of the statement set

significantly correlated with the factor, was interpreted as a distinct perspective on well-being. Particular focus was placed on the characterizing and distinguishing statements. Characterizing statements are those ranked in the outer two columns of the sorting grid (i.e., with scores of 9, 8, 2, and 1 in the factor), while distinguishing statements are those with scores statistically significantly different from their scores

in the other factors. Verbal explanations provided by respondents loading on each factor were used to validate and refine the interpretation of each factor, and citations are used for illustration purposes.

Results

The selection of Q methodology for this study was driven by several compelling advantages that align with the research objectives of examining well-being perspectives across generations. Based on what was collected, the analysis of the 176 rankings of the statement set (see appendix 1 for characteristics of the 53 older and 123 younger participants) revealed five viewpoints, representing distinct perspectives on well-being among older and younger people in Taiwan. A total of 119 participants loaded on one of the five viewpoints, while 25 participants were mixed loaders (i.e., confounded) and eight participants did not load on any viewpoint. Notably, there were no consensus statements across the five viewpoints, and certain viewpoints exhibited similarities (wit correlations ranging between −0.27 and 0.53). Viewpoints A and B had more loaders from the older age group, while viewpoints C, D, and E had more loaders from the younger age group (see Table 2, included as an attachment). A factor matrix with defining sorts by each participant is shown in Table 2.

The composite sorts of statements for the five viewpoints are presented in Table 3 (see attachment), collectively explaining 46% of the variance in respondents' rankings. Correlations between the viewpoints were observed to be low to moderate, ranging between −0.27 and 0.53. In the subsequent exploration of solutions with more than five viewpoints, no additional viewpoints were identified based on these negative loaders. The viewpoints were distinct in their interpretation and were not influenced by statements with negative loadings.

The description of viewpoints in Table 3 includes the positioning of important statements on the sorting grid, denoted by the statement number indicated by a number sign (#) in parentheses. The position on the sorting grid is further presented with an indication of significant differences in relation to other viewpoints, marked by an asterisk (*) to indicate differences at p-levels 0.05/0.01. For example, (#2, 9*/**) signifies that for that particular viewpoint, statement 2 had a factor score of 9, and this score was distinguishing compared to all other viewpoints at the 0.05 or 0.01 level of statistical significance.

In addition to the statistical details, interview citations from exemplars are provided as illustrations, noted in "…" with respondent ID numbers. In the following, the five viewpoints are described.

Viewpoint A

In this perspective, well-being is primarily intertwined with physical health (#1, 9; #3, 9) (see Table 4), feeling peaceful and relaxed (#10, 8), a deep sense of gratitude

Table 2 Factor matrix with defining sorts marked *

O/Y	ID	Viewpoint				
		A	B	C	D	E
O	001	0.50	0.25	0.31	0.26	−0.31
O	002	0.58*	0.19	0.21	0.34	−0.05
O	003	0.45*	0.00	−0.04	−0.05	0.09
O	004	0.38	0.47	−0.15	0.23	−0.25
O	005	0.61*	0.04	0.35	0.00	−0.01
O	006	0.32	0.43	−0.11	0.44	−0.14
O	008	0.38	0.39	0.18	0.54	−0.19
O	009	0.02	0.36	0.41	0.31	−0.44
O	010	0.51*	−0.18	0.04	0.21	−0.19
O	011	0.50*	0.08	0.00	0.34	−0.18
O	012	0.51*	−0.01	−0.19	−0.02	−0.24
O	014	0.16	0.56*	−0.41	−0.15	−0.07
O	015	0.19	0.41	0.16	0.13	−0.34
O	016	0.16	0.53*	0.26	0.01	−0.16
O	017	0.41	0.39	0.04	0.28	0.15
O	018	0.41*	0.27	0.08	0.19	−0.19
O	019	0.19	0.42	0.32	0.40	−0.20
O	020	0.46	0.01	0.16	0.44	−0.34
O	021	0.40*	−0.11	−0.12	−0.12	−0.19
O	022	0.24	0.17	0.07	0.43*	−0.23
O	023	0.38	0.51	0.06	0.35	−0.26
O	024	0.47*	−0.02	0.01	0.04	0.06
O	025	0.42	0.30	0.25	0.20	−0.28
O	026	0.49*	0.14	−0.07	−0.05	−0.33
O	027	0.60*	0.15	−0.07	0.03	0.02
O	028	0.50*	−0.05	0.13	0.01	−0.09
O	029	0.61*	0.02	−0.06	0.38	0.07
O	030	0.53*	0.16	0.12	0.25	−0.12
O	031	0.48*	0.35	0.10	0.22	−0.15
O	032	0.06	0.17	−0.27	−0.12	−0.14
O	033	0.34*	−0.03	0.07	0.15	0.10
O	034	0.64*	0.12	0.17	0.15	0.12
O	035	0.39	−0.02	0.35	0.51	−0.02
O	036	0.37	0.28	0.26	−0.05	−0.18
O	037	0.43*	0.07	0.27	0.28	−0.15
O	038	0.46	0.66*	0.13	−0.01	−0.04
O	039	0.63*	0.03	0.23	0.20	−0.43
O	040	0.35	0.33	0.18	0.54	−0.25
O	041	0.46*	−0.12	−0.05	0.42	0.10
O	043	0.66*	0.03	0.10	0.31	−0.28
O	044	0.73*	−0.07	−0.13	0.32	−0.40

Table 2 (continued)

O/Y	ID	Viewpoint				
		A	B	C	D	E
O	045	0.31	0.28	0.26	0.20	−0.18
O	046	0.29	0.18	0.43	0.07	−0.26
O	047	0.02	0.52*	−0.04	0.01	−0.44
O	048	0.06	0.57*	−0.04	−0.04	−0.17
O	049	0.48*	0.11	0.31	−0.07	−0.10
O	050	0.62*	−0.02	−0.15	−0.01	−0.29
O	052	0.43*	0.05	0.26	0.24	0.13
O	053	0.58*	0.26	−0.08	0.12	−0.02
O	054	0.28	0.56*	0.07	0.34	−0.04
O	055	0.53	0.02	−0.17	0.50	−0.30
O	056	0.48	0.55	−0.04	−0.21	−0.25
O	060	0.57*	0.16	0.27	0.00	−0.19
Y	6Z49	−0.02	0.20	0.37*	0.09	0.16
Y	NTBE	0.49	0.11	0.10	0.49	−0.09
Y	K72I	0.19	0.22	0.42	0.55*	−0.09
Y	A6WJ	0.46	0.04	0.27	0.61*	0.01
Y	RNEL	0.27	0.31	−0.06	0.59*	0.21
Y	91TF	0.27	0.06	0.09	0.46*	0.07
Y	9UV3	−0.16	−0.02	−0.16	0.28	0.48*
Y	EC06	0.14	−0.13	0.01	0.42	0.38
Y	MGDZ	0.31	0.09	0.41	0.32	0.31
Y	CWGR	0.15	0.26	−0.03	0.36	0.20
Y	7S7N	0.17	−0.20	0.34	0.54	0.38
Y	ZCD8	−0.12	0.37	0.40	0.41	−0.18
Y	2HAG	−0.03	−0.07	0.46	0.51	0.32
Y	QCSX	0.34	0.15	0.09	0.35	0.48
Y	RFV5	0.11	0.00	0.35	0.58*	0.09
Y	8VWD	0.27	0.21	0.22	0.48*	0.25
Y	R346	0.33	0.12	0.37	0.19	0.22
Y	HP1I	0.33	0.21	0.19	0.65*	−0.06
Y	ACHU	−0.01	0.26	0.45*	−0.09	−0.15
Y	PZEY	0.28	−0.7	0.48*	0.01	−0.25
Y	IMNU	−0.12	−0.12	0.40*	−0.24	0.18
Y	Z60X	−0.10	0.18	0.27	0.54	0.43
Y	T9YI	0.30	−0.15	0.14	0.29	0.23
Y	OQFU	0.08	0.18	0.56*	0.29	0.21
Y	QF6C	0.21	0.29	0.25	0.50*	0.20
Y	4K5Q	0.32	0.14	0.24	0.59*	−0.06
Y	G12Y	0.43*	0.18	−0.14	0.24	0.08
Y	DV1S	0.30	0.19	0.12	0.59*	0.27
Y	IADO	0.39	0.22	0.36	0.42	−0.06

Table 2 (continued)

O/Y	ID	Viewpoint				
		A	B	C	D	E
Y	DEWH	0.01	0.38	0.33	0.52*	0.05
Y	RDD5	0.39	0.17	0.28	0.61*	0.10
Y	J680	0.18	0.15	0.52	0.51	0.27
Y	IYMQ	0.05	0.28	0.19	0.51*	0.13
Y	TQJZ	−0.01	−0.19	0.19	0.21	0.68*
Y	KJMO	0.24	−0.06	0.40	0.55*	−0.09
Y	5I0G	−0.07	0.39	0.36	0.29	−0.07
Y	SCPF	0.13	0.46	0.27	0.39	0.33
Y	YRIZ	0.23	0.06	0.07	0.67*	0.01
Y	94U7	0.10	−0.07	0.05	0.74*	0.28
Y	TUYL	−0.11	0.20	0.05	0.66*	0.12
Y	QH9G	−0.34	−0.05	−0.09	0.54*	0.25
Y	0ED1	0.41*	−0.01	0.29	0.09	0.24
Y	82FF	0.11	0.09	0.15	0.54*	−0.21
Y	MMZN	0.20	0.12	0.36	0.70*	0.10
Y	AWBJ	0.11	0.10	0.24	0.72*	0.34
Y	W5WD	0.06	0.36	0.32	0.20	0.36
Y	LRKA	−0.21	0.23	0.46	0.33	0.21
Y	JY39	−0.08	−0.15	0.01	0.16	0.69*
Y	QVH4	−0.02	0.09	0.04	0.49*	0.37
Y	7WMU	−0.13	0.07	0.15	0.57*	0.17
Y	D6V1	−0.15	−0.05	0.40	0.43	0.40
Y	7YB8	0.00	0.05	0.02	0.58*	0.27
Y	79IJ	0.08	0.15	0.10	0.41	0.46*
Y	94U4	0.26	0.17	0.16	0.15	0.18
Y	2BBY	0.18	0.12	0.51*	0.27	0.13
Y	EFLA	0.39	0.23	0.30	0.48	0.24
Y	3C1K	0.13	−0.18	0.27	0.58*	0.40
Y	F81G	−0.04	−0.16	−0.15	0.50*	0.22
Y	QN3W	0.22	−0.24	0.18	0.36	0.56*
Y	EOWV	−0.32	0.10	0.48	0.35	0.38
Y	JVXA	−0.13	−0.23	0.39	0.41	0.15
Y	SYBB	0.02	0.03	0.58*	0.30	−0.21
Y	OTBB	0.17	−0.10	0.32	0.37	−0.28
Y	8Z7K	−0.20	0.02	0.17	0.12	0.80*
Y	ZNGN	−0.03	−0.07	0.05	0.18	0.55*
Y	UZ76	0.05	0.10	0.06	0.61*	−0.27
Y	D21X	−0.15	−0.20	−0.07	−0.01	0.82*
Y	32YL	0.10	0.15	0.24	0.22	0.01
Y	73DE	0.03	0.18	−0.06	0.47*	0.13
Y	3EM6	0.08	0.00	0.06	0.03	0.51*

Table 2 (continued)

O/Y	ID	Viewpoint				
		A	B	C	D	E
Y	6760	0.21	0.04	0.01	0.39*	0.33
Y	0TML	−0.13	0.12	0.07	0.04	0.73*
Y	R99H	−0.19	−0.15	−0.01	−0.08	0.85*
Y	T60U	0.36*	0.02	0.03	−0.18	0.11
Y	ZZEI	−0.17	0.05	0.02	0.18	0.79*
Y	UV5A	−0.09	−0.04	−0.19	0.35	0.67*
Y	E9JA	−0.31	−0.09	−0.13	−0.19	0.61*
Y	65K4	−0.02	0.01	0.29	0.15	0.47*
Y	IG45	−0.11	−0.20	−0.03	−0.04	0.85*
Y	2ROH	0.05	0.35	0.02	−0.21	0.35
Y	5C31	−0.25	0.62*	−0.15	−0.25	0.29
Y	M4V6	−0.36	0.42	0.10	0.24	0.16
Y	7GCV	0.01	−0.10	−0.27	0.22	0.14
Y	3RR7	−0.11	−0.05	−0.13	−0.26	0.69*
Y	PRAD	−0.15	0.15	−0.10	0.33*	−0.02
Y	NV4Q	−0.16	−0.46*	−0.12	−0.08	−0.09
Y	IYHB	−0.15	−0.16	0.00	0.17	0.43*
Y	E93L	0.04	−0.20	0.19	0.58*	0.25
Y	ER2N	−0.27	0.22	0.01	0.23	0.39
Y	4GBN	0.09	0.04	0.19	0.03	0.43*
Y	6HAM	0.01	−0.06	0.28	0.27	−0.01
Y	LBDL	−0.07	0.02	−0.03	0.08	0.81*
Y	16Z2	−0.22	0.14	−0.41*	−0.06	−0.06
Y	VKDQ	0.14	0.30	−0.30	−0.13	0.32
Y	CUEW	−0.16	−0.19	−0.17	−0.19	0.63*
Y	TXNQ	0.17	0.06	0.25	0.41	0.34
Y	XDGM	0.18	0.28	0.54*	0.18	0.18
Y	NFIX	−0.10	0.02	−0.06	0.10	0.78*
Y	7FTY	0.14	−0.05	0.12	0.61*	−0.01
Y	O0FK	−0.05	0.10	0.22	0.20	0.86*
Y	BYMH	−0.01	0.00	0.36	0.62*	0.13
Y	ZC2U	−0.12	0.35	0.03	0.34	0.30
Y	7ZFE	0.25	0.05	0.01	.390*	0.09
Y	GSZT	0.20	0.01	−0.22	0.72*	−0.12
Y	MFEL	0.14	0.19	0.15	0.43	0.45
Y	6CO6	0.33	0.25	0.27	0.58*	0.09
Y	DT81	0.27	0.08	0.53*	0.34	0.12
Y	CHIS	−0.03	0.15	0.28	0.47*	0.11
Y	NDD2	−0.23	0.46*	0.23	0.17	−0.21
Y	QWAS	0.11	0.13	0.56*	0.29	0.24
Y	EE5F	0.09	0.22	0.24	0.64*	−0.11

Table 2 (continued)

O/Y	ID	Viewpoint				
		A	B	C	D	E
Y	T8G9	0.14	0.35	0.36	0.49	−0.02
Y	BET7	0.05	0.00	0.07	0.74*	0.20
Y	X5QU	−0.28	0.39	0.13	0.26	0.06
Y	V0FX	0.13	0.31	0.49	0.37	0.01
Y	1PRS	0.06	0.55*	0.27	0.33	−0.04
Y	F5BD	0.07	0.16	0.30	0.29	0.71*
Y	SZAF	−0.11	0.10	0.20	0.62*	0.35
Y	UA9Q	0.18	0.41	0.05	0.47	−0.16
Y	BLYV	0.29	−0.02	0.26	0.59*	0.27
Y	1O3U	0.43	0.15	0.28	0.58	0.28
Y	F6WB	−0.03	0.48*	0.14	0.28	0.14
Y	APHA	0.08	0.01	0.20	0.65*	−0.15
Number of participants with unique loadings						
Older adult		27	6	0	1	0
Youth		3	5	11	42	24
Total		30	11	11	43	24

1. "O" means older adults sample, and "Y" means youth sample

2. The asterisk (*) denotes a statistically significant Q-sort for a factor ($p < 0.05$)

(#8, 8**), and religion (#40, 8; #41, 8**). Individuals with this viewpoint underscore the significance of maintaining good physical condition, quality sleep, and flexible mobility for overall well-being. For instance, a participant stressed the importance of good physical health as she ages: "As we age, sleep can become challenging, but it's crucial for maintaining overall physical health. Good health naturally leads to better mobility, allowing us to move more freely." (ID: 039). Personal stories further illustrate the impact of physical health on well-being: "Living with Parkinson's disease and a stroke for over a decade, I'm deeply concerned about my physical health, as being able to move freely is crucial." (ID: 043).

Moreover, they emphasize the importance of a profound sense of gratitude (#8, 8**). An expression of gratitude was highlighted: "Religious beliefs teach me the importance of gratitude" (ID: 044), cherishing positive aspects of life and aiming for inner peace and relaxation (#10, 8). Having a personal faith or life philosophy and seeking spiritual solace through religion are also considered crucial for well-being (#41, 8**; #40, 8*): "Religion teaches us to have a grateful heart, which I find to be very important. My parents were exposed to religion in their earlier years and found it to be wonderful. They lived to be 90 years old." (ID: 044).

Conversely, elements considered less influential in shaping their well-being include having a better life than others (#19, 1), considering oneself as important (#27, 2**), and enjoying material pleasures (#32, 2). Combined with the statement having sufficient financial capability to meet one's needs (#33, 6), this indicates that material wealth and relative income are not considered important for well-being,

Table 3 Factor scores per statement

Statement	Viewpoint				
	A	B	C	D	E
1. Both physical condition and sleep quality are well	9	8	8	6	1**
2. Being able to enjoy excellent health care services	5	6	8**	4	1**
3. Having flexible mobility	9	8**	9	5	2**
4. Able to think clearly and remain focused	7	5	6	4	2
5. Feeling positive and optimistic, and living a life filled with satisfaction and love	7	6	7	9**	3
6. Feeling happy and laughing often	7	8	5	8	2
7. Having a good sex life	1**	4	4	2	2
8. Maintaining a sense of gratitude and knowing how to cherish	8**	6	4	7	3
9. Not feeling anxious and depressed	5	3	3	6	3
10. Feeling peaceful and relaxed	8	5	8	8	4
11. Thoroughly savoring life	5	5	5	5	4
12. Not feeling lonely	4	4	3	4	3
13. Having a good relationship with friends and family and feeling satisfied with their support	4	5	6	6	5
14. Being complimented by other people	3	4	3	3	4
15. Seeing children achieve success	7	8**	1**	2**	4
16. Having a life partner	4	9**	2**	5	5
17. Participating in social media	4	2**	1	1	4
18. Making new friends	3	6	2	3	5
19. Having a better life than others	1	6	2	1**	4
20. Engaging with and having an interest in people and things in life	6	5	5	7	5
21. Being able to take control of one's living, manage time effectively, and accomplish what needs to be done	7	7	7	6	5
22. Being able to access the necessary information in daily life	5	3	6	3	5

Table 3 (continued)

Statement	Viewpoint				
	A	B	C	D	E
23. Feeling a sense of self-worth through helping others and having a positive influence on many aspects (people/events) of life	6	2	3	7	6
24. What I want to do is closely aligned with what I am doing. Life has meaning and purpose, and I am moving towards my goals	6	5	8	9**	8
25. Feeling a sense of accomplishment and worthiness in what was achieved	6	5	6	8	9
26. Being able to accept and let go when facing stress	6	4	5	7	6
27. Considering oneself as important	2**	6	4	7	8*
28. Even when in disagreement with the majority, having confidence in one's own beliefs	3	3	4	4	7
29. One's perspective on things matures and evolves year by year	4	3	7	5	8**
30. Learning new skills and new things	5	7	4	5	7
31. Considering myself to be attractive	2	3	5	3	6
32. Enjoying material pleasures	2	7	7	2	6
33. Having sufficient financial capability to meet one's needs	6	9	9	6	9*
34. Living in a country where the things I care about can be heard and voiced	2	1	6	4	7
35. Being able to adapt to a new environment	3	4	6	4	7
36. Living in a stable and less turbulent area	4	4	7	6	6
37. Residing in an environment with abundant natural resources	3	2	3	3	5
38. Looking back on one's past with a sense of joy and contentment	5	7	5	5	8**
39. Having a plan for the future, and feeling optimistic and secure.	5	7	5	8	7
40. Having one's own faith or life philosophy	8*	2**	4	5	6
41. Finding spiritual solace through religion	8**	1**	2**	2	3
% Explained Variance	9	6	6	14	11
Correlation with Viewpoint B	0.26				
Correlation with Viewpoint C	0.33	0.24			

Table 3 (continued)

Statement	Viewpoint				
	A	B	C	D	E
Correlation with Viewpoint D	0.41	0.23	0.53		
Correlation with Viewpoint E	−0.27	−0.14	0.13	0.22	

1. Characterizing statements for each factor are 9 and 8 as the most important ones, while 1 and 2 represented the least important one

2. Asterisks are marked for distinguishing statements, ** for $p < 0.01$, * for $p < 0.05$

3. Domains and sub-aspects for the set of statements were primarily categorized based on the original 226 concourse sources

Table 4 Full factor array table for viewpoint A

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
19.Having a better life than others	** ◄ 27.Considering oneself as important	37.Residing in an environment with abundant natural resources	13.Having a good relationship with friends and family and	11.Thoroughly savoring life	25.Feeling a sense of accomplishment and worthiness in what was	21.Being able to take control of one's living, manage time	** ► 8.Maintaining a sense of gratitude and knowing how to cherish	3.Having flexible mobility
** ◄ 7.Having a good sex life	32.Enjoying material pleasures	35.Being able to adapt to a new environment	12.Not feeling lonely	2.Being able to enjoy excellent health care services	33.Having sufficient financial capability to meet one's	** 15.Seeing children achieve success	** ► 41.Finding spiritual solace through religion	1.Both physical condition and sleep quality are well
	* ◄ 31.Considering myself to be attractive	28.Even when in disagreement with the majority, having	** 29.One's perspective on things matures and evolves year by year	22.Being able to access the necessary information in daily life	20.Engaging with and having an interest in people and things in life	* ► 4.Able to think clearly and remain focused	10.Feeling peaceful and relaxed	
	34.Living in a country where the things I care about can be heard and	18.Making new friends	36.Living in a stable and less turbulent area	30.Learning new skills and new things	* 24.What I want to do is closely aligned with what I am doing. Life has	* 6.Feeling happy and laughing often	* ► 40.Having one's own faith or life philosophy	
		14.Being complimented by other people	16.Having a life partner	39.Having a plan for the future, and feeling optimistic and	26.Being able to accept and let go when facing stress	5.Feeling positive and optimistic, and living a life filled with		
			7.Participating in social media	38.Looking back on one's past with a sense of joy and contentment	** 23.Feeling a sense of self-worth through helping others and			
				* 9.Not feeling anxious and depressed				

Legend

* Distinguishing statement at P< 0.05

** Distinguishing statement at P< 0.01

► z-Score for the statement is higher than in all other factors

◄ z-Score for the statement is lower than in all other factors

having enough to meet one's needs is sufficient. One participant stated that: "If you have sufficient financial resources, you can pursue any activity you desire without necessarily indulging in material pleasures. True enjoyment can stem from many things beyond materialistic satisfaction, which often involves comparison with others. Personally, at my age, I find that I tend not to seek fulfillment from material possessions." (ID: 001).

Furthermore, one participant mentioned that: "I don't consider myself as most important. I place myself on the same level of importance as everyone else." (ID: 046). Reflecting Buddhist principles, some participants shared: "Life involves too much focus on 'what I need' or 'what I desire.' This is also what Buddhism calls 'attachment', which can easily lead to conflicts. Removing this mindset can bring greater happiness." (ID: 053), highlighting humility and de-emphasizing self-importance. Additionally, participants emphasized that not viewing oneself as overly important reduces the impact of external validation, such as being complimented

by other people: “When we don’t view ourselves as overly important, compliments from others won’t affect us as much.” (ID: 053).

In conclusion, this viewpoint suggests that physical health, gratitude, and spiritual fulfillment are important to well-being, while factors related to the self are considered less important. Viewpoint A may be referred to as “physical health and spiritual harmony”.

Viewpoint B

Individuals with this view on well-being value personal relationships (#16, 9** ; #15, 8**) and financial stability (#33, 9). The most pivotal elements for this viewpoint revolve around having a life partner, seeing children’s success and ensuring sufficient financial means to meet their needs. For instance, one participant emphasized the profound impact of having a life partner on their happiness, which was distinguishing for this viewpoint: “A life partner is the closest person to me throughout my life, bringing me happiness.” (ID: 048). Feeling happy and laughing often is also considered important (#6, 8). Additionally, making new friends (#18, 6**) was considered more important for well-being than in the other viewpoints: “I am a cheerful person, and I enjoy making new friends.” (ID: 014). One participant shared the satisfaction derived from seeing their children succeed: “In the past, we had nothing. Everything depended on ourselves and our life partners. We started from scratch, raised our children, and saw them achieve success. As parents, we feel content. We used to think that providing our children with the opportunity to attend college or university based on our abilities was good enough. Our children have exceeded our expectations.” (ID:014). In this viewpoint, having a better life than others (#19, 6) is more important for well-being than in the other viewpoints: “My personality is also more inclined towards not giving up easily, so I consider ‘living better than others’ to be important. When I was younger, my husband and I worked very hard to have our own house.” (ID:014).

Similar to viewpoint A, physical health condition, sleep quality, and with free mobility are also considered important for well-being (#1, 8; #3, 8): “As we get older, our physical condition tends to decline. Without good health, we can’t take care of ourselves. If we need help from others, there’s practically no sense of happiness. So, I believe that good health and the ability to move freely are the most basic life conditions.” (ID: 038). Regarding learning new skills and new things (#30, 7**), it has some distinguishing influence: “I am a very curious person. For example, I once took apart a bag to study how it was made and practiced pattern making.” (ID:014).

Contrary to viewpoint A, seeking spiritual fulfillment through religion (#40, 2**; #41, 1**) is considered least important for well-being. One participant expressed a neutral stance on religious beliefs: “I don’t have any particular feelings about religious beliefs.” (ID: 048, 5C31). In addition, the influence of societal factors on their concerns (#34, 1), participating in social media (#17, 2**), and deriving a sense of self-worth from helping others (#23, 2 **) are regarded as less influential. Another participant mentioned limited engagement with social media: “I only use social

media to connect with a few familiar friends and avoid interactions with people I don't know." (ID: 048).

In summary, the primary drivers of well-being in this view are meaningful relationships and financial security for themselves and their children, while physical health was also considered important. Viewpoint B is therefore labeled as "interpersonal relationships, sufficient income, and health." Details regarding the complete factory array for this viewpoint can be found in Table 5.

Viewpoint C

This view on well-being prioritizes a comprehensive sense of well-being, encompassing both physical health and financial security for themselves. The importance of maintaining good physical health (#1, 8; #3, 9) is emphasized: "Being able to control one's body is essential for basic freedom and dignity." (ID: DT81). In relation to

Table 5 Full factor array table for viewpoint B

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
34.Living in a country where the things I care about can be heard and	37.Residing in an environment with abundant natural resources	22.Being able to access the necessary information in daily life	* 35.Being able to adapt to a new environment	4.Able to think clearly and remain focused	** ► 18.Making new friends	21.Being able to take control of one's living, manage time	1.Both physical condition and sleep quality are well	** ► 16.Having a life partner
** ◄ 41.Finding spiritual solace through religion	** ◄ 23.Feeling a sense of self-worth through helping others and	9.Not feeling anxious and depressed	26.Being able to accept and let go when facing stress	25.Feeling a sense of accomplishment and worthiness in what was	** ► 19.Having a better life than others	32.Enjoying material pleasures	** 3.Having flexible mobility	33.Having sufficient financial capability to meet one's
	** ◄ 40.Having one's own faith or life philosophy	28.Even when in disagreement with the majority, having	* ► 14.Being complimented by other people	13.Having a good relationship with friends and family and	* 8.Maintaining a sense of gratitude and knowing how to cherish	39.Having a plan for the future, and feeling optimistic and	** ► 15.Seeing children achieve success	
	** 7.Participating in social media	** ◄ 29.One's perspective on things matures and evolves year by year	7.Having a good sex life	** 10.Feeling peaceful and relaxed	* 5.Feeling positive and optimistic, and living a life filled with	* 38.Looking back on one's past with a sense of joy and contentment	6.Feeling happy and laughing often	
		31.Considering myself to be attractive	12.Not feeling lonely	11.Thoroughly savoring life	27.Considering oneself as important	** 30.Learning new skills and new things		
			36.Living in a stable and less turbulent area	20.Engaging with and having an interest in people and things in life	2.Being able to enjoy excellent health care services			
				* ◄ 24.What I want to do is closely aligned with what I am doing. Life has				

Legend

* Distinguishing statement at P< 0.05

** Distinguishing statement at P< 0.01

► z-Score for the statement is higher than in all other factors

◄ z-Score for the statement is lower than in all other factors

this, participants underscore the importance of having excellent health care service (#2, 9**): "This is what I currently pursue in life." (ID: PZEY) and "Basic physiological functions are needed to accomplish what I want to do." (ID: XDGM).

Having sufficient financial means (#33, 9) is considered an important facilitator for accomplishing certain aspirations: "Some level of financial capability is needed to assist in achieving certain things I want to do." (ID: XDGM). More than in viewpoints A and B, people with this viewpoint find the statement "What I want to do is closely aligned with what I am doing. Life has meaning and purpose, and I am moving towards my goals (#24, 8)" important: "Having goals and ideas to move forward gives life the impetus to progress."(ID: QWAS). Inner peace also plays important role as part of self-growth (#10, 8): "I believe that a peaceful life is most appealing to me, and, of course, it would be even better if I could experience growth within that tranquility." (ID: IMNU).

Personal relationships and social comparisons seem least important to well-being in this view. Having a life partner (#16, 2**), making new friends (#18, 2) or seeing their children succeed in life (#15, 1**) were ranked lowly. One participant mentioned that "I have never experienced having children or a sex life, so I do not have any real feelings towards these two aspects." (ID: DT81), while another participant stated that "my children's achievements are not the result of my efforts; they are not my concern." (ID: SYBB).

Furthermore, how their life compares to that of others (#19, 2), social media (#17; 1) and religion (#40; 4; #41; 2**) are considered of limited importance: "For some people, social media and religion are a double-edged sword. The positive aspects give them a sense of positivity, but excessive attachment or involvement can result in a feeling of confinement." (ID: XDGM).

In summary (see Table 6), individuals with this viewpoint prioritize a holistic approach to well-being, intertwining their personal physical health, financial stability, healthcare access, goals and inner tranquility in shaping their overall sense of fulfillment and satisfaction. Viewpoint C could, therefore, be named as "personal health, financial stability, inner peace, and goals."

Viewpoint D

Individuals with this perspective on well-being highly value positive emotions and a sense of life alignment. They emphasize the importance of feeling positive and optimistic, and living a life filled with satisfaction and love (#5, 9**). Also, living a meaningful life aligned with their personal goals (#24, 9**), having a plan for the future and feeling optimistic and secure (#39, 8) as well as feeling accomplishment and worthiness (#25, 8) are important: "Having life goals that can be achieved, finding joy in small victories, and having support and companionship even in the face of difficulties" (ID: MMZN) and "Achieving self-worth has always been the most satisfying and tangible thing for me." (ID: BET7).

They derive well-being from laughing often as well as moments of peace and relaxation (#6, 8; #10, 8). According to one participant, "I feel that a positive and loving life, frequent laughter, and feeling loved are my ideal states." (ID: GSZT).

Table 6 Full factor array table for viewpoint C

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
7.Participating in social media	** 41.Finding spiritual solace through religion	** 23.Feeling a sense of self-worth through helping others and	28.Even when in disagreement with the majority, having	** 31.Considering myself to be attractive	** 34.Living in a country where the things I care about can be heard and	32.Enjoying material pleasures	1.Both physical condition and sleep quality are well	3.Having flexible mobility
** ◄ 15.Seeing children achieve success	19.Having a better life than others	9.Not feeling anxious and depressed	40.Having one's own faith or life philosophy	26.Being able to accept and let go when facing stress	25.Feeling a sense of accomplishment and worthiness in what was	** 29.One's perspective on things matures and evolves year by year	** ► 2.Being able to enjoy excellent health care services	33.Having sufficient financial capability to meet one's
	18.Making new friends	37.Residing in an environment with abundant natural resources	30.Learning new skills and new things	11.Thoroughly savoring life	4.Able to think clearly and remain focused	36.Living in a stable and less turbulent area	10.Feeling peaceful and relaxed	
	** ◄ 16.Having a life partner	12.Not feeling lonely	27.Considering oneself as important	39.Having a plan for the future, and feeling optimistic and	13.Having a good relationship with friends and family and	21.Being able to take control of one's living, manage time	24.What I want to do is closely aligned with what I am doing. Life has	
		14.Being complimented by other people	7.Having a good sex life	20.Engaging with and having an interest in people and things in life	* 35.Being able to adapt to a new environment	5.Feeling positive and optimistic, and living a life filled with		
			* 8.Maintaining a sense of gratitude and knowing how to cherish	38.Looking back on one's past with a sense of joy and contentment	22.Being able to access the necessary information in daily life			
				** 6.Feeling happy and laughing often				

Legend

* Distinguishing statement at P< 0.05

** Distinguishing statement at P< 0.01

► z-Score for the statement is higher than in all other factors

◄ z-Score for the statement is lower than in all other factors

Contrastingly, aspects like participating in social media (#17, 1), striving for a better life than others (#19, 1**), and seeking spiritual solace through religion (#41, 2**) hold less significance for them. Their well-being centers around authentic emotions and a sense of purpose. As one participant stated, "Even if I don't participate in social media, I can still live happily through offline interactions with people. Social media often leads to public anxiety and mental health issues. Trying to live better than others is unattainable, requires constant comparison, and is often built on comparing oneself to others' misfortunes, which can result in an unhealthy sense of superiority." (ID: MMZN).

Compared with the previous viewpoints, this viewpoint finds physical well-being less important to their overall well-being, such as physical condition and sleep quality (#1, 6**), having flexible mobility (#3, 5**), and able to think clearly and remained focus (#2, 4).

In summary (see Table 7), this viewpoint prioritizes the cultivation of authentic positive emotions, alignment with life goals, and a sense of accomplishment as important for satisfaction with life. Viewpoint D could, therefore, be called "fulfillment and life satisfaction."

Viewpoint E

People with this perspective, akin to Viewpoints B and C, consider financial capability (#33, 9*) as a crucial component of overall well-being, deeming it indispensable for fulfilling desires: "Without financial capability, desires cannot be fulfilled." (ID: ZZEI) (#33, 8*) and "I believe that for having the ideal life, economic capability is indispensable." (id: O0FK) (#33, 9*).

Table 7 Full factor array table for viewpoint D

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
7.Participating in social media	7.Having a good sex life	14.Being complimented by other people	12.Not feeling lonely	** 3.Having flexible mobility	21.Being able to take control of one's living, manage time	26.Being able to accept and let go when facing stress	25.Feeling a sense of accomplishment and worthiness in what was	** ► 24.What I want to do is closely aligned with what I am doing. Life has
** ◄ 19.Having a better life than others	32.Enjoying material pleasures	22.Being able to access the necessary information in daily life	** 34.Living in a country where the things I care about can be heard and	** 29.One's perspective on things matures and evolves year by year	** 1.Both physical condition and sleep quality are well	23.Feeling a sense of self-worth through helping others and	10.Feeling peaceful and relaxed	** ► 5.Feeling positive and optimistic, and living a life filled with
	** 15.Seeing children achieve success	31.Considering myself to be attractive	28.Even when in disagreement with the majority, having	38.Looking back on one's past with a sense of joy and contentment	33.Having sufficient financial capability to meet one's	* 27.Considering oneself as important	6.Feeling happy and laughing often	
	** 41.Finding spiritual solace through religion	37.Residing in an environment with abundant natural resources	4.Able to think clearly and remain focused	** 16.Having a life partner	13.Having a good relationship with friends and family and	* 8.Maintaining a sense of gratitude and knowing how to cherish	39.Having a plan for the future, and feeling optimistic and	
		18.Making new friends	* 2.Being able to enjoy excellent health care services	11.Thoroughly savoring life	** ► 9.Not feeling anxious and depressed	* ► 20.Engaging with and having an interest in people and things in life		
			35.Being able to adapt to a new environment	40.Having one's own faith or life philosophy	* 36.Living in a stable and less turbulent area			
				30.Learning new skills and new things				

Legend

* Distinguishing statement at P< 0.05

** Distinguishing statement at P< 0.01

► z-Score for the statement is higher than in all other factors

◄ z-Score for the statement is lower than in all other factors

However, what distinguishes this view is the emphasis on self-importance (#27, 8*): "I believe that well-being starts from within." (ID: F5BD) and "I believe that oneself is fundamental." (ID: 79IJ). In line with this, fostering personal growth (#29, 8**), a sense of accomplishment (#25, 9) and looking back on one's past with satisfaction (#38, 8**) are considered important as well: "Views on things gradually mature, and looking back on past life brings joy. I think that in the process of growth, if I find myself making more progress than before, learning to accept my past self, whether it's perfect or flawed, is a sign of maturity." (ID: QN3W). They deeply value feeling that their life's achievements are meaningful and valuable, contributing significantly to their sense of self-worth: "Discovering a sense of achievement gained from personal growth." (ID: 79IJ). This aligns with other characteristic statements, such as prioritizing a purposeful life (#24, 8): "It is second place in my heart." (ID: R99H).

Interestingly, having confidence in one's own beliefs (#28, 7**), having a plan for the future and feeling optimistic (#39, 7), learning new skills and new things (#30, 7), living in a country where the things I care about can be heard and voiced (#34,7), and being able to adapt to a new environment (#35,7**) are relatively more important than in the other viewpoints: "To achieve well-being, one must feel satisfied with their past, present, and future." (ID: F5BD) and "To be able to be oneself and do what one wants to do." (ID: IYHB). In contrast with from the other viewpoints, all statements related to physical well-being were ranked very lowly (#1, 1**; #2, 1**; #3, 2**; #4, 2; #6, 2): "It's not important to me." (ID: CUEW, R99H, D21X).

In summary (see Table 8), this viewpoint can be labeled as "personal achievement-centric well-being," as it underscores the pivotal role of financial capability, achievement, confidence and self-worth in overall life satisfaction.

Discussion

In recent years, Western countries have witnessed a marked increase in research interest surrounding well-being, which has emerged as a complex, multi-dimensional concept. However, a significant gap in the literature persists regarding generational differences in how well-being is defined, particularly in non-Western contexts. The present study addresses this gap by investigating well-being perspectives among younger and older adults in Taiwan using Q-methodology. Through this approach, the research identified five distinct shared viewpoints on well-being, revealing both areas of consensus and divergence in factors that contribute to individual welfare. These findings not only provide valuable insights into intergenerational differences in Taiwan but also advance theoretical conceptions of well-being by demonstrating the importance of integrating both cultural and generational perspectives. This more nuanced understanding of well-being across different populations can inform the development of targeted interventions to enhance quality of life for both younger and older adults in Taiwanese society.

Table 8 Full factor array table for viewpoint E

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
** ◄ 1.Both physical condition and sleep quality are well	** ◄ 3.Having flexible mobility	** 41.Finding spiritual solace through religion	** 15.Seeing children achieve success	22.Being able to access the necessary information in daily life	26.Being able to accept and let go when facing stress	** ► 34.Living in a country where the things I care about can be heard and	** ► 38.Looking back on one's past with a sense of joy and contentment	25.Feeling a sense of accomplishment and worthiness in what was
** ◄ 2.Being able to enjoy excellent health care services	** ◄ 6.Feeling happy and laughing often	** ◄ 8.Maintaining a sense of gratitude and knowing how to cherish	** ◄ 11.Thoroughly savoring life	20.Engaging with and having an interest in people and things in life	* 40.Having one's own faith or life philosophy	** ► 35.Being able to adapt to a new environment	** ► 29.One's perspective on things matures and evolves year by year	* 33.Having sufficient financial capability to meet one's
	** ◄ 4.Able to think clearly and remain focused	12.Not feeling lonely	** 19.Having a better life than others	** ► 37.Residing in an environment with abundant natural resources	23.Feeling a sense of self-worth through helping others and	** ► 30.Learning new skills and new things	* ► 27.Considering oneself as important	
	7.Having a good sex life	** ◄ 5.Feeling positive and optimistic, and living a life filled with	7.Participating in social media	* ◄ 21.Being able to take control of one's living, manage time	** ► 31.Considering myself to be attractive	39.Having a plan for the future, and feeling optimistic and	24.What I want to do is closely aligned with what I am doing. Life has	
		** ◄ 9.Not feeling anxious and depressed	14.Being complimented by other people	** 18.Making new friends	36.Living in a stable and less turbulent area	** ► 28.Even when in disagreement with the majority, having		
			** ◄ 10.Feeling peaceful and relaxed	16.Having a life partner	* 32.Enjoying material pleasures			
				13.Having a good relationship with friends and family and				

Legend

* Distinguishing statement at P< 0.05

** Distinguishing statement at P< 0.01

► z-Score for the statement is higher than in all other factors

◄ z-Score for the statement is lower than in all other factors

Intergenerational Differences

The findings of this study highlight the generational disparities in well-being priorities, as outlined in the background. Older adults tend to prioritize physical health and emotionally fulfilling relationships, which is consistent with the Socioemotional Selectivity Theory (SST; (Carstensen, 1993; Carstensen et al., 1999) and reflects a focus on the quality of life in their remaining years. In contrast, younger adults emphasize financial stability, career goals, and personal achievements, showing a future-oriented perspective. These disparities in perspectives on well-being show potential areas of conflict in priorities between generations and underscore the importance of tailoring well-being measures and policies to address the unique needs of different age groups, ensuring that interventions are both relevant and effective.

The older and younger population included in this study revealed a significant difference in what they consider important for their well-being. As mentioned before, viewpoint A (physical health and spiritual harmony) and B (interpersonal relationships, sufficient income, and health) had more loaders from the older age group, while viewpoint C (personal health, financial stability, inner peace, and goals), D (fulfillment and life satisfaction), and E (personal achievement-centric well-being) had more loaders from the younger age group (see Table 3 for details).

In general, the younger adults showed a stronger focus on meeting goals, while the older adults attached greater importance to their physical health. It is known that SST (Carstensen, 1993; Carstensen et al., 1999) specifies that an individual's perception of their remaining lifetime is a crucial factor in setting goals and priorities. Therefore, as a person ages, superficial bonds tend to lose significance, and the aspects that hold a personal value become more important (Carstensen, 2021). For instance, with ageing the notion of time becomes more prevalent, physically and mentally, shifting priorities to physical health and more emotionally fulfilling relationships (Carstensen et al., 1999; Carstensen, 2021). Older adults may, therefore, focus more on the quality of their life, particularly on aspects that contribute to preventing and managing the health consequences of ageing. In this line, a Chinese longitudinal study found that self-rated health accompanied by having accessible healthcare services was most important for the SWB of older adults (Cheng & Yan, 2021). A study amongst older adults in 19 countries also found that health factors were among the most prominent factors affecting SWB (Vera Cruz et al., 2023), while a study among older people in the Netherlands also found physical and mental health to be central to well-being, intrinsically, but also as a means for remaining independent and being able to enjoy other aspects of life (Hackert et al., 2019). Such age-specific factors may thus also be reflected when exploring the well-being indicators across generations. Younger generations might place more importance on future-goal-oriented factors, whereas older generations would place more importance on the present experience (Carstensen, 2021; Carstensen et al., 1999). In particular, the younger generation might be inclined towards pursuing careers, learning, and self-development, directly impacting how they assess well-being. Conversely, older individuals may prioritize interpersonal relationships, and family, which play pivotal roles in their sense of well-being. Similar findings were also reported in previous studies, for example, stating that the perception of relationship quality is more important than the perception of relationship quantity and, consequently, more relevant to better well-being (de Bruine et al., 2020).

We also observed differences between the two age groups regarding religious practices and the impact of religion on well-being. Religion can offer social support and community connections, which may be important factors influencing well-being. Through religious communities, individuals can connect with empathetic people who share common values, contributing to the establishment of positive interpersonal relationships and social connections (Garssen et al., 2021). This social interaction and sense of community may have a positive impact on well-being (Lim & Putnam, 2010; Villani et al., 2019). Young people are often in the stage of exploring and establishing their identities, and they might be more inclined to explore different faiths or value systems without being fully embedded in a fixed religious

practice. Conversely, older adults may have established loyalty and stability towards a specific religious or belief system, finding comfort and support within this faith system.

Interestingly, the statement regarding financial status was considered a significant well-being indicator across participants and was the only item that ranked highly across the five viewpoints. This indicates a potentially strong association between being able to meet financial needs and the sense of well-being among Taiwanese individuals.

Cultural Values and Influences

Cultural values are often used as a post-hoc explanation to validate noteworthy results that demonstrate variations in outcomes among different cultures. The majority of Taiwanese society endorses Confucian values, a dominant philosophical and ethical system in Taiwan, emphasizing social integration and stability to maintain a harmonious relationship with others (Zhang et al., 2005). Our findings highlighted significant implications on how Taiwan's cultural values shape the factors that constitute well-being.

According to our results, the statement "feeling peaceful" came forward as an essential indicator of well-being from the collected views. Confucianism significantly emphasizes the value of peace, both within oneself and in society. Other than cherishing peace internally and within the broader societal context, the statement that was considered more important among the older population was interpersonal support, which aligns with similar results obtained from a group of Chinese oldest-old adults who reported that their well-being consists of having family members to lean on for instrumental and emotional support (Huang & Fu, 2021).

In addition, gratitude is considered immensely important for well-being as it shapes one's attitudes, emotions, and overall psychological well-being (Adler & Fagley, 2005). Gratitude implies appreciating the things around us and valuing the positive aspects and values in life. This attitude aids in enhancing personal emotions, strengthening psychological resilience, and bolstering the ability to withstand stress. Additionally, gratitude contributes to fostering social relationships. Expressing gratitude enables stronger interpersonal connections, resulting in more support and emotional bonds. This positive social interaction is a crucial component of well-being. Young people might seek self-identity and pursue personal goals, focusing more on self-growth, achievements, and pursuits. In this process, they may still need to be made aware of or fully appreciate things in life that are worthy of gratitude. On the other hand, through abundant life experiences, older adults may better recognize the blessings and valuable aspects in life, hence showing a richer sense of gratitude. They might find it easier to appreciate small things in daily life, showcasing greater maturity in their attitude of gratitude.

What is worth commenting on is how the Taiwanese society now exhibits a mix of individualistic and collectivist cultural elements. Although Taiwan has been traditionally influenced by Confucian values emphasizing collectivism, social harmony, and respect for authority, statements such as "considering oneself as important" or

"having one's own faith or life philosophy" played a central role in some viewpoints on well-being. Possibly Western values, usually considered as more individualistic, and encouraging personal autonomy, self-expression, and independence, have influenced Taiwanese well-being values.

Many cultural differences emerged when comparing the findings of this study with research previously conducted in Western countries. For instance, from what is known, those latter studies did not show correlation between older adults' well-being and their children's success. In contrast, this study suggests that children's achievements hold a significant influence on older adults' well-being in Taiwan. This observed disparity may be linked to the core values of Confucianism. According to Lu's research on happiness (Lu, 2001), it advocates for the preservation and expansion of family prosperity and vitality, which can encompass the accumulation of material resources or social status. In this context, a child's success can be seen as a fulfillment of familial obligations and a contribution to the family's overall well-being. Furthermore, another study comparing Asians and Euro-American conceptions of happiness (Lu & Gilmour, 2004), showed that most Asians embrace socially oriented SWB which emphasizes role obligation and dialectical balance while, Euro-Americans embraced individually oriented SWB, which emphasizes personal accountability and explicit pursuit. In addition, Chinese culture traditionally places a high value on collectivism and sharing the fruits of individual success with the family or group (clan). Therefore, a child's achievements may not only reflect well on the individual but also bring honor and advancement to the entire family unit, contributing to the overall well-being of older adults.

Comparing to the two Q-methodology studies exploring the constituents of a good life among older people (Hackert et al., 2019) and adults in general (van der Deijl et al., 2023) in the Netherlands, some interesting communalities and differences can be noticed. First, in all three studies health comes forward as a being of central importance to well-being. Just as here, health seemed more prominent in the study among older people, as was the relevance of social relations and a support network. Second, the ability to make ends meet was relevant in both counties, but more in terms of financial security than in terms of financial wealth. Third, among adults in the Netherlands, individualism, independence and materialism came across as particularly important in one of the views, which was also reflected in the current study, but particularly among the younger participants (as an influence of Western values). Regarding differences, in both studies in the Netherlands, the living environment -in terms of feeling safe and at home in your neighborhood- came forward as an important constituent of well-being. In the current study, the statement about living in a stable and less turbulent area (#36) had factor scores between 4 and 7 and thus came across less strongly. Another noticeable difference is in the expression of ways to cope with ageing and its consequences in terms of 'peace of mind' and 'spiritual harmony' in Taiwan versus 'mental well-being', 'independence' and 'ability to adapt' in the Netherlands.

Overall, the current findings highlight several disparities in well-being perceptions, which likely result from a combination of factors, including life stage transitions, psychological states shaped by those transitions, the accumulation of life experiences, and, importantly, the influence of cultural background. As shown

earlier, societies with strong collectivist values may place a greater emphasis on family success as a contributor to older adults' well-being. The importance of harmonious social bonds was also found prevalent among both generations in Taiwan. This interplay between cultural values, life stages and views on what is important for well-being is a crucial avenue for future research. A multi-country Q-methodology study using a unified statement set would help identifying communalities and differences in perceptions of well-being in greater depth.

Implications for Practice

This study contributes to the literature by providing better understanding of perspectives on what is important for well-being among generations in a non-Western culture. These findings have implications in various contexts, including healthcare and policy development. For instance, insights into generational differences in healthcare can empower healthcare professionals to adopt a more patient-centered approach, accommodating communication and treatment preferences that may ultimately enhance patient health outcomes and overall well-being. Policymakers can also gain valuable insights by acknowledging the differing priorities among generations when crafting social, economic, and environmental policies. This inclusive approach has the potential to yield more comprehensive and effective policies that address the distinct challenges and opportunities faced by different generations.

The noteworthy effectiveness of the Q-methodology is particularly evident when applied to older participants. It has been noted that older persons are less likely to complete surveys than younger persons (Murphy & Eyerman, 2004; Murphy et al., 2008), which creates potential barriers in behavioral measures. Despite the challenges associated with surveying this older age group, employing methods such as the Q-methodology proved successful not only in gathering valuable insights from them, but also being considered as a pleasant process. The instructions were clear and simple for the older adults to comprehend, accessible support when needed in ranking the statements was offered in an efficient manner, and the interviews were useful for confirming the validity of the ranking and obtaining rich qualitative data to support the interpretations of the rankings. The simplicity and straightforward nature of this method mitigated confusion among older participants, thereby maximizing accessibility and ensuring a high accuracy rate in measurements.

The study's findings have practical implications for policymakers and practitioners. Understanding the distinct well-being priorities of different generations helps identifying potential conflicts in values and priorities between generations and can guide the development of targeted policies that cater to the specific needs of each group. For older adults, interventions should focus on enhancing access to healthcare services and strengthening social support networks, which are critical for their well-being. Programs aimed at promoting physical health, mental well-being, and social connectedness can have a significant impact on improving quality of life for this group. Second, for younger adults, policies that support financial stability and career development are essential. Initiatives such as financial literacy programs, career counseling, and mental health services tailored to the challenges faced by

younger generations can help address their specific needs. Finally, culturally sensitive approaches that respect the values and priorities of different generational groups should be integrated into policy development. This might include community-based programs that foster intergenerational understanding and collaboration, which can help bridge the gap between different age groups and promote societal cohesion.

Limitations and Future Research Recommendations

This study, while offering important insights into generational differences in well-being, is subject to several significant limitations that require further examination. Firstly, the sample size, although sufficient for the scope of this study (Dieteren et al., 2023), may not fully represent the broader population and could affect the generalizability of the findings, particularly given the socio-economic, cultural, and geographical variations present in Taiwan. Future studies should consider more diverse samples to better capture these variations, for instance, including participants from different geographical regions (urban centers like Taipei, Taichung, and Kaohsiung, as well as rural areas in eastern Taiwan and offshore islands), various educational backgrounds (from vocational training to postgraduate degrees), different income levels, and diverse ethnic groups (including indigenous people, Hoklo, Hakka, and new immigrants). Expanding the sample from different sectors may provide a more comprehensive understanding of well-being perspectives across Taiwanese society. Secondly, the reliance on self-reported data introduces potential biases such as social desirability bias, where participants might have reported what they think is socially acceptable rather than their true perspective. This could skew the findings and limit the accuracy of the conclusions. However, in this Q study, participants were required to prioritize a comprehensive set of aspects in a systematic way, which reduces the potential impact of social confirmation on response. in addition, the subsequent qualitative interviews help evaluating the coherence and meaningfulness of the rankings of statements by participants and strengthen the interpretation of the viewpoints (Hill et al., 2017). Thirdly, the cross-sectional nature of this study limits the ability to infer about stability in well-being perspectives over time. Longitudinal research would provide a clearer picture of how generational perspectives evolve in response to life events and societal developments. Finally, the study's cultural context within Taiwan, which combines traditional and modern values, may limit the applicability of the findings to other cultural settings in the region. The interaction between cultural norms and generational values could vary significantly in other countries, which suggests a need for caution when generalizing these results. Conducting similar studies in other countries and comparative studies across diverse cultural contexts could further elucidate these differences.

Researchers in other countries are, therefore, encouraged to replicate our study and contribute to a more comprehensive exploration of what is important for well-being across nations and cultures, considering potential influences from other factors relevant in their context. For instance, different aspects that may be relevant to include in the statement set or variations in gender, age and ethnicity that may introduce distinct perspectives on well-being. A more in-depth examination of other

generation groups (e.g., middle-age) will also contribute to comprehending the broader spectrum of views on well-being and potential differences and shifts over the lifespan.

Conclusion

The present study provides valuable insights into the understanding of well-being among two distinct generations. Initially, both generations held contrasting perspectives, adding an intriguing dimension to the exploration of factors deemed important or unimportant. For instance, there was a consensus among older adults on the significance of maintaining good physical health. Conversely, the younger population emphasized the pursuit of goals as a more critical factor for their well-being. There were also factors that stood out among both age groups, such as having the financial ability to meet one's needs. The contrasts and similarities observed across both generations emphasize the importance of comprehending intergenerational differences and cultivating shared experiences over time. Such efforts are crucial for achieving a more thorough understanding of the elements that contribute to an individual's well-being.

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Data Availability The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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