

Wellbeing, Parental Attachment and Social Connectedness among College Students in Pakistan

Sana Rashid¹

¹Department of Behavioral Sciences, Fatima Jinnah Women University

Correspondence:
sanarashid736@gmail.com

Abstract

This study examined the correlation between well-being, parental attachment, and social connectedness among college students in Pakistan. It was hypothesized that females would report lower well-being but higher parental attachment and social connectedness compared to males. A sample of 111 students (54 females and 57 males) was drawn from two government colleges in the Kahuta area of Rawalpindi. Participants completed the BBC Well-being Scale, the Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA), and the Social Connectedness Scale. Results indicated that males reported higher well-being ($M = 67.90$, $SD = 10.315$), while females demonstrated greater social connectedness ($M = 37.39$, $SD = 8.169$) and stronger parental attachment ($M = 293.0$, $SD = 38.962$). Although these differences were not statistically significant, gender-based variations were observed. The findings provide preliminary insights and highlight the need for further research on these variables in the Pakistani context.

KEYWORDS

Wellbeing, Parental attachment, Social connectedness

1 | INTRODUCTION

Well-being is a very important aspect of life. Students are the youth and the future of a country incorporated in educational institutions. They contribute to the future of a country; hence, their well-being is extremely important to focus on their goals, and social interactions help them integrate into society successfully. During this age, an individual is loaded with a lot of positive energy and determination. Individuals experience many things that shape their lives and personalities. However, if they lack mental health at this stage, it can be a huge barrier to their social development and growth (Brown, 1999).

WHO in 2005 marked wellbeing as an umbrella of psychological, social and emotional aspects of existence. Well-being is not only related to physical health but also to our mental health and relationship with people, and the physical environment too. The term well-being refers to the relation between our mental, social, physical, and spiritual conditions. For a sense of better well-being, we need to be socially connected. Wellbeing is not only comprised of one's atmosphere but also an appreciating culture, positive relations with the people around that encourage a healthy communication. Forming positive relationships is important (Pels, 2011).

Mental health issues are rapidly accelerating in Pakistan. Studies have reported the situation of well-being in Pakistan. Pakistan has become the sixth overpopulated country in the world with increasingly high risks of health care problems (Mirza & Jankins, 2004). Social issues in society are majorly related to mental health and are directly affecting the mental health of adolescents. Lack of employment, child marriages, early childbirth, power and cruelty were the major factors for depression indicated in a study by Afzal, Rana & Mehmood (2008). According to a study by Gilani, Ijaz, Murtaza & Musa (2005), poor economic situation, poverty, illiteracy, and lack of awareness are the foremost indicators of emerging mental illnesses in Pakistan.

Well-being of students is principal. Students go through a testing trial and a tough routine. This condition may have adverse effects on their well-being. Stress and competition have a negative impact on their physical and mental health. Studies have shown that having strong social ties and a support system can protect people from psychological stress. The study reported that females consider social connections more

important than males and use social ties to get out of stressful situations. Better well-being will not only improve psychological health but will also help in forming secure communication and relationships with parents, peers and in a professional environment (Rehman, Habib & Fatima, 2014).

Attachment is the emotional bond formed between the person and the attendant or caregiver. Such a bond of a child with a parent is a Parental attachment, and with friends and peers is known as Peer attachment. Children experience two types of attachment. Secure if the parents are fulfilling their needs and insecure if they are neglected. If a parent is attentive towards a child, he or she will act positively, but if a child is not given proper attention, he or she might exhibit behavioral disturbances. Adaptive behavior of parents has a positive impact on the developing child's personality, development, and social life (Bowlby, 1969).

Early experiences of life help form an image of self and of others in making relations and the personal developmental process. They are effective in forming self-esteem and developing the personality of an individual. Bonding of an individual with other people in society depended on the typical behavior of their parents with them. Parental attachment of a child influences the formation of close peer relationships (Saferstein, Neimeyer, Hagans, 2005).

Social connectedness is a person's association of belongingness with friends, family, environment, emotional support, social support and all the surroundings in which a person feels their closeness to social media or social groups. Studies reveal that social attachments have a supportive impact on self-esteem, health condition, loneliness, satisfaction, cognitive functioning, sense of belongingness and overall well-being of an individual. Social connectedness correlates positively with a person's well-being. Lack of social connectedness tends towards psychosocial distress, loneliness, depression and negative thoughts. The importance of feeling connected to others can be placed only behind safety needs and basic physiological needs (Maslow, 1968).

People with more social connectedness experience less stress and less somatic symptoms, while poor well-being results in more stress (Lee et al., 2002; Moller et al., 2003; Yeh & Inose, 2003). Researchers have found that a firm social capital decreases the chances of mental and physical adversaries and helps in overcoming challenging situations (Rehman, Habib & Fatima, 2014).

1.1. Literature Review

1.1.1. Wellbeing

(Keyes, 2002) has related positive well-being to mental health as "flourishing" and as a state of equilibrium between favorable and unfavorable situations. Well-being is also associated with the type of relationship and perception towards the challenges of

life, and adopting ways for problem-solving and life satisfaction. Well-being or mental health is associated with social, emotional, physical, mental and economic interests (Okun, Stock, Haring & Witter, 1984).

Pakistan is becoming more prone to mental illnesses, mainly depression. This is leading towards a disturbing position (Ali, 2001). Positive well-being has an encouraging effect towards problem-solving in life (Scheier & Carver, 2001). A positive life outlook is necessary for well-being. Studies reported that there is a decrease in feelings of pleasure when a person is sad or depressed, and this influences a person's mental health.

Wellbeing comprises the 3P model that includes events and experiences of the Past, Present and Prospect (future), which means that wellbeing is influenced by life experiences as a whole (Durayappah, 2011). People with more positive well-being have better physical health than others. Well-being and academic achievement have a positive relationship among students (Pietarinen, Soini & Pyhalto, 2014). Individuals who were socially restricted for the last four weeks were experiencing depression and anxiety (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). Students' well-being and mental health have a significant role in their performance (Andrew & Annie, 2018).

This theory can well explain the concept of well-being. According to this theory, our psychological well-being depends upon different external and internal factors. Some of these factors give us happiness and motivation through our senses (Deci & Ryan, 2008). These factors can be subjective well-being, which is the level of satisfaction with life, the happiness or sadness in life that determines our well-being. Another type that relates to well-being is hedonic well-being, which is the level of pain rejection and acceptance of happiness or pleasure. The third type is Eudemonic well-being, which, according to Aristotle, is finding pleasure in something worth doing; it is related to the fulfilment of wishes, thoughts, and behaviors that give you the realization of self. Well-being is also explained in terms of positive well-being, life satisfaction and flourishing.

1.1.2. Parental Attachment

Children with poor child-parent relations failed to develop the emotions necessary for close friendships, while those with secure parenting had a better development of friendships. Children were introduced to strange situations for the assessment of parental attachment, where parents were missing, for example, a set environment with toys (Ainsworth et al. 1978). When a child is taken away from parents, he or she shows distress as explained by the Attachment Theory. In early stages of life, the attachment is mostly towards the mother (John Bowlby, 1982).

Children who had secure attachments were confident in strange situations and their exploration and would approach their parents when required, as they

knew that they would be available and would respond, while avoidant ones ignored their parents and the strangers (Bowlby, 1988).

Males and females with insecure parental bonds were more depressed (Cooper et.al, 1998). Children with good parental attachment are successful in controlling their emotions than children with insecure parental attachment (Cooper, Shaver & Collins, 1998). The parental attachment was indicative of a change in levels of well-being and social relationships among young adults (Love & Murdock, 2004). Excessive anxiety level and neglecting behavior due to poor parent attachment were major indicators of poor psychological well-being and adjustment issues (Wang, Mallinckrodt, 2006, Andersson, 2005).

Peer attachment had an important role in the future life and stability of an individual (Schnyders, 2012). Individuals who had strong parent-child relationships found themselves more competent and confident. Individuals who have secure attachments in life were more social and confident, and such individuals experienced good well-being, whereas others felt unworthy (Grey, 2013). Mothers were more indicative of attachment figures than fathers were.

When men are distressed, they exhibit neglected behavior that draws them away from relationships, while women, when anxious or stressed, go for interaction and social support that makes their relationships strong with others (Del Guidice, 2009). Girls are close to their parents and more likely to seek social capital (Ayub & Shahid Iqbal, 2013). The variance in developing relationships in society among males and females based on gender also depended on the type of parental attachment (Senchak & Solomon, 1990). American students who had adaptive and secure parental bonds in early stages of life had better friendship ties in college (Parade, Leerkes & Blankson, 2010).

1.1.3. Social connectedness

Social connectedness is the relationship to the outer world, including all outer environments and social groups (Williams & Galliher, 2006). Individuals who do not adjust to social groups are less socially connected and are thought of as an out-group (Tajfel & Turner, 1997). The social groups appreciate the individuals to participate and promote social ties (Brewer, 1999). Researches have reported that social bonding and support results in good health (Bisconti & Bregeman, 1999).

Offline communication is a rich source of developing positive social connectedness (Putnam, 2000). Social support has more impact on psychological distress than does the number of social activities or interactions. Dr Russ Harris: The Relation between social connectedness and survival explains our mental well-being depending on social relations. Happy individuals had more social ties than the unhappy ones (Holmberg 2014).

Social support and close relationships in life result in social competence (Williams, K. L., & Galliher, 2006). There is low social interaction among international students, and they want to have more interactions (James & Devlin, 2001).

Students either feel social relationships towards a close circle or may be towards other social groups (Rovai, 2002). Daily positive interactions make us socially connected (Townsend & McWhirter, 2005). Results indicate that international students from Europe experienced more social connectedness and less stress than those from Asia, Central/Latin America, and Africa (Yeh & Inose, 2010).

The concept of Social connectedness and connectedness with the institution is intersecting among students as they experience bonding with friends and ties with the institution staff as well (Jorgenson, Farrell, et.al, 2018). Most students in Melbourne were socially related, while some demanded support from their loved ones. Cultural background was related to social connectedness (Rosenthal, Russell, & Thomson, 2010).

1.1.4. The relationship between Wellbeing, Parental attachment, and Social connectedness among College students

According to research in a Canadian college, secure parental attachments lead to positive psychological well-being in students. Parent-child attachment was highly related to their well-being (Kenny & Perez, 1996). Efficacious learning among students demands positive and successful communication (Aitken, 1982). The positive correlation between achievement by students and well-being is explained by the self-determination theory, which is associated with a person's growth and psychological needs. Support induces competence, growth, and determination in an individual (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Poor parental attachment resulted in high scores of depression, stress, anxiety and all factors related to well-being and social connectedness among young adults (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987). Research shows that poor parenting has negative effects on adults' psychological well-being. One's attachment pattern remains firm from the period of childhood to adulthood (Shaver, Hazen & Bradshaw, 1988). Students who do not live with their parents are lonelier and anxious than those who live with their parents (Larose & Boivin, 1998). Educational support by parents has an effect on the self-esteem and academic achievement of the students.

Wellbeing can be positive as well as negative depending upon happiness, satisfaction, and attachments in life (Diener, 2006). Researches indicate that wellbeing triggers creative learning, better thinking and life satisfaction in students (Seligman, Gillham, Reivich & Linkins, 2009). Students come across many interactions from home to school. These can be online or offline. Some individuals can be introverts. These

introverts are good extroverts in online chats but more online chats decrease offline interaction and overall wellbeing of an individual (Kang, 2007). Using social media may be an alternate for promoting wellbeing in individuals as it does decrease the amount of anxiety and depression through online communication (Grieve, Indian, Witteveen, Tolan & Marrington, 2013).

Connectedness between college students is either academic or social (Clark, 2005, Smith & Zhang, 2009). Studies have confirmed that strong parental attachment has positive effects on well-being and secure parenting leads to secure social relationships (Gray, 2011). Wellbeing and academic achievement have positive relationships among students (Pietarinen, Soini & Pyhalto, 2014).

Age associates to mental health and peer support as well. Younger students face more stress than the elder students do. Younger students mostly have the support of parents but elder students have more strong friends circle and support as well (Thomson, Rosenthal & Russell, 2006)

Females are socially more connected than males and males are more prone towards distress than females (Moller et.al, 2003). Due to this, women are typically considered emotional and hence more prone to depression. Still, it does not mean that they have worse mental health, because men are more prone to substance abuse and more prone towards personality disorders. Well-being also differs due to emotional experiences of men and women (Wood, Roads & Whelan, 1989). Women had a closer relationship with friends and people around them than men (Saferstein et al., 2005).

Psychological and physical health, as well as output in studies of a student, is affected if he has issues in adjusting to a new culture. Cultural stress is associated with cultural variation. Cultural strain and pressure have a positive relationship with anxiety and depression, but a negative relationship with social connectedness. Cultural stress is a very important factor in a student's wellbeing as it is related to his/her psychological health and lifestyle. Students in Melbourne were stressed culturally, hence less socially connected. Increasing socialites decreases the cultural strain (Thomson, Rosenthal & Russell, 2006).

Physical health and mental well-being have an effective relationship. Risk-taking behavior like using drugs, etc., and depression are more prevalent in poor families. Individuals with high social class have more access to health care, knowledge, and other resources and have a better health (P. Smith, 1999). Students with low socioeconomic status are more likely to indulge in unhealthy behaviors if the parents are also into bad habits like smoking, drugs etc. (Borland & Rudolph, 1967).

1.1.5. Rationale

Wellbeing is a dependent variable and is dependent on two independent variables: parental attachment and

social connectedness. Wellbeing is an important factor in a person's life that effects overall physical, mental health and happiness of an individual's life. The aim of this research is to find out how wellbeing is affected by the type of parental attachment and social connectedness in a student's life. The reason for conducting this study on college students is that they go through a lot of mental stress due to tough competition and their support groups in academics and at home are responsible in shaping up their personality, social life, confidence, and communication. These factors also have an effect on his/her physical health. In addition, these factors directly influence a student's performance at academics, his competence level, and overall wellbeing, because college life is a peak time for a student to direct his positive energies towards his/her goal. Therefore, it is important to evaluate the variables and that would help to understand the overall impact of these factors on his/her life. Another reason is that plenty of research has been conducted on the same topic in other countries, but separately on each variable. In Pakistan, less research work has been reported on the selected variables. I wanted to check how these factors influence the lives of Pakistani students. The present research is based on previous findings from the literature review and aims to be helpful in further studies on this topic. This study will help to understand the needs of a student in improving their overall wellbeing and in improving the ways that can facilitate them. It will help understand what type of peer and parental bonding is required and why communication is important in a student's life.

1.1.6. Hypothesis

- There will be a positive correlation between well-being, parental attachment and social connectedness among adult students in Pakistan.
- Females will score lower on well-being than males. Males will score low on parental attachment and social connectedness.

2 MATERIAL AND METHOD

2.1. Ethical Concerns

Permission was taken from the heads of concerned colleges whose students were asked to be a part of the study. Before getting the questionnaires filled out, students were requested to read the consent form. Each participant was given a written form. It allowed them to have the right to ask questions about the study. It was made sure, that their name and personal data was kept in confidence in the form of a hard copy and not used for any purpose other than research work. They were also given knowledge about a mental health support organization. It was ensured that all the credentials in hard copy form would be discarded after the research work, according to ethical considerations.

2.2. Research Design and Sample Size

This research aimed to explore the aspects of well-being, parental attachment and social connectedness among college students in Pakistan. The quantitative method of convenience sampling was used. A correlational study method was used for this study. This study was carried out in KRL, Kahuta, which is 46 km away from the main city, Rawalpindi and a part of Tehsil Rawalpindi (Pakistan). Kahuta has a population of 16,000 according to the 2008 census. Kahuta is home to Khan Research Laboratories (KRL). Pakistan is an Islamic country on the Asian continent.

The sample size obtained for the current research was 111 college students, both male and female. This sample has included students of 11th and 12th standards within the age range of 15-19. The participants had varying socio-economic status, cultural background, and family systems.

Participants' age, marital status, and parents' occupation were mentioned in the protocol documents. A sample size for 95% confidence level, $\pm 5\%$ was calculated. G*Power 3.1.9.2 software was used for the calculation of the sample size of 111 individuals by applying the t-test and correlation research method.

2.3. Inclusion/ Exclusion

Male and female students of first-year and second-year standard with an age range of 15-20 were included in the study. Only those students took part in the study who were allowed by their colleges to participate. All the completely and correctly filled sets of consent forms, demographic sheets and questionnaires were included. All individuals were going to college and easily understood the nature, purpose, and language of the research and research scales in the Urdu Language. Incompletely filled sets of data, data sets in which questions were skipped or marked twice, or data sets with blank demographic sheets, were excluded from the sample size of 111 participants and replaced by completely filled questionnaires.

2.4. BBC Wellbeing Scale

This test measures the general well-being of an individual, which includes psychological, physical well-being and social relations. Internal consistency is 0.93. Subscale also has a consistency of 0.93. It uses a 4-point Likert scale method for scoring and has 24 items. This instrument has high consistency. This scale has reliable validity. Urdu translated version by (Khalid .A, 2014) that was mentioned in her research study, 'Correlates of Mental Health among Pakistani Adolescents: An exploration of the interrelationship between attachment, parental bonding, social support, emotion regulation and cultural orientation using Structural Equation Modeling' was used.

2.5. Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment Scale (IPPA)

This scale was developed (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987) and revised by. This scale measures the type and quality of relationships of an individual with mother, father, and peers. This scale has three subscales for mother, father, and peers, each with ten items. It is a self-report inventory. The original scale has questions about mothers and peers only, but the revised one includes discrete questions for father, mother, and peers. It has a high reliability (internal consistency $\alpha = .66-.86$) and convergent validity.

2.6. Family Affluence Scale

The Family Affluence Scale FAS II consists of four items. It measures the property, wealth and material belongings of a family. It tells the relationship between an individual and their socioeconomic status. The WHO developed it during the Health Service in School-Aged Children Service (Boyce, Toshiem, Currie & Zambon, 2006). Urdu translated version by (Khalid .A, 2014) that was mentioned in her research study, 'Correlates of Mental Health among Pakistani Adolescents: An exploration of the interrelationship between attachment, parental bonding, social support, emotion regulation and cultural orientation using Structural Equation

Modeling" was used. It has test-retest reliability and a moderate type of internal reliability, 0.58 Cronbach's alpha. This test has construct validity too (Liu, Wang, et al., 2012).

2.7. Social Connectedness scale

This scale measures the extent to which individuals feel an association with their friends and with their environment. This scale was developed by (Lee, R.M. & Robins, S.B, 1995). Sabitelli, R. revised it, Anderson & S. A. (2005). It was developed by Lee and Robin in 1995 and measures social inclusion in the community. It uses a 6-point Likert-type scale with eight questions. It has no subscales. It has reliability (internal consistency $\alpha > .92$) and Validity, Concurrent validity, construct validity, Convergent validity, and Discriminant validity (Lee, R. M., & Robbins & S. B., 1995).

2.8. Translation of the Scale

The social connectedness scale was translated into the Urdu language by the Brislin back translation method. A student of MSc, Linguistics and NUML University helped in translating the questionnaire in Urdu and back-translated by a Bachelor's level final year student of English and BHS Department, Fatima Jinnah Women University. A faculty member of BHS department verified these Urdu and back English translated versions. Afterwards, the supervisor checked the questionnaire and she made changes accordingly.

The students found difficulty in one item. A few students were unable to understand the translation of the word togetherness. This difficulty was discussed with the supervisor. The difficulty was explained to them after asking if they did not understand the word. Most of them had known about that word. It took two weeks to develop a translated version of the social connectedness scale. Before conducting the study, it was compulsory to find out the reliability of the translated social connectedness. A pre-pilot study was done on a small sample size of 50 students aged 15-19. The data was entered in SPSS, which gave 0.8 reliability for translated social connectedness, making the scale appropriate for use in the study.

2.9. Procedure

The data for this research were collected during April and June. The research study was conducted in two government colleges, the girls' wing and the boys' wing. These colleges were selected through convenience sampling. 125 college students of first year and second year, after approval from their administration, participated in the study, among which a sample of 111 students was added for the study after determining the sample size through G Power software (<http://gpower.software.informer.com/3.1/>). A demographic sheet containing information about name, age, education, language, marital status, living status and guardian's occupation was added. The BBC Wellbeing Scale, Parent Peer Attachment Scale, Social Connectedness Scale, and Family Affluence Scale were applied to the college students. It took three weeks to translate the social connectedness scale and already available Urdu versions of other scales were used for the study. It took four weeks for the data collection procedure. Participants were given a briefing about filling out the questionnaires. It took about 25 minutes to fill each set of data. The data analysis was done through SPSS. SPSS software was used to calculate characteristics, means, standard deviations and reliabilities of the BBC Well-being Scale, IPPA and Social Connectedness Scale. A t-test was applied to compare the relation of Wellbeing, Parental attachment and Social Connectedness based on gender differences. Normality was checked and Pearson's correlation was applied. The histograms were obtained to see normal curves.

3 RESULTS

This research aimed to find out the relationship between well-being, parental attachment and social connectedness among college students in Pakistan. The sample size includes 111 participants, 54 girls and 57 boys. The age range of participants was from 15 to 19 years old. All participants were students of the 11th and 12th standards. This chapter is the summary of results.

Table 1 shows the frequencies and percentages of the participants' gender, age, language and education, marital status, living status and guardian's occupation. The sample consists of 111 participants, among them 57(51.4%) were males and 54(48.6%) were females. Out of 111 participants, 90(81.1%) participants were from age 15-17 whereas 21(18.9%) participants were between age 18-20. Among the sample size majority of 44(39.6%) participants were Urdu speaking, 37(33.3%) were Punjabi, Pashto speaking participants were 15(13.5%) whereas Saraiki speaking were 11(9%) and 4(3.6%) participants were Hindko speaking. Participants in the first year of college were 54(48.6%), and participants in the second year of college were 56(50.5%). The frequency of single participants was 107(96.4%), while 4 (3.6%) participants were engaged. 103(92.8%) of participants were living with both parents whereas 2(1.8%) were living with single parent and 6(5.4%) participants were living with others. The ratio of 91 participants whose fathers were government employees and whose mothers were housewives was 82.0%. Among the 111 samples, 17.1% participants whose father and mother both were government employees were 19 in number and 1 (9%) participant whose father had a private job and mother was a housewife.

Table 1: Characteristics of study sample (N = 111).

Variables	Categories	F	%
Gender	Male	57	51.4
	Female	54	48.6
Age	15-17	90	81.1
	18-20	21	18.9
Language	Urdu	44	39.6
	Punjabi	37	33.3
	Pashto	15	13.5
	Sarakai	11	9.9
	Hindko	4	3.6
Education	First year	54	48.6
	Second year	56	50.5
Marital status	Single	107	96.4
	Engaged	4	3.6
Living status	Both parent	103	92.8
	Single parent	2	1.8
	Other	6	5.4
Guardian occupation	Father is a government employee,	91	82.0
	Mother house wife	19	17.1
	Father and Mother, government employee	1	9
	Father private job, Mother house wife		

Table 2 explains the reliability value of the BBC well-being scale; 0.8 is a good reliability. The inventory of peer parent attachment overall had 0.9 reliability. Its subscales, IPPA peer gave 0.7, IPPA mother and IPPA father gave 0.8 values that are good reliability values. The social connectedness scale also had a good reliability value of 0.8.

Table 2: Reliabilities of BBC Well-being Scale, Inventory of Parent Peer Attachment (IPPA), its subscales and Social Connectedness Scale.

Scales	Subscales	N	Cronbachs alpha
BBC well being scale		23	0.854
IPPA	IPPA peer	75	0.919
		25	0.784
Social connectedness scale	IPPA	25	0.853
	mother	25	0.890
	IPPA father	8	0.824

(N) = Total number of items on scales and subscales.

Table 3 shows a notable Pearson correlation between well-being, parental attachment and social connectedness. The table gives statistically significant and strong values.

Table 4 gives a comparison of gender differences of well-being, parental attachment and social connectedness among college students in Pakistan. The results are statistically insignificant, but there is a mean difference. Boys have more well-being than girls, with a mean ($M=67.90$) and a standard deviation ($SD=9.164$). At the same time, girls have mean score and standard deviation of ($M=66.80$, $SD=10.315$).

For IPPA, girls scored high on parental attachment with mean and standard deviation ($M=293.0$, $SD=38.962$) than boys with scores ($M=286.86$, $SD=38.024$).

Girls scored higher on the social connectedness scale than boys. Girls scored with mean ($M=37.39$) and standard deviation ($SD=8.169$) while boys scored with lower mean and standard deviation than girls did ($M=36.59.80$, $SD=7.036$) on social connectedness scale.

4 DISCUSSION

The purpose of study was to find the relation between wellbeing, parental attachment and social connectedness among college students in Pakistan. Study results showed a positive and significant correlation between wellbeing, parental attachment and social connectedness.

The results proved the hypothesis that wellbeing is dependent on parental attachment and social

connectedness. The literature review also supports this. As explained in the first, Individuals with secure parental attachments always have a better well-being. As explained in the first chapter, early experiences of life help form an image of self and of others in making relations and the personal developmental process. Better parental attachments increase self-esteem, confidence and positivity in individuals, and they tend to make stronger relationships throughout their lives. Parental attachment of a child influence forming close peer relationships (Saferstein, Neimeyer, Hagans, 2005). Poor parental bonding results in effects on a child's well-being and self-worth. Good parental bonds develop high wellbeing that helps the individual to overcome other shortcomings. Secure attachments have a positive effect on wellbeing (Radulovic, 2012). Secure attachments in life leads to more success and achievement either in school or in practical life while insecure relationships leads to depression and poor social adjustment. Conflicts among parents lead towards less parental attachment, low competence and poor social connectedness among children according to a study done in Pakistan by (Azam & Hanif, 2010).

Previous studies support the statement that attachments play a significant role in wellbeing of individuals. Students living away from parents are more anxious, stressed and depressed (Munir, Khalid & Sadiq, 2016). Their study indicated that a child's performance is more positive if they have more academic and moral support from parents. Studies have reported that individuals who experience step relationships or poor parental attachment in their lives have a poor wellbeing. They are more prone towards psychological, emotional, physical and social disturbances (Love & Murdock, 2004).

As parental attachment affects well-being and helps establish social relations, well-being is also dependent on social connectedness, whether it is socialising in society with social media or face-to-face. Individual who are more socially connected have a happy life (Holmberg 2014). Individuals involved in social groups have a healthy wellbeing. As explained in the literature review depressed and sad individuals had reported with poor social ties. A previous study by (Samia Nawaz, 2011) found that girls have strong correlation

Table 3: Correlation between wellbeing, Parent peer attachment inventory (IPPA) and social connectedness.

Variables	BBC wellbeing scale	IPPA	Social Connectedness scale
BBC wellbeing scale	-	.524**	-
.IPPA	-	-	.539**
Social connectedness scale	0.505**	-	-

$N=111$, $P^{**} < 0.01$

Table 4: Gender differences of wellbeing scale, inventory of parent peer attachment and social connectedness scale.

Variables	Male N=56		Female N=54		p	t	95% CI	
	M	SD	M	SD			UL	LL
BBC Wellbeing scale	67.90	9.164	66.80	10.315	0.263	1.126	6.133	-1.690
IPPA	286.86	38.024	293.0	38.962	0.104	-1.639	2.540	-26.826
Social connectedness	36.59	7.036	37.39	8.169	0.313	-1.013	1.517	-4.687

with parental attachment while boys had less parental attachment.

The last hypothesis was about gender differences. According to the literature review, married women have higher well-being than unmarried women. The sample of the study consisted of all single women. Study results proved the second hypothesis that females have lower well-being than males. Females have low well-being due to gender differences. However, this perspective is changing, but still, in most parts of the world, there are cultural differences. Well-being was low in women who were deprived of rights, especially economic rights, which can be one reason for low well-being in females (Graham & Chattopadhyay, 2013). Well-being in women can be low because of many reasons, including less access to power and resources, less awareness, fewer rights, religious and cultural boundaries and being considered a weak gender.

A study done in 2017 reported that less social support and stress are other reasons. Research has proven that women go through more mood swings and emotional disturbances than men do. Women in many countries, mostly Asian countries, are fed with the idea that they have to act, perform, and behave in a certain way, which is why their learning experiences also differ. Women become more anxious because they are more prone to depression and low well-being than men. Secondly, a male-dominant society is a leading cause. This also happens because of the uneven distribution of options and choices in life regarding gender differences, power, access, economic stability and educational opportunities (Batz & Tay, 2017). These factors also make women dependent on men. (Wood, Roads & Whelan, 1989) related to well-being in women and marital status. Married women had higher well-being than unmarried women because married women are more into social roles that make them more socially connected and improve their skills, but also, women were more responsive and sensitive to emotional experiences. Women are more sensitive toward certain situations.

The third hypothesis stated that boys scored less in parental attachment and social connectedness. Literature does not provide any clear identification of gender differences according to parent peer attachment, but it states that parental attachments in both genders depend upon the type of caregivers (Senchak & Solomon, 1990). Results may be insignificant because of the finding that secure attachment is more dependent on parenting style rather than gender. It depends on parenting style, secure and insecure ties, not gender. On the contrary, results have shown higher parental attachment in girls than boys; the results were insignificant, but there were differences. (Ayub & Shahid Iqbal, 2013) found that girls have a closer relationship with their parents, which is why they also tend to form better social relations than boys. The reason can be that girls stay with parents more than boys do, but this factor is yet unclear, and more research is required to explore the factors resulting in such results.

Literature review also supports the hypothesis that females have stronger social ties than males. Better social ties improve their self-esteem and help to overcome the problem quickly (Del Guidice, 2009). When males are sad or depressed, they exhibit neglectful behavior that affects their relationship with others. It draws them away from the social bonds, but if girls are depressed, they become expressive and talk to people close to them, which helps them release the stress and strengthen their social relationships.

The research results gave good reliabilities of all three scales, BBC Wellbeing Scale, IPPA and Social Connectedness Scale, above 0.7. The correlation values of the scales suggest that there is a positive correlation between the three variables, and well-being is dependent on parent peer attachment and social connectedness. Pilot study of translated social connectedness scale also gave a good reliability, Cronbach's alpha values that are almost the same or close to the original reliability values of these tests as mentioned in Section two in description of the scales.

4.1. Conclusion

With the support of the present study, there is a positive correlation between well-being, parental attachment and social connectedness among college students in Pakistan. Parental attachment and social connectedness significantly affect well-being and mental health. Gender also plays an important role, related to social connectedness. Adequately related to parental attachment and very slightly or not related to well-being. The insignificant results may be due to the type of environment where the study was conducted. There were gender differences, but they were insignificant. This may be because mostly parents of these participants were educated, and there was no difference in the quality of education, and there was a peaceful and productive environment. Almost equal opportunities were given to both girls and boys. This research will help to add to the literature review of the three variables of study and contribute to more knowledge about wellbeing, parental attachment and social connectedness among college students in Pakistan and will be helpful in further studies.

4.2. Limitations

There was a lot of literature review on three variables, but there was no study reported work on correlating wellbeing, parental attachment and social connectedness together. Very little work was done on any of these variables in Pakistan.

Unavailability of a translated version of the Social Connectedness Scale was the second limitation. It took three weeks to translate the questionnaire and check its pilot test reliability. The third limitation was that during the study, college students had final exams, and after that, very few students were available in summer classes.

4.3. Implications of the Research Findings

This study finds a positive correlation between well-being, parental attachment and social connectedness among college students in Pakistan, which helps them understand the status and importance of their mental health and well-being. This research also plays an important role for parents to identify whether their children are happy with their parents or not, and which type of parenting style they should adopt to make their child better. Teachers can identify students who are having trouble with social connectedness and other issues. They can thus help the students form positive relationships with their peers and parents. This research also identifies that gender-based hate can be addressed properly if there is a negative correlation.

This research provides a thorough understanding of psychological well-being and mental health. What parental attachment is, why social connectedness is important and how it can be made better for a better wellbeing.

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