Arts & Health

An International Journal for Research, Policy and Practice

ISSN: 1753-3015 (Print) 1753-3023 (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/rahe20

Wellbeing in the wild: co-creating context-sensitive wellbeing dimensions with a community of young artists

Dominik Havsteen-Franklin, Cristina Asenjo Palma, Mariza Dima, Marie Hansen, Ezgi Merdin Uygur, Gulsen Tore Yargin, Wendy Martin & Elina Meliou

To cite this article: Dominik Havsteen-Franklin, Cristina Asenjo Palma, Mariza Dima, Marie Hansen, Ezgi Merdin Uygur, Gulsen Tore Yargin, Wendy Martin & Elina Meliou (22 May 2025): Wellbeing in the wild: co-creating context-sensitive wellbeing dimensions with a community of young artists, Arts & Health, DOI: 10.1080/17533015.2025.2504894

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/17533015.2025.2504894

Published online: 22 May 2025.

ARTS & HEALTH
https://doi.org/10.1080/17533015.2025.2504894

Wellbeing in the wild: co-creating context-sensitive wellbeing dimensions with a community of young artists

Dominik Havsteen-Franklin[a], Cristina Asenjo Palma[b], Mariza Dima[a], Marie Hansen[c], Ezgi Merdin Uygur[d], Gulsen Tore Yargin[e], Wendy Martin[f] and Elina Meliou[d]

[a]Arts and Humanities, Brunel University of London, London, UK; [b]Medicine and Life Sciences, Brunel University of London, London, UK; [c]Department of Life Sciences, Brunel University of London, London, UK; [d]Business School, Brunel University of London, London, UK; [e]Design School, Brunel University of London, London, UK; [f]Health Sciences, Brunel University of London, London, UK

ABSTRACT

Background: This study addresses the challenge of developing context-sensitive measures of wellbeing for young people. In collaboration with a youth-led musical enterprise, researchers worked with 18 young artists (aged 14–25) engaged in an urban community arts programme to co-produce wellbeing dimensions reflective of their lived experiences.

Methods: An adapted Nominal Group Technique was used alongside iterative inductive thematic analysis to identify and prioritise key wellbeing dimensions.

Results: The study revealed ten discrete dimensions of wellbeing that reflect the experiences of young people engaged in community arts. These dimensions highlight the significance of creative expression, cultural appreciation, community experiences, and social responsibility, elements aligned with wellbeing but rarely considered in standardised wellbeing frameworks.

Conclusion: The study highlights the value of youth-led, situated approaches to defining dimensions of wellbeing, offering a framework that captures the creative and social dimensions in community arts contexts.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received 14 October 2024
Accepted 2 May 2025

KEYWORDS
Youth empowerment; Wellbeing measurement; participatory evaluation; context-sensitive assessment; youth-led indicators; arts-based outcomes

Background

Defining wellbeing for young people is a complex task (Erskine et al., 2017). Young people, particularly those experiencing poverty, social exclusion, stigma, discrimination, or marginalisation, including neurodivergent individuals and those from underrepresented backgrounds encounter significant barriers in improving subjective wellbeing (Kirkbride et al., 2024).

This study focuses on young artists, producing an understanding of wellbeing that attends to the specificities of creative subjectivities. As emerging cultural contributors, young artists often mediate between personal expression and collective narratives and

CONTACT Dominik Havsteen-Franklin dominik.havsteen-franklin@brunel.ac.uk Arts and Humanities, Brunel University of London, Kingston Lane, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 3PH, London, UK

may be exposed to tensions not typically captured by general models of wellbeing assessment. Wellbeing is a contested concept that is frequently misunderstood, and due to a lack of consensus, Pollard and Lee (2003, p. 69) concur, "has created confusing and contradictory research." Central to the confusion is the longstanding debate over whether the study of wellbeing should follow essentialist or contextualised approaches (Mitchell & Alexandrova, 2020). This polemic is reflected in the literature, as a spectrum of epistemologies ranging from highly contextualised, sensitively situated accounts of wellbeing to reductive and more "essentialist" definitions that oppose contextualist and open-ended variations (Fletcher, 2021). In contrast to contextualised approaches, an essentialist modelling of wellbeing assumes that there is a "universal" and "single" construct of wellbeing that generally remains constant across contexts, time and populations.

Yates et al. (2023) suggest "for systems transformation to occur, we argue that pluriversal, co-developed wellbeing frameworks are crucial for both assessing change and co-implementing it." (p.28), positing that using a model of measurement that is sensitive to diverse forms of knowledge and adaptable to changes within communities can bridge the gap between the need for generalisable and comparative metrics with context-dependent definitions of wellbeing.

Östlund (2024, p. 15) also problematises the universalisation of wellbeing theories, stating,

> To that end, contextualism shows how purpose-dependent wellbeing theories can co-exist without there being a master list that each purpose-dependent theory is a smaller segment of. They may partially overlap, have a family resemblance, or be disjoint. What matters is whether the theories are suitable to their purposes, not whether the theories con-verge on the same targeted good-for-making property.

Standardised essentialist definitions and measurements of wellbeing such as Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (Tennant et al., 2007), Ryff's Psychological Wellbeing Scales (Ryff, 1989), the PERMA model (Seligman, 2011), the WHO-5 Wellbeing Index (WHO, 1998), and the Flourishing Scale (Diener et al., 2010) are accessible and widely used, enabling larger data sets for analysing changes across populations. However, social inclusivity and factor sensitivity regarding arts engagements continues to be an under researched problem. These standardised instruments have inevitably led to oversights regarding political and cultural biases (see for example Krueger & Stone, 2014) due to a lack of contextual sensitivity (See Burke et al., 2024).

Bridging philosophy and empirical inquiry, Yates et al. (2023) also caution that standardised, top-down values can reduce participant investment and community agency, imposing majoritarian definitions that overshadow cultural heritages. This is particularly salient in the context of community arts programmes. For example, Blanchflower and Bryson (2024) argue that languages, communication styles, social cues and artistic expression produce versions of subjective wellbeing that are not directly comparable across countries and/or regions of the world. In addition, the arts, by their nature of producing novel social perspectives and experiences, express and evolve cultural and contextual relations, beyond what can be predefined from a majoritarian point of view (Uprichard & Dawney, 2019). As a result, participatory community arts initiatives face significant challenges when current wellbeing frameworks do not recognise the complex, socially situated experiences of young artists (Williams et al., 2023). These include difficulties in

securing funding due to mismatched evaluation metrics, reduced acceptance of youth-led creative expression in institutional contexts (for example in education), and the risk of representing artistic engagement in ways that fail to reflect its emergent, collective, and affective dimensions.

> On this basis, we formulated the guiding research question: *Which co-created dimensions of wellbeing do young artists perceive to be impacted by participatory community arts, and to what extent does this contribute to understanding wellbeing as a contextually situated construct?*

We worked with the arts organisations Kinetika Bloco (KB) and the Southbank Centre (SC) in London, UK, which have a 20 yearlong ongoing collaboration. KB is a youth music charity engaging young people from South London in music, dance, design, and leadership activities advancing their education, skills, and social capacity. SC is an arts and culture hub in the centre of London, host to numerous creative practices including community arts programmes such as their work with KB. The work of KB and SC illustrate policy efforts to improve the wellbeing of young people through arts engagement. Initiatives such as "Let's Create" strategy (2020–2030) by the Arts Council England, and the Local Cultural Education Partnership, for instance, emphasize the importance of arts access for young people, connecting community arts programmes with improved psychological wellbeing (Arts Council England, 2021; Lonie et al, 2019).

Through conducting an adaption of the Nominal Group Technique (NGT), focus groups with the KB community and SC leadership team and young artists we co-created context sensitive dimensions for modelling wellbeing . In this study, the term *young artists* refers to individuals aged 14 to 25 who actively engage in creative practices, including music performance, visual arts, spoken word, and interdisciplinary arts, as part of their personal, social, or educational development. The designation young artists foreground their identity as creative agents, rather than positioning them as service users or research participants. This framing reflects a commitment to recognising their expressive capacities, cultural contributions, and situated experiences within community-based arts practice.

The co-creation approach allowed us to capture the intrinsic impact of the arts on wellbeing and insights from young artists often encountering societal and context insensitivities, for example, marginalisation, racism or social biases. Therefore, we adapted the NGT, by introducing arts into the process throughout the focus groups to align with young artist experiences and produce thematic statements of wellbeing that were sensitive to their languages and experiences of wellbeing.

Contextualising wellbeing evaluation

Wellbeing is widely conceptualised as optimal functioning (Ryff, 2018; Ryff & Singer, 2008). Yet, what "optimal functioning" involves is disputed. Ryff's (1989) psychological wellbeing identifies self-acceptance, positive relations, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life and personal growth as constitutive of wellbeing or optimal functioning. Ryan and Deci's (2001) self-determination theory similarly identifies autonomy, competence, and relatedness as central constructs. However, as previously stated, the process of attempting to universalise definitions of wellbeing can lead to oversimplification of experience through a process of theoretical reductionism. To provide a couple of examples to

illustrate this, "happiness" is a widely used construct defining wellbeing, that is often construed as a standard value comparable across cultures. However, Bakracheva's (2020) research highlights that the expression and prioritisation of happiness as a core indicator of wellbeing can vary significantly across cultures. In some cultural or religious contexts, the pursuit of personal happiness may be viewed as less desirable, with values such as humility or modesty taking precedence (see also Joshanloo et al., 2015). In some contexts, the environment is inseparable from conditions of wellbeing, particularly in relation to culture, religion, or place (Strömbäck et al., 2023). For instance, "spiritual wellbeing" has been associated with concepts such as transcendence, harmony with nature, and anomie (Ekşi & Kardaş, 2017). Research into young people's wellbeing has followed similar trends.

While youth-led approaches are increasingly employed to conceptualise wellbeing in qualitative research (see, for example, Bourke & Geldens, 2007; Rawsthorne et al., 2019; Renwick et al., 2022; Vujčić et al., 2019), the dominant scales and models used to measure wellbeing continue to rely on universal and standardised frameworks. Notable examples include the *Global Youth Wellbeing Index* (Goldin, 2014) and the wellbeing domains endorsed by the World Health Organization, as articulated by the Technical Working Group on Adolescent Health and Wellbeing (Ross et al., 2020). Although these frameworks are informed by young people's perspectives and aim to be universally applicable across diverse countries and contexts, they nonetheless privilege generalisability over contextual specificity. As a result, wellbeing frameworks that are both youth-led and culturally and creatively situated remain largely absent. This discussion highlights some of the fundamental dilemmas inherent in wellbeing measurement – particularly the risks of reductionism and the neglect of definitional plurality – which in turn strengthens the rationale for investigating how contextual parameters interact with, and potentially challenge, standardised measures.

Creativity and wellbeing

As this paper refers to a community arts context, a brief description of the intersections of arts and wellbeing is required. Creativity can be understood as the process of generating novel insights through the rhythms of various forms of material engagement, such as using instruments, paints, digital media, and other tools. While some researchers, like Hennessey and Amabile (2010), argue that a criterion of creativity requires a degree of usefulness, creativity is clearly not useful in the usual practical sense of the word, that is we do not use a painting in an art gallery for anything beyond the relations and insights that are produced through being with the painting. Therefore, the defining criterion of arts in the context of this study is based on the developmental stage of young people, that during this time a person is forming their personality focusing on personal and social relations, and consequently, just as wellbeing is context dependent, creativity may also relate to the development of the young person and their primary interests. To address this, we refer to Kaufman and Beghetto (2009) who describe "mini-creativity" as a type of creativity implicit to the learning process – " … the dynamic, interpretive process of constructing personal knowledge and understanding within a particular sociocultural context" (2009, p. 3).

This relationship between creativity and wellbeing, in the context of self-actualisation and the young, is explored further by Kaufman (2023), who describes

creativity as a state of becoming that transcends and extends social adaptation.. Similarly, Tan et al. (2021) suggest that engaging in creative activities can also enhance wellbeing as a self-actualisation process that is bi-directional, in other words, wellbeing promotes creativity and vice versa. However, Christensen's (2023), research suggests that creativity is a notable attribute of open-mindedness, rather than wellbeing as such, where open-mindedness may lead to high-risk situations, not necessarily positively affecting wellbeing in the first instance. Similarly, Oishi and Westgate (2022) argue that creativity is closely associated with psychological richness, being open to challenges and engaging in deep sense-making.. These researchers demonstrate conceptual differentiations between creative acts of engaging in challenging tasks highlighting an increase in empathy, novelty and creativity, which Oishi and Westgate (ibid) describe as primarily developing changes in wisdom rather than wellbeing. This insight challenges the conventional assumption that creativity inherently promotes wellbeing and highlights instead that creative processes may often be disruptive or uncomfortable.. Such experiences can appear to contradict traditional conceptions of wellbeing, which typically emphasise happiness or satisfaction; however, creative acts can in the short-term yield significant collective or societal benefits. For example, during the recent COVID-19 pandemic, numerous instances emerged in which arts-based social actions facilitated collective change, prioritising community wellbeing (Huss & Havsteen-Franklin, 2023). This perspective aligns with critical theories of creativity, which emphasise the complex interplay between challenge, innovation, and the sociocultural conditions of creative practice. Accordingly, this study adopts the position that the social environment is of critical importance, not only in relation to the developmental needs of young participants, but also because artistic engagement can generate societal benefits that extend beyond, and at times surpass, individual happiness or gratification.

A social model of wellbeing also carries political implications, as it challenges the dominant association between personal happiness and capitalist models of productivity – an association often instrumentalised in service of state functioning aligned with neoliberal agendas that prioritise productivity and high achievement as mechanisms for capital growth (Binkley, 2014; Dean, 2010). From this perspective, it becomes necessary to interrogate how and when political forces shape the definitions and applications of creativity and wellbeing in research, rather than treating such definitions as inherently value-neutral. The implicit assumptions within wellbeing research may, perhaps unintentionally, contribute to a Eurocentric homogenisation of diverse epistemologies, aligning them with dominant societal frameworks that prioritise productivity and overly reductive measurable outcomes (see also Mitchell & Alexandrova, 2020). In response, this study seeks to develop nuanced, contextually grounded frameworks of wellbeing that more accurately reflect the complexity and diversity of experiences encountered in community-based arts practices. This approach is informed by critical theories of creativity, including Glăveanu et al. (2023) emphasis on the relational and socially situated nature of creativity. Donnelly and Montuori's (2023) exploration of complexity as an epistemological foundation for creative inquiry, and Sternberg's (2022) conception of transformational creativity as a driver of ethical and socially responsible change problematises universal definitions of wellbeing for young people demonstrating a clear need to explore approaches that are context-sensitive and responsive to diverse experiences.

Research approach and methodology

To produce context sensitive dimensions of wellbeing for young people engaging in community arts, we co-designed a research project working with a community arts group of young music performers, and community stakeholders at KB and SC. The research ethics was approved by Brunel University of London Research Ethics Committee and the pilot study was conducted between March and July 2024. Prior to commencing the project, all young artists were invited to provide consent to take part in the study agreeing to our primary aim of translating *their* understanding of wellbeing into measurable dimensions, and that we would use this data for further research beyond this study to evaluate the impact of community arts projects. Community arts projects are defined as all arts practices, including music, dance, visual arts, performance and dance, and projects being defined by rehearsals, meetings, learning spaces as well as arts sharing opportunities, public events and presentations, including shows or performances.

Initial discussions with the SC and KB community guardians offered a preliminary plan for the co-creation activities; two full day workshops with the young people and community facilitators. As researchers we sought to nurture an environment where experiences, ideas and statements could be freely explored (Hurley et al., 2018) and provide the theoretical basis for reaching consensus on the definition of the dimensions (Mostafa, 2016).

The first workshops focused on exploring young artists' understanding of wellbeing within a community context and identify an appropriate vocabulary that can help express their experiences in the form of shared themes. The second set of workshops built on the first insights to produce statements that clearly conveyed the nuanced parameters of their definitions of wellbeing.

Nominal group technique

The co-creation workshops were designed within a Nominal Group Technique (NGT) framework to aggregate statements, images, arts-based activities and discussions from multiple perspectives and stakeholders (community members, leaders, managers, researchers) over two days of workshops designed for this purpose. The NGT is widely used in organisations to develop democratic consensus and thematisation to address complex issues where there are considerable uncertainties that require a range of viewpoints (See Havsteen-Franklin, 2014; Havsteen-Franklin et al., 2021; Levine, 2012; Van de Ven & Delbecq, 1972). The structure moves from individualised responses, whereby all participants contribute their firsthand experiences in relation to a question before proceeding to group exploration and thematisation and then ranking the findings (See Figure 3). Given that the NGT is typically used to address local issues with a pragmatic and focused verbal approach, we adapted the model to account for inclusion of community arts and the arts organisations. This included using arts before and after discussions to enhance engagement and foster more in-depth discussions, while also creating a working environment that mirrored the young artists' usual experiences of using the arts. This adaptation allowed for a more authentic and contextually relevant exploration of wellbeing within the community arts setting. The workshops took place at the SC premises, where KB rehearsals and performances also took place.

Community guardians purposively selected a heterogenous group of 18 young artists with a range of socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, abilities and duration of time spent with the community arts organisations as well as an age range that represented a cross section of the group (ages from 14–25), noting that they all had engaged with the arts (musical, performative and dance). We used this purposive sampling strategy led by community leads to enable sufficient variation for the findings to be potentially relevant and sensitive to the young people in the project. Typically, the NGT is used to efficiently resolve problems with small groups of between 7–14 people (McMillan et al., 2016), however given the desire to find transferable results, we extended the number to increase inclusivity of a broader range of young artists and to explore the verification of the results through comparing findings across two subgroups of 9 people.

Procedure

The workshops began with icebreaker and warmup exercises and a description of the tasks of the project. The group of 18 young artists was then divided in two to engage in a round of sharing experiences about the impact of arts on wellbeing within the NGT framework (Figures 1–3).

The first stage of the NGT was conducted through a series of adapted workshops, supporting young people to share their experiences about community arts and wellbeing within SC (Fig.4). The statements were then written on flipcharts. Community arts project leads and researchers helped to cluster the statements into domains of wellbeing and excluded duplication but ensured that all young artists contributed. The clusters of statements were then checked and adjusted with young artists several times according to intended meanings produced during the discursive phase and during the thematisation. Once the themes were agreed, researchers and community guardians created a statement for each theme based on the language and intended meaning that was

Figure 1. Introducing arts into the NGT.

Figure 2. Exploring individual responses to the impact of arts on wellbeing.

Figure 3. Thematising responses through group consensus.

acceptable to all members. The thematic method used an inductive iterative process, to create statements that they could agree or disagree with depending on their experience.

After we had completed the focus groups and we had preliminary community led definitions of the dimensions of wellbeing that were important to them and that were affected by the arts, we asked the question, "*Which wellbeing dimensions have had the most impact on your life outside the programme, particularly school, home, work and related settings?*"

This last stage was conducted to explore the transferability and effects of the arts on their lives beyond the immediate community, indicating whether the dimensions were contextually relevant beyond the arts project itself, considering the extended affordances of the dimensions identified. In this final stage, young artists ranked the identified dimensions accordingly (See Figure 5).

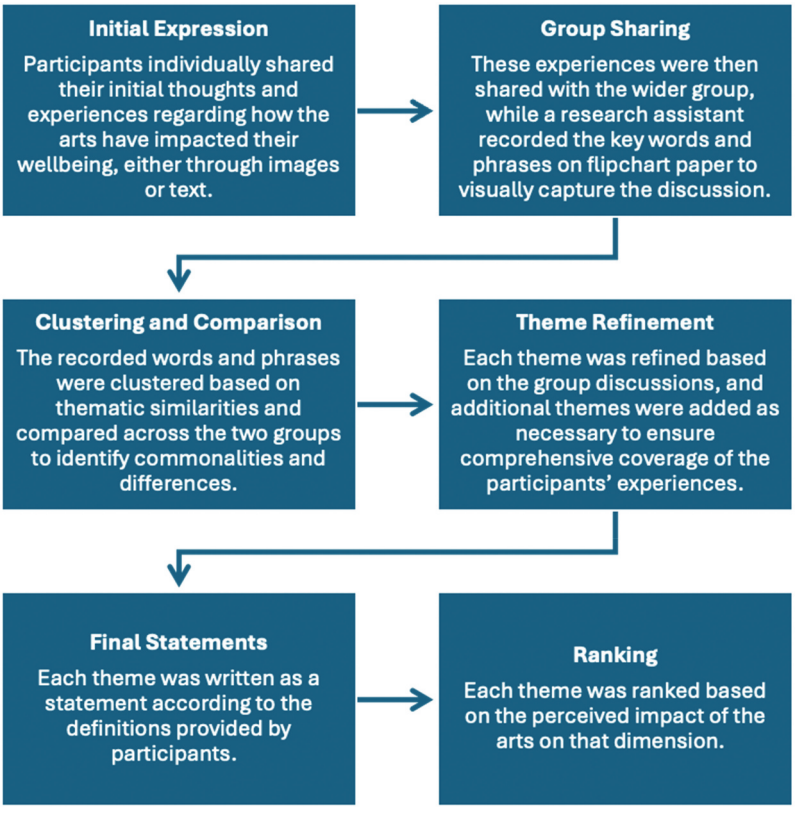

Figure 4. NGT Procedure.

Analysis

Following methods of analysis originally outlined by Delbecq and Van de Ven (1971), we transferred the text-based data on flip chart paper to Excel spreadsheets and organised with reference to verbal, visual and performative data from the young artists. The statements were collated and organised according to an inductive process, elucidating patterns in the young artist's language and worldviews.

We employed an inductive approach to facilitate the integration and comparison of image, text, and verbal data, aiming to uncover convergences and contrasts within the collected material (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The research team conducted the analysis using a constant comparison method, systematically assessing whether young artists expressed similar ideas. When discrepancies emerged, the team investigated the differences and sought to understand the underlying reasons for these variations.

The iterative analysis of the data involved identifying theme connections from the young artists' perspectives and examining the links between these concepts (Bryman, 2016). Whilst the production of the themes were mostly data driven as we were simply asking people to share their experiences of wellbeing, attempting to privilege their understandings over any predetermined concepts, we did also include some prompting questions to explore context sensitivity when relevant. For example, we asked, "is the

Figure 5. Graph of ranked items according to impact of community arts on young artists' lives more widely.

place relevant to your sense of wellbeing produced through engaging with the arts and if so in what ways?" and "If you were to perform your wellbeing what does that look like?".

Excel spreadsheets supported the systematic organisation, synthesis, and pattern recognition of the data. The analysis began with the structuring of raw data, followed by synthesising the content, identifying emergent patterns, and aligning these findings with the research questions. Specifically, reflections, notes, and observations were methodically coded, with each item, whether a word, sentence, or passage, shaping the themes (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006) (See Table 1).

Results

The list of themes are presented in Table 1. The themes in the left-hand column, emerged from discussions relating to the primary question, producing supporting codes in the right-hand column, in the language of the young people. This approach allowed us to systematically explore how the themes interconnected and how they reflected the young artists' experiences and insights, providing a view of the dimensions of wellbeing in the language and conceptual structures that the young artists felt best represented their experiences of wellbeing.

Themes

Theme 1: Feeling Confident

One of the central themes identified was the development of confidence among young artists. Statements such as "*It's about becoming confident and expanding your social world*" (young artist 8) reflected how the arts provided a platform for individuals to socially

Table 1. Themes from the NGT.

Theme [Wellbeing Dimensions]	Codes (In the young artist's words)
Feeling confident.	Forced to be more confident and interact with others
	Exposes introverts to be more extroverted
	More comfortable around people
	Boosting morale
	Feeling Confident
	Having Pride
	Confidence
	Self-Esteem
	Bigger, diverse audience
	Being able to explore options
A sense of belonging and community.	United
	Opportunity to collaborate
	Having a Family
	Making Friends
	Most important – support system and friends
	Intertwining. Alignment. Sharing interest and expression.
	Place of connection.
	Being in your comfort zone
	Having social variation
	Arts create the community (or adds to)
	Accepted within my group
Feeling in a safe and supportive place.	Feeling relaxed
	Having a safe space
	The place reflects KB's work
	Important the location is good/accessible
	The place is calming
	It's important to have a different space
	Exploring new places
	Having a bigger, diverse audience
	Being in SC building feels special, crossover with other music groups - Makes you feel lucky
	Makes you feel like you belong on stage and can have a creative career
	It's somewhere different to go.
	Feels comfortable to interact. Support is evident. Connection.
	Feels like HOME.
	It's a safe space
	Acknowledgement of your environment
	Being in your comfort zone.
Feeling optimistic and inspired.	Having a sense of a future career
	Imagining a future
	Makes you feel like you belong on stage and can have a creative career
	Feeling hopeful
	Feeling optimistic
	Inspired by olders
	Optimism about young people
	Inspiration
	Goals
	Targets
	Improving
	Putting worries behind
	Feeling Inspired
	Open to new experiences

(*Continued*)

Table 1. (Continued).

Theme [Wellbeing Dimensions]	Codes (In the young artist's words)
Applying skills developed through arts and being with new people.	Having a sense of a future career
	Leadership skills for the future
	Transferable skills e.g. in [music] academies
	Being around artistry
	Inspired by others makes you work harder
	KB supports careers & options in the arts (e.g. production as well as musicians)
	Performing with others immerses you and you understand your role in the bigger picture
	Being in public space, you see impact on audience
	Fulfilling experience
	Opportunity to display learned skills
	SC brings opportunities (e.g. competitions) and benefits (e.g. free access to Hayward)
Feeling sense of collective joy.	Overwhelmingly happy
	The atmosphere is atmosphere energetic, uplifting, happy
	Adrenaline rush
	Feeling Passionate
Improvising and expressing yourself creatively.	Wanting others to know you could perform the rhythm
	Increases creativity as a person
	Break boundaries -> explore & appreciate music
	Others help you bring out that [improvising] side of yourself
	Learning to play musical instruments
	Being Expressive
	Having Freedom of expression
	Having a new experience
	You appreciate performers more because you understand the work that they do
	Improvising helps you to adapt to change & improvise in daily life
	Exploring boundaries and limits pushes sense of identity.
	Opportunity for creativity.
Feeling that me and my culture are appreciated.	Being welcomed
	Feeling equal
	Feeling Appreciated
	Feeling represented in the environment
	Inclusion
	Feeling seen and heard
	Cultural awareness
	Having culture and Diversity
	Different backgrounds
	Feeling Represented in your environment
	Being culturally represented in SC space
Feeling more socially responsible and inclusive of others.	Inclusion, helping others so you can play together
	Having community, family
	Building and working with others
	Brings you together with others
	Start convos, learning kindness & helping others
	Learning about different cultures
	Learning leadership
	Looking out for people
	Expanding your social world
	Being Inclusive
	Making new friends
	Sense of belonging
	Relationships: interaction + integration, everyone has a purpose.
	Builds Strength and navigation.
	# Social responsibility
	Looking after and looking out
	Duty of shared care
	Care is handed down

(*Continued*)

Table 1. (Continued).

Theme [Wellbeing Dimensions]	Codes (In the young artist's words)
Feeling self-aware and reflective.	Being self-reflective Reflection means development, active attitude Having critical thinking Leading yourself Learning about the emotions you are feeling

interact as part of a group, reporting increases in morale, opportunities, experiences of new social dynamics, and a sense of pride in their abilities.

Theme 2: A Sense of Belonging and Community

Young artists frequently expressed how the project fostered a sense of belonging and community. As young artist 5 noted, "Networking, finding other people, having more connections in your life gives you a sense of family and community." The opportunity to collaborate, make friends, and develop a support system was emphasised, with young artists describing the project as a place where they felt connected and accepted within their group.

Theme 3: Feeling in a Safe and Supportive Place

The creation of a safe and supportive environment was another prominent theme. Young artists described the project space as a refuge, where they could relax and escape. "I feel like it's a safe space to come to and escape worries," said young artist 10, while others highlighted the importance of the project's location and its relaxed atmosphere, which contributed to a sense of comfort and inclusion.

Theme 4: Feeling Optimistic and Inspired

The project also had a significant impact on young artists' sense of optimism and inspiration. As young artist 9 explained, "Being in the Southbank Centre means you get to perform in front of a bigger and more diverse audience and also learn transferable skills." The exposure to new opportunities and the chance to imagine a future career in the arts inspired feelings of hope, energy, and personal development.

Theme 5: Applying Skills Developed through Arts and Being with New People

Young artists expressed how the project allowed them to develop and apply skills in new environments. "Learning new things e.g. music/dance, being around people, new emotions, which is hard to explain . . . This allows you to learn life skills that you may need in the future," shared young artist 2. The project offered opportunities to develop leadership, communication, and artistic skills, which young artists viewed as transferable to other aspects of their lives.

Theme 6: Feeling a Sense of Collective Joy

A shared sense of joy and emotional upliftment emerged as a common theme, with young artists often describing the energetic and happy atmosphere of the project. "It's about being united, having a memorable experience, which ties in

with your mental health," said young artist 10. The project provided an environment that facilitated positive emotions, joy, and collective celebration, contributing to young artists' overall sense of wellbeing.

Theme 7: Improvising and Expressing Yourself Creatively

Young artists valued the freedom to improvise and express themselves creatively. Young artist 1 emphasised this: "It's a good opportunity in terms of collaborations with people, having feelings of peace and freedom to improvise and express yourself." The project encouraged individuals to push boundaries, experiment with new creative expressions, and gain a deeper appreciation for their own artistic abilities.

Theme 8: Feeling that Me and My Culture are Appreciated

Cultural appreciation and representation emerged as vital elements of the project's impact. Young artist 4 noted, "It's about finding new relationships, community, and belonging, looking out for people, coming together from different backgrounds." The project was seen as an inclusive space where young artists felt their cultural identities were acknowledged, respected, and celebrated.

Theme 9: Feeling More Socially Responsible and Inclusive of Others

Many young artists discussed how the project instilled a sense of social responsibility and inclusivity. Young artist 7 shared, "I have a sense of pride, like, when I'm tired, I keep it going for the team." The project fostered a spirit of collaboration, inclusivity, and care, where young artists learned the value of supporting others, building relationships, and embracing diversity.

Theme 10: Feeling Self-Aware and Reflective

Lastly, young artists reported becoming more self-aware and reflective through their involvement in the project. "It's about adapting to the way you engage with others, learning how to approach unfamiliar situations better," said young artist 3. The project encouraged critical self-reflection, emotional awareness, and personal growth, enabling young artists to better understand themselves and their interactions with others.

Ranking

Finally, we asked young artists ($n = 18$) to rank the items based on their perceived impact on wellbeing beyond the community arts programme using an anonymised online tool - *Mentimeter*. The results indicated that the most significant areas of impact were in fostering feelings of confidence, belonging, safety, and optimism. These findings suggest that the community arts project not only provided young artists with artistic skills but also played a crucial role in enhancing their psychological, social, and emotional wellbeing (Figure 5).

Dimension occurrence in widely used scales

As an efficient method of considering evaluation and underlying conceptual structures relating to our dimensions, we mapped the results against five commonly used measures. These were the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) (Tennant et al., 2007), Ryff's Psychological Wellbeing Scales (Ryff, 1989), the PERMA model (Seligman, 2011), the WHO-5 Wellbeing Index (WHO, 1998), and the Flourishing Scale (Diener et al., 2010). Several noteworthy relationships and distinctions emerge. Many of our themes – such as feeling confident, experiencing a sense of belonging and community, and feeling optimistic and inspired – align closely with the psychological and social components of these established scales. For instance, the development of confidence relates to self-acceptance and competence in Ryff's scales, while feelings of optimism align with the positive affect dimension in WEMWBS and the PERMA model. Additionally, themes centred on social connections and community mirror the interpersonal relationships emphasised in these measures.

However, our findings (See Table 2.) also highlight unique dimensions that are not explicitly captured by standard wellbeing constructs. Themes such as "Improvising and expressing yourself creatively" and "Feeling that me and my culture are appreciated" underscore the significance of creative and cultural well-being – factors particularly salient in the context of community arts. Moreover, the emphasis on "Feeling in a safe and supportive place" points to the crucial role of environmental and contextual factors in defining wellbeing. These nuances suggest that while existing definitions provide a valuable framework, they may not fully encompass the multifaceted impacts of community arts programmes for young people. As a result, our study suggests that this group of young artists' experiences of wellbeing are not fully accounted for as was evidenced by how the use of language maintained personal and social meaning beyond definitions in common use.

Results from this study confirm our hypothesis that the impact of community arts on wellbeing are not fully represented in existing widely used models of measurement. Our findings reveal that established wellbeing measures often overlook crucial dimensions integral to community arts contexts, such as creative expression, cultural appreciation, place and the significance of social responsibility, highlighting the need for wellbeing tools and frameworks that are both accessible and capable of capturing situated and context-sensitive dimensions.

Discussion and implications

In this study, we focused on context-sensitive wellbeing dimensions shared by a community of young artists. Whilst the dimensions are rooted in specific youth experiences in a community setting, it is valuable to consider how these characteristics may change depending on different factors.

Firstly, age can be a major factor. Previous research suggests that different types of wellbeing measures, such as global life satisfaction, hedonic wellbeing, and negative emotions like worry or sadness, can yield different age-related trends (Lopez Ulloa et al., 2012). In assessing wellbeing in later life, Vanhoutte (2014) states that a tripartite model

Table 2. The mapping of wellbeing dimensions identified in this study against five widely used wellbeing measures – WEMWBS (Tennant et al., 2007), Ryff's Psychological Wellbeing Scales (Ryff, 2008), the PERMA model (Seligman, 2011), the WHO-5 Well-Being Index (Topp et al., 2015), and the Flourishing Scale (Diener et al., 2010), was based on a conceptual approximation of construct alignment. Each dimension was classified as 'directly present' when an explicit correspondence was found within the scale (e.g., 'self-esteem' was treated as conceptually equivalent to 'confidence'), 'partially present' when a related but not identical construct was identified (e.g., 'feeling calm and relaxed' was coded as partially indicative of self-awareness), and 'not present' when there was no meaningful coverage. This coding approach facilitated a nuanced understanding of both the convergences and gaps between standardised measures and the contextually specific wellbeing experiences articulated by young artists engaged in community arts programmes.

Wellbeing Dimension	WEMWBS	Ryff's PWB	PERMA	WHO-5	Flourishing Scale
Feeling confident	Directly	Partially	Partially	Not presen	Partially
A sense of belonging and community	Directly	Partially	Partially	Not present	Partially
Feeling in a safe and supportive place	Not present	Not present	Not present	Not present	Not present
Feeling optimistic and inspired	Directly	Not present	Partially	Not present	Partially
Applying skills & meeting new people	Partially	Partially	Partially	Not present	Partially
Feeling a sense of collective joy	Not present	Partially	Partially	Not present	Not present
Improvising & expressing yourself creatively	Not present	Not present	Not present	Not present	Not present
Feeling that me & my culture are appreciated	Not present	Not present	Not present	Not present	Not present
Feeling socially responsible & inclusive of others	Not present	Not present	Not present	Not present	Not present
Feeling self-aware and reflective	Partially	Partially	Not present	Not present	Not present

distinguishing affective (emotional), cognitive (evaluative), and eudemonic (self-actualization and autonomy) aspects of wellbeing can provide a more nuanced understanding than the traditional dual distinction between hedonic (pleasure-oriented) and eudemonic wellbeing. Based on this observation, they highlight the need for age-sensitive measurement tools.

In our study's context, dimensions such as "feeling confident," "feeling optimistic and inspired," "improvising and expressing yourself creatively," and "feeling that me and my culture are appreciated" might be more noticeable in younger individuals as these dimensions related to their identity, creativity, and social roles. These concepts are also linked to developmental stages in adolescence and early adulthood when self-expression and cultural identity exploration are especially important (Branje et al., 2021; Erikson, 1968). On the other hand, dimensions such as "feeling self-aware and reflective" or "feeling more socially responsible and inclusive of others" can be more relevant to adulthood as it may entail a more established continuity of self. However, certain dimensions, such as "a sense of belonging and community" and "feeling in a safe and supportive place" may be sensitive to wellbeing experiences across the age groups. The need for social connection, safety, and support is intrinsic to wellbeing at all ages as demonstrated by Cacioppo and Patrick's (2008) work on social connection and its impact on human health.

While it is difficult to draw general conclusions about the effect of age on subjective wellbeing, certain patterns are found in previous research regarding how subjective wellbeing changes over the lifespan. For example, a U-shaped relation between life satisfaction and age is discovered in high-income English-speaking countries, where satisfaction decreases during middle age, andis relatively

higher at earlier and older ages. However, satisfaction declines with age in other regions such as the former Soviet Union and eastern Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean (Steptoe et al., 2015). This variation highlights the context dependency of wellbeing perceptions. Moreover, Individuals' life satisfaction varies depending on the historical and social circumstances of their birth cohort. This suggests that differences in wellbeing across age groups may be due to generational experiences rather than a direct effect of ageing (Lopez Ulloa et al., 2012).

Gender differences also play a crucial role in shaping wellbeing across the lifespan. Stone et al. (2010) discovered that while women tend to report higher levels of negative affect, such as stress, worry, and sadness, they also frequently score higher in social wellbeing and life satisfaction compared to men. However, these differences change depending on age and cultural context. Gender disparities in wellbeing is noticeable based on variations in societal roles, economic opportunities, and caregiving responsibilities (McMunn et al., 2006).

Our findings must be considered in light of the developmental stage of the participants and the specific affordances of community arts environments (Figure 6). The programmes evaluated in this study support key developmental priorities for young people, including identity formation, peer connection, and autonomy seeking. Such priorities are not incidental but central to the design and delivery of community-based creative initiatives. These programmes often privilege exploration, improvisation, and experimentation as creative foci that facilitate what Sternberg (2022) describes as *transformational creativity*, where participants engage in meaning-making that is both personally and socially significant.

In this context, conventional wellbeing indicators, such as emotional stability or life satisfaction, may be insufficient. Our findings suggest that dimensions like place, social inclusivity, cultural appreciation, and the willingness to take creative risks are not only meaningful to young people but central to how they perceive their own wellbeing in participatory arts settings. These dimensions resonate with frameworks emerging from creative futures research (Donnelly & Montuori, 2023), which advocate for inclusive, dynamic, and context-sensitive approaches to understanding wellbeing.

Nevertheless, these developmental opportunities are often accompanied by specific vulnerabilities, including social exclusion, performance anxiety, identity uncertainty, and various structural access barriers. Such vulnerabilities underscore the importance of ethical and inclusive evaluation tools. The wellbeing dimensions described in this study were intentionally co-designed to reflect these realities, enabling participants to engage on their own terms while avoiding reductive or pathologising interpretations. In recognising these complexities, the study contributes to a growing body of work that situates creative engagement not only as an intervention for wellbeing, but as a site for navigating the nuanced developmental, emotional, and social landscapes of youth.

Figure 6 highlights the wellbeing dimensions revealed in our study and the contextual factors that may influence these characteristics in community arts settings. It reinforces the argument that wellbeing in this context is not static, but contingent on interpersonal, cultural, and environmental conditions. Future research is needed to explore how these wellbeing dimensions vary across age and gender groups and test their applicability in different populations or programme models. This line of inquiry could explore further

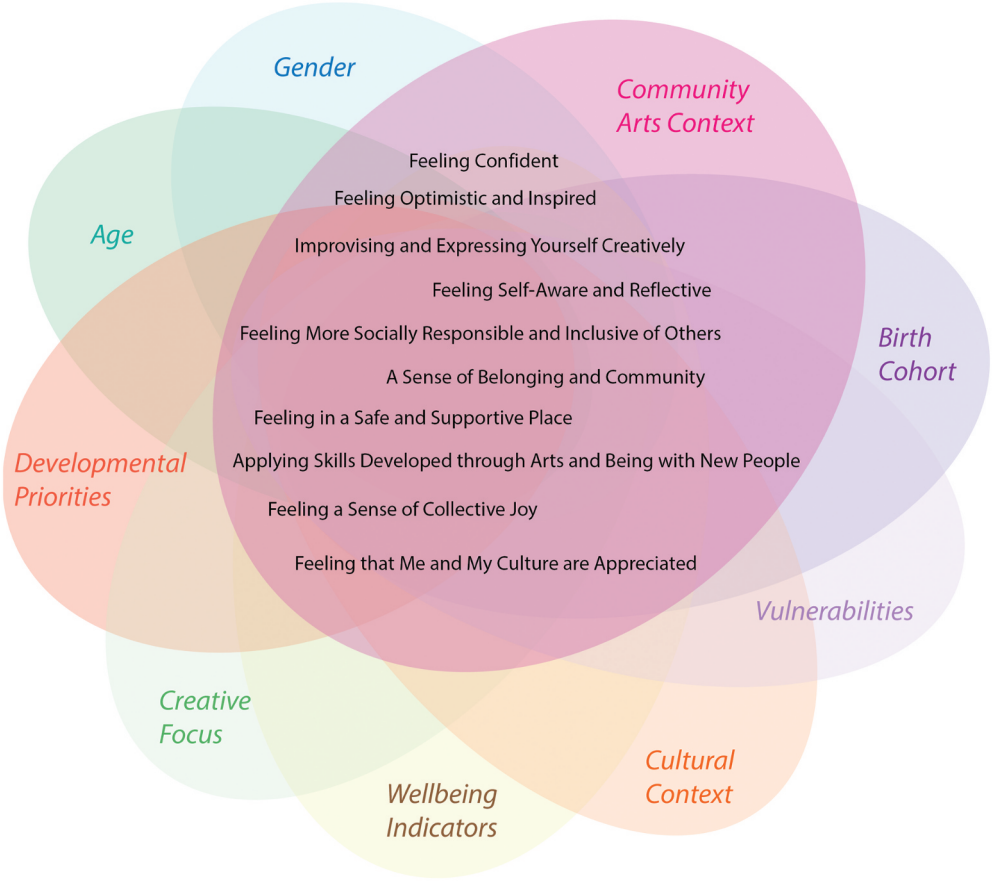

Figure 6. Context-sensitive wellbeing dimensions and relevant factors.

generalisability and specificity of the framework and provide further insight into how developmental priorities, creative processes, and vulnerabilities intersect across diverse community contexts.

Given the limitations of existing standardised evaluation tools in capturing the complexity of participatory arts experiences, particularly among young artists, this study advocates for more situated, relational, and context-sensitive approaches to measuring wellbeing change. Standard measures often prioritise fixed indicators of wellbeing – such as emotional stability or behavioural change – while overlooking the emergent, affective, and socially embedded dimensions of creative participation (Massumi, 2011, Huss and Havsteen-Franklin 2023). Drawing on critical creativity studies (Glăveanu et al., 2016; Montuori, 2019; Sternberg, 2022), we suggest that research designs incorporate mixed and pluralistic methods, including reflective journaling, arts-based elicitation, ethnographic observation, and participant-led narrative practices. These approaches allow for insight into how wellbeing is expressed, negotiated, and co-produced across time, space and place. Furthermore, measurement tools need to be co-designed to include iterative, and the sometimes-disruptive nature of creativity, that can better account for the relational dynamics and delayed or non-linear impacts that characterise community arts

settings. In this respect, the role of creative risk, discomfort, and aesthetic provocation becomes legible not as deviation from wellbeing, but as an integral feature of its collective reimagining.

The potential impact of identifying these context-sensitive dimensions extends to practical applications in funding, programme development, and programme evaluation. The identified dimensions may also form the basis of developing more situated measurement instruments that provide valuable tools for funders and programme developers to design and implement arts initiatives that are more closely aligned with the wellbeing goals of young artists. By highlighting the specific dimensions of wellbeing that are impacted by arts engagement, the dimensions can also support more targeted and effective funding strategies and inform the development of arts programmes that are responsive to the unique needs and contexts of the communities they serve. Furthermore, by centring the voices and experiences of young artists, the dimensions enhance young artist engagement, supporting a deeper sense of ownership and agency in the evaluation process and any subsequent evaluation model development.

Despite these contributions, the study also highlights the ongoing challenges of generating meaningful and measurable wellbeing data, particularly in the context of increasing demands from funders and commissioners for evidence of impact. While these dimensions offer nuance and context-sensitivity, their pragmatic usage in wider contexts will require testing, adaptions and development processes to enable metric validations sensitive to diverse cultural, social, and environmental contexts. This highlights the need for ongoing research to ensure that dimensions relating to wellbeing remain relevant and applicable across diverse settings, and that the dimensions used capture the rich and varied experiences of young artists.

Further, the small sample size of young people in a specific urban arts community may limit the generalisability of the findings to other arts organisations and contexts. Further to this we are defining the wellbeing dimensions according to what changes, that is, what is impacted by the arts in a specific organisational context. This may exclude definitions of wellbeing that are held by the young artists but that are not influenced by the arts. Moreover, as the research was conducted within space of the arts community and the focus of conversations were on wellbeing, there may have been more of a focus on affirmative and responses to wellbeing. Future research should include larger, more diverse samples and different contexts with similar populations to explore the sensitivity of these dimensions across diverse cultural and social settings. Further research may expand on these findings to produce pluriversal models of investigation, with increased inclusivity for the more-than-human, as began to emerge in this research as place-based factors, to investigate the role of environmental and social forces, including the impact of nature, environment, and place, in shaping individual and collective wellbeing outcomes.

Whilst wellbeing extends beyond the individual level and encompasses social and physical dimensions, we must critically consider how these elements complement each other and work together in promoting overall wellbeing. However, ranking each factor separately may have overlooked how these themes interact and reinforce each other in shaping overall wellbeing. A very highly ranked factor (i.e. feeling confident) may not promote wellbeing in the absence of a medium-ranked factor (i.e. feeling sense of collective joy).

There are also several empirical strategies to further enrich understanding. For example, a planned longitudinal study to track changes in wellbeing dimensions over time would be a potential next step. Another complementary strategy could be using narrative inquiry, moving beyond static ranking into lived and evolving narratives, prompting participants to reflect more deeply on their ranking decisions (e.g. "Can you share a specific example of how [the top-ranked wellbeing dimension] has influenced your daily life outside the programme?").

It is also notable that the lower-ranked items in our study but highly significant dimensions such as being "reflective and self-aware" and "social responsibility" may emerge more prominently through sustained participation. As previously stated, their nuanced development, often entangled with discomfort or disruption inherent to creative processes, warrants attention in future longitudinal or process-focused studies. Such dimensions may represent delayed or accumulative impacts rather than immediate effects.

We also acknowledge that variables related to broader societal structural issues such as socioeconomic challenges prevalent in many urban environments, could not be fully addressed within the scope of this study. These structural issues often contribute to the marginalisation of wellbeing knowledges. As such, while this study focused specifically on the context of community arts, we acknowledge that broader societal factors inevitably shape definitions of wellbeing. Future research should consider the complex sociopolitical interplay between community arts and community wellbeing in order to more fully understand their mutual influence and impact.

Conclusion

The findings of this study have implications for policy, research and practice in the field of community arts and young people. By exploring the limitations of well-used wellbeing models underpinning evaluation and measurement and highlighting the value of context-sensitive approaches to wellbeing dimension development, this research contributes to a growing body of literature that advocates for more inclusive and adaptive contextualised evaluation frameworks.

Acknowledgments

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all the Kinetika Bloco young artists who generously shared their time, experiences, and insights for this study. Their openness and engagement were crucial in deepening our understanding of the impact of community arts on wellbeing. We also extend our appreciation to South Bank Centre Wellbeing team and its dedicated staff for their invaluable support and collaboration throughout the research process. Special thanks to our colleagues and advisors for their guidance, constructive feedback, and encouragement. This research was supported by UKRI AKTP, whose assistance made this work possible.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

The project was funded by an accelerated knowledge transfer partnership fund provided by [UKRI, Ref:1629-AKT] Innovate UK.

ORCID

Dominik Havsteen-Franklin http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1309-3528

Ethics

The research ethics was approved by Brunel University Ethics Committee, under protocol number: 47951-MHR-May/2024 - 50,924-1

References

Arts Council England. (2021). *Delivery plan 2021–2024: Let's create*. Available at: (Accessed: 13 May https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/lets-create/delivery-plan-2021-2024

Bakracheva, M. (2020). The meanings ascribed to happiness, life satisfaction and flourishing. *Psychology*, *11*(1), 87–104. https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2020.111007

Binkley, S. (2014). *Happiness as enterprise: An essay on neoliberal life*. SUNY Press.

Blanchflower, D. G. (2021). Is happiness U-shaped everywhere? Age and subjective well-being in 145 countries. *Journal of Population Economics*, *34*(2), 575–624.

Blanchflower, D. G., & Bryson, A. (2024). Wellbeing rankings. *Social Indicators Research*, *171*(2), 513–565. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-023-03262-y

BOP Consulting. (2017). *The role of local cultural education partnerships in England's cultural education ecosystem. Arts council England*. Available at: Accessed: 13 May https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/BOP_LCEP_Research_190717_0.pdf

Bourke, L., & Geldens, P. (2007). What does wellbeing mean?: Perspectives of wellbeing among young people & youth workers in rural Victoria. *Youth Studies Australia*, *26*(1), 41–49.

Branje, S., De Moor, E. L., Spitzer, J., & Becht, A. I. (2021). Dynamics of identity development in adolescence: A decade in review. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, *31*(4), 908–927. https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12678

Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods*. Oxford University Press.

Burke, P. F., Rose, J. M., Fifer, S., Masters, D., Kuegler, S., & Cabrera, A. (2024). A new subjective well-being index using anchored best-worst scaling. *Social Science Research*, *120*, 103013. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2024.103013

Cacioppo, J. T., & Patrick, W. (2008). *Loneliness: Human nature and the need for social connection*. WW Norton & Company.

Christensen, A. P. (2023). Openness to experience. In Glăveanu V. P.*The palgrave encyclopedia of the possible* (pp. 941–947). Palgrave Macmillan.

Dean, M. (2010). *Governmentality: Power and rule in modern society* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.

Delbecq, A. L., & Van de Ven, A. H. (1971). A group process model for problem identification and program planning. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, *7*(4), 466–492. https://doi.org/10.1177/002188637100700404

Diener, E., Wirtz, D., Tov, W., Kim-Prieto, C., Choi, D. W., Oishi, S., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2010). New well-being measures: Short scales to assess flourishing and positive and negative feelings. *Social Indicators Research*, *97*(2), 143–156. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-009-9493-y

Donnelly, G., & Montuori, A. (Eds.). (2023). *Routledge handbook for creative futures*. Routledge.

Ekşi, H., & Kardaş, S. (2017). Spiritual well-being: Scale development and validation. *Spiritual Psychology and Counseling*, *2*(1), 73–88. https://doi.org/10.12738/spc.2017.1.0022

Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and crisis*. Norton.

Erskine, H. E., Baxter, A. J., Patton, G., Moffitt, T. E., Patel, V., Whiteford, H. A., & Scott, J. G. (2017). The global coverage of prevalence data for mental disorders in children and adolescents. *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences*, *26*(4), 395–402. https://doi.org/10.1017/S2045796015001158

Fereday, J., & Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006). Demonstrating rigor using thematic analysis: A hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *5*(1), 80–92. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690600500107

Fletcher, G. (2021). *Dear prudence: The nature and normativity of prudential discourse* (1st ed.). Oxford University Press.

Glăveanu, V. P., Tanggaard, L., & Wegener, C. (2023). Why do we need a newer vocabulary for creativity? In Glăveanu, V. P., Tanggaard, L., Wegener, C. (Eds.,) *Creativity-A new vocabulary* (pp. 1–11). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-41907-2_1. Palgrave Macmillan.

Goldin, N. (2014). *The global youth wellbeing index*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Havsteen-Franklin, D. (2014). Consensus for using an arts-based response in art therapy. *International Journal of Art Therapy*, *19*(3), 107–113. https://doi.org/10.1080/17454832.2014.968598

Havsteen-Franklin, D., Swanepoel, M., Jones, J., & Conradie, U. (2021). Families and collective futures: Developing a program logic model for arts-based psychosocial practice with South African rural communities. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *12*, 745809. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.745809

Hennessey, B. A., & Amabile, T. M. (2010). Creativity. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *61*(1), 569–598. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.093008.100416

Hurley, E., Trischler, J., & Dietrich, T. (2018). Exploring the application of co-design to transformative service research. *Journal of Services Marketing*, *32*(6), 715–727. https://doi.org/10.1108/JSM-09-2017-0321

Huss, E., & Havsteen-Franklin, D. (2023). Developing a theory of social art therapy: Insights from the context of crisis. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, *85*, 102066. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aip.2023.102066

Huss, E., & Havsteen-Frankln, D. (2023). Developing a theory of social art therapy: Insights from the context of crisis. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, *85*, 102066.

Joshanloo, M., Weijers, D., Jiang, D. Y., Han, G., Bae, J., Pang, J. S., Natalia, A., Ferreira, M. C., Demir, M., Rizwan, M., Khilji, I. A., Achoui, M., Asano, R., Igarashi, T., Tsukamoto, S., Lamers, S. M. A., Turan, Y., Sundaram, S. . . . Panyusheva, T. (2015). Fragility of happiness beliefs across 15 national groups. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *16*(5), 1185–1210. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-014-9553-0

Kaufman, J. C. (2023). *The creativity advantage*. Cambridge University Press.

Kaufman, J. C., & Beghetto, R. A. (2009). Beyond big and little: The four c model of creativity. *Review of General Psychology*, *13*(1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0013688

Kirkbride, J. B., Anglin, D. M., Colman, I., Dykxhoorn, J., Jones, P. B., Patalay, P., Pitman, A., Soneson, E., Steare, T., Wright, T., & Griffiths, S. L. (2024). The social determinants of mental health and disorder: Evidence, prevention and recommendations. *World Psychiatry*, *23*(1), 58–90. https://doi.org/10.1002/wps.21160

Krueger, A. B., & Stone, A. A. (2014). Measuring subjective wellbeing: Progress and challenges. *Science (New York, NY)*, *346*(6205), 42. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1256392

Levine, J. M. (2012). *Group processes*. Psychology Press.

Massumi, B. (2011). *Semblance and event: Activist philosophy and the occurrent arts*. MIT press.

McMillan, S. S., King, M., & Tully, M. P. (2016). How to use the nominal group and delphi techniques. *International Journal of Clinical Pharmacy*, *38*, 655–662. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11096-016-0257-x

McMunn, A., Bartley, M., Hardy, R., & Kuh, D. (2006). Life course social roles and women's health in mid-life: Causation or selection? *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, *60*(6), 484–489. https://doi.org/10.1136/jech.2005.042473

Mitchell, P., & Alexandrova, A. (2020). Wellbeing and pluralism. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *22*(6), 2411–2433. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-020-00323-8

Montuori, A. (2019). Creating Social Creativity: Integrative Transdisciplinarity and the Epistemology of Complexity. In Lebuda, V.P., Glăveanu, V.P. *The Palgrave Handbook of Social Creativity Research* (Palgrave Macmillan), 407–430. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-95498-1_25.

Mostafa, R. B. (2016). Value co-creation in industrial cities: A strategic source of competitive advantages. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, *24*(2), 144–167. https://doi.org/10.1080/0965254X.2015.1076885

Oishi, S., & Westgate, E. C. (2022). A psychologically rich life: Beyond happiness and meaning. *Psychological Review*, *129*(4), 790. https://doi.org/10.1037/rev0000317

Östlund, S. (2024). Well-being Contextualism and capabilities. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *25*(1–2), 10. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-024-00718-x

Pollard, E. L., & Lee, P. D. (2003). Child well-being: A systematic review of the literature. *Social Indicators Research*, *61*(1), 59–78. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1021284215801

Rawsthorne, M., Kinsela, G., Paxton, K., & Luscombe, G. (2019). Young person's well-being: Exploring material, subjective and relational factors. *Children Australia*, *44*(1), 13–22. https://doi.org/10.1017/cha.2018.53

Renwick, L., Pedley, R., Johnson, I., Bell, V., Lovell, K., Bee, P., & Brooks, H. (2022). Conceptualisations of positive mental health and wellbeing among children and adolescents in low-and middle-income countries: A systematic review and narrative synthesis. *Health Expectations*, *25*(1), 61–79. https://doi.org/10.1111/hex.13407

Ross, D. A., Hinton, R., Melles-Brewer, M., Engel, D., Zeck, W., Fagan, L., Herat, J., Phaladi, G., Imbago-Jácome, D., Anyona, P., Sanchez, A., Damji, N., Terki, F., Baltag, V., Patton, G., Silverman, A., Fogstad, H., Banerjee, A., & Mohan, A. (2020). Adolescent well-being: A definition and conceptual framework. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *67*(4), 472. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2020.06.042

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2001). On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *52*(1), 141–166. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.141

Ryff, C. D. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *57*(6), 1069. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.57.6.1069

Ryff, C. D. (2018). Eudaimonic well-being: Highlights from 25 years of inquiry. *Diversity in harmony-insights from psychology: Proceedings of the 31st International Congress of Psychology* (pp. 375–395). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, Chichester, UK.

Ryff, C. D., & Singer, B. H. (2008). Know thyself and become what you are: A eudaimonic approach to psychological well-being. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *9*(1), 13–39. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-006-9019-0

Seligman, M. E. (2011). *Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being*. Simon and Schuster.

Steptoe, A., Deaton, A., & Stone, A. A. (2015). Subjective wellbeing, health, and ageing. *The Lancet*, *385*(9968), 640–648. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(13)61489-0

Sternberg, R. J. (2022). Transformational creativity. In Glăveanu V. P.*The palgrave encyclopedia of the possible* (pp. 1676–1682. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-90913-0_259). Palgrave Macmillan.

Stone, A. A., Schwartz, J. E., Broderick, J. E., & Deaton, A. (2010). A snapshot of the age distribution of psychological well-being in the United States. *Proceedings of the National Academy of sciences* (Vol. 107. pp. 9985–9990 https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20479218/. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1003744107).

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research techniques*. Sage.

Strömbäck, C., Lindkvist, E., & Västfjäll, D. (2023). Individual differences in environmental wellbeing and pro-environmental behaviors explained by self-control. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *14*, 1088682. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1088682

Tan, C. S., Tan, S. A., Cheng, S. M., Hashim, I. H. M., & Ong, A. W. H. (2021). Development and preliminary validation of the 20-item Kaufman domains of creativity scale for use with Malaysian populations. *Current Psychology*, *40*(4), 1946–1957. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-019-0124-8

Tennant, R., Hiller, L., Fishwick, R., Platt, S., Joseph, S., Weich, S., Parkinson, J., Secker, J., & Stewart-Brown, S. (2007). The warwick-edinburgh mental well-being scale (WEMWBS): Development and UK validation. *Health and Quality of Life Outcomes*, *5*(1), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1186/1477-7525-5-63

Topp, C. W., Østergaard, S. D., Søndergaard, S., & Bech, P. (2015). The WHO-5 Well-Being Index: A systematic review of the literature. *Psychotherapy & Psychosomatics*, *84*(3), 167–176.

Uprichard, E., & Dawney, L. (2019). Data diffraction: Challenging data integration in mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, *13*(1), 19–32. https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689816674650

Van de Ven, A. H., & Delbecq, A. L. (1972). The nominal group as a research instrument for exploratory health studies. *American Journal of Public Health*, *62*(3), 337–342. https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.62.3.337

Vanhoutte, B. (2014). The multidimensional structure of subjective well-being in later life. *Journal of Population Ageing*, *7*(1), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12062-014-9092-9

Vujčić, M. T., Brajša-Žganec, A., & Franc, R. (2019). Children and young peoples' views on well-being: A qualitative study. *Child Indicators Research*, *12*(3), 791–819. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-018-9559-y

WHO. (1998). *Wellbeing measures in primary health care/the DepCare project: Report on a WHO meeting*. *No. WHO/EURO:1998-4234-43993-62027*. World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe. https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/328065/WHO-HIS-SDS-2018.15-eng.pdf

Williams, E., Glew, S., Newman, H., Kapka, A., Shaughnessy, N., Herbert, R., Walduck, Foster, S., Cooke, P., Pethybridge, R., Shaughnessy, C., & Hugh-Jones, S. (2023). Practitioner review: Effectiveness and mechanisms of change in participatory arts-based programmes for promoting youth mental health and well-being – a systematic review. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, *64*(12), 1735–1764. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcpp.13900

Yates, A., Dombroski, K., & Dionisio, R. (2023). Dialogues for wellbeing in an ecological emergency: Wellbeing-led governance frameworks and transformative *indigenous tools*. *Dialogues in Human Geography*, *13*(2), 268–287. https://doi.org/10.1177/20438206221102957