

The Psychological and Subjective Well-being of Ethiopian adults: Correlates, Explanations, and Cross-Cultural Constructions

Authors : Kassahun Tilahun

Abstract : The purpose of the study was two-fold: to examine the socio-demographic and psychological predictors of well-being and formulate a socio-culturally sound approach explaining the meaning and experience of psychological well-being among Ethiopian adults. Ryan and Deci's Self-Determination Theory was duly considered as a theoretical framework of the study. The study followed a sequential explanatory mixed method design. Both quantitative and qualitative data were obtained, via scales and open-ended questionnaires, from 438 civil servants working in Addis Ababa. 30 interviews were also conducted to gain further information. An in-depth analysis of the reliability and validity of instruments was made before employing them to the main study. The results showed that adults were better off in both their scores of psychological and subjective well-being. Besides, adults' well-being was found to be quite a function of their gender, age, marital status, educational level and household income. Males had a healthier psychological well-being status than females, where as females were better in their subjective well-being. A significant difference in psychological well-being was also observed between emerging and young adults, in favor of the young; and between cohabitated and married adults, married being advantageous. A significant difference in subjective well-being measures was also noticed among single, cohabitated and married adults, in favor of the married adults in all measures. The finding revealed that happiness level of adults decrease as their educational status increases while the reverse is true to psychological well-being. Besides, as adults' household income boosts, so do their psychological well-being and satisfaction in life. The regression analysis also produced significant independent contributions of household income to overall well-being of adults. As such, subjective well-being was significantly predicted by dummy variable of sex and marital status. Likewise, the agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness dimensions of personality were notable significant predictors of adults' psychological well-being where as extraversion and agreeableness were significant predictors of their subjective well-being. Religiosity was also a significant predictor of adults' psychological well-being. Besides, adults' well-being was significantly predicted by the interaction between conscientiousness and religiosity. From goal pursuit dimensions, attainment of extrinsic life goals was a significant predictor of both psychological and subjective well-being. Importance and attainment of intrinsic life goals also significantly predicts adults' psychological well-being. Finally, the subjective well-being of adults was significantly predicted by environmental mastery, positive relations with others, self-acceptance and overall psychological well-being scores of adults. The thematic analysis identified five major categories of themes, which are essential in explaining the psychological well-being of Ethiopian adults. These were; socio-cultural harmony, social cohesion, security, competence and accomplishment, and the self. Detailed discussion on the rational for including these themes was made and appropriate implications were proposed. Researchers are encouraged to expand the findings of this research and in turn develop a suitable approach taping the psychological well-being of adults living in countries like Ethiopia.

Keywords : psychological well-being, subjective well-being, adulthood, Ethiopia

Conference Title : ICBEPS 2015 : International Conference on Behavioral, Educational and Psychological Sciences

Conference Location : Zurich, Switzerland

Conference Dates : January 13-14, 2015