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Graciela H. Tonon *Editor*

Teaching Quality of Life in Different Domains

 Springer

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Graciela H. Tonon
Editor

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Graciela H. Tonon

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*To my dear husband, Walter, and my loving
sons, Pedro and Erica, who always
understand my work and illuminate and
enrich my life.
Graciela H. Tonon*

Preface

The aim of this book is to present proposals to teach quality of life in different fields. In Chap. 1 entitled “Theory and Methodology in Social Sciences Programs,” I present the proposition of quality of life (theoretical/methodological) as a possibility to construct a new outlook on the social field studies and to propose a course that includes the vision of quality of life in a Master/PhD Program in Social Sciences considering that the act of teaching is also a political act, which leads us to say that the role of politics should not only be restricted to the solution of material problems but also to develop an awareness of people’s life daily experiences.

In Chap. 2, Dan Weijers discusses the methods, topics, and perspectives that characterize a philosophical approach to teaching well-being or quality of life, focusing especially on how to create and critique a theory of well-being in a methodologically informed way, one that enables students to critique the methods used by a range of well-being and quality-of-life researchers, especially those used by philosophers. The chapter concludes with some suggestions on how to harness the subject matter in a way that creates an engaging undergraduate-level course on well-being and quality of life.

Tobia Fattore in Chap. 3 examines different ways in which well-being and quality of life can be used as pedagogical concepts for teaching Sociology. The chapter begins with a first overview of key philosophical traditions in quality-of-life research for introducing some foundational sociological theories and ways of undertaking social research. Finally the authors canvassed key approaches to researching quality of life which are related to different epistemological approaches in social science research.

In Chap. 4, Daniel T. L. Shek, Xiaoqin Zhu, Diya Dou, Moon Y.M. Law, Lu Yu, Cecilia M.S. Ma, and Li Lin present two programs in response to the results of the research studies that showed worsening mental health conditions such as rising depression and suicidal rates, the increase of adolescent egocentrism, and the declined of empathy and sense of social responsibility among university students in the past decades. To promote holistic development and quality of life in undergraduate students, two credit-bearing leadership subjects were developed at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU). The first subject is entitled “Tomorrow’s

Leaders,” based on the positive youth development (PYD), and the second subject is entitled “Service Leadership.”

Chapter 5 is dedicated to the teaching of quality of life in relation with the capability approach. Paul Anand offers new insights into how the capability approach can now make a systematic and transformative contribution to higher education teaching focused on quality of life. The author presents a brief survey of some key distinctive features followed by some suggested areas where capability approach research sheds light on what quality of life requires. The paper suggests such research is particularly useful for discussing the role of opportunities, freedoms, and constraints on the quality of life that individuals achieve and experience, and it highlights potential contributions to quality-of-life teaching by virtue of a capacity to connect structural social and economic drivers to quality-of-life outcomes.

In Chap. 6, written by Takashi Inoguchi, the author describes how political science courses on quality of life may be organized with a syllabus that consists of the following six sections: people’s satisfaction with daily life (QOL and daily life satisfaction), people’s approval of government conducts especially economic policy (QOL and government economic policy), parents’ propensity to nurture their children norms and values (QOL and culture values and norms), QOL and confidence in institutions, QOL-based societal profiling or typology of Asian societies, and Applying QOL studies in Sustainable Development Goals (health, education, and income in East Asia).

Don R. Rahtz, M. Joseph Sirgy, Stephan Grzeskowiak, and Dong-Jin Lee examine in Chap. 7 different ways in which quality-of-life concepts can be integrated into existing marketing coursework. The ultimate goal is to increase the likelihood that students would embrace a QOL orientation in the practice of marketing. The final section ends with a set of suggestions for moving the acceptance of the broader use of QOL-related concepts in marketing departments, the business academy, and both the broader public and private sectors.

Chapter 8 was written by Filomena Maggino who presents the case of *QoLexity* in Italy a post-master program at the University of Florence dedicated to the training of statisticians in the field of quality of life which was conducted for two editions and was closed on 2016.

In Chap. 9, Jon Hall comments how statisticians, economists, and policy makers around the world are working to design and use alternative measures of human progress: measures which focus on outcomes of life quality, rather than simply inputs like economic activity. This chapter discusses some of the ways in which education and training can foster and support this work.

In Chap. 10, Jorge Guardiola proposes Nonviolent Economics as a path for achieving quality of life. This chapter presents an experience of addressing quality of life in an Economic Policy course. The nonviolent approach is the perspective through which quality of life is viewed and is present throughout the whole economics course, with a particular emphasis on the violent component of the economic structure and how to satisfy human needs without using violence against others.

Matías Popovsky in Chap. 11 presents the importance of teaching quality of life using online education, which means conducting a course partially or entirely through the Internet. This chapter aims to discuss the following: the historical context of the education paradigm shift in which this experience is embedded, the educational model for online courses and degree programs at Universidad de Palermo (Argentina), and a proposal of a course to teach quality of life within the framework of this pedagogical model.

Javier Martínez in Chap. 12 presents an approach for teaching and learning quality of life in urban studies. It is contextualized within two higher education courses in an MSc specialization on Urban Planning and Management with a group of international students in the last 10 years. The chapter proposes a reflective and open spiral learning process where students are encouraged to define and operationalize spatial indicators to measure intra-urban quality-of-life variations and to critically use context-sensitive methods such as walking interviews. The teaching described is grounded in the fields of planning, geography, critical cartography, and mixed methods.

Chapter 13 is dedicated on the teaching of quality of life and well-being in Public Health. Chelsea Wesner, Diana Feldhacker, and Whitney Lucas Molitor propose the social ecological model of health as an organizing framework, considering that it is an innovative and integrated approach to teaching that aims to create quality learning experiences. The authors describe how influences of context, social determinants of health, individual factors, culture, and engagement in meaningful activities relate to health, offering learners the possibility to explore factors related to quality of life and well-being. Assignment descriptions and case examples are timely and serve to equip students to meet the demands placed upon health professionals in our modern, globally connected society.

Chapter 14 by Diane E. Mack, Philip M. Wilson, Caitlin Kelley, and Jennifer Mooradian presents how to teach well-being within the context of sports through four evidence-based modules. Defining quality of life and well-being will serve as the focus of the first module. The second module will highlight why consideration of well-being in sport is meaningful. How well-being can be promoted is examined in the third module through consideration of relevant psychological theories and interventions. Finally, the fourth module focuses on distinct groups of athletes including sport participants living with physical and intellectual disabilities, athletes undergoing injury rehabilitation, and current/former athletes transitioning beyond sport.

Finally in Chap. 15, Sabirah Adams, Shazly Savahl, Maria Florence, Kyle Jackson, Donnay Manuel, Mulalo Mpilo, and Deborah Isobell aim to briefly sketch the extent of quality-of-life research relating to children in South Africa and to propose a syllabus for training emerging researchers in conducting QoL research. The chapter identifies and provides a focused discussion on the extent of quality-of-life research within South Africa. The key aspect of the chapter is to propose a syllabus for teaching quality-of-life research with children. In particular five aspects are put forward: contextualizing children and childhood in South Africa, children's QOL

and inequalities, theories of children's SWB, methodological considerations, and children's rights and SWB.

My thanks to all the authors from different parts of the world—Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, North America, and Oceania—who collaborate with each other their work to make this book a reality. Their committed work allows me to continue learning about the quality of life of people around the world and improve my own quality of life; it is an honor for me to work with all of them.

Buenos Aires, Argentina
April 2019

Graciela H. Tonon

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For Alex Michalos, a Great Teacher of the quality-of-life field, whose generosity always opens me new ways to continue working and writing. Many thanks, Alex, for founding all these extraordinary series dedicated to quality of life and for giving me another opportunity to grow in my career.

Graciela H. Tonon

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Chapter 1

The Importance of Teaching Quality of Life Theory and Methodology in Social Sciences Programs



Graciela H. Tonon

Quality of Life

Quality of life is currently defined as a multidimensional concept comprising a number of domains that people consider and evaluate differently according to the importance they attach to each domain in their lives. This definition incorporates both a quantitative-objective approach (what people have and can be observed directly) and a qualitative-subjective approach (what people feel and can be observed indirectly).

As early as in the 1980s, Feinstein (1987) argued that quality of life had become an umbrella term for different indexes depending on the researcher's focus of interest. Subsequently, Dasgupta and Weale (1992) claimed that quality of life not only included the constituents of well-being but also its determinants, and thus connected the personal dimension (the micro level) with the social one (the macro level). In this regard, Diener (2006, p. 154) noted that the early studies on quality of life related it to objective conditions in people's lives, and hence a distinction was drawn with the concept of well-being. Today we can state that the twenty-first century has brought a definition of quality of life that combines and integrates the objective and subjective dimensions.

In addition, quality of life is conditioned by the social structure, considered in terms of demographic features, cultural traits, and psycho-social characteristics of the community and those of its private and public institutions operating within that context (Ferris 2006). Ferris further points out that the demographic foundations and institutional structure of society provide the social environment for an individual's living conditions. In this sense, quality of life is determined by two types of forces: endogenous and exogenous. The former include an individual's mental,

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emotional and psychological responses to his/her living conditions, while the latter refer to the social structure and cultural influences of the community (Ferris 2006).

In sum, we can state that quality of life is the perception each individual has of his/her position in life, within the cultural context and system of values in which he/she lives, in relation to his/her expectations, interests and achievements (Tonon 2015).

Social Sciences

Our approach to the Social Sciences follows Dogan and Pahré's (1993, pp. 15–16) assertion that there is still no consensus about the boundaries of the Social Sciences and that the difficulty in establishing a classification lies in the fact that the various social disciplines are subject to a high degree of fragmentation and that, at the international level, definitions vary depending on the context. According to Gimenez (2003, p. 365), social disciplines are characterised by the porosity of their boundaries, which makes hybridisation¹ between them possible and gives them a familial air, as if they belonged to the same theoretical species.

Thus, social research is currently organised around problems the examination of which requires concepts, methods and techniques from different disciplines (Torres Carrillo 2008); in this respect, we agree with Ortiz (2004, p. 145) that “the boundaries between disciplines cannot be rigid; the opposite would result in a fragmented comprehension of them”.

Sotolongo Codina and Delgado Diaz (2006, p. 81) acknowledge that the advance of social knowledge has been less integrated, more piecemeal, more unilateral and slower than it could have been, thus having a less significant impact on actual social situations. In the field of the Social Sciences, the processes of institutionalisation of knowledge and the creation of mechanisms of power have established certain issues and knowledge as dominant discourses in the academic world that have come to be naturalised as notions of truth (Diaz Gomez 2006, p. 225). This shows that the development of the social sciences has historically been based on ideas and organisations – universities and research institutes – providing effective support (Ortiz 2004).

In this regard, it should be noted that the traditional notion of supremacy of the exact and hard sciences over the social sciences – premised on the principle of objectivity of the former, as opposed to the subjectivity of the latter – has seen a shift in recent decades. Along these lines, Torres Carrillo (2008, p. 52) argues that

¹Gimenez (2003, p. 365) states that hybridisation or amalgamation is the merger, recombination or crossing between specialties or fragments of neighbouring disciplines. It does not cover entire disciplines, but only partial sectors of them. The notion of hybridisation is not to be confused with that of multidisciplinary or pluridisciplinary, which refers to the mere convergence of monodisciplines around a single object of study, each of them zealously maintaining its own purported boundaries” (Gimenez 2004, p. 268).

nowadays “it is recognised that the social sciences are localised and that the subject and subjectivity are present in all their processes”. Along these lines, Sotolongo Codina and Delgado Díaz (2006, p. 52) point to “the historicity of the classical epistemological figure of the object-subject relationship” and in this sense identify a mutation in the statute of the subject, a re-dimensioning of the object and a mutual contextualisation of the subject and the object within a daily praxis context (Sotolongo Codina and Delgado Díaz (2006, p. 52). It is then necessary to create a relationship between each subject (the micro dimension) and society (the macro dimension) that allows passing from the individual to the social and vice-versa (Cipriani 2013).

More than 20 years ago, Wallerstein (1995) pointed out that there were three theoretical-methodological problems to be solved in order to advance in Social Science research: the relationship between the researcher and the research; how to reinsert time and space as constitutive variables in research rather than as mere invariable physical realities within which the social universe exists; and how to overcome the formal separations originated in the nineteenth century between political, economic and socio-cultural issues.

Thus, in the twenty-first century, social scientists must not only be capable of producing and disseminating specialised knowledge but they must also be committed to ethical values and the public interest. These issues play a central role in covering a need in the continuous training of Social Science researchers that may allow them to successfully address contemporary life challenges. In this connection, Weber and Duderstadt (2012, p. 36) argue that “social sciences, arts and humanities are equally important to better understand the conditions for global sustainability, to support thinking differently and to imagine new policies”.

Finally, it should be pointed out that although some classifications of the Social Sciences include Sociology, Anthropology and Political Science as the major branches, some other classifications encompass Economics, Geography, History and other disciplines such as Social Communication and International Relations. In recognising the importance of the subjective dimension of social life and personal experiences, social research opens itself up to other languages such as literature, cinema, video, multimedia and theatre as strategies for the construction of knowledge (Torres Carrillo 2008, p. 60).

Whatever approach is adopted to define the Social Sciences, it is worth noting that disciplines can be distinguished from each other not only by their object of study but also by perspectives and ideology.

Teaching in Higher Education: A Socio-political Act

In the history of higher education, a new era has begun; an era in which knowledge is not only necessary to achieve social welfare but is also instrumental in the improvement of every person’s quality of life (Duderstadt (2010). Today education is considered an important element of human freedom (Estes and Sirgy 2018, p. 229).

This new trend proposes a switch from formal university degrees, mainly aimed at young students, to a mode of learning that seeks to ensure lifelong education. Thus, continuous learning has become necessary to guarantee work stability and relevance. Societies that deal with accelerating technological change must create a learning society, and education plays an important role in this process (Estes and Sirgy 2018, p. 200).

According to Nussbaum (2012, p. 183) education has had a pivotal role in the initiatives taken by nations in promoting human equality in the past two centuries. It is considered to be particularly central to human dignity, equality and opportunity (Nussbaum 2012, p. 181). Good education requires sensitivity to context, history and cultural and economic circumstances. Attention must be paid to issues of both pedagogy and content, asking whether and how the substance of studies and the nature of classroom interactions relate to citizenship (Nussbaum 2012).

More than four decades ago, Paulo Freire (1973) pointed out that teaching cannot be a mere process of transfer of knowledge from the teacher to the student. It cannot be a mechanical transfer which results in an equally mechanical memorisation. Critical study correlates with an equally critical teaching of a comprehension and realisation of a reading of the word and a reading of the world. In this sense, the task of the teacher is to problematise students with the content that mediates them, rather than disserting about it, giving, delivering, and extending it as if it were something already made, produced, ended and finished (Freire 1973, p. 41).

According to Gimenez (2003, p. 381) “in the face of the proliferation of extra-university institutions in search of information, the only competitive advantage of academia is its capacity to produce knowledge rather than just information”. In addition, educational organisations must respond to social dynamics with specific needs and characteristics, in which culture and politics are irreplaceable foundations (Portela Guarin and Murcia Peña 2006, p. 98).

As stated by Nowotny (2010, p. 321), “[w]hile the blurred boundaries of market and state are being redrawn, the social sciences are pressed to integrate knowledge and cultural understandings from other parts of the world and to engage in a fresh dialogue with the Other”.

This situation necessarily leads to the gradual yielding of the reductionist model still in force as a certifier of knowledge, towards a model of university that generates a space for the construction of citizenship and democratisation of knowledge, as well as for the improvement of personal quality of life. Moreover, today society and education are the scenarios in which individuals can evolve as persons and citizens in a given social reality.

The Inclusion of Quality of Life as a Concept That Allows an Innovation in the Social Sciences Field

In considering the issue of innovation, we draw on Dogan and Pahre's (1993) definition of innovation as the addition of something new to scientific knowledge, and we hold that such addition must be examined in its development context. Additionally, following Rodríguez Herrera and Alvarado Ugarte (2008, p. 22), we recognise that innovation has a social meaning and therefore consider that none of the persons that take part in this type of processes can be excluded. The importance of innovation thus lies in the praxis that creates a change, and in the fact that such change must be capable of being sustained over time and space (Rodríguez Herrera and Alvarado Ugarte 2008, p. 23).

However, in addition to theoretical and conceptual innovations, innovations can also occur at the methodological level. In other words, innovation also includes the creative application and adaptation of knowledge and technology.

Rodríguez Herrera and Alvarado Ugarte (2008, p. 23) argue that "the originality of innovation lies in the process that helps to make a specific change become a reality". It is thus worth examining the concept of originality and in this respect, we cite Cilleruello (2007, p. 95), who defines originality as that which is not a copy or imitation of something else, but rather a product of creation. This definition highlights the notion of creativity, which is central to any process of innovation. Portela Guarín and Murcia Peña (2006, p. 87) argue that creativity is related to culture, as creating not only involves generating something completely new but it is a social agreement and a creation of symbolic conditions that allow the function or innovation to be valued as such.

In this connection, at the meeting of the American Society for Information Science, Duderstadt (1994), speaking about the University of the twenty-first century, proposed a creative university whose primary activities will shift from a focus on analytical disciplines and professions to those stressing creative activities.

In line with the above statements and as we explain below, we can say that we consider our proposal to include quality of life in Social Science teaching an innovation.

The theoretical proposal of quality of life has had a previous, specific, well-known and considerable development in the fields of health, medicine, psychology and economics, where it gained a prominent place. In this regard, it is worth reflecting on some daily scenes at university when, as we spoke with faculty members of other fields such as education about the importance of studying quality of life, they said that the issue of quality of life is not so much related to education as it is to economics and/or health. This has led us to ask whether they might be confusing the concept of quality of life with that of living conditions or health conditions. It is thus

important for those pursuing studies in the Social Sciences – as broadly defined above – to acquire the conceptual and methodological knowledge offered by this proposal, as it will allow them to advance their academic and professional work.

Below we present a concrete case of quality of life teaching in the Social Sciences postgraduate programme.

Syllabus of the Course on Quality of Life and Well-Being of Nations Delivered at the Master's Degree in Social Sciences of Universidad de Palermo, Argentina

The Master's Program in Social Sciences of Universidad de Palermo, Argentina, is an academic programme focused on theory and research that takes account of both of these dimensions within a development context, thus allowing an in-depth examination of the time and space around which the programme is developed.

The introduction of the dimensions of time and space is in line with Passeron's argument, as quoted by Gimenez (2004, p. 275), that the social events that are the object of study of the social sciences have the property that they cannot be divorced from their spatio-temporal context; hence the use of the deictic term making reference to time and place. This is also connected with the above-mentioned view advanced by Wallerstein (1995) that one of the theoretical-methodological problems to be solved in order to advance in Social Science research is precisely how to reinsert time and space as constitutive variables in research.

Since its beginnings, the programme has had an international outlook and drawn on new technologies applied to communication and information in the pedagogical field. These technologies help to develop an academic programme without borders, permanently connected with university institutions and research centres and networks in different parts of the world.

The programme is designed to provide a general and updated understanding of the conceptual and philosophical foundations of the Social Sciences and of current social problems, both nationally and internationally. Students are encouraged to develop a sustained attitude to discover, understand and explain individuals' and groups' life situations, through a critical and cross-cutting exploration of social, cultural, political, economic, historical and geographic issues.

The programme is intended to offer a holistic view of reality, in which the actors – students and faculty – have a central role. It is built on study and the generation of knowledge capable of responding to current challenges with a future projection. In this regard, knowledge holds a prominent place in the syllabus, along with ethical principles based on respect for people and their rights.

In addition, the programme fosters complex and critical thought and commitment to social reality and human diversity through an in-depth exploration of theoretical and methodological aspects with specific practice in Social Science research.

The curricular design of the Master's Program in Social Sciences of Universidad de Palermo is structured around learning goals and techniques to achieve such goals. The programme is organised into courses with an innovative design that, in addition to respecting and integrating the foundational ideas of the Social Sciences, pose new intellectual challenges. In referring to the curriculum, we follow Portela Guarin and Murcia Peña's (2006) definition:

The curriculum is understood as an instrument of dissemination, reproduction and innovation, based on the various modes of knowledge and appropriation of culture as a form of interpretation, communication, cosmovision, mediation, of constructing the world and as a meaningful horizon, towards the consolidation of subject-world relationships in the process of achieving increased quotas of humanisation. (Portela Guarin and Murcia Peña 2006, p. 92)

This postgraduate programme thus encourages reflection on theoretical issues arising from challenges taking place in this historical stage and integrates new thematic fields such as literature, opera, and studies of the future, risk and audio-visual techniques. Additionally, it offers a comprehensive analysis of contemporary themes such as good living, growing inequality and insecurity.

One of the courses offered by the Master's Program is entitled "Quality of Life and Well-being of Nations".²

The course is based on the following goals:

- (a) To facilitate the discussion and interpretation of quality of life studies in different social and political contexts.
- (b) To make students well acquainted with the methods and techniques used for quality of life research at the micro and macro levels.
- (c) To gain in-depth knowledge about well-being and life-satisfaction in the community and in the country.
- (d) To gain in-depth knowledge about the construction of "good" nations and societies.
- (e) To encourage students to develop a research attitude for the analysis of cases based on Social Science research reports.

The course is organised into the following four thematic units:

²The course was designed by the author of this chapter, and she is the head lecturer.

Unit I: Quality of Life

Quality of life: origin and evolution of the concept.
 Personal well-being and social welfare: the difference of the concepts.
 Life satisfaction: concepts and characteristics.
 Quality of life of different population groups: children and young people.

Unit II: Community Quality of Life

Quality of life in the community: concepts and characteristics.
 The community's well-being: concept and indicators. The community's life satisfaction.
 The twenty-first century's communities and their definitions.
 The communities of Latin American countries: characteristics.

Unit III: Quality of Life and Public Policies

An innovative way to think the public policy: a view from the quality of life measurements.
 The satisfaction with democracy: concept and characteristics.
 Trust in national institutions.
 Citizen's participation in decision makings of public policies.
 The well-being of nations.
 The use of research results for the decision of public policies.

Unit IV: Methodological Strategies for Quality of Life Research

The PWI for adults and children.
 QOL's community indicators.
 QOL's indicators for public policy decision making.
 Scale of satisfaction with life in the country (ESCVP).
 Quality of life and qualitative research methods.
 Quality of life and mixed research methods.

References by Unit

Unit I

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Pedagogical Strategy and Evaluation

The course is grounded in a pedagogical approach that fosters reflection and the integration of theory and practice as the driving force of the pedagogical process. The recognition of students' prior learning allows optimising learning times and integrating knowledge. This generates a space for the exchange of analysis perspectives through a process of critical comment.

In order to successfully complete the course, students have to submit and pass an integrating final paper on one of the topics covered in the course in connection with quality of life. The paper is to be written in the format of an argumentative exercise.

Conclusions

As noted by Martinelli (2010, pp. 287–289) in the *World Social Science Report*, UNESCO, the Social Sciences play different roles in the public sphere: educating students to develop the knowledge and skills required to become researchers, professionals and responsible citizens of democratic societies; producing the empirically tested findings needed for the interpretation and analysis of social phenomena without prejudices; assessing priority issues on the public agenda; contributing as experts to policy-making and to the governance of complex problems.

Duderstadt (2010, p. 425) considers that “education is regarded today as the hope for a significant and satisfactory life”, and in that respect, both education and each individual's abilities are increasingly being regarded as the keys to personal quality of life and to the quality of life of society as a whole. Estes and Sirgy (2018, pp. 143–144) express that “Policies designed to improve education, learning, and innovation can enhance the quality of life of people and countries in significant and remarkable ways”. In this sense quality of life can be defined considering personal, societal and political dimensions.

Social Sciences are a reflection of the society about itself and a systematic and controlled exercise of critical autoperception about our times (Lechner 2015, p. 29).

Today, teaching a course about quality of life and well-being in a Master's and in a Ph.D. Programme in Social Sciences can be considered an innovation; however, it must first and foremost be considered to be important and necessary for the training of a social sciences professor and a social sciences researcher.

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Chapter 2

Teaching Well-Being/Quality of Life from a Philosophical Perspective



Dan Weijers

Introduction

Quality of life is a subject of study that is undeniably relevant to each and every one of us. It is no surprise then, that since humans have been studying anything at all, they have been studying quality of life. Indeed, the original academic subject, philosophy, held quality of life among its few central concerns.

“How should I live?”, ancient Greeks would ask before being directed towards Plato’s Academy, Epicurus’s Garden, or other sanctuaries for critical thinkers. But which sanctuary to choose? The second-century satirist Lucian of Samosata pointed out that each philosophical school had different advice on how to live because they had different views on what it was to live well (Bok 2012; Lucian 2005). The choice of philosophical school was important; much time could be wasted at the feet of any number of hairy-faced ideologues as they revealed their view of the one true path to happiness. And, of course, their mutually exclusive views meant that they could not all be correct.

These days, philosophers refer to the broad investigation of the more theoretical aspects of how we should live as ‘normative ethics’. The chief division within normative ethics is between moral theory and well-being. Moral theory is the investigation of what determines the moral rightness or wrongness of actions. It essentially involves identifying and critiquing theories of what we should do, where the normative force of the “should” comes from morality. Well-being, as a subject area in philosophy, is the investigation of what determines how good or bad a life is *for the one living it*. It essentially involves identifying and critiquing theories of what is ultimately good and bad for us, where good and bad are viewed prudentially (i.e., for us, as opposed to for others or for everyone). So, when a philosopher teaches quality of life, they usually understand themselves to be teaching well-being.

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What Does the Term “Well-Being” Refer to in Philosophy?

Conceptual clarity is important to philosophers. We tend to go on a bit, so it frustrates us greatly if we discover we have been talking past each other (for, say, the last 2000 years or so). For this reason, every good philosophical course on well-being or quality of life will start with several conceptual clarifications.

Well-Being: The Prudential Good Life

The philosophical understanding of well-being is shared by many academic disciplines, and is usually considered synonymous with welfare, prudential value, and the prudential good life. The concept is variously described, but the shared meaning within the various descriptions is clear: The life of well-being is the life that is good for the one living (Crisp 2017). So, when we ask about a person’s well-being, we are asking about whether their life is going well for them.

The “for them” phrase is important because a life can be good in various ways (Feldman 2004, Chap. 1). A life can be morally good, but morality may require sacrificing one’s happiness or even one’s life for the sake of others. While such a sacrifice might be the right thing to do in the moral sense of “right”, it seems anti-prudential – bad for the well-being of the one doing the sacrificing. A life might also be good in the sense of making for a good example of human life by being so perfectly average, or aesthetically good in the sense of making for a good story. Neither of these kinds of good life necessitate that the life is prudentially good – valuable to the one living the life. This is most clear for the aesthetically good life; the protagonists of literature’s tragedies tend not to live envious lives. The life of King Lear, for example, is not one I would wish for my children, despite the baubles of office that come with being king. So, philosophers of well-being are interested in prudential value, not necessarily moral or aesthetic value.

Well-Being or Quality of Life?

Well-being is the prudential good life, in other words, the life that is good for the one living it. Well-being and quality of life are sometimes understood as synonyms, but this definition of well-being differs from the definition of quality of life provided in the introduction to this book (and reproduced in Box 2.1), which takes a multi-dimensional and fairly fluid view of what makes life go well. These differences highlight key dissimilarities in specific methodologies and general approaches used when investigating the topic of prudentially good lives.

Box 2.1: Key Definitions 1

- *Philosophical definition of well-being*: the prudential good life, the life that is good for the one living it.
- *Quality of life studies definition of quality of life*: a multi-dimensional concept which involves a number of domains which people experience in diverse forms according to the importance attributed to them in their lives, considering their expectations, their values, and their experiences.

The philosophical concept of well-being is like an empty cup with the barest semblance of a form. Defining well-being as the prudential good life – the life going well for the one living it – does give some perspective on the concept of interest, but it does very little to answer the question, “How should I live?”. In effect, the bare-bones definition of well-being would answer, “You should live well” – an answer that isn’t all that informative. For this reason, philosophers of well-being do not stop after merely outlining the cup. We also try to fill the cup with a theory or account of well-being. So, to draw the analogy to its full extent, drinking from the cup would bestow one with the knowledge of what actually makes a life go well for the one living it (not just the meaning of the term “well-being”).

Quality of life, as defined in Box 2.1, is multi-dimensional and at least partly subjective; the definition allows the importance of the various aspects of a good life to be decided by each individual for themselves. From a philosopher’s perspective, both of these attributes of the definition are up for debate. This is no surprise when you consider that philosophers see one of their main roles as questioning the assumptions underlying important claims and arguments. Indeed, one of the most important questions in the philosophy of well-being is whether there is just one thing that ultimately makes life go well for the person living it or whether there are several things. In other words, when philosophers argue for a theory of well-being, one of the things they must argue for is whether there are many aspects or just one aspect of the prudential good life.

The issue of subjectivity is dealt with in the same way. A philosopher needs to argue for *why* we should think that the prudential good life has any subjective elements. This is not to say that objective elements are assumed. Philosophers need to justify any subjective or objective aspects of their theory of well-being. Hopefully the message is clear; philosophers should argue for their theory without making assumptions, or at least with making as few assumptions as possible. In practice, this leads to lots of extra opportunities to disagree about the fundamental aspects of the issue in question. This attention to detail and pedantry for addressing the fundamentals is doubtless part of the reason why philosophy has made little progress over the millennia, and quality of life researchers have not waited for a philosophical consensus to emerge before bringing empirical methodologies to the subject.