

Investigation of Social Well-being among Academic and Administrative Staff at Bamyan University

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Abstract

The social welfare of Bamyan University's faculty and staff in 2023 was examined in this study. Methodologically, it was a descriptive-survey study that was field-based and applied to the goal. The standardized Keyes (1998) Social Well-Being Questionnaire, which consists of 33 questions and 5 components, was used to collect the data. The five-point Likert scale used to assess each question ranged from "completely agree" to "completely disagree." The study's whole statistical population, which included all 249 faculty members and staff of Bamyan University, received the questionnaires. One hundred eighty-three of these completed surveys were sent back. SPSS software was used to evaluate the gathered data using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The results showed that Bamyan University's teachers and staff had an unsatisfactory level of social well-being. There was a statistically significant difference ($p=0.02$) between the benchmark score of 99 and the mean total social well-being score of 97.78. Additionally, all of the social well-being components social cohesiveness (17.61), social contribution (18.01), social actualization (20.99), social acceptability (20.70), and social coherence (20.45) –scored below the ideal level. This suggests that there are issues with job satisfaction, organizational support, and social interactions at work. The study's findings highlight the need for Bamyan University to develop policies that enhance social well-being.

Keywords: Acceptance, Bamyan University, Cohesion, Participation, Prosperity, Social well-being.

Introduction

One important aspect of general health that influences quality of life, social and individual functioning, and organizational effectiveness is social well-being. Economic strains, mounting workloads, a lack of managerial support, and quick changes in technology and education can all have a negative impact on the quality of education and research in Afghanistan's higher education system by undermining organizational participation, a sense of belonging, and the cohesiveness of working relationships (Sajadi, 2024). These

structural and contextual variables impact Bamyan University, a key institution in Bamyan Province, and it is strategically important to look at the social well-being of Bamyan University and staff in order to improve institutional performance and human resource health.

The three dimensions of health are physical, mental, and social, according to the World Health Organization's traditional framework. Because it depends on interpersonal roles and interactions as well as environmental factors, the social dimension of health is regarded as one of the most complex aspects of health (Ghafari et al., 2018). According to this perspective, social well-being results from the interaction of personal decisions with the local socioeconomic context (Elhadadi and Noureddine, 2023) and is defined as the capacity to build harmonious relationships, adjust to one's surroundings, and settle disputes in a reasonable and equitable way (Tajudin, 2017). The family, diet, longevity, and mood can all be impacted by broader structural shifts like industrialization and labor market shifts, which can also alter the general degree of social well-being (Ferdosian, 2017). Furthermore, people's subjective evaluations of their everyday contacts directly influence their level of social well-being (Heydarzadeh, 2025).

According to a review of the literature, social support and a healthy institutional climate significantly increase social well-being in academic contexts (Hassan & Samad, 2019), and social well-being and job satisfaction are positively connected (Obeidi, 2020). On a broader scale, Afghanistan's social well-being is weakened by gender inequality, poverty, and war; however, colleges can contribute to its advancement (Turabi, 2024). Significant variation in social well-being levels is also demonstrated by international evidence; for instance, epidemiological findings from the US suggest that a portion of the adult population has low social well-being, which may be a sign of "social ill health" at the population level (Ghafari, cited in MacArthur, 1995/2018). Gender patterns in health-promoting habits also impact communication and responsibility dimensions (Defarakhsh et al., quoted in Laroche, 2024), and notable disparities have been documented by educational attainment, marital status, social memberships, and employment (Hakiminia, 2017). According to Ghafari et al. (2018), social involvement and trust are regarded as conditions for community-based initiatives, and greater insecurity is linked to a decline in social health and well-being.

From a conceptual standpoint, studies emphasize the use of both objective and subjective metrics to gauge social well-being. The early work of Block and Breslow (1972) and Donald et al. (1978), who incorporated social functioning in the assessment and believed that health extended beyond disease symptoms, is where this field's roots may be found (Latifi et al., 2015).

According to Larson, relationship satisfaction and the size of communication networks are two aspects of social adjustment and social support (Khoshfar, 2015). Social solidarity/integration, social acceptance, social participation/contribution, social flourishing/fulfillment, and social cohesion/understandability are the five dimensions of social well-being that Keyes developed by integrating the emotional, psychological, and social aspects of health by conceptualizing mental health as positive functioning (Shahbazi et al., 2017; Keyes, 1998; Keyes & Shapiro, 2004; Niazi et al., 2018). According to this paradigm, "thriving" is the experience of pleasant emotion and efficient functioning, while "withering" is a condition in which positive affect is absent and sociopsychological performance is compromised.

The current level of social well-being among Bamyan University's faculty and staff has not been adequately explained by data, despite the wealth of evidence previously mentioned. This is particularly true when considering the five dimensions of Keyes' model and the structural and economic limitations of Afghanistan. The current study's guiding hypothesis is that the social well-being of Bamyan University employees is below average, and that all five of its dimensions—solidarity, participation, cohesion, flourishing, and social acceptance—fall short of the ideal level due to a heavy workload, financial strain, and a lack of managerial support. In order to provide a clear picture of the current situation and recommend evidence-based interventional pathways to improve social support, reduce work pressures, improve economic conditions, and enhance the organizational environment, the current work aims to measure the level of social well-being of Bamyan University's faculty and staff using the Keyes (1998) standard questionnaire and analyze its five dimensions. This study aims to close the current knowledge gap and offer a foundation for managerial and policy decision-making by situating Bamyan University data within the larger framework of local and worldwide research history.

Material and Method

This research was in the quantitative research category in terms of method, applied research in terms of purpose, and descriptive-survey research in terms of data collection and analysis. The statistical population of the research included all professors and employees of Bamyan University in year (2024). A total of 249 people, including 172 professors and 77 employees, were selected as a sample using a purposive sampling method and a questionnaire was distributed to them, of which (183) people responded to the questionnaire and the results were analyzed. To collect the required data, the Keys Social Well-Being Questionnaire (1998) was used. This questionnaire had 33 questions and consisted of five dimensions (cohesion, participation, prosperity, and social acceptance) that were scored using a 5-point Likert scale from completely agree to completely disagree. This tool has good validity and reliability, and its reliability was calculated based on Cronbach's alpha. Its alpha values for the five dimensions of solidarity, cohesion, participation, flourishing, and social acceptance were 0.83, 0.69, 0.81, 0.75, and 0.77, respectively, indicating good reliability of this questionnaire.

Findings

- A) Results of descriptive statistics analysis
- B) Inferential statistics

Inferential statistics is a set of methods by which the results obtained from the sample can be generalized to the entire statistical population with a certain degree of confidence (Heidari, 2015). In the following, first the main research question and then the sub-questions are analyzed.

Table 1.

Examination of the frequency of demographic information in the subjects under study.

Variables	Number	Percentage
Marital status		
Single	24	13.1
Married	159	86.9
Work experience		
Less than 2 years	42	23.0
2-4 years	47	25.7
5-8 years	46	25.1
More than 9 years	48	26.2
Age		
30-20	50	27.3
40-31	32	17.5
50-41	68	37.2
60-51	33	18.0
Job		
Employee	44	24.0
Professor	139	76.0
Educational degree		
Twelve Passes	4	2.2
Fourteen Passes	1	0.5
Bachelor's Degree	92	50.3
Master's Degree	81	44.3
PhD Degree	5	2.7

As can be seen in the table above, social well-being has been achieved with a mean of (97.78) and a standard deviation of (7.49) with a degree of freedom of (182) and a standard limit of (99) at a significance level of 0.029. Therefore, it can be inferred that the level of social well-being of Bamyan University professors and employees is lower than the average and is significant.

Table 2.
Social well-being situation.

Variable	Mean	Test Value	Std Deviation	T	df	Sig
Q2						
social well-being	97.78	99	7.49	2.200	182	0.029

As seen in Table 3, in none of the variables examined (cohesion, participation, prosperity, and social acceptance) is there a significant difference between the sample mean and the acceptable limit. Therefore, it is statistically concluded that the status of social health components among professors and employees of Bamyan University does not differ significantly from the expected values.

Table 3.
Situation of social well-being dimensions

Variables	Mean	Std Deviation	Test Value	T	df	Sig
Social solidarity	20.45	3.86	21	1.89	182	0.060
Social cohesion	17.611	3.264	18	1.608	182	0.110
Social participation	18.010	3.67	18	0.040	182	0.968
Social prosperity	20.994	3.875	21	0.019	182	0.985
Social acceptance	20.704	3.722	18	1.072	182	0.285

Discussion

Hassan and Samad (2019) conducted a study on the social well-being factors of students at Kabul University and showed that social support and the university environment play an important role in promoting the social well-being of students. The results of the present study also indicate the importance of social support and the university environment in the social well-being of teachers and staff at Bamyan University. This finding shows that social

support and the university environment, regardless of geographical and cultural differences, are important factors in the social well-being of individuals in universities.

Obidi (2020) conducted a study at Herat University that showed that job satisfaction has a significant relationship with social well-being among university teachers. This finding can confirm the hypothesis that job satisfaction, as an effective factor, plays an important role in improving social well-being. However, further studies are needed to determine the exact factors affecting job satisfaction at Bamyan University.

Torabi's (2024) research showed that social well-being in Afghanistan is affected by several factors such as war, poverty, and gender inequality, and universities have an important role in improving the situation. The present study also confirms that universities can play an important role in promoting social well-being. However, the specific differences of Bamyan University and local conditions must be taken into account. In order to provide social well-being.

Tajuddin (2017), referring to Farsi Nejad's master's thesis (2005), emphasized that the average social health scores in the total sample were low and the scores of boys were higher than girls. Although the present study did not address gender differences, the overall results indicate that social well-being at Bamyan University also needs more attention. Cultural and social differences between Iran and Afghanistan may affect the results.

Hakiminia (2017) showed in her research that there is a significant difference between girls and boys in terms of social health levels in the dimensions of participation and social cohesion. The present study also indicates the importance of participation and social cohesion in the social well-being of Bamyan University professors and employees, and this consistency shows that the factors of participation and social cohesion in different societies play an important role in social well-being.

Ghafari (2018) referred to the epidemiological study of social health in the United States, MacArthur (1995). It pointed out that approximately 40 percent of adults aged 25-74 years scored high on three social health scales, but in the present study, social well-being among Bamyan University professors and employees was not achieved.

The results of Khojaste Kashani's (2018) research showed that spiritual health was the most important factor affecting the quality of life of people with cancer, and social health was in second place. The present study did not specifically examine spiritual health and focused more on general factors of social well-being. Therefore, the results of this study are not directly comparable with the findings of this study.

Considering the background of domestic and foreign research, it can be concluded that several factors affect social well-being. The present study also confirms that social support, university environment, job satisfaction, and social security are among the important factors that can affect the social well-being of Bamyan University professors and employees. In order to improve social well-being at Bamyan University, there is a need for more research and programs to strengthen social support and social security.

Conclusion

This study was conducted to investigate the social well-being of Bamyan University staff and professors. The results of this study show that the social well-being of Bamyan University staff and professors is at an undesirable level. The overall average social well-being score (97.78) is significantly lower than the average (99), and the study of various components also shows that all dimensions of social well-being, including: social solidarity with an average (20.45), social cohesion (17.61), social participation (18.01), social flourishing (20.99), and social acceptance (20.70), are all below the average level, which indicates job dissatisfaction and weakness in social relations in the workplace. Therefore, it is necessary for Bamyan University officials to take practical steps to improve the social well-being of employees by focusing on improving job satisfaction, strengthening job security, and promoting mental health.

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Data Availability Statement

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

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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