

RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Malaysian Youth Well-Being Scale: Development and Initial Validation

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**Abstract:** Youth well-being has become a phenomenon of interest to community youth workers. Despite the potential of youth well-being to promote positive youth outcome and strengthen community settings, the practice remains unfamiliar to many. Thus, this study used multidimensional constructs to measure youth well-being in Malaysia. The aims of this study were to (1) construct and validate a multidimensional measure of the Youth Well-Being Scale (YWS) and (2) scrutinize the psychometric and measurement properties of the YWS in Malaysian youths. A quantitative study was conducted to validate the 97-item YWS with a sample of 500 Malaysian youths. The YWS demonstrated adequate psychometric properties for 10 YWS dimensions in the exploratory factor analysis. Confirmatory factor analysis indicated that the multidimensional constructs fit the YWS data. Participants confirmed that the validity and reliability of youth well-being take place at the intersection of personal, relational, and collective strengths. Going forward, the analysis of results offers a big picture of community ideals, needs, strength, as well as potential actions that could enhance personal, relational, and collective well-being of youth in Malaysia.

**Keywords:** Malaysia, youth well-being, measurement validation, community development

Nowadays, many social forces have changed both family forms and community structures, as well as young people's expectations. Many elements of society have deteriorated the informal community support available to young people in their transitions to adulthood and independence: high rates of housing instability among families; greater anonymity and distrust in neighborhoods and greater social exclusion; the extensive use of social media, involving exposure to sexual messages, offline aggression, pornography, online dating, and substance misuse; and in some cases, neighborhood disorganization as a consequence of local crime, delinquency, and neighborhood

poverty. At the same time, today's societies have become more global, complex, multicultural, and technical, placing challenging demands on youths in terms of the learning, training, and behavioral and socio-emotional skills required in a highly global competitive environment. The minimum length of adolescence has also extended to the mid- to late 20s, and the transition into young adulthood has become less clear (Jessor, Donovan, & Costa, 2016). Many youths enter the labor market to look for permanent jobs with insufficient information and knowledge and without skills such as the capability to communicate successfully and succeed in a job.

In line with this, concerns about youth-related issues and problems are at the center of several policy debates. The future well-being of communities relies on raising a new generation of trained, skilled, competent, and responsible adults. All youths should have an array of experiences to reduce multiple risk behaviors, enhance both current and future well-being, and have successful transitions into young adulthood. Such experiences include skill-building opportunities, making positive changes in their communities, interacting with other young people, leadership decision-making, and building strong connections with non-familial adults. These experiences are imperative to all youths. As such, social psychology research on the mental health of youths has shifted from understanding youth stressors and psychopathology to a holistic approach to youth development, as well as promoting well-being. Some studies have found well-being to have an adaptive and contributory effect on positive youth outcomes (Park, 2004). This body of work has assisted in comprehending the relationships between youth well-being and personality strengths (Kashdan et al., 2018), positive youth development (Leman et al., 2017), and life satisfaction (Mohamed, D'Silva, Samah, Shafri, & Dahalan, 2018).

Even with these significant contributions to our knowledge about youth well-being, further advancement of research on youth well-being has been inadequate regarding the dimensions linked with current assessment approaches. First, conceptualization and evaluation have tended to emphasize different dimensions of youth well-being. Though, research has considered civic participation, education and skills, economic opportunity, wellness and health, safety and security, and Information and communications technology (ICT) as dimensions of youth well-being and has distinctly verified the vital roles of youth poverty, youth positive development, social progress, quality of life, and physical wellness in providing an empirical understanding of youth well-being, no assessment has measured them simultaneously in a coherent framework.

Second, the factor structure underlying youth well-being evaluation is still under deliberation. Some studies have verified that youth well-being has multidimensional constructs across valued life dimensions (Mohamed et al., 2018), whereas others have applied one-dimensional measures, such as life satisfaction, or subjective dimensions (Ramli,

Samah, Samah, Idris, & Shafri, 2017), ignoring other evaluations of well-being, which need to go beyond global evaluations to provide youth workers with precise information about the dimensions in which youths flourish or struggle. Thus, it is required to comprehend which dimensions best predict successful adult transitions in numerous cultural backgrounds and how these dimensions come together in supporting both current and future well-being and accomplishment.

To address these gaps, the goals of this study are to (a) create a new measure of youth well-being that comprises multiple key dimensions of youth well-being deemed significant in the community context; and (b) explore the factor structure that would best represent the constructs of youth well-being in Malaysia.

### **Youth Well-Being Frameworks and Assessment Measures**

Well-being is one of the best commonly studied health and psychosocial outcomes among young people (Van den Eijnden, Meerkerk, Vermulst, Spijkerman, & Engels, 2008). Evans and Prilleltensky (2007) outlined well-being as a positive state of affairs, brought about by the concurrent fulfillment of personal, relational, and collective needs of persons and communities alike. These needs are fulfilled by the presence of forceful values and suitable material and psychological resources. In addition, Evans and Prilleltensky (2007) specified that the well-being of young people takes many forms, including not only personal but also relational and collective well-being. In the personal domain, Evans and Prilleltensky (2007) included a sense of control, self-efficacy, physical health, optimism and mental health, self-determination, and spirituality as signs of personal well-being; also, empowerment as a strategy of personal well-being comes to the fore for young people. In the relational domain, relational well-being is grounded in the presence of supportive, healthy relationships, caring and compassion, civic participation, and nurturance and affection. In the collective domain, collective well-being is dependent on access to healthcare, affordable housing policies, incentives to achieve high educational standards, mental health, and family planning, along with progressive tax policy. Community well-being arises from collective efficacy, community-based monitoring, and advocacy for social change and is recognized by young people and their communities

as vital for young people to thrive and fulfill their potential.

In addition, the notions of personal and collective well-being are worldwide and relevant to different cultures. One dimension utilized to depict cultural differences is that of individualism/collectivism (Uchida & Oishi, 2016). In collectivistic cultures, such as Malaysia, well-being is most intensely connected to interpersonal goals, community loyalty, and being capable of avoiding social conflict. In more-individualistic cultures, such as Western countries, the well-being of individuals is most powerfully linked to self-confidence, personal interests, and achievement (Uchida & Oishi, 2016).

Quite simply, these approaches to well-being represent different levels for how well youths are performing in their lives and for whether persons, families, societies, and communities have been effective in guiding today's youths. From a global perspective, multiple dimensions and conceptualizations of well-being are vital across cultural contexts (Jensen, Arnett, & McKenzie, 2011). Additionally, empirical investigations of well-being in Western and non-Western cultural contexts have shown that well-being in both individualistic and collectivistic cultures is enabled by accomplishing the tasks of adolescence and emerging adulthood (Sugimura, Lenne, & Graner, 2016).

Further, current indicator frameworks, including the Well-Being Indicator Tool for Youth (Anu Family Services, 2013) and the Global Youth Wellbeing Index (2013), are based on several topics that Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has identified as essential in determining youth well-being in collectivistic cultures. It proposes a comprehensive framework that categorizes dimensions for youth well-being, as well as possible indicators and current measures that fit with those dimensions. These frameworks are possibly some of the few inclusive frameworks that concurrently reflect personal, relational, and collective well-being has progressed significantly in the last three decades.

Though there is a body of literature that clarifies the cultural aspects and values that impact youths' views of the constructs and their level of well-being within each, recent evidence suggests that these dimensions are related to youth well-being in similar ways across different cultural regions (Tay & Diener,

2011). A comprehensive measure of youth well-being, then, should thoroughly address the value of self-determination, community capacity building, the status or specific level of youth participation, structural determinants, social justice, and youths' outlook and satisfaction across the various domains of their lives and transitions.

Although there are other scales that concentrate on single aspects of youth well-being (for quality of life [Ayala, Edwards, & Patrick, 2014], for happiness [Moghnie & Kazarian, 2012], for life satisfaction, for individual well-being [Proctor, Linley, & Maltby, 2009], and for mental well-being [Rose et al., 2017], none of them systematically represents a more holistic view of youth well-being. Thus, based on these frameworks, the study grouped the YWS into 10 dimensions that enhance health development and well-being in youths and facilitate successful transitions to adult life. The 10 key dimensions of youth well-being include social relationships, health status, physical environment, economic opportunity, spirituality, civic participation, education, ICT, safety and security, and public physical facilities.

## The Current Study

The present study attempts to address a gap related to construct development by adapting and validating a multidimensional well-being scale for youths in Malaysia. Thus, this study aims to develop a self-report measure of youth well-being that thoroughly measures overall well-being and its 10 distinct dimensions: health status, economic opportunity, education and skills, social relationships, civic participation, spirituality, safety and security, environment, public physical facilities, and ICT. The present conceptualization of youth well-being was assumed to reflect satisfaction in the 10 dimensions of youth well-being outlined in the Well-being Indicator Tool for Youth (WIT-Y) and Global Youth Well-being Index (GYWI) frameworks. Based on the conceptual framework, along with current studies on the multidimensional nature of youth well-being, we assumed that the validity of the overall construct of youth well-being and its 10 dimensions would be confirmed via exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and the multidimensional model would fit the scale data better than the one-dimensional structures as confirmed via confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). This would indicate that youth well-being can be best

comprehended as a broad factor specific to well-being, whereas the 10 domain-specific constructs describe the additional variance in well-being.

### ***Study Context: Youth Well-Being in Malaysia***

Malaysia is a multi-ethnic Southeast Asian country with a population of over 28 million, mostly composed of three major races: Malay, Chinese, and Indian with different cultural backgrounds (Statistics Department Public, 2010). Malaysia is mainly a collectivistic culture, and values such as support, helpfulness, conformity, dependency, and interpersonal relationships are promoted in the socialization of youth (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2009). In other words, young Malaysians today aspire to be appreciated in Malaysian society. They also need good-quality living environments to sustain their positive functioning and their emotional, physical, and mental well-being. Transformasi Nasional 2050 (TN50) is an initiative designed to shape Malaysia's future in the period 2020–2050. TN50 identifies citizen well-being as one of its central goals. According to Mohamed et al. (2018), measuring the well-being of Malaysian youths is needed for the preparation of TN50.

Within Malaysia, many studies have applied a number of instruments evaluating unidimensional measures within different population groups (the subjective well-being of school children [Clark et al., 2014], the subjective well-being of Japanese retirees [D'Silva, Yassin, Samah, & Kamaruddin, 2017], family well-being [Noor, Gandhi, Ishak, & Wok, 2014], the objective well-being of poor children [Omar & Ah, 2017], and the Malay Subjective Happiness Scale [Swami, 2008]). However, well-being cannot be described by one measure, as it includes numerous features. One-dimensional instruments are powerfully affected by the individual's mood at the time and neglect other features of well-being. In addition, very few instruments are multidimensional, which is a strong aspect of mental health and is, therefore, key for overall youth well-being assessment in non-Western countries such as Malaysia. Lastly, in a preceding quantitative study among youths belonging to the three major races in Malaysia, we identified the YWS in this population; the scale is considered a previously ignored available multidimensional measurement. Thus, in spite of the progress made in the dimensions of well-being, much research is needed to measure the multidimensional nature of youth well-being in Malaysia.

## **Methods**

### ***Instrument Development***

The development and validation of this new YWS in the Malaysian context were guided by the WIT-Y and GYWI, as well as the empirical evidence on different dimensions of youth well-being. Once a comprehensive literature review and a series of instrument development workshops had been conducted, common items were utilized to measure the various domains of youth well-being, including health status, economic opportunity, education and skills, social relationships, civic participation, spirituality, safety and security, environment, public physical facilities, and ICT. Other items were then improved and included in the YWS. For face validation, a team of experts also revised the items and translated them into Malay, taking into consideration the items' wordings. After the experts had reached agreement on the wording, a group discussion with the participation of 10 Malaysian youth was conducted to evaluate language appropriateness, clarity, readability, attractiveness, consistency, and logical sequence of items regarding the structure of the YWS Malay version. All respondents rated all items relevant to measure Malaysian youth well-being. They also recommended to the experts the use of simple sentences and easy language. Based on their comments, minor modifications were made to improve the items. A pilot survey was performed with 30 Malaysian youths, of three different races, to check the reliability of the items.

Ninety-seven final items were generated, which tapped into social relationships (e.g., "I have a respectable connection with my parents"), health status (e.g., "I am able to handle stress in life"), physical environment (e.g., "My place of residence is not affected by sound pollution"), spiritual well-being (e.g., "I accept all tests/challenges patiently"), civic participation (e.g., "For me, the government has been fair in ruling the country"), safety and security (e.g., "My place of residence is safe to live"), education and skills (e.g., "I am satisfied with my current education level"), ICT (e.g., "Various ICT tools facilitate my daily tasks"), economic opportunity (e.g., "My current financial standing is good"), and public physical facilities (e.g., "The telecommunication signal coverage in my place is satisfactory"). Each dimension of youth well-being was measured by at least six items (Hinkin, 1998). Additional items were generated as



needed. Items were assessed on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

### **Participants**

This cross-sectional research was carried out to evaluate the YWS in the Malaysian context. The dataset was attained using 500 questionnaires, which were distributed to Malaysian youths across the five main regions, namely: northern, central, southern, east coast, and Borneo. In Malaysia, according to the National Youth Development Policy (Ministry of Youth and Sports Malaysia, 1997), youths are categorized as those aged between 15 and 40 years old. The Ministry of Youth and Sports formulated a new youth policy in 2018, with youths now categorized as those aged 15 to 30 years old. The descriptive statistics of this study show that almost 37.8% of the respondents were male and 62% were female. They had a mean age of 22.74 years ( $SD = 3.06$ ). The majority of the students self-identified themselves as Malay (69.2%), with 14.8% identifying as Chinese and 15.8% identifying as Indian.

### **Procedures**

The dataset was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 23) for the EFA, whereas structural equation modeling (AMOS 23) was used for the CFA. The EFA and CFA were conducted to identify the latent constructs underlying the items of the YWS and to assess the model fit. Reliability, convergence, and discriminant validity tests were then employed to evaluate the validity and reliability of each dimension.

### **Results**

The dataset in this study had a normal distribution with no univariate outliers or curvilinear relationships between items; thus, the factor analysis ML values were considered appropriate and applicable. Floor and ceiling effects of the questionnaire were evaluated by the percentage of respondents. The results indicated that no floor and ceiling effects were identified in any of the dimensions but less than 15% of the respondents reached the worst score or best effect score. It shows good content validity.

We performed EFA on the YWS to identify emergent dimensions from our first stage of pilot testing and to verify items that could be problematic, given their low factor loadings. The results showed that all 10 dimensions had eigenvalues above 1.0, and the EFA model was verified using standard tests of significance (test of sphericity) and sampling adequacy (KMO). The YWS was statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), showing that the dimensions were correlated, and that they met the .918 level required for satisfactory factor analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). In addition, four items were omitted because the initial commonalities were lower than .30 and did not meaningfully load on to any of the 10 dimensions. These items measured neighborhood activities, financial standing, number of shops, and debt problems. The 94 items in the newly constructed YWS tapped into health status, economic opportunity, education and skills, social relationships, civic participation, spirituality, safety and security, environment, public physical facilities, and ICT. The 94 items were assessed using direct oblimin rotation. After dropping four items, the 10 dimensions explained 53.5% of the variance extracted. The means, standard deviations, and item loading values for each item are presented in Table 1.

To test the construct validity of the instrument after the EFA, CFA was carried out with the dataset from the validation group. To check the validity of the constructs, the 93 items were appointed to 10 latent constructs. In order to get a good fit index, 45 items where the value of the factor loading was .5 or more were included in the final measurement model (see Figure 1), and items where the factor loading was less than .5 were removed (Kline, 2010)DC", "page": "147–169", "source": "Google Scholar", "event-place": "Washington, DC", "author": [{"family": "Kline", "given": "Rex B."}], "editor": [{"family": "Thompson", "given": "B."}, {"family": "Subotnik", "given": "R. F."}], "issued": [{"date-parts": [{"2010"}]}], "schema": "https://github.com/citation-style-language/schema/raw/master/csl-citation.json".

The CFA results indicated that the model fit indices were within acceptable ranges (CFI = 0.901, RMSEA = 0.045, IFI = 0.901,  $\chi^2/df = 2.030$ ).

Table 2 demonstrates that the convergent validity did not meet the minimum acceptable fit criterion of .5 for all 10 constructs; however, we can accept .4, as Fornell and Larcker (1981) assumed that if the AVE is lower than 0.5 but the value of the composite reliability

**Table 1**  
Results of the EF

	Item	Factor loading value	Mean	Standard deviation		Item	Factor loading value	Mean	Standard deviation
A)	<b>Social relationships</b>				F)	Safety and security			
A1.	Good parent relationships	.74	4.6	.67	F1.	Safe place to live	.45	4.1	.88
A2.	Good sibling relationships	.77	4.4	.79	F2.	Thefts rarely occur in area	.56	3.5	1.09
A3.	Good family relationships	.74	4.1	.87	F3.	No security system	.75	3.4	1.2
A4.	Being a respectful community member	.54	3.9	.81	F4.	Safety concerns in my community	.65	3.4	1.15
A5.	Accepting multicultural neighbors	.58	4.3	.81	F5.	Security of home during the festive season	.74	3.5	1.14
A6.	No complaints about neighbors	.55	4.3	.82	F6.	Area road safety	.47	3.8	1.01
A7.	Involved in neighborhood activities	.28 <sup>b</sup>	3.46	1.1	F7.	Area is free from vandalism/crime	.68	3.44	1.09
A8.	Friends support/help	.79	4.14	.82	F8.	Going out alone safely	.70	3.2	1.2
A9.	Friends treat well	.82	4.2	.77	F9.	No security camera in home	.76	3.32	1.19
A10.	Friends' care	.78	4.07	.83	G)	Education and skills			
A11.	Sharing happiness and sadness with close friends	.46	4.15	1.02	G1.	Satisfied with current level of education	.44	3.7	1
A12.	Taking vacations with friends	.55	4.04	1.0	G2.	Acquiring basic skills of reading/writing/arithmetic	.56	4.27	.838
B)	<b>Health status</b>				G3.	The chance to further studies	.68	4.06	.977
B1.	Dealing with stress	.22	3.5	.92	G4.	Access to skills development training courses	.59	3.8	.948
B2.	Facing challenges with confidence	.17	3.59	.985	G5.	Access to financial aid/scholarships	.70	3.55	1.1

continue Table 1...

	Item	Factor loading value	Mean	Standard deviation		Item	Factor loading value	Mean	Standard deviation
B3.	Dealing with loneliness	.41	3.6	1.08	G6.	Opportunity to pursue education at a higher level	.69	3.7	1.04
B4.	Comfortable with body weight	.22	3.5	1.16	G7.	Motivation to pursue education	.67	3.97	.97
B5.	Eating a balanced diet	.27	3.37	1.03	H)	ICT			
B6.	My health is excellent	.44	3.6	.9	H1.	Daily tasks facilitated by ICT	.72	4.2	.81
B7.	Having adequate knowledge about health	.73	3.47	.92	H2.	Communication accelerated via ICT	.76	4.28	.79
B8.	Reproductive health awareness	.76	3.57	.89	H3.	Daily tasks organized via social networking	.72	4.39	.76
B9.	Maintaining reproductive health	.71	3.4	1.02	H4.	Daily tasks simplified via various ICT applications	.74	4.07	.85
B10.	Climb stairs comfortably	.52	3.89	.98	H5.	Gaining knowledge in fields	.72	4.32	.77
B11.	No body aches while walking and working	.32	3.7	.93	H6.	Perceived safety in using ICT	.68	3.9	.88
C)	<b>Physical environment</b>				H7.	ICT facilities make life stylish	.67	3.89	.935
C1.	Place is not affected by disasters	.76	4.04	1.0	I)	Economic opportunity			
C2.	Place is not affected by sound pollution	.73	3.75	1.07	I1.	Good financial standing	.24 <sup>b</sup>	3.2	.10
C3.	Area with pollution-free air	.77	3.59	1.07	I2.	Able to do shopping	.18 <sup>b</sup>	3.5	.98
C4.	Supply of clean water where I live	.54	4.24	.84	I3.	No debt problems	.12 <sup>b</sup>	.37	1.12
C5.	Numerous natural flora and fauna	.52	3.8	1.01	I4.	Able to save money	.33	3.3	1.1
C6.	Able to recycle and dispose rubbish	.68	3.6	1.08	I5.	Adequate personal emergency savings	.54	3.1	1.1

continue Table 1...

	Item	Factor loading value	Mean	Standard deviation		Item	Factor loading value	Mean	Standard deviation
C7.	Many green areas	.38	4	.95	I6.	Investments in schemes	.69	2.8	1.3
C8.	My daily activities not affected by weather changes	.32	3.5	1.02	I7.	Have own property	.69	2.9	1.22
C9.	My daily activities not affected by road traffic	.72	3.7	1.01	I8.	Access to youth entrepreneurship programs	.60	3.1	1.06
C10.	Neighbors do not disturb life	.59	3.98	.96	I9.	Access to business finance/loans	.69	3.12	1.07
C11.	Not allowed to keep animals (e.g., pets) where I live	.45	3.4	1.15	I10.	Access to jobs/economic opportunities	.44	3.3	1.07
C12.	No abandoned buildings	.34	3.7	1.11	I11.	Have money for travel/trips/vacations	.67	2.7	1.17
D)	Spiritual well-being				I12.	Access to medical treatment /health insurance	.63	2.9	1.23
D1.	Dealing with all the challenges we face	.49	3.9	.83	J)	Public physical facilities			
D2.	Dealing consciously with others	.57	4.1	.84	J1.	Satisfaction with telecommunication signal coverage	.41	3.76	1.0
D3.	Keep on time with all promises	.50	3.8	.85	J2.	Satisfaction with internet connection	.40	3.7	1.02
D4.	Empathetic with my family / neighbors	.64	4.3	.77	J3.	Satisfaction with radio/TV broadcasting	.34	3.9	.99
D5.	Not holding a grudge against anyone	.56	3.8	1.02	J4.	Satisfaction with electricity/water supply	.46	4.05	.907
D6.	Celebrating the successes of friends wholeheartedly	.67	4.1	.81	J5.	Satisfaction with road facilities	.45	3.8	.917
D7.	Having some sort of goal in mind	.65	4.02	.89	J6.	Adequate public facilities	.65	3.89	.97
D8.	Involving in many spiritual activities	.69	4.2	.83	J7.	Adequate places of worship	.58	4.1	.89
E)	<b>Civic participation</b>				J8.	Adequate grocery shops	.74	4.03	.93



continue Table 1...

	Item	Factor loading value	Mean	Standard deviation		Item	Factor loading value	Mean	Standard deviation
E1.	Power is distributed fairly throughout the country by the government	.75	2.9	1.15	J9.	Adequate restaurants/ places to eat	.78	3.93	1.02
E2.	Developing civic practices	.80	2.98	1.1	J10.	Accessible outdoor recreation places	.72	3.57	1.13
E3.	Freedom of speech	.85	2.9	1.13	J11.	Satisfaction with the water/sewerage systems	.73	3.6	1.05
E4.	Suitable policies from leadership to ensure well-being	.83	3.1	1.06	J12.	Sufficient banking services	.62	3.07	.98
E5.	Freedom to select and be involved in political parties	.44	3.6	1.06					
E6.	Caring for civilians' futures by political system	.79	3.2	1.08					
E7.	Able to voice opinions	.07	3.05	1.15					

<sup>b</sup> The item was excluded after the EFA.

Table 2  
Scale Development Sample Data—CFA Statistics

Variable	M	SD	$\alpha$	Composite construct reliability	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. SOR	4.2	.54	.86	.83	<b>.501</b>									
2. HS	3.6	.63	.85	.82	.128	<b>.432</b>								
3. PHE	3.8	.64	.86	.76	.109	.27	<b>.448</b>							
4. SPW	4.1	.61	.86	.86	.201	.29	.309	<b>.437</b>						
5. CIP	3.1	.88	.91	.91	.029	.067	.366	.132	<b>.664</b>					
6. SAS	3.5	.82	.89	.88	.102	.176	.432	.224	.157	<b>.475</b>				
7. EDU	3.8	.74	.87	.85	.153	.278	.181	.366	.180	.218	<b>.5</b>			
8. ICT	4.2	.65	.89	.87	.108	.184	.21	.308	.046	.169	.413	<b>.56</b>		
9. ECOP	3.2	.73	.88	.85	.097	.114	.234	.352	.177	.21	.301	.091	<b>.415</b>	
10. PUPHF	<b>39</b>	.71	.92	.86	.152	.186	.274	.254	.071	.2	.285	.38	.206	<b>.516</b>

Note. Squared inter-correlations are displayed in the main diagonal. The value of the average variance extracted (AVE), shown in bold type, was evaluated for the measurement model. SOR: social relationships; HS: health status; PHE: physical environment; SPW: spiritual well-being; CIP: civic participation; SAS: safety and security; EDU: education and skills; ICT: information and communication technology; ECOP: economic opportunity; PUPHF: public physical facilities.

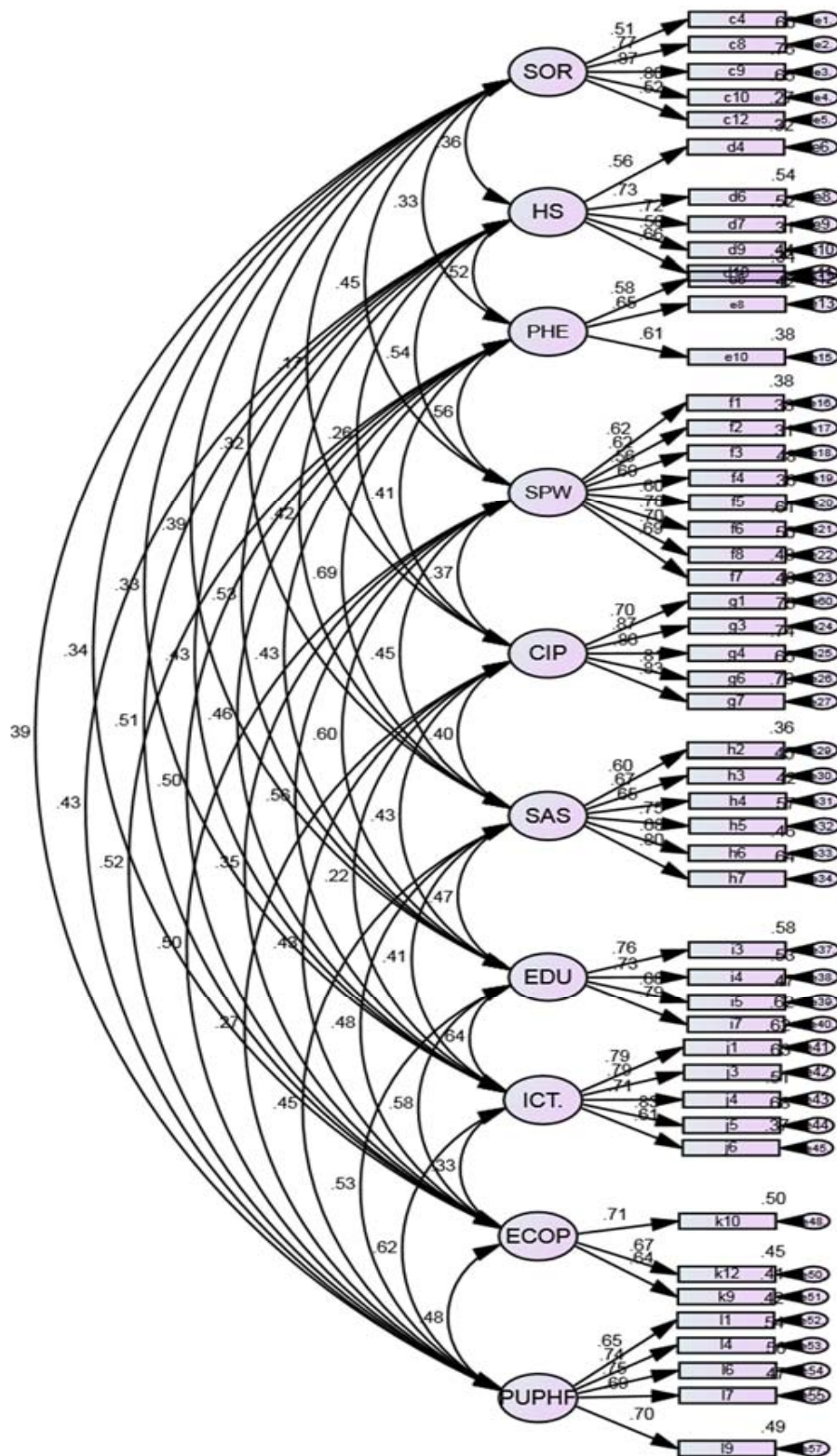


Figure 1. The measurement model for the Malaysian YWS.

is more than .6, the convergent validity of the subscales is still satisfactory.

The findings further show that the 10 constructs demonstrated acceptable discriminant validity. The AVE for all 10 constructs was more than the squared correlation coefficient ( $r^2$ ) for each pair (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2013). The results in Table 2 further show that the estimated reliability coefficients were adequate for all 10 dimensions, ranging from 0.85 to 0.92.

## Discussion

The current study aimed to develop and assess the psychometric properties of a new self-report instrument (the YWS) that evaluates multiple dimensions among Malaysian youth. The YWS is a self-report measure that adapts the WIT-Y and GYWI and taps into 10 significant dimensions of youth well-being. The YWS was shown to have suitable internal consistency, reliability, and construct validity. The results of the EFA reported here showed that this YWS could be conceptualized as embracing a wide overall construct and 10 domain-specific constructs. The results of the CFA demonstrated that the multidimensional model for understanding and measuring youth well-being had sufficient fit to the dataset in a sample of Malaysian youths.

Many participants invoked the 10 YWS dimensions that ranged from the personal and relational to the collective. It seems that the YWS can be best understood as having a domain-general YWS construct and two constructs of the YWS that also capture the exclusive features of relational well-being. The results of this study showed that relational well-being underscores competences in and across the functional dimensions of social relationships and civic participation. In fact, social relationship is fundamental to overall youth well-being in relationship to family, friend, and neighborhood variables, as is consistent with classical and ecological systems theories (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). It is vital to include the impact of the studies of youth well-being as the present findings show that social relationship may be more affected by immediate variables such as family and neighborhoods, whereas overall youth well-being may be affected more by distal variables such as friends and peers.

The findings also pointed out the relational well-being of Malaysian youth can improve by asking the

young to get involved in the community building, as this relational well-being treats individuals, the family system, peer interaction, neighborhood environment, and community involvement as interdependent and relational. Morsillo and Prilleltensky (2007) confirmed that relational well-being, in the form of relatives, friendships, and role models is a strong source for efforts to enhance the collective well-being. Furthermore, these results are consistent with McKnight (1995) who proposed a community vision in which the marginalized people are not treated as clients; however, they are instead joined into the community to experience social networks, friendship, support, and citizenship identity.

In addition, the results showed that many young people feel happy because relationships in the community are harmonious. Some of the collective issues important to Malaysian youth included high-quality health care, ICT tools, education, economy opportunities, safe communities, and accessible and caring physical environments. As the findings revealed, each one of the dimensions occurs in the physical space of communities. Malaysian youths then were crucial of the broader collective that they reside in and recognized many capitals, resources, and replies of importance to their collective well-being. Prilleltensky (2014) deliberated similar fundamental dimensions as principles of collective well-being. He proposed the need to make society more equitable via the redistribution of economic security, adequate health and education, safety, adequate housing and social structures, and a clean environment.

Further, descriptions of youth well-being by participants in this study show a focus on spirituality. Though spirituality is a fundamental sign of personal well-being and significant to young people from more-individualistic cultures (Prilleltensky, 2014), our results indicate that spirituality is significant to relational well-being as well. The human development literature suggests that adaptive developmental instruction creates the capability for every young person to achieve successful and healthy development (Lerner, Brentano, Dowling, & Anderson, 2002). In this study, young people who were energetically involved in equal and mutually beneficial relationships with their contexts contributed constructively to the healthy development and well-being of both themselves and society. Though the numerous relationships between individuals and contexts have been the focus of studies on positive

youth development, we consider that the function of spirituality in the well-being of young people needs more attention, particularly because spirituality may stimulate context relations for adaptive behavior that allows individuals to contribute in effective ways to youths' healthy development of a sense of self and a sense of family, as well as to the collectivistic society (Dowling, Gestsdottir, Anderson, von Eye, & Lerner, 2003).

Results finally support the notion of youth well-being as an umbrella under which 10 YWS dimensions—health, education, economic, ICTs, physical environment, safety environment, civic participation, social relationships, and spirituality—are deployed to enhance personal, relational, and collective well-being. The three aspects of well-being are interrelated that require interventions to promote youth well-being to be comprehensive and addressing 10 YWS dimensions that influence it. Adults should work with youth and youth themselves through youth-adult partnerships programs in learning how to address personal, relational, and collective well-being. The programs help young people in building capacities and create innovative opportunities for youth to work together with adults to mitigate harmful conditions. The program also assists the youth to develop skills and knowledge, socio-political awareness, interpersonal competencies, and a greater understanding of themselves and the community through social action. Therefore, the interplay between the multidimensional constructs of the YWS and various youth–adult partnerships in intervention programs should be examined to create the most optimal environment for a holistic approach toward youth well-being in Malaysia.

Beyond youth-adult partnerships programs, parents and families certainly play a critical role. However, the whole community may be the greatest important holding environment for flourishing. As collectivistic cultures, families can search for ways to give youth the opportunity to have a voice in their community's decisions that positively affect their lives. Besides that, youth well-being may occur when both the youth and their communities has the full benefit from the satisfaction of necessities at all levels. For instance, the youth in the community derives tangible benefits from access to high-quality education, job opportunities, universal health care, and safe communities. Communities benefit from

institutions that stimulate civic participation, health, and employment and from the youth who help these health-enhancing entities.

## Conclusion

This study emphasizes the importance of demonstrating respect for Malaysian youth and their respective cultures and beliefs as a foundation for developing measures to assess youth well-being in the community. The conceptualization and measure of YWS are supported in the commitment to determine 10 dimensions as well as outcomes aimed at enhancing personal, relational, and collective well-being. Such a three-tiered approach manages to incorporate the YWS, whereas highlighting 10 important dimensions that have to be taken into account when developing the YWS in the community. In fact, much can be gained by integrating youth well-being and community development to addresses some of the implicit assumptions that underpin the YWS.

Yet, the results suggest that our community do play a role in the well-being of the youth. It appears that the association between community and youth well-being is shaped by a range of dimensions. Efforts to transform community development intervention approach into youth well-being should bear this in mind. Yet, the results also recommend that certain population groups, such as how the youth might benefit more from the community-based intervention than others. For instance, youths are often attempting to sustain a certain degree of independence and, therefore, would benefit from community support. The YWS, especially when enriched with youth-adult partnerships programs, could do much to assist these youths in their quest for better autonomy. Although this holds true, it is similarly significant to bear in mind that personal, relational, as well as collective determinants also shape the lives of these youth. Therefore, although the YWS can contribute to the well-being of Malaysians, it is vital too, on the one hand, to translate the needs of these youths into political demands as well as political action. On the other, it is equally important not to fall into the trap to regard the construction of strong communities as the default answer to all issues facing Malaysian youth today. This study argues that the youth have personal, relational, and collective desires and beliefs that need to be considered in community practice. In Malaysia, the



youth's service providers who concentrate only on the youths' personal issues may be doing a disservice if they pay no attention to the broader relational and collective desires of the youth. Youth workers should, thus, involve in multiple levels of investigation to ensure the youth well-being in community settings.

### Ethical clearance

The study was approved by the institution.

### Conflict of interest

None.

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