Psychological Predictors of Student Wellbeing: Examining the Interplay Between Self-Esteem, Self-Efficacy, and Their Determinants among Private University Students in Klang Valley

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Abstract: The purpose of this research is to explore the Psychological Predictors of Student Wellbeing: Examining the Interplay Between Self-Esteem, Self-Efficacy, and Their Determinants among Private University Students in Klang Valley. A quantitative approach was used in this research which consists of 648 private University students in Klang Valley by using a stratified sampling method. A Person correlation coefficient was used to measure the variables. The factor analysis validated the theoretical model by confirming that self-esteem and self-efficacy are significant latent variables contributing to student wellbeing. The study found both have a significant positive correlation between self-esteem, self-efficacy towards student's wellbeing. Based on the results, it is clearly demonstrated the analysis revealed that self-esteem has a statistically significant impact on students' wellbeing (β = -0.14, t = -3.583, p = 0.000), confirming Hypothesis H_1a. This suggests that students' perceptions of their self-worth play a crucial role in shaping their overall sense of wellbeing. In contrast, self-efficacy did not show a significant effect on wellbeing (β = -0.05, t = -1.57, p = 0.12), leading to the rejection of Hypothesis H_1b. These findings pointed to the need for intervention to enhance their wellbeing which related to their self-esteem, and self-efficacy among private university students especially for their future career development. Hopefully, this research will guide all lecturers and counsellors in private universities in enhancing the student's wellbeing in the future.

Keywords: Positive Psychology, Private University Students, Self-Esteem, Self-Efficacy, Wellbeing

1. Introduction

The significance of this study lies in its potential benefits for private university students and lecturers in the Klang Valley, especially those in counseling and psychology. By examining the relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy, and student wellbeing, this research offers valuable insights that can enhance students' daily lives. Counselors, therapists, and clinical psychologists can use these findings to develop new techniques and programs aimed at improving students' self-esteem, self-efficacy, and their overall wellbeing. Ultimately, this study aims to foster positive wellbeing and enhance the quality of life among private university students.

By looking at university students' wellbeing, researchers in the future can evaluate the effectiveness of different programs aimed at improving mental health and wellness. This information can be used to identify best practices for fostering students' happiness. Lastly, research on students'

happiness at private universities can help us understand how to improve their mental health and wellness. The findings of this study can be used as a springboard by future academics to go deeper into this subject. Furthermore, this study is important because it will help additional research to be done in Malaysia, particularly on self-esteem, self-efficacy and student's wellbeing.

1.1 Background of Study

The positive psychology movement also has made a significant contribution to psychology by increasing the focus on the positive (Wang, Guo, & Yang, 2023) . In addition, self-esteem and self-efficacy are consistently linked to a wide range of positive life outcomes such as improved psychological health, social functioning, and quality of life spanning adolescence into adulthood (Bleckmann et al., 2023; Moksnes et al., 2020).

Specifically, a large-scale longitudinal study found that adolescents with lower self-esteem were more likely to experience depressive symptoms two decades later, underscoring the long-term importance of positive self-evaluations (Orth & Robins, 2014). Self-esteem and self-efficacy are widely recognized as important psychological constructs, strongly linked to various life outcomes, including health and social functioning across adolescence and adulthood.

For instance, there is a definite link between increased self-esteem and favorable outcomes, such as professional success, better social connections, a sense of wellbeing, favorable peer perceptions, scholastic performance, and effective coping mechanisms. (Nguyen et.al, 2019). Suicide, drug misuse, antisocial behavior, sadness, and low self-esteem are all causally linked. The body of research shows that students with poor self-esteem have lower social functioning, including acceptance by peers. Therefore, it is essential to comprehend how self-efficacy, and self-esteem affect students' wellbeing. Therefore, understanding how self-efficacy and self-esteem influence students' wellbeing is essential, as both constructs have been shown to protect against depression and emotional exhaustion among university populations (Esteban et al., 2022)

1.2 Problem Statement

The relationship between students' overall wellbeing and their levels of self-efficacy and self-esteem is not well understood, despite the increased interest in student wellbeing. A study published in Frontiers in Psychology looked at the variables that affect students' self-esteem, vitality, and happiness. According to Saleh d et al. (2017), more than half the sample college students were also suffering from low self-esteem (57.6%), little optimism (56.7%), and a low sense of self-efficacy (62.7%). In addition, Self-efficacy also is one of the elements which plays a huge role in performing good academic achievement and their good wellbeing. Students with higher self-efficacy and positive emotions are better equipped to handle academic and social stress

While various factors are believed to influence student wellbeing, there is a lack of comprehensive research identifying the significant determinants that contribute to self-esteem and self-efficacy. In recent years, self-esteem and self-efficacy have been recognized as significant psychological determinants of happiness, prompting scholars to explore why some students demonstrate lower levels of these traits (Diener et al., 2018; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). to self-esteem and self-efficacy among private university students.

Seligman's PERMA model has been updated and refined over the years, and recent empirical work continues to support its five foundational elements Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment as significant determinants of wellbeing (Seligman, 2018; Kern et al., 2015).

1.3 Research Objectives

The purpose of this research is to explore the relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy to improve the quality of wellbeing among private University students in Malaysia. To be more specific, the objectives of this research are as follows:

1a. To measure the correlation between self-esteem and students' wellbeing.

1b. To measure the correlation between self-efficacy and students' wellbeing.
2. To examine if there are significant determinants of students' wellbeing contributing to self-esteem and self-efficacy.
3. To examine the impact of students' self-esteem and self-efficacy on their overall wellbeing.

1.4 Research Questions

1a. What is the correlation between self-esteem and students' wellbeing?
1b. What is the correlation between self-efficacy and students' wellbeing?
2. Are there significant determinants of students' wellbeing that contribute to self-esteem and self-efficacy?
3. What is the impact of students' self-esteem and self-efficacy on their overall wellbeing?

1.5 Hypothesis

H1a: There is a significant positive correlation between self-esteem and students' wellbeing.
H1b: There is a significant positive correlation between self-efficacy and students' wellbeing.
H2: Determinants of students' wellbeing significantly contribute to self-esteem and self-efficacy.
H3: Students' self-esteem and self-efficacy have a significant impact on their overall wellbeing.

2. Literature Review

This study is underpinned by the PERMA Model of Wellbeing developed by Seligman (2011). The PERMA model represents five key elements of wellbeing: Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment. These components collectively explain how psychological resources such as self-esteem and self-efficacy influence student wellbeing.

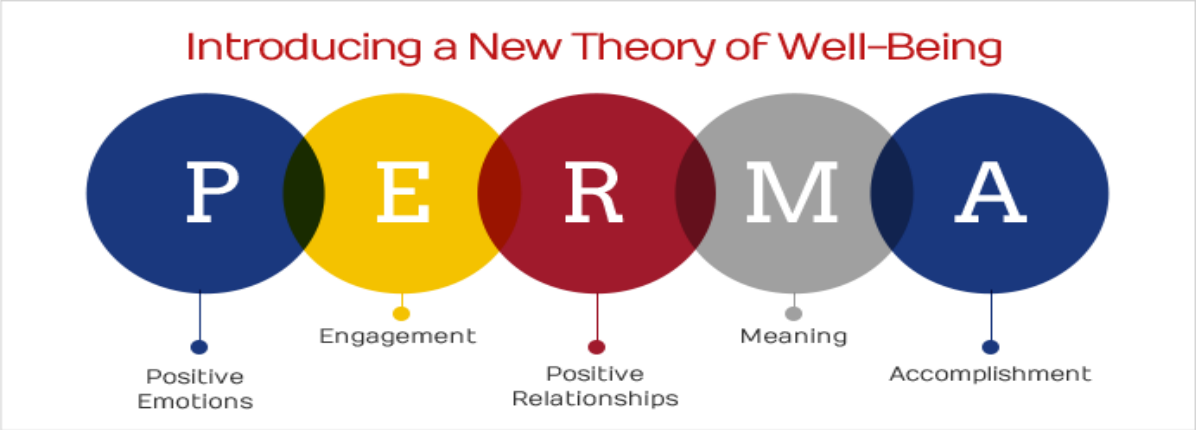
Firstly, Positive Emotions are closely linked to self-esteem and self-efficacy. Students who experience frequent positive emotions often report higher confidence, optimism, and motivation, which in turn enhance both their academic performance and overall wellbeing.

Secondly, Relationships play a vital role in reinforcing self-worth. Students with higher self-esteem are more likely to build and maintain supportive social interactions, which foster a sense of belonging and strengthen resilience against academic stress. Thirdly, Engagement or deep involvement in academic and extracurricular activities is strongly connected to self-efficacy. Students who believe in their abilities are more likely to immerse themselves in learning tasks, leading to growth and mastery.

The final two elements, Meaning and Accomplishment, are also central to students' wellbeing. A sense of purpose in academic life and the recognition of achievements directly influence students' self-esteem and self-efficacy. Students who perceive meaning in their education are more motivated and resilient, while accomplishments provide validation and reinforce a positive self-concept.

Figure 1

PERMA Model from the Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Wellbeing by Dr. Seligman (2011)



Overall, the PERMA model offers a comprehensive framework for understanding how self-esteem and self-efficacy serve as predictors of student wellbeing. By situating this research within Seligman's (2011) positive psychology perspective, the study highlights how fostering positive psychological traits can enhance wellbeing outcomes among university students.

Recent studies have increasingly emphasized the importance of psychological factors such as self-esteem and self-efficacy in shaping students' academic performance and overall wellbeing. These constructs are considered essential for fostering resilience, motivation, and positive mental health among students. Zhao et al. (2021) explored the relationship between self-esteem and academic engagement among adolescents. Their study found that self-esteem significantly influences how actively students participate in their academic environment. The authors proposed a moderate mediation model, suggesting that self-esteem not only directly affects engagement but also interacts with other psychological variables to shape academic outcomes. This highlights the foundational role of self-esteem in promoting both academic and emotional wellbeing.

Similarly, Luo, Gao, and Liu (2022) conducted a longitudinal study to examine the relationship between self-esteem and academic self-efficacy among Chinese college students. Using a cross-lagged model, they found a reciprocal relationship, where higher self-esteem predicted greater self-efficacy over time, and vice versa. This dynamic interaction suggests that building one of these traits can positively reinforce the other, ultimately contributing to improved student wellbeing.

In a more applied context, Jackson State University (2020) emphasized the role of self-esteem in improving academic performance. Their report argued that enhancing students' internal self-worth can lead to better academic outcomes, as students with higher self-esteem are more likely to set goals, persist through challenges, and maintain a positive outlook. This aligns with the broader understanding that self-esteem is a critical driver of both academic success and psychological health. Together, these studies underscore the interconnectedness of self-esteem, self-efficacy, and student wellbeing. They suggest that educational institutions should prioritize interventions that strengthen these psychological traits to support students' academic and emotional development.

A growing body of research highlights the importance of self-esteem and self-efficacy as key psychological predictors of student wellbeing. Their findings revealed that students with higher self-efficacy tend to report greater happiness and spiritual wellbeing, suggesting that belief in one's academic abilities contributes positively to emotional health. Choo Yap et al. (2021) conducted a quantitative study among Malaysian university students, finding a strong positive correlation between self-esteem and happiness. This supports the idea that students who value themselves are more likely to experience positive emotions and a greater sense of wellbeing. Kim and Park (2023) explored the mediating role of self-efficacy in the relationship between self-esteem and mental health. Their study found that self-efficacy partially mediates this relationship, indicating that self-esteem enhances mental health both directly and indirectly through increased self-efficacy. Singh and Kaur (2022) focused on

undergraduate students in India, reporting a significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and wellbeing. Their findings emphasize the role of self-belief in managing academic and personal challenges, which in turn supports psychological wellbeing.

Lee and Lee (2020) used structural equation modeling to investigate the link between academic self-efficacy and psychological wellbeing. Their results confirmed that students with higher academic self-efficacy are more likely to experience positive mental health outcomes, reinforcing the importance of confidence in academic abilities. Collectively, these studies affirm that both self-esteem and self-efficacy are critical to student wellbeing, with each contributing uniquely to emotional and academic outcomes. They also suggest that interventions aimed at enhancing these traits may be effective in promoting mental health and academic success among university students.

3. Research Design

The research design is a quantitative correlational research design. As the research questions imply, correlational research design includes both prediction studies and related studies. The quantitative approach will give an advantage.

3.1 Population and Sampling

Students from Klang Valley private universities would make up the study's population. This covers every student who meets the requirements for study on the connection between self-efficacy and self-esteem towards students' wellbeing who attends private institutions in Klang Valley.

The stratified random sampling method was used to select the participants. Stratified sampling was used to allow researchers to obtain a sample population that best represents the entire population being studied by dividing it into subgroups called strata. It involves first dividing a population into subpopulations and then applying random sampling methods to each subpopulation to form a test group. (Hayes, 2021). Therefore, the sample of this research encompasses students from private universities in Klang Valley of different ages, races, religions, levels of study, parents' incomes, etc. Stratified sampling also always has achieved greater precision than simple random sampling. It is more convenient to stratify a sample than to select a simple random sample. The stratified random sampling due to Shashuritawati (2006) that this method is very suitable for a nonuniform population, and the cost of data collection is cheaper than a simple random sampling. The process of stratified sampling was used to identify strata, determine proportions and calculate random size. Finally, researchers use a computer program or random numbers to select students at random from each small group. In this sense, the sample fairly represents the entire large group.

3.2 Instrumentation

In this research, the questionnaires were divided into four parts. It included the demographic factors, Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSES), General Self Efficacy Scale (GSE) and Oxford Happiness Questionnaires for the student's wellbeing. The background of the instruments is crucial. One popular instrument for assessing someone's wellbeing is the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire. It was developed by Michael Argle and Peter Hills in 2022. Peter Hills and Michael Argyle created OHQ who were very popular among positive psychologists in this world. Michael Argyle and Hills P. from Oxford University founded OHQ consists of 29 items with six Likert scales to measure the people's level of happiness in 2012. (Hills & Argyle, 2002). RSES with 10 items, often used for determining someone's degree of self-esteem is the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale. Morris Rosenberg is the founder of the RSES. It was developed in 1965. The RSES exhibits strong dependability. The third instrument is General Self Efficacy with 10 items. Matthias Jerusalem and Ralf Schwarzer created the GSE. It was created in 1979. Numerous investigations have demonstrated the excellent reliability of the GSE. Every instrument utilized in this study has undergone prior validation and has proven to have good reliability and validity when measuring the construct of student wellbeing, self-efficacy, and self-esteem. These tools have been extensively employed in comparable research settings, guaranteeing the precision and coherence of the information gathered. Table 1 illustrates the original and items used for testing the

questionnaire that frame each construct. Nevertheless, all the items have been validated by conducting pilot test procedures.

Table 1

Original and Items Used for Testing the Questionnaire that Frame Each Construct

	Numbers of Items	Sources	Reference
Demographic	9 items		
Self-esteem	10 items	Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSES)	Martin-Albo, Núñez, Navarro, and Grijalvo, (2007)
Self-efficacy	10 items	General Self Efficacy Scale (GSE)	Schwarzer, R., & Jerusalem, M. (1995)
Wellbeing	29 items	Oxford Happiness Questionnaires (OHQ)	Michael Argyle 2002

3.3 Data Analysis

1. Is there any significant relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy, and happiness level?

In this research, the data will be analyzed using the SPSS tool for windows 26.00. Correlations among the independent variables will be used to measure the relationship between students' self-esteem, self-efficacy towards wellbeing. Correlation Pearson was used to answering the first research objective and research question.

2. What are the significant determinants of student's wellbeing contributing to students' self-esteem and self-efficacy?

EFA (Exploratory Factor Analysis) will be used to measure the significant determinants of happiness level contributing to students' academic performance. EFA will reduce the fewer number of dimensions to validate the factor of wellbeing contributing to students' self-esteem and self-efficacy.

3. Do students' self-esteem and self-efficacy have a significant impact on their wellbeing?

Multiple regression analysis (MRA) will be used to investigate the impacts of students' self-esteem on their wellbeing.

4. Results

1a. What is the correlation between self-esteem and students' wellbeing?
1b. What is the correlation between self-efficacy and students' wellbeing?
H1a: There is a significant positive correlation between self-esteem and students' wellbeing.
H1b: There is a significant positive correlation between self-efficacy and students' wellbeing.

Table 2.1

Descriptive Statistics for Variables Measures

Panel A	Mean	Median	Max
Self Esteem	3.279	3.200	4.400
Self Efficacy	3.080	3.000	4.000
WellBeing	3.425	3.414	4.660

Panel B	**SE**	**SF**	**WellBeing**
Self Esteem	1.00	.642**	.757**
Self Efficacy		1.00	.675**
WellBeing			1.00

The above table presents descriptive statistics for five self-rated attitudes used in this research, self-esteem, self-efficacy towards happiness level. Panel A calculates the mean, median, maximum, minimum, and standard deviation for each variable. Panel B shows the correlations between self-rated attitude measure pairs. Table 2.1 Panel B reports the correlation between self-esteem and self-efficacy towards wellbeing. The correlation between self-esteem and wellbeing level is 0.757, which is a high positive correlation. It supports the alternative hypothesis. Similar to Choo Yap et al. (2021), the correlation between self-esteem and happiness measures relatively higher, which indicates that individuals with higher self-esteem have higher motivation which may result in greater.

On the other hand, the correlation between self-efficacy and happiness level is a moderately positive relationship. The strong positive correlation coefficient of 0.675 supports the alternative hypothesis, suggesting that higher self-efficacy levels are linked with increased happiness levels among the population under investigation. This result is also consistent with Amiri et al. (2018), who found there is a significant relationship between spiritual wellbeing and happiness with academic self-efficacy. Therefore, it answered the research question 1 and supports the hypothesis.

2. Are there significant determinants of students' wellbeing that contribute to self-esteem and self-efficacy?

H2: Determinants of students' wellbeing significantly contribute to self-esteem and self-efficacy.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is a statistical technique used to identify the underlying structure (factors) among a set of observed variables. In **SPSS**, you can perform EFA using the **Factor Analysis** procedure.

Reliability was extremely high (0.861) and could be elevated to an acceptable level by examining the squared multiple correlations for items to delete. Additionally, the mean inter-item correlation for the happiness subscale was 0.186. Item analyses on all self-rated attitude scales were reinforced to provide evidence supporting their theoretical structures in this sample. Therefore, exploratory factor analyses were conducted to identify any interpretable structures emerging from the data.

To test if the scales were appropriate for factor analysis, KMO measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity were performed. For the self-rated attitude, the KMO of 0.951 and Bartlett's test of sphericity with a Chi-square of 16513.337 resulted in a significant p-value (P=0.00 with 903 degrees of freedom). For the happiness level, the KMO = 0.932 and Bartlett's Chi-square of 6933.409 (p=0.00 with 406 degrees of freedom). These tests described the scales as being adequate for factor analysis. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to examine an emerging factor structure from the data. Initially, a Principal Component Analysis was conducted, extracting items with eigenvalues over 1.0. As the items are hypothesized to be correlated, Varimax Rotation was selected. The resulting structure was confusing, with multiple items loading on the 6-factors for self-rated attitude and 4-factors for happiness level that emerged. After the sixth and fourth factors, the percent of variance explained was minimal and decreased with each subsequent factor. This initial analysis is summarized in Table 3.1 and Table 3.2.

Table 3.1

Factors extracted with eigenvalues over 1.0 for self-rated attitude

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	13.755	31.988	31.988	13.755	31.988	31.988
2	5.467	12.713	44.701	5.467	12.713	44.701
3	2.373	5.518	50.219	2.373	5.518	50.219
4	1.734	4.033	54.251	1.734	4.033	54.251
5	1.376	3.200	57.452	1.376	3.200	57.452
6	1.104	2.567	60.019	1.104	2.567	60.019
7	.984	2.288	62.307			
8	.811	1.886	64.193			
9	.793	1.844	66.037			
10	.777	1.806	67.843			
11	.731	1.699	69.542			
12	.714	1.661	71.204			
13	.690	1.605	72.808			
14	.669	1.557	74.365			
15	.646	1.503	75.867			
16	.600	1.395	77.263			
17	.560	1.303	78.566			
18	.547	1.271	79.837			
19	.535	1.245	81.082			
20	.520	1.210	82.292			
21	.501	1.164	83.456			
22	.483	1.124	84.580			
23	.472	1.097	85.676			
24	.453	1.053	86.729			
25	.431	1.003	87.732			
26	.411	.957	88.689			
27	.406	.943	89.632			
28	.390	.907	90.539			
29	.383	.890	91.429			
30	.372	.866	92.295			
31	.358	.834	93.129			
32	.327	.761	93.889			
33	.320	.744	94.634			
34	.310	.721	95.354			
35	.303	.706	96.060			
36	.289	.672	96.732			
37	.248	.576	97.308			
38	.241	.560	97.868			
39	.224	.521	98.389			
40	.209	.487	98.876			
41	.181	.421	99.296			
42	.163	.379	99.675			
43	.140	.325	100.000			

Table 3.2

Factors extracted with eigenvalues over 1.0 for wellbeing

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.767	30.233	30.233	8.767	30.233	30.233
2	2.836	9.780	40.012	2.836	9.780	40.012
3	1.310	4.518	44.531	1.310	4.518	44.531
4	1.143	3.940	48.470	1.143	3.940	48.470
5	.983	3.391	51.861			
6	.963	3.321	55.182			
7	.937	3.231	58.413			
8	.889	3.064	61.477			
9	.872	3.006	64.482			
10	.794	2.737	67.219			
11	.748	2.578	69.797			
12	.694	2.392	72.189			
13	.681	2.348	74.538			
14	.651	2.246	76.784			
15	.594	2.048	78.832			
16	.583	2.011	80.843			
17	.569	1.962	82.805			
18	.552	1.904	84.710			
19	.527	1.818	86.528			
20	.509	1.754	88.282			
21	.476	1.641	89.923			
22	.451	1.554	91.476			
23	.419	1.445	92.921			
24	.405	1.396	94.317			
25	.368	1.270	95.587			
26	.367	1.265	96.852			
27	.337	1.161	98.013			
28	.313	1.080	99.092			
29	.263	.908	100.000			

The scree plot was also examined, which showed an elbow after the six-factor, and a 4-factor solution was examined. The solution had some cross-loading but seemed to be interpretable. But before deciding to work with this factor solution, the researcher decided to look at the possibility of a three-factor solution based on PERMA theory. When constructing self-esteem and self-efficacy towards students' wellbeing, the researcher hypothesized that the instrument would measure two constructs, self-esteem, self-efficacy along with internal and external attitude. Therefore, a forced 2-factor solution was examined using principal axis factor analysis. The pattern coefficients were examined for latent variables. Coefficient values smaller than 0.3 were suppressed in the analysis.

The correspondence index for factor loading analysis validity is shown in Table 4.1. In this factor analysis, the communalities for all items range from 0.361 to 0.760, which can be interpreted as the proportion of variance of each item that was explained by five factors which are namely self-esteem, self-efficacy and wellbeing. Principal components analysis was used to identify and compute all items into specific factors or components that should be at least 0.5 (50%) or better, as suggested by Garson (2012).

Table 4.1

Factor Loadings and Communalities Based on Principal Components Analysis with Varimax Rotation for 49 Items

Construct	Self-Esteem	Construct	Self-Efficacy
SEO1	0.532	SF1	0.403
SERCO2	0.567	SF2	0.423
SE03	0.593	SF3	0.492
SE04	0.619	SF4	0.611
SERCO5	0.657	SF5	0.64
SERCO6	0.655	SF6	0.45
SEO7	0.598	SF7	0.532
SE08	0.481	SF8	0.673
SERCO9	0.586	SF9	0.636
SE10	0.566	SF10	0.645
HAPPYRC1	0.496	HAPPY16	0.381
HAPPY2	0.248	HAPPY17	0.519
HAPPY3	0.382	HAPPY18	0.42
HAPPY4	0.395	HAPPYRC19	0.571
HAPPY5	0.308	HAPPY20	0.584
HAPPYRC6	0.451	HAPPY21	0.561
HAPPY7	0.486	HAPPY22	0.6
HAPPY8	0.406	HAPPYRC23	0.403
HAPPY9	0.62	HAPPYRC24	0.595
HAPPYrc10	0.359	HAPPY25	0.55
HAPPY11	0.49	HAPPY26	0.571
HAPPY12	0.62	HAPPYRC27	0.652
HAPPYRC13	0.371	HAPPYRC28	0.496
HAPPY14	0.376	HAPPYRC29	0.472
HAPPY15	0.673		

Note. Factor loadings are based on principal components analysis with varimax rotation. Factor loading ≥ 0.50 (50%). From Table 4.1, it can be deduced that most items had a factor loading above 50%, while 24 items (highlighted in red in the original dataset) had a factor loading below 50%.

RO3 : What is the impact of students' self-esteem and self-efficacy on their overall wellbeing?

H3: Students' self-esteem and self-efficacy have a significant impact on their overall wellbeing.

The purpose of this analysis was to investigate the impact of students' self-esteem and self-efficacy on their wellbeing. The results of the impact are shown in Table 4.10.

Table 4.2

Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for the Impacts of Students' Self-Esteem and Self-Efficacy on Their Wellbeing

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.799[a]	.638	.636	2.922296

Note. a. Predictors: (Constant), students' self-esteem and self-efficacy

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9698.904	2	2424.726	283.803	.001
	Residual	5493.590	645	8.544		
	Total	15192.494	647			

Note. a. Dependent Variable: Private University student's wellbeing. b. Predictors: (Constant)

students' self-esteem and self-efficacy.

The results of Multiple Regression analysis in Table 4.2 show the two variables (students' self-esteem and self-efficacy) on students' wellbeing. The results show that the value of Adjusted R square is 0.64, which indicates that students' self-esteem and self-efficacy contribute 64% to students' wellbeing. Results of the ANOVA[a] test in Table 4.2 show that students' self-esteem, self-efficacy, happiness and religiosity have a significant impact on their academic performance (F=283.8, df=4, p=.001). As such, students' self-esteem and self-efficacy are predictors of students' wellbeing.

Table 4.3

Coefficients for Predictors of Private University Students' Wellbeing

Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
Model	**B**	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**	**Tolerance**	**VIF**
(Constant)	15.878	0.805		19.731	0.000	15.878	0.805
Self Esteem	-0.122	0.034	-0.141	-3.583	0.000	-0.122	0.034
Self-Efficacy	-0.046	0.029	-0.053	-1.573	0.116	-0.046	0.029
Wellbeing	0.023	0.017	0.057	1.332	0.183	0.023	0.017

Note. a. Dependent Variable: Private University Student's Wellbeing.

Findings in Table 4.3 reveal that students' self-esteem has a significant impact on their wellbeing (β =-0.14, t= -3.583, p=0.000). On the other hand, the impacts of students' self-efficacy (β =-0.05, t=-1.57, p=0.12) on their wellbeing is not significant. Therefore, these findings accepted the H_1a which the students' self-esteem has a significant positive impact on their wellbeing and rejected H_1b where the students' self-efficacy has a significant positive impact on their wellbeing. The objective and the research question 3 are answered.

5. Discussion of Study

The results presented descriptive statistics, offering a foundational understanding of the distribution and variability of the key variables. The mean and standard deviation values suggest that while students generally rated themselves moderately high on self-esteem and self-efficacy, there was notable variability, indicating diverse experiences and perceptions among the sample.

For the first research question, the correlation between self-esteem and wellbeing was 0.757, indicating a strong positive relationship. This supports the alternative hypothesis and aligns with previous research, such as Choo Yap et al. (2021), which found that individuals with higher self-esteem tend to report greater happiness and motivation. This suggests that students who perceive themselves positively are more likely to experience higher levels of wellbeing. Similarly, the correlation between self-efficacy and wellbeing was 0.675, reflecting a moderately strong positive relationship. This finding is consistent with Amiri et al. (2018), who reported a significant link between academic self-efficacy and spiritual wellbeing. The implication here is that students who believe in their ability to succeed are more likely to feel happy and fulfilled, reinforcing the importance of fostering self-efficacy in educational settings.

In the pursuit of understanding the psychological determinants of student wellbeing, this study employed factor analysis to explore the underlying particularly focusing on self-esteem and self-efficacy. These constructs were examined within the framework of PERMA theory, which emphasizes Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment as key elements of wellbeing. The goal was to determine whether these attitudes could be meaningfully grouped into latent factors that contribute to students' overall sense of wellbeing.

The initial step in the analysis involved examining the scree plot, a graphical representation used to determine the optimal number of factors to retain. The scree plot revealed an elbow after the sixth factor, suggesting that up to six factors might be statistically justifiable. A four-factor solution was subsequently explored, which appeared interpretable but exhibited cross-loadings in a situation where individual items load significantly on more than one factor, potentially complicating interpretation.

Despite the statistical suggestion of a more complex structure, the researcher opted for a theory-driven approach. Drawing from PERMA theory and the conceptual model of internal and external attitudes, a forced two-factor solution was examined using Principal Axis Factoring. This decision was grounded in the hypothesis that students' wellbeing could be primarily explained by two core psychological constructs which is self-esteem, representing internal self-worth, and self-efficacy, reflecting belief in one's ability to achieve goals.

To ensure clarity and interpretability, pattern coefficients (factor loadings) below 0.3 were suppressed. This threshold is commonly used in factor analysis to filter out weak associations between items and factors, thereby highlighting the most meaningful relationships. The results of the two-factor solution indicated that the items grouped coherently into the hypothesized constructs. The factor structure was interpretable and aligned with theoretical expectations, suggesting that self-esteem and self-efficacy are distinct yet foundational components of student wellbeing.

This outcome supports the notion that students' perceptions of their own value and capabilities are central to their overall wellbeing. The use of a simplified, two-factor model not only enhances interpretability but also reinforces the practical relevance of these constructs in educational and psychological interventions. By focusing on self-esteem and self-efficacy, educators and counselors can develop targeted strategies to support students' mental health and academic success.

Therefore, the factor analysis validated the theoretical model by confirming that self-esteem and self-efficacy are significant latent variables contributing to student wellbeing. This finding underscores the importance of fostering both internal confidence and a sense of competence among students, particularly in the context of higher education where psychological resilience is crucial for personal and academic development.

The results of this study provide important insights into the psychological factors influencing student wellbeing. Specifically, the analysis revealed that self-esteem has a statistically significant impact on students' wellbeing ($\beta = -0.14$, $t = -3.583$, $p = 0.000$), confirming Hypothesis H_1a. This suggests that students' perceptions of their self-worth play a crucial role in shaping their overall sense of wellbeing. In contrast, self-efficacy did not show a significant effect on wellbeing ($\beta = -0.05$, $t =$ -

1.57, $p = 0.12$), leading to the rejection of Hypothesis H_1b. While self-efficacy is often associated with motivation and academic performance, its direct influence on wellbeing in this context appears limited.

These findings successfully address Research Question 3, identifying self-esteem as a significant determinant of student wellbeing, while self-efficacy does not emerge as a significant predictor. The results underscore the importance of fostering healthy self-esteem among students as a strategy to enhance their psychological wellbeing.

6. Conclusion

This study investigated the psychological determinants of student wellbeing, focusing on the roles of self-esteem, self-efficacy, wellbeing, and demographic factors among private university students in Malaysia. The findings revealed that self-esteem significantly influences student wellbeing, while self-efficacy, although positively correlated with happiness, did not show a statistically significant impact on wellbeing in the regression model. Factor analysis supported the theoretical structure of self-esteem and self-efficacy as distinct latent constructs contributing to wellbeing, aligning with frameworks such as the PERMA model. These insights contribute to the growing body of literature emphasizing the importance of psychological resilience and wellbeing in higher education.

7. Recommendations

We need institutional support programs for our private university students. Universities should implement structured programs that enhance self-esteem through mentoring, peer support, and confidence-building workshops, as this trait has a direct impact on student wellbeing. The targeted interventions should be more focus for the student's Self-Efficacy. Although not a significant predictor in this model, self-efficacy remains positively associated with happiness. Academic coaching and skills-based training can help students build belief in their capabilities, indirectly supporting wellbeing. Another idea is about the Culturally Sensitive Wellbeing Models where the next or future research should explore how cultural and religious values interact with psychological traits to influence wellbeing, especially in diverse societies like Malaysia. In addition to deepening understanding, future studies should adopt longitudinal designs and qualitative approaches to capture the evolving nature of self-esteem and self-efficacy over time. Therefore, the educational policymakers should consider integrating psychological wellbeing indicators into institutional quality assurance frameworks to ensure a holistic approach to student development.

8. Co-Author Contribution

Author 1 carried out the introduction and literature review. Author 2 wrote the research methodology and Author 3 conducted the data collection and data analysis.

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