Innovations

Demystifying Student's Economic Livelihood and Happiness in Learning: Evidence from Southwestern Nigeria Tertiary Institutions

Folorunso Obayemi Temitope Obasuyi

Department of Economics, Bamidele Olumilua University of Education, Science and Technology, Nigeria

ORCID 0000-0001-6499-0574

Abstract: *Researchers have linked emotions to economic commodities, which explains the individual utility function in consuming goods like education. This normative behaviour generates consumers' inner satisfaction from consuming their chosen goods. Hence, this study examines the economic livelihood and gross student happiness of students in Nigeria's southwestern tertiary institutions, considering the correlation between human capital stock and economic growth. It investigates the relationship between economic livelihood, gross student happiness (GSH), and student academic achievement (SAA). A sample of 510 respondents with hierarchical data was analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM) with partial least squares (PLS). Although capital expenditure had a significant negative relationship with student academic achievement ($p < 0.05$), contradicting the economic belief that capital investment in education contributes to growth, it significantly and positively impacted student well-being (SWB). Conversely, cumulative GSH increased SAA by 39% across the sample. Therefore, parents, guardians, and the government are encouraged to invest substantially in their children/wards' income, capital, and recurrent expenditures to promote happiness in learning.*

Keywords: Gross national happiness, gross student happiness, economic livelihood, tertiary education, economic growth, academic achievement, SEM, human development Nigeria.

1. Introduction

The growth of an economy begins in the classroom, as education significantly contributes to economic growth across countries (Schultz, 1961; Hanushek & Woessmann, 2010; Barro, 2013; Glewwe, Maiga, & Zheng, 2014). Notably, two research outcomes (Dollar & Kraay, 2000; Dollar, Kleineberg, & Kraay, 2013) consistently agreed that growth is beneficial for the poor. However, despite the benefits of education and the relevance of growth to impoverished individuals, many children worldwide are dropping out of school (Obasuyi, 2018), often symbolizing unhappiness in learning. For instance, a young Nigerian named Bright stated, "I want to be a doctor in the future, but now I'm not going to school, I don't know how I'll be a

doctor" (Obiezu, 2018). Bright's situation expresses unhappiness due to his inability to continue his education and pursue his dream of becoming a medical doctor. This case illustrates one of the many instances of dropout in Nigeria, potentially caused by family poverty and structural challenges, such as the Boko Haram insurgency in Northern Nigeria (Obiezu, 2018), which may have deprived him of classroom participation.

The issue of out-of-school children is a global phenomenon. Statistical evidence reveals that in 2018, Sudan had 1,002,854 out-of-school children. Although the numbers varied in 2020, countries such as South Africa (509,806), the United States (245,238), Colombia (34,434), Brazil (272,499), and Germany (41,695) reported significant numbers of out-of-school children. Similarly, in 2021, countries like Australia (16,412), Cambodia (144,985), Niger (872,378), the Philippines (603,774), and Burkina Faso (456,061) recorded notable out-of-school figures (World Bank, 2022). Moreover, Nigeria's out-of-school trend has been increasing, with the number rising from 10.5 million in 2018 to 20 million in 2022 (Abdulsemiu, 2022; Obiezu, 2018; Adewale, 2017; Obasuyi, 2018; UNESCO, 2022; Alabi, 2022).

While the issue of out-of-school children primarily affects the primary level, the situation could potentially extend to the tertiary education system due to various endogenous and exogenous factors influencing higher education. Literature emphasizes that student learning experiences are statistically linked to the pursuit of happiness and life satisfaction (Umans & Lidén, 2018), particularly in the context of completing a four-year university program. Furthermore, happiness enhances students' receptiveness to classroom learning experiences and improves learning outcomes (Wiers-Jenssen, Stensaker, & Grogaard, 2002; Umans & Lidén, 2018).

Globally, reports on out-of-school children draw the attention of education economists and policymakers to the need to reduce dropout rates, as unequal access to education persists across households worldwide (Wu et al., 2008; Obasuyi & Rasiah, 2019; Obasuyi et al., 2020). Furthermore, research highlights a significant relationship between economic growth and human capital, which is closely tied to learning acquisition (Solow, 1956; Lucas, 1988).

Over the years, the use of GDP as a measure of economic growth was consistently opposed as not a good indicator to measure country's growth and people's welfare (Ngunjiri, 2017; Tabbodi et al., 2015). Consequently, Bhutan substitute GDP for gross national happiness (GNH) in the 1980s to determine the growth of the country's economy (Priesner, 2004; Tideman, 2011; Ura, 2015).They see GNH as a measure of economic and moral progress thereby brought economics into the realm of psychology (Tideman, 2011). While arguing the strong connection between GNH and economics, structural violence is a kind of violence imposed by the existing "structures, systems and culture" (Burton, Gilpin, & Draughon Moret, (2021); Tideman, 2011, p.135). Such a structural violence caused by economic structure or

systems is capable to impose unhappiness or stress on the children's habit, both short and long run. With this, GNH is measured by sustainable development, good governance, environmental conservation, as well as preservation and promotion of culture (Tideman, 2016; Balasubramanian, & Cashin, 2019).

Similarly, the expected growth from student learning experiences can be understood through the lens of structural violence imposed by educational systems on students' learning processes. For instance, the increase in school fees across Nigerian universities is a form of structural violence that negatively impacts students' happiness in learning (IseOlorunkanmi et al., 2021).

In this context, psycho-economic variables such as capital and recurrent expenditures are associated with student happiness. In Nigeria, concurrent education shocks, such as poor funding (IseOlorunkanmi et al., 2021), are likely linked to various psycho-economic variables that impact happiness. For instance, when students lack sufficient financial resources to meet learning demands, their inner joy and economic livelihood related to learning can be negatively affected. Consequently, successful grade transition and higher education completion become uncertain.

Therefore, the objective of the study is to:

i. examine the relationship between students' economic livelihood and gross student happiness (GSH) in the Southwestern Universities and Colleges of Education, Nigeria.

ii. examine the impact of student wellbeing (SWB) on GSH in the Southwestern Universities and Colleges of Education, Nigeria.

iii. determine the relationship between GSH and student's academic achievement (SAA) in the study area.

2. Literature Review

Overview of Southwestern Nigeria

The geographical map of Southwestern Nigeria is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Southwestern Region, Nigeria

Source: Nigerianinformer.com

The southwestern region is one of Nigeria's six geopolitical zones, predominantly inhabited by the Yoruba ethnic group, and comprises six states. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2020), based on data from the National Population Commission (NPC, 2020), the region's total population projection was 38,788,518 in 2019, with Lagos State having the highest population of over 12 million (12,772,884) and Ekiti State having the lowest population of over 3 million (3,350,401). Notably, the southwestern region has the lowest Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) value compared to other regions, with an MPI of 0.151, 40% incidence, and 37.7% intensity (NBS, 2022). Historically, the region has been a hub for education, with higher educational attainment and lower out-of-school rates compared to other regions.

Regarding economic activities, Lagos State remains the economic hub of the region and possibly the largest economic center in the federation. Agriculture is the primary occupation of the people, although many young graduates prefer career jobs over entrepreneurship. The Southwest region is rich in economic resources, including crude oil and bitumen deposits in Lagos and Ondo States. The people of the region are known for their rich culture and hospitality.

Conceptual Perspective

Economic Livelihood

When contrasting economic development and people's livelihood, Han and Jiang (2023) argue that both can be attained primarily in developed economies rather than developing countries. The world's poorest people are often defined by their economic livelihood, which is a way of making a living at the individual household level.

A livelihood encompasses the capabilities, assets (including material and social resources), and activities necessary for a means of living (Natarajan et al., 2022; DFID, 2000; Khan et al., 2020). Households employ various strategies to access, strengthen, and maintain their income (both cash and in-kind) to meet essential needs such as food, savings, livestock, and land. These strategies ultimately contribute to well-being and happiness. Notably, the concept of livelihood is often centered around economic livelihood, which serves as the foundation for household sustainability..

Gross Student Happiness

Although GDP has been a widely used measure of economic progress, it has faced criticism from opponents (Ngunjiri, 2017; Trinh, 2017; Mallett & Keen, 2012; Leamer, 2009). In response, alternative methods such as Gross National Happiness (GNH) have been developed to better capture welfare, although some researchers have expressed reservations (Syrquin, 2011). Similarly, in the context of student learning

progress, two common measures are often used: academic performance and achievement (Brew et al., 2021; Albarico et al., 2023; Entwistle, 2007).

In this study, we conceptualize Gross Student Happiness (GSH) as a psychological variable that measures the cumulative educational progress of students over a given period. GSH encompasses mood, emotions, and satisfaction derived from aggregate psycho-developmental learning activities influenced by economic livelihood. This concept was previously introduced by Obasuyi et al. (2022), who defined GSH as the culmination of various indicators (economic, educational, environmental, social, etc.) that contribute to a student's overall happiness in learning. We assume that a higher economic livelihood, as defined by the conglomerate of indicators affecting students, is positively related to quality of GSH in learning.

Theoretical Perspective

This study draws on the capability literature of Amartya Sen and the philosophy of right livelihood, as discussed by Ruut Veenhoven (Sen, 1999a; Veenhoven, 2014), to provide a framework for understanding human development in the study area. According to human development theory, happiness and a good life are positively correlated. The concept of a good life has been extensively explored in development literature and philosophical discussions on happiness (Veenhoven, 2014).

Firstly, measuring happiness is challenging due to its subjective nature, making it difficult to determine when someone is truly happy. Observable behaviors, such as laughter, are not reliable indicators of happiness, as they can be short-lived. Research on subjective well-being (Diener et al., 1999) suggests that happiness is part of a dynamic system linked to the utility derived from commodities. For instance, Cheng and Cheng (2023) argue that individuals evaluate the utility of a commodity by weighing their labor efforts against the anticipated happiness it will bring. Therefore, developing a comprehensive questionnaire to measure eco-psychological well-being and happiness should incorporate aspects such as individual health, material well-being, and social relationships.

Second, happiness can be considered objective rather than subjective, particularly when evaluating the factors that contribute to life freedom (Sen, 1999b). According to this perspective, the more an individual acquires life freedom — especially the capability to engage in activities that promote good health, productivity, and poverty reduction —the greater the potential for student happiness in learning (Sen, 1999; Obasuyi, 2018).

Further discussion on happiness as an economic variable reveals that right livelihood extends beyond individual mental behavior to the market. For instance, Tideman (2011) argues that "as soon as we enter the market place, and buy products produced by a system that destroys environmental and social integrity, we may

actually breach Right Livelihood – we may add to structural violence'' (p. 151). This perspective suggests that unhappiness generated by market practices can trigger a chain reaction affecting people e.g. naira redisgn that generated people's reaction at the the Supreme Court.

Let's further examine the indicators of right livelihood that connect individual and market happiness. One key aspect is the economic measurement of happiness, which remains somewhat ambiguous in the economic literature. Researchers have debated the use of happiness ratings in survey instruments, questioning their relationship with well-being as a utility in economics (Rigoberto & Daza, 2004). While some accept happiness ratings as a direct proxy for utility, others view it as part of a culture of individualism that prioritizes ephemeral happiness through consumption and accumulation (Xavier, 2016; Baudrillard, 1970/1998, cited in Xavier, 2016). Alternatively, Tideman (2011) suggests that more robust indicators of individual and corporate economic happiness include government policy, access to capital, assets, favorable economic environment, and knowledge acquisition.

Furthermore, livability is a concept often explored in sociological and ecological studies. Livability refers to living in an environment where one is content with the external conditions. The society plays a significant role in fostering happiness within it. For instance, Veenhoven (2014) identifies livability measurement variables such as roads, traffic management, landscaping, and infrastructure. A substantial portion of people's livelihood depends on the quality of their external environment to lead a happier economic life. Understanding the environment also highlights the importance of managing social external factors like discrimination, oppression, inequality, and poverty to promote right livelihood and happiness. Recent studies have linked livability to housing, including factors like location, apartment quality, and accessibility (Kovacs-Györi et al., 2019).

Empirical Studies

This section reviews previous empirical literature on student happiness during schooling. Notably, there is limited research addressing the economic aspects of students' lives that could impact their happiness in learning. A 2018 study by Caballero-García et al. explored happiness among university students using a quasi-experimental method with 162 participants aged 18-45. Although the study did not consider economic indicators, the findings highlighted the importance of positive emotions toward academic work in student happiness. However, we argue that an economic challenge, which Illouz (2017) refers to as commodities, can hinder positive emotions toward learning. Additionally, while we disagree with Tabbodi et al. (2015) assertion that economic indicators are unnecessary for measuring student happiness, their study did find a positive correlation between student happiness and academic achievement. We believe that a student's sufficient income, aligned with

their expenditure, would positively impact their cognitive, emotional, and academic outcomes, as suggested by Caballero-García et al.'s findings..

Gray and DiLoreto (2016) investigated student satisfaction using several factors, including course structure, instructor presence, learner interaction, student engagement, and student satisfaction, analyzed through structural equation modeling (SEM). Their correlational analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between student satisfaction and perceived learning, with an 85% correlation. Notably, while previous studies have shown that learner interaction significantly impacts student satisfaction, this study found no such significant impact. In a separate study, Kaşıkcı and Özhan (2021) explored social-emotional learning skills as predictors of academic achievement and happiness among 337 middle school students, finding a significant predictive relationship. Additionally, research by Cherif et al. (2013, 2014) suggests that motivation plays a crucial role in students' academic success, while Al-Tameemi et al. (2023) identified three thematic areas influencing student outcomes: academic, personal-social, and demographic.

Methodology
Research Design
This study employs a quantitative design and was conducted in universities and colleges of education in the Southwestern region. Given its hierarchical nature, the study utilized structural equation modeling (SEM).

Sampling Technique
Because it is difficult to reach the entire scattered population in the study area, convenience sampling was used (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011; Kaşıkcı & Özhan, 2021) to select 510 sample size.

Student's happiness survey (SHS) and validity of instrument
This study was conducted in an elite environment where virtually all members of the population own Android phones. An online questionnaire, titled Student's Happiness Survey (SHS), was self-developed based on previous literature arguments to collect data across sampled institutions. The research instrument was designed by the authors to capture the study's objectives. To ensure face and content validity, the items were carefully reviewed by experts in psychology, economics, and education during a roundtable discussion.

Administration of SHS
In adherence to international ethical standards, the researcher obtained an ethical clearance certificate from the Centre for Research and Development (CERAD) prior to commencing data collection. The data collection process spanned three months, during which a total of 510 students responded via an online Google Form.

Study Assumptions and Hypotheses

In the previous section, we outlined the main concepts that will guide our analysis, and we will make necessary assumptions to achieve the study's objectives.

First, Children can serve as a form of insurance in old age due to consumption fluctuations associated with aging (Pörtner, 2001; Blundell et al., 2023). Consequently, working-age parents strive to support their children's completion of formal education, such as a university or college degree, as a means of securing better economic livelihood in their old age. The underlying assumption is that educated children will be economically capable of supporting their parents' financial needs later in life. Therefore, a student's economic livelihood, provided by parents or guardians, is expected to influence their level of gross learning happiness throughout their schooling, The null hypothesis is stated as follows;

i. H_0: Student economic livelihood has no significant implication on the GSH in classroom learning.

Second, a student's economic livelihood can significantly influence their level of well-being. Students often participate in social engagements that require a certain level of income to navigate effectively. Therefore, we assume that student economic factors (livelihoods) contribute to their subjective well-being (SWB), which in turn enhances their happiness. The null hypothesis is stated as follows;

ii. H_0: Student economic livelihood has no significant impact on the SWB that could aggravate GSH in classroom learning.

Third, the aggregate impact of gross student happiness (GSH) resulting from students' economic livelihood is crucial for achieving excellence in their learning experiences. Based on this premise, the study assumes the following null hypothesis:;

iii. H_0: Student economic livelihood has no significant impact on the student academic achievement (SAA) during the learning procession.

Fourth, assuming that student well-being is significantly and positively influenced by economic livelihood, the process of stabilizing well-being in student life is expected to have a substantial impact on the degree of gross student happiness (GSH) in classroom learning. The null hypothesis is stated as follows:

iv. H_0: Student wellbeing (SWB) does not significantly impact on GSH during student learning procession.

Finally, measuring the economic impact on academic achievement remains a topic of debate among researchers (Tabbodi et al., 2015). Nonetheless, this study assumes that a student's sufficient income to cover schooling expenditures positively influences their academic achievement. Based on this assumption, we hypothesize that":

v. H_0: Gross student happiness (GSH) in classroom learning has no significant implication on the overall student academic achievement (SAA).

The Study Conceptual Framework

The study's framework emerged from the arguments and assumptions underlying the research. The framework consists of three latent variables—subjective well-being (SWB), gross student happiness (GSH), and student academic achievement (SAA) —and three economic livelihood manifest variables. The framework is illustrated in Figure 2..
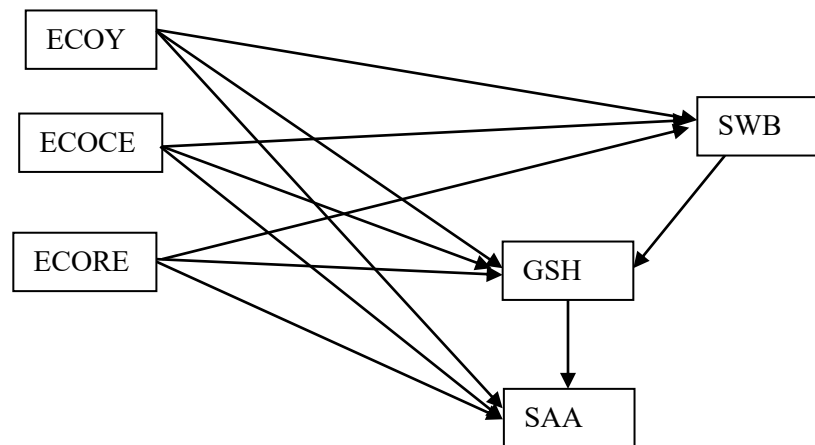
Note 1: *ECOY = Student level of Economic livelihood (Income); ECOCE = Student level of Economic likelihood (Capital Expenditure such as textbook, laptop, kitchen utensils); ECOCRE = Student level of Economic (Recurrent Expenditure such as school fee, rent, feeding, etc.); SWB = Student's wellbeing; GSH = Gross student happiness and SAA = Student academic achievement*

Estimation Technique

From Figure 1, the framework shows hierarchical linear models. Thus, structural equation modeling is an appropriate method to analyse the data obtained from 510 students.

Data Estimation

The structural equation modeling (SEM) method was employed to jointly test the five hypotheses stated earlier. This study focused not only on prediction but also utilized a multivariate model, which exhibits linear relationship characteristics (Hair et al., 2014). To determine the appropriate estimation method, the data were tested for normality indicating no normal distribution. Both measurement and structural models were estimated using WarpPLS software, version 5.0.".

Results and Discussion

Model Diagnostics model fit and quality indices

The following indices were used to assess the overall model fit: average path coefficient (APC), average R-squared (ARS), average adjusted R-squared (AARS), average block variance inflation factor (AVIF), and average full collinearity VIF.

Additional indices included Tenenhaus's goodness-of-fit (GoF), Simpson's paradox ratio (SPR), statistical suppression ratio (SSR), and nonlinear bivariate causality direction ratio (NLBCDR). The results of these tests are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Model Fit and Quality of Indices

Models	Coefficient	P-Value/Threshold	Decision
Average Path Coefficient (APC)	0.151	0.001	Significant
Average adjusted R-squared (AARS)=	0.150	0.001	Significant
Average block VIF (AVIF)=	1.084	acceptable if <= 5, ideally <= 3.3	Absence and satisfied
Average full collinearity VIF (AFVIF)	1.296	acceptable if <= 5, ideally <= 3.3	Absence and satisfied
Tenenhaus Goodness of Fit Test T(GoF)	0.310	Small >= 0.1, medium >= 0.25, large >= 0.36	Large and significant
Simpson Paradox Ratio (SPR)	0.727	Acceptable if >= 0.7, ideally = 1	Satisfied
R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR)	0.966	Acceptable if >= 0.9, ideally = 1	Satisfied
Statistical suppression ratio (SSR)	0.909	Acceptable if >= 0.7	Satisfied
Nonlinear bivariate causality direction ratio (NLBCDR)	0.955	Acceptable if >= 0.7	Satisfied

Source: Author's SEM Computation

Table 1 presents the results of the model fit and quality indices, indicating the overall goodness-of-fit of the model. The results in column 4 of Table 1 show that all tests met the criteria for satisfactory model fit.

Measurement Models

Internal Consistency

The results of the internal consistency of the model using the Cronbach Alpha, Composite reliability and R^2/adjusted R^2 tests are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Cronbach Alpha, Composite Reliability Tests, R^2 Values and Multicollinearity

Variables	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability	R-Squared / Adjusted R^2	VIF
SWB	0.850	0.882	0.114 / 0.109	1.711

|				
ECOY	0.741	0.817	-	1.152
ECOCE	1.000	1.000	-	1.058
ECORE	1.000	1.000	-	1.033
GSH	0.877	0.901	0.218 / 0.212	1.304
SAA	0.772	0.834	0.137 /0.130	

Source: Author's SEM Computation

Note: There were three dependent variables comprising SWB, GSH and SAA

The Cronbach's alpha results for the latent variables (SWB, ECOY, ECOCE, ECORE, GSH, and SAA) showed that all exceeded the 0.7 threshold, indicating satisfactory internal consistency. The composite reliability results further supported this, with values greater than the 0.6 threshold. To assess multicollinearity, variance inflation factor (VIF) was used, with a benchmark of less than or equal to 5. According to Table 3, all manifest variables influencing the latent variables had VIF values below 5, suggesting no significant multicollinearity issues.

The goodness of fit, as indicated by R-squared (R^2) and adjusted R-squared values, was as follows: SWB (11.4% and 10.9%), GSH (21.8% and 21.2%), and SAA (13.7% and 13.0%).

Structural Model's Results

Prior presentation of the structural models, the graphical result of the latent variable models is presented in Figure 3.
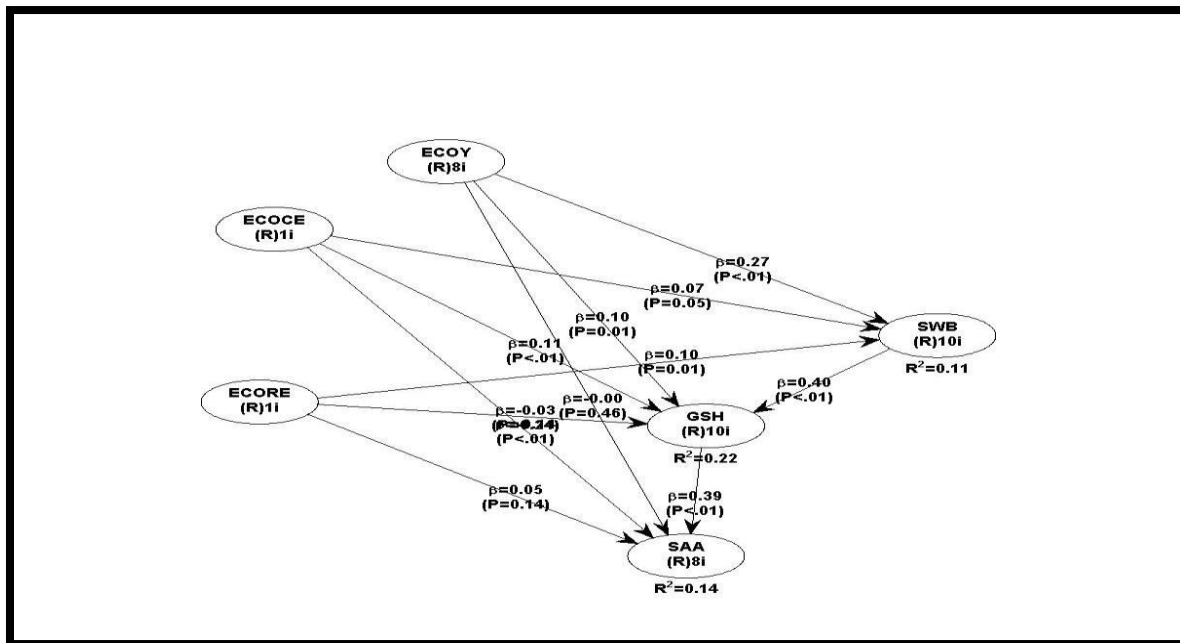
Figure 3: Graphical Model Results

Source: Author's SEM Computation

Further to the graphical results in Figure 3, the numerical estimates of the structural model, including the path coefficients of the latent variables, are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Structural Model Results

Latent Variable	Coefficient	SE	Effect Size	p-Value	Decision
ECOY path to SWB	0.270	0.043	0.085	<0.001*	Significant
ECOCE path to SWB	0.072	0.044	0.012	0.051**	Significant
ECORE path to SWB	0.102	0.044	0.017	0.010*	Significant
ECOY path to GSH	0.099	0.044	0.024	0.012*	Significant
ECOCE path to GSH	0.107	0.044	0.021	0.008*	Significant
ECORE path to GSH	-0.031	0.044	0.004	0.241	Not Significant
SWB path to GSH	0.398	0.042	0.177	<0.001*	Significant
GSH path to SAA	0.390	0.042	0.148	<0.001*	Significant
ECOY path to SAA	-0.005	0.044	0.000	0.457	Not Significant
ECOCE path to SAA	-0.139	0.044	0.013	<0.001*	Significant
ECORE path to SAA	0.048	0.044	0.003	0.136	Not Significant

Note: the path coefficients are significant at the p-value of (*) < 5% and (**) < 10%.
Source: Author's Computation

Interpretations

In this study, we tested eleven null hypotheses corresponding to eleven path coefficients. The path coefficient from ECOY to SWB indicates that a unit increase in income accrued to students on campus increases their subjective well-being (SWB) by 27%. This suggests that adequate livelihood income provides an enabling environment for robust learning. Furthermore, the path coefficient from ECOCE to SWB shows a positive relationship, indicating that a unit increase in capital expenditure (e.g., laptops, books, and essential items) would increase student well-being by 7.2%. In contrast, the path coefficient from ECORE to SWB reveals a negative impact of -0.102, implying that a unit increase in recurrent expenditures (e.g., feeding, rent, and transport) contributes to a 10.2% decrease in student well-being. All three paths were statistically significant at the 5% and 10% levels. Notably, the path from ECOY to SWB had a more significant effect size of 8.5%.

Next, we present the results of the paths from ECOY, ECOCE, ECORE, and SWB to GSH. Out of the four paths, only the path coefficient from ECORE to GSH was not statistically significant. The path coefficient from ECOY to GSH showed a positive impact of 0.099, indicating that a unit increase in income accrued to students on

campus contributed 9.9% to gross student happiness (GSH) during learning. This path was statistically significant at p < 0.05. Similarly, the path coefficient from ECOCE to GSH showed a positive and significant impact, with a unit increase in capital expenditure contributing 10.7% to student happiness. The path coefficient from SWB to GSH revealed a robust outcome, with a 39.8% positive impact, suggesting that optimized student well-being arising from economic livelihood contributed significantly to GSH during classroom learning. All significant path coefficients were statistically significant at p < 0.05. Notably, the SWB path to GSH had the largest effect size of 17.7%, compared to 2.4% and 2.1% for ECOY and ECOCE, respectively.

Examining the paths leading to student academic achievement (SAA), we found that only two path coefficients were statistically significant. The path coefficient from GSH to SAA indicates a positive relationship, suggesting that as students experience greater happiness in learning, their academic achievement improves. Specifically, the cumulative effect of gross student happiness (GSH) arising from economic livelihood contributes to a 39% increase in student academic achievement during the learning period.

Finally, the path coefficient from ECOCE to SAA revealed a negative relationship, indicating that capital expenditure accrued to students on campus was associated with a decrease in student academic achievement. Although statistically significant at p < 0.05, this finding contradicts the conventional economic belief that capital investment in education promotes growth (Liao et al., 2019; Yusuf, 2014; Ifionu & Nteegah, 2013; Hanushek & Woessmann, 2010; Judson, 1998). Specifically, a unit increase in capital available to students resulted in a 13.9% decrease in academic achievement. This outcome may be attributed to (i) the type of capital invested not being directly related to learning outcomes or (ii) the amount invested being insufficient to meet students' capital expenditure needs.

Discussion of Findings

This study confirms that economic livelihood is a crucial factor that enhances student well-being, thereby promoting school completion. Similarly, the aggregate effect of student well-being positively influences gross student happiness in classroom learning. Contrary to the findings of Tabbodi et al. (2015), which suggest that economic livelihood is insignificant to learning processes, our study argues that higher economic livelihood is associated with increased student well-being, ultimately translating to greater gross student happiness in learning.

Furthermore, previous studies have focused on academic achievement and happiness (Caballero-García et al., 2018) as measures of student progression in learning. While we acknowledge the importance of happiness in learning, we emphasize that students with poor economic livelihood motivation may require

additional psychological effort to complete their programs (Cherif et al., 2013; Cherif et al., 2014). It can be inferred that the aggregation of gross student happiness (GSH) in learning processes positively influences student academic achievement. Moreover, the interplay between economic livelihood and student well-being, as reflected in GSH, can accelerate the pace of academic achievement (Al-Tameemi et al., 2023).

A country's favourable economic conditions play a crucial role in determining students' happiness in learning (Solow, 1956). Developing countries often face challenges such as poverty and insecurity, which often hinder educational progress. In contrast, countries like those in Europe, Singapore, and Malaysia promote a positive learning environment, a trend less common in developing countries like Nigeria (Zonies et al., 2012).

Conclusion

This study investigates the relationship between economic livelihood and gross student happiness in learning among students in Southwestern universities and colleges of education in Nigeria. Using structural equation modeling, we tested five null hypotheses to address the research objectives. Our findings indicate that: (1) economic livelihood positively influences students' well-being on campus, (2) aggregated student well-being enhances gross student happiness in learning, (3) economic livelihood contributes to student academic achievement, and (4) aggregated gross student happiness significantly accelerates student academic achievement.

This study makes a two-fold contribution. Firstly, it confirms and builds upon the theories of Amartya Sen and Ruut Veenhoven regarding good life and right livelihood (Sen, 1999; Veenhoven, 2014). Secondly, it challenges the existing notion that economic livelihood is unimportant to student academic achievement, as proposed by Tabbodi et al. (2015). Based on our findings, we recommend that governments, parents, and guardians prioritize economic livelihood indicators, including capital and recurrent expenditures, to support students' education. For instance, governments in Southwestern Nigeria should allocate sufficient funds to education, meeting the UNESCO-recommended budget, to foster student happiness. Additionally, governments can strengthen the Federal Government education loans for tertiary students, provided they implement effective loan management systems. In today's digital age, laptops are essential for quality learning and student happiness. Furthermore, parents and guardians should invest in their children's education, covering expenses such as tuition fees and living costs, to promote their social and academic well-being.

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Conflict of Interest Declaration
There is no conflict of interest to declare about the paper.

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