Student Well-Being of Generation Alpha:
A Case Study in An Islamic Elementary School

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Abstract
This study aims to analyze the student well-being profile of Generation Alpha in the context of Islamic elementary education to map the factors contributing to learning happiness. This research employed a descriptive quantitative approach with a case study design involving 29 fifth-grade students at an Islamic Elementary School in Salatiga. Data were collected using a four-point Likert scale questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine the mean and percentage of achievement. The findings indicate that the overall student well-being is in the "happy" category, with a collective achievement rate of 77% and an average score of 3.04. The highest scores were recorded in "pride in achievement" (3.72) and "meaning of school for the future" (3.66), while "task independence" received the lowest score (2.00). This study concludes that while students feel happy and find meaning in their education, there is a significant need for instructional strategies that foster greater autonomy and self-efficacy.
Keywords: *Student Well-Being, Education Basics, Learning Happiness, Generation Alpha, Efficacy Self*

INTRODUCTION

Basic education is a fundamental phase that prepares students to face future challenges (Akour & Alenezi, 2022; Beagon et al., 2023). Developmental potential not only covers cognitive aspects but is also highly dependent on psychological well-being (Ferreira, Fornara, Pinna, Manca, & Guicciardi, 2024), or Student well-being (Douwes, Metselaar, Pijnenborg, & Boonstra, 2023; Klapp, Klapp, & Gustafsson, 2024). Student well-being in elementary schools, including Islamic elementary schools, serves as an indicator of a healthy educational ecosystem (Chen, 2024; Wentzel, 2024). A healthy ecosystem of education will foster a conducive learning environment for the growth of character-positive students.

Reality education currently shows significant academic pressure on students at the elementary school level (Debyo, Suarni, & Gunamantha, 2024; Novianti & Mariyati, 2024). This academic pressure often arises from a burdensome curriculum and demands for continuous competence in the digital era (Lutfiyah et al., 2025). Increasing demands for competence sometimes sideline students' happiness and comfort in the learning process (Husnaini, Sarmiati, & Harimurti, 2024). Comfort-neglected students can trigger stress and drastically reduce motivation to learn (Nisa, Handayani, & Rahmawati, 2025).

The recognition of student well-being is widespread (Graham et al., 2022); however, the current scholarly literature remains heavily dominated by studies focusing on secondary and higher education. This trend creates a substantial research gap at the primary education level, especially in faith-based environments such as Madrasahs, which often manage dual-curriculum requirements (Jingga, Santosa, Sugiarto, & Kamaludin, 2026). Mapping Generation Alpha's responses in Islamic elementary schools to these academic pressures is vital to a comprehensive understanding of their psychological state (Höfrová, Balidemaj, & Small, 2024).

The identification of students' welfare levels is a crucial problem that educators must address immediately and systematically (Halabieh et al., 2022). This crucial issue stems from the lack of evaluation instruments that specifically measure children's psychological parameters in the classroom (Acar, Dumas, Organisciak, & Berthiaume, 2024). Psychological parameters are often considered secondary to the formative exam mark (Juwariyah, Hulvi, Riduan, & Kusrini, 2024). The test scores used a standard single test without seeing the child's mental condition, which will hinder the objective term of long-term humanistic education.

Student happiness can be improved through transforming interaction patterns between teachers and students during classroom activities (Firdiansyah, Lestantyo, Susilawati, Mubarok, & Cahyono, 2025; Gkintoni et al., 2025). Interaction patterns grounded in empathy and social support will foster a sense of security that allows students to explore (Romanovska & Novak, 2024). This sense of security is an essential first step in building a foundation for subjective well-being in elementary education. Various scientific studies have proposed applying emotional needs-based learning as a strategy to improve children's well-being (Akour & Alenezi, 2022; Singh, 2024).

This emotional need includes providing appreciation and recognition for every small step students take (Laili, 2021). Genuine recognition from teachers has been shown to increase students' self-confidence and learning satisfaction significantly (Lidyasari, Purbarini, Firmansyah, Senen, & Mujinem, 2024). In addition to teacher support, the dynamics of peer relationships are a determining factor in happiness in the school environment (Hawani et al., 2023). Positive social relationships can minimize the risk of bullying and increase mutual respect among upper-grade students (Palupy & Sauri, 2025).

Generation Alpha carries unique traits from early digital exposure (Adhi & Masykuroh, 2025), making the mapping of their psychological profiles an urgent necessity. This research fills a gap in the literature by offering novelty through a comprehensive analysis using a case study design of a specific fifth-grade class in an Islamic elementary school. Employing a case study approach enables a deeper, more contextual investigation of subjective well-being, which is often marginalized in large-scale research.

This research aims to analyze students' well-being in grade 5 at the educational level using a descriptive-quantitative approach. Specifically, the study captures the psychological well-being profile of grade 5 students at MI Asas Islam Kalibening, Salatiga, representing Islamic primary education in a satellite city context. This profile offers novelty through collaboration across institutions, enriching the validity of data analysis in the field. The

resulting data analysis is expected to provide scientific justification for the factors that shape children's learning happiness. This study is limited to four primary indicators: emotional positivity, involvement, social relationships, and the meaning of learning.

METHOD

This research employed a quantitative descriptive design with a case study approach to obtain an objective profile of the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2018). The chosen approach is quantitative because it can present data in an accurate, numerical form to measure students' welfare. Numerical data are described in a way that does not involve interpretation or manipulation in the field of research. The survey method is considered the most effective for quickly reaching respondents while maintaining data reliability that can be accounted for. The systematic execution of this research, from initial identification to data categorization, is illustrated in Figure 1.
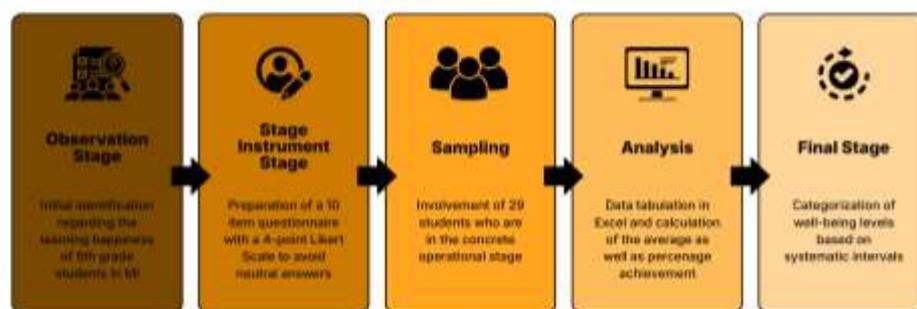

Figure 1. Research Procedure Flow

This study involved 29 students from class 5 at MI Asas Islam Kalibening, Salatiga, representing the general characteristics of grade 5 students. They were chosen as participants mainly because, in a psychological sense, they are at the operational concrete stage, capable of reflecting on their feelings towards the learning process. Reflection feeling it is crucial to take pictures to condition student well-being in a way that is original from the participant's perspective, educating them alone.

Data collection was conducted using a closed-ended, systematic questionnaire based on indicators of child welfare and psychological well-being (Raihana, Dewi, Syahrina, Sukmakarti, & Hapsari, 2023). The research instrument consisted of 10 items covering four dimensions: positive emotions, engagement, social relationships, and meaning of learning. The instrument questionnaire is use a four-point Likert scale to avoid a trend; respondents choose an answer to position neutral. To ensure data quality, the instrument underwent content validity testing by educational experts and reliability testing to confirm the consistency of student responses.

This uses statistical descriptive methods to process raw survey results and make the information meaningful for scientific analysis. The descriptive statistics applied include calculating the mean value per indicator and the percentage of classical scores. To provide accurate interpretation, the mean values are categorized into four levels based on systematic interval ranges. The categorization criteria used to evaluate the well-being levels are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Categorization Criteria for Average Indicator Scores

Average Range	Category
3.26 – 4.00	Very high
2.51 – 3.25	High
1.76 – 2.50	Currently
1.00 – 1.75	Low

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Data collection was conducted using a questionnaire distributed to 29 grade 5 students at MI Asas Islam Kalibening, Salatiga. The collected research data were then quantitatively analyzed to comprehensively map students' welfare and psychological profiles. Profile welfare is presented in two forms: a central table to give an idea of the classical approach, and a detailed table per indicator showing the measured well-being. The overall achievement of student well-being is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of Classical Student Well-Being Achievement

Variables	Acquisition Score	Maximum Score	Percentage	Category
Student Well-Being	893	1,160	77%	Happy

Based on Table 2, the level of subjective welfare among students is in the 'happy' category, with a 77% achievement rate. The percentage achievement data show that most students have a positive perception of their learning experiences at school. This positive perception is the accumulation of various emotional and social dimensions that students experience during classroom interactions. A conducive classroom environment has been shown to support students' mental stability as a class. Furthermore, the distribution of scores across ten specific indicators is detailed in Table 3.

Table 3. Average Scores per Well-Being Indicator

No	Indicator Welfare	Average Score	Category
1.	Spirit leaves school (Positive Emotions)	2.62	High
2.	Pride on task (Achievement)	3.72	Very high
3.	Attachment time learning (Engagement)	2.52	Currently
4.	Interest teacher explanation (Involvement)	3.21	High
5.	Relationship with friends (social)	3.34	High
6.	Teacher attention and concern (Support)	3.00	High
7.	Meaning school for the future (Meaning)	3.66	Very high
8.	The role of schools in character (Spiritual)	3.10	High
9.	Independence task (Self-Efficacy)	2.00	Low
10.	General happiness at school (Global)	3.21	High

Referring to Table 3, there was significant variation in scores among the ten well-being indicators studied. The well-being indicators with the highest scores were pride in task accomplishment (3.72) and the significance of school for the future (3.66). This very high sense of school significance indicates that students have a good cognitive awareness of the function of educational institutions. However, this high awareness contrasts with the independence score in tasks, which only reached 2.00, placing it in the moderate category.

This disparity is visually represented in Figure 2 to highlight the gap between emotional achievement and individual autonomy.
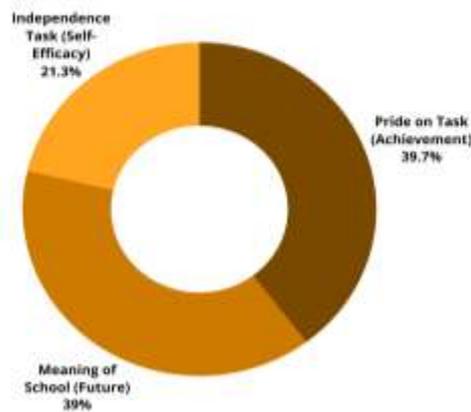

Figure 2. Comparison of High and Low Well-Being Indicators

The research findings, which show a happiness rate of 77%, provide strong justification that elementary education in Salatiga has succeeded in creating a positive learning atmosphere. This positive learning atmosphere is in line with the theory of subjective well-being, which states that student satisfaction in school is influenced by a sense of security and social acceptance (Huang & Chui, 2024; Özcan, 2024). The social acceptance students feel serves as the basic capital they need to develop their academic potential without excessive psychological pressure (Prasetiyo, 2025; Salma, Martono, & Primadata, 2024). This proves that psychological well-being is a primary prerequisite before students can optimally absorb learning materials (Li & Wang, 2024; Luo, 2022).

The high scores in pride (3.72) and meaning of school (3.66) can be analyzed through the PERMA model (Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment) (Seligman, 2018). The "Meaning" and "Accomplishment" pillars serve as the primary drivers of student happiness in this case study, indicating that students find deep purpose in their educational journey (Wang & Zhang, 2025).

This phenomenon supports the expert opinion that appropriately appreciated academic achievement will lead to deep emotional satisfaction for students (Octavia & Oktavia, 2024; Simatupang & Bui, 2025; Sindy, Eka, & Munawaroh, 2025). Having a life purpose from an early age is identified by many researchers as a significant factor that maintains students' learning motivation despite facing tough curriculum challenges (Pranayoga, Azizah, Manaf, & Aditya, 2025; Puspita et al., 2025; Wulandari, 2022).

The finding of low task independence (2.00) remains a critical issue requiring focused intervention. Low self-efficacy indicates that students still feel helpless or too dependent on teacher instructions when facing difficulties. This instructional dependence is most likely due to learning patterns that remain teacher-centered or to a lack of space for students to make independent decisions (Saputra & Anita, 2025). To overcome low independence, educators need to shift teaching strategies towards methods that provide more autonomy

and trust for students to experiment (Hanaris, 2023; Nurhayati, Khairunnisa, Suryani Tarigan, & Mariani Lubis, 2025).

The dynamics of social relationships (3.34) act as a vital buffer for overall student happiness. Social support from peers and class teachers has been shown to reduce student anxiety in both madrasah and elementary school environments (Hoferichter, Kulakow, & Raufelder, 2022; Martinot et al., 2022). Low student anxiety facilitates active participation in group discussions and classroom collaboration (Archbell & Coplan, 2021; Xethakis, Rupp, & Plummer, 2024). Therefore, a harmonious relationship between teachers and students is not merely a complement but a core component of student well-being that must be consistently maintained.

A practical implication of a study comparing PGMI and PGSD students is the importance of a balanced curriculum that addresses both academic and psychological aspects. Students may again be viewed as variables, but must be integrated into every teacher's instructional design. Instructional design grounded in well-being will produce graduates who are not only intelligent in an intellectual sense but also possess strong mental toughness. Thus, basic education in Indonesia can give rise to a generation of gold capable of adapting to the times without losing the happiness essential to them as individuals.

This study also recognizes the limitations in the number of samples and the diversity of institutional backgrounds. The sample size is as large as 29 students, which limits the extent to which the results can be studied. This cannot yet be generalized to represent the entire education population in Indonesia. Population education is based on other areas, with different characteristics, cultures, facilities, student influence profiles, welfare, and student learning styles. Therefore, future research is recommended to expand the range of respondents and to use a mixed-methods design to delve deeper into the qualitative reasons for the low independence of students observed in studies.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the student well-being of grade 5 students at MI Asas Islam Kalibening is in the "happy" category, with an achievement rate of 77%. The high levels of learning happiness are primarily driven by strong psychological pillars, including pride in academic achievement (3.72) and a positive perception of school as a meaningful path for the future (3.66). However, the significant gap in task independence (2.00) indicates that students still possess low self-efficacy in autonomous learning. These findings imply that educational policies in Islamic primary schools should shift from teacher-centered approaches toward instructional strategies that foster student autonomy. Future research is encouraged to explore parenting variables and involve a broader population to enhance the generalizability of these findings.

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