

# The impact of family structure and family relationships on children's subjective well-being

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## **Thematic importance:**

This is confirmed by research that positive family relationships are fundamental to children's social and emotional development and that family life satisfaction enhance their overall subjective well-being. Nevertheless, still little is known on how recent trends illustrating the changing nature of families affect family well-being from the perspective of the children's themselves, and how different is subjective well-being of children who are living in diverse family structures.

## **Introduction and objectives:**

The purpose of this study is to explore differences in family relationships, family subjective well-being and overall subjective well-being among Polish children living in three identified living arrangements: nuclear families, single-parent families, step-families. An attention will be also paid to multigenerational households and to the link between living with grandparents and children's well-being.

## **Method:**

The analysis will use the data gathered from the children's subjective well-being study, which was conducted among representative sample of Polish pupils as a part of the third wave of the Children's Worlds survey. The Children's Worlds is a major worldwide study of children's lives and well-being. It's is a unique initiative that deepens our understanding of the worldview through the eyes of young people.

The analysis will utilize data collected in Poland from over 2300 children aged 10 and 12 participating in the study.

Several relevant agreement, satisfaction and time use questions from the conducted study will be applied to identify the children's family structure, family well-being as well as family economic situation . Some psychometric scales will be used to explore the children's overall subjective well-being.

**Results:**

The initial findings show that family relations and satisfaction with family life of Polish kids vary according to their family structure. Children living with both parents are found to evaluate their family relationships and family life higher than children living in a single parent family or in a step-family. Overall there is a tendency for lower life satisfaction scores to be associated with experiencing worse relationships with family members, however it can vary depending on age or gender of a child as well as on his/her family economic circumstances.

**Conclusions and implications:**

The result of the study emphasizes that the source of differences in subjective well-being of Polish children living in various family forms is complex and may include both macro and micro explanations. At the macro level, this may be related e.g. to the socioeconomic background of different family types, whereas at the micro level it reflects variations in social interactions and support between family members.