



Children's Worlds National Report

Nepal

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1. Introduction

Globally, working for children's well-being has been an important activity for a long time. Conducting surveys, in this field is a recent phenomenon. The survey on children's well-being entitled International Survey of Children's Well-Being (ISCWeB) is a world-wide research study on children's subjective well-being. ISCWeB recognizes that children's rights are fundamental to them for ensuring a good childhood and future life chances. It emphasises the need to provide children with an environment in which they can fully grow and attain their highest potential.

One of the most overarching factors in assessing whether a particular environment is conducive to children for developing their best potential is to find their own perception of their sense of well-being. This is best understood by asking children directly and allowing them to give an assessment of their own well-being.

1.1 The context of children's lives in Nepal

External influences

Nepal, with an area of 147, 181 square kilometers and situated on the southern slope of the mighty Himalayas, is a landlocked mountainous country. It is bounded on the east, south and west by India and on the north by the People's Republic of China. In terms of physical features, Nepal is divided into three regions: Mountains, Hills and Terai. These regions extend from east to west like stripes. Nepal, administratively, is divided into 5 development regions and 75 districts. Each development region consists of a number of districts and each district is also divided into municipalities and Village Development Committees (VDCs) – the lowest unit in the administrative hierarchy. The number of municipalities and VDCs in 2014 is 130 and 3,633 respectively.

According to the national population and housing census of 2011, the population of Nepal is 26,494, 504 (12,849,041 males and 13,645,463 females) with an annual growth rate of 1.35% (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2011). The population living in urban areas is only 17% of the total population whereas 83% live in rural areas, some of them in remote areas accessible only through trails.

The population of 8- to 12-year old children in Nepal is 3,455,499 which makes up 13% of the total population. Even the disaggregated data by single year of age reveal that the number of children of respective age group is 733,228 in 8 years age group, 552,867 in 9 years age group, 811,748 in 10 years age group, 562,582 in 11 years age group and 795,076 in 12 year age group. Further analysis of these data reveals that the percentage of children in 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 years age group in the country out of total population is 2.8; 2.1; 3.1; 2.1; and 3 respectively (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2011).

Nepal is a multi-ethnic country. Distinctly, the people of Nepal belong to two broad groups: Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burman. Most of the people belonging to Indo-Aryan group live in the southern part (plain region) of the country and those of Tibeto-Burman group in the northern part (mountain region). In the hills (middle part of the country), the distribution of ethnic groups is rather different because of inter-mixing that has taken place through the ages (CERID, 1984). According to the census report of 2011, there are 125 caste/ethnic groups (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2011). These groups have their own

mother tongues. Hence, Nepal is a multi-lingual country where 123 languages are spoken as mother tongue. Nepali which is an official language, is spoken as mother tongue by 44.6% of the total population followed by Maithili (11.7%), Bhojpuri (6.0%), Tharu (5.8%), Tamang (5.1%), Newar (3.2%) and others (23.6%) (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2011).

People following ten types of religious categories live in Nepal. Hinduism is the religion of 81.3 percent of the population; and Buddhism is followed by 9 percent of the total population. Islam, Kirat, Christianity, Prakriti, Bon, Jainism, Bahai and Sikhism are minority religious groups.

People belonging to different ethnic groups, religious groups and language groups have different perspectives on male and female children. On the one hand, Nepal has a tradition of worshipping young pre-pubescent girls as manifestations of the divine female energy or living goddess called Kumari in Hindu religion. Interestingly, a pre-pubescent girl is selected from the family belonging to the Buddhist religion. In Nepal, a Kumari is believed to be the incarnation of Taleju Bhavani (a Nepalese name for Durga) until she menstruates, after which it is believed that the goddess vacates her body. Serious illness or a major loss of blood from an injury are also causes for loss of deity. At the extreme, girls in the mid-western and far-western parts of the country who practice Chaupadi tradition must sleep in sheds or outbuildings on their menstruation period. They have little contact with others and minimal protection, causing some to die from illness or exposure. A family member offers food to girls practicing Chaupadi, without touching the dish or the girl, who are considered to be impure while menstruating. Girls are not permitted to enter a house or pass by a temple during their monthly cycle. Traditional beliefs still cause many Nepalese families to have a strong preference for sons. Religious, social and economic compulsions regard sons as not only valuable but also an indispensable asset whereas daughters are still seen as a financial burden to their parents in many communities (Pant & Nepal, nd). Recently, substantial efforts are being made to abolish ill-practices against female girls such as bonded labour, chaupadi practices, child labour, child marriage, child trafficking etc. Government as well as UN agencies and national and international organization are making concerted efforts to improve the lives of children and make them aware of their rights through radio, television, hoarding boards, school curricula and printed media.

According to the human development report of UNDP, Nepal is one of the least developed countries in the world (<http://www.tradingeconomics.com/nepal/gdp-growth-annual>). Agriculture is the main sector of the economy as over 70% of the population is engaged in agriculture and its contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is 33%. Though there are no precious mineral resources and petroleum, Nepal is rich in water resources. Tourism has been steadily growing in recent years. Remittance, recently, has been a major source of national income contributing to GDP (25% to the GDP in 2014). The GDP in Nepal has been expanded by 3.65 percent in 2013 from the previous year. The GDP per capita in 2013 was US \$ 694.

Unfortunately, children along with adults are the victims of natural disasters such as soil erosion in mountainous region and floods in plain region every year causing casualties and making them homeless and orphans.

Family and Child Policies

The UN Convention on Rights of the Child (CRC) defines the age of 18 years as the limit of the age of the child whereas the Children Act, 1992 in Nepal defines the age of 16 years as the limit of the age of the child. However, as a signatory to CRC, Nepal is likely to follow it. Ratifying all international conventions related to children, Nepal issued a realistic and practical national children policy in 2012 including all aspects of children (National Policy on Children, 2012). Children's rights are guaranteed by controlling the exclusion of all forms of exploitation, misbehavior and discrimination against the children. Similarly, ensuring necessary care and nutrition from conception to after birth and organising programmes for the physical, mental and intellectual development of children are some of the notable strategies. However, the existing level of poverty is one of the major problems in the protection and implementation of child rights. Geographical remoteness and illiteracy also affect the children's well-being. Enforcing children acts and regulations, and policies related to children and building the institutional capacity of agencies working in the field of child rights are the major challenges.

Education System

Children in Nepal enter the first grade/class of school education at the age of five. In this context, the services of Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) are provided to the children before they reach five years old (Ministry of Education, 2009). Nepalese education system is currently undergoing a change in the structure of school education from a four-tier system (5 years of primary education, 3 years of lower secondary education, 2 years of secondary education and 2 years of higher secondary education) to a two-tier system (8 years of basic education and 4 years of secondary education). Out of a total of 34,782 schools in 2012/13, 84% (29,272) are public/community schools and 16% (5,510) are private/institutional schools (Ministry of Education, 2013).

Education up to grade 10 in public schools is free, which includes free admission, free tuition fee, free textbooks and free examination fee (Ministry of Education, 2009; 2013). In addition, scholarships are provided to girls, children with disabilities, children affected by conflict, children of martyrs, etc.

Concerted efforts have been made to improve the access of school-aged children to attend school through formal schooling and alternative (open, non-formal adult and non-primary) schools. Importantly, there are provisions of special schools for deaf children and inclusive schools for blind children, physically disabled students and other children with special needs. However, private schools are very expensive. As a result, the net enrollment rate at primary level reached 95.6 percent in 2013 (Ministry of Education, 2013). However, problems remain in the attendance and retention rates of students in the school system.

The 5 to 12 years age group of children, normally, are expected to attend 1 to 8 grades of basic education. Specifically, 8-, 10- and 12-year-old children study at grades 4, 6 and 8 in schools. However, there are over-age children in each grade because of late enrollment in the schools and repetition rate. In 2012-2013, altogether there are 34,782 schools and out of those schools 34,298 are primary, 14,447 are lower secondary, 8,416 are secondary, and 3,596 are higher secondary. According to the new structure, 34,484 are basic (Grades 1-8) and 8,711 are secondary (Grades 9-12).

In the context of Nepal, the average person from lower social class backgrounds receives fewer years of schooling; schooling of lower quality; and poorer educational results for each year of schooling that is undertaken (Bennett, 2005 as cited in Devkota and Bagale, 2015).

Family environment

Out of 5,427,302 households in Nepal, 386,731 (7%) households have nine or more members. The number of households with four members is 1,080,858. The majority of households lie between three to seven members. The average household size has decreased from 5.44 in 2001 to 4.88 in 2011 at the national level (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2011). This implies that the number of siblings in each family is decreasing.

Divorce has been noticed as a problem in recent years. Nearly eight thousand married couples have been separated legally within one year across the nation. The divorce rate has increased by 30 percent compared to the last year (December 2, 2012, Nepal Mountain News).

Household size/family size is affected by government policy and traditional practices. Family size was affected by a slogan 'Two children – blessing of god' and the availability of family planning facilities in the recent years. These days, educated couples prefer small families. On the other hand, the traditional practice of child marriage is still prevalent among illiterate people and indigenous ethnic groups. A study conducted in 2012 found that the median age for marriage was 21 for males and 18 for females (Maharjan, Karki, Shakya and Aryal, 2012). Love marriage at an early age is also a common phenomenon leading to early pregnancies and child births.

Altogether, 85.26 percent of the households reside in their own house whereas 12.81 percent in rented, 0.63 percent in institutional and 1.30 percent in other arrangements (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2011). Living in multi-storey apartments is quite a new practice in cities. Almost all children always live in the same home with their own families/parents.

Boys receive preference from their family – they are given more freedom and are not expected to engage in domestic chores whereas the reverse is true for girls in most households.

Everyday life

Normally, children who study in private schools are expected to do a lot of homework and preparation before going to school. However, the situation for children who are studying in public schools is different. Some children of families who are busy in domestic work and income-generating activities in or outside home will study while others may be playing at home or in the street. Children studying in public as well as private schools do mostly similar work in school. In public schools, the school hour is 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. whereas it may be different in private schools. In the afternoon and evening, children studying private schools are busy doing homework before going to play and spending time on the computer. Children in public schools, especially of lower grades, give more priority to playing and to domestic work than to study and do homework. In Nepal, children live with their parents and family members. However, children whose parents are outside the country for employment and who are residing in hostels are deprived of living with their parents.

Almost all children of high class families study in private schools and most of them engage more in study and less in play. They also spend time in school buses to go and to come back from schools. Children of low class families go to school on foot. The school success and achievement level of high class children seem to be good whereas the high failure rate exists in the low class category. Parental support is also available to high class children. However, cases of drug addicts are found among high class children.

Unequal Childhoods

Interim Constitution of Nepal – 2007 states that all citizens shall be equal before law, every child shall have the right to nurture, basic health and social security, and every citizen shall have the right to receive a free education up to the secondary level from the State.

The pronouncement of the Supreme Court made on December 20, 2007 regarding the rights of the third gender can be taken as a positive step (National Human Rights Commission, 2008). It implies that all citizens shall have equal opportunity to grow and develop in their childhood. However, the reality is different. Because of geographical remoteness, it is very difficult to reach the unreached. The children from Dalits¹ and indigenous ethnic groups (highly marginalised and endangered groups) living in such areas are deprived of opportunities that normal children get. According to a survey conducted by ILO, among the 2.6 million child labourers, 127 thousand children are found to be involved in vulnerable occupations. Children in the urban area who are engaged in the vehicles as helpers/assistants in the transport system are considered as highly vulnerable (National Human Rights Commission, 2008). There are cases of children being victims of the domestic violence. They are also made victims of socio-economic problems like Chaupadi (customs of confinement during menstruation), kamlari (enslavement of girl child from Tharu community), haliya (a form of bonded labor engaged in ploughing) and caste discrimination. These are some of the cases of unequal childhoods.

Children's rights

Article 22 of The Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2007 states the rights of the child in five sub-articles:

- i. Every child shall have the right to his or her identity and name, ii. Every child shall have the right to nurture, basic health and social security, iii. Every child shall have the right against physical, mental or any other form of exploitation. Such exploitative act shall be punishable by law; and any child so treated shall be given such compensation as may be determined by law, iv. The helpless, orphan, mentally retarded, conflict victim, displaced, vulnerable and street children shall have the right to get special facilities from the State for their well-ascertained future, v. No minor shall be employed to work in any factory, mine or engaged in any similar other hazardous work or used in army, police or conflict (p. 11).

In addition to ascertaining the rights of the child in the constitution, the District Child Welfare Committee in collaboration with the District Development Committee has elaborated the fundamental rights of the child under four major headings and displayed through hoarding boards to make the children, parents and stakeholders aware of child rights and educate them to act accordingly (Refer to Appendix – A for a sample of hoarding board written in the Nepali language.).

¹ Dalits are occupational groups who, due to historical and socio-cultural reasons, have been deprived of equal opportunities and are at the bottom of Hindu social hierarchy. The Government of Nepal has identified 23 castes as Dalits and they form 12 percent of the total population of Nepal

1.2 Sampling: Strategy and outcome

Sampling Strategy

A stratified sampling strategy was used in ISCWeB in Nepal to select regions, districts and schools. The details are explained in the following paragraphs.

In terms of physical features, Nepal is divided into three geographical regions. Administratively, Nepal is divided into five development regions and 75 districts. These districts are distributed in the matrix of development regions and geographical regions as mentioned in Table 1.1 and Figure 1.1 of map of Nepal.

Table 1.1. Total number of districts and sample districts by development regions and ecological belts

		Development regions					Total
		Eastern	Central	Western	Mid-Western	Far-Western	
Ecological belts	Mountain	(3) Taplejung	(3) -	(2) -	(4) Jumla	(3) -	2
	Hills	(8) Udayapur	(10) -	(11) -	(7) Pyuthan	(4) -	2
	Tarai/Plain	(5) Morang	(7) -	(3) -	(3) Banke	(2) -	2
	Total	(16) 3	(20)	(16)	(14) 3	(9)	(75) 6

Numbers in parenthesis indicates the number of districts in the region. Within these districts, the names of districts selected for this study are mentioned in the table.



Figure 1.1: Map of Nepal

For sampling purposes in this survey, the Eastern, Central and Western development regions were put in one group, and the Mid-Western and Far-Western development regions in another group as they have similar characteristics in terms of the number of educational institutions, accessibility, and transportation facilities. The Eastern region was selected to represent the first group and the Mid-Western region to represent the second group for this study. Hence, two out of the five development regions were included in this survey.

Three districts each from the two groups of development regions representing three geographical regions (two each) were selected randomly. In terms of representation of geographical regions, Jumla and Taplejung from Mountain, Pyuthan and Udayapur from Hills, and Banke and Morang from Terai/Plain region were selected for this study. In terms of representation of administrative regions, Jumla, Pyuthan and Banke were selected from Mid-western region and Taplejung, Udayapur and Morang from Eastern region.

For this survey, schools were selected randomly based on probabilities proportional to size. Data on student population were collected from Flash I Report, 2012/13 published by Department of Education/Ministry of Education, Government of Nepal. The required number of sample students in each age group is 1,000 and 33 more children were added. Thus, the proposed sample size was 3,100 for three age groups. In Table 1.2, the number of sampled public schools and private schools is shown by districts with their stratum number.

Table1.2. Number of sample public and private schools by district/stratum

Stratum No.	Sample districts	No. of public schools	No. of private schools
1.	Jumla	5	1
2.	Taplejung	7	1
3.	Morang	20	7
4.	Banke	15	5
5.	Pyuthan	11	1
6.	Udayapur	14	1
	Total	72	16

Similarly, the proposed number of sample children in public schools was 2,634 and that in private schools was 466 thus making a total of 3,100 sample students.

It was also proposed to select 12 children from each group from each school - thus making a total of 36 children from each school (12 children/age group x 3 groups = 36 children in each sampled school). Though the number of children to be selected from private schools was less than 36 as per sampling strategy, in practice 36 questionnaires were completed by 36 children from each private school. Three

sets of questionnaires - a set of questionnaire for each age group - developed by the core team of the ISCWeB project were used in this survey. Those questionnaires were in the Nepali language.

Sampling Outcome

To collect the required data according to the sampling strategy, fieldwork was completed in two phases: first in Taplejung, Morang and Jumla and second in Udaypur, Pyuthan and Banke. Table 1.3 shows the actual number of questionnaires completed by children in the three age groups.

Table 1.3. Achieved sample (Actual numbers)

	Stratum						
	Total	1	2	3	4	5	6
8 years	1000	69	92	318	218	136	167
10 years	1000	69	92	318	211	140	170
12 years	1000	69	92	316	229	129	165
Total	3000	207	276	952	658	405	502

Weights were given to the samples used in this analysis so that the proportion of children in the data set from each stratum is equivalent to the proportion of children from that stratum in the population. Moreover, for the purpose of pooling data across the three age groups, each sample has been further weighted so that there is a weighted sample size in each age group as given in Table 1.4.

Table 1.4. Weighted sample (Numbers)

	Stratum						
	All	1	2	3	4	5	6
8 years	975	38	117	407	133	72	207
10 years	983	37	120	417	128	69	212
12 years	995	40	119	413	139	75	210
Total	2953	115	356	1237	400	215	630

In order to bring uniformity in data sets of all the participating countries, criteria were proposed for exclusion from the international data set. On the basis of those criteria, 25 cases in the 8-years-old data set, 17 cases in the 10-years-old data set and 5 cases in the 12-years-old data set have been identified for exclusion. This means that 975, 983 and 995 children in the 8-, 10- and 12-years-old surveys respectively are used for the final national and international data sets.

2. Results

The results of the survey of children's well-being in Nepal are presented under nine major headings. While presenting the results, analysis and interpretation of collected data of similar items included in the 8-, 10- and 12-years-old children's questionnaires are presented comparatively and typical items included in them are presented separately.

2.1 The Participants

Age and gender

In this survey, although the aim was to include an equal number of boys and girls, the number could not be made equal because of cases which were excluded for national and international data set as described earlier. The number of boys and girls in each age group is given in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1. Samples included by gender

Gender	8 years	10 years	12 years	Total
Boys	473	483	493	1450
Girls	502	500	502	1503
Total	975	983	995	2953

Country of birth of sample children

According to the survey data, 97.5% of total sample children were born in Nepal and 2.5% of them were born in the neighbouring country of India.

2.2 Children's Home and the People They Live With

Family Members Children Live With

Children in the 10-years-old and 12-years-old surveys were asked about the people they live with. In Nepal, as revealed in Table 2.2, almost all children always live in the same home with their own families/parents.

Table 2.2. Family members children live with (10 and 12 years)

	10-years-old	12-years-old
Mother	92.1%	97.0%
Father	94.1%	90.0%
Father and mother	87.4%	88.5%
Grandmother	57.0%	53.1%
Grandfather	45.9%	42.0%
Brothers and sisters	83.7%	88.8%
Other children	15.0%	11.6%
Other adult(s)	8.4%	8.9%

Home situation

Questions about children's home situation included 'feeling safe at home' and having 'a quiet place to study at home'. These questions used a five-point agreement scale (0 for 'I do not agree', 1 for 'Agree a little bit', 2 for 'Agree somewhat', 3 for 'Agree a lot' and 4 for 'Totally agree'). The data in Figure 2.1 reveal that a high percentage of the children of all age groups either totally agree or agree a lot regarding their safe feeling at home and a quiet place to study. However, the percentage of children who totally agree that they have a quiet place to study at home was less than that of children who totally agree that they feel safe at home. The difference was 8.7%.

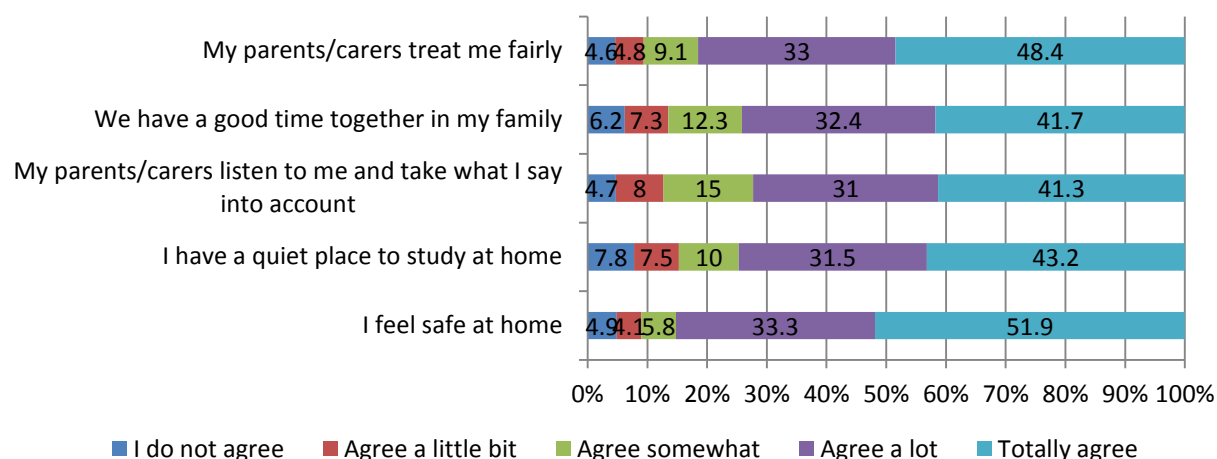


Figure 2.1. Responses of children on home condition, parents and family in % (All age groups)

As shown in Table 2.3, the means for both boys and girls were almost equal and quite high (Above 3 in the 0 – 4 scale for 'safe feeling at home' and 2.95 for 'a quiet place to study at home'). The mean for the item 'a quiet place to study at home' is less than for the item 'safe feeling at home'.

Table 2.3. Responses of children on home situation, relationships with parents and family by gender and age groups (Mean)

	I feel safe at home	I have a quiet place to study at home	My parents/carers listen to me and take what I say into account	We have a good time together in my family	My parents/carers treat me fairly
Gender					
Boys	3.23	2.95	2.90	2.88	3.11
Girls	3.24	2.95	3.02	3.04	3.20
Age group					
8-years-old	3.05	2.85	3.03	2.92	3.07
10-years-old	3.32	3.02	2.89	2.96	3.13
12-years-old	3.33	2.97	2.97	3.00	3.27

The means for the three age groups were also all high (Above 3 in the 0–4 scale for ‘safe feeling at home and above 2.85 for ‘a quiet place to study at home’) but with some variation. Comparatively, 12-year-old children (mean value 3.3) felt safer at home than other two age groups of children whereas 10-year-old children (mean value 3.02) had the highest scores for ‘a quiet place to study at home’.

Children’s opinions about their relationships with parents and family

As shown in Figure 2.1 and Table 2.3, children’s opinions about their relationships with parents and family were assessed by three statements: attention of parents/carers to their children, good time to live together in family, and fair treatment to children. Like home situation, most of the children totally agree and agree a lot with these three statements. Among the three statements, the percentage of children of all groups who totally agree and agree a lot with ‘fair treatment to children’ was higher than the percentage for the other two statements.

The means for both boys and girls for the three statements were all relatively high, but the means for girls were found slightly higher than that for boys for all three items. In particular, more girls (Mean value of 3.04 in 0-4 scale) have a good time together in their family than boys (Mean value of 2.88).

There was also some variation by age group. Interestingly, the means of three age groups (Above 3.07 in the 0-4 scale) for ‘fair treatment of parents/carers to them’ were higher than those for the other two items. Comparatively, the means for 12-year-old children were higher for ‘good time to spend together in their family’ and ‘fair treatment of parents/carers to them’ than those of the other age groups.

Happiness/satisfaction with house, people and family

The responses of 8-year-old children to the items related to happiness with their living place and family were rated on a five-point happiness/emoticon scale (0 for ‘most unhappy’ to 4 for ‘most happy’) whereas those of 10 and 12 years old children were rated on an 11 point scale (0 for ‘not at all satisfied’ to 10 for ‘totally satisfied’).

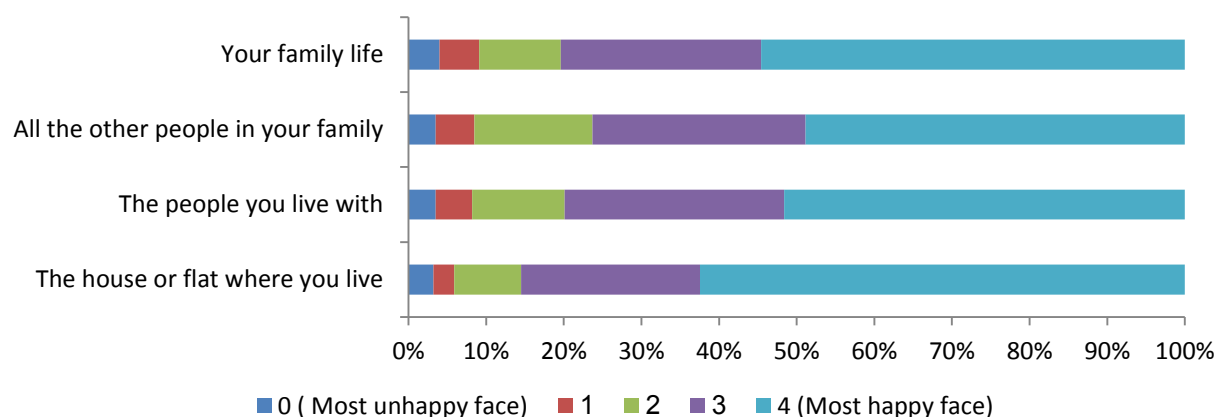


Figure 2.2. Happiness with living place and family of 8 years age group (%)

Figure 2.2 shows that 8-year-old children are happier with the house or rooms they live in and their family life than with the people they live with and other people in their family. The percentage of children's responses clustered around happier side of the scale and their level of happiness was found in descending order. The percentage of unhappy children with these four items was negligible.

Table 2.4. Satisfaction with living place and family (10-years-old and 12-years-old age groups)

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
The house or flat where you live	1.7	1.4	1.1	1.9	2.4	7.8	3.2	3.2	5.5	8.8	63.0
The people you live with	2.7	0.6	1.4	2.0	3.7	9.0	5.1	5.5	6.8	11.4	51.8
All the other people in your family	6.1	1.0	1.5	2.1	3.2	8.4	5.1	6.0	8.2	11.0	47.6
Your family life	1.4	0.3	0.8	1.2	1.7	5.4	4.2	3.7	5.6	11.9	63.8

Like 8-year-old children, 10- and 12-year-old children were more satisfied with the house or rooms they live in and their family life than with the people they live with and all the other people in their family.

Time Spent with Family

In this survey, an attempt has also been made to find out the time spent with family on three activities – talking together, having fun together and learning together in family in the previous week before the day of questionnaire administration.

Figure 2.3 reveals that the percentage of children of all age groups spending time in these activities every day ranged between 40.2% for having fun together to 51.5% for learning together. The percentage of children spending time in all activities was found to decrease gradually from 'every day' to 'most days' to 'once or twice' to 'not at all'. Learning together and talking together were the activities which were mostly practised every day.

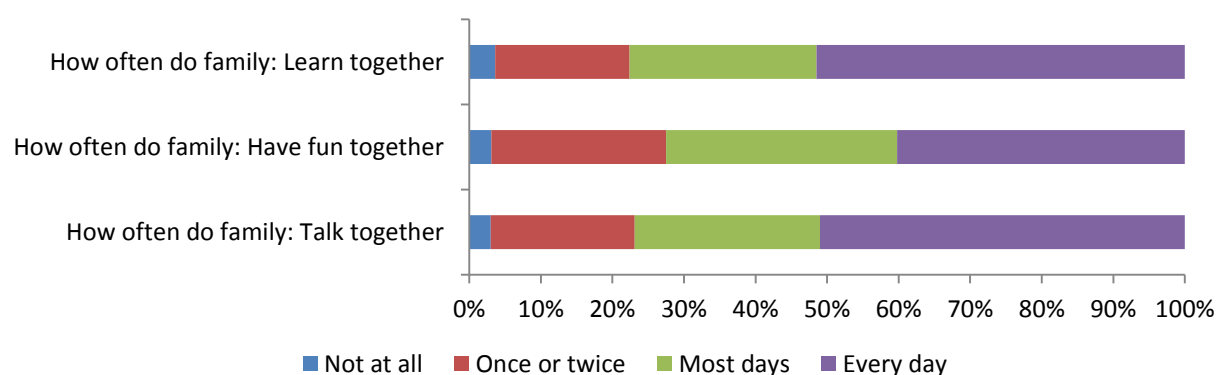


Figure 2.3. Time spent with family by all age groups (%)

The means for both genders for the above stated activities, as shown Table 2.5, can be considered fairly high as they ranged between 2.08 to 2.28 on the 0 to 3 point scale. Comparatively, girls were found to have spent more time on these three activities than boys. In addition, boys as well as girls, spend less time having fun together than talking together and learning together.

Table 2.5. Time spent with family by gender and age group

	How often do family: Talk together	How often do family: Have fun together	How often do family: Learn together
<i>Gender</i>			
Boys	2.23	2.08	2.22
Girls	2.27	2.11	2.28
<i>Age group</i>			
8-year-old	2.23	2.13	2.22
10-year-old	2.21	2.04	2.33
12-year-old	2.30	2.12	2.22

The time spent by children in the three age groups on these three activities was also fairly high as the means lay between 2.04 to 2.33 on the 0 to 3 point scale. However, slight variations were found in their responses. Twelve-year-old children spent more time talking together than children of other age groups. Similarly, 8-year-old children spent more time having fun together than children of the other age groups. Again, 10-year-old children spent slightly more time learning together.

2.3 Money and Things Children Possess

Children in the three age groups were also asked whether they possess certain essential things (Yes/No question) and about the money their families have (four-point scale).

Things children possess

Some items related to essential things the children have were not asked to 8-year-old children. The results are given in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6. Things possessed by children

	8-year-old	10- and 12-year-old
Mobile phone	-	75.8
Own room	-	58.6
Books to read for fun	-	69.6
Own stuff to listen to music	-	53.6
Good clothes to go to school	95.67	96.8
Access to a computer at home	12.00	12.7
Access to the Internet	5.83	6.7
Family car for transportation	8.68	7.4
Television that you can use	64.15	68.7

The large majority of children (96%) in all three age groups, said that they had good clothes to go to school. However, their access to computer was quite low, as less than 13% children of the three age groups had a computer in their house. Further, not all those who had a computer had access to the internet. The children who had internet access was as low as 5.83% for the 8-year-old age group and 6.7% for the 10-year-old and 12-year-old age groups. Similarly, the children having a car for transportation was as low as 7.4% for the 10-year-old and 12-year-old age groups and 8.68% for the 8-year-old age group. Interestingly, the children of the three age groups having television that they can use, ranged from 64% to 68.7%.

As responded by 10- and 12-year-old children, almost three-quarters of them had a mobile phone in their house². The proportion of children who had their own room for study was 58.6% and those with their own stuff to listen to music were 53.6%. It is also interesting that 69.6% of 10- and 12-year-old children had books to read for fun.

Happiness/satisfaction with the things they possess

Children (who were selected randomly in this survey) possess different things depending on their socio-economic status and whether they lived in an urban or a rural area. They were also asked to respond to a question about their happiness/satisfaction with the things they have.

² In the Nepali version children were asked to indicate if they have a mobile phone either their own or at home that they use.

Table 2.7. Age-wise and gender-wise happiness/satisfaction with the things children possessed

	8-years-old survey	10 and 12-years-old survey
Gender		
Boys	3.39	8.67
Girls	3.48	8.86
Age group		
8-year-old	3.43	
10-year-old		8.79
12-year-old		8.75

Table 2.7 reveals that most of the boys and girls in the three age groups are very happy with all the things they have. Moreover, girls seemed to be slightly happier than boys as the mean of 8-year-old girls in 0–4 scale is higher by 0.09 and that of 10- and 12-year-old girls is higher by 0.19 than the corresponding mean scores for boys.

Concern about the money of their family possess

Figure 2.4 shows an interesting result in relation to the children's concern about the money their family possesses using a four-point scale (0 for 'never', 1 for 'sometimes', 2 for 'often' and 3 for 'always'). Half of the children in the sample in all three age groups were sometimes worried about the money their family possess. Specifically, 8-year-old children were the most likely to always worry followed by 10- and 12-year-old children. Few of the children were never worried about the money their family possess, which implies that in general most children across the three age groups had some worries about the money their family possesses. It may be that children experience such emotion when, for example, their parents had to pay schools or for expenses relating to their education.

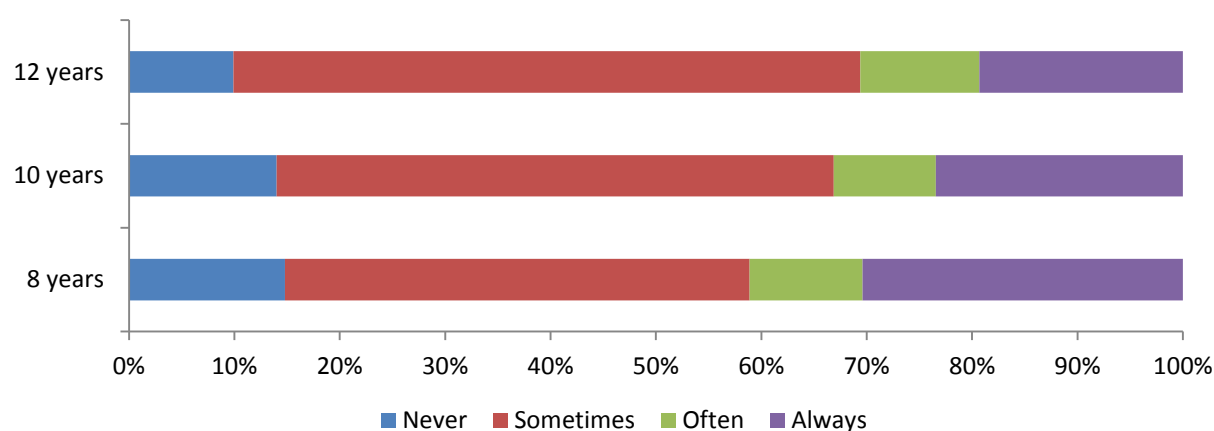


Figure 2.4. Concern about the money owned by the families

Number of employed adults

A question was asked only to 12-year-old children about the number of adults who had a paid job in their family. The results show that 43.5%, 30.4% and 17.3% children had one, two and more than two adults with paid jobs in their family respectively. The percentage of children in the sample with no adults in their family having a paid job was 8.7%. So most of the children lived with at least one adult who had a paid job.

Pocket money

There was also a question about how often children received pocket money from their family with four options - no pocket money, get pocket money but not regularly, get pocket money every week and get pocket money every month. This question was also asked only to 12-year-old children. Interestingly, 91.6% children received pocket money but not regularly and 8.4% of them did not received pocket money at all. However, none of them received pocket money weekly and monthly.

2.4 Children's friends and other people

Children were also asked about their friends and other people. The results are presented below:

Nice friends and enough friends

As children grow up, they naturally make friends. In this survey, an item has been included to find out how nice the friends of children in the sample are. As revealed in Figure 2.5, a high percentage of children of the three age groups responded 'totally agree' (38.3%) and 'agree a lot' (41.9%) for the item 'my friends are usually nice to me'. The survey also showed that the percentage of children of the three age groups with enough friends was high in 'totally agree' (40.6%) and 'agree a lot' (35.8%). It further indicates that most children of all age groups feel that they have enough friends but that the percentage of children with nicest friends was moderate.

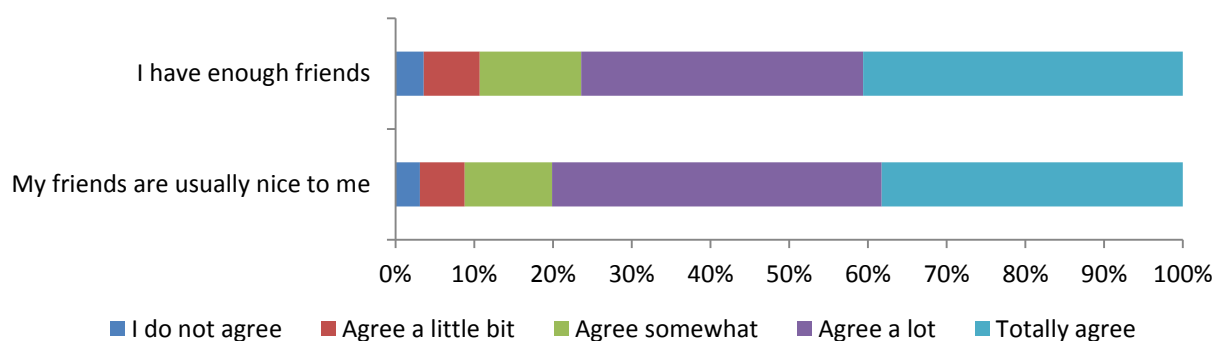


Figure 2.5. Children's friends (all age groups)

Happy/satisfied with friends and other people

Table 2.8 shows that 8-year-old children are quite happy with their friends, the people living in their area and their relationships with people in general as the means of their responses for each of these items ranged between 3.2 and 3.4 in a (0 to 4) five-point scale.

Table 2.8.Satisfaction with friends and other people

	8 years	10 years	12 years
Your friends	3.4	8.7	8.4
The people in your area	3.2	8.4	7.9
Your relationships with people in general	3.2	8.2	7.9

Similarly, 10- and 12-year-old children were also found quite satisfied with their friends, the people in their area and their relationships with people in general. It was also observed that 10-year-old children seemed more satisfied than 12-year-old children as the mean of the former ranged from 8.2 to 8.7 and the latter from 7.9 to 8.4 on an (0 to 10) eleven-point scale. Thus children of all three age groups were very happy/satisfied with their friends, the people living with them and their relationship with people in general.

Time spent with friends apart from school in the previous week

As a child grows, the circle of friends gets enlarged. They have friends outside school and they also spend time with them talking, having fun and meeting to study. Figures 2.6, 2.7 and 2.8 show that, interestingly, among the three age groups, 8-year-old children spent more time with their friends every day for these three activities than the children in the other two groups. The relevant percentages ranged from 34% for 8 years old children to 28.8% for 12 years old children. The percentage of 10 and 12 years old children who spent time for these activities every day was slightly in descending order.

The percentage of children not spending time at all to meet friends for study purposes was considerably higher than for the other two activities for the children in all three age groups. The percentage ranged from 15% for 10 years old children to 19.1% for 12 years old children whereas the percentage of children of the three age groups who did not spend time at all in talking together and having fun together ranged from 3.6% to 5.4%.

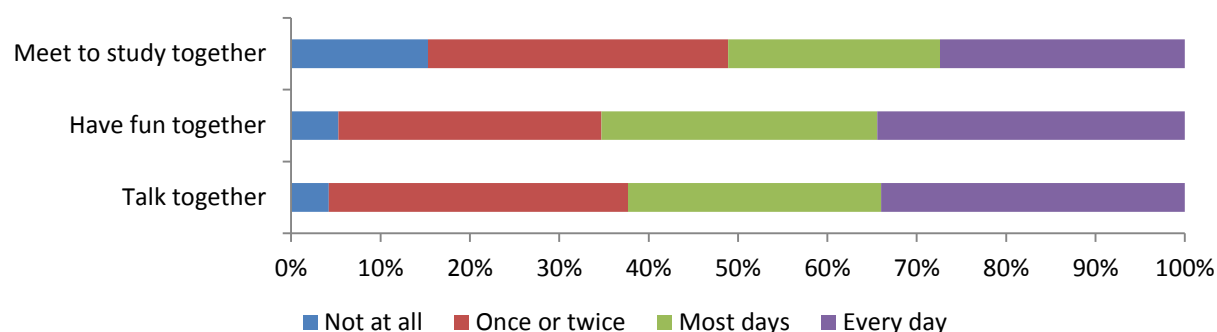


Figure 2.6.Activities with friends in the last week (8 years)

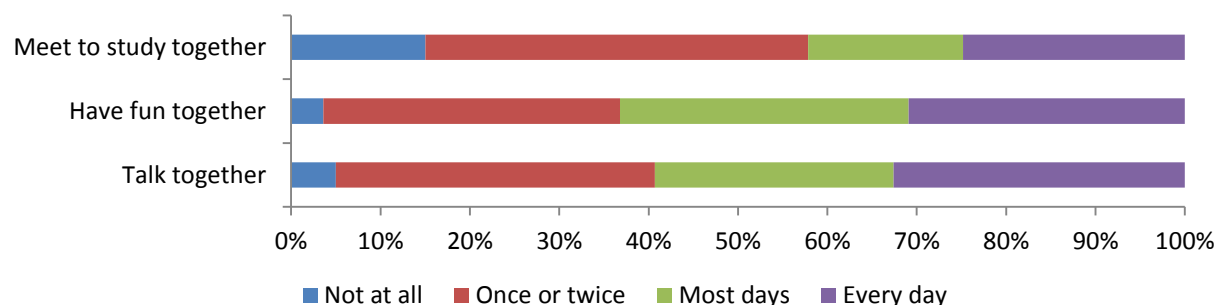


Figure 2.7. Activities with friends in the last week (10 years)

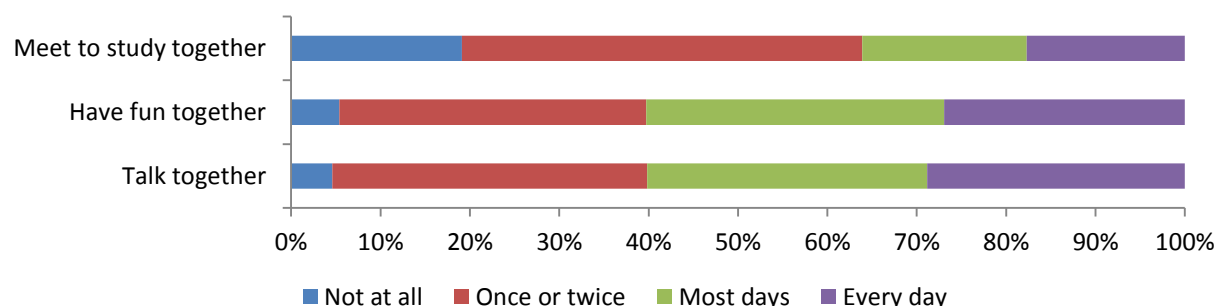


Figure 2.8. Activities with friends in the last week (12 years)

2.5 The area where children live

Children's views on the places to play and safety in their areas were gathered using a five-point agreement scale and the results are presented below.

Place to play and safety in residential area

Play is one of the natural activities of children and it is their right. Hence, there should be enough places to play or to have a good time in their areas. As shown in Figure 2.9, three-quarters of the children in all three age groups either 'totally agree' or 'agree a lot' that there are enough places to play or to have good time in their areas and that they are safe in their areas.

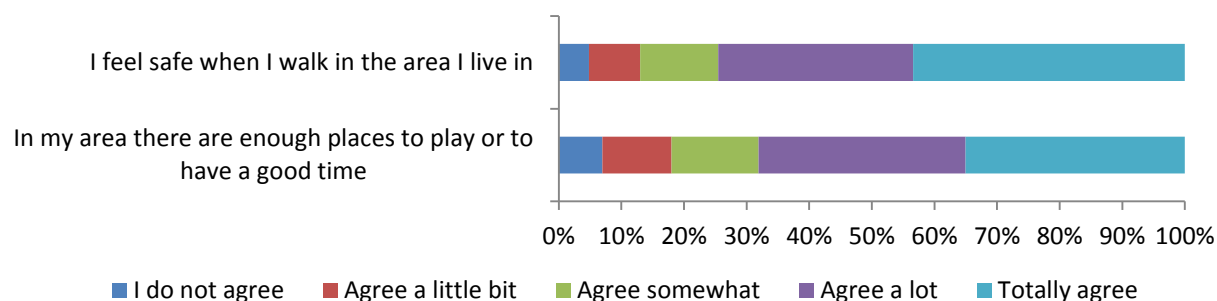


Figure 2.9. Happiness/Satisfaction with local area

By gender, more girls indicated that they have enough places to play or have good time than boys. Similarly, more girls felt that their area was safe while walking around. Interestingly, the means of all age groups for these two items were found to be around 3 in the 0 to 4 scale. These findings suggest that most children had enough places to play or they have good time in their local area and also felt safe when they walked in their area.

Table 2.9.Happiness/satisfaction with local area by gender and age group

	In my area there are enough places to play or to have a good time	I feel safe when I walk in the area I live in
Gender		
Boys	2.73	2.97
Girls	2.83	3.04
Age Group		
8 years	2.97	3.03
10 years	2.72	3.01
12 years	2.65	2.96

Concern of town council

A question was asked only to 12-year-old children about whether they thought that the town council (Municipality or VDC in Nepalese context) listened to children and young people about the things that are important to them. A moderate percentage (30.2%) of them responded to this item negatively. Few of them (11.5%) agreed only a little bit. Eighteen percent of them were found to have totally agreed with it and equal percentage agreed it a lot as well. This suggests that the amount that town councils consulted children and young people about important things for them was not felt to be adequate.

Happiness/satisfaction with facilities in local area

Figure 2.10 shows that 8-year-old children were less happy with the way they were dealt with at the doctors. However, 10- and 12-year-old children, as shown in Table 2.10, were relatively satisfied with the dealing at the doctors. Moreover, 10- and 12-year-old children were less satisfied with the outdoor areas children can use.

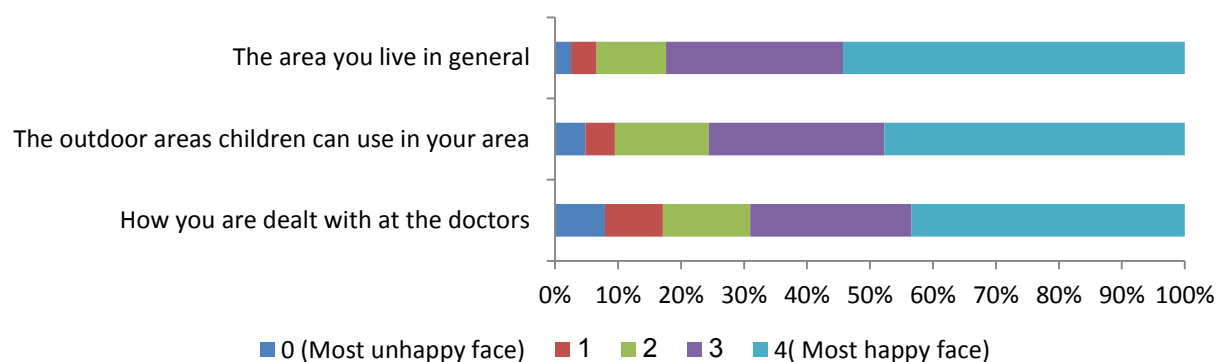


Figure 2.10. Happiness with local area (8 years)

2.10. Satisfaction with local area (10 and 12 years)

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
How you are dealt with at the doctors	1.7	.6	.7	1.6	2.2	7.0	3.1	4.2	8.2	11.2	59.6
The outdoor areas children can use in your area	6.0	1.1	1.5	3.2	5.6	11.0	6.4	8.2	10.3	12.9	33.7
The area you live in general	1.7	1.0	.7	2.2	3.2	5.7	5.0	5.2	7.2	11.8	56.4

Girls were more satisfied than boys with these three aspects of their local area. Among 10- and 12-year-old children, the younger group was happier with these facilities than the older group. Moreover, the mean satisfaction of 12-year-old children with the police in their local area was lower than for how they were treated at the doctors and with the area they live in general but greater than with the outdoor areas children can use.

Table 2.11 Satisfaction with local area by gender and age group (Mean)

	How you are dealt with at the doctors	The outdoor areas children can use in your area	The area you live in general
Gender			
Boys	8.48	7.06	8.18
Girls	8.73	7.39	8.68
Age group			
10 years	8.68	7.45	8.53
12 years	8.54	7.01	8.35
Total	8.61	7.23	8.44

2.6 School

Children were asked three groups of items related to school. The first group as shown in Figure 2.11 consisted of items using a five-point agreement scale. The result is very encouraging as 63% of the children totally agreed and 31% of them agreed a lot with the statement 'I like going to school'. Similarly, most of the children of all age groups agreed that their teachers listened to them and took what they said into account, their teachers treated them fairly and they felt safe in school.

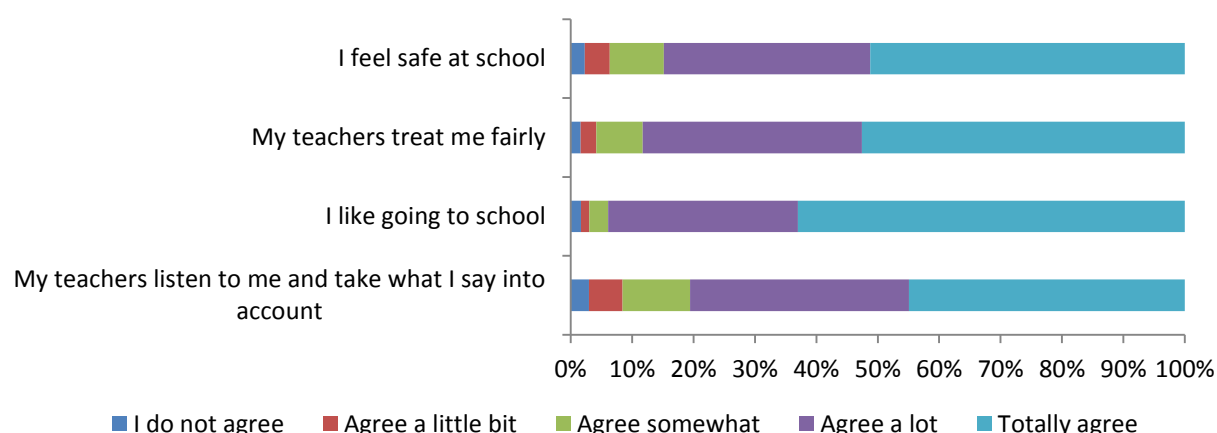


Figure 2.11. Happiness/satisfaction with school

As shown in Table 2.12 the means of girls' responses to these four questions about school were all greater than those of boys.

Table 2.12. Happiness/satisfaction with school by gender and age group

	My teachers listen to me and take what I say into account	I like going to school	My teachers treat me fairly	I feel safe at school
Gender				
Boys	3.10	3.51	3.30	3.24
Girls	3.18	3.53	3.40	3.31
Age group				
8 years old	3.13	3.33	3.23	3.19
10 years old	3.09	3.52	3.33	3.24
12 years old	3.20	3.71	3.49	3.39
Total	3.14	3.52	3.35	3.27

Age-wise, the means for 12-year-old children for these four items were higher than those of other age group children. Apart from the question about teachers' attention to children, the means of 10-year-old children were lowest of all.

The second group of items were two questions asking children whether they had been hit by other children in the school and left out by other children in their class in the previous month (from the day of questionnaire administration). Figure 2.12 shows the overall responses.

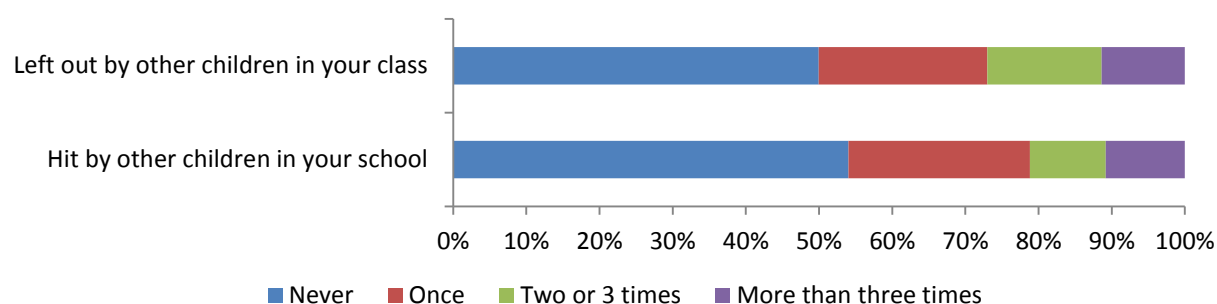


Figure 2.12. Children hit by other children (all age groups)

As shown in Table 2.13, the mean of children's responses was lowest for the 12-year-old children (0.53) followed by 10-year-old children (0.84) and then 8-year-old children (0.96). This suggests that as the age of children increased bullying was less prevalent in the school. Gender-wise, girls were less likely to be hit by other children than boys.

Table 2.13. Children hit by other children by gender and age group (all age groups)

	How often you were hit by other children in your school	How often you were left out by other children in your class
Gender		
Boys	0.85	0.89
Girls	0.71	0.87
Age group		
8 years old	0.96	1.04
10 years old	0.84	0.87
12 years old	0.53	0.75
Total	0.78	0.88

Left out by other children in the class

The response pattern of the three age groups of children for being 'left out by other children in the class' was similar to the pattern of 'children hit by other children' but with slightly higher mean values compared to that of latter. Among the three age groups of children, the percentage of children who were never left out by their peers in the class was high for 12-year-old children (56.8%) and it was nearly the same for 10- and 8-year-old children (46%). The proportion of children left out by other children in the class were in descending order from 'never' to 'once' to 'two or three times' to 'more than three times'. The gap in the percentage of responses between 'never' to 'once' was 36.7% for 12-year-old children, 17.2% for 10-year-old children and 26.7% for 8-year-old children. The percentages of children who were left out by other children 'two or three times' and 'more than three times' were smaller. However, such cases happened roughly equally among boys and girls.

The third group of questions asked children about their happiness or satisfaction with various aspects of school. Most of the 8-year-old children were happy with other children in their class, their school marks, their school experience and their relationship with teachers. Comparatively, boys and girls were roughly equally happy with these aspects.

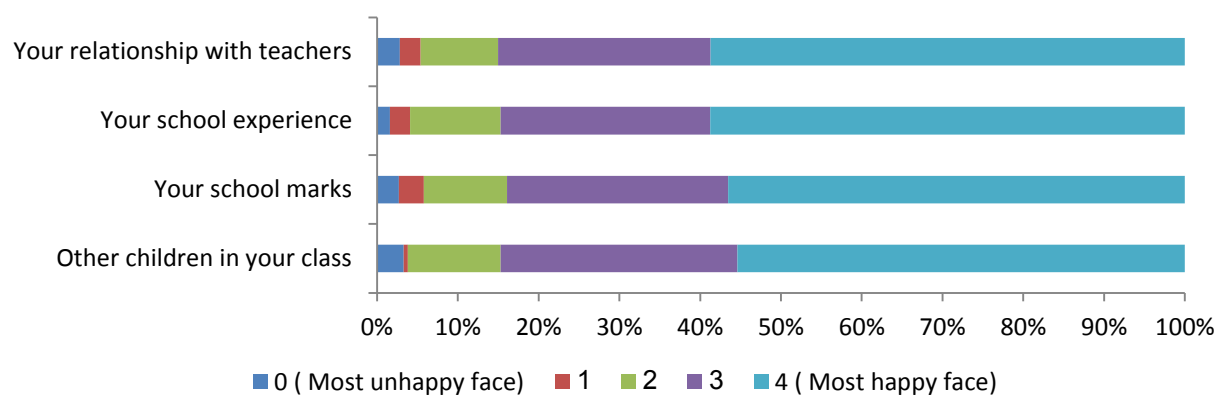


Figure 2.13. Happy with school related things

Table 2.14. Happy with school related things by gender (8 years)

	Other children in your class	Your school marks	Your school experience	Your relationship with teachers
Boys	3.28	3.26	3.33	3.30
Girls	3.38	3.38	3.42	3.40
Total	3.33	3.32	3.38	3.35

As with the responses of 8-year-old children, 10- and 12-year-old children were satisfied with other children in their class, their school marks, their school experience, their life as students, things they have learned and their relationship with teachers. Gender-wise, girls were slightly more satisfied with these aspects than boys. Similarly, except for the satisfaction with their life as students, 10-year-old children were more satisfied with these aspects than 12-year-old children.

Table 2.15. Satisfaction with school-related things (10 and 12 years)

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Other children in your class	2.1	.9	.5	1.6	2.9	8.3	4.9	5.9	7.7	13.2	52.0
Your school marks	1.4	.4	.7	.6	1.8	5.4	3.8	5.0	8.5	13.9	58.5
Your school experience	.9	.4	.7	.4	1.8	5.4	3.2	5.3	7.9	15.0	59.0
Your life as a student	1.1	.5	.2	.5	2.1	4.4	2.6	3.4	6.4	12.2	66.7
Things you have learned	.2	.3	.2	.4	1.3	4.0	2.7	3.0	8.4	14.6	64.9
Your relationship with teachers	1.5	.7	.6	.7	1.2	3.5	3.2	3.7	6.5	11.8	66.6

Table 2.16. Satisfaction with school-related things by gender and age group (10 and 12 years)

	Other children in your class	Your school marks	Your school experience	Your life as a student	Things you have learned	Your relationship with teachers
<i>Gender</i>						
Boys	8.13	8.58	8.67	8.82	9.02	8.81
Girls	8.49	8.89	8.96	9.17	9.22	9.10
<i>Age group</i>						
10 years old	8.40	8.82	8.87	8.94	9.25	9.09
12 years old	8.22	8.65	8.77	9.06	9.00	8.83
Total	8.31	8.74	8.82	9.00	9.12	8.96

2.7 Time Use

Children were asked how they used their time doing different activities outside school in 0 to 4 five-point scale. The questions for children of 12 years included four more activities also with five-point scale.

Table 2.17 reveals that more and more 8 and 10 years old children used to spend their time every day or almost every day in doing homework (68.9%) and helping with housework (68%). Similarly, doing homework and helping with housework were the daily activities of three-fourth of the 12 years old

children. Notably, 84% of the 8 and 10 years old children and 81% of 12 years old children rarely or never used their time in using a computer. The opportunity of watching TV every day or almost every day was available only to one-third of the children of all age groups. However, almost half of the 12 years old children were found to have spent their time every day in taking care of younger brothers and sisters, and other family members.

Table 2.17. Time use in out-of-school activities (8 and 10 years)

	Rarely or never	Less than once a week	Once or twice a week	Every day or almost
Taking classes outside school time	30.0	17.9	32.9	19.3
Reading for fun	10.2	13.3	27.1	49.4
Helping with housework	5.1	7.4	19.6	68.0
Doing homework	6.0	8.3	16.8	68.9
Watching TV	18.4	15.7	33.0	32.9
Playing sports or doing exercise	9.0	17.0	33.5	40.6
Using a computer	84.0	2.9	5.3	7.8

Table 2.18. Time use in out-of-school activities (12 years)

	Rarely or never	Less than once a week	Once or twice a week	Every day or almost
Taking classes outside school time	25.0	20.7	42.4	11.9
Organised leisure time activities	34.9	22.5	30.4	12.2
Reading for fun	18.8	16.3	32.8	32.1
Helping with housework	2.2	6.6	16.2	75.0
Doing homework	2.8	5.9	14.8	76.5
Watching TV	14.7	16.4	35.4	33.4
Playing sports or doing exercise	10.9	16.7	34.9	37.5
Using a computer	81.2	3.7	8.4	6.8
Just being by myself	40.6	26.4	20.5	12.5
Taking care of family members	9.8	11.6	25.4	53.2

Table 2.19. Time use in out-of-school activities by gender and age group (8 and 10 years)

	Taking classes outside school time	Reading for fun	Helping with housework	Doing homework	Watching TV	Playing sports or doing exercise	Using a computer
Gender							
Boys	1.46	2.15	2.51	2.44	1.84	2.11	0.39
Girls	1.37	2.17	2.50	2.53	1.77	2.00	0.35
Age Group							
8 years	1.41	2.20	2.48	2.45	1.65	2.01	0.31
10 years	1.42	2.12	2.53	2.52	1.95	2.10	0.43

There were only small variations between the responses of 8- and 10-year-old children in the frequency of spending time on out-of-school activities. The largest difference was for playing sports or doing exercises where the mean score for boys was 0.11 higher than for girls.

The highest mean difference between 8- and 10-year-old children was noticed for watching TV (0.30) and using computer (0.12), both of which were more common among 10-year-old children.

Some gender differences were also found in the responses of 12-year-old children. Boys were engaged in organised leisure time activities than girls - with the mean difference between them remaining 0.14, and girls more frequently spent time reading for fun (the mean gender difference was 0.12).

Table 2.20. Time use in out-of-school related activities (12 years)

	Taking classes outside school time	Organised leisure time activities	Reading for fun	Helping with housework	Doing homework	Watching TV	Playing sports or doing exercise	Using a computer	Just being by myself	Taking care of family members
Boys	1.44	1.27	1.72	2.62	2.60	1.91	2.07	0.45	1.11	2.24
Girls	1.38	1.13	1.84	2.66	2.70	1.84	1.91	0.37	0.99	2.20
Total (12 years)	1.41	1.20	1.78	2.64	2.65	1.88	1.99	0.41	1.05	2.22

2.8 Children Life and Their Future

Children in all three age groups were also asked how happy or satisfied they were with other aspect of their life on a five-point scale. As shown in Table 2.21, interestingly, most of the 8-year-old children were happy with their life as a whole. The higher scores for 8-year-old children were for safety, freedom, health and own body.

Table 2.21. Happy/satisfaction with things in children's life (8-years-old survey)

	0	1	2	3	4
The freedom you have	3.9	3.9	10.1	28.1	54.1
Your health	3.3	2.8	13.7	26.9	53.3
The way that you look	1.7	3.8	14.9	31.7	47.9
Your own body	2.2	3.1	13.1	28.2	53.4
What you do in your free time	3.2	4.0	12.9	29.8	50.1
How you are listened to by adults in general	4.1	3.8	16.7	28.7	46.6
How safe you feel	3.1	3.9	10.2	25.8	57.0
Your life as a whole	2.0	2.7	8.9	25.6	60.8

Table 2.22. Happy/satisfaction with things in children's life (10- and 12-years-old surveys)

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
How you use your time	1.3	.9	.9	.6	3.3	8.2	5.2	7.4	8.0	13.1	51.0
The freedom you have	4.6	1.2	1.6	.6	3.4	9.3	6.9	6.0	9.2	14.2	42.9
The amount of opportunities you have*	2.6	.8	1.2	2.2	3.6	9.5	5.3	8.8	11.8	14.0	40.2
Your health	1.2	.9	.3	1.1	2.2	5.7	3.8	6.5	8.7	11.6	58.0
The way that you look	4.1	1.2	1.1	1.8	3.8	7.8	5.6	7.4	9.3	12.1	45.8
Your own body	1.5	.7	.5	.8	2.3	6.9	5.6	4.8	8.2	11.8	57.0
What you do in your free time	1.5	1.1	.7	1.0	2.9	8.8	6.1	6.9	10.9	12.4	47.8
How you are listened to by adults in general	4.1	1.9	1.9	2.5	4.1	9.5	7.4	6.7	10.5	12.7	38.6
Your self-confidence	2.5	.8	.8	1.0	1.8	5.8	4.4	4.9	8.5	13.7	55.8
Your life as a whole	1.7	.7	.5	.9	2.1	5.5	3.8	5.4	7.5	14.6	57.3

*Asked only for 12 years old children)

Table 2.22 shows that the levels of satisfaction of 10- and 12-year-old children with these aspects of their life were clustered towards the 'totally satisfied' side. Particularly, they were more satisfied with their health, their own body, their self-confidence and how they used their time. They were also relatively satisfied with their life as a whole.

Table 2.23 shows a slight difference between the means of boys and girls in their level of satisfaction with the aspects of life considered in this section. Girls were more satisfied than boys in all respects. In terms of age groups, 10-year-old children were more satisfied with nine of the aspects than 12-year-old children. Moreover, an item on satisfaction with 'the amount of opportunities you have' was asked of 12-year-old children only and their mean level of satisfaction was comparatively low compared to other aspects of life.

Table 2.23. Satisfaction with things in children's life by gender and age group

	How you use your time	The freedom you have	The amount of opportunities you have	Your health	The way that you look	Your own body	What you do in your free time	How you are listened to by adults in general	Your self-confidence	Your life as a whole
Gender										
Boys	8.16	7.76	7.73	8.51	7.82	8.42	8.04	7.39	8.43	8.54
Girls	8.51	7.84	8.03	8.77	7.97	8.70	8.41	7.68	8.59	8.75
Age Group										
10 years	8.48	8.04	-	8.80	7.92	8.65	8.32	7.79	8.70	8.79
12 years	8.19	7.57	7.88	8.49	7.87	8.49	8.13	7.28	8.32	8.51
Total	8.34	7.80	7.88	8.64	7.90	8.57	8.23	7.53	8.51	8.65

Changes in children's lives

Five questions with a yes/no response format were asked to 10- and 12-year-old children. Interestingly, among the changes in children's lives, the number of children who changed schools (44.1%) in the past year was found higher than the number of those who changed house and local area. It was followed by the number of children changing houses (37.5%) and local areas (24.1%) in the past year. These changes may be due to internal migration from rural to urban areas in search of job opportunities and armed conflict that happened in the country. Only 12.9% of the children had moved to another country accompanying their parents who moved to neighbouring country specially India for jobs. It is also quite interesting to note that Nepali children (83.7%) lived with the same parents or carers with whom they were living one year ago.

Feeling about themselves

The questions related to feeling about themselves were asked only to 10- and 12-year-old children using an 11-point scale (0 for 'not at all satisfied' to 10 for 'totally satisfied'). Both groups of children were found to be highly satisfied with 'the things they want to be good at' as the mean was around 9. 'Feeling safe' and 'their preparation for the future' were the other two things the students were most highly satisfied with. Children's level of satisfaction for 'doing things away from their home' and 'what may happen to you later in your life' was slightly lower compared to other things mentioned above.

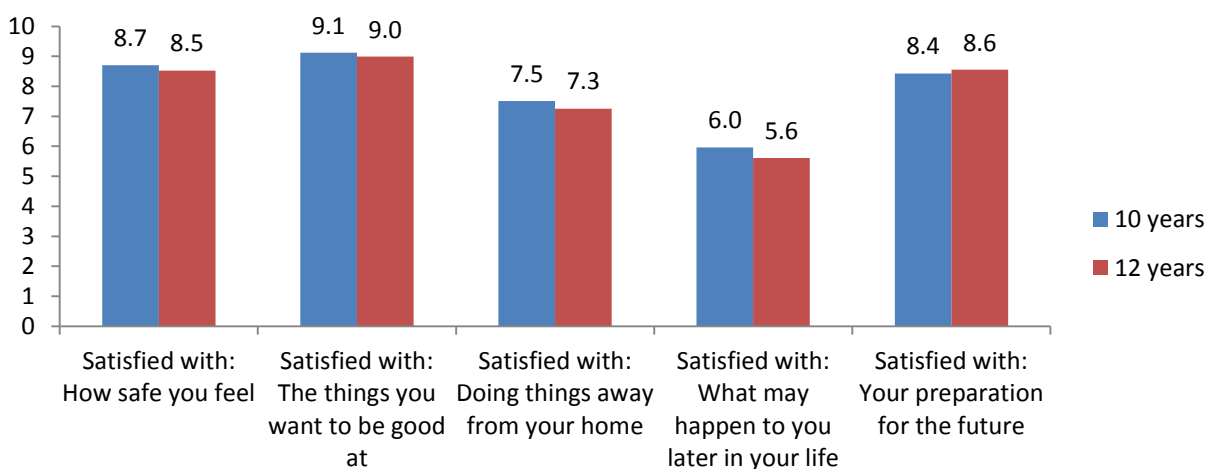


Figure 2.14. Feeling about themselves

Feeling happy during the last two weeks

Also on an 11-point scale, the mean scores of 8.6 and 8.7 for 10- and 12-year-old children respectively indicate that they were generally happy during the last two weeks (before the date of the survey administration).

Child rights

Sixty two percent of children of all groups were aware of child's rights, however only 30.3% of them were familiar with the children's right's convention. Furthermore, 57.9% of the children thought that adults in general did respect children's rights in Nepal.

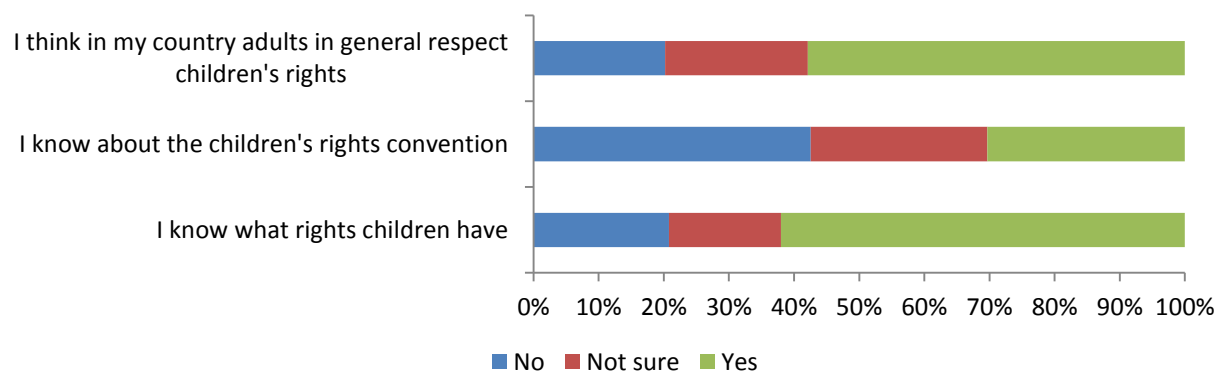


Figure 2.15. Children's rights

2.9 Overall subjective well-being

This includes six sets of indices of psychometric scales: OLS; SLSS; BMSLSS; PWI-SC7, Adapted PWI-SC9; and Positive affect (for more detailed information about the scale see the Methods section in the General Introduction on page 2). The results derived from the data sets for these scales of overall subjective well-being are presented below.

Overall Life Satisfaction (OLS)

The OLS single-item measure indicated that most of the children of three age groups were happy/satisfied with their life as a whole. Sixty one percent of 8-year-old children were totally happy on a five-point scale whereas only 57% percent of 10- and 12-year-old children were totally satisfied on an 11-point scale. A high percentage of children's responses in all three age groups were above the mid-point on the scale.

Student Life Satisfaction Scale (SLSS)

The version of the SLSS administered to the 8-year-old children used a five-point agreement scale whereas the one administered to 10- and 12-year-old children used an 11-point agreement scale. Table 2.24 shows that the responses of the 8-year-old children were inclined towards a high level of satisfaction i.e. agree a lot and totally agree. Interestingly, as shown in Table 2.25, the levels of total agreement of the 10- and 12-year-old children were higher than that of the 8-year-old children.

Table 2.24. Student life satisfaction of 8 years old children (%)

	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
My life is going well	3.8	4.5	7.8	38.0	46.0
My life is just right	4.8	10.1	15.3	37.9	31.9
I have a good life	2.4	5.5	10.2	32.1	49.8
I have what I want in life	4.4	7.2	20.5	30.0	38.0
The things in my life are excellent	3.8	6.4	8.5	34.5	46.8

Table 2.25. Student life satisfaction of 10 and 12 years old children (%)

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
My life is going well	.8	.3	.6	.5	1.3	4.0	2.2	3.9	5.4	12.2	68.8
My life is just right	3.3	1.0	1.1	1.5	2.2	9.2	4.1	5.2	8.9	16.7	46.9
I have a good life	2.7	.7	.3	.7	1.8	5.3	3.5	4.4	7.3	12.0	61.3
I have what I want in life	7.2	.9	1.2	2.4	4.8	9.1	5.2	6.6	9.6	12.1	40.9
The things in my life are excellent	4.1	.8	1.1	1.8	3.1	7.7	4.8	6.5	7.5	11.2	51.3

For the presentation of the results the response scales were transformed into 0-100 scales. The distribution of scores depicted in Figure 2.16 reveals that 28% of the 10-year-old children experienced maximum possible level of satisfaction with the items included in SLSS. In addition, most of the children's level of satisfaction was seen in the upper part of the scale.

However, as shown in Figure 2.16, though the levels of satisfaction of 12-year-old children were distributed in the upper part of the scale, the highest possible level of satisfaction in the SLSS was found to be below 15% for this age group.

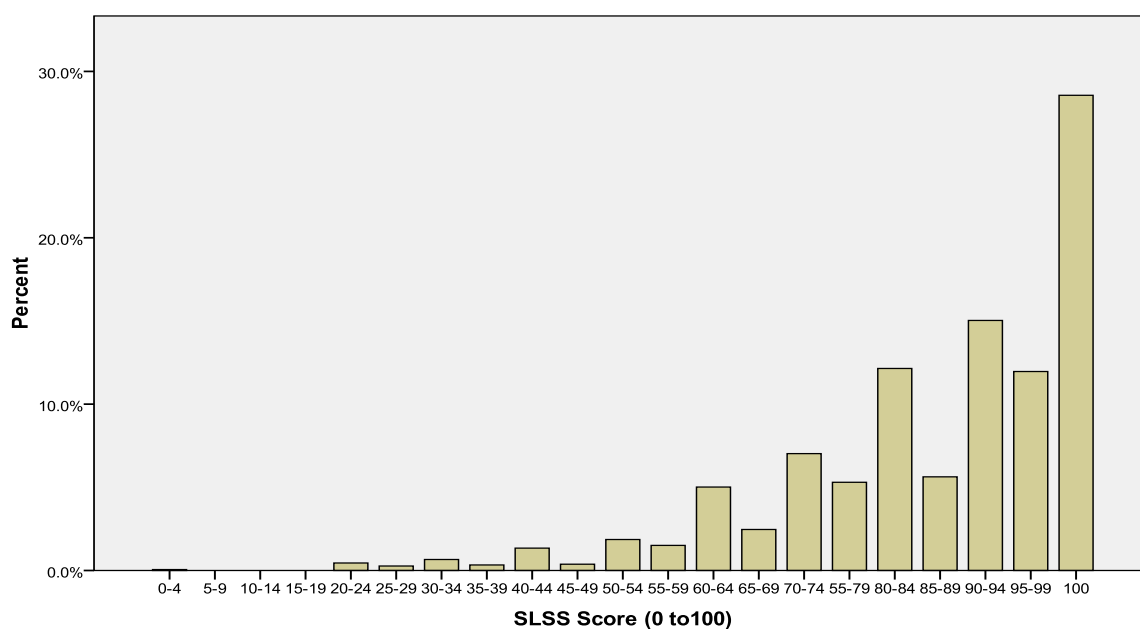


Figure 2.16. Distribution of scores on the SLSS (10 years)

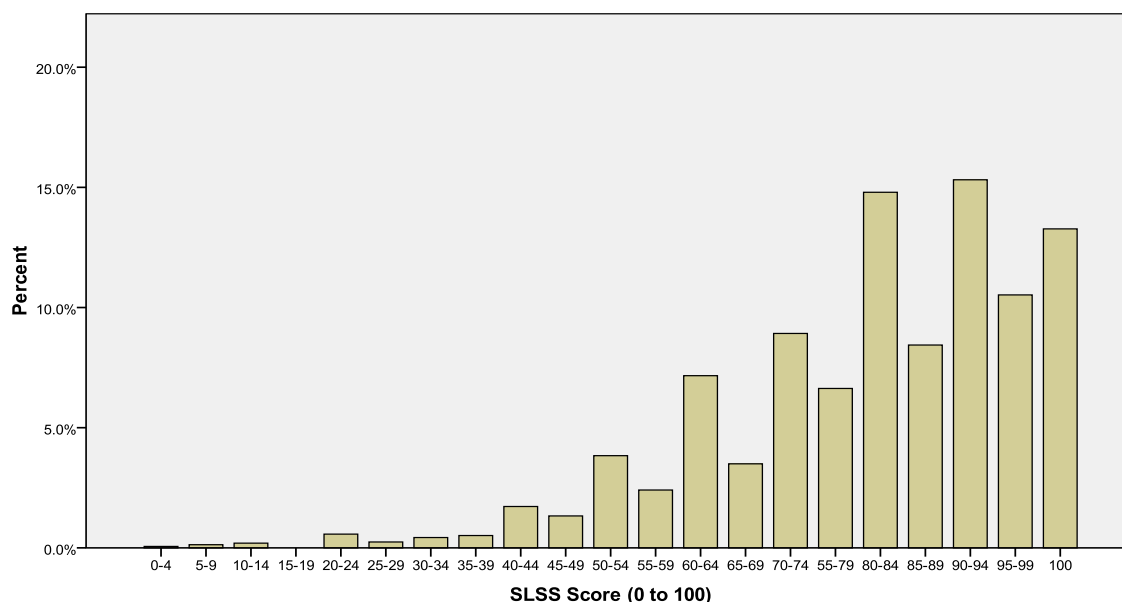


Figure 2.17. Distribution of scores in the SLSS (12 year)

Brief Multidimensional Student Life Satisfaction Scale (BMSLSS)

This scale consists of five domains – family life, friends, school experience, local area and body. The scale is a sum of these five scores transformed so that it is from zero to 100 and the scores of 10- and 12-year-old children are displayed in Figure 2.17 and 2.18 respectively. As with the SLSS, most of the scores of both age groups were above mid-point of the scale. In particular, 28% of the 10-year-old children and 20% of the 12-year-old children reported the maximum possible levels of satisfaction with the items included in the BMSLSS.

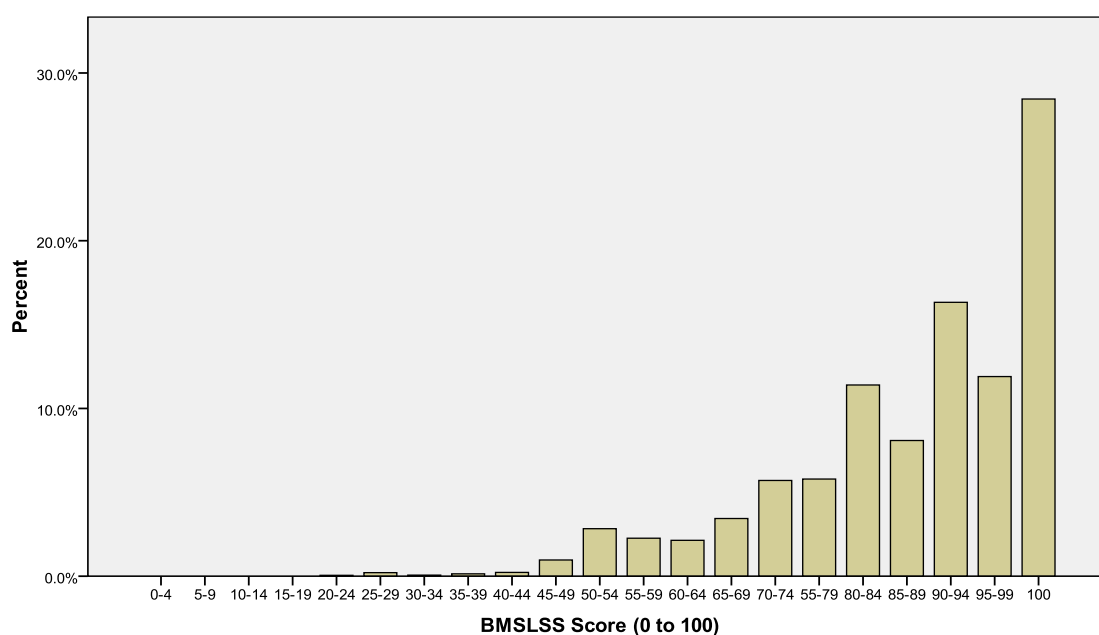


Figure 2.18 . Distribution of scores in the BMSLSS (10 years)

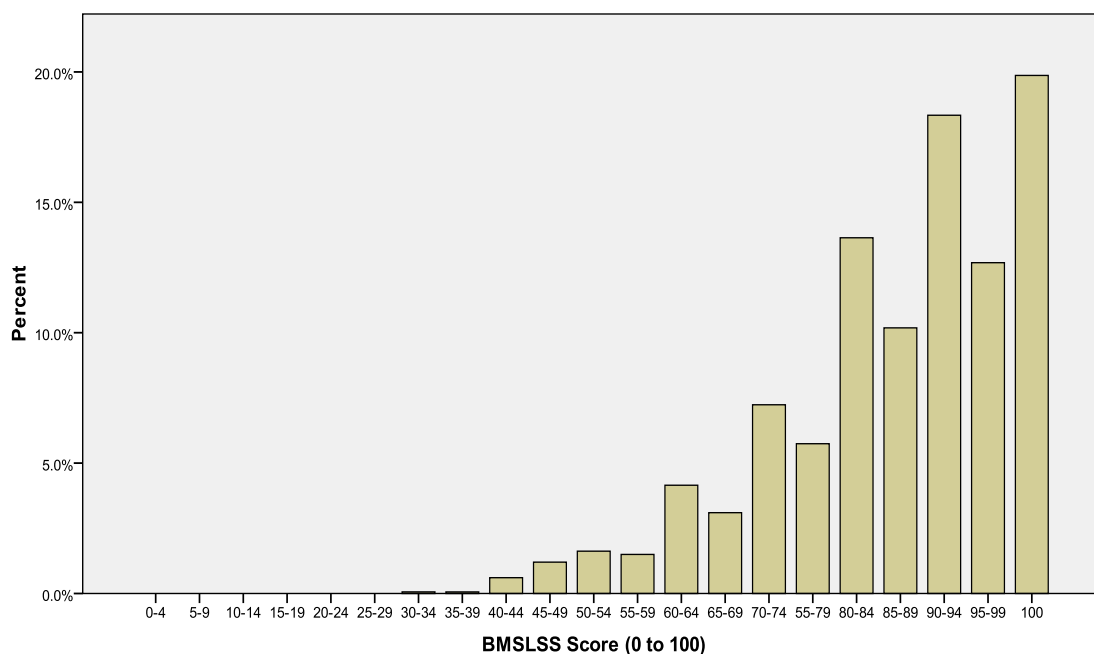


Figure 2.19: Distribution of scores in the BMSLSS (12 years)

Personal Well-Being Index – School Children (PWI-SC7)

The PWI-SC7 which was administered to 10- and 12-year-old children had seven items: all the things you have, your health, the things you want to be good at, your relationships with people in general, how safe you feel, doing things away from your home, and what may happen to you later in your life. As with the previous scales, the scores obtained in this scale were transformed into a score ranging from 0 to 100 and their distributions for the two age groups are presented in Figure 2.20 and 2.21.

It can be seen in Figure 2.20 that most of the PWI-SC7 scores of 10-year-old children were above the mid-point of the scale, but the percentage who scored the maximum satisfaction was below 15%. However, the distribution of scores of 12-year-old children was rather different - around 20% of this age group scored in the range of 85 to 89.

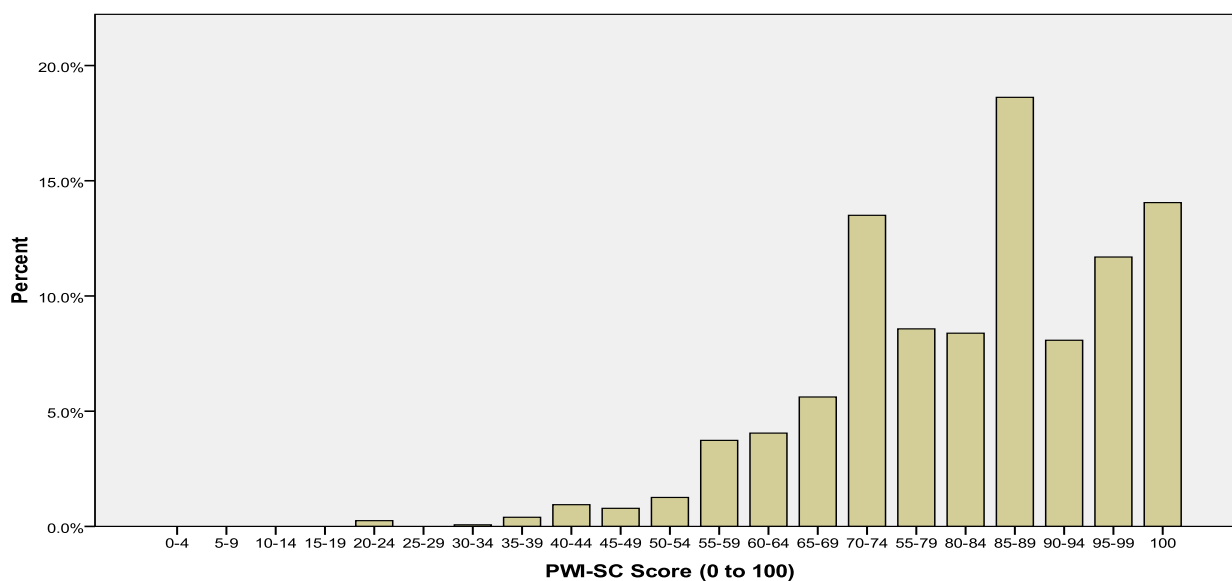


Figure 2.20. Distribution of scores in the PWI-SC7 (10 years)

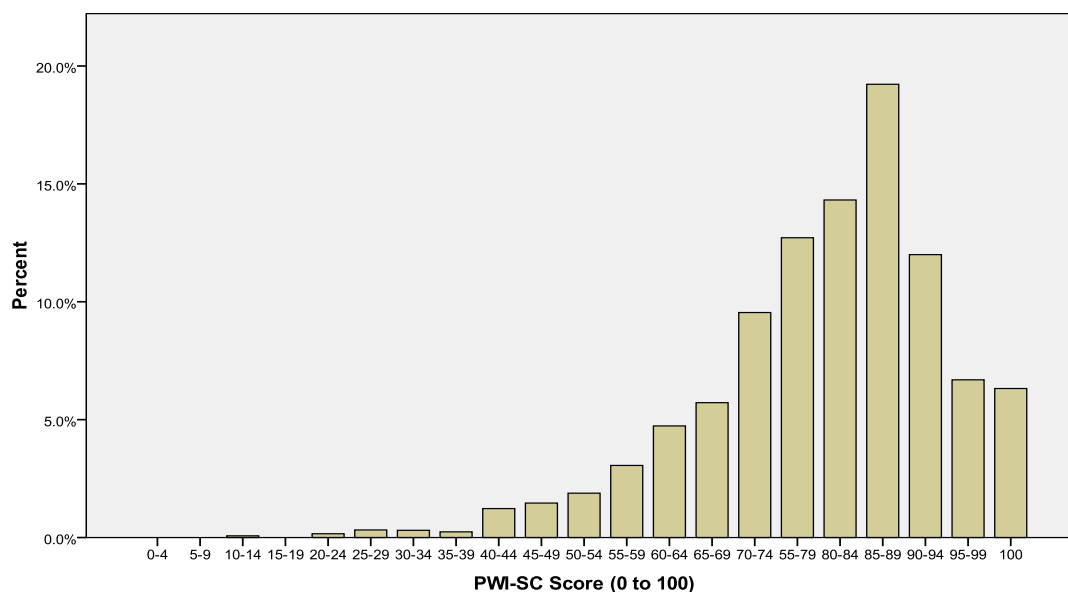


Figure 2.21. Distribution of scores in the PWI-SC7 (12 years)

Adapted PWI-SC (9 items version)

The adapted PWI-SC9 with two more additional items related to time use and life as a student was administered to 10- and 12-year-old children. The distribution of scores for the two age groups are shown in Figure 2.22 and 2.23. Similar to previous scales, most of the scores of lie above the mid-point.

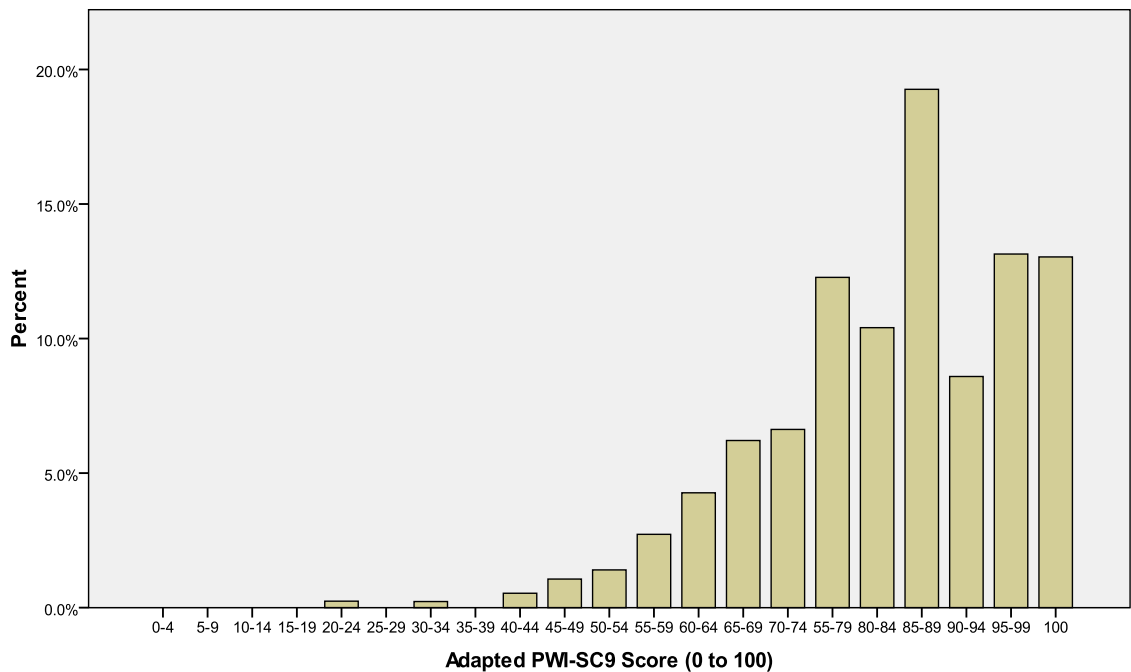


Figure 2.22.Distribution of scores in the adapted PWI-SC 9 (10 year)

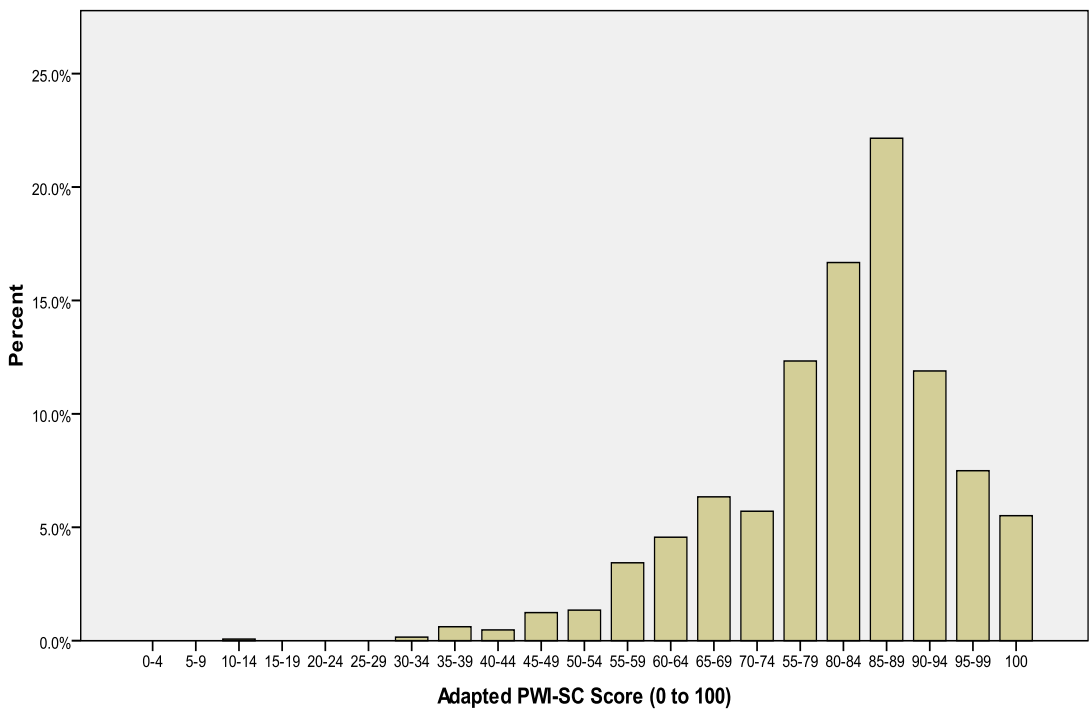


Figure 2.23.Distribution of scores in the adapted PWI-SC 9 (12 year)

Positive Affect

This set has 6 questions, also using an eleven-point (0 to 10) scale, which describes different positive feelings and emotions. The children were asked to say how much they had felt the given feelings and emotions during the last two weeks. The distribution of their scores is given in Figure 2.24 and 2.25, which shows that almost 33% of 10-year-old children and 17% of 12-year-old children scored the maximum. Moreover, as in the previous scale, most of the scores were above the mid-point of the scale.

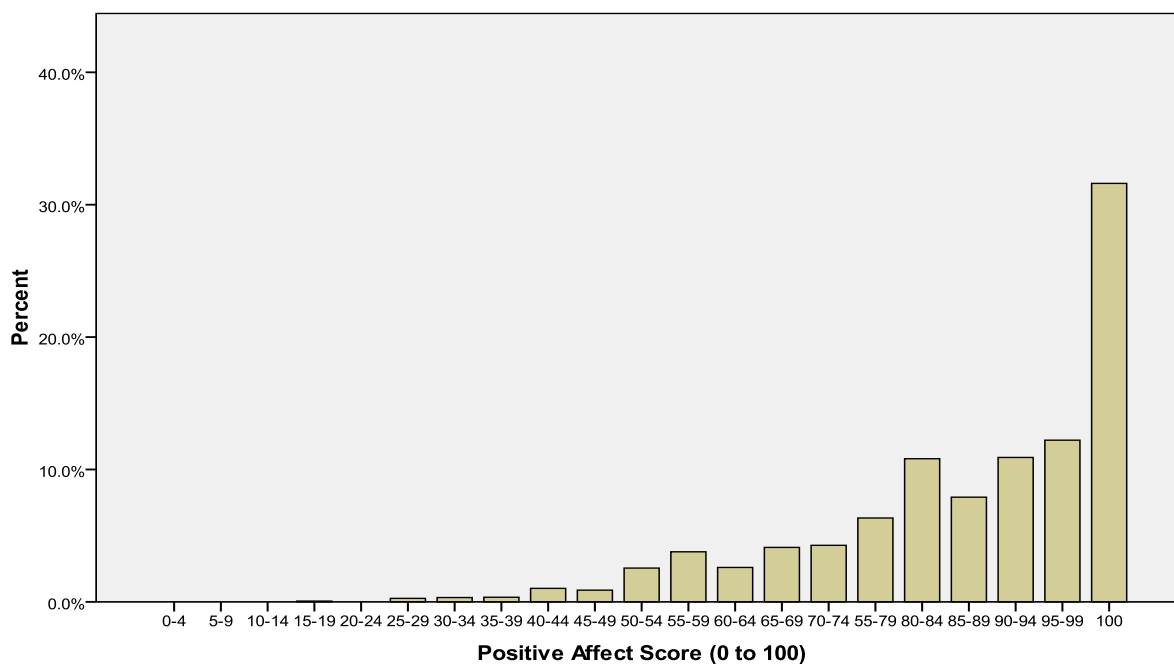


Figure 2.24. Distribution of scores in the Positive Affect Scale (10 years)

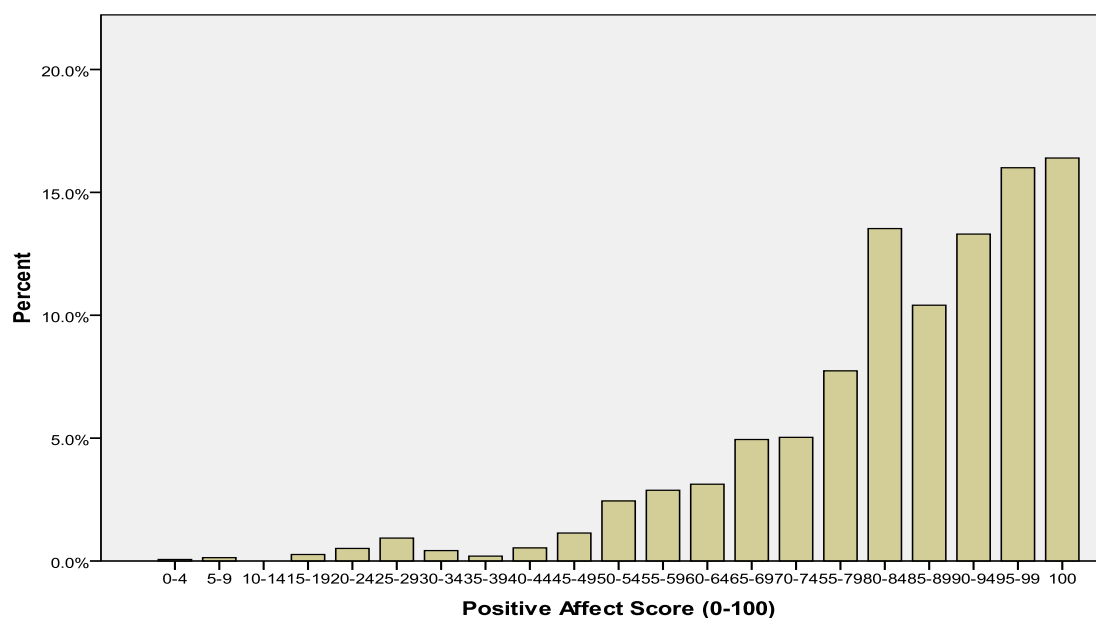


Figure 2.25. Distribution of scores in the Positive Affect scale (12 years)

Variations in overall subjective well-being

Table 2.26 shows the gender-wise and age-wise means of OLS, SLSS, BMSLSS, PWI-SC7, PWI-SC9 and positive affect. The data set clearly showed satisfying results for both boys and girls in those scales. Interestingly, the responses of girls were better than that of boys - indicating that the former tended to be happier/more satisfied than the latter. Further analysis shows that the girls were ahead of boys in all respects and especially they were noticeably better in BMSLSS, PWI-SC9 and PWI-SC7 among six data sets.

Comparing the three age groups, 10-year-old children were ahead of the other two age groups on all scales except the PWI-SC7.

Table 2.26. Results of six psychometric scales by gender and age group

	OLS	SLSS	BMSLSS	PWI-SC7	PWI-SC9	Positive affect
Gender						
Boys	85.10	79.86	83.79	79.86	80.53	83.54
Girls	86.93	81.61	86.52	82.26	83.03	85.09
Age group						
8 years	85.08	76.27	82.78	82.46	-	-
10 years	87.94	85.55	86.90	81.56	82.79	85.57
12 years	85.07	80.40	85.83	79.25	80.81	83.09
Total	83.03	80.75	85.18	81.08	81.79	84.32

3. Conclusions

Most of the conclusions drawn from the survey of subjective well-being of children were generally quite positive. However, in conclusion, there are some identified areas for potential improvement. These conclusions are presented in two major sub-headings.

3.1 Positive Aspects

The key conclusion of the survey is that most of the 8-, 10- and 12-year-old children, though not all, are happy/satisfied with their life. This conclusion implies that, most of the children in Nepal, despite not belonging to high socio-economic status, are happy/satisfied with their life. Interestingly, girls are more happy/satisfied than boys in many respects. The survey indicates more positive aspects of children's subjective well-being in Nepal. These aspects are substantiated by the following supporting conclusions.

Most of the children of the three age groups feel safe at their home and are happy/satisfied with their house or rooms where they are living. The reason behind this statement is that they are living with their parents and they are getting affection of their parents. It indicates that the feeling of self-satisfaction of the children about their home condition, above all, is the most important thing.

Children of the three age groups are generally positive about the fair treatment of their parents/carers who look after them and are happy/satisfied with the people they live with. Hence, most of them are happy/satisfied with their family life.

Two-thirds of the children of the three age groups spent time with their family talking together, learning together, and having fun together. Comparatively, girls spent more time on these activities than boys.

School dress is the most common thing that almost all the children possess. The things most of the children have in their families are mobile phones and televisions. Interestingly, most of the children of the three age groups are happy/satisfied with whatever things they have. Moreover, girls were slightly happier than boys with the things they have.

Most of the 12-year-old children are living in a family with at least one of the family members engaged in income-generating activity - whether it is in the formal or informal sector. Almost all 12-year-old children get pocket money but not regularly.

Most of the children have enough friends and they feel that their friends are nice to them to a moderate degree. The children of the three age groups who did not spend time at all meeting with friends for the purpose of studying was relatively high compared to other activities such as talking together and having fun together with friends.

Most children, both boys and girls, liked going to school. Fair treatment of teachers, safety at schools, and attention and responsiveness of teachers to them are ranked from top to bottom according to their agreement.

Around half of children were never hit other children at school, and the same goes for being left out by other children. Girls were less likely to be hit by other children than boys.

Most of the 8- and 10-year-old children spent their time every day or almost every day in doing homework and helping the parents and guardians in their housework. Twelve-year-old children spent more time doing homework and helping with housework than 8- and 10-year-old children. Contrary to this, most of the children of the three age groups spent little time using computers. Watching TV and taking classes outside schools were the activities which received least time.

Children of the three age groups were happy/satisfied with the way they use their time, their health, their own body, use of free time and their self-confidence. Particularly, girls were more satisfied with these aspects than boys.

Most of the children lived with the same parents or carers with whom they were living one year previously. This is an indication of the stability that children have with their family life.

The distribution of scores in the upper part of the six psychometric scales: Overall Life Satisfaction (OLS), Student Life Satisfaction Scale, Brief Multidimensional Student Life Satisfaction Scale, Personal Well-Being Index- School Children (7 items), Adapted Personal Well-Being Index – School Children (9 items), and Positive Affect Scale indicates mostly positive levels of overall subjective well-being of children.

3.2 Areas needing improvement

Apart from the positive aspects, there are some other aspects that need to be improved or there are certain obstacles which need to be minimised to improve the well-being of the children.

Within the home environment, most importantly, children's responses about places to study at home were not as positive as feelings of safety at home, so parents and the family need to be oriented toward making the household environment conducive and supportive to the needs of the children.

The responses about town councils consulting children and young people about the important things was not adequate. The eight-year-old children were not happy with the way that they were dealt with at the doctors. Though 10- and 12-year-old children's satisfaction with this aspect was better, they are less satisfied with the outdoor space they can use in their locality. It suggests that management of outdoor space is important for children with the increase in their age and maturity.

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Appendix A - Hoarding Board Showing Child Rights



English Translation of Messages Displayed in the Hoarding Board

Right to survive

- Right to nutritious food
- Right to immunization and medical treatment
- Right to safe birth and birth certificate
- Right to safe and clean drinking water

Right to protection

- Protection from abuses, corporal punishment, hatred and exploitation
- Protection from excessive work and sexual exploitation
- Protection from war, quarrel, and child trafficking
- Protection from drug abuses, murder and kidnapping

Right to development

- Right to acquire education
- Right to sports and entertainment
- Right to have life skills
- Right to information related to health and all other subjects

Right to participation

- Right to put opinion for the decisions affecting their life, recognition of such opinion, and participation in the decision process
- Right to participate in various meetings/conferences, in the works related to social welfare and in cultural activities

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