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Abstract: Wellbeing is a multifaceted concept that involves various facets of human condition and experience, including individual and communal spiritual, emotional, intellectual, physical, and social dimensions. To explore the complex facets of sustainable wellbeing, this study utilized an interpretive qualitative research approach, looking at round table (focus group) discussion data obtained from a diverse group of public and private sector representatives, including education, government, non-governmental organizations, and businesses in Qatar. The purpose of this study was to gain a contextualized understanding of how participants perceive and experience wellbeing. A purposive sampling technique was employed to recruit participants representing different sectors of society. To elicit participants' perspectives on wellbeing, thematic analysis was used to identify recurring themes and patterns that emerged from the focus groups, viewed through the lens of Bronfenbrenner' Ecological Systems Theory. Findings reveal that wellbeing is a very personal and subjective experience. Key themes extracted from the data include challenges to sustainable wellbeing in Qatar, including technological disruptions and socio-cultural influences. These challenges require proactive measures that reflect educational priorities, promote cultural preservation, and foster resilient communities while emphasizing individual and collective sustainable wellbeing. This research also identified opportunities for enhancing sustainable wellbeing in Qatar.

Keywords: Education; wellbeing; sustainable development; focus group discussions; stakeholders; Qatar

1. Introduction

The purpose of this research article is to investigate stakeholders' views of the challenges and opportunities to sustainable wellbeing in Qatar. In light of the various and complex global challenges such as climate change, resource depletion, and social disparities, the imperative of advancing wellbeing to support sustainability is increasingly pressing. In recent decades, the pursuit of sustainable development is increasingly intertwined with the domains of education and wellbeing. Recognizing the complex interactions between these spheres is crucial for addressing the multifaceted challenges facing societies worldwide. In the context of Qatar, a nation ambitiously striving for sustainable growth and societal advancement, the nexus between wellbeing, education, and sustainability assumes paramount significance.

Against this backdrop, education stands as a cornerstone, serving as a catalyst for individual wellbeing and a driver of sustainable societal progress. Qatar has made substantial investments in bolstering its education infrastructure, aiming to nurture a knowledgeable and skilled workforce capable of meeting the challenges of the modern world. Moreover, the emphasis on quality education extends beyond traditional academic pursuits to encompass holistic development, fostering well-rounded individuals equipped with the critical thinking skills necessary to address sustainability challenges.

At the heart of Qatar's efforts lies the important link between education, wellbeing and sustainability, recognizing that a society's prosperity depends on more than just material wealth but

also on health, social cohesion, and environmental stewardship. Initiatives to strengthen wellbeing comprise myriad activities spanning healthcare advancements to community engagement, all guided by a commitment to promoting sustainable lifestyles and safeguarding the nation's natural heritage. Despite visible progress, Qatar faces multifaceted socio-economic and environmental challenges that impede its pursuit of sustainable wellbeing, including rapid urbanization, demographic shifts, and pressures of globalization.

This research paper endeavors to examine the perspectives of stakeholders on the hindrances and prospects for sustainable wellbeing in the context of Qatar. By analyzing data extracted from focus groups discussions, this study aims to extend our understanding of the confluence of social and cultural influences shaping these perspectives. In doing so, this paper seeks to offer insights that can inform future initiatives aimed at fostering sustainable wellbeing in Qatar and the broader Arab region.

This paper is organized as follows. The next section contextualizes the current study and provides relevant background information. This is followed by a detailed description of the methodology used in this study, including the research design, participants, data collection, and the mode of data analysis adopted. In the section that follows, the study's findings are presented, focusing specifically on stakeholders' conceptualizations of wellbeing, as well as the challenges and opportunities associated with it. Finally, the paper concludes with a discussion of these findings and proposes policy recommendations and suggestions for future research.

2. Societal Transformations in Qatar

Over the past two decades, Qatar has experienced a profound shift in its societal approach to wellbeing. Traditionally, wellbeing was gauged solely in terms of economic prosperity, driven by the nation's abundant oil and natural gas reserves. However, this perspective has evolved significantly, supported by strategic initiatives such as the **Qatar National Development Strategy** (NDS) and the **Qatar National Vision (QNV) 2030**. These initiatives stress a commitment to individual and societal wellbeing, reflecting a broader understanding of wellbeing, one that encompasses spiritual beliefs, physical health, mental wellness, social cohesion, and cultural identity. Factors contributing to this shift include globalization, increased exposure to diverse cultures, and a growing awareness of mental health.

Historically, Qatar's concept of wellbeing has been centered on economic success, fueled by its oil and gas wealth. Yet, recent years have witnessed a paradigm shift toward a more comprehensive view of wellbeing. This expanded perspective now includes physical health, mental wellness, social harmony, and cultural identity. The catalysts for this change include globalization, greater cultural exchange, and increased awareness of mental health issues. Presently, Qatar's leadership prioritizes human development and social welfare through initiatives like the **NDS** and QNV **2030**. These efforts emphasize citizen and resident wellbeing as fundamental to sustainable development.

Building upon this shift towards a holistic understanding of wellbeing, Qatar's education system has also undergone significant reforms, transitioning from a focus on preparing students for public sector jobs to promoting critical thinking and innovation, exemplified by initiatives like the Education City project. This reform aligns with a knowledge-based economy and lifelong learning principles, enhancing Qatar's educational landscape. Traditionally, education focused primarily on preparing students for careers in the oil and gas industry. However, there have been concerted efforts to reform the education system to meet the demands of a knowledge-based economy. This includes initiatives such as the Education City project, which has attracted leading international universities and research institutions to establish campuses in Qatar.

Sustainable development is a principal global agenda, aiming to harmonize economic prosperity, social inclusion, and environmental stewardship. In Qatar, a rapidly evolving nation in the Arabian Gulf region, the pursuit of sustainable development holds paramount importance due to its implications for citizen wellbeing and global sustainability commitments. The interaction between wellbeing, sustainable development, and education forms a nexus in Qatar's quest for a prosperous and equitable future. Drawing on seminal works in the field, policymakers, educators,

and researchers can contribute to the advancement of sustainable development objectives in order to safeguard the wellbeing of present and future generations in Qatar and beyond.

Qatar's National Vision 2030 serves as the bedrock for its sustainable development aspirations. Outlined as a blueprint for transitioning Qatar into a knowledge-based economy, the Vision prioritizes sustainability principles, including economic diversification, social advancement, and environmental preservation. Central to this vision is the promotion of human development and wellbeing through accessible education, healthcare, and social services. Previous research has identified health, education, and living standards as key dimensions of wellbeing in Qatar [1]. The researchers stress the importance of integrating subjective wellbeing indicators with objective measures, revealing the multifaceted nature of wellbeing. Other research has examined the role of social support in enhancing Qatari citizens' wellbeing, highlighting the value of community networks and social cohesion [2].

Education serves as a linchpin in advancing sustainable development goals by raising environmental awareness, promoting social equity, and cultivating critical thinking skills. In Qatar, endeavors to incorporate education for sustainable development into the national curriculum have gained traction. For instance, existing research has investigated the implementation of ESD principles in Qatari schools, identifying challenges and opportunities that demand streamline sustainability education across disciplines [3]. Similarly, the impact of experiential learning approaches on students' environmental attitudes and behaviors confirms the effectiveness of hands-on learning experiences in fostering sustainability awareness [4].

In the context of Qatar, Islam exerts a significant influence on education by cultivating the development of an Islamic ethos. This emphasizes Islam's holistic way of life, which transcends the bounds of mere ceremonial and ritualistic observance (Qur'an, Al-Baqarah 2: 208), positing that Islamic education nurtures *Ihsan* (Arabic for the values, morals, manners, and a pursuit of excellence) that Islam stresses [5]. By integrating the values of truth, honesty, and justice with Islamic principles, Islam seeks to empower individuals to develop spiritual fulfillment and moral rectitude [5]. As such, Islamic education aims to prepare students to fulfill their role as stewards of the Earth and promoters of righteousness, as outlined in Islamic teachings.

2.1. Problem Statement

While there has been growing interest in examining the intersection of wellbeing, education, and sustainability within Arab-Muslim societies, existing research indicates a significant gap in understanding this complex nexus [6]. Particularly within Qatar, a non-Western Arab-Muslim context, there remains a dearth of comprehensive research on the unique socio-cultural, economic, and political dynamics shaping wellbeing. To study wellbeing, education, and sustainability in Qatar requires understanding the unique, context-specific challenges and the various ways in which Islamic values are expressed in society. By addressing these gaps, this study aims to contribute to a better understanding of how wellbeing, education, and sustainability intersect in Qatar, a Middle Eastern Arab state, with a view to informing policy and practice in this critical area.

2.2. Research Questions

Participants were invited to articulate their interpretations of wellbeing. This involved providing definitions for the concept and discussing the challenges and opportunities associated with it in the context of Qatar. The following questions were designed to guide the study:

1. How do stakeholders define and perceive the concept of wellbeing in the context of Qatar?
2. What are the perceived challenges likely to impede the promotion of sustainable wellbeing in Qatar?
3. How do stakeholders envision opportunities to promote sustainable wellbeing in Qatar?

2.3. Theoretical Framework

The Ecological Systems Theory (EST), pioneered by Urie Bronfenbrenner [7,8], stresses the interconnectedness between individuals and their environment, providing an adequate theoretical framework to understand human development within various environmental systems. This seminal work outlines principles that assert the multi-level influences on individuals, comprising the micro-system (immediate settings such as family and work), meso-system (interconnections between settings), macro-system (societal structures including government policies and cultural norms), and chronosystem (temporal influences) [7].

Applied to the study of sustainable wellbeing in Qatar, EST offers a structured approach to analyze perceived challenges and opportunities through the lens of EST. This includes examining the impact of global forces on societal values and individual lifestyles, as well as evaluating the influence of government initiatives on quality of life and social cohesion. By employing EST, this research systematically explores the dynamic and reciprocal relationships between individuals and their changing environments, offering valuable insights into the factors that contribute to or hinder wellbeing in Qatar [7].

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design to delve into the perceived challenges and opportunities to sustainable wellbeing in Qatar. Focus groups were chosen to examine the perspectives of stakeholders from various sectors within Qatari society.

3.2. Data Collection

Participants

The participants in this study were selected using a purposive sampling technique chosen to ensure representation from the public and private sectors, including education, government, non-governmental organizations, and businesses. A preliminary list of potential participants was carefully curated, drawing names from a wide range of settings. High-profile figures (government ministers, members of the Shura Council (parliament), and business owners) were personally contacted via phone, while all other participants were contacted via email and phone to gauge their interest in participating in the study. Those who agreed were required to read and digitally sign an informed consent form, which clarified the voluntary nature of the study and outlined its objectives.

3.3. Procedure

Data were collected through round-table discussions conducted in May 2023. The discussions, which were held daily over a span of 5 days, with 2 sessions each day, were informal, unstructured, and designed to be open-ended to encourage free expression of ideas. Each round-table session comprised 8 to 12 participants, encompassing a balanced mix of male and female residents of Qatar from various backgrounds (policymakers, business owners, service providers, healthcare employees, educators, researchers, teachers, students, religious scholars, and charity organization representatives). Each discussion session lasted 50-60 minutes. The discussions were moderated by designated moderators and notes were taken by two individuals with a sound background in research to ensure thorough documentation of the discourse. Altogether, 92 participants ultimately took part in these discussions, providing a rich and varied set of perspectives on the topics of interest.

3.4. Pilot Study

Prior to the main phase of the research, a pilot study was conducted in April 2023 involving 13 community members representing diverse sectors. This pilot was essential for testing the validity of the interview questions, which were subsequently revised, developed further, and refined based on

the feedback received. This preliminary phase helped in fine-tuning the research methodology and ensuring the relevance and clarity of the questions used in the subsequent discussions.

3.5. Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to examine the data, aiming to discern patterns, themes, and meanings [9]. Arabic transcripts were translated into English by experienced Arabic-English translators and the translations were reviewed by the researchers and two faculty members to ascertain accuracy and fidelity to the original meaning. Each transcript was assigned a unique identifier to ensure traceability and organizational coherence. Next, a comprehensive review of the data was conducted, involving multiple readings of transcripts and initial code generation. Subsequent steps of the analysis included data familiarization, coding, theme development, and interpretation.

NVivo software (version 11) was used to organize and code the transcripts, enabling a systematic approach to the thematic synthesis. The software also facilitated the identification of significant passages and the establishment of connections between data sets, which served to derive meaningful insights from the unstructured focus group discussions. The data was then reviewed and assessed and themes defined and refined to consolidate the essential meanings pertinent to the research objectives and to provide an accurate interpretation of the data. During this review, themes were adjusted – combined   or discarded as was deemed appropriate – to determine relationships among the themes within and across data and to construct coherent and compelling narratives. The review ensured the themes' adequate reflection of key concepts and their integration into the overall analysis. Finally, for each theme, illustrative quotes were carefully chosen to capture the theme's essence.

3.5.1. Trustworthiness

To ensure the rigor and trustworthiness of the data analysis, several strategies were employed, including researcher reflexivity, peer debriefing, and member checking. These strategies helped mitigate potential biases and enhance the validity and reliability of the study findings.

3.5.2. Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical guidelines outlined by Qatar University's Institutional Review Board (QUHIG-CEDU-23-293). Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their participation in the study. Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity, and their rights were protected throughout the research process.

4. Findings

This study's findings are presented in themes and categories that collectively emphasize the multifaceted nature of wellbeing, incorporating emotional, intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual dimensions. These themes collectively provide a comprehensive view of the factors affecting individual health and happiness and societal prosperity. Understanding the complex interconnectedness of internal and external influences that shape wellbeing is instrumental, and the study delineates diverse definitions of wellbeing, touching upon various aspects contributing to people's and society's overall state of being.

Through a thematic analysis of the data, the study identified three central themes: perceptions of wellbeing, challenges, and opportunities. These themes collectively unveil the multidimensional nature of wellbeing and its significance in fostering sustainable individual and communal prosperity. The findings are structured into three distinct sections, reflecting participants' conceptualizations of the five pillars of wellbeing, their insights on the perceived challenges and opportunities, as illustrated in Tables 1–3. Each section is segmented into spiritual, emotional, physical, social, and intellectual dimensions, each reflecting links to local and global influences, as well as broader implications for sustainable development. The approach adopted in this research emphasizes the

necessity of integrated initiatives that nurture holistic wellbeing, enhancing the development of sustainable and just societies.

Table 1. Perceptions of wellbeing.

Spiritual wellbeing	Connection with the divine and adherence to moral principles
Emotional wellbeing	Managing and adapting emotions to diverse complex settings
Physical wellbeing	Balancing physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health
Social wellbeing	Interpersonal relationships (core values of respect, empathy, and compassion)
Intellectual wellbeing	Development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and reasoning

Table 2. Perceived challenges to wellbeing.

Challenges to spiritual wellbeing	– Detrimental influence of social media and technology – Decline in parental involvement and the erosion of traditional family values
*Challenges to **emotional** wellbeing*	– Insufficiency of support systems and resources – Emphasis on academic achievement over emotional development – Negative impact of technology and social media – Cultural barriers (foreign influences conflicting with local values)
*Challenges to **intellectual** wellbeing*	– Shortcomings in education (school curricula hindering critical thinking and creativity – Challenges teachers encounter (heavy workloads and limited professional development) – Rapid technological innovations and the prevalence of western ideas (linguistic and identity threats)
*Challenges to **physical** wellbeing*	– Limited engagement in sustainable physical wellbeing – **Prevalent sedentary lifestyle** – **Overuse of technologies** – Cultural stereotypes and gender barriers – Inadequate school programs and facilities – Time constraints and competing priorities – Unhealthy eating habits – Environmental factors (weather conditions – Lack of motivation and role models – Lack of research in the sports science field and lack of collaborative efforts
Challenges to docial wellbeing:	– Influence of technology and social media – Cultural differences and westernization – Intrusion of foreign customs and traditions – Diminishing role of the family, high divorce rates – Insufficient quality time spent between parents and children – Failure of the education system to promote social values

Table 3. Perceived opportunities to enhance wellbeing.

Opportunities to foster spiritual wellbeing	– Integrating spiritual wellbeing and values in school curricula – Engaging families, communities, and society – Building on Qatar's Islamic faith and cultural heritage – Support from leaders and social environment – Leveraging modern technologies and media
Opportunities to foster emotional wellbeing	– Supportive educational environments (school activities, teacher training, and psychological support services) – Family and community involvement – Teachings and values of Islam – Family and community involvement
Opportunities to foster intellectual wellbeing	– Role of education (critical thinking, creativity, and reasoning) – Family and community support
Opportunities to foster physical wellbeing	– Sports infrastructure and facilities – Government and institutional support – Qatar's education system – Hosting major sporting events (FIFA World Cup, Asian games) to inspire the community – Using media channels and social media to raise awareness about health and wellness via
Opportunities to foster social wellbeing	– Educational institutions and programs – Community spaces and events – Societal norms, values and traditions – Leadership and national vision – Capacity building and role models – Usage of media and technology

4.1. Definitions

4.1.1. Spiritual Wellbeing

Spiritual wellbeing emerged as a concept interwoven with participants' connection with the divine and adherence to moral principles. Spiritual wellbeing was perceived as fundamentally about having a strong connection to the Creator (Allah) and embracing religious faith as guiding principles in life. As one participant stated, "The spiritual component is the heart of wellbeing, as it is the relationship of human beings with their Creator and those around them." This connection manifests in the compliance with morals, values, ethics, and principles that shape people's actions and interactions with others. Participants noted the importance of spiritual fulfillment, achieved through faith and religion (Islam), which they claimed serve to attain inner peace, tranquility, and contentment. Spiritual wellbeing, according to most participants, calls for holistic development that nurtures the mind, body, and spirit in harmony. As such, it is not confined to individual practices but extends to the field of education where schools and educators play key roles in enhancing students' spiritual growth.

4.1.2. Emotional Wellbeing

Central to participants' conceptualization of emotional wellbeing is the ability to manage one's emotions in diverse complex settings with efficacy. This, many participants argued, entails the need

to foster a sustainable supporting ecosystem that empowers individuals to manage and adapt their emotions. As one aptly remarked, "Emotional wellbeing depends on creating a safe, supportive sustainable environment." While some participants emphasized the value of understanding and expressing emotions effectively, others noted the importance of building positive interpersonal relationships and exhibiting empathy towards others. As one reported, "Emotional wellbeing involves developing resilience, coping skills, and maintaining a positive mindset." This sentiment suggest the resilience-building aspect inherent in emotional wellbeing, comprising the ability to handle life's adversities and other difficult situations adequately. Accounts reported by many participants indicated the role of familial support specifically in fostering emotional wellbeing.

4.1.3. Physical Wellbeing

Participants' views of physical wellbeing transcend the absence of illness and highlight its holistic nature. A general tendency governing participants' perceptions was expressed by one participant remarking that "Physical wellbeing involves holistic health, balancing physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health." This shows how different facets of wellbeing are connected, capturing the importance of catering to various aspects of wellbeing for good health. Central to physical wellbeing is the adherence to a healthy lifestyle. Participants stressed the importance of sound nutrition, regular exercise, and adequate sleep. These lifestyle factors were viewed as essential components of physical health and as integral to mental and emotional wellbeing. Importantly, participants acknowledged the symbiotic relationship between physical wellbeing and overall quality of life, noting its profound impact on learning, performance, and overall liveliness. Interestingly, participants underlined the moral and religious dimensions of physical wellbeing, portraying it as a sacred duty to care for the body, viewed as a gift from Allah that must be protected. Reports by participants identified educators and parents as key agents in modeling and promoting physical wellbeing among individuals, illustrating the importance of education in cultivating healthy habits.

4.1.4. Social Wellbeing

Social wellbeing, as defined by participants, is intertwined with interpersonal relationships and interconnected with other wellbeing dimensions. The value of sound social relationships was reported as essential for the promotion of social wellbeing. In a participant's words, "Social wellbeing is not separate from other dimensions, namely spiritual, emotional, intellectual. Life is an ongoing interaction among these dimensions." Another described it as a "state of bliss that is achieved through healthy bonding and effective communication which starts within the family unit and reflects on the society." Other participants asserted the importance of core values such as respect, empathy, honesty, and compassion, which promote understanding and cooperation among individuals. Educational institutions was often recognized by participants as key agents in promoting social wellbeing through the provision of "tailored curricula" and "creating positive learning environments." Collaboration among families, schools, and communities was identified as essential for advancing social wellbeing, with participants underlining the importance of collective efforts. This collaborative approach demonstrates the interconnectedness of social networks and collective responsibility in fostering supportive environments conducive to wellbeing.

4.1.5. Intellectual Wellbeing

Perceptions of intellectual wellbeing revealed strong associations with the development of critical thinking, reasoning, and problem-solving skills. Participants emphasized the need to surpass mere memorization and develop higher-order cognitive abilities. As expressed by one participant, "Intellectual wellbeing is the ability to think critically, possessing a passion for knowledge, the skill of intuitive perception, sound reasoning, and creative thinking." Moreover, creativity and innovation were identified as essential components of intellectual wellbeing, with participants stressing the importance of environments that encourage original thinking, imaginative exploration, and "The

ability to imagine, which leads to creativity and innovation." Intellectual wellbeing was also associated with commitment to learning and curiosity, which some viewed as catalysts for intellectual prowess and exploration of new ideas. As stated by one participant, "Intellectual wellbeing means to create lifelong learners with a curious mind who are open to new information and exploring different ideas while having the capacity for logical reasoning."

Intellectual wellbeing was also viewed as being interconnected with a person's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral growth, demonstrating the significance of cultivating well-rounded individuals by considering the overall development of the mind. According to one participant, "Intellectual wellbeing is a blending of the heart, mind, and intellect." Additionally, participants emphasized the importance of integrating religious teachings and ethical and moral values into the pursuit of knowledge, for "Intellectual wellbeing is a mental process that should be inculcated in the minds of students within the frame of Islam," as one participant commented.

4.2. Challenges

The analysis yielded several challenges perceived to impede the holistic development of individuals (Table 2).

4.2.1. Challenges to Spiritual Wellbeing

Overall, participants expressed concerns over the detrimental influence of social media and modern technologies, which many perceived as diverting attention from spiritual growth and genuine human relationships. One participant lamented that "Social media and its impact on students, as it takes up a lot of our time and separates us from the real world." The erosion of traditional family values and the decline in parental involvement were stated as significant factors hindering spiritual wellbeing. Similarly, reliance on domestic helpers and busy schedules further exacerbate this issue, as noted by one participant: "Children are emotionally attached to maids more than their parents, as they carry out parents' duties." The absence of adequate educational preparations that prioritize values was noted by certain participants, evoking the discrepancy between curricula that focus on information dissemination instead of spiritual guidance. Interestingly, cultural and religious differences also were viewed by some both as a challenge and an opportunity for fostering shared values and understanding in Qatar.

4.2.2. Challenges to Emotional Wellbeing

Multiple concerns were cited as hindrances to improving emotional wellbeing. Referring to education as an example, participants referred to the insufficiency of support systems and resources, observing a "lack of awareness and skills among educators" and the "absence of training" to address student-related psychological issues effectively. Other participants commented that "limited access to counselors and psychologists" aggravates the situation and leaves students vulnerable. A challenge often reported by participants was the "overwhelming emphasis on academic achievement over emotional development," suggesting an imbalance in educational priorities within the local communities. This challenge is further exacerbated, some said, by parents' lack of awareness and involvement in addressing children's emotional needs. Another recurrent theme participants mentioned was the negative impact of technology and social media, heightening emotional problems. Equally important were cultural barriers such as the "stigma surrounding emotional expression" and "foreign influences conflicting with local values," which create further barriers to fostering emotional wellbeing.

4.2.3. Challenges to Intellectual Wellbeing

With reference to intellectual wellbeing, shortcomings identified by participants revolve around the educational system, specifically school curricula, which they claimed "inhibit creative thinking among learners, leaving them with no desire to learn and think." and "do not allow for sufficient time or opportunities for thinking and the application of knowledge." Another issue often cited

concerns the lack of societal support, coupled with challenges teachers encounter, including heavy workloads and limited professional development opportunities. Similarly, a concern reported by many is the rapid technological innovations and advancements, including artificial intelligence, exacerbate fears that they may inhibit mental wellbeing: "The fear of technology and artificial intelligence." The absence of accessible role models and leaders to look onto was another salient issue compounding these challenges.

4.2.4. Challenges to Physical Wellbeing

Myriad factors were reported to contribute to the limited engagement in sustainable physical wellbeing, including diverse societal, cultural, and environmental factors. First, many participants observed lack of awareness of the importance of physical activity, nutrition, and overall health as challenges, with remarks lamenting "Lack of awareness among parents and society regarding the importance of exercising" and "maintaining healthy lifestyles for their children, especially for children of working mothers." **Second, participants argued that prevalent sedentary lifestyle and the overuse of technologies were real challenges that** invade leisure time and diminishing opportunities for exercise: "People spend a lot of time on electronic devices for work, social communication, or gaming, and this limits their time for exercise and physical activities."

Third, cultural stereotypes and gender barriers were cited as salient constraints, with societal norms, traditional customs, and gender roles restricting participation, particularly for females. As one participant commented, "Customs and traditions impose restrictions on the practice of sports, especially for girls." Fourth, inadequate school programs and facilities were also viewed as challenges, for participants expressed dissatisfaction over the scarcity of physical education classes and the lack of diverse sporting options, calling for compulsory physical education classes at all schooling levels. Fifth, time constraints and competing priorities were identified as key challenges, with participants viewing the rapid pace of modern life and academic/professional pressures as impediments to maintaining an active lifestyle. To these, lack of leisure time due to long work hours and familial responsibilities constitute challenges to physical wellbeing: "Many responsibilities make it necessary for parents to work for long hours, preventing them from spending quality time with their families or practicing sports."

Another issue that participants identified concerns unhealthy eating habits and inadequate nutritional education, with participants referring to the prevalence of fast food reliance and lack of nutritional awareness in schools and within society at large. Environmental factors, such as severe weather conditions, were also cited as deterrents to outdoor physical activities, with participants expressing frustration over the limited opportunities for outdoor recreation during extreme weather conditions. As one stated, "Hot weather discourages outdoor exercise." Lack of motivation and role models was another issue some participants indicated, feeling disappointed over "lack of inspirational figures that advocate for active lifestyles and physical fitness in society." Participants also mentioned lack of facilities, programs, and awareness initiatives for individuals with disabilities, calling for greater inclusivity and support. Finally, a notable issue identified by participants pertains to the scarcity of research in the sports science field and lack of collaborative efforts among stakeholders to advance understanding and practices that can promote physical wellbeing and physical health.

4.2.5. Challenges to Social Wellbeing

Reported challenges to social wellbeing ranged from the influence of technology and social media to cultural differences and the influence of Westernization. Concerns were raise about the excessive use of technology and social media, stating its detrimental effects on social interaction and cultural preservation, especially among the youth. As one participant observed, "Addiction to social media has eroded social skills, causing people to withdraw and refrain from socializing." Another acknowledged the dual nature of technology, commenting, "Technology represents both an opportunity and a challenge and serves as a vehicle of intellectual and cultural invasion." Furthermore, the impact of cultural differences and Westernization on Qatari society was noted, with

participants expressing apprehension about the invasion of Western influences driven by "economic prosperity" and its implications for local cultural identity.

Participants also expressed concerns about the intrusion and prevalence of Western and other foreign customs and ideas that they considered to present threats to their "Arabic and Islamic identity." More importantly, participants further noted the diminishing role of the family, high divorce rates, and financial constraints, all of which affect people's sustainable wellbeing. Whereas some were worried about insufficient quality time spent between parents and children, divorce was also cited as further contributing to family disintegration, with its negative repercussions on children. Interestingly, some participants expressed discontent over the failure of the education system to promote "social values and building human character." Additionally, reduced social communication and engagement were also cited as important problems attributed to factors such as technology usage, work pressures, and limited opportunities for social interactions. Participants thus lamented the decline in face-to-face interaction and highlighted its adverse impact on social cohesion, citing financial issues as contributing factors.

4.3. Opportunities

Respondents identified several opportunities to enhance sustainable wellbeing in Qatar.

4.3.1. Opportunities to Foster Spiritual Wellbeing

A prominent opportunity cited by many participants lies in of utilizing Qatar's schools, universities, and curricula to integrate spiritual wellbeing and values by leveraging the existing educational infrastructure. As one remarked, education may be used to encourage wellbeing initiatives and "enforce compulsory inclusion of Qatari history, Arabic language, and Islamic studies in school curricula" because this will serve to protect "our identity, religion, history and language." Participants also reported the significance of engaging families, communities, and society in promoting spiritual wellbeing, stressing the need to establish stronger bonds among family, school, and society to preserve faith and address spiritual problems. Moreover, building on Qatar's Islamic faith and cultural heritage was quoted as an opportunity to foster spiritual wellbeing. Thus, Qatar's identity as an Arab and Muslim state was seen as a ground for fostering spiritual values. Qatar's leadership support also was acknowledged as a catalyst for implementing spiritual wellbeing initiatives. Lastly, the recognition of the potential to leverage media and modern technologies, including social media platforms, for the promotion of spiritual values was acknowledged.

4.3.2. Opportunities to Foster Emotional Wellbeing

Opportunities for enhancing emotional wellbeing were largely felt to lie within educational and societal spheres, with participants pointing to the value of supportive educational environments, including school activities, teacher training, and psychological support services alongside the role of family and community involvement. According to one participant, educational institutions can "enhance the academic experience of students, provide psychological support, help them succeed, and develop their personal skills." These institutions, another stated, "help improve students' understanding religion and history, giving value to religious, spiritual, and historical aspect." The teachings and values of Islam were viewed as a great opportunity to foster emotional wellbeing, as in a participant's words: "Adherence to the Islamic teachings improves our emotional wellbeing and deepens the values of love and tolerance among the learners." In like manner, Islamic values and principles which characterize Qatar's conservative society, including tolerance, righteousness, peace, and respect for parents and the elderly, were cited as offering opportunities to contribute significantly to the emotional state of individuals.

4.3.3. Opportunities to Foster Intellectual Wellbeing

The analysis yielded consistent references to education, family, and community support as factors influencing intellectual wellbeing. For instance, participants indicated the importance of critical thinking, lifelong learning, and holistic development in enhancing intellectual wellbeing. The development of "lifelong learning, curiosity, and continuous self-improvement" was deemed essential for a person's intellectual abilities, as one participant suggested. Other participants argued that family and community support were crucial for a person's holistic development, including cognitive prowess and moral and ethical maturity deeply rooted in Islamic teachings.

4.3.4. Opportunities to Foster Physical Wellbeing

Participants reported sports infrastructure and facilities (stadiums, clubs, parks, and air-conditioned spaces) alongside government and institutional support as incentives enhancing physical wellbeing in Qatar. For example, a participant observed "the commitment of our leadership" to "ensure a sustainable healthy lifestyle" and citing initiatives such as "Qatar National Sports Day." Indeed, physical education and sports activities are integrated into Qatar's education system, including school curricula, morning assemblies, and after-school programs. Participants further recognized the role of educational institutions in promoting physical activity, citing the establishment of "Physical Education departments at Qatar University and Hamad Bin Khalifa University". Nonetheless, there were calls to strengthen awareness of physical education at all school levels. Hosting major sporting events, such as the FIFA World Cup and the Asian Games, was perceived as presenting unique opportunities to inspire Qatar's population, especially the youth, to engage in sports alongside its "positive impact on spreading the love of sports among young people." Participants also stressed the need to raise awareness about health and wellness via media channels and social media to "spread awareness of physical, psychological, and mental health," as one participant commented.

4.3.5. Opportunities to Foster Social Wellbeing

Accounts reported by participants regarding opportunities that may contribute to social wellbeing in Qatar revolved around seven areas. Participants highlighted the potential impact of schooling in cultivating social wellbeing, particularly in terms of collaborative learning and group activities, extracurricular clubs and events, as well as the integration of values and social-emotional learning in school curricula. School-family-community partnerships were also identified as potential stimuli for strengthening social wellbeing. As reported in some participants' accounts, community spaces and events may facilitate social interaction and connectedness; these comprise mosques and other religious centers, parks, sports facilities, youth centers, and cultural events, national holidays, and especially the local Majlis (traditional gathering spaces). In one participant's words, "Hosting cultural, sporting, and scientific events and exhibitions provides unique opportunities for interacting with different civilizations and cultures."

Societal norms, values and traditions, according to many participants, underlie the sustainability of people's social wellbeing in Qatar. For, participants emphasized the importance of strong family bonds and community ties within the country's social fabric, with one participant remarking, "There is a strong family connection in our Arab-Islamic environment, especially in our Qatari society." Similarly, Islamic values and teachings were identified as inherent factors that contribute to society's wellbeing. Participants often reported the importance of shared cultural customs and identity and Qatar's tolerance and openness to diversity, as was echoed by one participant who indicated that "Common features in Qatar's conservative society are manifestations indicating people's social values and their eagerness to learn the Holy Qur'an and the demand for Qur'anic centers."

The role of the leadership and the country's national vision was acknowledged as instrumental in promoting social development. Participants emphasized the importance of actively engaged leaders in steering the nation towards progress. As one participant contended, "Qatar National Vision is supportive of initiatives concerned with building social values. Financial abundance in

Qatar must be properly invested in human and society development." Central to Qatar's vision is the human development pillar, which participants identified as a cornerstone for investing in human capital and advancing social wellbeing. Capacity building and the importance of talent and role models also emerged as additional factors that enhance the wellbeing of individuals, institutions, and the broader society. Participants indicated various opportunities for capacity building, such as training programs for educators and the youth. Here, inspirational community leaders and high achievers were cited as key agents for enhancing wellbeing. Institutions dedicated to promoting social values were also perceived as essential contributors to social wellbeing, with one participant citing the efforts of "Qatar Voluntary Center" and its efforts in spreading the values of volunteering within Qatar's social fabric.

The transformative potential of media and digital technologies in advancing social wellbeing was evident in many participants' accounts, which highlights the effectiveness of social media campaigns and influencers, and their ability to facilitate communication among communities locally and internationally. Moreover, participants acknowledged the value of educational technology and its role in improving learning experiences and skills development among students. Television programs were also identified as influential tools that foster positive values, with participants stressing their role in shaping societal norms, habits, and behaviors. Contemplating the benefits of using the media and television, one participant captured this sentiment, stating that they serve to, "create programs that promote social wellbeing."

5. Discussion

The current study's findings highlight the **multifaceted nature of wellbeing**, incorporating spiritual, emotional, physical, social, and intellectual dimensions. Demonstrably, various interconnected systems shape the concept of wellbeing, as outlined in Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory. The findings, therefore, demonstrate complex relationships between environmental, such as family, peers, and religious institutions, and different aspects of wellbeing at various levels. Specifically, participant perspectives reveal the impact of educational, social, cultural, and religious beliefs on all dimensions of wellbeing, stressing the need to foster supportive environments at various ecological levels. While participants' perspectives provide a multidimensional portrait of wellbeing, their conceptualizations help to understand the different challenges that impede sustainable wellbeing at the individual and societal levels, including the need for supportive environments, access to resources, and cultural considerations. Exploring these definitions and challenges offers valuable opportunities to develop inclusive strategies that prioritize wellbeing across diverse contexts and communities such as those in Qatar.

The findings disclosed wellbeing conceptualizations deeply rooted in the context of religious and moral structures. In this regard, a conspicuous feature in participants' views is the prominence of spirituality, particularly in participants' emphasis on the connection with the divine and adherence to Islamic principles. This shows the significance of spiritual wellbeing as a salient factor that permeates other types of wellbeing, echoing findings in recent research [10,11]. However, while the integration of religious teachings into wellbeing is highlighted, it may also raise questions about inclusivity and diversity, especially in educational settings where individuals may come from diverse religious or non-religious backgrounds. Therefore, there is a need for critical reflection on how to reconcile religious perspectives with a pluralistic society, ensuring that wellbeing initiatives are inclusive and respect diverse belief systems. In line with conclusions derived from research by Das and colleagues [12] and Ruggeri and others [13], the findings further revealed that the interrelated nature of the dimensions of wellbeing accords with contemporary understandings of this concept, emphasizing the importance of addressing various aspects of individuals' lives for optimal health, happiness, and wellness.

The findings also yielded challenges that impede fostering wellbeing in Qatar point to complex societal, cultural, and environmental factors. Chief among these factors is the pervasive influence of modern technologies and social media, which participants consistently identified as significant obstacles across the different types of wellbeing, corroborating results from prior research [14,15].

This may be indicative of a broader societal shift towards digital engagement that detracts human relationships and hampers the cultivation of traditional values and familial bonds. While technology offers opportunities for connectivity and information dissemination, overreliance on it poses significant challenges, particularly in the context of education where it can exacerbate the imbalance between academic achievement and emotional development. Moreover, the influence of foreign customs and Westernization, facilitated by Qatar's wealth and economic prosperity, raises concerns about the erosion of cultural identity and social cohesion, pointing to a complex interplay between globalization and local values.

Another critical features highlighted in the findings is the inadequacies in the educational system, particularly in addressing the holistic development of students. For, participants lament the lack of emphasis on creative thinking and the dearth of support systems to address psychological issues adequately. This demonstrates a general deficiency in education, namely prioritizing academic outcomes over emotional wellbeing, perpetuating a cycle of stress and disengagement among students, a finding that is consistent with results concluded from a study by Folsom and others [16]. Furthermore, the scarcity of role models and leaders exacerbates these challenges, leaving learners without guidance or inspiration to be prepared for the complexities of modern life. The findings thus call for a reevaluation of education to foster intellectual growth as well as emotional resilience and social responsibility.

Societal and cultural barriers also emerged as significant impediments to wellbeing, particularly in relation to physical health and social integration. Specifically, gender stereotypes and traditional norms restrict participation in physical activities, especially for females, highlighting broader inequalities. Additionally, the decline in face-to-face interactions due to technological distractions and work pressures further exacerbates social isolation, diminishing the sense of community and belonging. Similarly, the lack of leisure time, exacerbated by long work hours and familial responsibilities, indicates the need for comprehensive support systems to promote work-life balance and prioritize health. Addressing these challenges requires concerted efforts to challenge gender norms, promote inclusive environments, and foster meaningful social connections that transcend digital boundaries.

The study's findings further yielded suggestions perceived to enhance sustainable wellbeing in Qatar, emphasizing the fundamental role of education, societal norms, leadership support, and the utilization of media and technology. However, a critical examination reveals several points of consideration. Firstly, while integrating spiritual and cultural values into educational curricula is viewed as an opportunity, there is a risk of imposing a singular narrative that may not resonate with all individuals, especially in a diverse society. Indeed, in consistency with findings from Kokozos and Gonzalez's research [17], compulsory inclusion of specific subjects might inadvertently marginalize certain perspectives and limit critical thinking. Moreover, while Islamic teachings are lauded for their potential to foster emotional and social wellbeing, there should be careful consideration to ensure that interpretations are inclusive and accommodating of diverse beliefs within Qatar's multicultural landscape.

Secondly, whereas the emphasis on physical activity through sports infrastructure and initiatives is commendable, there is a need for a more comprehensive approach to wellness that goes beyond physical health. For example, mental health awareness and support should be integrated within educational and societal approaches. Moreover, the focus on hosting major sporting events as catalysts for promoting physical activity should be balanced with sustainable strategies for long-term engagement beyond these events. Thirdly, while societal values and traditions are identified as foundational for social wellbeing, there is a risk of idealizing certain aspects of Qatar's conservative society, potentially overlooking areas for improvement or the voices of other expatriate communities. The emphasis on family and community ties is essential, but efforts should also be directed towards promoting inclusivity, particularly for expatriate groups whose wellbeing is integral to Qatar's social fabric.

6. Conclusions

This study explores individual and societal wellbeing and sustainable development, with particular significance given Qatar's rapid social and economic transition towards a knowledge-based society. Viewed through the lens of the Ecological Systems Theory, this study emphasizes the interaction between individual agency and external influences across different ecological layers, providing a comprehensive perspective on wellbeing. Demonstrably, understanding the interconnected facets of wellbeing dimensions in their entirety is essential for formulating efficient educational strategies and assessing the present state against the desired goals to guide intervention strategies. Qatar's growing awareness of sustainability needs mirrors broader societal transformations influenced by socio-economic development, educational reforms, globalization, environmental consciousness, and evolving cultural norms. Nonetheless, multiple challenges facing Qatar's sustainable wellbeing persist, spanning technological disruptions and socio-cultural tensions, calling for an inclusive approach that recognizes individual, societal, and cultural factors. These challenges demand proactive measures in order to reorient educational priorities, promote cultural preservation, and cultivate resilient communities while emphasizing human connection and collective sustainable wellbeing.

This research identified various opportunities that offer grounds for enhancing sustainable wellbeing. However, critical analysis is necessary to ensure an inclusive approach that embraces diverse perspectives and promotes sustainable wellbeing for all. Supportive educational environments, family involvement, and teachings rooted in Islamic values appear to provide a foundation for holistic wellbeing by fostering a sense of belonging and moral guidance. Coupled with community support, education was perceived to embody the importance of a person's holistic development and character/moral education, contributing to her/his wellbeing. Initiatives such as sports infrastructure, government interventions, and awareness campaigns promoting healthy lifestyles encourage physical wellbeing and integrate the value of physical education into school curricula, thus promoting overall wellness. Societal norms and values, bolstered by community engagement and the promotion of shared cultural customs and identity, serve as pillars for wellbeing, reinforcing a sense of collective purpose and belonging. Leadership and media further amplify these opportunities, playing important roles in advancing social development and shaping societal norms to enhance overall individual and societal wellbeing.

While the study employed purposive sampling to ensure representation from various sectors within Qatari society, reliance on sectoral individuals who voluntarily agreed to participate might introduce biased perspectives, potentially neglecting the voices of less influential groups within Qatari society. This could potentially limit the generalizability of the findings and overlook important insights from other segments of the population. Additionally, the lack of standardized procedures and the open-ended nature of informal and unstructured round-table discussions employed in this research could prompt subjectivity in the data collection process, impacting the reliability and validity of the findings. The presence of moderators and note-takers may also have influenced the direction of the discussions or the interpretation of participants' responses, potentially introducing researcher bias into the data.

Overall, these findings provide valuable insights for designing comprehensive wellbeing initiatives that address the diverse needs of individuals while promoting a holistic approach to human flourishing. The recognition of the challenges and opportunities surrounding wellbeing calls for interventions that take into account individual differences and societal considerations and provide support needs tailored accordingly; this would require moving beyond a one-size-fits-all approach to wellbeing promotion. The integration of sustainable wellbeing into education is essential for preparing individuals capable of contributing to a sustainable future. By focusing on a person's holistic development, education can play a crucial role in creating a more balanced and sustainable society.

The synergies between wellbeing, education, and sustainability are indicative of the critical role of education in fostering a sustainable future. Insights gleaned from synthesizing the perceived themes of wellbeing, education, and sustainability suggest important policy recommendations for

advancing Qatar's sustainable development goals [18]. Promoting holistic wellbeing education should be prioritized: implementing a curriculum that covers different facets of wellbeing, alongside academic achievement, is essential. This should foster creative thinking, emotional resilience, and social responsibility, while integrating mental health awareness and support systems to address psychological issues effectively. While acknowledging the significance of spirituality and cultural values in enhancing wellbeing, educational curricula should ensure inclusivity and embrace diverse beliefs within Qatar's multicultural society. Interpretations of religious teachings should be flexible and accommodating, fostering an environment where individuals from diverse backgrounds feel represented and respected.

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