



Eudaimonic Orientation Enhances the Well-Being Experienced by Fathers

Courtney A. Gosselin^{1,2} · Veronika Huta¹ · Arthur Braaten¹

Received: 14 September 2020 / Accepted: 18 November 2021 / Published online: 21 January 2022
© The International Society for Quality-of-Life Studies (ISQOLS) and Springer Nature B.V. 2021

Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the potential moderating roles of eudaimonic orientation (prioritizing authenticity, meaning, excellence, growth) and hedonic orientation (prioritizing pleasure, comfort) on the link between parental status and well-being. A sample of 473 parents and 138 nonparents from Canada and the United States completed a questionnaire assessing eudaimonic and hedonic motives for activities and well-being experiences in their private life. The sample was balanced by gender, country, and age group (ages ranged from 18 to 93). Multivariate regression analyses revealed a significant positive interaction between being a parent and eudaimonic orientation in predicting positive well-being experiences as a set. Follow-up analyses comparing results by gender revealed that eudaimonic orientation had an enhancing moderating effect on fathers', but not mothers', well-being. Univariate regression analyses showed that, for males, the interaction between eudaimonic orientation and parental status related specifically to life satisfaction, and experiences of meaning, elevation, self-connectedness, vitality, and relatedness. No significant interaction effect was found between parental status and hedonic orientation in predicting overall well-being. The results of our study suggest that the ways people construe and pursue the 'good life' have important implications for the well-being derived from parenthood—at least for fathers. Our findings also support evidence suggesting that eudaimonic and hedonic orientations constitute an important lens through which individuals interpret the well-being experienced in relation to different life contexts.

Keywords Eudaimonia; hedonia; parenthood; orientations to well-being; well-being motives

✉ Veronika Huta
vhuta@uottawa.ca

¹ School of Psychology, University of Ottawa, 136 Jean-Jacques, Lussier Private, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5, Canada

² Present Address: Department of Psychology, Acadia University, 18 University Avenue, Wolfville, Nova Scotia B4P 2R6, Canada

Introduction

Evolutionary psychologists have proposed that parenting tops the pyramid of human motives (Kenrick et al., 2010). Despite parenthood's alleged promise of fulfillment, research examining whether parents feel happier than childless adults has presented very mixed results (see review by Nelson et al., 2014). Furthermore, evidence has established that a variety of circumstantial and psychosocial factors have implications for parents' well-being (Nelson et al., 2014; Umberson et al., 2010). However, few studies have examined whether and how a person's motives may influence the well-being derived from parenthood. This study sought to do so, by investigating the potential moderating roles of eudaimonic and hedonic orientations on the link between parental status and well-being (Huta & Waterman, 2014; Peterson et al., 2005). Eudaimonic and hedonic orientations (also referred to as eudaimonic and hedonic *motives* or *pursuits* in the well-being literature) represent the values and ideals that drive a person's behaviour in pursuit of a 'good life.' Is a 'good life' one that is filled with personal pleasure, enjoyment and comfort (hedonic orientation; Huta & Ryan, 2010)? Or is it the result of seeking to use and develop the best in one's self, in alignment with one's values and ethics (eudaimonic orientation; Huta & Ryan, 2010)? Parenthood is more fulfilling for some than others, and our study sought to help make sense of parents' well-being by examining individual differences in eudaimonic and hedonic orientations and how these interact with parental status (parent or nonparent) in predicting a range of well-being experiences.

Parenthood and Well-Being: A Complex Relationship

Many people hold the belief that raising children is one of life's most rewarding and meaningful experiences (Hansen, 2012; Simon, 2008). While humans may become parents to satisfy fundamental urges (Kenrick et al., 2010), having and raising children is a lifelong undertaking with manifold implications for well-being (Nelson et al., 2014). Evidence from studies examining the link between parenthood and well-being is very mixed, reflecting the complex nature of the relationship (Nelson et al., 2014; Umberson et al., 2010). Some studies indicate that, compared to adults without children, parents are happier and more satisfied with their lives (Herbst & Ifcher, 2016; Myrskylä & Margolis, 2014; Nelson et al., 2013), and experience greater levels of meaning (Baumeister et al., 2013; Nelson et al., 2013; Umberson & Gove, 1989; White & Dolan, 2009). Other studies found no differences in affective well-being, life satisfaction, and indicators of eudaimonic well-being (Ryff, 1989) between parents and nonparents (Hansen et al., 2009; Rothrauff & Cooney, 2008). Still others found that parenthood was associated with less happiness and life satisfaction (see review by McLanahan & Adams, 1987; Stanca, 2012) and more depressive symptoms (Evenson & Simon, 2005).

While there is no clear or consistent picture of parents' well-being, research has established that the costs and rewards of parenthood are unevenly distributed across the life course and depend on contextual factors and structural demands (e.g., gender, relationship status, living arrangements, socioeconomic status) as well as

psychosocial factors (e.g., social support, parent attachment style, parenting style) (see reviews by Nelson et al., 2014 and Umberson et al., 2010). As Nelson et al. (2014) emphasized, circumstantial and psychosocial factors may exert their effects on parents' well-being via psychological processes (e.g., frequency of positive or negative emotions, degree of perceived social support or stress, need satisfaction); consequently, additional research on how psychological mechanisms may help explain the link between parenthood and well-being is needed (Nelson et al., 2014).

Motives, Values and Well-Being Derived from Parenting

The goals people pursue and their motivations for doing so have been shown to have important implications for well-being (e.g., Sheldon et al., 2004). Within the context of parenthood, however, very few studies have examined how explicit and implicit motives influence parents' well-being. Dunlop et al. (2017) found that, when asked to provide a list of personal goals, individuals who reported a higher number of parenting-related goals reported higher life satisfaction. Nevertheless, upon further analysis, the researchers found that only communal, or other-focused, parenting goals predicted higher life satisfaction, whereas, agentic (i.e., self-focused) parenting goals were unrelated to life satisfaction. In contrast, the researchers found that the proportion of parenting goals reflecting agentic/self-focused motives was not associated with life satisfaction (Dunlop et al., 2017). In another study, Le and Impett (2019) found that daily and chronic pursuit of child-oriented motives (i.e., love and security) predicted more positive emotionality, whereas the pursuit of parent-image goals predicted higher negative emotionality. Together, these findings suggest that other-oriented goals, versus self-focused motives, are important predictors of well-being in the context of parenthood.

Eudaimonic and Hedonic Orientations and Their Implications for Well-Being

People vary in their ideas of the 'good life' (Zeng & Chen, 2020). Researchers have identified eudaimonic and hedonic orientations as two dominant ways people think about and pursue fulfillment and well-being (e.g., Huta & Waterman, 2014; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Peterson et al., 2005; Vittersø et al., 2010; Waterman, 1993). These well-being orientations encompass the priorities, values, motives and goals that guide a person's behaviour in pursuit of well-being (Huta & Waterman, 2014). Eudaimonic orientation involves the pursuit and prioritization of values such as authenticity (autonomy, self-discovery), meaning (mattering, contributing to the bigger picture), excellence (virtue, quality performance), and growth (maturity, self-realization) (Huta, 2016). Eudaimonic orientation has been associated with a concern for both the self and for others and the environment, a future-time perspective, and big-picture thinking (Pearce et al., 2020). It has also positively related to self-control (Zeng & Chen, 2020), active coping strategies (Giuntoli et al., 2021), and intrinsic motivation (Behzadnia & Ryan, 2018). Hedonic orientation involves the pursuit and prioritization of personal pleasure (positive emotions, pleasant sensations) and comfort (ease, painlessness) (Huta, 2016). It has been associated with

a focus on the self and the present (Pearce et al., 2020), reduced self-control (Zeng & Chen, 2020), avoidant coping strategies (Giuntoli et al., 2021), and external/controlled motivation (Behzadnia & Ryan, 2018).

Furthermore, eudaimonic and hedonic orientations have been associated with common and distinct well-being experiences. At the global level, eudaimonic and hedonic orientations have positively related to positive affect, life satisfaction, and vitality (Henderson et al., 2013, Huta & Ryan, 2010; Huta, 2016). Eudaimonic orientation, compared to hedonic orientation, has more strongly related to experiences of meaning/purpose, elevation, and engagement/interest (Henderson et al., 2013, Huta & Ryan, 2010; Huta, 2016, Zeng & Chen, 2020). In contrast, hedonic orientation has more strongly associated with carefreeness (Henderson et al., 2013, Huta & Ryan, 2010). It has also, perplexingly, related both positively (Henderson et al., 2013, Huta & Ryan, 2010) and negatively (Zeng & Chen, 2020) to negative affect.

Recent studies have also shown that eudaimonic and hedonic orientations predict differential well-being experiences depending on context. In the academic context, both eudaimonic and hedonic orientations positively related to well-being experiences, though eudaimonic orientation more strongly related with experiences of meaning, elevation, self-connectedness, interest, and school satisfaction (Braaten et al., 2019). In the context of physical education, eudaimonic orientation related more strongly to positive affect, life satisfaction, elevation, vitality, and meaning, while hedonic orientation was more strongly associated with carefreeness and higher negative affect (Behzadnia & Ryan, 2018). Moreover, higher levels of eudaimonic orientation were associated with higher life satisfaction and reduced anxiety symptoms among staff supporting individuals with autism; it also appeared to buffer the negative impacts of challenging behaviour exposure on anxiety symptomatology among the same group (Merrick et al., 2017).

These results indicate that eudaimonic and hedonic orientations are associated with somewhat unique niches or ‘flavours’ of well-being (Huta, 2012), and that these associations can vary depending on the context examined. The findings thus provide evidence for the need to study a balanced array of well-being variables that reflect both eudaimonic and hedonic forms of happiness. Traditional measures of subjective well-being (i.e., positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction), well-being researchers have criticized, assess only for hedonic happiness and ignore the complexity of what it means to live a fulfilled life (Deci & Ryan, 2000; King & Napa, 1998; McGregor & Little, 1998; Ryff, 1989; Vittersø, 2004).

The Current Study

The aim of this study was to investigate the influence of eudaimonic and hedonic orientations on well-being in the context of parenthood. As researchers continue to piece together the ‘puzzle of parenthood’ (Lyubomirsky & Boehm, 2010), scant attention has been paid to the role of individuals’ goals, values, priorities in predicting parents’ well-being. The values, ideals, motives and goals that constitute eudaimonic and hedonic orientations not only provide reasons for people’s behaviours in pursuit of well-being, but likely serve as a lens through which people interpret and make sense

of their experiences. We theorized that how well a person weathers the highs and lows of parenthood depends on their conceptualizations of a ‘good life’ or well-being (e.g., prioritizing meaning versus pleasure). Sheldon and Elliot (1999) and Waterman (1990; 2008) have suggested that eudaimonic well-being results from congruence between one’s actions and one’s deeply held values and goals. From this perspective, parenthood likely feels fulfilling when a person’s value system places a high value on parenting, while it likely feels burdensome when a person’s value system places a low value on parenting. Since the tasks of having and raising children are congruent with eudaimonic aims (e.g., self-realization, caring about and contributing beyond one’s self, striving toward maturity) and scope of concern (e.g., prosocial values and behaviour, generativity) (Pearce et al., 2020), a high degree of eudaimonic orientation may encourage parents to take more frequent notice of the benefits of parenting and to positively interpret and savour the outcomes of parenting. In contrast, hedonic orientation’s emphasis on personal pleasure and comfort in the short-term may allow parents to be more ‘in the moment’ with their children when things feel easy, fun, or relaxing, but it may also lead them to more frequently notice, and dwell on, the costs of parenting to their peace of mind, relaxation, and freedom to pursue other pleasurable activities. Accordingly, we proposed and tested the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Eudaimonic orientation moderates the relationship between parental status and well-being, such that higher levels of eudaimonic orientation make the association between being a parent and well-being more positive.

Hypothesis 2: Hedonic orientation moderates the relationship between parenthood and well-being, such that higher levels of hedonic orientation make the association between being a parent and well-being less positive or possibly negative.

We also explored whether eudaimonic orientation and hedonic orientation interacted with parental status in predicting individual well-being experiences, though we stated no firm hypotheses on the matter. We also performed exploratory analyses to compare results for males and females separately, given evidence that fathers experience more well-being compared to mothers (Keizer et al., 2010; Nelson et al., 2013; Meier et al., 2018; Meier et al., 2016; Musick, Meier, & Flood, 2016).

Method

Participants

A sample of 575 adults residing in Canada and the United States (US) was recruited for the study.¹ The sample was stratified in terms of age, sex, country of residence,

¹ The data used for this study is part of a larger data set previously published to study a different topic—the associations of well-being orientations with age and gender (Lefebvre & Huta, 2021).

and parental status. American statistics show that males have children two to three years later than females, on average (Khandwala et al., 2017; Martinez, Daniels, & Chandra, 2012); thus, the female age groups were 18-30, 31-44, 45-64, 65-99, and the male age groups were 18-33, 34-48, 49-69, 70-99. Within each age group, we aimed to have about 50% Canadian participants, 50% females, and about 75% parents. It was difficult to obtain a sample where 50% of participants were nonparents, given that about 75% of adult males and 85% of adult females go on to have at least one child (Monte & Knop, 2019). Of the total sample, 52% of participants were female, 50% were Canadian, and 76% were parents. In comparison to North American averages, our sample was relatively equivalent in terms of education (about half reported at least some college or university education); annual household income (the sample mean was about \$70,000, undifferentiated USD/CAD); and marital status (65% of participants reported being married or living together). The mean number of children in our sample (2.2) was slightly higher than Canadian (1.55) and US averages (1.90). Finally, 86% percent of participants were White, at least 10 percentage points higher than current demographics in Canada and the US.

Procedure

To obtain a stratified sample, participant recruitment was undertaken by Cint—an online, survey-based research participation platform. Cint recruited participants within their database to complete a survey about well-being across adulthood. Links to surveys were made available using three methods: they were (a) sent directly to participants via email; (b) listed within the active surveys on Cint’s research platform; or (c) sent to participants if they did not qualify for another survey they had selected. Once participants consented to completing the survey, they completed a questionnaire that assessed for eudaimonic and hedonic motives, well-being experiences, and demographic data. Participants received compensation or an incentive with a value of up to \$3USD. The researchers paid Cint \$3USD per participant.

Measures

Parental Status

To confirm parental status, we asked, “Do you have any children? This includes biological children, adopted children, and any stepchildren in the present or past.” Participants could respond “yes” or “no.”

Hedonic and Eudaimonic Orientations

Hedonic and eudaimonic orientations to life were measured using the revised version of the Hedonic and Eudaimonic Motives for Activities scale (HEMA-R; Huta, 2016). Participants rated on a seven-point scale (1 = *not at all*; 7 = *very much*) how much in their *private* life (i.e., not at work) they typically pursue five hedonic motives (e.g., “seeking pleasure,” “seeking to take it easy”) and five eudaimonic

motives (e.g., “seeking to develop a skill, learn, or gain insight into something,” “seeking to contribute to others or the world”). The hedonic orientation scale produced a Cronbach’s α of .81. The eudaimonic orientation scale had an alpha of .83.

Well-Being

For the purposes of our analyses, well-being refers to a set of positive well-being experiences. Given the varied associations between hedonic and eudaimonic orientations and different types of well-being, we included a broad array of well-being experiences to create a balanced, comprehensive picture of well-being. In addition to positive affect and life satisfaction—experiences that are about feeling pleasant—we included experiences that are about feeling integrated or “right” and often labeled as “eudaimonic”—meaning, elevation, self-connectedness and interest. We also wanted to assess carefreeness (Huta & Ryan, 2010), as it appears to be the experience most consistently related to hedonic orientation, it has not been previously studied in the context of parenthood, and it seems relevant because parenting is very much about caring and thus may be at odds with carefreeness. We also included vitality—a feeling of aliveness or energy available to the self—which like positive affect, is a strong proxy for well-being experience in general (Ryan & Frederick, 1997). In addition, it made sense to assess relatedness, as parenting is by definition an interpersonal activity. In accordance with prior research (Behzadnia & Ryan, 2018; Guintoli et al., 2021), we examined associations with negative affect separately from positive well-being experiences.

Participants rated how often they experienced a given emotion or psychological state in their “private life (not at work)” during the past year. Unless otherwise noted, participants made their ratings on a seven-point Likert type scale (1 = *rarely*; 7 = *almost always*).

From Diener and Emmons (1984), four items measured positive affect (e.g. “happy,” “pleased”) and five items measured negative affect (e.g., “worried/anxious,” “depressed/blue”). Cronbach’s α values were .93 for positive affect, and .89 for negative affect.

Carefreeness was measured using six items developed by Huta and Ryan (2010) (e.g., “lighthearted,” “free of concerns”). Cronbach’s α was .88.

To measure life satisfaction, participants rated their life overall in the past year on two separate 10-point scales adapted from the Cantril Ladder in the Gallup World Poll (Bjørnskov, 2010) and the World Values Survey (Bjørnskov, 2010). The first scale had the following anchors: 1 = *worst possible life overall*, 10 = *best possible life overall*. The anchors for the second scale were: 1 = *completely dissatisfied with my life*, 10 = *completely satisfied with my life*. Together, the life satisfaction scales had a Cronbach’s α of .94.

To assess for meaning, participants rated how often they felt that their activities and experiences were “meaningful,” “valuable,” that they “mattered,” and “had a worthwhile purpose.” The first two items come from Huta and Ryan’s (2010) two-item meaning scale. The third and fourth items were added based on Huta’s (2016) expanded definition of meaning experience. The four items produced a Cronbach’s α of .94.

To measure elevation, we used eight items from the full 13-item version of the Elevating Experience scale (Huta & Ryan, 2010): “enriched,” “inspired,” “in awe,” “morally elevated,” “profoundly touched by experiences,” “part of something greater than myself,” “connected with a greater whole,” and “emotionally moved.” The items had Cronbach’s α of .91.

Five items developed by Huta (2012) measured self-connectedness (e.g., “that I knew who I was,” “aware of what mattered to me”). Cronbach’s α was .86.

To assess vitality, we used four items from the Subjective Vitality scale (Bostic et al., 2000; Ryan & Frederick, 1997): “energized,” “alive and vital,” “I had energy and spirit,” and “alert and awake.” We left out “felt so alive I just wanted to burst,” and “I looked forward to each new day” because, in unpublished data in our lab, the four selected items tended to be the highest-loading items in factor analyses of the scale. Cronbach’s α for the four items was .90.

To measure interest, we developed three items based on the interest subscale of the Basic Emotions Trait Test (Vittersø et al., 2005): “engaged in living,” “interested in what I was doing,” and “enthusiastic.” To these items, we added “immersed in my experiences” to reflect the immersion/absorption aspect of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). Our interest scale had a Cronbach’s α of .80.

We created four items to assess relatedness for this study: “I felt loved and cared about,” “I felt close to other people,” “I had a feeling of belonging with other people,” and “I felt that I had intimate bonds with other people.” These items were influenced by the relatedness items from the Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction Scale (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gagné, 2003), Baumeister and Leary’s (1995) concept of belonging, and Ryff and Keyes’s (1995) concept of intimacy. Our relatedness scale had a Cronbach’s α of .89.

Analyses

Tests were performed using SPSS 27.0 software (IBM Corp., Armonk, NY, USA). First, we obtained descriptive statistics for parental status, eudaimonic and hedonic orientations, and well-being experiences. Next, we performed correlational analyses to examine relationships between these variables. Subsequently, we conducted a series of multivariate general linear models to predict positive well-being experiences as a set, to control for family-wise risk of Type 1 error. We then followed up with a series of univariate regression analyses to examine the positive well-being experiences individually. We also performed univariate regression analyses with negative affect as the criterion variable. Finally, we ran the multivariate and univariate regression analyses a second time comparing results for males and females independently.

Results

Descriptive Analyses

Descriptive statistics for parental status, eudaimonic orientation, hedonic orientation, and well-being experiences are presented in Table 1. Bivariate correlations between the study variables are provided in Table 2.

Regression Analyses

Multivariate regression analyses are presented in Table 3. First, we entered parental status, eudaimonic orientation and hedonic orientation as predictors (Analysis 1). Second, to test Hypothesis 1, we entered parental status, eudaimonic orientation, hedonic orientation, and the interaction between parental status and eudaimonic orientation as predictors (Analysis 2). Third, to test Hypothesis 2, we entered parental status, eudaimonic orientation, hedonic orientation, and the interaction between parental status and hedonic orientation as predictors (Analysis 3). In all analyses, parental status was unstandardized, whereas eudaimonic orientation, hedonic orientation, and well-being variables were standardized.

In Hypothesis 1, we predicted that eudaimonic orientation would have a positive moderating effect on the link between being a parent and positive well-being experiences. Supporting this prediction, the multivariate general linear model (GLM) in Analysis 2 revealed a significant positive interaction between parental status and eudaimonic orientation when predicting positive well-being experiences as a set.

In Hypothesis 2, we predicted that hedonic orientation would have a weaker positive or even negative moderating effect on the link between being a parent and positive well-being experiences. However, the multivariate GLM in Analysis 3 showed no significant interaction between parental status and hedonic orientation.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics for study variables

| Variable | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | SD |
|---|---------|---------|------|------|
| Parental status (nonparent = 0; parent = 1) | 0.00 | 1.00 | 0.75 | 0.43 |
| Eudaimonic orientation | 2.20 | 7.00 | 5.52 | 1.02 |
| Hedonic orientation | 2.40 | 7.00 | 5.58 | 0.96 |
| Positive affect | 1.75 | 7.00 | 5.06 | 1.32 |
| Life satisfaction | 1.00 | 10.00 | 6.82 | 2.01 |
| Carefreeness | 1.00 | 7.00 | 4.38 | 1.32 |
| Meaning | 1.50 | 7.00 | 5.49 | 1.21 |
| Elevation | 1.50 | 7.00 | 4.60 | 1.22 |
| Self-connectedness | 2.00 | 7.00 | 5.47 | 1.10 |
| Engagement | 1.25 | 7.00 | 4.88 | 1.16 |
| Vitality | 1.50 | 7.00 | 4.86 | 1.35 |
| Relatedness | 1.00 | 7.00 | 5.00 | 1.38 |
| Negative affect | 1.00 | 7.00 | 3.33 | 1.49 |

Table 2 Bivariate correlations between study variables

| Variable | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 6. | 7. | 8. | 9. | 10. | 11. | 12. |
|---------------------------|-------|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1. Parent (vs. nonparent) | .07 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Eudaimonic orientation | .05 | .44** | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Hedonic orientation | .15** | .42** | .35** | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Positive affect | .13** | .27** | .19** | .81** | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Life satisfaction | .13** | .38** | .35** | .83** | .68** | | | | | | | |
| 6. Carefreeness | .16** | .44** | .25** | .68** | .60** | .56** | | | | | | |
| 7. Meaning | .14** | .54** | .25** | .78** | .63** | .68** | .67** | | | | | |
| 8. Elevation | .11** | .46** | .26** | .70** | .57** | .61** | .58** | .67** | | | | |
| 9. Self-connectedness | .22** | .42** | .26** | .72** | .70** | .65** | .61** | .70** | .68** | | | |
| 10. Interest | .10* | .47** | .31** | .83** | .71** | .76** | .61** | .73** | .68** | .66** | | |
| 11. Vitality | .17** | .41** | .23** | .74** | .66** | .63** | .61** | .70** | .68** | .65** | .68** | |
| 12. Relatedness | .11** | -.16** | -.08 | -.62** | -.66** | -.56** | -.40** | -.41** | -.50** | -.55** | -.54** | -.49** |

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 3 Multivariate regression analyses predicting positive well-being experiences as a set

| Model | <i>F</i> (9, 575) | η_p^2 |
|---|-------------------|------------|
| Analysis 1 | | |
| Parental status (nonparent = 0; parent = 1) | 2.52** | .04 |
| Eudaimonic orientation | 32.43*** | .34 |
| Hedonic orientation | 7.61*** | .11 |
| Analysis 2 | | |
| Parental status (nonparent = 0; parent = 1) | 2.59** | .04 |
| Eudaimonic orientation | 7.44*** | .11 |
| Hedonic orientation | 7.79*** | .11 |
| Interaction of parental status and eudaimonic orientation | 2.01* | .03 |
| Analysis 3 | | |
| Parental status (nonparent = 0; parent = 1) | 2.59** | .04 |
| Eudaimonic orientation | 32.14*** | .34 |
| Hedonic orientation | 1.69 | .03 |
| Interaction of parental status and hedonic orientation | .37 | .01 |

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Though the focus of Analysis 2 was the multivariate *F* test, it was informative to explore which criterion variables contributed to the multivariate interaction; these included life satisfaction, self-connectedness, vitality, and relatedness. Univariate regression analysis results are provided in Table 4, and feature all positive well-being experiences included in the multivariate regression analyses as well as negative affect. In Analysis 2, nearly all univariate regression results for parental status, eudaimonic orientation, and hedonic orientation remained significant or non-significant as in Analysis 1. The exceptions were as follows: In Analysis 2, the relationships between parental status and vitality was no longer significant; the relationship between eudaimonic orientation and life satisfaction was also no longer significant. Figure 1 illustrates the positive interaction effect between parental status and eudaimonic orientation in predicting life satisfaction scores; it shows that parents scored significantly higher than nonparents in the case when eudaimonic orientation was high. The pattern for the other well-being experiences was similar.

Exploratory Analyses

Given evidence that fatherhood is more consistently associated with well-being than motherhood (Keizer et al., 2010; Nelson et al., 2013; Meier et al., 2018; Meier et al., 2016; Musick, Meier, & Flood, 2016), we explored potential differences between males and females. To do so, we split the data file by gender and ran the three multivariate regression analyses on males as a group and females as a group. Results are presented in Table 5. The analyses showed that eudaimonic orientation had a positive moderating effect on the link between being a parent and positive well-being experiences for males, but not for females. Univariate regression analyses (see Table 6) revealed that

Table 4 Univariate regression coefficients when predicting experiences using parental status, eudaimonic and hedonic orientations, and the interactions between them as predictor variables

| | Parental status (nonparent = 0; parent = 1) | | | Eudaimonic orientation | | | Hedonic orientation | | | Interaction of parental status and eudaimonic orientation | | | |
|--|--|----------|----------|------------------------|----------|----------|---------------------|----------|----------|---|----------|----------|------------|
| | <i>b</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>b</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>b</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>b</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | η^2_p |
| Positive well-being experiences | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Positive affect | .28 | 3.24 | ** | .27 | 3.45 | ** | .20 | 4.90 | *** | .07 | 0.83 | | .00 |
| Life satisfaction | .27 | 2.92 | ** | .08 | 0.94 | | .07 | 1.61 | | .20 | 2.17 | * | .01 |
| Carefreeness | .25 | 2.85 | ** | .22 | 2.78 | ** | .22 | 5.29 | *** | .08 | 0.92 | | .00 |
| Meaning | .30 | 3.50 | *** | .29 | 3.79 | *** | .06 | 1.48 | | .15 | 1.74 | | .00 |
| Elevation | .24 | 2.91 | ** | .44 | 6.08 | *** | .02 | 0.40 | | .11 | 1.35 | | .00 |
| Self-connectedness | .19 | 2.25 | * | .27 | 3.56 | *** | .07 | 1.69 | | .19 | 2.23 | * | .01 |
| Interest | .28 | 3.54 | *** | .45 | 6.39 | *** | .05 | 1.37 | | .09 | 1.19 | | .00 |
| Vitality | .17 | 2.04 | * | .27 | 3.55 | *** | .11 | 2.75 | ** | .20 | 2.35 | * | .01 |
| Relatedness | .34 | 3.83 | *** | .22 | 2.80 | ** | .06 | 1.37 | | .20 | 2.31 | * | .01 |
| Negative affect | -.24 | -2.52 | * | -.03 | -0.40 | | -.03 | -0.04 | | -.15 | -1.59 | | .00 |

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

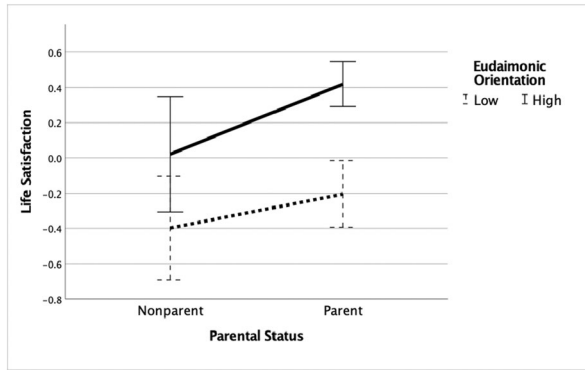


Fig. 1 Interaction between parental status and eudaimonic orientation in predicting life satisfaction. Scores reflect standard scores (i.e., z-scores). Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals. The low eudaimonic orientation group represented the bottom tertile (bottom 33%) and the high eudaimonic orientation group represented the top tertile (top 33%) of participant scores on eudaimonic orientation

life satisfaction, meaning, elevation, self-connectedness, vitality, and relatedness contributed to the interaction of parental status and eudaimonic orientation in predicting well-being for fathers. Hedonic orientation had no moderating effect on the association between being a parent and positive well-being experiences for neither males nor females.

Table 5 Multivariate regression analyses predicting positive well-being experiences as a set among males and females as independent groups

| Model | Males | | Females | |
|---|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|
| | <i>F</i> (9, 299) | η^2_p | <i>F</i> (9, 276) | η^2_p |
| Analysis 1 | | | | |
| Parental status (nonparent = 0; parent = 1) | 2.06* | .07 | 2.21* | .06 |
| Eudaimonic orientation | 17.82*** | .38 | 15.96*** | .33 |
| Hedonic orientation | 6.48*** | .18 | 2.94** | .08 |
| Analysis 2 | | | | |
| Parental status (nonparent = 0; parent = 1) | 2.28* | .07 | 2.18* | .06 |
| Eudaimonic orientation | 1.91* | .06 | 5.82*** | .15 |
| Hedonic orientation | 6.26*** | .18 | 3.07** | .09 |
| Interaction of parental status and eudaimonic orientation | 2.04* | .06 | .81 | .02 |
| Analysis 3 | | | | |
| Parental status (nonparent = 0; parent = 1) | 2.06* | .07 | 2.22* | .06 |
| Eudaimonic orientation | 18.31*** | .38 | 15.33*** | .32 |
| Hedonic orientation | 1.68 | .05 | 1.47 | .04 |
| Interaction of parental status and hedonic orientation | 1.47 | .05 | .50 | .02 |

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table 6 Univariate regression coefficients when predicting experiences using parental status, eudaimonic orientation, hedonic orientations, and the interaction between parental status and eudaimonic orientation as predictor variables among males as a group

| | Parental status | | | Eudaimonic orientation | | | Hedonic orientation | | | Interaction of parental status and eudaimonic orientation | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|----------|----------|------------------------|----------|----------|---------------------|----------|----------|---|-------------|----------|------------|
| | <i>b</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>b</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>b</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>b</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | η_p^2 |
| Positive well-being experiences | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Positive affect | .38 | 3.03 | ** | .13 | 1.10 | ** | .24 | 4.16 | *** | .24 | 1.79 | | .01 |
| Life satisfaction | .48 | 3.55 | ** | .03 | 0.21 | | .04 | 0.58 | | .29 | 2.00 | * | .01 |
| Carefreeness | .24 | 2.02 | ** | .16 | 1.38 | ** | .20 | 3.61 | *** | .20 | 1.57 | | .01 |
| Meaning | .27 | 2.30 | *** | .17 | 1.49 | *** | .03 | 0.58 | | .40 | 3.19 | ** | .04 |
| Elevation | .27 | 2.27 | ** | .31 | 2.62 | *** | -.03 | -0.05 | | .28 | 2.21 | * | .02 |
| Self-connectedness | .41 | 3.28 | * | .06 | 0.50 | *** | .08 | 1.33 | | .42 | 3.16 | ** | .04 |
| Interest | .39 | 3.27 | *** | .33 | 2.87 | *** | .10 | 1.84 | | .22 | 1.77 | | .01 |
| Vitality | .27 | 2.34 | * | .11 | 1.38 | *** | .09 | 1.77 | ** | .36 | 2.94 | ** | .03 |
| Relatedness | .36 | 3.00 | *** | .16 | 1.39 | ** | .03 | 0.63 | | .34 | 2.66 | ** | .02 |
| Negative affect | -.31 | -2.21 | * | -.07 | -0.50 | | .08 | 1.16 | | -.14 | -0.93 | | .00 |

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Discussion

The present study investigated the influence of eudaimonic and hedonic orientations on the relationship between parental status and well-being. To our knowledge, this is the first study to examine the role of well-being orientations in the context of parenthood. As predicted, our results showed that a high degree of eudaimonic orientation made the association between being a parent and well-being more positive. While we expected hedonic orientation to have a weaker positive or even negative moderating effect on the link between being a parent and well-being, the interaction between hedonic orientation and parental status was not significant. Crucially, further analyses revealed that eudaimonic orientation had an enhancing moderation effect only on fathers', but not mothers', well-being. For males, the interaction between eudaimonic orientation and being a parent was associated specifically with higher levels of life satisfaction, meaning, elevation, self-connectedness, vitality, and relatedness.

Several studies have provided evidence that fatherhood is associated with increased well-being (e.g., Keizer et al., 2010; Meier et al., 2018; Meier et al., 2016; Musick, Meier, & Flood, 2016; Nelson et al., 2013), whereas evidence on mothers' well-being has been mixed (Hansen et al., 2009; Savolainen et al., 2001; Zuzanek & Mannell, 1993). Nonetheless, we were surprised by the clear gender difference in our results. Why does a eudaimonic orientation seem to lead males, but not females, to experience greater well-being from parenthood?

Historically, societal norms have emphasized paid—also uninterrupted, continuous—work as a central context for male mastery and identity construction (Collinson & Hearn, 2005). While authors have underlined the costs of the masculine

full-time work model to men's quality of life (e.g., Halrynjo, 2009; Hörning et al., 1995; Meikins & Whalley, 2002), work likely remains an obvious, anticipated, and socially sanctioned vehicle for men's self-realization. However, if having and raising children can be considered a more eudaimonic endeavour, then parenthood may provide an unexpected context in which males can express their eudaimonic values, thereby broadening the sources through which males can satisfy their eudaimonic pursuits beyond the career arena. Males high on eudaimonic orientation may thus view parenthood as an opportunity to fulfill eudaimonic motives for authenticity (e.g., becoming more down-to-earth), excellence (e.g., being a good role model), growth (e.g., learning how to guide another human being), and meaning (e.g., making a positive difference in someone's life). Such fulfillment of motives likely raises fathers' well-being leading, as our results showed, to heightened evaluation of one's experiences as valuable, and increases in feelings of wonder and enrichment, of knowing what matters to oneself, and of intimacy and belonging. Eudaimonic orientation, in its association with active coping styles (Giuntoli et al., 2021) and intrinsic motivation (Behzadnia & Ryan, 2018), may also lead fathers to be willing to rise to the various tasks and challenges posed by parenting, and to view such encounters as satisfying and energizing.

With regards to the lack of moderation effect of eudaimonic orientation on mothers' well-being, we speculate that this could be due to one or more reasons. Females have been found to experience a surge in eudaimonic orientation in early adulthood, suggesting that females may be more biologically and socially prepared to be eudaimonic (e.g., to prioritize others' needs and be generative) compared to males (LeFebvre & Huta, 2021). Therefore, females may express their eudaimonic values across various domains (e.g., work, friendship, community involvement) resulting in no additional well-being benefits of eudaimonic orientation for mothers compared to childless females.

Furthermore, despite the hypothesized congruence between parenting and eudaimonic values, perhaps, even for eudaimonically oriented mothers, the responsibilities of child rearing—along with potential work and other caregiving obligations—exert too great a demand on mothers' energy and emotional resources resulting, at times, in sacrifices to personal well-being. Activities that could be construed as sources of meaning (e.g., raising children, caring for an ailing parent) may be perceived as taxing or burdensome in mothers' lived, day-to-day experience; consequently, the stresses of parenthood may overwhelm the potential well-being benefits of carrying out valued action (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999; Waterman, 1990, 2008) or fulfilling an important life goal (Nelson et al., 2014). In contrast, females high on eudaimonic orientation may derive a greater subjective sense of authenticity, personal growth, and self-realization in their endeavours and accomplishments outside the home through their career, community involvement, or leisure activities. At least one study suggests that females in general may derive more well-being from activities in the public sphere relative to the family sphere (Larson et al., 1994). It could be worthwhile to investigate the roles of eudaimonic and hedonic orientation in well-being derived from work, volunteerism, and other self-expressive activities (Waterman, 1993), as well as any potential gender differences in outcomes.

As a final remark on the matter, researchers have argued that gender differences in parental well-being likely result from the types of activities mothers and fathers tend to engage in with their children, whether a mother is parenting on her own (Meier et al., 2016), the rise of intensive parenting beliefs (e.g., Meeussen & Van Laar, 2018; Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020; Rizzo et al., 2013), quality of parent sleep and leisure (Musick et al., 2016), and maternal burden of parenting stress (e.g., Meier et al., 2018; Milkie et al., 2002; Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2003), among other factors. Therefore, despite our speculations as to the gender differences in the present study's results, it bears reminding that the well-being experienced in relation to parenthood ultimately depends on a variety of circumstantial and psychological factors.

As mentioned above, when it came to hedonic orientation, we found that it did not moderate the relationship between being a parent and well-being. From a hedonic perspective, the daily demands and responsibilities associated with parenthood may be viewed as costs to one's personal happiness and comfort (e.g., experiencing frequent negative emotions, having less time to pursue pleasurable activities); however, a hedonic orientation may also confer some benefits for parenting and engaging with children—the ability to be in the present, a sense of playfulness, having spontaneity, and savouring (Huta, 2021). Consequently, for hedonically oriented individuals, the perceived benefits and costs of parenting may cancel each other out, yielding no net benefit or detriment to well-being. Furthermore, the well-being derived from parenthood may require some frequency of big-picture and long-term assessment of how parenthood relates to one's values. Given that hedonic orientation involves a focus on the here and now (Pearce et al., 2020), hedonic orientation on its own may not build a clear mental link between parenthood and well-being.

To move on to a broader discussion, our study underscores the implications of eudaimonic and hedonic orientations for well-being in the context of parenthood. More precisely, in our study, the pursuit of authenticity, meaning, excellence, and growth (eudaimonic orientation; Huta 2016) were associated with increased well-being in relation to being a parent. Meanwhile, parents who pursue pleasure and comfort (hedonic orientation; Huta, 2016) had no well-being advantages or disadvantages compared to nonparents. Given that eudaimonic orientation has been associated with a broad scope of concern (e.g., prosociality, generativity) and hedonic orientation has related with a narrow focus of concern on the self (Pearce et al., 2020), our findings are consistent with prior evidence that other-focused, but not self-focused, motives relate to higher well-being among parents (Le & Impett, 2019). This suggests that eudaimonic and hedonic conceptualizations of a 'good life' provide an important lens through which people evaluate their experiences and, in turn, the well-being they derive from their activities. Importantly, our results corroborate evidence that the well-being associated with eudaimonic orientation has less to do with pleasant emotions and a sense of carefreeness (i.e., hedonic happiness) and more to do with integrated cognitive-affective experiences that have been considered eudaimonic (e.g., meaning, elevation, self-connectedness; Delle Fave et al., 2011; Huta, 2015; Vittersø, 2013) and reflective of healthy psychological functioning (e.g., vitality, relatedness, life satisfaction) (Guintoli et al., 2021; Ryan et al., 2008). These findings further accentuate the need for researchers to include a balanced and differentiated range of subjective experiences and cognitive appraisals when measuring

well-being (Braaten et al., 2019; Huta, 2012). They are also consistent with evidence from other studies that eudaimonic orientation may enable people to derive greater fulfillment from life activities involving challenge, effort, and delayed satisfaction (Behzadnia & Ryan, 2018; Braaten, 2019; Merrick et al., 2017), thereby highlighting the importance of distinguishing between eudaimonic and hedonic orientations in predicting well-being across different contexts.

It is worth considering limitations of our study. First, our methodology was relatively robust for a correlational study: we compared parents to nonparents, our sample covered the entire adult age range, and sample sizes were balanced based on age, gender, and country of residence. The sample was also fairly typical of the US/Canadian population in terms of education, income, and marital status. In addition, we asked people about their well-being globally at home, not the well-being derived from parenting, which helped to reduce the role played by rose-coloured glasses. We also assessed the current well-being of participants, helping to avoid the potential bias of retrospective recall. Nevertheless, our study's cross-sectional design prevents us from making causal interpretations from the results. Furthermore, parental status (i.e., being a parent) is not an adequate proxy for engagement in parenting. Given that we asked participants to report on their typical levels of well-being experienced in their private life (i.e., not at work), we can only speculate that eudaimonically oriented fathers derive well-being from parenting activities; meanwhile, their higher levels of well-being compared to childless males could be experienced in relation to other private pursuits such as personally meaningful hobbies or interests. Likewise, the fact that we asked people about their well-being globally in their private life and not the well-being derived specifically from parenting limits the extent to which we can understand parents' subjective experiences of parenting and how these experiences may be filtered through or moderated by eudaimonic and hedonic orientations. Future studies employing experience sampling could help elucidate the moderating roles (or lack thereof) of eudaimonic and hedonic orientations on the links between parents' and nonparents' daily activities (including diverse types of parenting activities) and well-being experiences.

Another matter not addressed by our study that likely has important implications for parents' and nonparents' well-being is the intention to become a parent or remain childless. Though we compared parents and nonparents, readers cannot assume that participants' parental status resulted from intentionally pursuing an important life goal. The vast majority of adults go on to become parents (Monte & Knop, 2019), suggesting that becoming a parent may result from a biological drive that is more unconscious than consciously valued priorities. Parenthood may also be more of a consequence of how one's life happens to evolve than choices based on value systems (e.g., whether a person finds a suitable mate, has children to make a mate happy, or unintentionally becomes a parent). In contrast, some people may feel a desire for children but may not go on to become a parent because of infertility, or a lack of perceived parenting self-efficacy. Also, some people may choose to express their value system and seek fulfillment through their work, leisure activities, or community involvement rather than through parenting.

A final limitation we wish to acknowledge pertains to the demographics of our sample. The participants in our study were North American and predominantly

White, limiting the generalizability of our results. Future studies could explore the potential moderating influence of eudaimonic and hedonic orientations in more diverse samples.

In summary, the results of our study suggest that the ways people construe and pursue the ‘good life’ have important implications for the well-being derived from parenthood—at least for fathers. Fathers that prioritize and pursue authenticity, personal growth, excellence, and meaning (i.e., who have eudaimonic orientation) appear to experience greater well-being compared to males without children. Mothers in our sample, however, did not derive any additional well-being benefits from a eudaimonic lens on the ‘good life.’ Perhaps, for mothers, the stresses associated with parenthood—especially when combined with career demands and/or other caregiving responsibilities—obscure the advantages to well-being conferred by eudaimonic values. It is also possible that eudaimonically oriented females derive greater day-to-day fulfillment from activities outside the home—through their careers or community involvement, for example. Nonetheless, our findings support evidence suggesting that eudaimonic and hedonic orientations constitute an important lens through which individuals interpret the well-being experienced in relation to different activities and contexts. We suspect that eudaimonic and hedonic orientations may also act as moderators in predicting well-being in other important contexts, including intimate relationships, sexuality, and participation in spiritual or religious communities or practices. These contexts would be worth investigating in future research.

Authors’ Contributions Courtney Gosselin: Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Writing – Manuscript preparation, Visualization Veronika Huta: Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Methodology, Writing – Review and editing, Supervision Arthur Braaten: Data Curation, Formal analysis, Methodology, Writing – Review and editing

Declarations

Ethical Approval Ethics approval for this study was granted by the University of Ottawa Health Sciences and Science Research Ethics Board (file number: H08-16-19).

Informed Consent Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants in the study.

Conflict of Interest The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

References

- Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, *117*(3), 497–529. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.117.3.497>
- Baumeister, R. F., Vohs, K. D., Aaker, J. L., & Garbinsky, E. N. (2013). Some key differences between a happy life and a meaningful life. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, *8*(6), 505–516. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2013.830764>
- Behzadnia, B., & Ryan, R. M. (2018). Eudaimonic and hedonic orientations in physical education and their relation with motivation and wellness. *International Journal of Sport Psychology*, *49*(5), 363–385. <https://doi.org/10.7352/IJSP.2018.49.363>

- Bjørnskov, C. (2010). How comparable are the Gallup World Poll life satisfaction data? *Journal of Happiness Studies: An Interdisciplinary Forum on Subjective Well-Being*, 11(1), 41–60. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-008-9121-6>
- Bostic, T. J., McGartland Rubio, D., & Hood, M. (2000). A validation of the Subjective Vitality Scale using structural equation modeling. *Social Indicators Research*, 52(3), 313–324. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1007136110218>
- Braaten, A., Huta, V., Tyrany, L., & Thompson, A. (2019). Hedonic and eudaimonic motives toward university studies: How they relate to each other and to well-being derived from school. *Journal of Positive Psychology & Wellbeing*, 3(2), 179–196. <https://www.journalppw.com/index.php/JPPW/article/view/123/61>. Accessed 28 July 2021.
- Collinson, D. L., & Hearn, J. (2005). Men and masculinities in work, organizations, and management. In *Handbook of studies on men & masculinities* (pp. 289–310). SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452233833.n17>
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2009). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. Harper Perennial Modern Classics.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The “what” and “why” of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227–268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PL11104_01
- DelleFave, A., Brdar, I., Freire, T., Vella-Brodrick, D., & Wissing, M. P. (2011). The eudaimonic and hedonic components of happiness: Qualitative and quantitative findings. *Social Indicators Research*, 100(2), 185–207. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-010-9632-5>
- Diener, E., & Emmons, R. A. (1984). The independence of positive and negative affect. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 47(5), 1105–1117. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.47.5.1105>
- Dunlop, W. L., Walker, L. J., Hanley, G. E., & Harake, N. (2017). The psychosocial construction of parenting: An examination of parenting goals and narratives in relation to well-being. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 18(6), 1729–1745. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-016-9796-z>
- Evenson, R. J., & Simon, R. W. (2005). Clarifying the relationship between parenthood and depression. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 46(4), 341–358. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002214650504600403>
- Gagné, M. (2003). The role of autonomy support and autonomy orientation in prosocial behavior engagement. *Motivation and Emotion*, 27(3), 199–223. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1025007614869>
- Giuntoli, L., Condini, F., Ceccarini, F., Huta, V., & Vidotto, G. (2021). The different roles of hedonic and eudaimonic motives for activities in predicting functioning and well-being experiences. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 22(4), 1657–1671. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-020-00290-0>
- Halryngo, S. (2009). Men’s work-life conflict: Career, care and self-realization: Patterns of privileges and dilemmas. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 16(1), 98–125. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2008.00432.x>
- Hansen, T. (2012). Parenthood and happiness: A review of folk theories versus empirical evidence. *Social Indicators Research*, 108(1), 29–64. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-011-9865-y>
- Hansen, T., Slagsvold, B., & Moum, T. (2009). Childlessness and psychological well-being in midlife and old age: An examination of parental status effects across a range of outcomes. *Social Indicators Research*, 94(2), 343–362. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-008-9426-1>
- Henderson, L. W., Knight, T., & Richardson, B. (2013). An exploration of the well-being benefits of hedonic and eudaimonic behaviour. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 8(4), 322–336. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2013.803596>
- Herbst, C. M., & Ifcher, J. (2016). The increasing happiness of US parents. *Review of Economics of the Household*, 14(3), 529–551. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11150-015-9302-0>
- Hörning, K. H., Gerhard, A., & Michailow, M. (1995). *Time pioneers: Flexible working time and new lifestyles*. Polity Press.
- Huta, V. (2012). Linking peoples’ pursuit of eudaimonia and hedonia with characteristics of their parents: Parenting styles, verbally endorsed values, and role modeling. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 13(1), 47–61. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-011-9249-7>
- Huta, V. (2015). The complementary roles of eudaimonia and hedonia and how they can be pursued in practice. In S. Joseph (Ed.), *Positive psychology in practice* (pp. 159–182). John Wiley & Sons Inc. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118996874.ch10>
- Huta, V. (2016). Eudaimonic and hedonic orientations: Theoretical considerations and research findings. In J. Vittersø (Ed.), *Handbook of eudaimonic well-being* (pp. 215–231). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-42445-3_15

- Huta, V., & Ryan, R. M. (2010). Pursuing pleasure or virtue: The differential and overlapping well-being benefits of hedonic and eudaimonic motives. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 11(6), 735–762. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-009-9171-4>
- Huta, V., & Waterman, A. S. (2014). Eudaimonia and its distinction from hedonia: Developing a classification and terminology for understanding conceptual and operational definitions. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 15(6), 1425–1456. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-013-9485-0>
- Huta, V. (2021). *Healthy hedonism: What hedonically oriented people are good at* [Conference presentation]. 7th IPPA World Congress, online.
- Keizer, R., Dykstra, P. A., & Poortman, A.-R. (2010). The transition to parenthood and well-being: The impact of partner status and work hour transitions. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 24(4), 429–438. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0020414>
- Kenrick, D. T., Griskevicius, V., Neuberg, S. L., & Schaller, M. (2010). Renovating the pyramid of needs: Contemporary extensions built upon ancient foundations. *Perspectives on Psychological Science: A Journal of the Association for Psychological Science*, 5(3), 292–314. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691610369469>
- Khandwala, Y. S., Zhang, C. A., Lu, Y., & Eisenberg, M. L. (2017). The age of fathers in the USA is rising: An analysis of 168 867 480 births from 1972 to 2015. *Human Reproduction*, 32(10), 2110–2116. <https://doi.org/10.1093/humrep/dex267>
- King, L. A., & Napa, C. K. (1998). What makes a life good? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75(1), 156–165. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.75.1.156>
- Larson, R. W., Richards, M. H., & Perry-Jenkins, M. (1994). Divergent worlds: The daily emotional experience of mothers and fathers in the domestic and public spheres. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 67(6), 1034–1046. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.67.6.1034>
- Le, B. M., & Impett, E. A. (2019). Parenting goal pursuit is linked to emotional well-being, relationship quality, and responsiveness. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 36(3), 879–904. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407517747417>
- LeFebvre, A., & Huta, V. (2021). Age and gender differences in eudaimonic, hedonic, and extrinsic motivations. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 22(5), 2299–2321. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-020-00319-4>
- Lyubomirsky, S., & Boehm, J. K. (2010). Human motives, happiness, and the puzzle of parenthood: Commentary on Kenrick et al. (2010). *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 5(3), 327–334. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691610369473>
- Martinez, G., Daniels, K., & Chandra, A. (2012). Fertility of men and women aged 15–44 years in the United States: National Survey of Family Growth, 2006–2010. *National Health Statistics Reports*, 51, 1–28.
- McGregor, I., & Little, B. R. (1998). Personal projects, happiness, and meaning: On doing well and being yourself. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74(2), 494–512. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.74.2.494>
- McLanahan, S., & Adams, J. (1987). Parenthood and psychological well-being. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 13(1), 237–257. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.13.080187.001321>
- Meeussen, L., & Van Laar, C. (2018). Feeling pressure to be a perfect mother relates to parental burnout and career ambitions. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 2113. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.02113>
- Meier, A., Musick, K., Flood, S., & Dunifon, R. (2016). Mothering experiences: How single parenthood and employment structure the emotional valence of parenting. *Demography*, 53(3), 649–674. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13524-016-0474-x>
- Meier, A., Musick, K., Fischer, J., & Flood, S. (2018). Mothers' and fathers' well-being in parenting across the arch of child development: Well-being in parenting by child age. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 80(4), 992–1004. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12491>
- Meiksins, P., & Whalley, P. (2002). *Putting work in its place: A quiet revolution*. ILR Press.
- Merrick, A. D., Grieve, A., & Cogan, N. (2017). Psychological impacts of challenging behaviour and motivational orientation in staff supporting individuals with autistic spectrum conditions. *Autism: The International Journal of Research and Practice*, 21(7), 872–880. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362361316654857>
- Monte, L. M., & Knop, B. (2019). *Men's fertility & fatherhood: 2014*. United States Census Bureau. <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2019/demo/p70-162.html>. Accessed 28 July 2021.
- Musick, K., Meier, A., & Flood, S. (2016). How parents fare: Mothers' and fathers' subjective well-being in time with children. *American Sociological Review*, 81(5), 1069–1095. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122416663917>

- Myrskylä, M., & Margolis, R. (2014). Happiness: Before and after the kids. *Demography*, 51(5), 1843–1866. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13524-014-0321-x>
- Nelson, S. K., Kushlev, K., English, T., Dunn, E. W., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2013). In defense of parenthood: Children are associated with more joy than misery. *Psychological Science*, 24(1), 3–10. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797612447798>
- Nelson, S. K., Kushlev, K., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2014). The pains and pleasures of parenting: When, why, and how is parenthood associated with more or less well-being? *Psychological Bulletin*, 140(3), 846–895. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0035444>
- Nomaguchi, K., & Milkie, M. A. (2020). Parenthood and well-being: A decade in review. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 82(1), 198–223. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12646>
- Pearce, K., Huta, V., & Voloaca, M. (2020). How eudaimonic and hedonic orientations map onto seeing beyond the 'me, now, and tangible. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2020.1791943>
- Rizzo, K. M., Schiffrin, H. H., & Liss, M. (2013). Insight into the parenthood paradox: Mental health outcomes of intensive mothering. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 22(5), 614–620. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-012-9615-z>
- Rothrauff, T., & Cooney, T. M. (2008). The role of generativity in psychological well-being: Does it differ for childless adults and parents? *Journal of Adult Development*, 15(3–4), 148–159. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10804-008-9046-7>
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2001). On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52, 141–166. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.141>
- Ryan, R. M., Huta, V., & Deci, E. L. (2008). Living well: A self-determination theory perspective on eudaimonia. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 9(1), 139–170. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-006-9023-4>
- Ryff, C. D. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57(6), 1069–1081. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.57.6.1069>
- Ryff, C. D., & Keyes, C. L. (1995). The structure of psychological well-being revisited. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69(4), 719–727. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.69.4.719>
- Savolainen, J., Lahelma, E., Silventonen, K., & Gauthier, A. H. (2001). Parenthood and psychological well-being in Finland: Does public policy make a difference? *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 32(1), 61–74. <https://doi.org/10.3138/jcfs.32.1.61>
- Sheldon, K. M., & Elliot, A. J. (1999). Goal striving, need satisfaction, and longitudinal well-being: The self-concordance model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 76(3), 482–497. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.76.3.482>
- Sheldon, K. M., Ryan, R. M., Deci, E. L., & Kasser, T. (2004). The independent effects of goal contents and motives on well-being: It's both what you pursue and why you pursue it. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 30(4), 475–486. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167203261883>
- Simon, R. W. (2008). The joys of parenthood, reconsidered. *Contexts*, 7(2), 40–45. <https://doi.org/10.1525/ctx.2008.7.2.40>
- Stanca, L. (2012). Suffer the little children: Measuring the effects of parenthood on well-being worldwide. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 81(3), 742–750. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2010.12.019>
- Umberson, D., & Gove, W. R. (1989). Parenthood and psychological well-being: Theory, measurement, and stage in the family life course. *Journal of Family Issues*, 10(4), 440–462. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019251389010004002>
- Umberson, D., Pudrovska, T., & Reczek, C. (2010). Parenthood, childlessness, and well-being: A life course perspective. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72(3), 612–629. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2010.00721.x>
- Vittersø, J. (2004). Subjective well-being versus self-actualization: Using the flow-simplex to promote a conceptual clarification of subjective quality of life. *Social Indicators Research*, 65(3), 299–331. <https://doi.org/10.1023/B:SOCI.0000003910.26194.ef>
- Vittersø, J., Dyrdal, G. M., & Røysamb, E. (2005). *Utilities and capabilities: A psychological account of the two concepts and their relation to the idea of a good life* [Conference paper]. 2nd Workshop on Capabilities and Happiness, University of Milano, Bicocca, Italy.
- Vittersø, J. (2013). Feelings, meanings, and optimal functioning: Some distinctions between hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. In *The best within us: Positive psychology perspectives on eudaimonia* (pp. 39–55). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/14092-003>

- Waterman, A. S. (1990). Personal expressiveness: Philosophical and psychological foundations. *The Journal of Mind and Behavior*, *11*(1), 47–73.
- Waterman, A. S. (1993). Two conceptions of happiness: Contrasts of personal expressiveness (eudaimonia) and hedonic enjoyment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *64*(4), 678–691. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.64.4.678>
- Waterman, A. S. (2008). Reconsidering happiness: A eudaimonist's perspective. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, *3*(4), 234–252. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760802303002>
- White, M. P., & Dolan, P. (2009). Accounting for the richness of daily activities. *Psychological Science*, *20*(8), 1000–1008. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2009.02392.x>
- Zeng, Z., & Chen, H. (2020). Distinct associations of hedonic and eudaimonic motives with well-being: Mediating role of self-control. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *17*(15), E5547. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17155547>
- Zuzanek, J., & Mannell, R. (1993). Gender variations in the weekly rhythms of daily behaviour and experiences. *Journal of Occupational Science*, *1*(1), 25–37. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.1993.9686376>

Publisher's Note Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.