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Well-Being in the Arab World: An Anthropological Perspective

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Abstract

The Arab World has received considerable attention by scholars and the media since the global and regional events of September 11, 2001, the financial crisis of 2008 and the Arab Spring of 2011. This research contributes to the scholarship of both quality of life and human well-being and the inquiry of the development and current status of social and public policies across selected countries of the Arab World. This research aims to present a critical review of the scope of the quality of life and well-being in Arab countries. In dealing with the quality of life and policy issues among Arab countries, this study, using objective and subjective indicators, focuses on three dimensions namely economy, health, and education. It also seeks to analyze the positive and negative aspects of well-being and policy issues in the Arab World from cross-cultural perspectives. Furthermore, the paper examines wellbeing in very different cultural contexts of the Arab World to uncover shared notions of the good life and how best to achieve it. In addition to scholarly work from the field of anthropology, the study draws on a wide range of quantitative and qualitative social indicator data. Along with the ethnographic inquiry, the paper uses indicators and data from economic, health, and education resources to capture both positive and negative states of the quality of life in the Arab World. Because the Arab World is large and diverse, the research adopts certain criteria related particularly to economy and population. Similarities and differences between selected countries are discussed. For example, although income distribution in Arabian Gulf countries are relatively similar, populations and perceptions among their residents and citizens are significantly different.

Keywords: *Arab World, An Anthropological Perspective*

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