

On Harmony

A draft by some members of

Global Harwell Collaboration

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<https://globalharwellgoal.org/On%20Harmony/index.php>)*

Note: *This article focuses primarily on harmony rather than wellbeing. In fact, a part of this article has appeared in “the more detailed description of the conference theme” on the AIEH2026 webpage. Although incomplete, it nevertheless offers an initial set of thoughts on the conceptual framework of Global Harwell.*

Rooted in ongoing scholarly dialogue and collective reflection, and informed by related documents published by UNESCO, the OECD, and Ministries of Education across the world, **Global Harwell** (a word combining harmony and wellbeing) is advanced as a framework of educational objectives with far-reaching global significance. For example, UNESCO’s Sustainable Development Goals exemplify this orientation by framing harmony and wellbeing as indispensable to global peace and sustainable futures. At the same time, Global Harwell aligns with emerging international approaches to AI governance that emphasize human-centered values, fairness, accountability, and the protection of human dignity. While local goals rightly reflect diverse cultural and societal conditions, Global Harwell represents a universal aspiration—one that builds upon our common humanity and our collective responsibility for the future.

The concept of Global Harwell—a nascent yet broadly resonant idea—emerges in response to today’s deeply interconnected global crises. It contends that since the First Industrial Revolution, **the imbalance between material wellbeing and humanistic**

wellbeing has steadily widened. By imbalance, we refer to the unequal attention and effort devoted to these two forms of wellbeing. Such asymmetry has inevitably contributed to growing conflicts and fractures across all dimensions of human life.

Material Wellbeing and Humanistic Wellbeing

Here, **material wellbeing** refers to the attainment of concrete necessities of life, such as food, shelter, transportation, wealth, and safety. By contrast, **humanistic wellbeing** encompasses non-material human needs, including emotional health, interpersonal connections, a sense of meaning in life, and self-realization. When economic productivity—developed in the pursuit of material wellbeing—is elevated above humanistic wellbeing and all other considerations, the imbalance between these two forms of wellbeing continues to widen, gradually eroding harmony across all levels of human existence. **Harmony**, as used here, includes peace, calm, equilibrium, concord, reciprocity, coexistence, fellowship and sustainability; all of these essential qualities are thereby undermined.

Why we learn defines the world we build.

For this reason, Global Harwell calls for a shared educational goal: to pursue material wellbeing while actively elevating humanistic wellbeing, and to regard both as equally essential and mutually indispensable.

An analogy may be drawn from higher education, where students typically complete both a major and a minor. Across much of today's educational landscape, material wellbeing is treated as the "major," while humanistic wellbeing is positioned as the "minor"—important, perhaps, but ultimately secondary. The demands of the future, however, point toward a different model: a dual major, with one major devoted to material wellbeing and the other to humanistic wellbeing. Only by granting both equal weight, depth, and priority can education truly foster a complete and flourishing human society.

To sustain balance between these two forms of wellbeing, harmony should be recognized as their **shared ethical responsibility** toward others and the wider world—one that is rooted in human interdependence and expressed through interconnected

relationships among the self, human society, and the natural world. Together, these levels form a guiding compass that integrates and balances the cultivation of both forms of wellbeing.

For example, in education, curriculum design, assessment, AI integration, and policymaking should not be judged solely by metrics of skill, efficiency, or economic output. Instead, we must measure how they foster harmony across a continuum: self → family → society → nation → planet, and reciprocally from planet to self.

When educational and social systems lose their moral and directional bearings, harmony offers a stable point of reference through which evaluation, recalibration, and ongoing evolution become possible. In this sense, harmony functions as the central axis through which material wellbeing and humanistic wellbeing are held in balance, and as an overarching and foundational normative concern guiding educational thought and practice.

The Golden Rule: The Foundation of Harmony

Harmony comprises *self-harmony*, *social harmony*, and *environmental harmony*, which are mutually interrelated. The discussion that follows, however, focuses primarily on social harmony. At the heart of achieving social harmony lies the **Golden Rule**, an ethical foundation that has echoed across diverse cultures, traditions, and philosophical systems for thousands of years. The Golden Rule is commonly articulated in two principal forms:

1. **Positive (proactive) formulation:** *“Treat others as you would like to be treated” (or “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”).*

This formulation emphasizes proactive moral agency, encouraging benevolent action and the active promotion of others’ wellbeing.

2. **Negative (restrictive) formulation:** *“Do not do to others what you would not want done to yourself.”*

This formulation underscores moral restraint, guiding individuals to regulate their actions in order to avoid causing harm to others.

Some further clarification of the Golden Rule is necessary. To avoid the assumption

that “what I desire must also be what others desire,” modern scholars have proposed an important refinement: *treat others in the way they themselves wish to be treated*. This perspective reminds us that, even when motivated by goodwill, others’ genuine expectations and needs may differ from our own. For instance, if I am fond of seafood and enthusiastically order an entire table of seafood dishes when hosting a meal, I may unintentionally place a friend—who is allergic to or dislikes seafood—in an uncomfortable situation.

We must therefore remain alert and avoid the mindset of “what I desire must be imposed on others.” When personal convictions or preferences are imposed upon others, the Golden Rule is violated, and harm often follows. Regrettably, many disputes—and even serious conflicts—arise today precisely from such well-intentioned yet one-sided impositions.

Ultimately, the Golden Rule expresses the practice of perspective-taking and reciprocal respect, forming the foundation of empathy. It calls on individuals, in their interactions with others, to imaginatively place themselves in the other’s situation, reflect on how the other person wishes to be treated, and adopt this reflection as the basis for our actions. By doing so, it cultivates fairness, mutual understanding, and interpersonal trust. It is therefore widely recognized as one of the most universal and enduring ethical foundations of human civilization.

Despite differences in expression, the Golden Rule transcends time and culture, appearing as a shared ethical consensus across the world’s major philosophical and religious traditions¹:

- **Confucianism:** *“Do not impose on others what you yourself do not desire.”* — Analects (Wei Ling Gong)
- **Ancient Greek philosophy:** *“Do not do to others what you yourself would find objectionable.”* — Isocrates
- **Christianity:** *“In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.”*

¹ In articulating the concept of Global Harwell, we intentionally avoid alignment with specific political ideologies or religious doctrines. The Golden Rule, however, warrants special consideration, as it represents a universally shared ethical principle embedded across diverse religious traditions.

— Gospel of Matthew 7:12

- **Islam:** *“Wish for your brother what you wish for yourself.”* — Hadith

Other major religious traditions—such as Buddhism, Hinduism, and Judaism—also contain closely related formulations of this same ethical foundation.

However, in modern society, the Golden Rule has been widely neglected, leading to social disorder at multiple levels and a growing range of systemic problems. One manifestation of this neglect is the rise of self-centeredness, in which little attention is paid to others’ feelings or preferences, thereby weakening moral responsibility and care for others. At the same time, a pervasive consequentialist mindset prioritizes outcomes over processes; in the pursuit of results, the ethical quality of the means is often treated as irrelevant, normalizing practices such as manipulation, deception, and exploitation. Moreover, social media algorithms tend to reinforce echo chambers by amplifying views aligned with one’s existing positions, while casting dissenting voices as threats or enemies—contributing to processes of dehumanization.

Education is no exception. It places strong emphasis on how to succeed—knowledge and skills, performance and competition, selection and achievement—yet rarely provides learners with systematic opportunities to ask: *Is my success achieved at the expense of others? What responsibilities do I bear toward the world we inhabit together?* When society no longer asks, “Would this still be acceptable if I were the other?”, injustice and unfairness become inevitable; harmony collapses, and wellbeing can no longer be realized.

If education could cultivate in each of us the discipline of pausing—for three seconds, say—before we speak or make decisions, and of asking ourselves, *“If I were the one affected, how would I feel?”*, then a shared understanding of what it means to live a life oriented toward the good might gradually take root, and the vision of a harmonious and peaceful world would no longer remain mere imagination.

For example, when societal leaders or organizational decision-makers design systems and institutions, the Golden Rule can serve as a critical test: *If I were the one being governed, evaluated, or predicted, would I find this acceptable? If I were among the most vulnerable, would this system still be fair? Would I be willing to bear the long-*

term consequences of such a system?

The Golden Rule is simple in meaning, clear in logic, and both operable and verifiable in practice. It is the foundation of moral integrity and the starting point for how we should handle global governance and public policy. Unless we bring it back—honored in practice, upheld by the whole society, and woven into institutional design, technological development, and educational assessment—we shall never find a lasting way to achieve world peace.

Collective Wellbeing

Before proceeding further, we may consider what is meant by “collective wellbeing,” since wellbeing is often understood as a personal pursuit, as articulated in frameworks such as Maslow’s hierarchy of human needs and Seligman’s PERMA model. We may then define the collective wellbeing of a group—whether its members are individuals, societies, or nations—as the condition in which members largely experience benevolence, fairness, justice, and a balance of interests, enabling them to flourish together over time.

Conversely, when such relational harmony is absent, collective wellbeing becomes difficult to sustain. Conflicts may become more frequent and even escalate into war. Harmony among individuals, among societies, and among nations is therefore necessary for sustained and equitable flourishing. In short, without harmony, wellbeing is impossible.

In a similar respect, the Golden Rule—“Treat others as you would like to be treated”—can also be extended to collective entities: “Treat other societies or nations as your own society or nation would like to be treated,” and so forth.

BEJaM: a Model of Harmony in Practice

Grounded in the universal ethics of the Golden Rule, the practice of harmony can be concretized through a four-element model, **BEJaM**:

Benevolence: cultivating inner dispositions of kindness, care, and goodwill;

Equity: maintaining fair and respectful treatment of others;

Justice: upholding the normative requirements that sustain an orderly shared life;

The Middle Way: seeking moderation and balance.

Taken together, these four elements translate the Golden Rule into sustainable, mutually reinforcing forms of positive interaction at both personal, societal, and international levels.

Taking **AI in education** as an example, we often prioritize personalization, effectiveness, scalability, and performance gains. While these goals are commonly regarded as indicators of educational success, without guidance from a broader ethical framework they risk narrowing the purposes of education. In the case of **AI companions**, when design decisions focus primarily on increasing engagement, immersion, or measurable outcomes—without sufficient attention to relationships, moral development, and social context—education becomes technologically advanced yet ethically deficient. In such cases, learners may be well supported cognitively while remaining underserved emotionally, socially, and ethically.

Accordingly, at every stage of the development and deployment of AI companions, the Golden Rule calls on us to ask a fundamental question: *If our own children were among the learners most directly affected—especially those who are youngest, most vulnerable, or from the most disadvantaged backgrounds—would we be willing to accept the impacts of such a system?*

When the BEJaM model is put into practice, the development and use of AI companions should reflect the following commitments: in *cultivating benevolence*, AI companions should spark learners' curiosity, interests, and passion, rather than fostering excessive dependence on AI; in *maintaining equity*, they should avoid neglecting—or worse, amplifying—existing inequalities related to learners' backgrounds, differences, and needs; in *upholding justice*, education should move beyond mere selection and competition toward supporting learners in understanding themselves, exploring meaning, and forming values, thereby enabling them to care for others and act responsibly toward society and the world; and in *seeking the Middle Way*, balance should be achieved between automation and human judgment, algorithmic optimization and compassion, and innovation and restraint. Such a harmony-oriented design weaves

technological excellence together with humanistic values, ensuring that education supported by AI is concerned not only with **what is possible**, but also with thoughtful consideration of **what is right**.

The Balance and Reciprocal Advancement of Material and Humanistic Wellbeing

Material wellbeing is something almost everyone desires, and there is nothing inherently wrong with this—the pursuit of material wellbeing is entirely legitimate. Indeed, the comfort and convenience brought about by continuous advances in science and technology have steadily improved people’s quality of life. When we point to the imbalance between material wellbeing and humanistic wellbeing, we do not mean to advocate suppressing material development in order to enhance the latter. Rather, we argue that, compared with earlier eras, we must more consciously and earnestly devote greater effort to fostering the growth and deepening of humanistic wellbeing.

In fact, what we mean by the enhancement of wellbeing is the simultaneous advancement and mutual reinforcement of both material and humanistic dimensions—not the suppression of material wellbeing in favor of a one-sided emphasis on the humanistic. On the contrary, provided that our value orientation and developmental direction are sound, continued technological innovation and improvements in material living conditions need not undermine humanistic wellbeing. Instead, they can become powerful forces for its promotion. If Global Harwell represents a shared aspiration of humankind, why should we not harness rapidly advancing technologies to help realize it? The **General Artificial Companions Hypothesis** proposed below offers one concrete vision and practical pathway toward this goal.

One of the defining challenges of our time is to realize the General Artificial Companions Hypothesis. This hypothesis proposes that as artificial companions become increasingly advanced, their design must prioritize ethical human–AI companionship and societal benefit. Supported by Artificial General Intelligence within a Seamless AI World, these companions could play a decisive role in daily life, contributing 50 percent or more to the cultivation of Global Harwell as the core value of their human users. Because AI is ultimately a reflection of its creators, these companions can only be built by Global

Harwellians—individuals who embrace Global Harwell as their central life purpose. Validating this hypothesis would mark a historic triumph for both technology and humanity.

The Fundamental Role of Education in the Reorientation of 21st-Century Civilization

As noted earlier, schools today largely prioritize the pursuit of material wellbeing as their primary educational objective (major), while treating humanistic wellbeing as secondary (minor). In the future, however, educators must accord equal importance to both forms of wellbeing—treating them as a dual major—and recognize harmony as the ethical responsibility that binds them together. In this sense, **Global Harwell should become a shared global educational goal**. That is, schools exist to foster Global Harwell.

Thus, learning—beyond acquiring knowledge and skills, nurturing creativity and innovation, learning how to learn, and cultivating the capabilities and agency to navigate and resolve diverse and complex problems and challenges—also serves to develop learners' sense of responsibility, moral character, and commitment to the wellbeing of others. Accordingly, the realization of Global Harwell should stand as the foundational value shaping every aspect of school design and operation.

Civilization, as defined in the dictionary, refers to a human society with a well-developed social organization, or the culture and way of life of a particular society or nation during a specific period. In the past, our criteria for measuring civilization often emphasized economic growth and technological advancement, institutional effectiveness and competitiveness, as well as material wealth and the ability to control nature. However, the global crises of the 21st century (wars, polarization, climate, ecology, AI risks) have shown us that this model of development, while showcasing humanity's capacity to conquer the world and achieve highly optimized output, no longer addresses the survival and future of contemporary humanity. Civilization should be a shared responsibility among humans in multiple relationships, establishing an order of coexistence, meaning, and dignity, while continuously pursuing harmony, happiness, and intergenerational sustainability. The truly advanced civilization of the future must be

fundamentally re-rooted in education.

Nelson Mandela once said, *“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”* Global Harwell may be understood as a contemporary response to this insight. Education should not be conceived merely as schooling, as an instrument for economic productivity, or as a means to individual achievement; rather, it is a moral force and a collective responsibility—one that shapes not only knowledge and skills, but also values, dignity, and human agency. More fundamentally, the role of education is to serve as a vital force for humanization—for becoming fully human—and for the transformation of global civilization.

From Vision to Practice: An Operational Pathway to Harmony in Education

The **HeXie Education Model (HXEM)**—grounded in HeXie Theory by Xi Youmin—relates to Global Harwell as a practical enactment of its philosophical vision. Developed from the HeXie Management Theory (HXMT), HXEM integrates both Eastern and Western philosophical traditions. “HeXie,” often translated as “harmony” in Chinese, centers on the complementary principles of “**He**” and “**Xie**,” whose dynamic balance is used to manage complexity and foster a holistic approach to education.

Global Harwell articulates harmony and wellbeing as a unifying value framework for humanity in an era shaped by AI, technological acceleration, and systemic interdependence, emphasizing benevolence, equity, justice, and balanced development across individual, societal, and planetary levels. In alignment with this vision, HXMT conceptualizes harmony not as static consensus but as a dynamic process of balancing competing interests, uncertainties, and systemic tensions through ethical, reflective, and sustainable decision-making. By aligning individual agency, organizational practices, and societal goals, it provides a concrete managerial and institutional logic through which Global Harwell’s normative aspirations can be enacted. Extending this into education, HXEM frames learning as a lifelong, holistic process integrating cognitive growth with moral cultivation, emotional maturity, and social responsibility, thereby nurturing learners’ inner harmony and outward ethical conduct. When read alongside Global Harwell, HXEM clarifies how education can deliberately cultivate “Harwellian” individuals—learners who possess not only knowledge and skills, but also a strong sense of purpose,

agency, and relational responsibility. Together, Global Harwell and the HeXie frameworks offer a coherent, multi-level lens for fostering humanistic wellbeing, ethical leadership, and global harmony by synchronizing personal development with institutional design and societal transformation.

In sum, Global Harwell defines the ultimate educational aim: achieving harmony by balancing material wellbeing and humanistic wellbeing across levels—from self to planet. HXEM provides a methodological pathway for realizing this vision in schools and learning ecosystems. It guides how curricula, assessment, AI integration, and policy can be structured without losing their human purpose. While Global Harwell offers the normative compass, HXEM supplies the operational logic—translating a civilizational ideal into everyday educational practice that is both effective and humane.

Final Remarks

This article is, above all, an invitation—to rethink, to rebalance, and to reimagine the purpose of education in our time. In a world shaped by rapid technological advancement and deepening interdependence, the question is no longer simply how we learn, but **why we learn and for whom**. The concept of **Global Harwell** responds to this question by placing harmony and wellbeing at the center of our shared educational aspiration.

The discussion reminds us that the challenges we face today are not only technical or economic, but fundamentally human. The growing imbalance between material progress and humanistic development has eroded the conditions for meaningful coexistence. Re-centering harmony—through principles such as the Golden Rule and practices such as BEJaM—offers a way to restore ethical grounding in both personal life and collective systems.

Importantly, this vision does not remain at the level of ideals. Through the **HeXie Education Model (HXEM)**, the article illustrates how harmony can be enacted in real educational contexts. By weaving together structure and care, efficiency and humanity, HXEM shows that education can be both rigorous and compassionate, adaptive yet principled.

In the end, the significance of this work lies not only in what it proposes, but in what

it makes possible. It invites a global community of educators and researchers to participate in shaping a future where education cultivates not only capable individuals, but responsible, reflective, and relational human beings. The journey toward harmony is ongoing—and it begins with how we choose to educate.

Of course, many other important related ideas remain to be explored. At this stage, we pause and warmly invite further contributions from the broader community of educational researchers.