A STUDY OF MEASURING THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING OF WORKING WOMEN (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BALANGODA DIVISIONAL SECRETARIAT DIVISION)

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ABSTRACT

The measurement of Subjective Well-being (SWB) has advanced rapidly over the last two decades with the several segments. Subjective well being is defined as sum of three components-life satisfaction, presence of positive affect and absence of negative affect together called " happiness". However studies based on working women's well-being still is scarce. In this paper a attempt has made to measure the social determinants of subjective well-being for working women while identifying the variation among social determinants and subjective well-being for the selected area is the supplementary objective. Selected sample consisted with 187 married, employed women in the age group of 19-60, from 3 GN Divisions in Balangoda DS Division, through cluster sampling and convenience sampling methods, using a structured questionnaire. Weighted Principal Components Analysis (WPCA) is performed on variables for the indicators of Subjective Well-Being. Under this method, the loading from the first component of PCA are used as weights for the respective indicators. Finally the constructed social determinants of subjective well-being are classified into three categories as happy moderately happy and unhappy using cluster analysis. Indicators for community relationships, contribution of family members, social validity, organizing events and nature of the job lead to high satisfaction while working hours per week, working environment and trade union participation make less happiness among working women

KEYWORDS: *Social, Subjective Well-Being, Employed Women, WPCA*

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH PROBLEM/ISSUE

Subjective well-being (SWB) is widely considered to be an essential ingredient of the good life and represents a hedonic well-being concept with roots in the mid-seventies when Andrews and Whitey (1976) introduced a well-being structure consisting of three factors such as cognitive evaluation, negative effect and positive effect. According to Diener (1984), subjective well-being covers two main components such as one affective including negative and positive emotions and one cognitive namely life satisfaction. Negative emotions and life satisfaction are distinct measures and although positive emotions are related to life satisfaction (Diener et al, 1999). Therefore, subjective well-being can be defined in terms of high levels of positive emotion and life satisfaction and low levels of negative emotions.

When people describe what they most want out of life, happiness is almost always on the list. Scientists rely primarily on surveys to assess the happiness only for the individuals, but some important point should in to consideration that people's levels of subjective well-being are influenced by both internal factors, such as personality and outlook, and external factors, such as the society in which they live. In recent years, cultural differences in subjective well-being have been explored, with a realization that there are profound differences in what makes people happy (Diener & Suh, 2000).

A growing numbers of scholars have attempted to study the subjective well-being of women, because role of the women in the society and their contribution for the family and economy is very important and significant. A woman can be considered as a pre dominant character in any society. She plays an important role in the family by encouraging the husband, children and other family members. And also women provide a greater service to strengthen the household economic activities and make her full effort to enhance the welfare of the family members.

Main objective of this study is to measure the social determinants of subjective well-being for the selected group. Identifying the variation among social determinants and subjective well-being for the selected area is the supplementary objective.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on a sample of 187 married, employed women in the age group of 19-60, selected from 3 GN Divisions in Balangoda DS Division which represent urban (Balangoda Town), rural (Rassagala) and estate sector (Pettigala estate) through cluster sampling and convenience sampling methods, using a structured questionnaire. Weighted Principal Components Analysis (WPCA) is performed on variables for the indicators of Subjective Well-Being under three varieties as community contribution, family and working place. Under this method, the loading from the first component of PCA are used as weights for the respective indicators. Finally the constructed social determinants of subjective well-being are classified into three categories as happy moderately happy and unhappy using cluster analysis.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

PCA on Community Contribution

One component solution is chosen as component in community contribution dimension. This suggested that just less than 61 per cent of the variance in the five variables is represented in the first component.

TABLE 01: PCA ON COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION

	Component
	1
Spend time for social activities	0.998
Relationship with friends	0.003
Relationship with neighbors	-0.077
Organizing social activities	-0.029
Participation for recreational activities	0.603
% of total variance	60.9

Source: Sample Survey, 2015

PCA on family

PCA applied to the five family measures suggested one component solution with the component representing around 98 per cent of the variance in the five indicators.

TABLE 02: PCA ON FAMILY

	Component
	1
Contribution of family members	0.114
Attention of family members	0.164
Decision making within the family	-0.008
Time spend with family members	13.6258
Structure of the family	-0.038
% of total variance	97.7

Source: Sample Survey, 2015

PCA on working place

Working place categorized under one of the social relations which determine the satisfaction of the workers. Contribution to trade union, thrift societies, attaining and organizing some events and the nature of the job are identified as the variables under this section. PCA generated one component with Eigen values greater than 1.0. These components accounted for 98% of the variance in the dataset.

TABLE 03: PCA ON WORKING PLACE

| | Component |
	1
Working environment	-1.193
Working hours per week	-12.313
Social validity	0.397
Organizing events	0.15
Trade union participation	-0.35
Nature of the job	0.237
% of total variance	98.2

Source: Sample Survey, 2015

Final index

First principal component of the social dimensions of subjective well-being are the linear compound;

$$SWB = 0.107 \ Social - 185.009 \ family + 28.311 \ working$$

And results from the first principal component for SWB is recorded as their associated Eigen value is 1.489, accounting for 61%, of the variation in the original data. Social and working variables are weighted as positively on SWB.

K-means clustering classified 187 individuals as 65 low, 80 moderate and 42 high satisfied group. Cluster 2 is the largest grouping with just half the cases while the smallest group is cluster 3.

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND SIGNIFICANCE

Indicators for the community relationships are especially with association and the amount is given to the society by a group in many ways have high positive weights on happiness while having neighbors association makes less happiness among women in the selected area.

Family and the family members are important social determinants of subjective well-being since family is identified as the small cluster. When the decision are making with more special occasion, it makes more complex with the group.

Working hours per week, working environment and trade union participation lead to less satisfaction while social validity, organizing events and nature of the job lead to high satisfaction.

Greater the social working environment increase subjective well-being but lack of family assistance limits well-being.

IMPLICATIONS

Women should encourage to participate in community societies or the volunteer works and should conduct awareness programmers to give an idea about the importance of those societies. Concerning the working status of the women, working places or the organizations should give the priority for the women and should provide needed leaves for women based on their requirements. Further, should be offered suitable duties in line with their skills and education level.

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