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Research paper

The Link between Life Effectiveness, Well-Being and Life Satisfaction Among Communities of Sepanggar Island in Sabah

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the link between life effectiveness, well-being and life satisfaction among members of the Sepanggar Island community. In addition to that, the aim was also to gauge the relationship between these variables according to the different generations of the island's resident. A random sample of 124 people living at Sepanggar Island, Sabah (aged 65 to 97) responded to a questionnaire that included the following scales: The WHO-5 Well-being Index; The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS); and The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). Findings suggested that the community members of the Sepanggar Island who were able to initiate action in new situations reported higher well-being. The subscales of time management and social competence contributed significantly and positively on the community members' life satisfaction. The findings showed that life effectiveness of Generation X contributed higher variance in well-being as compared to the life effectiveness among Generation Y. The results also reported that the subscales of intellectual flexibility; task leadership and active initiative were the significant predictor of well-being among Generation X. Contrary, emotion control was the only significant predictors of well-being among Generation Y. The subscale of social competence was the only significant predictor of life satisfaction among Generation X of Sepanggar Island. But, for Generation Y, besides social competence, active initiative was also a significant predictor for their life satisfaction.

Keywords: *Life effectiveness; well-being; life satisfaction; Sepanggar Island.*

1. Introduction

In today's competitive world, most countries face challenges in regards to their social and economic crisis and this includes Malaysia as well. These socio-economic factor may affect many individuals' life satisfaction and well-being. [1] suggested that life satisfaction is highly congruent and is correlated with social and economic developments. Many factors can affect an individual's life satisfaction including geographical locations, for example, urban centers with high levels of infrastructure provide different types of facilities that affect a person's quality of life. Likewise, life on small islands is quite different in comparison to living on a mainland. According to [2] approximately 600 million people, which make up around ten percent of the world's population, live on islands, including archipelagos that make up one quarter of the world's sovereign states. While discussing the life on Island, we can assume that due to geographical isolation, the life on small Islands are different from mainland. [3] suggested that even though relatively vulnerable and isolated, small islands tend to do well as societies and communities living there have developed more socially adaptive and cooperative economies. However, there are other factors that we believe would also contribute to individuals' life satisfaction and well-being such as life effectiveness. Life effectiveness is viewed as the way an individual thinks, acts and responds in a variety of situations and it is closely associated with success in life [4]. The positive elements in life effectiveness such as leadership, time management, achievement motivation, self-confidence, active initiative, emotional control and intellectual flexibility contribute to life satisfaction and well-being. According to [5], by developing life skills such as time management, problem-solving skills, leadership and communication skills, certain positive elements such as improving self-image, gaining self-control and controlling and adjusting emotions can be acquired. All these positive elements are embedded in well-being and life satisfaction.

Each person has a different definition of life satisfaction as it is a subjective concept. Generally, it refers to an individual's cognitive assessment of his or her life [6]. Life satisfaction refers to a somewhat stable cognitive assessment of one's own life and it is an important component of subjective well-being and the scientific term for happiness [7]. In regards to the community who live on a small island, they might also have their own cognitive evaluation in perceiving their life effectiveness and its effects towards their well-being and life satisfaction. For instance, communities in Zlarin, Kaprije and Zirje islands perceived and evaluated their life satisfaction based on a distance between an island and the mainland [8]. In our study, we aim to investigate life satisfaction and well-being among the community members of Seppangar Island based on their life effectiveness. Exploring the factors that can affect the well-being of various communities can help us to understand their strengths and weaknesses so that their needs to overcome challenges can be addressed.

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2. Methodology

2.1. Participants

A total of 124 residents of Sepanggar Island of Sabah, Malaysia were randomly selected to participate in this study. There were 49 (39.5%) males and 75 (60.5%) females. Fifty (40.3%) of them still single and 74 (59.6%) were married. The respondents' age ranged from 10 to 76 years old with an average of 30.83 years old. Sepanggar Island is an island located off Sepanggar Bay, Sabah. Its eastern shore supports a small community with a population of approximately 300. The largest ethnic group in Sepanggar Island is Bajau.

2.2. Measures

The measurement used in this study consists of three parts: demographic information, The WHO-5 Well-being Index (WHO-5), The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) designed by [5] and The Life Effectiveness Questionnaire developed by [3]. Demographic information includes gender, age, marital status, religion, ethnicity and participants' academic level.

The WHO-5 Well-being Index is a short 5-item instrument developed to measure subjective quality of life based on positive mood (e.g., good spirits, relaxation), vitality (e.g., being active and waking up fresh and rested), and general interest (e.g., being interested in things). Responses for the 5-items were given on seven-point Likert scales from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree to indicate respondents' degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement of the items. Higher scores indicated better well-being.

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) has been widely used as a measure of the life satisfaction component of subjective well-being. The SWLS consists of five item designed to measure global cognitive judgments of satisfaction with life. Participants' responses to each item of SWLS were scored using a seven-point Likert style response scale. Higher score means higher satisfaction with life. [7] reported the coefficient alpha for the SWLS ranged from .79 to .89, which indicates that the scale has high internal consistency. The SWLS was also found to have good test-retest correlations of .84 and .80 over one month interval.

The Life Effectiveness Questionnaire (LEQ-H) is a self-report inventory for assessing eight life effectiveness skills, which are: time management, achievement motivation, social competence, emotional control, intellectual flexibility, task leadership, active initiative, and self-confidence. LEQ-H measures the extent to which a person's actions, behavior, and feelings are effective in managing and succeeding at life. It consists of 24-items to measure the eight scales (each scale containing 3 items). The response format of the items were scored using an eight-point scale from 1 = It isn't like me at all to 8 = It is very much like me.

3. Results and Findings

3.1. The Effect of Life Effectiveness of Sepanggar Island Communities on Their Well-Being

The Simultaneous Multiple regression analysis was conducted to test The Effect of Life Effectiveness of Sepanggar Island communities on their well-being. The multiple regression model with eight subscales of life effectiveness (time management, social competence, achievement motivation, intellectual flexibility, task leadership, emotion control, active initiative, and self-confidence) explained significantly explained 31.0% of the total variance in communities' well-being of a community ($F(8,123) = 6.45$, $p < .05$). The regression coefficient showed that only the subscale of active initiative was a significant predictor of communities' well-being ($\beta = .27$, $t = 2.63$, $p < .05$). The results suggested that the communities of Sepanggar Island who are able to initiate action in new situations are reported to have a higher well-being (refer to Table 1).

Table 1: Simultaneous Regression Analysis of Life Effectiveness of Sepanggar Island Communities on their well-being.

Independent Variable	B	*β*	*t*	Sig.
Time management	.14	.10	.91	.37
Social competence	.29	.21	1.74	.09
Achievement motivation	-.10	-.07	-.49	.62
Intellectual flexibility	.28	.19	1.64	.10
Task leadership	-.26	-.18	-1.52	.13
Emotion control	.19	.15	1.66	.10
Active initiative	.39	.27	2.63	.01
Self-confidence	.06	.04	.33	.74
Constant	9.28		3.17	.02
R^2	.31			
F	6.45			.001

The Finding showed only one of the components in life effectiveness (i.e. active initiative) contributed to the well-being of the community in Sepanggar Island. In this study, active initiative refers to the ability to act and initiate actions and thoughts in a variety of different settings [9]. We believe that people who live in small islands such as Sepanggar Island always initiate and create various activities such as fishing, taking care of their livestock farm, involvement in community work (e.g., cleaning the surrounding of the island, organized cultural and community events), and these activities contributed to their well-being. The same findings are also shown in other island community such as Omadal Island. For instance, people in Omadal Island grow various crops such as cassava, coconut and vegetables and take care of their livestock farms and farm animals [10]. [11] also, while discussing the lives of communities on Pacific Islands stated that people living there have developed highly resilient farming methods and cooperative economies. In a nutshell, people living on small islands need to initiate activities which may bring benefits for them and their community.

3.2. The Effect of Life Effectiveness of Sepanggar Island Communities on Their Life Satisfaction

The same multiple regression model of the eight life effectiveness subscales (time management, social competence, achievement motivation, intellectual flexibility, task leadership, emotion control, active initiative, and self-confidence) explained similar results on the life satisfaction of the Sepanggar Island community. The model also contributed 31.1% of the total variance in Sepanggar Island communities' life satisfaction ($F(8,123) = 6.49$, $p < .05$). The results indicated that the subscales of time management ($\beta = .38$, $t = 2.17$, $p < .05$) and social competence ($\beta = .63$, $t = 3.44$, $p < .05$) contributed significantly and positively on communities' life satisfaction, which suggested that the communities of Sepanggar Island who were able to plan and make optimum use of time and feel confident in social situations reported higher life satisfaction (refer to Table 2)

Table 2: Simultaneous Regression Analysis of Life Effectiveness of Sepanggar Island Communities on their life satisfaction.

Independent Variable	B	*β*	*t*	Sig.
Time management	.38	.24	2.17	.03
Social competence	.63	.41	3.44	.001
Achievement motivation	-.29	-.17	-1.25	.21
Intellectual flexibility	-.08	-.05	-.43	.67
Task leadership	-.02	-.02	-.13	.90
Emotion control	.14	.10	1.11	.27
Active initiative	.23	.14	1.41	.16
Self-confidence	.02	.01	.09	.93
Constant	7.15			
R^2	.31			
F	6.49			

In this study we found out that out of eight life skills, time management (managing time wisely) and social competence (success-

ful in social situations & communicate well with people) are the significant predictors of community of Sepanggar Island life satisfaction. Time management is considered as an essential skill for personal effectiveness, while social competence is defined as the extent to which one feels confident in social situations [12]. Social competence, which is embedded in self-concept, also contributed to life satisfaction. This, as stated by [13], showed that self-concepts such as self-esteem contributes to life satisfaction. In addition, a higher level of life satisfaction is associated with lower violence, fewer suicide attempts, fewer sexual risk-taking behaviors and diminished substance abuse among adolescents [14]. Enhancing life satisfaction during adolescence is a cornerstone for promoting healthy development. Peer support and self-esteem play the most crucial roles in Asian American adolescents' life satisfaction [15]. Other factors that might also contribute to social competence among the community in Sepanggar Island are their sense and feeling of belonging and maintaining good relationships with their neighbors.

[16] investigated life satisfaction and preference of future practice locations of physicians in rural and remote islands in Japan. They found out that "acceptance by community" as well as "relationship with people in the community" were found to be significant factors influencing the choice of the Oki islands as a future practice location. Based on our observation during this study, we also found out that the community in Sepanggar Island know each other very well and possessed a strong sense of community belongingness.

3.2. The Moderating Effect of Difference Generations of Communities in the Relationship between Life Effectiveness and Well-Being.

The moderating effect of difference generations of communities in the relationship between life effectiveness and well-being were tested by comparing the regression results among two generation (Generation X and Generation Y) of the communities. Generation X were defined as those born between 1964 and 1980 (or age range between 53 years old and 37 years old). While, the definition for Generation Y are those born after year 1980 (or below 37 years old).). In Table 3, the analysis conducted on Generation X indicated that the whole model of life effectiveness contributed significantly contributed to 51% of the total variance in Generation X's well-being ($F(8, 80) = 9.42$, $p < .05$), while the analysis conducted on Generation Y showed that the model only contributed 31% (not significant) of the total variance in their well-being ($F(8, 42) = 1.90$, $p > .05$). The results suggested that different generations may moderate the relationship between the communities' life effectiveness and their well-being. The findings showed that life effectiveness of Generation X contributed a higher variance in well-being as compared to life effectiveness among Generation Y (refer to Table 3).

Besides that, the results also reported that three out of the eight subscales of life effectiveness, intellectual flexibility ($\beta = .42$, $t = 3.44$, $p < .05$); task leadership ($\beta = -.29$, $t = -2.41$, $p < .05$) and active initiative ($\beta = .32$, $t = 2.90$, $p < .05$) were significant predictors of well-being among Generation X (refer Table 3). Contrary, emotion control ($\beta = .38$, $t = 2.13$, $p < .05$) was the only significant predictor of well-being among Generation Y. These results supported the moderating effect of different generations in the relationship between life effectiveness and well-being. These findings suggested that the Generation X of Sepanggar Island has the ability to adapt and accommodate the views of others (intellectual flexibility) and the ability to act and initiate actions and thoughts in a variety of different settings (active initiative), but is able to lead others effectively for task completion or goal achievement (task leadership) reported better well-being. Whereas, for Generation Y who have the ability to retain or dominate his or her reactions provoked by pleasant or unpleasant emotions reported higher well-being.

Table 3: Regression Analysis of the Moderating Effect of Different Generation in the Relationship between life effectiveness and Well-being.

Independent Variable	X Generation				Y Generation			
	B	*β*	*t*	Sig.	B	*β*	*t*	Sig
Time management	.08	.06	.52	.60	.40	.24	1.02	.32
Social competence	.28	.20	1.67	.10	.04	.03	.10	.92
Achievement motivation	.31	.19	1.40	.17	-.67	-.48	-1.13	.26
Intellectual flexibility	.58	.42	3.44	.01	-.53	-.33	-1.24	.22
Task leadership	-.39	-.29	-2.41	.02	.67	.44	1.44	.16
Emotion control	.07	.05	.52	.60	.45	.38	2.13	.04
Active initiative	.44	.32	2.90	.01	.36	.21	1.17	.25
Self-confidence	-.10	-.07	-.48	.63	-.02	-.01	-.06	.95
Constant	4.21				15.0			
R^2	.51				.31			
F	9.42				1.90 (n.s)			

3.3. The Moderating Effect of Difference Generations of Communities in the Relationship between Life Effectiveness and Life Satisfaction

The moderating effect of difference generations of communities in the relationship between life effectiveness and life satisfaction were also tested by comparing the regression results among two generation (Generation X and Generation Y) of Sepanggar Island. The results showed the model of life effectiveness significantly contributed 30% of the total variance in Generation X's life satisfaction ($F(8, 80) = 3.86$, $p < .05$) but significantly contributed 50% of the total variance in Generation Y's life satisfaction ($F(8, 42) = 4.27$, $p < .05$). The results also suggested that the different generations may moderate the relationship between the communities' life effectiveness and life satisfaction. The findings showed that the life effectiveness of Generation X contributed to a higher variance in well-being but it contributed a higher variance in life satisfaction among Generation Y (refer to Table 4).

Table 4: Regression Analysis of the Moderating Effect of Different Generation in the Relationship between life effectiveness and Life Satisfaction

Independent Variable	X Generation				Y Generation			
	B	*β*	*t*	Sig	B	*β*	*t*	Sig
Time management	.38	.26	1.88	.06	.46	.24	1.19	.24
Social competence	.42	.29	1.99	.05	1.14	.67	2.79	.01
Achievement motivation	-.16	-.09	-.56	.58	-.68	-.41	-1.14	.26
Intellectual flexibility	.16	.11	.74	.46	-.80	-.42	-1.86	.07
Task leadership	-.10	-.07	-.46	.65	.47	.26	1.00	.33
Emotion control	.20	.13	1.19	.24	-.06	-.04	-.27	.79
Active initiative	.09	.06	.48	.63	.64	.33	2.12	.04
Self-confidence	.02	.01	.06	.95	.02	.01	.06	.95

Constant	7.71				1.31			
R^2	.30				.50			
F	3.86 *				4.27 *			

Refer to Table 4, the analysis on the effect of each subscale of life effectiveness towards life satisfaction showed the subscale of social competence was the only significant predictor ($\beta = .29$, $t = 1.99$, $p < .05$) of life satisfaction among Generation X of Sepanggar Island. But, for Generation Y besides social competence ($\beta = .67$, $t = 2.79$, $p < .05$), active initiative ($\beta = .33$, $t = 2.12$, $p < .05$) was also a significant predictor of their life satisfaction. These results also supported the moderating effect of different generations in the relationship between life effectiveness and well-being among communities of Sepanggar Island.

Our study revealed that the life effectiveness of Generation X contributed higher variance in well-being as compared to the life effectiveness among Generation Y. We believed that life effectiveness contributed more to Generation X well-being compared to Generation Y might be due to the fact that the older generations have more experience in applying their life effectiveness skills than the younger ones. In addition, older people tend to report higher level of well-being compared to younger people. Based on the Australian Psychological Society Stress and well-being in Australia's survey 2015 [17], younger people (18-25) have consistently reported lower levels of well-being than older Australians. This might explain the findings of our study. [18] however, stated that general health and well-being diminish with decreasing the ages. These changes lead to decreasing life satisfaction and the meaning of life among elderly individuals.

Other possible reasons might be influenced by the concept of well-being between the two generations. We assume that the two generations might possess different opinions on the concept of life effectiveness and well-being. Several studies in Asian countries found that meaning of life is related to culturally specific factors [19]. Individual's concepts of the meaning of life tent to include both culturally specific and universal indicators [20].

Apart from that, the differences in life satisfaction and wellbeing of Generation X and Generation Y could be due to their different perceptions about the 'sense of community' while living on the small island. The concept of the sense of community can be defined as the individual's perception of the immediate environment, network of friends, participation in neighbourhood activities, and social relationships with others in the environment. Elderly people seem to give more importance towards the overall sense of community as compared to the younger generation [21]. Therefore, it could be assumed that a stronger sense of community on the small island among the older generation contributed towards their life satisfaction and wellbeing.

3. Conclusion

In nowadays societies, knowledge of the factors affecting life satisfaction of the people whether young or elderly is highly beneficial. Thus, in the future, it might be interesting to examine other factors that might also contribute to the life satisfaction and well-being of communities in small islands. We believe that other factors such as their sense of belonging or involvement in the community work might also contribute to their life satisfaction and well-being. So to enhance life satisfaction and wellbeing of people from different generation, further exploring these factors can help to develop our knowledge about how to capitalize on the strengths of these communities living on small islands.

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