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Sociological Study of Well-being: Definition of Good Quality of Life and its Dimensions according to the Attitude of Rural People of Shabestar

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Abstract: *Lack of the viability and vitality and totally well- being in life and low-level of the rural community wellbeing, could have decreased the belonging to the community and caused less participation. It also would lead to non- qualitative life and satisfaction. On the other hand, low level of the wellbeing and lack of the attractive situation put the sustainability and stability of the rural in danger. Therefore this study aimed to recognize the definition of the well-being and the life with high quality in rural regions of Shabestar. So, data of this study were gathered by qualitative method and interview and FGD techniques. The result has proved that life with high quality is the reflex of the effect of the situation and factors in three spheres which are individual, family and community. These factors in material and economic dimension include high profit/ having enough, financial independency and the living opportunities and earning money in rural region. In social dimension, social viabilities of living in community, social-demographical vitality, satisfaction of life, happiness and security are included. In health and environmental dimension, factors such as physical and mental health, air condition, peace of life and silence is considered.*

Keywords: *Well-being, good life, high quality of life.*

Introduction

The indicators of development have changed from just income, gross national production (GNP)…to social and mental factors through time. New dimensions such as social security, quality aspects of people's life, satisfaction and …, were considered. "The objective of development is not to produce more "stuff", more goods and services, but rather to increase the capabilities of people to lead full, productive, satisfying lives" (Griffin and McKinley, 1998: 22). Stiglitz (2003) declared that the new development paradigm is directed to social development which increases the opportunity of choice and human freedom, sanity and life expectancy, the same as decreasing the poverty, environmental imperishable (Ghaffari and Omidi, 2009: 98-99).

Reviewing the literature of the subjective well- being and happiness showed that there is no useful related scientific and experimental researches with sociological perspective (Moosavi Befrooee, 2008). There is none academic and practical researches in rural sociological area in Iran. It should be considered that, the well-being of the rural concept is the important key to developmental issues according to the demands of the rural people the same as for rural sustainability and stability. Decision-makers can improve the acts and policies which lead to improvement, viability and sustainability of the regions through the understanding of the forces which exist and act among rural communities and governments (Courvisanos, 2005). Lack of the viability and vitality and totally well- being in life and low-level of the rural social wellbeing, could have decreased the belonging to the community and caused less participation. It also would lead to non- qualitative life and satisfaction (Rostamalizadeh et al, 2013). Rural sustainability is related to rural well- being closely. Nowadays, most of the rural regions in Iran, face unsustainability which leads to rural-abandon, irregular migration, rural desolate, lack of eager to live at rural places and so on. These situations reveal the importance of surveying well-being and good quality of life

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(Rostamalizadeh et al, 2013). MacKendrick and Parkins (2004), declared that the measurement of the well-being is the same as "barometer of sustainability". Also it is quantity- perspective to measure the human and eco-system well- being (Mackendrick and Parkins, 2004: 3). Therefore, we decided to study well- being according to the view of rural people. To achieve this goal and comprehension and understanding the ideas of rural people about good life and its dimensions, rural words and concepts were used.

Tiwari believed that different studies showed that values, environment and cultures have great role on the definition of "well-being" term (Tiwari, 2009: 131). Also Coulthard and colleagues (2011), proved that collection of needs, freedom and living condition which lead to well- being differs from geographical, social and cultural environments to the others. It is concluded that well-being of human is the result of social, economic and environmental- local circumstances that person live theme (Coulthard et al, 2011: 457). So, we started studying this term according to the people of Shabestar, because of "the vast meaning of "well-being" and freedom of people in describing it" (Narayan et al, 2011: 69).

Well-being Definition

Well-being concept emerged and extended from philosophy-traditional texts, especially its related meaning "how to live" and "how to achieve happiness and satisfaction" (Hayborn, 2008, quoted from La Placa et al, 2013). Sociologist were interested in well-being according to history, especially they were curious about mental dimension of well-being that people tried to reinvestigate. Vast social forces, like modernization, well- fare government and organizations that have great effect on this potential measurement factor (Veenhoven, 2008). Finally, the concept was created and extended through policy-discourse (La placa et al, 2013). Nowadays, the term is considered as a subject in comparative sociology and social-index researches (Veenhoven, 2008).

New perspectives about social well-being investigation and demographic statistic are rooted during Europe social reformation and 1830s in USA. Primary efforts to investigate well-being, consider sanity and healthiness aspect of it, but through the time economic, social and environmental indexes were added to the term. Eventually, recent evolution in research and using social index is accompanied with new- emerged environmental indexes because of continuous dissatisfaction or economic indexes and developing international discussion about the situation of world environment (like Stokholm conference about environment 1972 and the conference in Rio, 1992). Also considering the reasons of the event which includes human activities involved social, economic and environmental dimensions (Murphy, 2010: 5). Investigation the community well-being is almost a new subject which emerged during 1980s and 1990s. Its investigation reflects: 1. Release the supervising and controlling the developing policies to local people. 2. The need to investigate achievements of agenda 21[1]. 3. Emphasizing on the better function and answering indexes (like measuring the expenses of the social policies) (Ibid: 6-7). These changes among local community development lead to consideration social and community indicators to measure of well-being term.

"Crying out for change: the voice of the poor" book is the departure point. This book consists of 12 chapters. The second one is about "well- being and ill- being, the good and bad life". In this study, well- being and its dimension has been defined according to the participants as: In the all countries and continent, among all kind of people, a good quality of life: includes "material well-being" and "bodily well-being", "social well-being" and "freedom of choice and action".

Material well-being includes "having enough", Healthy well-being includes "being strong", social well-being includes "good relation and providing shelter for children, high self-esteem among family and local community. Security is defined with social safety and healthy. Physical security, hope, choice and action freedom. Also, it is noted that well-being and states of mind and being existing. Well-being consists of mental and psychological dimensions, which is balanced, happy and calm mental status. Poverty is a kind of mental-illness (Narayan et al, 2011: 68). So, it could be concluded that well-being is a life with good quality of life or a good quality of life which consists of material well-being, bodily and social healthiness, security, freedom of choice and action that accompanied by happiness, mental calmness and satisfaction. According to the above, well-being is a condition which human experienced it, but it is based on the situation to achieve well-being. These situations are such as: full field needs and provided valuable freedom and experienced good quality of life. So these terms are important: the needs of human, freedom or independence, the quality of life. If one of these three hasn't been achieved, the

[1] . http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/agenda21/

well-being of individuals would decrease (Coulthard et al, 2011: 27). To experience good quality of life, standards and living conditions should change and get better. Finally, to describe a healthy and good life, experiences such as living standards, a good quality of life, well- being, satisfaction and…are used (Kusel, 1996: 364). It means that well-being includes changes in living standards, well fare and satisfaction of life, changes in personal and local situations that lead to personal and rural well-being. These changes in quality such as quality of local-community services, quality of governmental services, quality of neighborhood, local societal dependency/ belonging to community and quality of jobs (Sundblade, 2008: 8), To develop levels of living standards until to enhance sense of welfare and satisfaction of life. Murphy believed that there isn't unified definition of well-being term, but referred that well-being is beyond the lack of illness, it is full fling elements of living satisfaction, which should not be defined only by economic growth. Well-being affected through individual conceptualize (subjective well-being) and material situations (objective well-being) which could be measured for societies and countries (Murphy, 2010: 4). So, definition of well-being is : the existence of good quality of life that includes: standards of good living, high levels of sanity and healthiness, sustainable environment, vital and active communities, educated people, balanced use of time, high civic participation, access to the art to involve, dynamic entertainment and culture (Murphy, 2010: 4). It should be noted that both indivdual and community aspect should be considered to define well-being term.

Sociological Perspective on Well-being

The perspective is society based one, despite the psychological perspective which consider personal experiences. It includes individual, social and ecological dimensions as Wilkinson said (Wilkinson, 1991). According to the socialogical perspective, well-being is full filing the needs of human (Coulthard et al, 2011; Copestake, 2008). At the second step includes valuable freedom such as freedom of choosing the type of life (Coulthard et al, 2011). Therefore, a response to the needs and model/ type of living is related to social situations. The perspective present that society should prepare personal needs and demands and provide freedom as Sen declared. "The things which people achieved positively is affected by economic opportunities, political freedom, social powers, suitable sanity provide and health care, primary education, encourage and training of innovation. These kinds of opportunities are affected by the kind of freedom which develop the situation for free participation of people during social election and free decision making (Sen, 2003). The freedom of political, economic facilities and opportunities, social opportunities, transparency warranty, supportive system (Sen, 2003).

Different cultures and societies, have different definition of needs, so definition of the well-being differs too, because environment, values and culture affect it (Tiwari, 2009; Narayan et al, 2011). Collection of needs, freedom and living condition which lead to well- being differs from geographical, social and cultural environments to the others. It is concluded that well-being of human is the result of social, economic and environmental- local circumstances that person live theme. Vinhoven, (2008), believed that well-being of people especially the subjective one includes important information about the quality of the social system which people live. If people usually feel dissatisfaction, the social system is apparently inappropriate for living. Vinhoven declared that one of the goals of sociology is to participate and create the society. Studying subjective well- being helps to make more livable society (Veenhoven, 2004). It means that sociological perspective enters policy sphere.

He also, mentioned that subjective well-being could possibly influence the function of the social systems such as labor organization and governmental networks. Therefore, individual subjective well-being is the result of social structures and also affects their functions. For example, subjective well-being is one of the effective factors on social behavior. It shows that most of the time, happy and vital people are better citizens. They have more useful political information, they take part at elections, involve more in social activities, and their attitude is less radical (Veenhoven, 2008). Sociological perspective shows that features and situations of the society and local regions have great and important role on the forming of well-being. Also, on the other hand, the definition of well-being differs from one society to the other, it means that well-being is a social-structured concept. It is defined with human action through the societal features. So, three spheres are involved sociological perspective about well-being term: 1.determinative factors and developing ones of well-being, 2. Effects and results of well-being, 3. Investigation and measurement of well-being and inequality in that. Well-being is societal subject, so its meaning is related to the society people live. It means that society provides chances to fulfill need for people. It also makes quality of life standards better. It should be considered that definition of well-being is varied from one culture to the other.

Defined ESRC[1] Perspective on Well-being

The group defines the term as a situation to spend time with others, to achieve needs, to accomplish personal goals, and enjoy the quality of life. Definition includes three dimension to investigate the results of well-being of human (Britton and Coulthard, 2013).

1. Material dimension emphasizes on the sources which people own and how much they were achieved.
2. Relational dimension investigates how much social relations could enable human to have meaningful action to reach well-being.
3. Cognitive dimension investigates the level of satisfaction which people feel from well-being. The definition combine mental and objective situation.

Material well-being includes the things people own: such as food, income, property, house, job, access to the services and natural sources, and the quality of environment. Relational well-being includes how they connect to each other to provide these things. It includes supportive and friendly relationships, relation with government, social institutes, regulars and laws. It helps to diagnose how to access to the sources, forms of group actions, inequality and differences, security, cultural and political identity. The mental well-being includes the perception of human, the way how feel about the quality of their life, how they express it and how respect values and beliefs. White thinks that mental well -being is the top of the pyramid, because 2 others derived from beliefs. At last, all dimension are connected to each other, so all of them should be considered, if a good investigation is needed (Britton and Coulthard, 2013: 29).

McNought Definitional Framework (2011)

After searching a lot, the definition well-being concept includes objective and subjective elements. If both haven't considered, logical investigation couldn't take place (La Placa et al, 2013: 17-8). Well-being is defined as a vast spectrum of subjects that are beyond the individual subjectivities. The theory links "well-being" to the family, local community, society, economic, political, geographical and environmental factors. Also, people existence is important, and all aspects of the term is considered. These aspects are personal (individual), family, community and societal well-being (La Placa et al, 2013:118). Well-being is considered as a dynamic- constructed concept which is built through the interaction between situations, conditions, activities and sociological sources such as relation between people among family and significant others, by actors ((La Placa et al, 2013).

Research Method

The qualitative method was used in this study. Interview and focus group discussion techniques were chosen to gather data. Qualitative analysis was picked. At rural society, sampling is easy and follow snow- balling method. Goal-based sampling is usually used (Hajbagheri, 2007: 34). We reached theoretical saturation after 24 deep interviews and 3 FGD consist of 41 participants, such as local aware people, Elites and related people to the case study, like rural women, youth, middle aged ones, adults, high educated ones, local ones and wise people were selected to study the subject deeply. Most of data were gathered from two rural region: Benis and Zinab. Considering the method, field study, interviewing and analyzing were done permanently and simultaneously. After completing all interviews and making lists of raw data, basic elements such as terms, themes, and concepts. After extracting them, they were coded, "the open codes". The second stage was the analysis of the sphere. Terms and concepts were shown in high levels. They were made through the same analysis process. They were built through the comparison to recognize similarities and differences (Strauss and Corbin, 2012: 148). The model is like the below:

Raw material → pieces of data → concepts → category → themes (spheres)

"Open codes" intended to put data and phenomena to the concept frame (Flick, 2008: 330). In this method after interview, data were investigated precisely and analyzed line by line, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph. After interview and writing them, extracted concepts from lines, texts, paragraphs were written in front of them. Because the most important goal is to piece and understand the text, combine the elements and codify category and organize them according to the time line (Flick, 2008: 333). To name the concepts, open codes,

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social unstructured terms were used. But, we tried to use more open codes which were gathered through participants. During the building the terms, themes were created. Extracted concepts from interviews were connected to each other and those themes were built.

Research Findings

"What is your definition of a good quality of life, what are the things which are used to have a good life"? To understand the "well-being" term among the field, these questions were asked. People participated individually or trough 2-4 member groups in this study. So, different aged groups, women and men took parts.to achieve the goal of the study , line by line, sentence by sentence and paragraph by paragraph analysis with open codes were used to make basic concepts. The results are shown in the below table:

	Alternative category	Basic category	Spheres	Determinative levels
1	Sufficient access	Material sufficient/ Having enough	Economic	individual
2	Routine life/ability to earn of living affaires			
3	Money, property			
4	Good income			
5	Well- fare existence			
6	Comfort at home			
7	Job, employment, income sources	Economic dependency	Economic	individual
8	Life-spending opportunities in community	Living opportunities and earning money in rural community	Economic	Local society
9	Job, income and business facilities in community			
10	Job and employment facilities for youth in community			
11	Life comfort in rural space	Living environmental viabilities/ rural community viabilities	Social, bodily/physical and environmental	Local community
12	House owning opportunities for youth			
13	Availability to services and facilities in rural community			
14	Easy access in life space/community			
15	Weather and calmness in community			
16	inhabitance opportunities in community			
17	Social interaction /formal and informal ones	Societal living vitality/ community vitality	social	Local society
18	Intimate relation in community			
19	Healthiness of rural environment			
20	Societal supports			
21	Security in village	Existence of security	social	Personal and family
22	Financial and insurance security in aging			
23	Security of living space			
24	Financial support of children			
25	Satisfaction of personal and family living situation	Satisfaction of personal and family life	social	Personal and family
26	Good parents, wife, husband and children			
27	Close family relationship			
28	No worries of being separated (children)			
29	Happiness and vitality	happiness	social	personal
30	Physical healthiness	healthiness	healthiness	personal
30	mental comfort			

These categories were established on the axial terms which are determined factors to reach good quality of life at rural areas.

1. The most sufficient material accessibility/ having enough
2. Economic dependence
3. Making a living rural parts/ Living opportunities and earning money in rural community
4. Social and environmental viabilities of living/ rural community viabilities
5. Rural social- demographical vitality

6. Personal and family satisfaction of life
7. Existence of security
8. Happiness
9. Healthiness

Economic, social and environmental categories appear. The levels of a good quality of life are derived to three dimensions: personal (individual), family and community level.

Life Spheres with Good Quality

"Good quality of life among the case study, was defined as a situation that emerged through individual (personal), family and societal environment. These factors related to the term of well-being which provide good quality of life for the target people.

- Individual (personal) sphere contains appropriate jobs, income, money, property, owning of house, calmness, happiness, self-esteem, security for the current and the future life. These elements are the sub-categories of personal-life satisfaction, efficient material sources, economic developing, security, mental and physical happiness and vitality.
- Family sphere includes kind of love and intimate relation among family, having good parents and children, providing living equipment, happy family, societal appropriate relation, environmental security, abundance of jobs, natural and environmental rural features, societal and demographic rural vitality, and environmental capability.
- The other is "public or societal environmental sphere" which includes the opportunities of providing facilities, access to the service and facilities, intimate interaction among people, suitable and appropriate interaction among the society, environmental security, existence of job opportunities, having jobs, local and natural features of the rural regions, rural societal vitality, viability of the rural and so on.

These spheres lead to well-being of life. Thence individual and family levels are in one line and follow each other, and they are affected by personal act, therefore by considering the combination of these levels, it could be concluded that a good quality of life implicates through two spheres: "individual/ private sphere" and "related spheres to the social living environment/ public sphere". Private sphere includes personal and relative living kind, emotional and private relation, and economic elements such as jobs, income, investment, property and human existence.

Feature of the public one or local- societal levels are important to form a high quality of life, because in public-local areas communication is face to face. Their judgments of the life is under the great effect of each other's behavior, attitude, ideology and their satisfaction of life. Healthy and intimate relation, empathy, interplay support, societal group- work participants, rural societal vitality accompanied by rural economic growth, services, easy access and better living environment affect the definition of well-being for the rural population. Therefore, to define the good quality of life, the role of living situation and environment should be considered precisely. So, definition of well-being is related to the social-living sphere specially the rural ones. Rural regions cause intimate and deep emotional feeling on rural people. Alleys, squares are considered as public places where they gather and interact. It could be concluded that social interaction, social vitality and demographical aspect are parts of their well-being. Also they have close connection with nature. Nature is important for them because it is the origin of their supplies. They can make living and cultivate the lands and ranch. Rural environment improve the quality of life and well-being through appropriate weather, lands and calmness. So people can not define the well-being and good quality of life without considering the societal situation provided for them. Here are some definition of well-being according rural-one's attitude:

- "Having money, good life and a place for living".
- "Good quality of life is a kind of living in which rural regions are prosperous, earning money is easy. If a one can't make a living there, he would abandon the place".
- "Good quality of life is a kind of life that all inhabitants love each other, they do not lie, and they do not tease each other. They treat each other well. As a result they experience a good quality of life.

Dimension of a Good Quality of Life

The first aspect of a good quality of life is material one which includes sufficient accessibility, economic dependency, providing living opportunities at rural places, income, job, money and properties. They have basic importance, but based on the need the people have.

"A person should have some money to live, he should have the needed money. He should have the things he needs at home. If he can't earn money, he would feel embarrassed at home". So, one of the important aspect of a good quality of life is economic and material one. But it should be considered that the amount of need is important to investigate this aspect. Social well-being includes calmness, happiness, appropriate relation among family and societal life, suitable house and the existence of security. "If a one has a good family, a good house, intimate family, healthy children, he has successful life". Happiness and satisfaction of life is the other part of social well-being. Security includes environmental, living security, physical elderly ones.

"Life is good when there aren't any worries about job, money, house and the things like that".
"No worries to improve the life including all mental, social and material aspects".
"If a person feels comfort and is calm, his life is good, Mental and physical calmness are the most important ones".
The third aspect is healthiness. Body healthiness is so important for the rural people because they have to be strong to work.
"If a person is strong, his life is good and he is happy".
It is concluded that mental and psychological well-being includes happiness, satisfaction of life, self-esteem and so on. At rural places, personal and social living sphere play great role on well-being.

Definition of Good Quality of Life

To define this concept, it should be said that, good life is a situation which the life is good qualitative and appropriate in all dimension, such as economic, social, healthy and mental in all levels. The good life is a life that people have income and money based on their need, appropriate jobs, intimate family, healthiness and good societal situation. So the complete definition of good quality of life includes opportunities of job, income, property, living with family and children, intimate relation, healthy family, good services, social interaction. The different aspect of this definition from the others is paying more attention to family, social life and living with children". At rural regions of Shabestar, migration, especially migration of youth cause family separation. So this phenomena make parents feel sorrow and worried. It is observed most of the old families consider their children as their supportive power. "I have 2 children who they live in other places. One of them has left to Tehran, the other to Tabriz to study. I cannot afford them. They need money. They should get married and it's better to say they should be married, although I have faith in them but they must get married based on our religion".

Conclusion

Nowadays, sustainability of rural areas and keeping rural people is linked to well-being. Because to keep rural population to live at rural parts, condition of living should get better. Therefore, development programmers should be aware of their needs and demands. It shows that they need more local policies which can afford their needs. So, understanding the meaning of a good quality of life can help to know what they need and want. To develop the quality of their life, they should focus on these spheres. Findings proved that good quality of life is the reflex of environmental effect and three factors at three levels, personal (individual), family and local society. Factors are efficient accessibility, economic and demographic living opportunities. Considering social sphere which includes factors such as capability of the suitable- living environment, local societal vitality, satisfaction of life, happiness, security, healthiness. Environmental sphere includes mental and physical healthiness, weather, calmness situations and inhabitance equipment. If people feel happiness at local kind of living society and experience good quality of life, they would be eager to participate and improve participation. These relation can affect finding jobs and having income, in the other hand. These process lead to personal and social vitality.

Finally, it is concluded that there is a vivid definition of well-being: "having access to their needs more". These findings confirm the results of the research which has been done by Narayan and colleagues. They define well-being as "a little more than need" based on the poor's attitude. Finally, this study proved that a good quality of life among rural environment lead to good quality of rural regions. Good quality of rural places provide good quality of life. So, we should consider the needs and demands of rural population in Iran, to have good quality of life at rural places and its sustainability. Also their potentiality and capabilities should be considered. People are the core of the developing rural well-being. They would be happy if they could provide their needs and if they have a little more. In this condition, they would stay at their hometowns, and developing investment and vitality would come after.

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