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Do Household Income Related to Social Well-being among Smallholder Glutinous Rice Famers in Langkawi, Malaysia?

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore the impact of income on social wellbeing among farmers in Langkawi, Kedah, engaged in government-supported smart farming practices for glutinous rice cultivation. Conducted across seven villages, the study involved 118 respondents selected via a census approach. Using a survey tool adapted from Radzyk (2014), various dimensions of social wellbeing were assessed, including social connections, neighborhood cohesion, material deprivation, and social isolation. Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis were employed to analyze the data. The results indicate a strong positive correlation (Pearson coefficient of 0.766, significant at $p < 0.01$) between household income and social wellbeing, suggesting that higher income levels are associated with increased satisfaction, fulfillment, and positive social interactions. Despite income being a significant predictor, the findings highlight the complex, multifaceted nature of social wellbeing, implying the importance of other contributing factors beyond income alone.

Keywords: Household Income, Smallholder Farmers, Social Well-Being, Family Economic, Food security

Introduction

Malaysia has made significant strides in reducing poverty incidence, yet pockets of poverty persist, particularly in rural areas (Aspiranti et al., 2023). Several factors contribute to this, including a lack of infrastructure, limited access to essential services, and ineffective distribution of aid (Lugada et al., 2022). In rural regions, inadequate infrastructure such as roads and utilities hampers economic development and access to crucial services like

healthcare and education (Safitri, 2018). Moreover, remote locations face challenges in accessing markets and opportunities due to geographical barriers, further exacerbating poverty (Tedong et al., 2022). Additionally, the erratic income generated from agricultural activities, coupled with risks like decreased production, droughts, and pest attacks, pose further challenges to poverty alleviation efforts in these areas. Addressing these underlying issues is crucial to effectively combatting rural poverty in Malaysia (Kabir et al., 2019).

Langkawi, situated within the Kedah State, represents one of its regions. Presently, Kedah exhibits a higher poverty rate (8.8%) compared to the national average poverty rate in Malaysia (5.6%) (Department Of Statistics Malaysia, 2020; Survei et al., 2019). In Malaysia, the classification of household income into three groups - B40, M40, and T20 - serves as a vital tool for assessing socioeconomic disparities and formulating targeted policies. The B40 category represents the bottom 40% of income earners, often comprising lower-income households facing financial challenges. These households typically struggle to meet basic needs such as food, shelter, and healthcare (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020b). The M40 group encompasses the middle 40% of income earners, representing a middle-income bracket that may have more financial stability but still faces various economic pressures. They often have access to basic amenities but may encounter difficulties in achieving long-term financial security or upward mobility (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020b). Finally, the T20 category includes the top 20% of income earners, consisting of affluent households with higher levels of disposable income and access to luxury goods and services (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020b). Despite being a region with significant agricultural activity, many farmers in Kedah find themselves situated within the B40 income group, facing economic challenges with an average income typically ranging between RM2000 to RM4000, or even less. This income level places them among the lower-income segment of society, where meeting basic needs such as food, housing, and healthcare can be particularly challenging. Factors such as fluctuating crop prices, unpredictable weather conditions, and limited access to resources and markets contribute to the financial constraints faced by these farmers (R. Akhtar et al., 2019)

Despite facing various challenges, smallholder farmers stand out in their social dynamics due to the strong bonds and solidarity they exhibit within their communities. This sense of togetherness fosters mutual support, cooperation, and collective action among farmers, enabling them to navigate difficulties more effectively (Heenan, 2010). The extended working hours undertaken by farmers may exert influence on farmers mental wellbeing (Vayro et al., 2020). As per the World Health Organization (WHO), health is described as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." This definition emphasizes the inseparability of health from social wellbeing, indicating that they are interconnected facets of overall wellbeing. In certain contexts, social wellbeing is considered a component of Quality of Life, further highlighting its integral role in assessing individuals' overall wellness (Yusoff et al., 2021; World of Health Organization, 2021). Based on evidence gathered from prior studies, it has been documented that a portion of smallholder farmers experience diminished quality of life and wellbeing (Heo et al., 2020; TerAvest et al., 2019)

Social wellbeing is a fundamental component of physical and mental health, exerting a substantial influence on societal functionality (Zhang & Ma, 2020). Rashid and Seligman's

(2018) findings reveal a concerning reality where half of the global population experiences a notable decline in social wellbeing, particularly evident during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, exacerbated by factors like stringent isolation measures and limited social and financial mobility. This underscores the significance of addressing not only physical health but also social and economic dimensions of wellbeing. To effectively tackle this issue, policymakers must adopt a comprehensive approach that considers household income. By understanding the interconnectedness of these challenges, targeted interventions can be devised, such as initiatives to address income inequality, improve access to healthcare and education, and strengthen social support systems (Whitman et al., 2022). Furthermore, recognizing the impact of socioeconomic factors on household income can inform policies aimed at ensuring poverty for vulnerable populations, including measures like food assistance programs and efforts to bolster local systems (Bilan et al., 2020). According to (Mosley-Johnson et al., 2019) the deficiencies in the economic it can result in the risk of social well-being and lead to health risks.

Literature Review

Smallholder Farmers

Smallholder farming has been a longstanding practice in Malaysia, dating back to the colonial era under British rule (Ratnasingam et al., 2021). Despite this historical presence, the advancement of smallholder farmers in areas like education and marketing has not kept pace, largely due to systemic challenges within the agricultural sector itself (Giller et al., 2021). While the government has introduced various programs aimed at supporting smallholder farmers, such as FAMA's contract farming initiative, many farmers still grapple with economic vulnerability (Norazman et al., 2023). This vulnerability stems from factors like high initial investment costs, difficulties in maintaining their fields, and bureaucratic hurdles that impede their progress (Hossain et al., 2022; Mgbenka et al., 2015; Nazuri et al., 2018; Tilai et al., 2022). Despite these challenges, smallholder farmers continue to cultivate a diverse range of agricultural products, including vegetables, fruits, and various animal products.

The agricultural sector remains a significant contributor to Malaysia's GDP (Gaur & Verma, 2023), yet the needs of smallholder farmers often receive inadequate attention, particularly within a capitalist economic system where larger corporate farms tend to dominate. Stereotypes persist regarding agriculture in Malaysia, but the reality is far more complex, with smallholder farmers engaged in a multitude of agricultural activities beyond simply planting rice (Afroz et al., 2021; Hussin & Mat, 2013; Tiemann & Douxchamps, 2023). These farmers typically own small plots of land and engage in family-based or village-based farming practices, though there are differing views on how to classify them based on their specific roles within agriculture (Nishi, 2023).

Natural challenges, such as flooding, pose significant risks to smallholder farmers, particularly in regions like Kelantan and Kedah (Abas et al., 2020). Additionally, the ever-present threat of climate change further exacerbates these challenges, impacting crop yields and overall income. Given these risks, effective risk management strategies are essential for smallholder farmers (Tilai et al., 2022). These strategies may include weather risk management techniques, sound financial planning, targeted entrepreneurship education programs in rural areas, and the adoption of appropriate agricultural technologies (Ruwanza et al., 2022; Savari & Zhoolideh, 2021; Sivel, 2023; Tiemann & Douxchamps, 2023). In

summary, while smallholder farming plays a crucial role in Malaysia's agricultural landscape and economy, smallholder farmers face numerous obstacles that threaten their livelihoods. Addressing these challenges requires concerted efforts from policymakers, agricultural experts, and the farmers themselves to ensure the sustainability and resilience of smallholder farming communities in Malaysia.

Household Income

In Malaysia, household income serves as a critical indicator of economic well-being, reflecting the financial capacity of families to sustain their livelihoods and meet basic needs. The classification into three main groups—B40, M40, and T20—provides insights into the distribution of income across the population and highlights disparities in wealth and living standards. The B40 group, encompassing the bottom 40% of income earners, faces significant economic challenges. With household incomes typically falling below RM4850 per month. In contrast, the M40 group represents the middle 40% of income earners, with household incomes ranging from RM4850 to RM10959 per month. While relatively better off than the B40 group, many M40 households still experience financial constraints, particularly during economic downturns or unforeseen expenses. Despite their relatively stable financial position, they may face challenges in accessing higher education, healthcare, and homeownership, limiting their opportunities for socioeconomic advancement. The T20 group comprises the top 20% of income earners, with household incomes exceeding RM10959 per month (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020).

Social Wellbeing

Well-being encompasses a blend of positive emotions and optimal functioning, including happiness, personal fulfillment, a sense of control, and positive connections with others (Keyes, 1998). This construct, often closely associated with mental health, underscores the importance of both individual and social dimensions in shaping well-being (Larson, 1993). Social well-being, specifically, delves into an individual's interaction with society and community structures, playing a vital role in optimizing mental health outcomes. This social aspect of well-being is multifaceted, encompassing dimensions such as social integration, contribution, coherence, actualization, and acceptance (Teghe & Rendell, 2005).

Social acceptance involves perceiving society positively through others' qualities, fostering trust and positive emotions towards others. Contribution refers to actively participating in society to positively impact the common good and evaluating one's social worth (Lake et al., 2021). Actualization entails believing in society's potential for fulfillment and maintaining an optimistic outlook on the future. Coherence involves understanding the social world despite imperfections and seeking purpose in life. Integration evaluates one's relationship with society, fostering a sense of belonging and support within various circles (Radzyk, 2014).

Further dimensions of social well-being include social contacts, neighborhood cohesion, material deprivation, occupation, social isolation, societal institutions, and participation. These dimensions highlight the various aspects of social engagement and belonging within communities and society at large (Radzyk, 2014). Research corroborates the significance of these dimensions by examining behaviors indicating involvement in

community activities, belonging to specific groups, and factors related to social capital and cohesion (Lake et al., 2021).

Moreover, social actualization, akin to Maslow's concept of self-actualization, focuses on realizing social potential within the broader context of self-development (Maslow, 1956). Social life is considered integral to maximizing individual potential, promoting healthy personality development, fostering social interest, and instilling resilience in facing life's challenges. The World Health Organization underscores the interconnectedness of social well-being with overall health, emphasizing its intrinsic role in realizing individual potential and self-development (Allen et al., 2022; Desmet & Fokkinga, 2020; Elizabeth Hopper, 2020).

Methodology

Location

Langkawi, situated in the state of Kedah, is an island approximately 500 kilometers north of Kuala Lumpur. The study, depicted in Figure 1, was conducted across seven villages within Langkawi: Ulu Melaka, Lubuk Setol, Ayer Warm, Nyior Chabang, Bukit Termin, Mawat, and Padang Saga. These villages are interconnected by main roads and were selected to receive government subsidies due to their natural potential and accessibility for implementing smart farming practices for glutinous rice cultivation. The climate in Langkawi is typically tropical, characterized by warm temperatures ranging from 24°C to 33°C, creating favorable conditions for the cultivation of glutinous rice (Zainal & Shamsudin, 2021).

Sampling Respondents

The study focuses on farmers engaged in the cultivation of glutinous rice. This agricultural endeavor is supported by government subsidies, which entail the distribution of seeds, fertilizers, and smart-farming technologies, including drone rentals managed by service providers. The respondents for this study were selected using a census approach, which involves surveying the entire population. Specifically, all farmers participating in government-sponsored programs for glutinous rice cultivation with smart farming practices were included as respondents in this research (118 respondents).

Instrument

This survey tool to evaluates social well-being adapted from Radzyk (2014), various aspects including social connections, cohesion within neighborhoods, levels of material deprivation, primary occupation, social isolation, engagement with societal institutions, and participation. It comprises a total of 41 items designed to gauge these dimensions comprehensively. Meanwhile, for the author's socioeconomics collects data such as age, education, main occupation and gender. In the household income section, respondents were asked about family income, including husband's income, wife's income and side jobs that make money for both of them. The score using the Likert-scale, ‘1=strongly disagree’ to ‘5=strongly agree,

Table 1
Social Well-being items

1. I feel emptiness.
2. I am satisfied with the surrounding conditions.
3. I have a close relationship with my neighbors.
4. I feel comfortable at home.
5. It is important to be a member of the association.
6. I have enough money to become a member of the association or club.
7. I am satisfied to receive assistance from the government when I need it.
8. We are satisfied with the glutinous rice program that benefits us.
9. I am satisfied with my social position after participating in the glutinous rice program.
10. I am happy with the people around me and the farmers' well-being.
11. I am satisfied with my relationship with my neighbors.
12. People in my neighborhood help each other positively.
13. I do not feel safe in my own home.
14. I see myself as part of the community.
15. I have enough money to help needy neighbors.
16. I feel understood and listened to by the organizations involved in the glutinous rice program.
17. I can trust the police if I need them.
18. I am satisfied with my current life.
19. I am happy to participate in activities in the neighborhood.
20. I live in a friendly neighborhood with diversity.
21. I feel unsafe on the streets and around the house.
22. I feel capable of contributing to the community.
23. I am satisfied with my current financial situation.
24. I am satisfied with my future financial situation.
25. I receive appropriate assistance from the community when I need it.
26. There are enough people I can rely on in times of difficulty.
27. My work situation contributes to the well-being of myself and my family.
28. I trust the people around me.
29. Community members are not well acquainted with each other.
30. By practicing an Islamic way of life, I find more peace compared to my friends or family if I need it.
31. I receive sufficient help.
32. I know many people I can fully trust.
33. I feel accepted in my neighborhood.
34. I am satisfied with the population composition in my neighborhood.
35. I willingly help others if they need my assistance.
36. I have a close relationship with the agencies in the glutinous rice program.
37. Others accept me as I am.
38. I happily maintain relationships with others through social media (Facebook, email).
39. I enjoy spending time playing online games with others.
40. I have trustworthy social media contacts.
41. I often feel abandoned.

Data Collection

The survey employed in this study was approved by the UPM Ethics Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects (JKEUPM-2022-431). Respondents were selected from a list provided by the Department of Agriculture of Malaysia. Initially, approximately 300 farmers expressed interest in participating in the study, but some withdrew due to crop failure caused by natural factors, so there are 118 respondents in this study. Data collection took place in August 2022, with researchers conducting face-to-face interviews with the farmers. The researchers provided assistance to ensure respondents understood and completed the questionnaires, which included an ethical concern form. The questionnaire was divided into sections covering ethical concerns, household income, and social well-being. Respondents were allocated 25-45 minutes to complete the questionnaires with the assistance of researchers.

Data Analysis

After data collection, there are two data, namely social wellbeing and household income. Social wellbeing data processing is obtained by adding up all the questionnaires for each respondent and getting a final score, this makes the social wellbeing data a continuous data. Meanwhile, for household income data, researchers added up the husband's income, wife's income and side jobs. Initially, descriptive statistics, including measures such as mean and standard deviation, were employed to depict the characteristics of household income and social wellbeing. Subsequently, correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between independent and dependent variables. Pearson correlation, a statistical technique used to assess the strength and direction of linear relationships, was utilized for this purpose. A significance threshold of less than 0.005 was set for the minimum p-value of the Pearson correlation.

Result and Discussion

The Descriptive of Socio-economic

The table presents the socioeconomic profile of 118 respondents and their households, categorized into various demographic and socioeconomic variables. The age distribution shows that respondents fall within the working age range of 15-64 years and old age of more than 65 years, with the largest group (38.1%) being between 51-64 years. The mean age is 53.1 years, the median age is 54 years, with the minimum and maximum ages being 25 and 86 years, respectively, and a standard deviation of 13.4 years. The gender distribution is highly skewed, with 97.5% of respondents being male and only 2.5% female. In terms of education, respondents have varied educational backgrounds: 11% have no schooling, 22% completed elementary school, 25.4% junior high school, 27.1% senior high school, 11% hold diplomas, 3.4% have degrees, and none have attained a Master's or PhD. Regarding marital status, 81.4% are married, 12.7% are single, 2.5% are divorced and living, and 3.4% are widowed. The main occupations include farming (84.7%), cattle rearing (0.8%), fishing (3.4%), government employment (2.5%), private employment (5.1%), and business (2.5%), with a small percentage (0.8%) engaged in other occupations. The data highlights an older, predominantly male population with diverse educational achievements, mostly married, and primarily engaged in agriculture.

There is a noticeable migration of young, highly educated individuals from rural areas. This has led to a debate about the future of agriculture in Asia, driven by the significant decline

in the number of young farmers (Rigg et al., 2020). Besides that, this lack of higher educational attainment may limit opportunities for economic diversification and innovation in rural areas, potentially stifling growth and development. (Guzmán et al., 2021). Strategies could include promoting higher education and vocational training, encouraging gender diversity in agricultural activities, and creating economic incentives to retain young, educated individuals in rural communities (Geza et al., 2022).

Table 2
The Tabulation of Respondents' and Household Socioeconomic Profile (N = 118)

Variables	Frequency (N=118)	Percentage (%)
Age (year):		
Working Age (DOSM, 2019)		
1. 15-20	0	0
2. 21-30	7	5.9
3. 31-40	17	14.4
4. 41-50	24	20.3
5. 51-64	45	38.1
Old Age (DOSM, 2019)		
6. More than 65	25	21.2
7. Mean	53.1	
8. Median	54	
9. Minimum	25	
10. Maximum	86	
11. Std. Deviation	13.4	
Gender:		
1. Male	115	97.5
2. Female	3	2.5
Education Level:		
1. No School	13	11
2. Elementary School	26	22
3. Junior High School	30	25.4
4. Senior High School	32	27.1
5. Diploma	13	11
6. Degree	4	3.4
7. Master/PhD	0	0
Marital Status		
1. Married	96	81.4
2. Single	15	12.7
3. Divorced life	3	2.5
4. Divorced dead	4	3.4
The main job		
1. Farmer	100	84.7
2. Cattleman	1	0.8
3. Fisherman	4	3.4
4. Government employee	3	2.5
5. Private employee	6	5.1

6. Business	3	2.5
7. Others	1	0.8

The Descriptive of Household Income

Table 3 presents the distribution of household income among the respondents, categorized into the B40, M40, and T20 groups, along with descriptive statistics. The frequency column indicates the number of respondents falling within each income bracket, while the percentage column illustrates the proportion of respondents in each category relative to the total sample size of 118. Within the B40 group, the majority of respondents fall into lower income brackets, with the highest frequency observed in the RM1500-RM1999 range (21 respondents, 17.8%). As the income brackets increase, the frequency generally decreases, indicating a smaller proportion of respondents with higher incomes within the B40 group. For the M40 group, the income range spans from RM4850 to RM10959, with the highest frequency observed in the RM4850-RM10959 range, characteristic of middle-income households. Conversely, the T20 group, representing the highest income bracket, consists of respondents with incomes up to RM10960, with no specific income ranges identified within this group due to its relatively small size. The mean household income across all respondents is RM2852.7, with a median income of RM2250. The minimum household income reported is RM500, while the maximum is RM10500. The standard deviation of household income is RM2192.3, indicating the degree of variability or dispersion of incomes within the sample.

Research shows that farmers in Kedah are primarily in the B40 income group, earning between RM 2,000 and RM 4,000, below the Malaysian poverty line of RM2208 (Kana et al, 2020; DOSM, 2020). Kedah's poverty rate of 8.8% surpasses the national average, largely due to low agricultural productivity, limited resource access, and market challenges (Abiddin et al., 2023; Tilai et al., 2022). Malaysian rice farmers are particularly affected by poverty, which is exacerbated by small-scale farming, lack of productive assets, and non-agricultural activities (Afroz et al., 2021; Ibrahim, 2023; Tilai et al., 2022).

Table 3
The Table of Household Income

Variables	Frequency (N=118)	Percentage (%)
B40 Group		
Less than 500 (B1)	1	0.8
500-999 (B1)	4	3.4
1000-1499 (B1)	18	15.3
1500-1999 (B1)	21	17.8
2000-2499 (B1)	22	18.6
2500-3169 (B2)	20	16.9
3170-3969 (B3)	8	6.8
3970-4849 (B4)	9	7.6
M40 Group		
4850-10959 (M40)	15	12.7
T20 Group		
More then 10960 (T20)	0	0
Mean	2852.7	
Median	2250	
Minimum	500	
Maximum	10500	
Std. Dev	2192.3	

The Descriptive of Social Well-being

Table 4 presents the tabulated responses related to social wellbeing, detailing the frequency and percentage distribution for each statement, along with the mean and standard deviation. The first column lists various statements regarding social wellbeing, addressing aspects such as satisfaction with living conditions, relationships with neighbors, financial situation, and community support. The subsequent columns (labeled 1 through 5) indicate the frequency of responses corresponding to a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). For instance, regarding the statement "I feel emptiness," 65 respondents (55.1%) strongly agreed, while 24 (20.3%) agreed, indicating a considerable portion expressing feelings of emptiness. On the other hand, only 2 respondents (1.7%) strongly disagreed. The mean and standard deviation columns provide summary statistics for each statement, offering insights into the average level of agreement or disagreement among respondents and the degree of variability in responses, respectively.

Table 4a
The Descriptive of Social Well-being

Statement	Percentage					Mean	Std. Dev
	1	2	3	4	5		
Item 1	55.1	20.3	5.9	16.9	1.7	1.79	1.03
Item 2	0	5.9	24.6	34.7	34.7	3.98	0.91
Item 3	0	3.4	11.9	34.7	50	4.31	0.81
Item 4	1.7	1.7	11.9	28	56.8	4.36	0.88
Item 5	0.8	5.9	13.6	35.6	55.9	4.16	0.93
Item 6	0	11	24.6	39.8	24.6	3.78	0.94

Item 7	0	5.9	24.6	34.7	34.7	3.98	0.91
Item 8	8.5	14.4	34.7	26.3	16.1	3.27	1.15
Item 9	0.8	5.9	23.7	32.2	37.3	3.99	0.96
Item 10	0.8	3.4	9.3	32.2	54.2	4.36	0.85
Item 11	0	0.8	12.7	28.8	57.6	4.43	0.74
Item 12	4.2	3.4	5.9	36.4	50	4.25	1.01
Item 13	67.8	11	12.7	5.1	3.4	1.65	1.09
Item 14	1.7	3.4	15.3	44.1	35.6	4.08	0.89
Item 15	0	7.6	25.4	33.9	33.1	3.92	0.94
Item 16	5.1	6.8	33.1	34.7	20.3	3.58	1.04
Item 17	3.4	0.8	10.2	50.8	34.7	4.13	0.88
Item 18	0	14.4	15.3	34.7	35.6	3.92	1.04
Item 19	0	4.2	10.2	42.4	43.2	4.25	0.80
Item 20	1.7	0.8	7.6	41.5	48.3	4.34	0.79
Item 21	55.1	20.3	16.9	5.9	1.7	1.79	1.03
Item 22	5.1	3.4	28	33.9	29.7	3.80	1.06
Item 23	10.2	17.8	24.6	35.6	11.9	3.21	1.17
Item 24	16.1	29.7	29.7	19.5	5.1	2.68	1.11
Item 25	1.7	12.7	21.2	40.7	23.7	3.72	1.02
Item 26	1.7	11.9	17.8	44.1	24.6	3.78	1.05
Item 27	0.8	5.9	15.3	43.2	34.7	4.05	0.90
Item 28	1.7	1.7	20.3	45.8	30.5	4.02	0.85
Item 29	5.9	27.1	39.8	18.6	8.5	2.97	1.02
Item 30	0.8	0	11.9	36.4	50.8	4.36	0.75
Item 31	0.8	2.5	22	42.4	32.2	4.03	0.86
Item 32	0	3.4	25.4	35.6	35.6	4.03	0.85
Item 33	0	5.1	18.6	41.5	34.7	4.06	0.86
Item 34	0.8	3.4	12.7	50	33.1	4.11	0.81
Item 35	0.8	5.9	20.3	42.4	30.5	3.96	0.91
Item 36	0	3.4	16.9	40.7	39	4.15	0.82
Item 37	0	2.5	22	42.4	33.1	4.06	0.80
Item 38	19.5	17.8	11	32.2	19.5	3.14	1.43
Item 39	66.9	14.4	9.3	8.5	0.8	1.62	1.02
Item 40	43.2	21.2	16.1	12.7	6.8	2.19	1.30
Item 41	69.5	12.7	11.9	5.1	0.8	1.55	0.94

The Pearson Correlation between Household Income and Social Well-being

Household Income	Household Income	Social Wellbeing
Pearson Correlation	1	0.766***
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
N		118

***correlation is significant at the 0.001 level

The correlation analysis conducted between household income and social wellbeing yielded a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.766, which indicates a strong positive relationship between these two variables. The correlation coefficient being significant at the 0.01 level ($p < 0.01$) further confirms the strength and statistical significance of this relationship. This

finding suggests that as household income increases, there tends to be a corresponding increase in levels of social wellbeing among the respondents. In other words, individuals with higher household incomes are more likely to report higher levels of satisfaction, fulfillment, and positive social interactions. Conversely, those with lower household incomes may experience greater challenges in maintaining social connections, accessing resources, and experiencing overall wellbeing. With a sample size of 118 respondents, this analysis provides robust evidence supporting the association between household income and social wellbeing within the study population.

Recent research has indicated that although income contributes to quality of life, its impact on the broader concept of social wellbeing may be limited. Using data from the Living in Queensland Survey, a comprehensive Wellbeing Index was developed. This index encompassed various objective conditions known to influence wellbeing, assessed from the individuals' subjective perspectives. The significance assigned to each aspect enhanced the measure's reliability. This index was subsequently used to investigate the influence of income on wellbeing through different income specifications. The findings reveal that income is a statistically significant predictor of social wellbeing (Povey et al., 2016).

Conclusion

The study's findings highlight that while income is a statistically significant predictor of social wellbeing, its impact on this multi-faceted concept is nuanced and influenced by various other factors. The comprehensive Wellbeing Index, which integrates both objective conditions and subjective perspectives, proves to be a robust measure for assessing social wellbeing. This index reveals that higher household income tends to correlate with greater satisfaction, fulfillment, and positive social interactions among respondents. However, the limited impact of income alone suggests that other dimensions, such as community support, relationships, and living conditions, play crucial roles in determining overall wellbeing. The benefit of this study is its contribution to a more holistic understanding of social wellbeing. Policymakers and social planners can leverage these insights to design interventions that address not only economic disparities but also other critical aspects of wellbeing. By focusing on a broader range of factors beyond income, efforts to enhance social wellbeing can be more effectively tailored to meet the diverse needs of different population segments, ultimately fostering a more equitable and supportive society.

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