

CRITICAL DIMENSIONS OF WELL-BEING IN SELANGOR, MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Selangor is leading the other thirteen states in Malaysia in the economy, making it one of the most preferred places to stay for its economic flourish, employment prospect, great infrastructure, and excellent facilities. Selangor is ranked the highest by contributing 23% of its National Gross National Product to Malaysia. Nevertheless, for social indicators, Selangor ranked fourth in the country. Social development was not at par with the fast-growing economy and the extensive physical developments that take place. Thus, the objective of this paper is to identify the critical dimensions of Selangorians' well-being. We adapted a questionnaire from a Gallup survey and distributed it about 1500 questionnaires to people in Selangor using random

and non-proportionate stratified sampling in twelve (12) municipalities of the state. We employed SPSS 22.0 for descriptive results and Smart PLS 3.0 for the structural equation modeling. The finding revealed that the economic dimension (t -values =5.141), environment dimension (t -values =6.668), health dimension (t -value=5.092), and spiritual dimension (t -values= 4.969) were significant to well-being except for emotion dimension (t -values =0.283). This finding provides insights to practitioners, local authorities, and policymakers of the state government in enhancing Selangorians' quality of life and well-being.

Keywords: Critical Dimension, Well-Being, Economic, Environment, Health, Spiritual, Emotion.

JEL Classification Codes: I31, I38.

INTRODUCTION

Selangor has three international airports, numerous important highways, and ports, placing it the most developed state in Malaysia. Its Gross National Product (GNP) which is almost 30 percent of the whole nation, making it one of the preferred places to stay and work (Abdullah, 2017). By having great infrastructure, a conducive environment, and good facilities, is Selangor having great well-being? Even though Selangor is ranked the highest by contributing 23% National GDP, followed by Wilayah Kuala Lumpur, dan Sarawak (Statistics Department, 2016). Nevertheless, for social indicators, Selangor ranked the lowest among these top four states. It indicated that social development was not tally with the fast-growing economy and the wide-ranging physical development that take place (Hashim & Shuib, 2016). It is quite crucial to find out the scenario of social development as well as the well-being in this golden state of Malaysia. Well-being is now getting a lot of attention from academicians, physicians, practitioners, and policymakers locally and globally. What is well-being? Well-being may refer to living well together at a community that aspects of living have in facilitating local individual well-being. It is also central to place sustainability and quality of life (Husin *et al.* 2020). Previous researchers have conceptualized well-being in different definitions. For instance, Kim and Ludwigs (2017) utilized cultural, social, human, political, economic, and physical capital to measure well-being. Meanwhile, Tonon (2017) concentrated more on fulfillment with life, satisfaction with people around them, involvement in the community group, mutual support among neighbors, the society of the neighbors, and the accessibility of public spaces. In a similar front, Rath, Harter, and Harter (2010) reckoned that five crucial elements in well-being for general people are career, social, physical, financial, and public, whereas world leaders place too much emphasis on economic measures of performance. This case might not adequately represent other dimensions that shape well-being like environmental and social dimensions, for example, the gross domestic product (GDP) and gross national product (GNP) are common key drivers for assessing growth and development. The increase in GDP and GNP is a measurement for the policies and decision-making to keep on growing. Many researchers cannot come into a conclusive definition of well-being. Instead of defining it, researchers come up with the dimensions that explain well-being. Dodge, Daly, Huyton, and Sanders (2012) presume that it would be proper for a fresh definition of well-being to centre on a state of equilibrium or balance that can be influenced by life episodes or challenges. Another common definition of well-being is the combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political conditions identified by individuals and their

communities as essential for them to flourish and fulfill their potentials (Wiseman & Brasher, 2008). Though Cunningham, De La Rosa, and Jex (2008) perceived that the well-being is a “messy” dimension. There are some agreements that well-being dimension is broad, likely multidimensional or multifaceted, and demonstrative of something more generalized than good physical health (Prescott-Allen, 2001). He further argued that any well-being assessment should revolve around people’s well-being of people, the ecosystem, and how do these people behave and react to each other.

There is another similar study on well-being by Musa, Yacob, Abdullah, and Ishak, (2018) in Putrajaya. These researchers formulated a framework of community happiness index that holistically combines wide-ranging sustainability dimensions from human well-being to environment-friendly well-being sub-index with four sustainability domains, namely social, economic, environmental, and urban governance, to tackle individual subjective perceptions of the community involvement and development orientation. The finding revealed that Putrajaya dwellings performed good environmental-friendly well-being and human well-being, they possess a moderate sustainability, and a medium-high level of community happiness. Most literature on well-being emphasizes the importance of people’s experience concerning where they are living, health condition, income, education, relationship, and family.

Malaysian Well-being Index 2013 defines well-being as “...the various direct and indirect benefits acquired and enjoyed by the citizen as well as contributed to the life satisfaction of individuals, families, and communities.” In Malaysia's scenario, Bakar, Osman, Bachok, and Ibrahim, (2016) analyzed 14 components that assess social and economic well-being. The Malaysia Plan aligned all the dimensions unswervingly to which aimed to achieve a good quality of life and sustainable well-being by improving the economy of individuals and craft an opportunity for the citizens to achieve sound well-being. The only drawback of this study lacks an environmental component. Such a dimension is also fundamental to measure the extent and readiness of the Malaysian citizens in shaping sustainable well-being.

Well-being research is gaining much bigger attention nowadays from people from all walks of life for sustainable and smart cities. In this study, therefore, we examined the reflection of well-being based on five (5) domains, namely environment, economic, health, spiritual, and emotion. This paper is to examine well-being and its determinants in Malaysia’s smart state, Selangor. We formulated the questionnaire as such on the Selangor people’s perception and feeling about staying in Selangor. It is important for the state government to enable its people to have good access now and in the future to the social, economic, and environmental resources required to shape its sound well-being. An understanding of the consequence of policy on the way people perceive their beliefs lives and behaviors is crucial for designing and, at the same time, prioritizing them. Since Selangor state is having a robust development and moving towards a Smart state by the year 2027 (Selangor Blueprint, 2016), thus the objective of this study is to identify the critical dimensions of people of Selangor’s well-being. We are adapting the Gallup Survey (1992) that has five (5) dimensions that relate to well-being. This study is specifically looking into the community’s well-being in Selangor. The finding would shed light on the real scenario of its well-being, which can benefit the people in Selangor and its governance.

WELL-BEING DIMENSIONS: ECONOMIC, EMOTION, ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH, AND SPIRITUAL

The well-being of an individual can be affected by many factors. A lot of studies have well-documented on the significant relationship between economic factors such as income, savings,

bills, debts, and materials belongings. (Povey, Boreham, & Tomaszewski, 2016; Di Tella, MacCulloch & Oswald, 2001; and Tsai, Dwyer, & Tsay 2016). Money is the crux of all devils as well as the root of happiness and well-being. Economic factors affect the way individuals' physical requirements are satisfied and can also influence their intellectual, feeling, and social needs too. However, the evidence for any relationship between GDP/capita growth and growth in well-being in wealthier countries is sometimes arguable. Kenny (2005) investigated both reasons for expecting the relationship to be stronger in developing countries, and those for a weak link that might still apply in less developed countries. He discovered that at least in middle-income countries, there is little strong evidence in favor of a relationship between economic growth and well-being. Meanwhile, Dolan, Peasgood & White (2008) postulated that poor health, separation, unemployment, and lack of social contact are all strongly negatively associated with well-being.

Another important domain that associates with well-being is emotion. Townsend (2016) outlines emotional geography is concerned with the association between feelings themselves and the representations and accounts of these feelings that are experienced through the body and within particular spaces. Not just that, he found out that therapeutic landscape literature is to guide linkages between the volunteering landscape and the other forms of physical and emotional and well-being.

Sound well-being will make the people live in a harmonious and sustainable community. A positive environment can also influence people's attitudes and behave rationally. Numerous studies on the environment are positively related to great community well-being. Phillips and Wong (2017) documented that the domain of well-being should represent values and goals for the community even though it is difficult to measure well-being as there are varieties of values that depend on the characteristics of the place. Newton (2007) defined well-being as "*people's positive evaluations on their lives which consist of positive emotion, engagement, satisfaction, and meaning.*" One important study by Gatzweiler, Zhu, Roux, Capon, Donnelly, Salem & Hanaki, (2017) who studied a 10-year plan for improving life in Wales confirmed that Wales' well-being comprises health, opportunities for learning, quality of life a stronger economy, and also better, a simpler government which these five determinants are in the country's plan.

We now look at the relationship between health and well-being. Unfortunately, Khairani Afifi (2019) reported that Malaysia is the unhealthiest nation in Asia. Two-thirds of Malaysian adults are at risk of chronic diseases. Almost half of its population is overweight, and half of the working population have mental health. Strachan, Wright, and Hancock (2007) confirm that Government initiatives of health programs are fundamental to have better well-being. Not only that, as a pro-active action by the government, it is also imperative to know that the relationship of health to well-being is undeniable. Marks, Cave, Hunter, and Mason (2011) discovered the influence of governance and incentive programs on commissioning for health and well-being and the governance towards deterrence. These researchers discovered that contracting health and well-being involves working through partnerships, performance management regimes preferred community success and well-being. Community well-being is a function of many determinants working together to promote an optimal quality of life for all residents of a community. However, the promotion of lifelong learning among older adults can significantly contribute to community well-being is debatable. The aging society is a global phenomenon presenting both opportunities and challenges to community well-being. Merriam and Kee (2014) suggested that the more active, healthier, and educated older adults are, the less problematic, they are one family, relatives, and community resources and services.

Spiritual is another important domain for community well-being. Religion and spirituality are some of the key drivers of happiness in psychology, as spirituality plays a very important role in one's life. Nevertheless, Coleman, McKiernan, Mills, and Speck (2002) pointed out that spiritual well-being is a neglected aspect of quality of life in British research. Doodman and Safari (2017) carried out a study in Iran and found out that spiritual well-being positively and significantly predicted happiness in adolescents. As a construct domain, spirituality provides diverse options for researchers seeking to describe and understand stress, well-being, and related phenomena. Indicators of personal experiences with religions/ spirituality can be descriptive and functional, as they are deeply connected to the basic human need for managing the aspects of life that are dynamic, ambiguous, and uncontrollable. The psychological, philosophical, and behavioral aspects of spirituality make this form of demographic variance incredibly valuable for future consideration in occupational stress research. Gallup (1999) suggested that religion/spirituality, more than any other background or demographic characteristic, maybe the key to understanding how people think and act but also quite likely among individuals in other countries and cultures. As presented by Pargament, Smith, Koenig, & Perez (1998) and Abu-Raiya (2013), the association with religion or spirituality is always related to positive outcomes, but not necessarily always true. Spirituality is multivalent, meaning that one's religious or spiritual experiences and involvement can lead to negative results as well as positive ones. Everyone needs to explore what they believe is their sense of meaning and purpose. Spiritual wellness may include meditation, prayer, affirmations, or specific spiritual practices that support one's connection to a higher power or belief system. Research indicates that spirituality is related to better health results (Utsey, Bolden, Williams, Lee, Lanier, & Newsome, 2007). Spirituality may help people cope with illness, suffering, and even death. Spirituality also influences end-of-life decisions. Many people reckon that spirituality and religion are the same things, and so they bring their beliefs and prejudices about religion to discussions about spirituality. Spirituality and religiosity are sometimes interchangeably explained concepts related to God or a higher power, things sacred or divine, or a heightened level of human consciousness.

Therefore, specifically, this study investigated the reflection of well-being on the well-being domains, namely economic, emotion, environment, health, and spiritual. Based on the literature reviewed, this study is expected to have positive linkages between well-being and all five dimensions. Indirectly, this paper would contribute to the body of knowledge towards the realization of the Smart City of Selangor.

METHODOLOGY

This study aims to investigate the formative second order of five (5) dimensions of community well-being among people who live in Selangor. This research design includes a cross-sectional and a quantitative approach. We adapted a set of a questionnaire from Gallup (1992). The population is people who live in Selangor and come from all walks of life. The researchers administered the questionnaires themselves. A total of 1306 out of 1500 questionnaires were received (84.4% response rate). The data is collected using random and non-proportionate stratified sampling as the targeted respondents. Hence, 1306 of the data collections were further analyzed the causal relationship using Partial Least Square (PLS) by measure on measurement and structural model of this study. Items under each construct and present the descriptive statistics for each item with a 5-point scale. Before the analysis, we analysed the data of the demographic factors aimed to understand the characteristic of the respondents in this study. The

study analyzed the data using Smart PLS 3.0. PLS-SEM method is on iterative techniques approach that maximizes the stated variances of endogenous constructs. It also well behaved, such as multiple regression techniques (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham, 1998). This characteristic approaches PLS-SEM is important for exploratory research. We assessed the measurement model in PLS in terms of consistency and validity, which consists of item loading, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE).

Item loadings must be greater than 0.70 to be satisfactory for the constructs to represent the variable. Also, the value of composite reliability, which is greater than 0.70, is to be acceptable in terms of its reliability. The average variance extracted (AVE) determine the amount of variance captured by the construct from each of the variables due to measurement errors. As suggested by Fornell and Lacker (1981), the construct should be a minimum of 50% of the variance. This value implies that the values of AVE should be more than 0.50. We examine the structural model in PLS by evaluating the path coefficients value at a 5% level of significance to see the nature of the relationship between the constructs. To validate the model, we conducted the diagnostic checking onto the model by observing the value of R^2 which determines the strength of the model. Besides, we also examine the effect size by using f^2 value, and the value determines the magnitude or strength of the relationships among the constructs. This result helps the researchers to assess the overall contribution of the study. A value of effect size of 0.02 indicates small effects, 0.15 indicate medium effects, and more than 0.35 indicate large effects, respectively (Cohen, 1988).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In Table 1 shows 1306 of Selangorians from 12 of local authorities and the higher respondents participated in this study from Majlis Perbandaran Kajang (n=113), followed by Majlis Perbandaran Selayang, Majlis Perbandaran Kelang, Majlis Perbandaran Sepang, Majlis Daerah Sabak Bernam with a total of 110 of respondents. Next is Majlis Bandaraya Petaling Jaya (n=109) Majlis Daerah Hulu Selangor (n=109), Majlis Perbandaran Ampang Jaya (n=108), Majlis Daerah Kuala Selangor (n=108), Majlis Perbandaran Subang Jaya (n=107), Majlis Bandaraya Shah Alam (n=106), and Majlis Daerah Kuala Langat (n=106).

Also, the number of males with a total of 656 is slightly above females, with a total of 650. However, Malay respondents were highly dominant in this study, with a total of 724, followed by Indian was 291, Chinese was 251, and others were 40. Additional information revealed the income level of 796 of the respondents were range between RM1001 to RM5000, followed by 198 respondents who were less than RM1000, followed by 197 respondents who earn RM50001 to RM10,000 and only 115 of them from those earning more than RM10,000 a month. Those the results interpret that most of the respondents were a group of B40 with the income household within RM6,275 and RM3,000.

Table 1. Demographic Factors

Demographic Factors	N	%
Majlis Bandaraya Petaling Jaya	109	8.3
Majlis Perbandaran Ampang Jaya	108	8.3
Majlis Bandaraya Shah Alam	106	8.1
Majlis Perbandaran Kajang	113	8.7
Majlis Daerah Hulu Selangor	109	8.3

Majlis Perbandaran Kelang		110	8.4
Majlis Daerah Kuala Langat		106	8.1
Majlis Perbandaran Selayang		110	8.4
Majlis Daerah Kuala Selangor		108	8.3
Majlis Perbandaran Sepang		110	8.4
Majlis Daerah Sabak Bernam		110	8.4
Majlis Perbandaran Subang Jaya		107	8.2
Gender	Male	656	50.2
	Female	650	49.8
Race	Malay	724	55.4
	Indian	291	22.3
	Chinese	251	19.2
	Others	40	3.1
Income	less than 1,000	198	15.2
	1,001-5,000	796	60.9
	5,001-10,000	197	15.1
	Above 10,000	115	8.8

First Order Reflective Measurement Model

From the finding, Table 2 indicates all the indicator loadings of constructs were greater than 0.5. Furthermore, the composite reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values found greater than 0.5. Moreover, as indicated in Table 2, all constructs do not highly correlate with each other. Thus, the results are implying that the constructs are unique from and unrelated to each other. Hence the result confirmed there is no issue on discriminant validity as the indicators load more strongly on their construct, and the AVE share between each construct and its measure is greater than the variance shared between the construct and another construct.

Table 2. Convergent validity

Factors	Indicators	Factor Loading	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Economic	C2D	0.825	0.860	0.671
	C2E	0.805		
	C2F	0.828		
Emotion	C4A	0.849	0.923	0.801
	C4B	0.907		
	C4D	0.926		
Environment	C1A	0.870	0.899	0.641
	C1B	0.813		
	C1C	0.759		
	C1D	0.794		
	C1E	0.761		

Health	C3A	0.778	0.842	0.571
	C3C	0.757		
	C3D	0.736		
	C3E	0.752		
Spiritual	C5A	0.880	0.913	0.724
	C5B	0.806		
	C5C	0.877		
	C5E	0.837		
	C5A	0.880		
Well-being	D2A	0.728	0.825	0.541
	D3A	0.725		
	D4A	0.770		
	D5A	0.719		

For the next consequent test, we run the discriminant validity test. As recommended by Hair et al. (2017), we use the Lacker criterion to assess the discriminant validity between reflective constructs. Table 3 showed that bolded values on the diagonal were greater than the corresponding row and column values indicating the measure was discriminant, and thus we conclude that the constructs have discriminant validity.

Table 3. Discriminant validity

Constructs	Economic	Emotion	Environment	Health	Spiritual	Well-being
Economic	0.819					
Emotion	0.093	0.895				
Environment	0.510	0.071	0.800			
Health	0.425	-0.008	0.458	0.756		
Spiritual	0.229	0.024	0.254	0.292	0.851	
Well-being	0.413	0.044	0.464	0.417	0.306	0.736

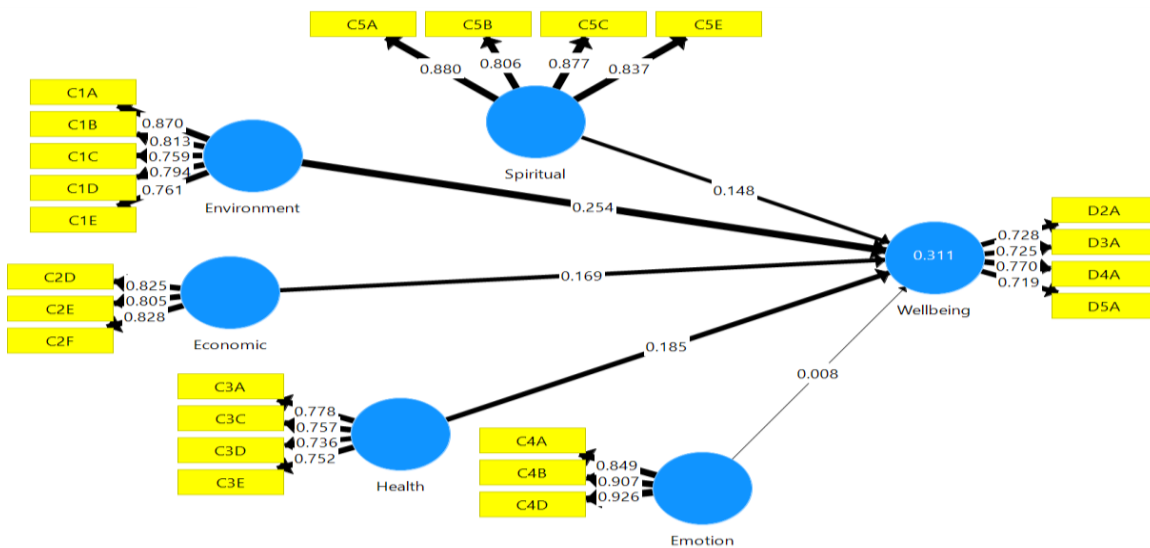


Figure 1. First Order Reflective Measurement Model

Second-Order Formative Measurement Model

As in Figure 1, the R square (R^2) of the model was 31.1 percent of the variance of well-being explained by the economic, environment, health, and spiritual factors. According to the suggestions of Hair et al., (2011), the R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 in the structural model can represent the strong, medium, and weak determination coefficient. These results showed that all those constructs moderately presented the constructs of well-being. Table 4 is a multicollinearity analysis. It revealed there were no issues of multi-collinearity as the VIF values were less than 10, economic (VIF=1.459), emotion (VIF=1.014), environment (VIF=1.515), health (VIF=1.402), and spiritual (VIF=1.121).

Table 4. Multicollinearity analysis

Constructs	VIF Values
Economic	1.459
Emotion	1.014
Environment	1.515
Health	1.402
Spiritual	1.121

Next is the significance of weight based on the t-values, and standard error. Based on Table 5, the associated coefficients for the formative relationships so-called as outer weights in the model presented the outer weight of economic factor was (0.260), followed by emotion (0.253), environment (0.342), health (0.304), and spiritual (0.007). The results interpreted that all those dimensions were at a moderate level of well-being excepted for spiritual was found was weak.

Furthermore, to assess the significance of the weight, a bootstrapping was conducted, and the T-values should be greater than 1.96. The finding revealed that the economic (t -values =5.141), environment (t -values =6.668), health (t -value=5.092), spiritual (t -values= 4.969), exception for emotion (t -values =0.283) found less than 1.96. The emotional dimension is not significant to well-being. Recommended by Sarstedt, Ringle, & Hair, (2017) when an indicator has no significant weight, and the outer loading is below 0.50, the study should decide whether to retain or delete the indicator by examining its theoretical relevance and potential content overlap with other indicators of the same construct. In this study, the emotion was not significant, and but the prior study remained as the construct for well-being, then this study included the emotion factor as a determinant for well-being.

Table 5. Significance values well-being

Relationship	Outer Weight	SE	T-Value	Result
Economic -> Well-being	0.260	0.172	5.141	Supported
Emotion -> Well-being	0.253	0.013	0.283	Not Supported
Environment -> Well-being	0.342	0.252	6.668	Supported
Health -> Well-being	0.304	0.188	5.092	Supported
Spiritual -> Well-being	0.007	0.149	4.969	Supported

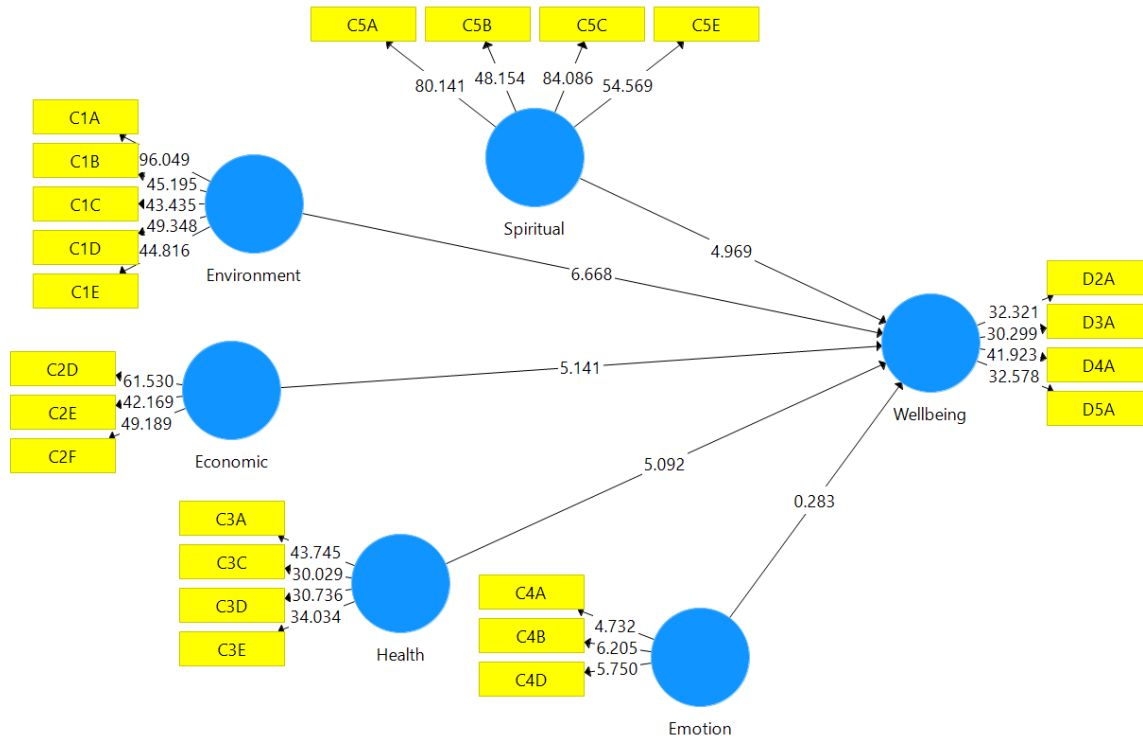


Figure 2. Second-order formative measurement model

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study aimed at data analysis used to estimate and interpret formative second-order constructs of five constructs of well-being in Figure 2 with a study among 1306 of residents in Selangor. The finding revealed that the economic dimension, environment dimension, health dimension, and spiritual dimension were significant to well-being except for the emotion dimension was not significant to well-being. The environment showed the most significant factor (*t*-value =6.668), followed by economic (*t*-value =5.141), health (*t*-value =5.092), spiritual *t*-value =4.969). The implication of the findings highlights the assessment for the study might use the formative second order of measurement model. A step and interpretation of this study guide the researcher to further explained the result of the study.

DISCUSSION

The most significant dimension found in this study is the environment dimension. Most of the respondents agree that a conducive environment is vital in determining community well-being, which in line with Musa et al. (2018) study. The questions that we probed are on the respondents' perceptions of having a great environment, such as the availability of space for the young and the senior citizens. We also do not forget to mind the issues of the poor regardless of their ethnic and minorities. Besides, recycling centers are of importance in determining the Selangor community's well-being. Secondly, there is no doubt; the economic dimension is also paramount. Povey et al., 2016; Di Tella et al., 2001; and Dwyer, 2016) have the same opinion. Based on the questions asked in the questionnaire, the Selangorians agreed that they should have some savings, life insurance, health insurance, and good pay that commensurate with their qualifications. These matters are important to ensure their economic status to embrace well-being. The next crucial dimension is health. If one is not healthy, the community's well-being is

hard to achieve. The study indicated that most of the respondents are satisfied with their health status; they have enough energy to get things done daily and generally have health problems. This scenario could be due to a wonderful environment that they feel, and Selangor claims to have world-class medical centers. The fourth key dimension is spiritual. Our finding is concurrent with Phillip and Wong (2017) and Gatzweiler et al. (2017) study. The majority of the Selangorians are Muslims, followed by Buddhists, Hindus, and Christians. Most of them admitted that they pray and have fulfilled their responsibilities as required by their religions. They also believed that they have a strong belief in their respective religion that they should not only think good but do good. Having a strong religious belief is key to great community well-being. Despite the caution and controversy about the 'robustness' of proof and reluctance to publish non-significant findings that have undergone rigorous statistical tests, the number, and variety of different studies showing the different ways in which interaction with nature has a positive impact on well-being should be critical. Interestingly, our study found out that the emotional dimension is not significant to the well-being dimension. This study contradicts with Townsend (2016) study. This scenario probably is due to the questions asked about their emotional elements, such as whether or not they experienced anger, worry, or stress lately. They could have felt all those emotions due to personal issues that are not necessarily related to the overall well-being. As long as everyone understands and respects each other, well-being is accessible across a large range of possible domains of life, but almost always includes some variances of environment, economy, health, and security. The most important first step in assessing well-being is always to consider its purpose in terms of the choices for action that it can measure or distinguish. Whether the objective is to identify how community-scale activities might affect or impact, normative preferable individual behavior, to reduce inequalities between and within states or across generations, this is not a technical decision but an idea and political one which needs to be formulated by the local governance. Thus, we strongly recommend scholars, policymakers, and state governments to pay closer attention to these variables that enhance Selangorians' well-being.

LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Well-being can be seen as evaluations of conditions in a community, specifically here in Selangor, which involves various community processes, action, and government. However, it is equally important to assess subjective perceptions of community well-being and resilience in quality of life research (Turksever & Atalik, 2001) because perceptions have their authenticity. Although perceived well-being is only modest in this research, it is not necessarily Selangorians are not actively engaged with the well-being.

FUTURE RESEARCH AND IMPLICATIONS

While the current research examines well-being in terms of economics, emotion, environment, health, and spirituality, future research should address other factors that influence the well-being of a state. Here, we do not specifically look into the culture. Probably, future research can include other potential determinants of well-being. Researchers could also tap on a specific community well-being study. Research on social well-being could also be of interest. Moreover, a comparative study of well-being from other developing countries might provide insights into the enhancement of overall well-being in Selangor.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to thank the Selangor State Government for funding of this paper under grant no: SUK GPPSTI/2017/002.

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