Community Vitality

Sangay Chophe*

5.1 Introduction

The study of measuring community vitality is relatively a new subject. Not much research has been done on it. For meaningful development and vitality of the community the emphasis on the quality of life of the community, not just on the economic aspects of it, is clearly important. This is because research has shown that an increase in material well-being over time does not increase the happiness of the people (Blanchflower and Oswald 2000; Diener and Oishi 2000; Myers 2000; Kenny 1999; Lane 1998; and Easterlin 1974, 1995; cited in Frey and Stutzer 2002). An increase in income definitely raises the happiness of the people with low income, but stops to do so beyond a certain level (Inglehart 1999). Besides an excessive focus on material development has led to a diminished sense of community in some countries.

Definitions of community are varied, but show three general characteristics: it is a social group, people in it have common activities and experiences, and it occupies a definite territorial area (Hoffer 1931). This paper is mainly concerned with geographic communities of people living in villages and towns.

This study pertains to determinants and methods that could maximize well-being and vitality of the community, as well as revitalize moribund communities. It examines interactions and relationships within and, to some extent, across communities. By looking at specific dimensions of community vitality, such as giving and volunteering, social cohesion, safety, family, and duration of stay in the community; this paper gives some ideas on the state of community vitality in Bhutan. Relationships between these variables are also analysed.

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5.2 Survey

The survey on community vitality covered the following: 1) Duration of stay in the community: To track mobility of the respondents, and their contribution to the community, they were asked how long they lived in the current community. 2) Giving and volunteering: Questions were asked to record voluntary help, types of volunteerism provided, number of days volunteered, satisfaction with voluntary activity, and the proportion of people who donated money and goods. Respondents were also asked to provide monetary values of the donations. 3) Social cohesion: Questions on sense of belonging, sense of trust, sense of fairness, frequency of socializing, rate of labour exchange, sense of enmity in the community, and perception of neighbourhood as a place where neighbours help each other were asked as part of social cohesion. 4) Family: Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed to seven issues related to their families. They were also asked as to how many relatives lived in the same community as theirs. 5) Safety: Respondents were asked if they had been a victim of crime and had seen others being victimized during the past 12 months. The sense of subjective safety was disaggregated at three levels: feelings of safety from human harm, wild animals and spirits. This was done because fear from wild animals and spirits obscured our result on feelings of safety from human harm in the pilot survey.

Subjective happiness, on a scale of 1 to 10, quality of life, and health status are used as dependent variables to find the relationship with variables of community vitality.

5.3 Results

5.3.1 Giving and Volunteering

5.3.1.1 Voluntary help

Giving and volunteering contributes directly to community health by helping the needy and the underprivileged. 51.9%, or 493 respondents, of the total respondents (n=949) reported volunteering in various forms in the past 12 months. Per capita days volunteered was approximately 10.5 days. It was calculated in days because it was not feasible to calculate in hours in Bhutan, especially in rural areas. In rural areas when people volunteer in a day they either volunteer for half day or one full day. The graph given below shows the percentages for various types of volunteerism provided in terms of labour:
Figure 5.1 Types of volunteerism provided during the past 12 months

The most common forms of volunteerism provided are help provided during times of death in the family (72.2%), religious rituals (69.6%), annual chhokus or rituals (67.1%), construction of house (58.6%), paddy transplantation (50.1%), and so on. The figures are higher for these activities because of the continuing traditional practices of helping each other in times of adversity, plantations, religious ceremonies, etc., which precludes payments for the labour accrued. 91.5% of the respondents reported that their experience as volunteers was satisfying.

The above findings show that people volunteer in informal ways. Formal voluntary organisations have just begun to develop in some urban areas but have not yet been actively involved in volunteerism.

5.3.1.1 Cross tabulation between voluntary help and demographic variables

Of 493 respondents who said they volunteered during the past 12 months, 56.9% (272) were men and 46.9% (221) were women. Probable reason for this could be that the kind of help they provided mostly required the use of physical strength.
Table 5.1 Voluntary help by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Voluntary help</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within gender</td>
<td>56.9%</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within gender</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
<td>53.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within gender</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of age, a high proportion of those who volunteered were in the age range of 18-45 years. See table 5.2 for details.

Table 5.2 Voluntary help by age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age category</th>
<th>Voluntary help</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-17</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within age category</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-30</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within age category</td>
<td>50.4%</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within age category</td>
<td>61.0%</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within age category</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 60</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within age category</td>
<td>39.7%</td>
<td>60.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within age category</td>
<td>52.0%</td>
<td>48.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When we analyse volunteerism in terms of levels of income of the respondents we observe that those in the highest income bracket (income more than Nu. 100,000) provided comparatively less voluntary help than other respondents.

Table 5.3 Voluntary help by income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income category</th>
<th>Voluntary help</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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When we analyse volunteerism in terms of the residence of the respondents we observe that those in the rural areas provided more voluntary help than those from urban areas: 55.2% of the rural respondents provided voluntary help whereas only 35.4% of the urban respondents provided voluntary help. Given the high proportion of rural respondents who volunteered, it could be said that the labour shortage they face must be eased to some extent by the prevalence of volunteerism.

**Table 5.4 Voluntary help by area of residence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of residence</th>
<th>Voluntary help</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within area of residence</td>
<td>55.2%</td>
<td>44.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within area of residence</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
<td>64.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within area of residence</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysing volunteerism by dzongkhags, we observe that respondents from Thimphu volunteered less than those from other districts. Volunteerism arises largely out of a sense of belonging one has towards one’s community and desires to help others; these elements either do not exist or if they do, they are very low in Thimphu.
5.3.1.1.2 Voluntary help and happiness

The data show that respondents who had volunteered have a higher level of mean happiness than those who did not. The mean happiness level for those who volunteered was 6.23 whereas it was 6.05 for those who did not. This could mainly be due to sense of satisfaction one derives from engaging in such activities.

Table 5.5 Voluntary help and happiness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did you provide voluntary help?</th>
<th>Mean happiness level</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>S.D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6.23</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>1.951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>6.05</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>2.053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6.15</td>
<td>949</td>
<td>2.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.1.2 Donation

Respondents provided donation in the form of both money and goods. 88.7% of the respondents (n=950) provided some form of donations. Estimating the value of donation in goods and adding it up with the monetary donations, the total value of donations was approximately Nu. 2,697,942 out of which Nu. 990,249 were accounted for by donations in goods. The per capita donation was Nu. 2840. Figure 5.3 shows donations made in goods and money to various institutions and individuals.
5.3.1.2.1  Donation by area of residence and dzongkhags

Proportion of respondents from rural areas who provided donations were much higher than those from urban areas: 90.5% of the rural respondents provided donation as compared to 79.9% of the urban respondents.

Table 5.6 Donation by area of residence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of residence</th>
<th>Did you provide donation?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>716</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within area of residence</td>
<td>90.5%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within area of residence</td>
<td>79.9%</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>843</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within area of residence</td>
<td>88.7%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When we analyse donation in terms of dzongkhags where respondents lived, we observe that the proportion of respondents who donated were higher in Pemagatshel and Dagana, and lowest in Thimphu. This shows
that the willingness to help other people is relatively less among the respondents from Thimphu.

**Figure 5.4 Donation by dzongkhags**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dzongkhag</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pemagatshel</td>
<td>95.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagana</td>
<td>94.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haa</td>
<td>92.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tashigang</td>
<td>92.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samdrupjongkhar</td>
<td>90.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasa</td>
<td>89.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhemgang</td>
<td>88.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wangduephodrang</td>
<td>88.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsirang</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samtse</td>
<td>83.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tashiyangtse</td>
<td>78.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thimphu</td>
<td>78.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.1.2.2  Donation and happiness

Respondents who donated had mean happiness level higher than those who did not donate. The mean happiness level was 6.17 for those who donated and 5.95 for those who did not donate. This could mainly be due to the merit one accumulates when one helps the needy and the underprivileged.

**Table 5.7 Donation and happiness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did you provide donation?</th>
<th>Mean happiness level</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>S.D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6.17</td>
<td>843</td>
<td>1.981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5.95</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>2.152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6.15</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>2.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.2  Social Cohesion

As mentioned before, several measures were used to gauge social cohesion: sense of belonging, sense of trust, sense of fairness, frequency of socializing, rate of labour exchange, sense of enmity in the community,
and perception of neighbourhood as a place where neighbours help each other.

5.3.2.1 **Sense of belonging**

Sense of belonging prevents social isolation by enabling the individuals to feel that they have a community that values them and of which they form an integral part. Sense of belonging fosters volunteerism and other acts that contribute to well-being of communities. 60.9% of the respondents (n=947) said that they have very strong sense of belonging to their local community.

5.3.2.1.1 **Cross tabulation between sense of belonging and demographic variables**

The data show that the proportion of respondents who have a very strong sense of belonging to their community increases with age. 82.5% of the respondents above the age of 60 reported that they have very strong sense of belonging to the local community whereas there were only 45.8% of the respondents within the age group 0-17 reporting very strong sense of belonging to the local community. See table 5.8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age category</th>
<th>Sense of belonging to your local community</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very strong</td>
<td>Somewhat strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-17 Count</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within age category</td>
<td>45.8%</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-30 Count</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within age category</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
<td>43.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-45 Count</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within age category</td>
<td>66.9%</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-60 Count</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within age category</td>
<td>70.3%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 60 Count</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within age category</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Count</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within age category</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data also show inverse relationship between the sense of belonging to one’s community and the respondents’ level of education. Proportion of respondents who said that their sense of belonging to the community...
was very strong was highest for uneducated ones. 72.1% of them said that they have very strong sense of belonging to their local community while only 33.8% of most formally educated respondents said the same.

Table 5.9 Sense of belonging to the local community by education level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education level</th>
<th>Sense of belonging to your local community</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very strong</td>
<td>Somewhat strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No formal education</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>396</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within education level</td>
<td>72.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>76</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within education level</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-10</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>62</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within education level</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within education level</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further education</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within education level</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>575</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within education level</td>
<td>60.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents’ sense of belonging was higher in rural areas than in urban areas, which implies that urban respondents are less likely to contribute to their community. 67.6% of the rural respondents said that they have very strong sense of belonging to their local community whereas only 26.9% of the urban respondents said the same.

Table 5.10 Sense of belonging to the local community by area of residence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of residence</th>
<th>Sense of belonging to your local community</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very strong</td>
<td>Somewhat strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>535</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gross National Happiness Survey Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% within area of residence</th>
<th>67.6%</th>
<th>29.7%</th>
<th>2.7%</th>
<th>100.0%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban Count</td>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within area of residence</td>
<td></td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>64.1%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Count</td>
<td></td>
<td>577</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within area of residence</td>
<td></td>
<td>60.9%</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysing the respondents’ sense of belonging by dzongkhags that they lived in, we observe that the proportion of respondents who have a very strong sense of belonging to their community is lowest in Thimphu and highest in Haa. See figure 5.5.

**Figure 5.5 Sense of belonging by dzongkhags**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dzongkhag</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haa</td>
<td>83.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasas</td>
<td>75.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samtse</td>
<td>71.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tashigang</td>
<td>68.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pemagatshel</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhemgang</td>
<td>66.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wangduephodrang</td>
<td>62.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagana</td>
<td>60.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsirang</td>
<td>58.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tashiyyangtse</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samdrupjongkhar</td>
<td>49.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thimphu</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysed in terms of occupational background of the respondents, we observe that the sense of belonging was low among civil servants and corporate employees, and hence their tendency to contribute to the community would also be low. Only 33.3% of the corporate employees and 36.7% of the civil servants reported that they have very strong sense of belonging to their local community respectively.
Table 5.11 Sense of belonging to the local community by occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Sense of belonging to your local community</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very strong</td>
<td>Somewhat strong</td>
<td>Weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within occupation</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>Count 436</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within occupation</td>
<td>72.2%</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trader/Shopkeeper/Businessmen</td>
<td>Count 28</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within occupation</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students/Trainees</td>
<td>Count 49</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within occupation</td>
<td>37.7%</td>
<td>56.2%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Servants</td>
<td>Count 18</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within occupation</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
<td>53.1%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GYT/DYT members</td>
<td>Count 17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within occupation</td>
<td>65.4%</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monks and Gomchens</td>
<td>Count 7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within occupation</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate employees</td>
<td>Count 3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within occupation</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count 565</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within occupation</td>
<td>61.8%</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.2.1.2 Sense of belonging and contribution

The data show a positive relationship between sense of belonging and volunteering. Proportion of respondents who volunteered is higher among those who felt strong sense of belonging to their community. 54.7% of the respondents who said they had a very strong sense of belonging to their community volunteered, while only 31.4% of those
who said they had a weak sense of belonging to their community volunteered.

Table 5.12 Sense of belonging to your local community and voluntary help

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sense of belonging to your local community</th>
<th>Voluntary help</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very strong</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within sense of belonging</td>
<td>54.7%</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat strong</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within sense of belonging</td>
<td>49.9%</td>
<td>50.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within sense of belonging</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>68.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within sense of belonging</td>
<td>52.1%</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly, when the sense of belonging to the local community is stronger the rate of donation is higher as shown in table 5.13.

Table 5.13 Sense of belonging to your local community and donation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sense of belonging to your local community</th>
<th>Did you provide donation?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very strong</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within sense of belonging</td>
<td>90.1%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat strong</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within sense of belonging</td>
<td>88.4%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within sense of belonging</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>841</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within sense of belonging</td>
<td>88.8%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.2.1.3 Sense of belonging and happiness and quality of life

Generally, weak sense of belonging results in a tendency to feel out of place, and this would eventually decrease one’s happiness and quality of life. The figure 5.6 shows that respondents who reported weak sense of belonging to the community have lower mean happiness as compared to
those who had strong sense of belonging. Likewise, respondents who said that they had a weak sense of belonging to their community had a lower quality of life than those who reported somewhat strong or very strong sense of belonging.

Figure 5.6 Sense belonging and happiness and quality of life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sense of belonging to your local community</th>
<th>Mean happiness level</th>
<th>Mean life quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>2.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat strong</td>
<td>5.97</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very strong</td>
<td>6.32</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.2.2 Trust

Trust between individuals has been found to play an important role in determining their well-being. A study conducted by John F. Helliwell of the University of British Columbia found that “average well-being would increase by 0.03 on a ten-point scale for each 0.01 increase in the proportion of the population judging that people in general can be trusted”\(^1\). Conflicts ensue if there is a lack of trust, which would then lower the well-being of the society. On the other hand, with increased trust we can expect stronger relationships, which provide the fundamental basis for collective happiness.

The data show that trust in neighbours was comparatively higher than trust in people in general. However, the levels of trust are low for both. The respondents attributed the low level of trust to the presence of discrimination, increase in self-interest, migration, and lack of cooperation in the community, rise of individualism, low level of socialization, among others.

\(^1\) The data contains 87, 806 observations covering forty-six different countries drawn from three successive waves of the World Values Survey.
Gross National Happiness Survey Findings

Figure 5.7 Distribution of trust

5.3.2.2.1 Cross tabulation between trust and demographic variables

There were more men than women who reported that most people can be trusted in general: 32.9% of the male respondents reported that they trust most of the people as against 27.2% of the female respondents.

Table 5.14 Trust in people in general by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>How much do you trust Bhutanese People in general?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust most of them</td>
<td>Trust some of them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>156</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32.9%</td>
<td>45.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>126</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27.2%</td>
<td>46.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>282</td>
<td>430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30.1%</td>
<td>45.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents above the age of 60 years tended to trust most people in general as compared to respondents of other age groups. The lowest
percentage of respondents reporting that most people can be trusted was observed for respondents in the age group of 18-30 years.

**Table 5.15 Trust in general by age category**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age category</th>
<th>How much do you trust Bhutanese people in general?</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust most of them</td>
<td>Trust some of them</td>
<td>Trust a few of them</td>
<td>Trust none of them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-17</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within age category</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-30</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within age category</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>49.5%</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within age category</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within age category</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>41.3%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 60</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within age category</td>
<td>45.9%</td>
<td>37.7%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within age category</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>46.0%</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A low percentage of civil servants and businessmen reported that they trust most of the people in Bhutan; 18.4% of the civil servants and 15.4% of the businessmen reported that they trust most people in Bhutan. This low level of trust could hamper the functioning of bureaucracy and business by minimising the level of cooperation within the organisation.

**Table 5.16 Trust in people in general by occupation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>How much do you trust Bhutanese people in general?</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust most of them</td>
<td>Trust some of them</td>
<td>Trust a few of them</td>
<td>Trust none of them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td>38.9%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td>33.8%</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trader/Shopkeeper/Business-men</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>52.3%</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students/Trainees</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td>25.2%</td>
<td>52.7%</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
<td>.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Servants</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>55.1%</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GYT/DYT members</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monks and Gomchens</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate employees</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td>45.6%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rural respondents tended to trust most of the people in Bhutan much more than urban respondents: 33.5% of the rural respondents trust most of the people as against 13.2% of the urban respondents.
When trust was analysed in terms of dzongkhags where the respondents lived, we observed that Thimphu had lowest proportion of respondents who trusted most people in general; only 12.5% of them said they trusted most of the people in Bhutan. This shows that a high proportion of budget allocated to Thimphu for administrative and economic purposes hasn’t brought about corresponding increase in social capital, as measured by trust.

Figure 5.9 Trust in general by dzongkhags
5.3.2.3 Neighbourhood as a place where neighbours help each other

When asked if they considered their neighbourhood as a place where neighbours help each other, 48.5% reported that neighbours always help each other, 47.6% reported that neighbours sometimes help each other, 2.5% reported that neighbours rarely help each other, and 1.4% reported that neighbours never help each other.

5.3.2.3.1 Cross tabulation between neighbours helping each other and demographic variables

As shown in the table 5.17, 52.6% of the rural respondents reported that neighbours always help each other whereas only 27.6% of the urban respondents said the same. This indicates that families in the urban areas are more nuclear and individualistic.

Table 5.17 Neighbours helping each other by area of residence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of residence</th>
<th>Would you say this is a neighbourhood where neighbours help each other?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>44.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td>63.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>48.5%</td>
<td>47.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is interesting to note that Thimphu had the lowest proportion of respondents (25.9%) who said that neighbours always help each other in Thimphu and highest proportion of respondents (7.1%) who said that their neighbours never helped each other. This again indicates that social capital is low in Thimphu. See figure 5.10.
The data also show an inverse relationship between income and incidences of helping each other in the neighbourhood. Proportion of respondents who said that they always helped each other was much higher for low income respondents: 50.1% of the respondents that had annual household income below 15,000 said that they always helped each other whereas only 36.4% of the respondents with annual household income of more than Nu. 100,000 said the same (See table 5.18 for details). This could be partly because people tend to be more individualistic when income rises. Research has shown a strong correlation between individualism and income (Diener, Diener & Diener 1995 cited in Hirata 2006, p. 48).

**Table 5.18 Neighbours helping each other by income**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income category</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Would you say this is a neighbourhood where neighbours help each other?</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 15000</td>
<td></td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>231</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within income category</td>
<td>50.1%</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15001- 50000</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within</td>
<td>54.6%</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income category</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>50001-100000</td>
<td>100000-200000</td>
<td>&gt;200000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within income category</td>
<td></td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>56.0%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;100000</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within income category</td>
<td></td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>55.8%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within income category</td>
<td></td>
<td>48.3%</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.2.4 Labour exchange

Labour exchange is fundamental to building a strong relationship within the community unlike monetary exchange where the relationship ends with the payment for services received. In Bhutan, people exchange labour for activities such as farming, constructing houses, etc. 70.4% of the respondents had exchanged labour with their community members in the past 12 months.

5.3.2.4.1 Labour exchange by area of residence

Exchange of labour is more common in rural areas than in urban areas as shown in table 5.19.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of residence</th>
<th>Labour exchange by area of residence</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within area of residence</td>
<td>81.8%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within area of residence</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>668</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within area of residence</td>
<td>70.4%</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.2.4.2 Labour exchange and trust in neighbours

Exchange of labour helps to build trust between individuals. More interactions people have through exchange of labour, more they get to
know each other and trust more. As we can see in figure 5.11, proportion of respondents who said that they trust most of their neighbours was higher for those respondents who exchanged labour with their neighbours during the past 12 months than those who didn’t.

**Figure 5.11 Labour exchange and trust in neighbours**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did you exchange labour?</th>
<th>Trust most of them</th>
<th>Trust some of them</th>
<th>Trust a few of them</th>
<th>Trust none of them</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**5.3.2.5 Socialization**

Socializing with friends and neighbours helps to maintain and nurture social networks, which have often been referred to as social capital. Further, it creates opportunities for enlarging one’s social networks, which could in turn increase the degree of social contact, trust, socializing activities, and reduce the probability of being isolated.

People socialized more with their friends than with their relatives and neighbours. 51.5% of the respondents socialized with friends, 45% with neighbours, and only 29.4% with relatives a few times a week in the last month.
5.3.2.5.1 Socialization by gender and area of residence

People socialized with neighbours more in rural than in urban areas. Further, women tended to socialize more than men in rural as well as urban area as shown in figure 5.12.

Socialization with neighbours by gender and area of residence

Similarly, people socialize with relatives more in rural than in urban areas, and women socialized with relatives more than men in rural as well as urban area as shown in figure 5.13.
Socializing with friends is more common among urban respondents than their rural counterparts. On the whole, men in both urban and rural areas socialized with their friends more than their women counterparts. See figure 5.14.

**Figure 5.13 Socialization with relatives**

**Figure 5.14 Socialization with friends**
Gross National Happiness Survey Findings

5.3.2.5.2 Socialization by happiness and quality of life

A positive relationship was observed between socializing with friends and happiness and quality of life. The graph given below shows that socializing with friends increases happiness level and it also increases quality of life.

Figure 5.15 Socialization by happiness and life quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often did you socialize with your friends in the last month?</th>
<th>Socialization by happiness and life quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not in the last month</td>
<td>5.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>3.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few times a month</td>
<td>Mean happiness level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few times a week</td>
<td>Mean life quality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.2.6 Sense of fairness

50.6% of the respondents said that they were always treated fairly by the people in their community and 44.7% said they were fairly treated only sometimes. The term fairness is usually translated as impartiality in the Bhutanese context, such as refraining from favouring relatives and friends in employment, scholarships, etc.

5.3.2.6.1 Sense of fairness by area of residence

Proportion of respondents who said that they were fairly treated by the members of their community were higher in rural than in urban areas: 53.6% of the rural respondents reported that people in their community always treated each other fairly as against 35.5% of the urban respondents.
Table 5.21 Sense of fairness by area of residence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of residence</th>
<th>People in this community treat you fairly</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within area of residence</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
<td>42.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within area of residence</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
<td>57.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within area of residence</td>
<td>50.6%</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.2.7 Sense of enmity

An increase in enmity in the community would adversely affect the progress of the community since enmity would prevent people from doing things that could have collective benefits. 12.2% of the respondents (n=950) reported that enmity aroused in the community in the past 12 months. The reasons given by them for an enmity in the community are given in table 5.22. The main reasons were damage to crops by domestic animals, alcohol and dispute over land related issues.

Table 5.22 Reasons for enmity in the community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. no</th>
<th>Reasons for enmity in the community</th>
<th>% of respondents (n=116)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Black magic</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Political disagreements</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dispute over children's fight</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sexual misconduct</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Dispute over irrigation water supply</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jealousy b/w husband &amp; wife over illicit affairs</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Dispute over land related issues</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Damage to the crops by domestic animals</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3.3 Family

5.3.3.1 Mean family index

Seven statements have been used to capture the extent of relationship in family, and these statements portray the ideal type of family one would wish to have. Good family is an indispensable ingredient for mental as well as physical well-being and quality of life. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they agree, disagree, or neither agree nor disagree with the following statements:

1. The members of the family really care about each other
2. You wish you were not part of your family
3. Members of your family argue too much
4. You feel like a stranger in your family
5. You have enough time to spend with your family
6. There is a lot of understanding in your family
7. Your family is a real source of comfort to you

Each statement was scored on a scale of 1 to 3, with 1 being disagree, 2 neutral, and 3 agree. Upon computation of the scores, the mean family index was found to be 2.82 (S.D. 0.22) out of 3. 96.2% reported that the members of the family really care for each other; 92.8% reported that they did not wish they were not part of their family; 72.8% disagreed that the members of the family argue too much; 94% disagreed that they feel like a stranger in their family; 67.1% agreed that they have enough time to spend with their family; 87.6% agreed that there is a lot of understanding in the family; and 94.8% agreed that family is a real source of comfort.

5.3.3.1.1 Family relationship and social support

When the family relationship is good social support is more likely to increase. The figures 5.16 and 5.17 shows that with the increase in family index (higher the index means better family relationship) the frequency of social support in times of sickness increases, and, similarly, with the increase in family index the frequency of social support in times of problems, such as financial and emotional problems, also increases.
5.3.3.1.2 Family relationship and health status

When the family relationship is good the chances of receiving physical and psychological support during the times of problems is higher. This could result in better health status. Figure 5.18 shows that respondents who have higher mean family index have better health status.
5.3.3.2 Size of the relatives

To determine the size of the relatives with whom they had contacts in the past month, respondents were asked how many of them live in the same community, excluding those living in the same household. The result is shown in the table given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Per cent (n=950)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All or most</td>
<td>39.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About half</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

39.8% of the respondents had all or most of their relatives living in the same community. The size of the relatives living in the same community was assessed because a high percentage of relatives living within the same community could enable individuals to get support during times of difficulties, and it would also facilitate social contact. Studies have found that having frequent contacts with extended family members increases the subjective well-being of individuals (Helliwell and Putnam 2005).

5.3.3.2.1 Size of the relatives and social support

The graph shown below supports the claim that a higher percentage of relatives living in the same community increases social support. It is clear
from the figure 5.19 that when the number of relatives living in the same community decreases the social support also decreases, and vice versa.

**Figure 5.19 Extent of relatives living in the same community and social support**

![Extent of relatives living in the same community and social support](image)

5.3.4 Safety

Safety consists of two variables: victimization of crime and subjective assessment of one’s feelings of safety.

5.3.4.1 Victimization of crime

An attempt has been made to record unreported crime, such as family violence and sexual assault, which can be attributed either due to fear of crime or being embarrassed to report it. Only 1.4%, or 13 respondents, of the total respondents (n=950) reported that they were victimized due to crime in the past twelve months but when asked if they had seen other people being victimized, 25.3%, or 240 respondents (n=950), responded that they saw such incidences. This indicates that there are more people being victimized, and that some cases are unreported.

The percentages of respondents who said that they were victims of various crimes and that they have seen other being victimized are shown in the figure 5.20. As it is evident from the graph there is a large difference between self reported victimization and assessment of other people being victimized with regard to family violence, vandalism, robbery and sexual assault, indicating that people are not revealing the truth in these matters.
Figure 5.20 Self reported victimization and assessment of other people being victimized as % of those being victimized and seeing others being victimized respectively

5.3.4.2 Subjective assessment of safety

The subjective assessment of one’s safety when walking alone in the neighbourhood after dark was disaggregated at three levels: safety from human harm, wild animals, and ghosts. The data shows that the proportion of respondents who always felt safe from human harm is higher than those who always felt safe from wild animals and ghosts.

Table 5.24 Subjective feelings of safety as % of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Always safe</th>
<th>Usually safe</th>
<th>Rarely safe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human harm</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild animals</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghosts/spirits</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.4.2.1 Safety from human harm by dzongkhags

When we disaggregated the fear from human harms by dzongkhags, we observed that the proportion of respondents feeling rarely safe from human harm was high in Thimphu compared to other dzongkhags. This calls for the need to revise and frame appropriate policies to address this issue in Thimphu.
Table 5.25 Safety from human harm as % of respondents by dzongkhags

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dzongkhags</th>
<th>Always safe</th>
<th>Usually safe</th>
<th>Rarely safe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haa</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhemgang</td>
<td>72.9</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pemagatshel</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tashiyangtse</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wangduephodrang</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samtse</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tashigang</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasa</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagana</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samdrupjongkhar</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsirang</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thimphu</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.5 Duration of stay in the community

Longer duration of stay in a community increases sense of belonging, willingness to contribute, and increases the level of trust. 2.9%, which is 27 respondents, have lived less than one year in the same community. They are migrants or mobile people who move from one place to another.

Table 5.26 Duration of stay in the community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of stay</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 to 1 year</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 to 5 years</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10 years</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 10 years</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>78.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>947</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.5.1 Duration of stay in the community by area of residence

10.8% of the urban respondents had lived in the community for less than 1 year, which is more than the rural respondents. This indicates that more people migrate to urban areas. Migration decreases trust and sense of belonging, and this would ultimately affects one’s overall sense of well-being. Migration also increases the number of nuclear families.

Table 5.27 Duration of stay in the community by area of residence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of residence</th>
<th>0 to 1 year</th>
<th>2 to 5 years</th>
<th>6 to 10 years</th>
<th>More than 10 years</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
### 5.3.5.2 Duration of stay in the community and donation

As mentioned before, longer duration stay in the community increases contribution to the community. Figure 5.21 shows that respondents who had lived for longer duration in the community have provided more donations than those who had lived for shorter duration.

**Figure 5.21 Duration of stay in the community and donation**

![Duration of stay in the community and donation](image)

### 5.4 Conclusion

Key findings and recommendations of this sample study include the following:

1. Almost all of the respondents volunteered informally. Respondents in the highest income bracket provided comparatively less voluntary help than other income levels, and
urban respondents also provided less voluntary help than rural respondents.

2. Respondents donated in the form of money as well as in goods, and the per capita donation was Nu. 2,840.

3. The sense of belonging to the local community was low among civil servant and corporate employees. The rate of volunteering and donation was higher when the sense of belonging to the local community was stronger. Respondents who had weak sense of belonging tended to have lower level of happiness and quality of life than those who had somewhat or very strong sense of belonging.

4. The level of trust was low at 30.1%. It was even lower for civil servants and businessmen; this could adversely affect the effectiveness of bureaucracy and business.

5. 48.5% reported that neighbours always help each other, and half of the respondents reported that they have always been treated fairly by the people in their community.

6. Labour exchange increases trust, which in turn builds relationships.

7. People socialized more with their friends than with their neighbours and relatives. Positive relationship between socialization and level of happiness was observed. Similar relationship was observed between socialization and quality of life.

8. The family relationship, on the whole, was strong; the mean family index was 2.82 out of 3. The data show that having a good family and more relatives living in the same community increases social support, and also results in better health status.

9. Proportion of respondents who said that they saw others being victimized by crime was higher than the ones who said that they were themselves the victims of crimes. This indicates that some crimes are not reported to the police. The proportion of respondents feeling unsafe was higher for Thimphu than other dzongkhags.

10. Longer duration of stay in the community increases contribution to the community. The rate of volunteering, donation, level of trust, helping neighbours, and sense of fairness are all low in urban areas, and, specifically, it is lower in Thimphu.

11. To curb enmity in the community, damage to the crops by wild animals, alcohol, and dispute for land related issues should be properly addressed.
12. Allocation of relatively high amount of budgets to Thimphu for various administrative and economic purposes hasn’t brought about corresponding increase in social capital. This suggests that in Thimphu more budget needs to be allocated to promote social and cultural capital that contributes to happiness.

References


