

# Project Priority for Community Focusing on the Residents

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## Abstract

*The purpose of this study is to explore the factors affecting the community well-being of residents through empirical analysis. Rather than just identifying the variables that promote residents' subjective happiness, we focused on factors affecting residents' living condition. In order to empirically investigate the influencing factors, we constructed the analysis data using the Gyeonggi-do survey. We analyzed it by using linear regression analysis. Through the effects of influencing factor analyzed, we could find implications for public project's priority in budget distribution. It could be suggested that local public projects for residents should be focused on improving programs such as job satisfaction, resident health, and neighborhood relations in order to effectively raise community well-being level.*

**Key words:** Community Well-being, Residents, Local Government, Priority, Budget Allocation.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Many local political leaders have been committed to improving the quality of life of their inhabitants and pledge to activate local economies and to expand social infrastructure. These factors can be crucial success factors. Because of rapid industrial modernization, the overcrowding of large cities and the hollowing of rural areas has accelerated in Korea. As a result, the relationship-oriented life of residents, such as feeling of belonging, neighborhood exchange, and local culture, has weakened. In particular, the individualization has a very serious negative impact on regional happiness that can be gained through living with positive neighbors. There is growing interest in the importance of communities based on the shared perception of these phenomena. Especially the village community, where neighboring relationships are institutionalization, is recognized as a place where interaction of residents is carried out spontaneously and where a network of people can be expanded to play an important role. Well-being is a core value that penetrates an individual's life, and at the same time, well-being sense among neighbors is a value that could be central to the formation, operation, and development of a community. The residents of the area may feel a sense of security in their lives and secure sustainability through the growth of the formal community supported by local government. Therefore, community well-being can be seriously discussed in the public domain.

Community well-being is a concept that can be considered in relation to certain area and residents. It is

frequently used in relation to subjective well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction. Since the 2000s, researches have been actively carried out in academia to measure local happiness and satisfaction. Especially community well-being can be understood as being related to the quality of life or satisfaction in the community. There is some controversy as to the definition of community well-being, which can be understood as the happiness of residents in the community. Conceptually, a community is based on local space, but it is essentially a network of relationships in which people interact together within the realm of everyday life. Noya et al. have found that people's intentions, beliefs, resources, preferences, demands, and other conditions are somewhat common and affect their behavior in community [1]. A community can be defined as a network of people gathering and communicating with each other in a specific space, forming and continuing emotional ties with neighbors. The community has been a major research topic for sociologists. The community needs to try to improve the connection among people, to resolve the conflicts among the residents, and to increase the availability of community jobs. Therefore, it is clear that the problem of an inhabitant's happiness at the community level is a public agenda that should be addressed in the process of local government policy [2].

OECD has defined well-being as "a good mental state," a comprehensive concept that is broader than happiness, and this mental state includes both the various evaluations of people's lives and the emotional effects on their experiences [3]. Distinguishing well-being from subjective well-being is also worthy of note [4]. Subjective well-being is measurable by asking people how satisfied they are with the living standards of life, health, safety and community network. On the other hand objective well-being is an empirically

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observable physical condition and can be measured by analyzing employment, education, democratic participation and income [5].

The concept of community well-being is very useful in terms of defining happiness factors including certain subjective happiness. This is because local governments need to consider residents both as individuals and as community members simultaneously. In addition, local government policies for residents as community members should aim not only to improve physical benefits such as welfare facilities but also to design community spaces for human beings to live more humanely. This is essential factors of local policy for communities. Because we can not mitigate conflicts, regional disorder, and inequalities without social cohesiveness and humanity [6]. Additionally, if the social integration conditions are not strengthened, urbanization may have very negative impact on the lives of children, elderly, and people with disabilities in that area [7].

What are the components of this community well-being? OECD in Better Life Initiative presents eleven measures of safety, environment, income, employment, health, housing, education, citizen participation and service accessibility. In Korea, community well-being was understood as being related to the quality of life or satisfaction in the community. According to Shin Seung Bae, the components are socio-economic and environmental conditions, community members' participation, public services, human resources, natural resources, social resources, and local administrative services [8]. Finally, the scope of research on community well-being includes the process of delivering administrative services to satisfy the diverse needs of residents [9].

The value of local government is confirmed when welfare enhancement of the residents is identified. This is because the recognition of the needs of community residents has a greater impact on local government activities in a more desirable direction [10]. Nevertheless, the leaders and officials of most local governments are trying to make a substantial improvement in the well-being of local residents, it is difficult to realize realistically what is the specific role of local governments. Because there is a difference in the specific contents of community well-being according to each region and residents [11]. Therefore, all local governments that want to improve the level of community well-being are required to analyze the priorities of demand in community units and apply them to their program design. It is a concrete policy decision making of the local government to reflect the wants of the citizen.

In modern society, each government recognizes responsibility of public services to enlarge the happiness of the people. Whether or not these responsibilities perform well, the results can be an essential legitimacy indicator of the governments [12]. Generally, a nation is made up of both central and local governments. It is the local government that is in direct contact with the daily life of the residents and exercises restricted authority on the front line. Residents can feel the legitimacy of public authority and the capacity of the local governments according to public services served [13].

Who is responsible for the happiness of citizens? This question can be understood differently depending on political

perspectives. From a liberal standpoint that emphasizes individual autonomy, each individual has certain rights and duties as the master of his own life. An individual's happiness is determined by his choice of focusing on self-responsibility [14]. However, from a social contract perspective, an individual who forms a community has a certain latent contract with the state and has rights and obligations [15], [16].

For a long time, the role of the local government has not changed a great deal. However, the priority of local government should be flexible, focusing on the satisfaction of residents' lives. Theoretically, if local residents choose their residence according to the performance of local government, customer(residents) orientated local governments can be prosperous. However, the mobility of residents in Korea is very conditional. This is because many variables such as job location, housing price, and the school district must be taken into consideration simultaneously when residents make a decision to move. Nevertheless, the residents' awareness of settlement on certain area is still crucial to local governments. Therefore, it is necessary for local governments to recognize the preferences of residents and to reflect them in local government policies.

The biggest difficulty that we face in reinforcing community well-being is in setting performance targets and then measuring these as an evaluation index in pursuing policy [17], [18]. It is indispensable to establish a process that periodically analyzes residents' demands and reflects these onto indicators of performance targets [19].

Regarding public administration and policy studies, various relational factors and material factors that affect the quality of life of residents are meaningful subjects, but there is still a lack of empirical research results at the community level. This lack of empirical data is a reason why local governments in Korea are trying just to increase settlement numbers in the region amidst the crisis of low birth rate.

This study is based on an intensive survey of residents in Gyeonggi-do, Korea's representative metropolitan government. We want to identify priorities among the various factors that determine community well-being level. The results of this study are practical in that they can be a criterion for adjusting local government spending budgets based on selecting important factors that determine the happiness of residents. In addition, through the accumulation of any case study like this, the promise of local political leaders can be revised practically, and local government projects may become more demand-oriented.

At present, most local governments, which aim at improving community well-being for their residents, are under increasing pressure to cope with soaring welfare demands. It leads local governments to focus more on effective fiscal spending. When local governments may rearrange their policies and business structures successfully, it is possible to achieve higher levels of residents' happiness with a smaller budget [20]. Based on the recognition of this perspective, the role of the local government and the direction of policy for improving the quality of a resident's life, centering on the concept of community well-being, are

first examined. We then suggest priorities after analyzing survey data.

## 2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 Literature Review

In economics, Easterlin paradox has been raised that income growth can no longer increase happiness beyond a certain level. And studies focusing on community and social capital have been actively conducted in psychology and sociology [21]. In the field of public administration, public services, public projects and policies were mainly studied, focusing on improvement of residents' satisfaction. In particular, the public service results of the government affects the satisfaction and happiness of the residents. The study of happiness or well-being in the public sphere is a measure of level and influential factors, In addition, most of the articles were analyzed by survey data, and the main focus of the studies was on the improving happiness or satisfaction and identifying the factors influencing the level of well-being [21].

First, objective and personal factors were analyzed using demographic variables such as gender, income, age, marital status, occupation, religion, housing and health status. The results of the study varied according to the analysis subject and the timing. For example, there was a result that gender was not a significant variable for happiness but the result of women being happier than men [22]. However, the higher the level of education, the greater the possession of own house, the more common the married person is happier, the more likely it is that the Korean situation. In particular, the recognition that relative income is more important than absolute income can be evaluated as a very important research result.

Second, in the research on subjective factors such as satisfaction survey, the perception of self - socio -

economicstatus was analyzed as the major factor of happiness. In addition, the value and satisfaction of work are found to be in a positive (+) relationship with happiness. The results of this study are consistent with previous research showing that individuals' perception of freedom and control over life are positively correlated with levels of happiness [23].

Thirdly, there are many research results that safety, fairness, credibility and inequality are important factors for social and subjective well-being. However, there are not many studies on how these social and subjective factors are increased through local government policies and programs [24].

Fourth, there are social and objective factors influencing happiness, such as local living conditions, government's public services and decentralization. In addition, there is also a paper analyzing the relationship between happiness and settlement using a certain measure like the characteristics of residence [25].

However, direct research using various factors and identifying the priority among them is still needed. This study is useful for policy re-design and allocation of public resources in terms of government policy. However, the difficulty of generalization still exists in causal relations between objective situation conditions and subjective well-being level [26].

### 2.2 Framework

Considering prior studies, it can be concluded that it is necessary to accumulate social subjective research cases [27]. Therefore, in this study, although it is claimed that it is continuously expanded for the people's happiness in diverse areas such as neighbor relations, personal health, job, disaster safety. Now We focus on analyzing the relative priorities of independent factors. The following variables and hypotheses were set up to reflect research objectives. The demographic characteristics of the subjects are controlled and community well-being level is used as dependent variable.

Table 1. Variable composition and contents

Name of Variable		Definition	Survey Components
Dependent variable	Community well-being	Subjective satisfaction degree with the lives of the residents in the area	Satisfaction with the present life as a whole, Current status closed to the ideal life
Independent variable	Neighborhood	Neighborhood level in the area	Helping, Neighbors' trust
	Health	Perception level of health	Recognition of health, Eating habits for health, Exercise for health
	Current job satisfaction	Current job satisfaction level	Reward and Pride, Whether material rewards are given, Stability, Aptitude and Compatibility, Recognition from acquaintances
	Disaster management	Local disaster management level	Disaster safety level, Residents safety awareness level, Alert in case of disaster or Evacuation notice, Emergency medical system
	Convenience facilities	Convenience facilities satisfaction level	Purchase facilities of everyday goods, Medical institutions, Public institutions, Living culture infrastructure, Cultural centers and museums, neighborhood facilities
Traffic environment	Satisfaction degree with traffic environment	Walking, Bicycle or Motorcycle, Car, Train	

Hypothesis 1: Neighborhood relationships will have a positive impact on the level of community well-being.

Hypothesis 2: Personal health will have a positive effect on community well-being.

Hypothesis 3: Job satisfaction will have a positive effect on the level of community well-being.

Hypothesis 4: Disaster safety levels will have a positive impact on community well-being.

Hypothesis 5: The level of convenience facilities will have a positive effect on the level of community well-being.

Hypothesis 6: Satisfaction of traffic environment will have a positive effect on community well-being level.

### 3. EMPIRICAL STRATEGY

The data collected in July 2016 by the Gyeonggi Research Institute, is analyzed to make policy alternatives for improving the quality of life of residents. The research institute selected 20,000 people at random and interviewed about housing, household economy, job, traffic environment, general environment, social integration, and well-being for this survey. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS 21 for Windows program. Factor analysis, reliability analysis, and regression analysis were performed for this article.

### 3.1 Technical Statistics

According to the technical statistics of this survey, 16,903 (84.5%) and 3,097 (15.5%) were male and female respectively. The age of the head of the household ranged from 19 to 29 (1%), and the age of 30 to 39 (18.5%), 40 to 49 (22.4%), 50 to 59 (19.8%), and over 70 years (16.9%) were identified. The marriage rate was the highest in married(76.6%), followed by bereavement (9.5%), unmarried(7.8%), divorce(5.3%), separation (0.6%) and cohabitation(0.2%). The most educated was college graduates(47.4%) and it was followed by high school graduates(40.6%), middle school graduates (8.9%), and elementary school graduates(3.21%). The occupation rate was 5.9 percent, it was followed by job openings (21.9%), sales (14.4%), service (13.2%), functional (7.1 %), simple labor (7.0%), professional (5.9%), Machine assembly (4.9%), professional soldiers (0.3%), and non-response (15.2%). Household income is less than 1 million won was 2.9% and it was followed by 100-200 million won (13.6%), 200-3 million won (21.6%), 300-4 million won (26.1%), 400-5 million won (18.7%) and more than 6 million won (7.7%). The demographic characteristics of the subjects are shown in Table 2.

Before the regression analysis, the descriptive statistics were calculated for the characteristics of the variables as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics

var.	group	frequency	per.(%)	var.	group	frequency	per.(%)
sex	male	16,903	84.5	job	manager	984	5.8
	female	3,097	15.5		expert	1,173	5.9
age	19-29	191	1.0		office	4,376	21.9
	30-39	3,692	18.5		service	2,638	13.2
	40-49	4,472	22.4		sales	2,885	14.4
	50-59	4,304	21.5		agriculture	1,082	5.4
	60-69	3,969	19.8		technician	1,413	7.1
	70 above	3,372	16.9		mecahnic	970	4.9
marriage	single	1,556	7.8		labor	1,397	7.0
	married	15,318	76.6		military	50	0.3
	mate	42	0.2	others	3,032	15.2	
	bereaved	1,907	9.5	income	less than 100	572	2.9
	divorce	1,056	5.3		100-200	2,714	13.6
	separate	121	0.6		200-300	4,318	21.6
edu.	elementary	633	3.2		300-400	5,224	26.1
	middle	1,770	8.9		400-500	3,748	18.7
	high	8,127	40.6		500-600	1,883	9.4
	undergraduate above	9,470	47.4	600 above	1,541	7.7	

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of variables

variable	sample	average	S.D.	Min.	Max.
C.W.	20,000	0.575	0.494	0	1
Neighborhood	20,000	2.593	0.693	1	4
health	20,000	2.815	0.494	1	4
job	16,968	2.875	0.470	1	4
disaster	20,000	2.724	0.627	1	4
facilities	20,000	2.913	0.461	1	4
traffic	20,000	2.792	0.448	1	4

Community well-being as a dependent variable has an average value of 0.575. Health and job satisfaction as independent variables are more positive. The disaster safety, neighbor relations, and traffic environment are somewhat different. On average, residents' response to infrastructure is slightly positive. Satisfaction for convenience facility was very positive and stood out amongst the results. Factor analysis and reliability analysis were conducted to reduce the number of variables and increase the validity. It was confirmed that Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient is more than 0.6, as shown in Table 3. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient for neighbors, health, employment, disaster safety, convenience facilities, and traffic environment variables extracted as a single factor are considered to have the internal consistency.

In addition, the exploratory factor analysis of the variables showed that the Bartlett's sphere formation test was Approximated-Chi=11860.365 and df=1. The significance level of .000 appeared to be appropriate, and a single factor was extracted. The results are shown in Table 3. To confirm the explanatory power of the causal relation and the variables, we conducted a regression analysis between community well-being and the independent variables. First, the tolerance limit

and the dispersion expansion factor were examined. The value was close to 2 at 1.833 and not close to 0 and 4, therefore, the independence of the residuals was verified as well. In addition, kaiser- meyer- olkin(KMO) was identified for sampling adequacy.

**3.2 Hierarchical regression analysis**

Hierarchical regression analysis is an analytical technique used to determine the relative influence of independent variables on dependent variables. In other words, by identifying the independent variables that have the greatest effect on the dependent variables, policy priorities can be given to the sectoral projects.

Table 5 shows the hierarchical regression analysis results to confirm the magnitude of the relative influence of the independent variables from Model 1 to Model 6. We also can find the significance of R2 change value and the standardization coefficient. The absolute value of the beta value was ascertained. Job Satisfaction ( $\beta = .248$ ) is the most influential factor in the relative influence of the independent variables. Next, the personal health ( $\beta = .242$ ) was followed. The third is the neighborhood relationship ( $\beta = .125$ ) and the fourth is the convenience facility ( $\beta = .101$ ). The fifth is disaster safety ( $\beta = .020$ ) and the sixth is the traffic environment respectively. The results of this analysis indicate that local governments should prioritize the expansion of fields such as job, health and neighbors rather than fields such as convenience facilities or traffic environment. The tolerance limits are all 0.1 or more, and it can be judged that there is no multi-collinearity issue. Durbin-Watson is 1.356, which is not close to 0 or 4, and it can be judged that there is no correlation between the residuals.

Table 4. Reliability Analysis Results

	C.W.	Neighbor	health	job	disaster	facilities	traffic
Cronbach's $\alpha$	.800	.845	.697	.785	.713	.776	.641
KMO	.500	.698	.677	.828	.719	.803	.642
Approximate chi square	11860.365	27393.954	11033.620	21609.393	14781.816	28055.135	7946.287
Degree of freedom	1	3	3	10	6	15	3
Probability of significance	.000**	.000**	.000**	.000**	.000**	.000**	.000**

(\* :  $p < .05$ , \*\*: $p < .01$ )

Table 5. Regression Analysis Results

Dependent variable: community well-being						
Model	B	SE	$\beta$	t value	tolerance limit	
<b>Model1</b>	<b>2.975</b>	<b>.019</b>		<b>156.429(.000)</b>		R=.178, R <sup>2</sup> =.032
Neighbor	.169	.007	.178	23.553(.000**)	1.000	Adj R <sup>2</sup> =.032 F=554.723, p=.000
<b>Model 2</b>	<b>1.711</b>	<b>.031</b>		<b>55.236</b>		R=.394, R <sup>2</sup> =.155
Neighbor	.137	.007	.145	20.405(.000**)	.991	Adj R <sup>2</sup> =.155
Health	.475	.010	.353	49.842(.000**)	.991	F=1560.088, p=.000
<b>Model3</b>	<b>.985</b>	<b>.035</b>		<b>27.923</b>		R=.471, R <sup>2</sup> =.222
Neighbor	.122	.006	.128	18.647(.000**)	.987	Adj R <sup>2</sup> =.222
Health	.353	.010	.263	33.444(.000**)	.884	F=1615.441, p=.000

Job	.386	.010	.275	40.521(.000**)	.885	
<b>Model4</b>	<b>.917</b>	<b>.037</b>		<b>24.919</b>		R=.473, R <sup>2</sup> =.224 Adj R <sup>2</sup> =.224 F=1225.055, p=.000
Neighbor	.116	.007	.122	17.744(.000**)	.967	
Health	.338	.010	.252	34.016(.000**)	.836	
Job	.371	.010	.265	35.965(.000**)	.845	
Disaster	.062	.009	.048	6.492(.000**)	.838	
<b>Model5</b>	<b>.655</b>	<b>.041</b>		<b>16.011</b>		R=.483, R <sup>2</sup> =.233 Adj R <sup>2</sup> =.233 F=1032.442, p=.000
Neighbor	.120	.006	.126	18.422(.000**)	.965	
Health	.327	.010	.243	32.963(.000**)	.830	
Job	.349	.010	.249	33.655(.000**)	.826	
Disaster	.030	.010	.023	3.041(.002**)	.792	
Facilities	.149	.010	.103	14.265(.000**)	.871	
<b>Model6</b>	<b>.640</b>	<b>.042</b>		<b>15.177</b>		R=.483, R <sup>2</sup> =.233 Adj R <sup>2</sup> =.233 F=860.755, p=.000 Durbin-Watson =1.356
Neighbor	.119	.007	.125	18.303(.000**)	.962	
Health	.326	.010	.242	29.850(.000**)	.823	
Job	.349	.010	.248	33.511(.000**)	.823	
Disaster	.026	.010	.020	2.560(.010**)	.838	
Facilities	.147	.011	.101	13.803(.000**)	.844	
Traffic	.122	.014	.011	1.419(.156)	.804	

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01

The policy priorities based on the influence of factors are to be identified to effectively improve the well-being level of the residents. The results of the analysis show that the focus should be on factors such as jobs, health, and neighbor relations rather than on factors such as convenience facilities or traffic environment. Therefore, budget distribution and policy direction can be adjusted according to the influence value difference. However, to redefine the specific role of local government for community well-being is not enough to set a policy agenda setting [28]. It is necessary to pay close attention to the detailed items included in each factor. It is because each sub-item is directly linked to the local government's expenditure programs. In the end, allocating budgets according to the difference in the impact on community well-being is important because it does not mean just efficiency but secure orientation for residents [29].

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to propose the direction of local government policy and priorities of public programs to improve community well-being. The influential order derived from civil opinions. These variables are statistically significant and have positive effects on community well-being. This study explored the priorities of social and objective factors for community well-being using the Gyeonggido residents survey data. The results of empirical analysis and policy implications are as follows.

First, the priorities for each category were ascertained by determining their influence in order from the variables. As a result, the magnitude of the influence was identified by job,

health, neighborhood relations, convenience facilities, disaster safety, and traffic environment order. Therefore, Gyeonggi Province can raise the level of community well-being by realigning projects and budgets according to the difference. Recently, the unemployment rate is rising in the recession in the Korean economy, so job creation is becoming a top priority. In addition, many civil complaints about health problems caused by environmental pollution such as fine dusts are being raised, and it is considered that necessity of trust restoration between state and citizen is increasing. Nowadays the Gyeonggi provincial government is actively engaged in restructuring the self-employment and marginalized enterprises and supporting technological enterprises to activate the local economy, thereby expanding jobs, strengthening health services, and revitalizing communal communication channels can be effective for restoring local vitality.

Although it is subordinate to other demands, it is important to raise the safety consciousness level of the residents is important as well. As the pursuit of community well-being is aimed at building sustainable and healthy communities, local governments ought to assume roles beyond individual capacity. Other areas that local governments have to focus on encompass various aspects such as economic income creation, residential environment improvement and nature conservation etc.. Clearly, local governments need to consider the diverse needs of members of the community in a multi-dimensional way. In conclusion, local governments need to establish policies in accordance with priorities that reflect the needs derived from systematic inhabitants' demand and to pursue felicitousness of individual program projects. The implementation of local projects based

on this orientation is expected not only to raise the level of individual community well-being but also to contribute to the national residents' happiness through the process of making the area more competitive among local governments.

This study has implications and limitations in the following aspects. The results of this study are summarized as follows. First, this is the analysis of opinion of residents in the perspective of prioritization of policy fields. Second, a theoretical and downward approach is important, but it is also meaningful that practical and upward analysis is needed. However, it is recognized that there is certain limit to generalize the results, it is a kind of regional study, so we can not be denied its usefulness. lastly, It is also a limitation that only the annual survey data is used and it is not nationwide survey. In future research, it will be necessary to conduct more in-depth analysis using more comprehensive and time series data.

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