

## Towards Well-being: An Anthropological Study of Migrant Women Labourers in Delhi

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**ABSTRACT** Well-being is a multifactorial concept based on several parameters. Through this study social well-being of migrant workers is sought and its reliance on physical and economic well-being. This study is conducted on female labour at construction sites, the population being migrant. The study is a multi-sited ethnography where the fieldwork is done at a destination site (Delhi) and one of the sites of origin (village Khadowara, Uttar Pradesh). It is a qualitative study based on the narratives of people. Through this paper, the aim is to understand the local conception of well-being and negotiation adopted by the people. This paper reveals how meanings are given to well-being and approaches that people adopt to ensure it. The paper unravels that well-being exists in interaction shaped by culture.

### INTRODUCTION

Studies on women, work and well-being have not been much and extensive especially concerning the construction industry. Women are affected by the strenuous nature of the job in addition to the domestic load. Sadly, women face subjugation at the household level that has a heavy bearing on their physical and mental health. Occupation or vocation means two places of work, that is, home and workplace, movement and commuting, wages, and unceasing employment are capable of disturbing a woman's life cycle. For an anthropologist's interest workers come from diverse backgrounds and work together with their identities intact. Migration imports with itself traditional roles in new culture positions for women as more vulnerable. The main objectives of the paper are to study how well-being is conceived locally, how people negotiate with circumstances in life to ensure well-being, the meanings attached and approaches adopted by the people and shares recommendations based on it.

Despite opportunities, the migrant workers lack job security, receive poor wages, and have improper or long working hours, poor health,

living and working conditions, inadequate access to public services, poor legal status and unending physical and mental threats to social and economic well-being (Reza et al. 2019). Some of the factors for increasing migration include population expansion, easy traveling, and economic opportunities for those willing and able to move but the impact of the phenomenon on the destination cannot be ignored (Turner 2019).

Philips et al. (2019) state migrants as a vulnerable group, as they are exposed to identifiable threats that they are lacking the ability to deal with or safeguard themselves. Migration is capable of revitalising gender relations in social structure and the economic independence of women leads them to climb up the social ladder (Jolly and Reeves 2005). There is a U-shaped relationship between economic development and female workforce participation rates. Poverty and dominance of agriculture hike women's participation in developing countries (Verick and Chaudhary 2014).

The rites of the passage give a premise to labour migration as a social process involving progression where there are three stages. First, phase of separation, which means pre liminal, where people have to uproot themselves from their place of origin and migrate to a new place, which marks the transition as the second phase, also known as liminal, and third, they step into a new society at the destination, which marks post liminal phase or rites of incorporation (McAllister 1980; Kirk et al. 2017).

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Well-being is a common subject of inquiry in many disciplines like anthropology, psychology, economics, etc. Most often, it is attached to economic conditions but it is an umbrella concept that goes beyond fiscal matters. Well-being indicators are determined by identifying factors most significant to people and communities. Objective well-being can be measured based on two indicators of income and education, whereas subjective well-being is understood by experiences of people and their perception about pleasant or unpleasant, improving or degrading that determine whether there is contentment or not (Smith and Clay 2010).

If seen through anthropological lens well-being refers to individual disposition (Mathews and Izquierdo 2009). Health, income, safety and access to amenities are the objective components of well-being, and happiness, contentment and social capital are subjective determinants of the same (Veenhoven 2004). Well-being was most understood by ethnographic studies that unravelled the way well-being operates in routine life, word, actions, and the world (Colby 2009).

Migration has an important bearing on well-being because a migrant group of people is subjected to a transitory phase attached with distress asserted through loss and separation (Gaur and Patnaik 2011). OECD, the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (2013), lays the foundation of subjective well-being on several parameters including demography, quality of living, mental, etc.

### METHODOLOGY

The study is a multi-sited ethnography where data collection is done by fieldwork on construction sites, labour camp and a local village to locate and understand the life-world of migrant labour working in the construction sector to discern well-being in the light of cultural backdrop. A bigger section of the labour population belonged to Bundelkhand and Bilaspur, therefore, village Khadowara (Lalitpur district, Uttar Pradesh) was zeroed for the fieldwork. District Lalitpur comes under the Bundelkhand area of Uttar Pradesh. For data analysis, narratives were taken through in-depth interviews and case studies with the purpose to understand the dimension of experiential well-being. Though in

labour studies, it is difficult to take a precise population size because of the unstable nature of this work, hence an estimated number of nearly 350 families in Delhi and Khadowara were taken as samples for the study.

### OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION

#### Physical and Economic Well-being

Locally, the term attached to well-being are *khushaali*<sup>1</sup> (Derne 2017), *nirogi*<sup>2</sup> or *sukhi*<sup>3</sup>. Other than having a fit body, economic conditions also ensure well-being like house, land, occupation, etc., sufficient food for self and family, access to medical facilities, education and spiritual bliss, being able to sleep peacefully make well-being internal and external.

Health is the most commonly perceived source of well-being as the case of AA1, a 70-year-old widow from Uttar Pradesh faces difficulty in moving around due to joint pains, which inhibit her from making temple visits, so to get peace, she prays at her shelter. She prays for good health to god. AB1 and AC1 (40 years old) firmly believe that a healthy body enables you to do everything and maintain social relations, whereas AD1 (35-year-old from Uttar Pradesh) states that an unhealthy body is a cause of depression and sadness in life. AE1 (65-year-old from Madhya Pradesh) has deteriorating health with aging and yet looks after her grandchildren, as everyone else goes for work to the site. She hardly gets any time for herself but the little she gets, she likes to sit in the park close by. She is capable of experiencing well-being with the ability to cook and eat herself and the time she spends with the grandsons and in the park. The fresh air in the park keeps her in good health. Health and well-being are inter-causal factors. Derne (2017) explains health, pleasure, and connections to be central to well-being. His sociological introspection considers his health as pivotal to well-being.

Better economic conditions lead to well-being but how happiness is perceived by the people determines well-being. During the study, the workers' population revealed richness does not ensure well-being if one is a *rogi*<sup>4</sup>. Hence, a healthy person is capable of achieving aspirations thus restoring well-being. AH1, a 40-year-

old from Uttar Pradesh, is forced by her situation to work as a *kuli*<sup>5</sup> due to poverty. Her daughter is losing on age and is still not married, as AH1 lacks resources to arrange for her wedding, which is the main cause of her unhappiness. Also, she desires to marry her daughter with a man who is not a labourer in construction, as they shall be economically sound than AH1 and there will be lesser pressure of dowry on her. AI1 and his wife AI2, labourers from Bilaspur, emphasise that well-being can only be experienced by a healthy body and social reverence.

The poor economic status of a woman harms her well-being. AJ1, a 50-year-old woman from Uttar Pradesh, had to face a setback when her husband AJ2 had an accident after which he became disabled to continue his masonry, which forced her to take up the work of a *kuli* and also received some financial support from her brother. When her daughter AJ3 completed her studies, she began taking tuitions, which delivered complete bliss to AJ1 that her children do not have to join her line of work though she still works as *kuli*. AK1, a 45-year-old woman from Madhya Pradesh, asserts alcoholism of her husband has damaged peace in their lives and money also gets wasted so she took up the work of a *kuli* that gave financial independence to her.

Well-being largely depends on the economic conditions of the families, as it improves living conditions, gives social stature, control and independence, and especially in the case of women and in the absence of these, well-being is not experienced. AL1, a 60-year-old widow from Bihar, lives with her married sister and depends on her for her survival, which in turn pulls back her control over her own decisions.

In the case of women, the ability to earn may not impart a status in the family. AN1, a 35-year-old *kuli* from Uttar Pradesh, works intending to look after her family who depend on her income only because her husband is into drinking and womanising. The lack of leisure time and humiliation she faces from her husband are the main sources of her unhappiness. She feels she lives to struggle and there is no happiness. On returning from work she resumes her household chores of cooking and washing, and giving attention to the children. She wishes to rest in some spare time. Her work enables her to fulfil her family's requirements yet without any sta-

tus. Her worn-out relationship with her husband is the main cause of her not experiencing well-being, as she does not have her life partner to share her burdens and struggles. Due to lack of resources, they miss the smallest pleasures in life and daily hardships and struggle lead to compromised well-being. Despite this, they make all possible efforts collectively to bring some tranquillity in their lives either through radios or media or get-togethers in common areas. Derne (2017) argued that for women, financial dependence is the core of lacking well-being, as it snatches away their control over their lives.

The study revealed health to be the premise of well-being but deteriorating health disables a person to make earnings thereby further deteriorating economic well-being, and sometimes, it is a lack of economic well-being that inhibits a person to get proper treatment. These situations have a bearing on the well-being of the entire family. Well-being may not directly correlate with objective health but with subjective health, which indicates interactions contribute to health, generate the meanings that ascribe to prevailing health conditions and the understanding of it. For labourers, income forms a significant source of well-being but yet they are capable of experiencing it which suggests that income may not be the main channel but is capable of channelizing other sources. AQ1, a 45-year-old from Uttar Pradesh, states improved economic conditions fill many lacunae but cannot be the only source of obtaining well-being, which is mainly rooted in social networking. The study reveals that it is not unprecedented for a person to experience well-being and absence of it at the same time. Besides, the strife of individual predilection with one's relationships with others makes the experience of well-being so mixed.

Derne's (2017) study reveals that money is not the direct source of well-being but is crucially attached to other aspects of well-being like control of a situation, decision making, weak social connections (like alcoholic spouses do not share income), ability to buy little pleasures, imparting confidence and status.

### Social Perspectives

Unlike western cultures where the focus is on individual survival, the Indian culture defines

“self” laid on the foundations of family and community. Individual desires and achievements are weaved in connection with family and community onus, which also transpires a contestation between individualism and community but contributions from family and society are important for the well-being with special relevance in a woman’s life.

AY1, a 70-year-old Ahirwar in Khadowara, explained *khushaali* is in following traditions, customs and worshipping the local deity, and he will fulfil all the wishes. AZ1, a 30-year-old from Uttar Pradesh, shared her experience as an income generator or contributor in the family fund that imparted a kind of reputation to her in the family, and this recognition of her labour by her family is central to her well-being. Many women participated as income generators for their family but only when they were able to utilise their earnings for their children’s welfare gave them a feeling of self-used and ensured *khushaali*.

In the labour camps, it is observed that social interactions take place between neighbours especially in groups that operate as informal social networks having key features of reciprocity and trust. BA1, BB1 and BC1 from Uttar Pradesh, although from different districts, are relatives and prefer to work together in Delhi at a common site because migrating, working and living together grants security to them, though BC1 revealed that working with affinal relatives makes her uncomfortable, and rather working with women of her age group was preferable to her. Migration can develop relationships through interdependence because of living in *pardes*<sup>6</sup> for a long period. BD1 and BE1 are around 24-year-olds from Bundelkhand and Hamirpur (Uttar Pradesh) respectively, living at the same labour camp for the past six months and have been a big anchor for each other in terms of looking after each other’s children. Social capital is a support system that enhances the experience of well-being.

BF1 hails from Uttar Pradesh and was abandoned by her husband who took their children away, and lives with her brother and sister-in-law. She became self-reliant after joining work with them in Delhi. Her brother has four children, and thus was supporting BF1 with great difficulty. By migrating, her life has become live-

able and work keeps her busy. BF1 is very attached to her brother’s children. She asserted that migration enriches the experience of staying together as groups at the destination and can share *sukh-dukha*<sup>7</sup> with each other but the only thing that makes village life better is that sometimes, the new people one meets are not dependable, so one needs to be careful. But sharing joys and sorrows with family and well-wishers leads to well-being and maintains social bonds. Well-being experienced is fleeting and resides in interactions. If the focus of a person is on those domains of life that are discouraging then they feel the absence of well-being, but if the interactions shift to focus on other areas of life then well-being can return.

Well-being is said to be determined through positive correlations with meaning and life satisfaction, happiness, hope, positive relationships, health, etc. and negative correlations with anxiety, stress, hopelessness and other negative emotions (Steger 2018). Very interestingly, migrants were drawn to their village more due to spiritual reasons, as they believed that the local deity in their village brings all the *sukh*<sup>8</sup>. In Delhi, being away from the local deity, they have to face a lot of trials and tribulations concerning health and work, and only by going back to please their deity can obliterate the problems in their lives, as it gives them hope and restores happiness. Migrants are compelled to move to other cities in search of well-being but such a movement with kinsmen gives security and satisfaction to them and the ability to act as a unit. Subjective health produces well-being more than objective health, which means how circumstances are viewed by an individual poses critically to well-being (Derne 2017).

### Well-being in Interactions

Well-being operates in these chains of connections and interactions. Nonetheless, one can say, reciprocity of interactions is pivotal to well-being. During this study, a lot of respondents considered reciprocal interactions across generations important. BI1, a 54-year-old, wants the same respect and importance from her daughter-in-law BI2, which she had given to her mother-in-law. BI1 stated her behaviour towards BI2 is quite amicable but BI2 neither respects her

nor her son, whereas BI2 revealed that she is physically assaulted by her husband and her mother-in-law plays a catalyst in such events that is why she lost respect for all the members of the household, as no one comes for her rescue.

Non-reciprocal equations disrupt well-being like for BJ1 from Malda district, who finds it hurtful that after working for long hours continuously, is ill-treated by her superiors if seen resting. BJ2 from Jharkhand revealed that she does all the domestic work like cooking, washing, cleaning, etc., and also washes the footwear they all wear to the site and then works as *kuli*, and still her husband and his family deal harshly with her. AP1 and her husband AP2, 60-year-old workers from Madhya Pradesh, expressed a void of *sukh* in their lives, as they have to struggle a lot even for basics. Many years back they had to take loans for kidney treatment of their son, which was a time full of hardships to save their child. But at present, they feel utter disappointment with their sons for not taking responsibility of their parents. They exclaimed when parents could look after so many children then why can't so many children take care of their two parents. Since well-being finds its route through interactions, positive interactions result in a positive experience of well-being whereas non-reciprocal interactions result in suppressing well-being.

### Well-being: Understanding Meaning

BK1, a 65-year-old from Uttar Pradesh and a *kuli*, is a devotee of Lord Shiva and had been migrating to Delhi for many years. She has learned from life neither money nor worldly things ensure *khushaali*, which is an experience of internal bliss obtained spiritually when a person realises the purpose of his coming to this world. The life cycle cannot be as simple as being born, taking education, getting married, expanding family and then dying. Internal bliss can be achieved by obtaining peace by siding out all the negative feelings and greed.

AX1's euphoric experience is in singing and for BK1 it is worshipping. Well-being is achieved by pursuing one's inner desires that add meaning and give purpose to life. Supporting family by working and ensuring a regular flow of income to fulfil their expectations eventually grants meaning to well-being. The faith of Khadowara

dwellers on their local deity for peaceful living grants well-being to them. This means well-being is developing an approach to the way of life that makes tough times sustainable.

BL1 is a *beldar*<sup>9</sup> from Khadowara, revealed that his approach to life focuses on the body, finance, and social relationships. Through the study, it was found that he faced a major setback when his son died almost a decade ago, a suffering that cannot cease in a few days but is forever. While the researcher empathised with him, he indicated his approach towards his life, "*Nothing can be done about it. Only our actions count, and I have to support my family who is left behind.*" BL1 had lost tranquillity in his life and was very depressed. He left his work and became a substance abuser. His wife BL2 helped him come out of the bereavement and has taken the charge of her family alone. With their failed belief in the almighty, their attitude completely changed and they got a purpose after a local religious figure (whom they address as *baba*) preached him, "*Because the body is nothing, it is mortal, so one should feel soul and bodiless, this way all the pain will disappear.*" They realised self is without body, and hence he has to work for his family's health than remaining immersed in his pain. They have to maintain good social relations. Certain approaches to well-being show that meanings given to subjective well-being are more experiential and sometimes drawn on religion.

Though religion is a significant source of reasoning, certain cases did not acknowledge religion as one of the factors to attain well-being. Drawing an example from the case of BL1 and BL2, who had no faith left in a supreme power, now completely focus on karma, that is, actions are more consequential than the results. This idea, though grounded in religion, was not acknowledged by either. A religious guru gave them this realisation about karma when his religious ethos had completely metamorphosed. Religion is a reserve of means that people adopt in constructing their approach towards adversities or catastrophic events in life. Religion can contribute far beyond this by providing a sense of pleasure, and by giving contentment or purpose just as in the case of BK1. People expressed that by worshipping they may or may not get riddance from their problems but at least it enables them to endure difficulties.



The case of BL1 reflects that internal feelings can be turned positive through external factors like health, wealth and esteem, which highlight paradoxical domains of experience engendering well-being. His case establishes well-being as not only internal but can be acquired through relationships. It is essential to find an approach to give meaning to well-being that can be based on actions or just a disposition. The meanings and approaches to given life conditions keep changing with time but the ability to find and establish such meanings always lasts. Therefore, well-being is said to be experienced by only those who continue to create meanings irrespective of fluctuating conditions of life. The sense of pleasure runs parallel to the approaches and meanings one creates especially that of the body.

Religiosity and spirituality are positive parameters of subjective well-being, that is, people with higher religious and spiritual involvement have given a positive appraisal of their lives, as it is capable of empowering both internal and social resources. Religion is seen to be positively connected with life satisfaction because beliefs with strong conviction enhance individual well-being by reducing mental dissonance. Hence, it is important to study religiosity in light of cultural backdrop (Villani et al. 2019).

Social science studies are focused on how people identify discourses making an impact on their lives and minds. For instance, for a poor person, poverty defines every situation of his life and wages become central to *khushaali*. Religion shapes people's actions towards the service of others and obtaining well-being through the same. Studies have revealed that structural forces delimit the approaches assigned to well-being. Interestingly, well-being was acquired through a variety of domains, events or actions in one's life, which can be as simple as good sleep, dipping self in the river, etc. and as big as surviving mishaps, embracing motherhood, serving neighbours, etc. could assure *khushaali* along with various sources like religious texts and figures, media and movie songs, etc. Sometimes, people fail to identify the central discourse to their well-being and end up adopting varied routes to achieve it that are experiential in nature. Out of the several avenues people also make contradictory choices.

### Organic Nature of Well-being

Young to middle-aged women are in the phase of rearing children, and hence their well-being is entrenched in work and family. Well-being for some lies in pleasures like singing or morning prayers, whereas some find well-being in their work both paid and unpaid (the domestic chores meant for serving family). The role of women is multi-faceted and women obtain well-being when they can fulfil those. The younger generation of workers achieved well-being by working, socialising and accomplishing domestic responsibilities. The younger women are considered for income generation and also raising a family. It was observed that some found well-being in things apart from work and family even though those were not accepted by the members of the household. AX1 struggles between her passion for singing and demand of supporting her family, and despite the family disapproving her passion, singing is central to her well-being even if she does not earn well. Although commonly, work and family are the elementary sources of well-being since a woman's life is too much absorbed in them.

Married women mostly expressed their contentment associated with their children, feeding, playing, education, health, recreation, and other interests. BP1, a 15-year-old girl from Banda district was a student of higher secondary. Her mother wanted her to continue education after school for which she has been working as a *kuli* in Delhi and was never tired of her work only to secure BP1's future.

For labourers well-being could be beyond work but not without it as their ultimate goal is survival. BQ1 from Bihar says, "*Khushaali comes when you have sufficient food, which comes from working*". She added, "*Working, eating and having a sound sleep brings khushaali, there is nothing more to desire for.*" BR1, a Yadav woman from Khadowara earned by grazing cattle, which only added to her husband's income and said, "*Khushaali is when you do your part of work and earn a livelihood*". For BS1, who is a 50-year-old *beldar* from Bihar, *khushaali* means rendering to the needs and requirements of his children and taking care of his old mother.

Older respondents considered spiritual activities for internal bliss and preached the same value to the younger generation. BU1, a 25-year-old from Uttar Pradesh, who works as a part-time domestic helper and along with her husband, BU2, who works as a *chaukidaar*<sup>10</sup> at the construction site (also washes the cars of the people residing in the colony for additional income), raises a family of two children (a son and a daughter) states, "*Happiness of my children means Khushaali for me... I and my husband have made two fixed deposits in the name of their children of one lakh rupees each in the last ten years to secure their future.*" She is happy to spend her wages on her children's needs and interests.

### Searching Well-being

Women and older respondents had their grievances because older people feel untended by their family members and women are caught up between a dichotomous situation of paid and unpaid work that is a cause of oppression. Women are usually subjected to cruelty after the marriage that adds to their agony. Labourers work for an extended period for little wages. Well-being is suppressed due to structural conditions despite that every individual is capable of finding it in various aspects of life. Workers usually do not have sound financial conditions and are compelled to migrate but their route to achieving well-being lies in work because they can then resolve prevailing conditions to some extent. Oppressed individuals can experience well-being when interactions bridge the gap between people and domains of life that are going well. BW1, a 52-year-old from Bihar, said the day her sons started earning, she started giving her wages to her brother's family and she is surviving on her husband's earnings that she feels is sufficient for them. Her brother is paralysed and unable to work, though his wife works and also takes care of him and their children. Yet, BW1's wages are of great help to them, as it is consumed on his treatment. His improving condition makes BW1 feel immense happiness, as it was her long-awaited desire to invest in his treatment. She said, "*It is difficult to achieve khushaali, as right after two years of marriage she started working as labour, which she was not*

*used to and was only 16 years old then. Earlier, I had the responsibility of my family for whom I had to earn and even at this age I am continuing to work but am satisfied that my brother is recovering by using my wages.*"

BX1, a 37-year-old from Bihar's husband BX2 is an alcoholic, who does not contribute to family funds and conducts himself violently at home with her and children. She desires that BX2 should take up his responsibilities like every other man in her vicinity so that even she can take a break and get some peaceful time for herself. The conditions that are challenging her well-being are an alcoholic and abusive husband, non-remunerative and unrelenting work. The fleeting nature of well-being proves changing circumstances in life can provide well-being during the course of life.

Women are exposed to deplorable conditions within a family that impairs their experience of life satisfaction and a quest for well-being continues. Like, BX1 is unable to come close to the concept of *khushaali* because her husband is a wife-beater and covertly sells household articles, agricultural yield, and her ornaments to organise liquor. BY1, a 22-year-old girl from Uttar Pradesh was married at the age of 18 to a man of 58 years old who already had four children of nearly BY1's age from his first wife (deceased). BY1 was nearly 14 years old when she lost her parents and was adopted by her mother's family. They got her forcibly married to an older man to get rid of loans taken from him. She has two children from the wedlock and is carrying a third in her womb. She was the only case who expressed undesired motherhood and was unhappy about it though she completely loves her children now. It is evident through her case that at times, when one is caught in a web of conditions in a life-changing approach, one cannot even help the person to come any place closer to well-being. Affinal kinship has a great bearing on a woman's well-being living in close family circles. Abusive relationships harm well-being.

There can be an intersection or junction between one's well-being and society at large. BZ1, a 62-year-old from Khadowara asserted *khushaali* can only prevail in society if there is mutual respect among people. "*Any person who can establish social relations well and can offer hospitality to others and stands through hap-*

*py and sad events of life and adopts the social traditions in practice, this earns you respect and reputation in society that can fetch you khushaali.*" Her daughter-in-law BZ2 who works as a *kuli* in Delhi said not just at the native place, but also even at the work destination where one is living with so many people from different parts of the country, well-being is in *milna-julna*<sup>11</sup> with others. Establishing social relations with other people was considered as *milna-julna* to everyone, which is seen as having a direct relationship with well-being. It is the series of felicitous interactions that is pivotal for well-being.

Social relationships affect the mental and physical health, health behaviour and mortality risk. Social scientists can play an important role in establishing a bridge between social relationships and health outcomes, identifying explanations for this link and also, revealing social variation at the population level. Social relations establish social support, which refers to emotionally sustaining traits of relationships furthering mental and physical health. Social support provides an indirect effect on health by enhancing mental health, reducing stress and fostering meaning and purpose in life (Umberson and Montez 2010).

### Framework of Well-being

Economy, health, pursuits, and aspirations of people, social capital, pleasures, etc. give a framework to well-being. CE1 from Uttar Pradesh adopts various pursuits for well-being like the pleasure she derives from interacting with neighbouring women, through winter bonfires in labour camp where they are found eating and knitting together, having tea in groups, etc., worshipping and being towards animals gives meaning and her achievements are defined by *kuli*'s work at the site in Delhi and in the village, she works on her field and also stitches clothes for women. With the change in the stage of life there is a change in sources of pleasure relations with others switching from friends to kin, agents of meaning change from music/singing to religion, instead of leisure outings religious rituals become the source of pleasure. Attaining life satisfaction and well-being is an unceasing phenomenon that continues throughout life. Well-being derived from pleasures is customarily bodily ex-

periences and those from meanings are more cognitive, which makes the foundation of well-being quite contradictory.

Well-being is contextually ruled depending on events of life capable of explaining the cause of contradictions in the framework of the concept. Sources of well-being are different at the workplace and home, before and after wedlock, whether obtained from school or fields. Experience of well-being that AX1 gets through singing is in constant conflict with its absence because of escaping work, which is disapproved by her husband. CF1, a 45-year-old *kuli* from Bihar, submits that well-being exists when good health is augmented with good work, "*Mind, brain, and body should be in sound health and every person having work are sufficient to ensure well-being.*" As already discussed, well-being is fleeting and contradictory, and thus is unable to give an enduring life satisfaction. Well-being exists in situational interactions and not in an individual's objective situation that can enable in identifying its sources.

### CONCLUSION

Culture shapes interactions and meaning resulting in emotions that are not stocked in an individual. Health, wealth and social capital produce well-being through interactions, meanings, and conditions. Social capital does not produce well-being rather how people achieve social status with their approach to social relations gives well-being. Approach to well-being determines it which may be calibrated by the quality of married life, good economic conditions or serving others. Hence, one can say, the approach to different predicaments produces well-being. Contemplating own life and its predicaments with others also gives life satisfaction. Positive interactions are capable of reinstating well-being.

When in groups people narrate and share their various experiences in life with one another but interviewing can hamper the real sentiment in it. At some places, interviews triggered felicitous interactions thereby leading to well-being because of which people shared their experience of serving others to earn a good reputation and respect that promoted well-being.

Subjective well-being can be reasoned through interactions and diverse meanings that



people attach to it. Labourers encounter interactions that can be disgraceful or non-reciprocal especially about women being unskilled workers. The absence of well-being is not inconclusive but is usually a result of non-felicitous interactions. The middle years of a life cycle are devoted to family life where interactions are directed towards raising a family. Sufficient earnings, ensuring shelter, food and clothes impart meaning to well-being rather than spirituality or religious affairs. The discourse of well-being depends on interactions to give meaning to it.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to economic progress, targeting policies towards people's social lives will improve their quality of life, health, and emotional well-being. First, measurement is an important aspect, as societies need to assess the well-being of its citizens. Second, it is essential to have an office in the government meant for targeting well-being. Third, urban and rural designing should be such that there are ample green spaces meant for relaxing and engaging in social activities to promote social cohesion. Fourth, focusing on community activities can lead to neighbourhood cohesion, which is central to well-being. Activities like neighbourhood watch programs, community festivals and volunteerism enhance social connections and well-being. The fifth, protective housing is the basic requirement of all. The standard of housing facilities should be laid down, as living in uncomfortable or exploitative or inhumane conditions negatively impact well-being. Sixth, focus on building stronger norms to help neighbours and society promoting pro-social behaviour. Seventh, securing the present and future of vulnerable groups like women and elderly members and reducing their dependency on other family members. Last, focus on well-being will not only decrease health costs in the long run but will also enhance pro-social behaviour leading to a more harmonious social environment.

To make the workers receive all their entitlements they have to be given the status of contract labour over casual labour for which the recruiting agent needs to be given the status of the employer with clearly laid roles and duties,

so that the workers can get all the benefits along with their wages from him.

### NOTES

- 1 Local term for well-being
- 2 Disease free person
- 3 State of happiness and contentment
- 4 An ailing person
- 5 A female labour helper
- 6 Destination site
- 7 Joy and sorrow
- 8 Joy and safety
- 9 A male labour helper
- 10 Guard
- 11 Socialise

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