

# Psychological Well-Being and Influence of Work Attitude on Women Domestic Workers

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## ABSTRACT

Understanding one's psychological well-being is crucial, as it fosters a more balanced and healthier lifestyle, impacting individuals both within communities and workplaces. Psychological well-being significantly shapes behaviour across various contexts, influenced by subtle environmental cues, with the workplace holding particular importance for adults' mental health. In 2022, the World Health Organization (WHO) outlined guidelines to address mental health risks in workplaces, aiming to promote well-being, prevent mental health conditions, and support those facing challenges. This study, conducted in Shillong city with a sample size of 360 women domestic workers, utilized a mixed method approach, collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. The findings underscored the importance of addressing job satisfaction, autonomy, environmental mastery, and organizational commitment to enhance the psychological well-being of women domestic workers. By identifying and tackling factors influencing job satisfaction and organizational commitment, there is potential for improved well-being outcomes and overall job satisfaction in this demographic.

**Keywords:** Domestic Workers, Influence, Job Satisfaction, Nature of work, psychological well-being, Work Attitude

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## INTRODUCTION

The origins of well-being as a field of psychological investigations date back to the seminal works of Diener on subjective well-being (Diener, 1984) and Seligman on positive psychology (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Since then, well-being has grown increasingly popular as a field of research. Two schools of thought have evolved around the theory of well-being: a hedonic and eudaimonic perspective (Ryan and Deci, 2001; Huta and Ryan, 2010). SWB often also referred to as hedonic well-being, does not provide a full picture of what well-being and happiness are, failing to capture the complexity of philosophical conceptions around the notion of happiness. An alternative approach is the so-called eudaimonic paradigm, where well-being is construed as an ongoing, dynamic process (rather than a fixed state) of effortful living using engagement in an activity perceived as meaningful (Kopperud and Vitterso, 2008; Ryan and Deci, 2001; Vitterso, Overwien and Martinsen, 2009). Advocates of the eudaimonic approach argue that living a life of virtue and actualizing one's inherent potential is the way to well-being (DelleFave, Massimini, and Bassi 2011).

Psychological well-being has been regarded as synonymous with mental health and quality of life. It is being studied by using both subjective and objective indicators. Researchers defined psychological well-being in different ways. Goldberg et al. (1997), psychological well-being is understood as individuals' evaluation of their experiences of emotional tension, depression, anxiety, somatic symptoms, insomnia, social skills, and skills to cope with adverse situations. Keyes and Magyar-Moe (2003), traditionally, psychological well-being has been defined by a lack of symptom distress (i.e., lack of depression, anxiety, and other symptoms of mental disorders), over time, the term has taken on a more positive definition.

The psychological well-being of the individuals is possibly affected by inner processes such as personality, temperament, etc., and can also be affected by occupational factors such as occupation, working environment, and job satisfaction. A person can have multiple attitudes, but managerial behaviour focuses on a very limited number of work-related attitudes. These work-related attitudes tap positive or negative evaluations that employees hold about aspects of their work environment. The degree to which psychological well-being is influenced by work attitude contributes significantly to the productivity of the employee. To function efficiently in a psychological sense within the job involves the development of potential with positive aspects of growth and purpose for working towards their goal and also having positive relationships with others. Psychological well-being is becoming an asset in the working-age population, not every employee is as fortunate to be working in an organization that values the psychological well-being of its employees. A few examples of working conditions that lead to psychological risks are Excessive workloads, Conflicting demands, lack of role clarity, lack of involvement in making decisions that affect the worker, lack of influence over the way the job is done, job satisfaction, and job insecurity.

### Objectives:

1. To study the psychological well-being of women domestic workers.
2. To examine the influence of work attitude on the psychological well-being of women domestic workers.

### Hypothesis:

- H1: There is no significant relationship between full-time domestic workers concerning their psychological well-being.  
H2: There is no significant relationship between part-time domestic workers concerning their psychological well-being.  
H3: There is no significant relationship between educational level and psychological well-being of women domestic workers.  
H4: There is no significant relationship between job satisfaction and psychological well-being.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Psychological Well-being

Hirsch et al. (2020) pointed out that loneliness was found to be positively associated with depressive symptoms and suicide behaviors among workers. Raju and Anuradha (2020), investigated the relationship between work stress, coping strategies, and psychological well-being among domestic workers. Rengaman et al. (2019) show that the domestic workers possess a very low status both in the workplace as well as in the society which influence their psychological well-being. Ansari (2018) found out that work load and discriminatory practices affects psychological well-being. Manju (2017) said that the female participation in the unorganised sector was more than male, their condition was highly unpredictable and have constraints related to their work such as low-level irregular patterns of earning and employment, absence of employer-employee relationship and weak administrative structure. Gurtoo (2017) female domestic workers' psychological well-being was contingent on occupational features that are desired by employee of any other occupation. Bandyopadhyay (2017) suggest that conscientiousness, optimism and resilience significantly contributed to psychological well-being. Vallejo et al. (2016) psychological well-being stands as an important personal resource to favour adaptive coping strategies for stress.

### Work attitude

Sulistiyan (2020), found that job satisfaction was positively associated with psychological well-being among domestic workers. Factors such as autonomy, respect from employers, and a supportive work environment were linked to higher levels of well-being. Li et al. (2020) positive relationships with employers, coworkers, and social networks can contribute to higher levels of job satisfaction of domestic workers. Allegri et al. (2019) indicated that poor psychological well-being showed no association with job satisfaction. Gadanez et al. (2019) positive emotions are strongly related to optimism while achievement is related to self-efficacy. Omar et al. (2019) found that well-being is influenced by occupational stress, work engagement, authentic leadership, social support, and others and job resources could compensate for resources lost by meeting the requirement of emotional job demands, thereby reducing stress reactions and increasing well-being.

Araya and Gimenez, (2019), factors such as long working hours, low wages, lack of benefits, and poor working conditions have been found to negatively affect their job satisfaction. Nyanga and Sibanda (2019) view job satisfaction among domestic workers as the feelings and attitudes domestic workers have toward their work. It is the extent to which domestic workers like or dislike their work. Ortensi (2018), domestic and care workers can be satisfied with their jobs if basic decent working conditions are guaranteed. Barve et al. (2018) pointed out that most employees are in a better state in terms of psychological well-being if they are given rewards or compensation on the basis on their performances.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The study aims to study psychological well-being and the influence of work attitudes among women domestic workers in Shillong City. The present study is a mixed method research. The triangulation convergence design was used in the study. The purpose of this model is to end up with valid and well-substantiated conclusions about a single phenomenon.

### Sample:

Determination of the sample size for the study has been done through the sample size formula by Krejcie and Morgan Sample Size Formula (1970), the total number of samples to be taken for this study is 351, approximating 360.

For the study, a multi-stage sampling procedure is adopted by the investigator. Multi-stage sampling is a further development of the idea of cluster sampling. The following are the stages of the sampling procedure:

**Table 1: Sampling Procedure undertaken**

<b>Stage 1</b>	Shillong city is selected as the universe to carry out the study.
<b>Stage 2</b>	Five wards each will be selected respectively from the 27 wards of Shillong Municipal area, 10 wards of the Shillong Cantonment board and 7 wards of the Census Town under the 3 towns of Shillong City, which falls under the Shillong Urban Agglomeration.
<b>Stage 3</b>	Using simple random sampling, 24 women domestic workers will be chosen from each ward.
<b>Stage 4</b>	From the record obtain from the organization on the registered women domestic workers present in the selected wards or towns, only those women domestic workers who have obtain the age of 18 years old and not above 60 years old will be taken as samples.

**Tools used:**

Both primary and secondary data are used in this study. For secondary data, the study is enriched using the data collected from various sources like books, journals, articles, newspapers, documentaries, etc.

The primary data is collected using the following tools;

For quantitative data, the following tools were selected for the study. The questionnaire was translated to the local language (Khasi) for clear understanding by the sample respondents.

- Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS), developed by C. Ryff (2007)
- Job Satisfaction Scale, developed by Spectre (1994).

**Validation of the tool:**

For practicability of the research tool the questionnaire was given to different experts from the Department of Education, North-Eastern Hill University, Meghalaya Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (MIMHAMS), Director of North Eastern Regional Domestic Workers Movement (NERDWM), Director and Clinical Psychologist of RoUTES ((Reaching out & Understanding to Empower Society), to identify problems in the language, tool structure and clarity of statements. The questionnaires were modified according the suggestions from the experts. Necessary changes were done as per the purpose of the study as well as keeping the cultural differences in mind.

**Statistical Techniques used:**

The study has employed both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics includes frequency, percent, mean and standard deviation. Inferential statistics are used to test the hypothesis which includes Cramer's V and One-way ANOVA.

The study has employed both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics includes frequency, percent, mean and standard deviation. Inferential statistics are used to test the hypothesis which includes Cramer's V and One-way ANOVA along with Scheffe post hoc for significant F-value. Further, this chapter includes predictive statistics which includes Pearson product-moment correlation and linear regression.

**MAIN FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

**Psychological well-being**

The study found that 57.8 percent of women workers had average psychological well-being while 42.2 percent of women domestic workers had above-average psychological well-being. Psychological well-being encompasses an individual's emotional health and overall functioning of the six components. The registered domestic workers are emotionally guided through counselling and to some extent receive protection from the organization. In this present study the level of psychological well-being of the women domestic workers was ranging from average to above average. Interestingly, the psychological well-being of women domestic workers was not low or below average even though the nature of work coincides with the guidelines provided by WHO (World Health Organisation) that poses a risk to mental health: under-use of skills or being under-skilled for work, lack of control over job design or workload, violence, harassment or bullying, discrimination and exclusion and unclear job role, job insecurity, inadequate pay, or

poor investment in career development, conflicting home/work demands which is very common among domestic workers.

### **Psychological well-being by Type of Work**

Based on the type of work by psychological well-being, the study found a significant association between the type of work and psychological well-being. Part-time workers, especially those working outside their residence, showed a higher prevalence of average psychological well-being compared to full-time workers, particularly those working within their residence. This suggests that the nature and intensity of work can impact the psychological well-being of women domestic workers. Factors such as flexibility, workload, and work-life balance may contribute to these differences.

Furthermore, the study found out that that full-time women domestic workers (residence) had a higher autonomy while full-time women domestic workers (outside the residence) had the lowest. The study also found that there exists a non-significant difference indicating that part-time women domestic workers (outside the residence), full-time women domestic workers (residence), and full-time women domestic workers (outside the residence) were similar in environmental mastery revealing that there is no significant influence of nature of work on environmental mastery.

The study also found out that full-time women domestic workers (outside residence) had the highest personal growth while part-time women domestic workers (outside residence) had the lowest. Also, the study found that full-time women domestic workers (residence) had a higher positive relation while full-time women domestic workers (outside residence) had the lowest.

Additionally, the study found that there exists a non-significant difference indicating that part time women domestic workers (outside residence), full time women domestic workers (residence) and full-time women domestic workers (outside residence) had similar scores on purpose in life revealing that there is no significant influence of type of work on purpose of life. The study also found that full time women domestic workers (residence) had the highest self-acceptance while part time women domestic workers (outside residence) had the lowest.

### **Educational qualification by psychological wellbeing**

On the basis of educational qualification by psychological well-being, the study found that women domestic workers with SSLC and above level of education has the highest mean score on overall psychological well-being while women domestic workers with middle school education had the lowest.

The study also found that there exists anon-significant difference in four components of psychological well-being: autonomy, positive relations, purpose in life and self-acceptance, which indicates that the mean scores of different educational levels were similar on autonomy, positive relations, purpose in life and self-acceptance revealing no significant influence of educational levels on autonomy, positive relations, purpose in life and self-acceptance.

Furthermore, the study found that women domestic workers who did not attend any schooling had the highest mean score, while women domestic workers with middle school education had the lowest mean score on environmental mastery. Additionally, the study found that women domestic workers with SSLC and above education had the highest mean score, while women domestic workers with middle school education had the lowest mean score on personal growth.

### **Work Attitude**

Job satisfaction - The present study found that 45 percent of the women domestic workers had satisfaction towards the work and 55 percent were ambivalent towards the job. The study found that overall psychological well-being had a positive significant correlation with pay, employer, co-workers, nature of work, communication and overall job satisfaction indicating that as pay, employer, co-women domestic workers, nature of work, communication and overall job satisfaction increase, overall psychological well-being increases and vice versa. However, there was no significant correlation of overall psychological well-being with benefits, rewards and operating conditions.

### **Discussion on psychological well-being of women domestic workers**

It is well known and very common to see in our society that domestic work is an occupation opted by women who are looking for a way to earn and support their livelihood. Based on everyday working hours and nature of employment, domestic workers are classified into part-time, full-time and live-in domestic workers (International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2023).

The present study has also adopted this classification of domestic women domestic workers namely: part time women domestic workers (outside residence), full- time women domestic workers (outside residence) and full-time women domestic workers (residence). Part time women domestic workers (outside residence) are women domestic workers

who are working for 1-2 hours in multiple households but do not reside in the employer's house, full-time women domestic workers (outside residence) are women domestic workers who are working for 6-7 hours in one household but do not reside in the employer's house, and full-time women domestic workers (residence) are women domestic workers who are working full time in one household and reside in the employer's house.

#### **Nature of work and psychological well-being**

The present study found that 57.8 percent women domestic workers had average psychological wellbeing while 42.2 percent women domestic workers had above average psychological wellbeing. In our society it is common to see that employers are empathetic towards their domestic worker. The study found that part time women domestic workers (outside residence) had average psychological well-being while full-time women domestic workers (residence) had above average psychological well-being. Previous study stated that in urban areas, employed mothers from low-income groups face a plethora of challenges in their domestic, environmental and working conditions that may affect their mental well-being. Often these women reside in slums and work as domestic workers. Empirical evidence suggested that life stressors associated with poor financial status increase risk of mental health disorders (Parkar et al. 2003; Patel and Kleinman, 2003) and women are more vulnerable than men to mental health disorders such as depressive disorders, schizophrenia, affective disorders and self-inflicted injuries (WHO 2005).

#### **Educational level and psychological well-being**

Interestingly, women domestic workers with SSLC and above level of education has the highest overall psychological well-being while women domestic workers with middle school education had the lowest. The findings of the present study align with the study conducted by Nguyen et.al (2021) higher education levels lead to a higher level of psychological well-being. The findings of the present study found that psychological well-being of the women domestic workers was similar irrespective of their marital status. This finding is similar to the study of Sahni, S.P., Junnarkar, M. (2019) stating, psychological wellbeing of the women domestic workers was similar irrespective of their marital status. Wissing et al. (2010) found that psychological well-being increases with increasing levels of education.

Married people reported higher levels of positive mental health and general psychological well-being than both the never married and the divorced and widow. Uralde et al. (2004) confirm a positive association between socioeconomic status and psychological well-being, psychological well-being increases with increasing level of education, economic status and changes in economic status over time have an impact on psychological well-being and there is no sustainability of employment of women workers in the unorganized sector.

### **DISCUSSION ON WORK ATTITUDE**

#### **Job satisfaction– Based on the components of psychological well-being the study found that:**

**Autonomy:** On the basis of autonomy and components of job satisfaction the study found that there exists a positive significant correlation with pay, benefits, communication and overall job satisfaction which indicates as pay, benefits, communication and overall job satisfaction increase, the autonomy increase and vice versa. There was no significant correlation of autonomy with employer, rewards, operating conditions, co-workers and nature of work.

**Environmental mastery:** On the basis of environmental mastery and components of job satisfaction the study found that there exists a positive significant correlation with co-workers and communication which indicates that, as co-workers domestic workers and communication increase, environmental mastery increase and vice versa. However, there was no significant correlation of environmental mastery and other components of job satisfaction such as pay, employer, benefits, rewards, operating condition, nature of work and overall job satisfaction.

**Personal Growth:** On the basis of personal growth and components of job satisfaction the study found that there exists a positive significant correlation with employer, operating conditions, nature of work and overall job satisfaction which indicates that, employer, operating conditions, nature of work and overall job satisfaction increases, personal growth increase and vice versa. However, there was no significant correlation of personal growth with other components such as pay, benefits, rewards, co-workers and communication.

**Positive Relations:** On the basis of positive relations and components of job satisfaction the study found that there exists a positive significant correlation with benefits, co-workers and communication indicating that as benefits, co-workers and communication increase, positive relations increase and vice versa. Furthermore, positive relations had a positive significant correlation with operating conditions indicating that as operating conditions increase, positive relations increase and vice versa. However, there was no significant correlation of positive relation with pay, employer, rewards, nature of work and overall job satisfaction.

**Purpose in life:** On the basis of purpose in life and components of job satisfaction the study found that there exists a positive significant correlation with operating condition indicating that as operating conditions increase, purpose in life



increase and vice versa. However, there was no significant correlation of purpose in life with pay, employer, benefits, rewards, co-workers, nature of work, communication and overall job satisfaction.

**Self-Acceptance:** On the basis of self-acceptance and components of job satisfaction the study found that there exists a positive significant correlation with employer and overall job satisfaction indicating that as employer and overall job satisfaction increases, self-acceptance increase and vice versa. However, there was no significant correlation of self-acceptance with pay, benefits, rewards, co-workers domestic workers, operating conditions, nature of work and communication.

## CONCLUSION

Employment of women domestic workers typically occurs within the personal space of the employer, fostering a deeply personal relationship. In our society, particularly in Shillong City, hiring a domestic worker usually occurs through personal connections or word of mouth, highlighting the absence of a formal professional relationship. In the current study, the majority of respondents indicated a mutual relationship with their employers, indicating a sense of interdependence.

The psychological well-being of women domestic workers in Shillong City was assessed within a specific context, considering the prevalent "living to work" perspective where one's profession defines their identity. While registered domestic workers receive sporadic support, they are not entirely neglected, as evidenced by the findings.

Emotional attachment to work significantly contributes to job satisfaction and positively impacts the psychological well-being of workers. For domestic workers, emotional support from employers is crucial. Feeling understood and supported can alleviate the challenges they face, although there remains an overarching sense of subordination that affects their situation.

To enhance the bargaining power of domestic workers, there is a pressing need to sustain and support domestic worker organizations. Organizing domestic workers is essential for addressing the various issues they encounter. However, the government has yet to take steps to organize domestic workers, leaving women domestic workers without the protection of labor laws.

While domestic work shares common structural characteristics worldwide, the dynamics of power relations are influenced by local circumstances and societal structures. Understanding the different arrangements of domestic work, whether part-time, full-time, or live-in, is crucial for developing effective policy interventions in this sector.

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