



**ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER**

**Psychology**

**LIFE IN KUMAUN : STUDY OF LIFE SATISFACTION IN KUMAUNI WOMEN**

**KEY WORDS:** Life satisfaction, Happiness, Kumauni Women

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**ABSTRACT**

This study was a part of the major project from ICSSR, New Delhi and it was aimed to ascertain the impact of cultural variation, chronological age and marital circumstances on life satisfaction. It was contended that :

- 1- life satisfaction and happiness would be affected by variation in culture.
- 2- young and old participants would differ in relation to their scores on life satisfaction.
- 3- discrepancy in the scores of life satisfaction would be appeared in women living with their husbands and living far from husband.

Two hundred and forty women ranging between 25-60 years served as participants and arranged according to the requirements of 3\*2\*2 factorial design with three types of cultures (Bhotia, Buxa, General Kumauni) X two levels of chronological age (25-30 years and 55-60 years) X two types of marital circumstances (wives living with husbands) and wives living far from the husbands) i.e; 20 participants per cell. Measures of life satisfaction were used to get the indices of life satisfaction in participants.

Data analysis was made by analysis of variance and correlation. It was noted that all independent variables laid their impact as main effect and interaction mode. Also, correlation coefficients showed close knit.

Findings were discussed in terms of cultural variation, chronological age and marital circumstances as effectors of life satisfaction. At last, need of intervention programs to raise the mental faculty of vulnerable people was also discussed.

In these days considerable attention on the concept and use of mental health is moving around promoting and maintaining the psychological soundness in needy people. A very large number of researchers not only in India but also in abroad are based on the males societies only and observation of females is relatively less explored. As a result, the studies on the mental health of women in still in progress (Shukla, 2000) and to be explored more later on. Keeping these views in consideration this study was planned and it was aimed to find out the impact of cultural variation, chronological age and marital circumstances on Kumauni womens' life satisfaction. The delineation of concept is as follows :

**Life satisfaction**

Life satisfaction is the way a person tries to understand how his/her life has been and how she feels about where the life is going in future (Medley, 1980). Life satisfaction is a criteria of well-being and may be assessed in terms of mood, satisfaction, relation with others, achieved goals, self-concept and self-perceived ability to cope with daily life. It is having a favorable attitude to one's life as a whole rather than their current feelings. It also represents how satisfied people feel their life generally as accompanied by temporary positive affect. Life satisfaction includes some factors such as goals attainments and doing well as other people around them and feel happiness generally rather than right.

Life satisfaction is considered to be the cognitive component of subjective well-being. There are emotions consisting of positive and negative affects about how people perceive their lives. Life satisfaction can be assessed globally or by a specific domain such as, safety after marriage and health. It is an overall assessment of feeling and attitude about one's life at a particular point in time ranging from negative and positive. (Kousna & Mohseni, 2005; Kuppens, Realo and Diener, 2008). Increase in life satisfaction, positive affect and decrease in negative affect are three major indicators of well being. Research studies on satisfaction with current life circumstances include the desire to change one's life satisfaction with past and satisfaction in literature includes happiness, quality of life and well-being. So, while making study on satisfaction one should also understand the concept, structure and process of happiness (Alfred, 2003; Rode, 2006). This notion was the key foundation on the basis of which this study was launched.

on one's efforts to follow the utilitarian lead of creating greater happiness for a greater number of people. Defining life satisfaction it must be deeply and thoroughly examined how there are change in life style. The question arise that what life satisfaction is precisely. One cannot create great happiness without a clear definition of happiness. Next, a preliminary methodological question is whether or not life satisfaction can be measured if no attempts are made to make life more enjoyable. This will remain a matter of subjective belief without which we remain uncertain about both the necessity to intervene and effect of such intervention. The question is how satisfied people are and whether the degree of satisfaction differs among people. If everyone is satisfied with life then there is little need to search for ways in which level of satisfaction can be improved. Further if people do not differ there is no need or there would be no clues as to how life satisfaction could be improved. If people are not equally satisfied with their lives there is a great need of effort to bring satisfaction.

Life satisfaction is considered to be a controlled aspect of human welfare (Peter & Sevend, 2004; Prakash, 1990; Rode, 2006). It is the ultimate goal of human beings who strive to achieve this goal throughout their life. Satisfaction with one's life implies acceptance of the circumstances and the fulfillment of wants and need for life as a whole. It generally indicates an assessment of the condition of existence as derived from a comparison of one's aspirations to one's achievement and thereafter to one's actual achievement. Such assessment and comparison can also be defined as having a favorable attitude towards life.

Keeping these views in consideration this study was planned. " Life in Kumaun : Study of life satisfaction and happiness in Kumauni Women." It was a part of major project by Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi and this piece of work was aimed to ascertain the impact of cultural variation, chronological age and marital circumstances on life satisfaction. The objectives and hypotheses were as follows :

- The first objectives of the study was to find out the impact of culture variation on life satisfaction. It was contended that culture variations would show variations in the level of life satisfaction.
- The second objective of the study was to ascertain the pattern of life satisfaction and happiness as affected by chronological age. It was hypothesized that increase in chronological age would cause variation in the scores of

The literature on satisfaction can be summarized by insisting



concerned it was nominal.

The chronological age and marital circumstances as interaction was also significant ( $F, 1, 239 = 7.61$ ) and it is reported in figure 2.

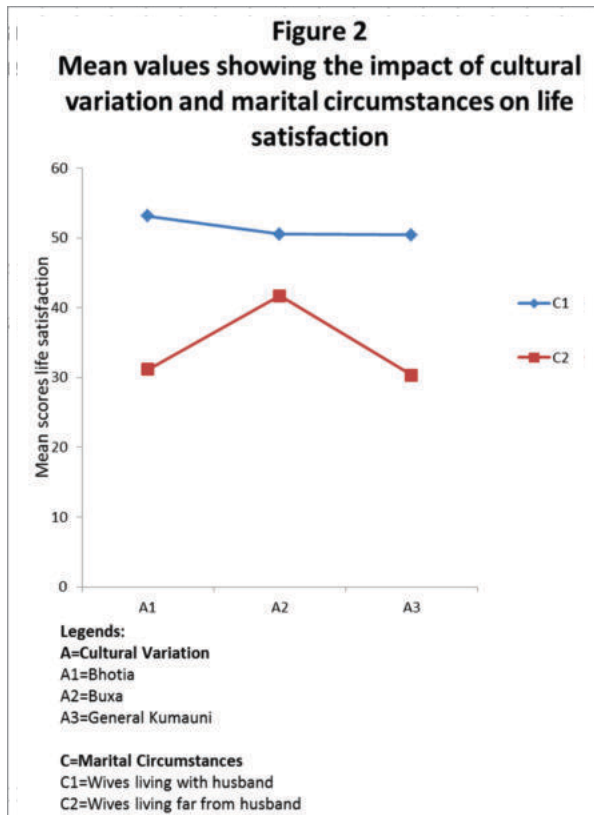
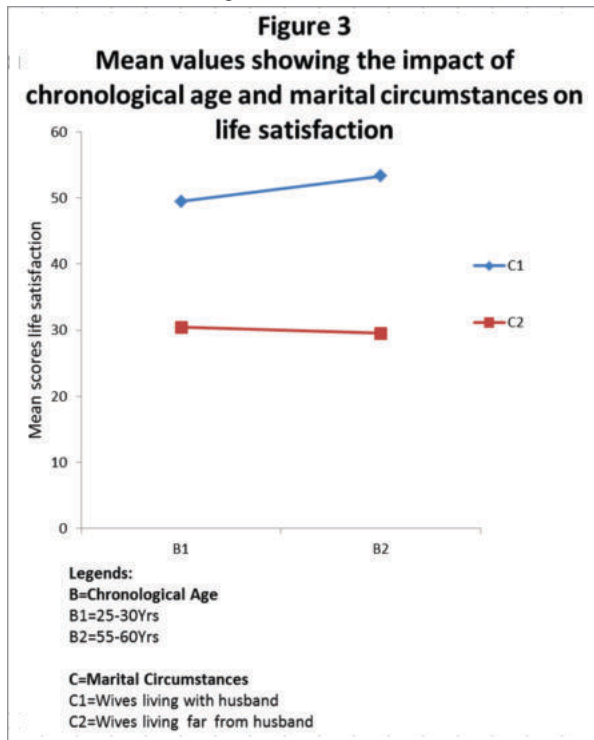


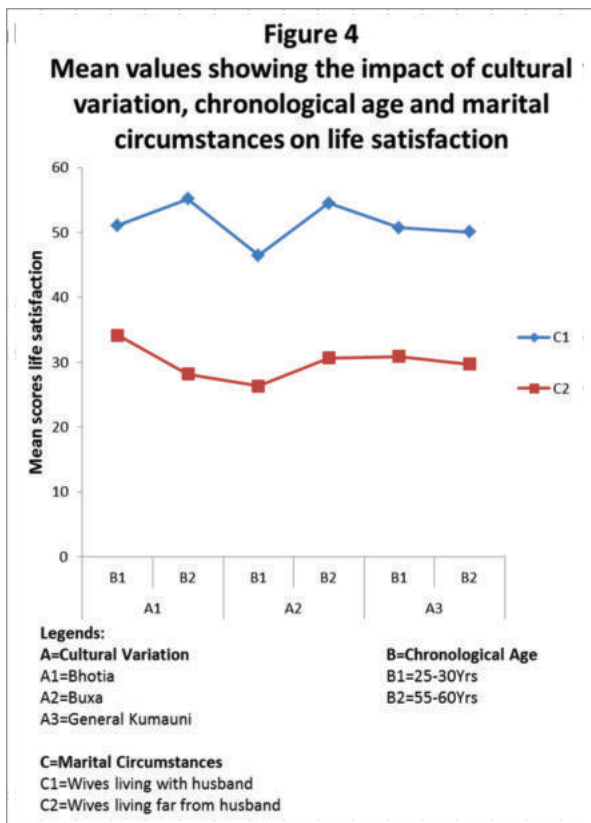
Figure reveals that the magnitude of age related discrepancy was higher for wives accompanied by husbands as compared to those who were living far from their husbands.



The chronological age and marital circumstances interaction was also significance ( $F, 1, 235 = 9.61$   $P < .01$ ) and it revealed that the magnitude of age related discrepancy was higher for

wives accompanied by husbands as compared to those who were living far from their husbands. The interaction is appeared in figure 3.

The three way interaction of cultural variation, chronological age and marital circumstances was also significance ( $F, 2, 239 = 10.19$   $P < .01$ ) and it is mentioned in figure 4. Figure clearly reveals that



All variables laid their impact on the scores of life satisfaction.

**Section II**

(I) *Area wise analysis of satisfaction scale:* In order to find out the relation wise analysis was made out it is mentioned in table 4. Table shows good knit of dimensions.

**Table 4**  
Inter correlation analysis of Life Satisfaction Scale Scores

S.N	Name of the areas	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Health Satisfaction	-	.69	.66	.59	.56	.56
2.	Personal Satisfaction		-	.52	.61	.68	.79
3.	Economic Satisfaction			-	.56	.46	.61
4.	Social Satisfaction				-	.71	.70
5.	Marital Satisfaction					-	.53
6.	Job Satisfaction						-

All coefficient values are significant. They, therefore, reveal that all dimensions of life satisfaction scale here were similarly knitted with each other.

Findings, in sum, revealed that life satisfaction was influenced by cultural variation and marital circumstance in developmental perspective. In addition, the correlation. Coefficients were also significant. It showed the fact that life Satisfaction affecters of human life.

**DISCUSSION**

Obtained data were analyzed by three way analysis of variance and interpreted in terms of cultural variation, chronological age and marital circumstances as effectors of life satisfaction. Prior to the inception of this study some hypothesis were formulated and the findings will be



discussed accordingly.

**(i) Variation in culture would cause variation in life satisfaction :**

Our first and foremost concern was related with the impact of cultural variation on life satisfaction. It was contended that variation in culture would evince its impact on the level of life satisfaction and participants hailing from various cultural segments would show differences in relation to their scores on life satisfaction. Our findings confirmed our hypothesis and it was noted that the magnitude of life satisfaction was higher in general Kumauni population followed by Buxas and Bhotias.

It appears from the findings that people living in civilized and privileged place feel more comfort and they are more satisfied with their lives as compared to others because such places provide much amenities of life. The participants of tribal societies were taken from the rooted areas of their places where they are deprived of such facilities which they must have. They listen about them from the other societies but lack it. In addition, life satisfaction is also based on cultural values which lay their impact on life satisfaction. The importance of work, family, religion and interpersonal trust also play an important role in deciding the magnitude of life satisfaction (Lange, 2009). While going through the study of life satisfaction in cross national perspective Oishi (2006) noted that Chinese were less satisfied with their lives as compared to American. Our findings support there notion and it can be said varying cultural produce variation in life satisfaction.

In India, such researches have also done and they have stressed on the relative efficacy of cultural on life satisfaction. Joshi and Shukla (2018) and Joshi (2018) revealed the relative impact of cultural variation on the magnitude of life satisfaction of Kumauni women. Moreover, Dubey and Tripathi (2016) also found significant impact of varying status of women on life satisfaction. Bharadwaj (2013) have also stated that women as a disadvantaged features of society have faced discrimination and maltreatment as human individuals and it contributed to make them rebellious and agents of social change.

Our findings are the clear indicator of culture related variation in life satisfaction and happiness. Actually the life satisfaction of any person not only depends on the cultural setup but also it is based on the circumstances, nature and behavior of concerned other persons and many more. Moreover, the inner feeling and level of global satisfaction and non complaining behavior also general a feelings of life satisfaction.

One other important feature of life satisfaction, as we see today is having wealth in life. Many times, wealth provides a sense of life security and confidence therefore, the life satisfaction was found varied in various group. However, it is surely fair to say that culture impact life satisfaction.

**(ii) Variation in chronological age would lay its' impact on life satisfaction:** Our second notion was related with the impact of chronological age on life satisfaction. It was hypothesized that variation in chronological age would lay its impact on life satisfaction and happiness and it was noted that our young old participants yielded their difference in terms of the scores of life satisfaction.

It is a common fact that human being is a ontogenetic learner and throughout the life he tries to get everything more as compared with. Realizing his limitation in consistent mode he always works hard but this feeling always produces a sense of dissatisfaction for the life and it impacts the human life cycle. Perhaps this notion has caused our findings.

Our findings are in close consonance with Medley (1980) who focused on the pattern of life satisfaction in adulthood. The changes in life satisfaction during adulthood were also noted by MrocZek and Sapiro (2005), Huang Rough, Ziaomin, Tengnaio and Buxin (2011). If we see dimension wise results we find that health, economic and social satisfaction of young aged participants was higher than old aged participants. Moreover, it was also noticed that participants living with husbands were more satisfied than the wives, living far from husbands. The category of their satisfaction is average but they are on lower side of this category. The dimensions are concerned with physical and mental health, struggle in life, being active availability of basic facilities, recreation, interest in social problems, good adjustments with family members, respects for custom etc. Their being on lower side means that in these areas their position was in average category but the level of all the amenities and adjustment etc are not so high.

The essence and core of life satisfaction is found different at every age and it depends on the situation and the demands of time. In this way it appears that pattern of life satisfaction differs with increase in age. Findings support our hypotheses.

**(iii) Variation in life satisfaction would be influenced with variation in marital circumstances :** Last but not least was the hypothesis in which it was assumed that variation in life satisfaction would be caused by variation in marital circumstances. Our hypothesis was confirmed and it was found that the pattern of life satisfaction was varied with variation in marital circumstances.

It is a common fact that a women, in spite of her husband marital relation feels secured and satisfied and happy became a lot of responsibilities are showed by her husband while on the other hand the women living without and far from her husband feels insecurity and helplessness. Moreover, she feels children's and financial management out of her control and feels herself on the cross road and thinks her life in vain. The women living with husbands finds herself elated and happy while the reverse side of the life comes in the parts of women living alone with the children and far from the husbands.

Findings, in general, reveal the status of women in respect to life satisfaction. Better attempts are required to reuse the satisfaction level of women who required it.

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