

## LIFE SATISFACTION OF ELDERLY AGED PEOPLE IN RELATION TO DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE

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### ABSTRACT

The Study was conducted with a view to find out the relation of life satisfaction of elderly aged people with their gender, marital status, educational qualification, socioeconomic status and types of residence. The samples of the present study comprised of 197, their age ranges from 65 to 90 years recruited from two old home institutes and outside of the old home institute situated in the same area. Data were collected by using Life satisfaction scale (SWLS) developed by (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) and Bengali version was adapted by Flora Jasmine in 2000. The findings of the present study are indicating a strong relation of marital status, educational qualification, socio-economic status and living situation with life satisfaction, but in this study, we have not found any differences of life satisfaction with gender in the perspective of Bangladesh. To sum up the study, it can be said that the findings are important in understanding what to expect of ourselves and others as we age, which things are likely to be most important for elderly aged people in Bangladesh and what factors are predictors of overall life satisfaction.

**Keywords:** life satisfaction, aged people, gender, marital status, educational qualification, socioeconomic status

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### Introduction

Life satisfaction is the main expectation of

human life. It is the final destination and people try to achieve this goal throughout the life. Life satisfaction is different in various stages of life (Doyle & Forehand,



1984). According to Erikson (1963) people proceed through eight stages of psychosocial development across their life (An & Cooney, 2006). The last and eighth stage is integrity vs. despair. The duration of this stage from 65 to death this is known as old age. This period is reflecting on life. The elderly person may experience satisfaction or a sense of failure. They evaluate their whole life and find themselves were they satisfied or not. In response to this older people become preoccupied with the past. Some become preoccupied with their failures, the bad decisions they made and regret that (unlike some in the previous stage) they really don't have to time or energy to reverse them. Along with these retirement, deterioration of health, and loss of spouse experienced in the aging process may affect the life satisfaction (Chen, 2001).

Life satisfaction is an overall assessment of feelings and attitudes about one's life at a particular point in time ranging from negative to positive. It is one of three major indicators of well-being: life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect (Diener, 1984). Different study describe the relationship between life satisfaction, happiness and current mood of elder people (Gamble & Gärling, 2012). Peterson, Park, and Seligman (2005) measured life satisfaction in three different ways such as- through pleasure, engagement and meaning to be happy. Each of these individually predicted life satisfaction. If, all are fulfilled, people deserve the satisfactory life. On the other hand, the underachievers deserve the low life satisfaction. In studies, it was found that life satisfaction among the elderly people decreased as age increased beyond 65 years of age. It was also found that social demographic variables, an income decrease, living arrangement, and level of activity participation have a profound impact on life satisfaction

of elderly people (Chen, 2001). A number of studies, which considered gender differences in the correlates of elderly well-being, have observed that the same conditions do not apply in the same ways to the subjective well-being of older men and women, and have emphasized the importance of separate analyses by gender (Berg, Hassing, McClearn, & Johansson, 2006; Mroczek & Kolarz, 1998; Pinquart & Sörensen, 2001). Marital status is related to life satisfaction across all ages, also in old age. Among a range of life events, the effects of marriage and bereavement are the only events that have been found to influence level of life satisfaction positively respectively over longer periods of time. In general, indicate that being married is associated with higher life satisfaction when compared with the divorced and widowed in elder age (Fengler, Danigelis, & Grams, 1982). The education is correlated with life satisfaction (Amaike, 2014). Socio-economic status, different types of residence influence the life satisfaction of elderly people (Devi, KavithaKiran, & Swachita, 2015).

It is expected that the study will become very much crucial in Bangladesh because the life expectancy has increased in the recent years and there is no such relevant significant studies which is held in Bangladesh on elder aged people. It can also be said that study will assist the interested people to comprehend about factors which is playing a catalyst role in life satisfaction. The study is mainly conducted with the purpose of finding the relationship between gender, marital status, educational qualification, socioeconomic status, types of residence (with family, institutional, single) with life satisfaction. The specific objectives are

- i) to see whether there is any difference of life satisfaction in relation to sex,
- ii) to see whether there is any difference of life satisfaction in relation to marital status,
- iii) to see whether there is any difference of life satisfaction in relation to level of education,
- iv) to see whether there is any difference of life satisfaction in relation to socio-economic status,
- v) to see if there is any difference of life satisfaction in relation to residence.

## Method

### Participant

The sample of the present study comprised 197 elderly aged participants whose age range was 65 to 90 year. They were from diverse marital status, educational qualification, socioeconomic status and types of residence (like with family, institutional and single). The design of this study was to survey design. It used the systematic collection technique for sampling about a specific group of people (elderly aged people), living in a specific geography, culture or administrative areas. They were selected from the target population (65 to 90 years old) by purposive sampling method. The data of the study was collected from two old home institutes a) Old Home Rehabilitation Centre Gazipur and b) Probin Nibash and Hospital Agargoan Dhaka and outside of the old home institute situated in the same area.

### Measuring instruments

The following instruments were used to collect data of the present study. i) personal information questionnaire ii) life satisfaction scale.

#### i) **Personal information questionnaire**

**(PIQ).** Personal information questionnaire was used to collect information about 65 to 90 years old people. In personal information questionnaire their age, gender, marital status, education, socioeconomic status and type of residence is listed.

#### ii) **Life satisfaction scale.**

Bengali version of Life satisfaction scale (Diener et al., 1985) was used to measure life satisfaction. The scale has been extensively used and has proven to be applicable to adult age groups (Pavrot & Diener, 1993). SWLS is a five-item scale that measures perceived life satisfaction. The SWLS is rated at 7-point Likert scales (1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree), and the response was summed to produce a total score. Higher scores indicate greater satisfaction with life. Internal consistency of SWLS items was 0.80. Significant correlation [ $r(48) = 0.805, p < .005$ ] between scores of English and Bengali versions indicated translation reliability of the scale. The internal consistency of this study has been Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.604.



**Procedure:**

To conduct this study researcher firstly seeks permission from the institute. After getting permission a written explanatory statement was provided which contains the purpose, procedure and benefits of the research. Besides, the researcher verbally described the content of explanatory statement for low literacy participants. After providing the instruction, participants who are ready to participate were requested to give signature on consent paper. All interviews were conducted under face to face setting. Participants were given the scale and give instruction to read this carefully and then put the tick mark on the life satisfaction scale ranging from agreeing (7) to disagree (1). The duration of the interview session ranged from 15 to 20 minutes. Participants’ responses were scored according to the scoring system of life satisfaction scale separately. To analyze the collected data with SPSS 20 version was used.

**Results**

The collected data has been analyzed by descriptive statistics, mean (x), standard Deviation (SD), t Test and ANOVA (Post Hoc) analysis. The mean age of the participants was 70.29 with SD= 4.582. The findings are shown the following table.

*Table 1: Demographic characteristics of participants (N= 197)*

Participants characteristics	Demographic characteristics	N	%
Gender	Male	134	68.02
	Female	63	31.98
Marital status	Married	76	38.58
	Unmarried	08	4.06
	Widow	105	53.3
	Divorce	08	4.06
Educational Qualification	Primary	93	47.2
	Secondary	55	27.92
	Higher secondary	29	14.72
	Graduation	12	6.09
	Post-graduation	08	4.06
Social-economic status	Higher class	51	25.89
	Middle class	57	28.93
	Lower – middle class	56	28.43
	Lower class	33	16.75
Type of residence	With family	128	64.97
	Institute	60	30.46
	Single	09	4.56

Table1 shows the Demographic characteristics of the 197 participants with their percentages where gender, marital status, educational qualification, socioeconomic status, type of residence were taken into consideration.



Table 2: Mean (x) and Std. Deviation and t Test on Gender and Life Satisfaction of elderly aged people

Variable	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig
Male	19.6	6.7	1.4	195	.075
Female	18.07	7.7			

Table 2 shows that the mean score of life satisfaction of male was found 19.6 which is greater than female 18.07. The Standard Deviation of a male was found 6.7 and female 7.7. The result also found that there is no significant difference (t, df = 1.4, 195) at the alpha level of  $p > 0.05$  in life satisfaction of elderly aged people in relation to gender. .

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of life satisfaction of elderly aged people in relation of marital status.

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Married	21.1316	6.27023
Unmarried	15.8750	7.14018
Widow	18.1810	7.43146
Divorce	15.6250	3.66206

Table 3 shows the mean score of life satisfaction of elderly aged people which was found at 21.1316, 15.8750, 18.1810, 15.625 and Standard Deviation was found 6.27023, 7.14018, 7.43136, 3.66206 in married, unmarried, widow, divorced respectively.

Table 4: Summary of Post Hoc test (Tukey HSD) of life satisfaction of elderly aged people by marital status.

Tukey HSD Marital Status		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Married	Unmarried	5.25658	2.55831	.172	-1.3734	11.8866
	widow	2.95063*	1.03658	.025	.2643	5.6370
	divorce	5.50658	2.55831	.141	-1.1234	12.1366
Unmarried	married	-5.25658	2.55831	.172	-11.8866	1.3734
	widow	-2.30595	2.52444	.798	-8.8482	4.2363
	divorce	.25000	3.44140	1.000	-8.6686	9.1686
Widow	married	2.95063*	1.03658	.025	5.6370	-.2643
	Unmarried	2.30595	2.52444	.798	4.2363	8.8482
	divorce	2.55595	2.52444	.742	3.9863	9.0982
Divorce	married	-5.50658	2.55831	.141	-12.1366	1.1234
	Unmarried	-.25000	3.44140	1.000	-9.1686	8.6686
	widow	-2.55595	2.52444	.742	-9.0982	3.9863



The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level. From the table, we can see that the unmarried group and divorced group do not differ significantly from the Married group of life satisfaction of elderly aged people, but the Widow group is significantly different from the life satisfaction of married elder people. We can also see that the widow group and divorced group have not any significant difference from the unmarried group in life satisfaction. Similarly, divorced group does not differ significantly from the widow group in life satisfaction.

*Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation of life satisfaction of elderly aged people in relation to Educational Qualification*

Variables	Means	Standard Deviation
Primary	19.1075	7.05639
Secondary	17.6909	6.55143
Higher Secondary	18.5862	6.83749
Graduation	21.4167	5.29937
Post-graduation	27.6250	7.98100

Table 5 shows the mean score of life satisfaction of elderly aged people which was found as 19.1075, 17.6909, 18.5862, 21.4167, 27.6250 and Standard Deviation was 7.05639, 6.55143, 6.83749, 5.29937, 7.98100 in primary, secondary, Higher secondary, graduation, post-graduation respectively.

*Table 6: Summary of Post Hoc test (Tukey HSD) of life satisfaction of elderly aged people by Educational Qualification*

Education Qualification		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Primary	secondary	1.41662	1.16218	.740	-1.7839	4.6171
	Higher secondary	.52132	1.45313	.996	-3.4804	4.5230
	graduation	-2.30914	2.09569	.805	-8.0804	3.4621
	Post-graduation	-8.51747*	2.51732	.008	-15.4499	-1.5851
Secondary	primary	-1.41662	1.16218	.740	-4.6171	1.7839
	Higher secondary	-.89530	1.56792	.979	-5.2131	3.4226
	graduation	-3.72576	2.17685	.429	-9.7205	2.2690
	Post-graduation	-9.93409*	2.58528	.002	-17.0536	-2.8145
Higher	primary	-.52132	1.45313	.996	-4.5234	3.4804





secondar y					0	
	second ary	.89530	1.567 92	.97 9	- 3.422 6	5.213 1
	graduat ion	- 2.8304 6	2.345 13	.74 7	- 9.288 6	3.627 7
	Post- graduat ion	- 9.0387 9*	2.728 48	.01 0	- 16.55 27	- 1.524 9
Graduati on	primar y	2.3091 4	2.095 69	.80 5	- 3.462 1	8.080 4
	second ary	3.7257 6	2.176 85	.42 9	- 2.269 0	9.720 5
	Higher second ary	2.8304 6	2.345 13	.74 7	- 3.627 7	9.288 6
	Post- graduat ion	- 6.2083 3	3.118 48	.27 4	- 14.79 62	2.379 6
Post- graduatio n	primar y	8.5174 7*	2.517 32	.00 8	1.585 1	15.44 99
	second ary	9.9340 9*	2.585 28	.00 2	2.814 5	17.05 36
	Higher second ary	9.0387 9*	2.728 48	.01 0	1.524 9	16.55 27
	graduat ion	6.2083 3	3.118 48	.27 4	- 2.379 6	14.79 62

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 6 shows that secondary, primary, higher secondary and graduation have not any significant difference from primary whereas post-graduation has significant differences from primary in life satisfaction. Similarly, in case of life satisfaction, higher secondary and graduation have not found any significant difference from secondary, but post-graduation has found significant differences from secondary level. Graduation does not differ from higher secondary significantly, whereas post-graduation differ significantly from higher secondary. Lastly, elderly aged people Post-commencement ceremony has no significant difference from graduation in case of their life satisfaction.

*Table7: Mean (x) and Std. Deviation of life satisfaction of elderly aged people to Social-economic status.*

Variables	Means	Standard Deviation
higher class	23.5686	7.04345
middle class	19.6667	5.49134
lower middle	16.4107	6.38400
lower class	15.9091	6.92984

Table 7 shows the mean score of life satisfaction of elderly aged people which was found as 23.5686, 19.6667, 16,4107,15.9091 and Standard Deviation was found 7.04345, 5.49134,6.38400, 6.92984 in the higher class, middle class, lower middle and lower class respectively.



Table 8: Summary of Post Hoc test (Tukey HSD) of life satisfaction by Social-economic status

Socio economic status (I)	Socio economic status (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig .	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
higher class	middle class	3.90196*	1.23687	.010	.6965	7.1074
	lower middle	7.15791*	1.24208	.000	3.9390	10.3768
	lower class	7.65954*	1.43362	.000	3.9442	11.3748
middle class	higher class	-3.90196*	1.23687	.010	-7.1074	-.6965
	lower middle	3.25595*	1.20738	.038	.1270	6.3849
	lower class	3.75758*	1.40366	.040	.1199	7.3952
lower middle	higher class	-7.15791*	1.24208	.000	-10.3768	-3.9390
	middle class	3.25595*	1.20738	.038	6.3849	-.1270
	lower class	.50162	1.40825	.984	-3.1479	4.1512
lower class	higher class	-7.65954*	1.43362	.000	-11.3748	-3.9442
	middle class	3.75758*	1.40366	.040	-7.3952	-.1199
	lower middle	-.50162	1.40825	.984	-4.1512	3.1479

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level. Table 8 shows that middle class, lower middle class, lower class have significant difference from higher class in life satisfaction. Similarly, life satisfaction of lower middle class and lower class has found significant differences from the middle class. There is significant difference found between lower class and lower middle class of life satisfaction.

Table 9 Mean (x) and Std. Deviation of life satisfaction of elderly aged people with Type of residence.

Variables	Means	Standard Deviation
with family	20.9609	6.34370
Institute	15.7833	7.36020
Single	15.2222	4.73756

Table 9 shows the mean score of life satisfaction of elderly aged people which was found at 20.9609, 15.7833, 15.2222 and Standard Deviation was found 6.34370, 7.36020, and 4.73756 in with family, institutional and single respectively.

Table 10: Summary of Post Hoc test (Tukey HSD) of life satisfaction by Social-economic status

Type of residence (I)	Type of residence (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig .	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
with family	Institute	5.17760*	1.03482	.000	2.7335	7.6217
	Single	5.73872*	2.28086	.034	.3517	11.1257
Institute	with family	-5.17760*	1.03482	.000	-7.6217	-2.7335
	Single	-.56111	2.36424	.969	-5.0229	6.1451
Single	with family	-5.73872*	2.28086	.034	-11.1257	-.3517
	Institute	-.56111	2.36424	.969	-6.1451	5.0229





The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level. Table 10 shows that old age people who live in an old home or in single have found significant differences of life satisfaction from the group with family, but there is no significant difference found between single and institute, or family and single in life satisfaction.

### Discussion

The purpose of the present study was mainly to see life satisfaction of elderly aged people in relation to their demographic variables. The specific objectives were i) to see whether there is any differences of life satisfaction in relation to sex, ii) to see whether there is any differences of life satisfaction in relation to marital status, iii) to see whether there is any differences of life satisfaction in relation to level of education, iv) to see whether there is any differences of life satisfaction in relation to socio-economic status, v) to see whether there is any differences of life satisfaction in relation to residence.

Table 1 illustrates the Demographic characteristics of the 197 participants with their percentages where genders, marital status, educational qualification, socioeconomic status, type of residence were taken into consideration. In Bangladesh, only 5% of the total populations are aged above 65 (Bangladesh Bureau of statistics, 2015). The female participation in this study was relatively low as well. Moreover, the number of people agreed to participate in this study was very few. For these reasons the total number of participants and variations were found low.

Table 2 shows that there is no significant difference ( $t$ ,  $df = 1.4, 195$ ) at the alpha level of  $p > 0.05$  in life satisfaction of elderly aged people in relation to gender.

Moreover, the majority of studies find no gender differences in life satisfaction. These findings can be defined by considering the range of affect that men and women typically experience. The measures of depression and subjective well-being, which include affective components, appear to capture the extreme lows that leave women vulnerable to depression, as well as the extreme highs that allow for greater well-being. By contrast, men and women report similar rates of global life satisfaction, which is primarily a cognitive assessment (Worell, 2001).

From the table 4, we can see that the Widow group is significantly different from the married elderly aged people. The result of the study has coincided with the statement of (Fengler et al., 1982). Among elderly aged people it is observed that married persons are happier than widow, unmarried and divorced elderly aged people. Firstly married persons can share their opinions and views with their partner, secondly they can support each other during the time of crisis (Fengler et al., 1982). Moreover, widows are neglected in our society. Thus overall the life satisfaction of the married persons is increased.

Table 6 shows that elderly aged people with post-graduation have significant differences from primary, secondary, higher secondary and graduation group. Education is one of the most important stabilizing factors of life satisfaction in retirement. So, the post graduated people have the highest level of life satisfaction. Education assists in equipping older people with skills and resources which help them to adjust to changes in their socioeconomic status occasioned by retirement. Most retirees who has assessed their health status as positive (excellence or good) are retirees



with higher (tertiary) education whereas others with no formal education or primary education has rated their health status poorly (Amaike, 2014). The main reason is that the educated retirees will have adequate livelihood and report higher life satisfaction in retirement than retirees with less educational qualifications. In general, the statistics point to the pivotal role of education as a determinant of life satisfaction among older retirees.

Table 8 shows that middle class lower middle class, lower class have significant difference from higher class. Similarly lower middle class and lower class has significant difference from middle class. There is significant difference found between lower class and lower middle class. So, the persons with higher income have higher life satisfaction among elderly aged people. Elderly individuals with higher income have better social integration for having high quality of social ties and higher competence (both basic competences needed to maintain an independent life and expanded competence to fill the day with meaningful activities) reported greater life satisfaction, higher self-esteem, and greater happiness (Pinquart & Sörensen, 2000).

Table 10 shows the elder people who staying with family has higher life satisfaction than the person in an old home or single. Due to lack of close family ties and reduced connections with their culture of origin elder people experience loneliness and depression (Singh & Misra, 2009). On the other hand older people lose connection with their friendship networks and that they find it more difficult to initiate new friendships and to belong to new networks. The study conducted by Devi et al. (2015) establishes the fact that old home and non-old home elderly showed extremely statistically significant

difference in satisfaction with life. Elderly populations residing with families were found to have very high satisfaction than the non-old home elderly in their study which is harmonious to this study. Elderly aged people staying with family can spend their time happily with their grandchild and get support physically, mentally, economically. Moreover, they are most respected person among the family member.

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