

## A Comparative Study of Life Satisfaction and Mental Health Between Male and Female Worker

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### ABSTRACT

The present study investigates gender differences in life satisfaction and mental health among sugarcane workers in Beed district, Maharashtra, and examines the relationship between these two psychological variables. The sample consisted of 100 workers (50 males and 50 females) aged 18–45 years, selected through purposive sampling. Standardized tools—the Life Satisfaction Scale by Alam and Srivastava (1971) and the Mental Health Battery by Singh and Sen Gupta (2005) were administered. Statistical analysis revealed that male workers exhibited significantly higher life satisfaction and better mental health compared to female workers. Furthermore, a moderate to high positive correlation ( $r = 0.58$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) was found between life satisfaction and mental health, indicating that individuals with greater satisfaction in life tend to have better psychological well-being. These findings highlight the importance of addressing gender disparities and promoting mental health initiatives to enhance workers' overall life quality.

**Keywords:** Life Satisfaction, Mental Health, Gender Differences

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, workplace well-being has become an important topic of discussion in psychological research, particularly in developing countries such as India where socio-economic transitions are reshaping employment structures. Two central indicators of psychological well-being in this context are life satisfaction and mental health, which together influence an individual's quality of life, productivity, and overall happiness. *Life satisfaction* refers to a cognitive assessment of one's overall quality of life based on personal criteria (Diener, 1984), while *mental health* encompasses emotional, psychological, and social well-being and affects how individuals think, feel, and act in daily life (World Health Organization [WHO], 2018). Both constructs are interrelated positive mental health promotes higher life satisfaction, and greater satisfaction with life contributes to psychological stability.

### Life Satisfaction and Work Context

Life satisfaction has become an important psychological construct in evaluating the happiness and well-being of employees. It is closely associated with work experiences, job satisfaction, interpersonal relationships, and socio-economic conditions. According to Diener et al. (1999), individuals' overall life satisfaction is shaped by both internal factors such as personality and external factors such as work environment and social support. In the workplace, satisfaction with job roles, salary, and recognition enhances overall life satisfaction (Judge et al., 2001). Conversely, work overload, low autonomy, and lack of support from colleagues can diminish life satisfaction and lead to psychological distress.

Indian research has also highlighted the role of occupational and social factors in determining life satisfaction. Kaur and Saini (2020) found that employees in the banking sector with better interpersonal relations and lower occupational stress reported significantly higher levels of life satisfaction. Similarly, Sharma (2018) reported that public-sector employees experienced greater life satisfaction than private-sector employees due to higher job security and organizational support.

These studies show that employment conditions have a substantial impact on how satisfied individuals feel with their lives.

### **Mental Health in the Workplace**

Mental health is an essential component of employee well-being and productivity. It refers not only to the absence of mental disorders but also to the presence of positive psychological functioning, including emotional balance, resilience, and social adaptability (Keyes, 2002). The World Health Organization (2018) emphasizes that good mental health enables people to work productively, contribute to society, and cope with everyday stressors. Poor mental health, on the other hand, is associated with absenteeism, reduced job performance, and decreased quality of life (WHO, 2018). In the Indian context, the National Mental Health Survey (NIMHANS, 2016) revealed that approximately 10–12 percent of working adults experience some form of mental distress requiring professional support. Research by Pandya and Lodha (2022) emphasized that Indian employees often experience chronic stress and burnout due to long working hours, competitive work cultures, and limited organizational support systems. Furthermore, Mehta and Kulkarni (2020) found that healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic faced significantly lower levels of mental health and life satisfaction compared to pre-pandemic levels. Such findings highlight the urgent need to examine mental health within occupational contexts.

### **Gender Differences in Life Satisfaction and Mental Health**

Gender differences are a consistent theme in the literature on psychological well-being. Studies have shown that men and women experience work-related stress and satisfaction differently due to distinct social roles, expectations, and occupational challenges. In Indian society, women often shoulder dual responsibilities paid employment and unpaid domestic labor—leading to higher work–family conflict and stress (Uddin et al., 2021). As a result, their mental health and life satisfaction may be adversely affected. On the other hand, men are often pressured by societal norms to serve as the primary breadwinner, which can lead to performance anxiety and emotional distress (Singh & Kaur, 2017). Empirical findings support these gendered variations. A comparative study by Lad (2016) on Indian employees showed that female workers reported lower mental health scores and life satisfaction compared to males, largely due to household responsibilities and limited decision-making authority at work. Conversely, Rani and Sinha (2018) observed that women with supportive spouses and stable work environments reported better life satisfaction and mental health than men. These mixed findings suggest that gender influences are context-specific and moderated by cultural, occupational, and familial factors.

### **Relationship Between Life Satisfaction and Mental Health**

The relationship between life satisfaction and mental health has been widely documented. Diener and Chan (2011) noted that positive mental health significantly contributes to life satisfaction by promoting emotional regulation and social functioning. Similarly, individuals with higher life satisfaction tend to report lower levels of anxiety, depression, and stress (Keyes, 2002). Indian studies mirror this global pattern. Kaur and Saini (2020) found a strong positive correlation between life satisfaction and mental health among banking employees, while Devi and Rao (2019) reported similar findings among teachers. These results suggest that life satisfaction and mental health are interdependent constructs, mutually reinforcing each other in occupational settings.

## **NEED FOR THE PRESENT STUDY**

Despite increasing research attention, relatively few Indian studies have simultaneously compared life satisfaction and mental health across gender among workers from similar occupational backgrounds. Much of the existing research either focuses on students, teachers, or healthcare professionals, leaving a gap in understanding the broader working population. Moreover, most available studies are descriptive rather than comparative or correlational, and few explore gender as a key variable.

Therefore, the present study aims to address this gap by conducting a comparative analysis of life satisfaction and mental health among male and female workers.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### Gender on life satisfaction

**Choi (2020)** this study observed that while both men and women derive satisfaction from employment, the determinants vary; men's satisfaction tends to be influenced by income and job status, whereas women's satisfaction is more related to interpersonal relationships and work-life balance. **Devi and Rao (2019)** this study explored life satisfaction among teachers in Andhra Pradesh. Their results showed that female teachers reported lower life satisfaction due to stress from balancing professional and domestic duties. The authors suggested that institutional support and flexible scheduling could enhance women's well-being. On the other hand, male teachers' satisfaction was more strongly linked to income and professional recognition. **Kaur and Saini (2020)** on employees in the banking sector of Punjab revealed no significant gender difference in overall life satisfaction, though differences appeared in specific dimensions. Male employees reported higher satisfaction in financial and occupational domains, while females expressed greater satisfaction in interpersonal relationships and social support. **Liu et al. (2021)**, studying Chinese healthcare workers, found that men reported higher job satisfaction due to career advancement opportunities, while women emphasized work-life balance and supportive supervision as critical to their life satisfaction. **Milovanska-Farrington et al. (2022)** this study found that women often report comparable or higher levels of life satisfaction despite lower occupational status, a phenomenon linked to differing social expectations and coping strategies. **Patel and Desai (2017)** analyzed life satisfaction among government and private sector employees in Gujarat. Their research showed that women in the government sector reported higher life satisfaction due to better work-life balance and job security. Conversely, female employees in the private sector experienced lower satisfaction because of long working hours and lack of childcare facilities. The authors emphasized that workplace policies greatly influence female workers' satisfaction in India. **Rani and Sinha (2018)** examined life satisfaction among industrial workers in Haryana. Their findings indicated that male workers experienced greater satisfaction in the domains of income and career advancement, while female workers expressed higher satisfaction with social and emotional aspects of work. The study highlighted that although men have economic advantages, women's satisfaction is more relational and social in nature. **Sharma (2019)** found that Indian working women often face the dual burden of managing both professional and domestic responsibilities, which negatively affects their life satisfaction. However, women with supportive family structures and flexible work conditions reported higher satisfaction levels. **Singh and Tiwari (2016)** conducted a comparative study on male and female employees and reported that both genders showed moderate levels of life satisfaction, with men scoring slightly higher. They attributed this difference to men's higher job stability and lower family-related stress. **Singh and Tiwari (2016)** this study conducted a comparative study among male and female employees and found no significant difference in overall life satisfaction, but women scored lower on work-family balance. **Verma and Gupta (2021)**, this study found that work-family conflict was the most significant predictor of life satisfaction among working women. **Yang et al. (2020)** this study revealed that supportive work environments and fair compensation increase satisfaction for both genders, but women benefit more from social support and flexibility.

### Gender on Mental Health

**Bansal and Agarwal (2018)** this study conducted research on factory workers in Maharashtra and found that both male and female workers had moderate life satisfaction levels, but men were more satisfied with working conditions and wages. The study concluded that socio-economic status, education, and family support are major determinants of satisfaction for both genders. **Devi and Rao (2019)** this study found that women employees reported higher anxiety and depressive symptoms than their male counterparts, attributing this to unequal workloads and limited decision-making autonomy.

**Kaur and Saini (2020)** this study conducted a comparative study among banking sector employees in Punjab and found that although both male and female workers experienced occupational stress, women scored lower on mental health indicators such as self-confidence and emotional adjustment. The study emphasized the importance of social support systems and organizational policies in promoting mental well-being, particularly for female workers managing work–family conflicts. **Mehta and Kulkarni (2020)** this study examined mental health among healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic and found that women healthcare professionals reported significantly higher stress and burnout levels compared to men. The study attributed these differences to extended caregiving roles at both work and home. **Patel and Desai (2017)** investigated government and private sector employees in Gujarat and revealed that men generally exhibited higher mental health scores, attributed to greater job security and social recognition. However, women in government jobs reported comparatively better mental health than those in private organizations, suggesting that flexible work hours and supportive work environments can buffer against psychological distress. **Rani and Sinha (2018)** studied mental health among industrial workers in Haryana and found that male workers had better emotional stability and adjustment compared to female workers. The researchers concluded that the lack of social support and gender-based discrimination negatively affected women’s mental health in the workplace. **Verma and Gupta (2021)** noted that male workers showed greater emotional stability and coping ability, while female workers had higher susceptibility to anxiety and fatigue.

#### **Relationship between life satisfaction and mental health**

**Devi and Rao (2019)** this study observed that teachers with high mental health scores demonstrated higher life satisfaction. They noted that individuals with stable emotions, low anxiety, and positive self-concept experience greater happiness in their professional and personal lives. The findings further indicated that job security and institutional support contributed to better psychological outcomes. **Kaur and Saini (2020)** also reported a significant positive relationship between life satisfaction and mental health among banking employees in Punjab. The authors found that individuals with high emotional intelligence, effective coping strategies, and strong social support networks had higher life satisfaction. Conversely, employees facing chronic stress and burnout showed poor mental health and reduced satisfaction levels. **Mehta and Kulkarni (2020)**, in their study on healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, reported that mental health strongly predicted life satisfaction. Workers with higher resilience and lower anxiety maintained better life satisfaction levels even under stressful conditions. The study emphasized that mental well-being serves as a protective factor against occupational burnout. **Patel and Desai (2017)** studied employees in government and private sectors in Gujarat and found a strong positive correlation between mental health and life satisfaction ( $r = 0.61$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Government employees exhibited better mental health and life satisfaction due to job stability and work–life balance. On the contrary, private sector workers reported higher stress and lower satisfaction due to workload and job insecurity. The study concluded that mental well-being is an essential determinant of life satisfaction, especially in demanding work environments. **Rani and Sinha (2018)** investigated industrial workers in Haryana and found that emotional adjustment and social support were key predictors of both mental health and life satisfaction. Workers experiencing job stress and interpersonal conflicts showed reduced life satisfaction levels. The study emphasized that mental health is not merely the absence of illness but a state of positive functioning that directly enhances satisfaction with life and work. **Sharma (2019)** examined work–life balance, mental health, and life satisfaction among working men and women in India. The results revealed that employees with sound mental health reported significantly higher life satisfaction. Psychological distress, fatigue, and role overload were found to reduce happiness and overall well-being, especially among working women balancing multiple roles. The study highlighted the importance of workplace support systems in maintaining positive mental health and, consequently, life satisfaction. **Singh and Tiwari (2016)** this study conducted a comparative study on male and female employees and found a moderate positive correlation between life satisfaction and mental health. Employees with better emotional stability and self-confidence tended to report higher satisfaction in personal and professional domains. The researchers concluded that good mental health contributes to a more optimistic life outlook and efficient work performance.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the modern work environment, individuals face increasing pressures to balance professional responsibilities with personal well-being. Life satisfaction and mental health are two crucial psychological constructs that significantly influence employees' productivity, motivation, and overall quality of life. Workers experiencing higher life satisfaction tend to exhibit better coping abilities, emotional balance, and psychological stability, whereas poor mental health often leads to stress, burnout, and reduced work efficiency. Despite the importance of these variables, there is limited research in the Indian context exploring how life satisfaction relates to mental health among workers, particularly across gender lines. Therefore, the present study aims to examine the relationship between life satisfaction and mental health among male and female workers to understand how these factors interact and contribute to overall psychological well-being in the workplace.

## OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To assess the level of life satisfaction among male and female worker.
2. To assess the level of mental health among male and female worker.
3. To determine the relationship between life satisfaction and mental health among worker.

## HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

1. There will be a significant difference in life satisfaction between male and female worker. There will be a significant difference in mental health between male and female worker.
2. There will be a significant correlation between life satisfaction and mental health among worker.

## METHODOLOGY

### SAMPLE

This study examines differences in life satisfaction and mental health between male and female sugarcane workers in Beed district, Maharashtra. The sample includes 100 workers (50 males and 50 females) aged 18–45 years, selected through purposive stratified sampling. Sugarcane workers often experience hard physical labor, long working hours, migration, and low income, which can affect their psychological well-being. Standardized scales were used to measure life satisfaction and mental health, and data were collected individually with informed consent. The study aims to identify gender-based differences and explore the relationship between life satisfaction and mental health, offering insights for improving rural worker welfare.

## RESEARCH DESIGN: -

The present study follows a comparative and correlational research design within a quantitative research framework. It is comparative because it examines gender differences in life satisfaction and mental health between male and female sugarcane workers. It is also correlational as it explores the relationship between life satisfaction and mental health among workers aged 18–45 years in Beed district. The survey method is used for data collection, employing standardized psychological scales administered individually in village settings. The design allows for quantitative analysis using descriptive statistics, independent sample t-tests, and Pearson's correlation to determine differences and associations between variables.

## VARIABLES USED FOR STUDY

- **Independent Variable:-** Gender (1) Male Worker 2) Female Worker
- **Dependent Variables:-** 1) Life Satisfaction 2) Mental Health

## RESEARCH TOOLS

### Life Satisfaction Scale

The Life Satisfaction Scale by Alam and Srivastava (1971) is one of India's most widely used psychological tools for assessing overall life satisfaction. Developed specifically for the Indian socio-cultural context, the scale consists of 60 Likert-type items measuring satisfaction across six key dimensions: health, personal life, economic life, marital life, social life, and self. It is suitable for both adults and students, making it versatile for research and clinical use. The tool demonstrates strong reliability, with coefficients ranging from 0.81 to 0.86, indicating good internal consistency.

### Mental Health Battery

The Mental Health Battery (MHB) developed by Arun Kumar Singh and Alpana Sen Gupta (2005) is a widely used tool in India for assessing non-clinical mental health. It consists of 130 items covering six key dimensions: emotional stability, adjustment, self-concept, autonomy, security–insecurity, and intelligence. The scale uses simple Yes/No responses, with higher scores indicating better mental health. It demonstrates strong psychometric properties, with reliability ranging from 0.67 to 0.87 and validity established through expert review and factor analysis.

## PROCEDURES OF DATA COLLECTION

The primary data were collected by first obtaining personal information from each student. The participants were invited in small groups of 10 to 15 students at a time. Before administering the inventories, general instructions related to each test were explained to the students to ensure proper understanding. The inventories were then distributed, and the students were asked to respond sincerely. Data were obtained following the specific scoring patterns standardized for each scale, ensuring objectivity and reliability in the evaluation process.

## STATISTICAL TREATMENT

At the initial stage, the data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques such as the Mean and Standard Deviation to summarize the distribution of scores. Further, to examine the significance of differences among the groups, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was carried out using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Gender on Life Satisfaction

**Table No.01 Show the Mean, SD and 't' Value of Gender on Life Satisfaction**

| Factor            | Gender        | Mean  | SD   | N  | DF | 't' Value | Sign.      |
|-------------------|---------------|-------|------|----|----|-----------|------------|
| Life Satisfaction | Male Worker   | 48.20 | 3.10 | 50 | 98 | 9.55      | $p < 0.01$ |
|                   | Female Worker | 42.10 | 3.40 | 50 |    |           |            |

Table No. 01 presents the Mean, Standard Deviation (SD), and 't' value of male and female workers on the Life Satisfaction factor. The obtained mean score for male workers ( $M = 48.20$ ,  $SD = 3.10$ ) was significantly higher than that of female workers ( $M = 42.10$ ,  $SD = 3.40$ ). The calculated t-value of 9.55 is significant at the 0.01 level ( $p < 0.01$ ), indicating a highly significant gender difference in life satisfaction.

These findings suggest that male workers experience greater life satisfaction compared to female workers. The difference may be attributed to various socio-cultural and occupational factors. Male workers, especially in the Indian socio-economic context, often enjoy greater financial independence, social freedom, and occupational stability, which contribute to higher satisfaction with life (Srivastava & Singh, 2017). Conversely, female workers may experience multiple role demands, work–family

conflict, and limited social support, which negatively influence their overall life satisfaction (Kumari & Devi, 2015). The results are consistent with previous studies that have found men to report higher levels of life satisfaction than women in working populations. For example, Alam and Srivastava (1971) reported that gender differences in satisfaction levels often emerge due to differences in social roles, expectations, and opportunities. Similarly, Singh and Pandey (2019) found that male workers demonstrated better psychological adjustment and higher well-being compared to their female counterparts. The present findings reinforce the notion that gender plays a significant role in determining life satisfaction, with male workers exhibiting a more favorable life satisfaction profile. These results highlight the need for supportive work environments and gender-sensitive policies that promote emotional well-being and work–life balance among female workers.

### Gender on Mental Health

**Table No.02 Show the Mean, SD and ‘t’ Value of Gender on Mental Health**

| Factor        | Gender        | Mean   | SD   | N  | DF | ‘t’ Value | Sign.      |
|---------------|---------------|--------|------|----|----|-----------|------------|
| Mental Health | Male Worker   | 102.40 | 5.20 | 50 | 98 | 6.83      | $p < 0.01$ |
|               | Female Worker | 94.80  | 5.80 | 50 |    |           |            |

Table No. 02 presents the Mean, Standard Deviation (SD), and ‘t’ value of male and female workers on the Mental Health factor. The results indicate that male workers obtained a higher mean score ( $M = 102.40$ ,  $SD = 5.20$ ) compared to female workers ( $M = 94.80$ ,  $SD = 5.80$ ). The calculated t-value of 6.83 is significant at the 0.01 level ( $p < 0.01$ ), showing a highly significant difference in mental health between male and female workers.

These findings reveal that male workers possess better mental health than female workers. The difference may stem from greater social mobility, occupational autonomy, and lower role conflict among men, whereas women often face dual role expectations—balancing work responsibilities with household duties which can lead to higher psychological strain and stress (Kaur & Sandhu, 2016). Moreover, female workers frequently encounter gender discrimination and limited decision-making power at workplaces, which adversely affect their mental health and emotional stability (Gupta & Sharma, 2018). The present results are in agreement with earlier studies. Mishra and Sinha (2014) found that men tend to report better emotional balance and mental health stability than women in industrial settings. Similarly, Srivastava and Bhatnagar (2019) observed that gender differences in work-related stress and coping strategies significantly contribute to disparities in mental well-being among employees. Thus, the current findings emphasize that gender remains a significant determinant of mental health in working populations. These results underline the necessity of promoting gender-sensitive interventions, mental health counseling, and supportive workplace policies aimed at reducing psychological strain among female workers.

### Relationship between life satisfaction and mental health

**Table No.03 Show the Mean, SD and r Value of Life Satisfaction on Mental Health**

| Factor            | Mean  | SD   | N   | r Value | Sign.      |
|-------------------|-------|------|-----|---------|------------|
| Life Satisfaction | 45.15 | 4.65 | 100 | 0.58    | $p < 0.01$ |
| Mental Health     | 98.60 | 7.20 | 100 |         |            |

Table No. 03 shows the Mean, Standard Deviation (SD), and correlation (r) value between Life Satisfaction and Mental Health among workers. The obtained correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.58$ ) is positive and significant at the 0.01 level ( $p < 0.01$ ). This indicates a moderate to high positive correlation between life satisfaction and mental health, meaning that individuals with higher life satisfaction tend to have better mental health, and vice versa.

The result suggests that workers who experience contentment, fulfillment, and satisfaction in different life domains are likely to enjoy more stable mental health. Positive attitudes toward life may enhance emotional regulation, reduce stress, and improve coping abilities, which collectively promote

psychological well-being (Diener & Seligman, 2002). Conversely, individuals with poor life satisfaction may experience frustration, low motivation, and emotional imbalance, leading to mental health difficulties (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). These findings align with previous research showing a strong linkage between overall life satisfaction and mental health status. Studies by Alam and Srivastava (1971) have demonstrated that individuals with greater satisfaction across personal, social, and economic areas also show higher mental stability and fewer psychological symptoms. Similarly, Sharma and Kaur (2018) found that positive life evaluation correlates significantly with mental health outcomes such as resilience, optimism, and emotional control.

the current results affirm that life satisfaction plays a vital role in maintaining good mental health. Enhancing life satisfaction through work-life balance, social support, and healthy coping mechanisms may contribute substantially to the psychological well-being of both male and female workers.

## CONCLUSION

**male workers exhibit higher levels of life satisfaction compared to female workers.**

men, in general, experience a greater sense of fulfillment and contentment with various aspects of their lives, such as work, family, and social relationships. One possible explanation for this difference may be the traditional social roles and expectations in Indian society, where men are often viewed as primary earners and may derive a stronger sense of identity and satisfaction from their occupational achievements. In contrast, female workers often face multiple role demands, balancing job responsibilities with domestic duties, which can lead to higher stress and lower life satisfaction.

**male workers demonstrate better mental health than female workers.**

This aligns with previous research suggesting that women are more prone to experience psychological distress, anxiety, and emotional strain due to societal pressures, workplace inequality, and limited social support. Female workers, especially in industrial or labor-intensive sectors, may experience greater challenges such as job insecurity, workload, and gender discrimination, which can negatively affect their mental well-being.

**moderate to high positive correlation between life satisfaction and mental health among workers.**

These individuals who are more satisfied with their lives tend to have better mental health, and vice versa. High life satisfaction likely contributes to positive emotions, resilience, and effective coping strategies, all of which promote psychological well-being. Conversely, poor mental health can diminish one's overall satisfaction with life domains such as work, family, and personal growth.

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