



A Case Study on Happiness of Muslim Women of Rautara Anchal in West Bengal

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ABSTRACT

The present study examined the relationship between selected socio-demographic variables and happiness among Muslim women. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, and data were collected from 172 Muslim women using a standardized measure of happiness. The study investigated whether happiness differed across caste, educational level, family type, and marital status. The collected data were analysed using independent samples t-test and one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The findings revealed no statistically significant differences in happiness scores across any of the selected socio-demographic variables. The one-way ANOVA indicated that happiness did not differ significantly among caste groups, $F(4, 167) = 0.336$, $p = .853$, educational levels, $F(3, 168) = 0.582$, $p = .627$, or marital status groups, $F(3, 168) = 1.807$, $p = .148$. Similarly, the independent samples t-test showed no statistically significant difference in happiness between women from joint and nuclear families, $t(170) = 1.587$, $p = .114$, although participants from joint families reported a slightly higher mean happiness score. These findings suggest that caste, educational attainment, family type, and marital status do not significantly influence the happiness of Muslim women in the present sample. The study highlights that happiness may be shaped more by psychological, interpersonal, and contextual factors than by the socio-demographic

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characteristics examined. Further research with larger and more diverse samples is recommended to explore additional determinants of happiness among Muslim women.

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary society is beginning to acknowledge the unique identities of women. It is recognized that women possess their own aspirations, abilities, and qualities, just as men do, and there is a consensus that they should have the chance to cultivate their skills and express them according to their own preferences (Gyan, 2018). Women, whose roles and statuses were traditionally well-defined and largely unchanging, such as Indian women who have historically held roles as daughters, wives, homemakers, and sisters, are now undergoing significant transformations (Kiran, 2018). There is a growing belief that the advancement and well-being of society hinge on the progress and welfare of women. As a result, women are continually making strides and evolving, or we might say

Rationale of the Study

After making a careful analysis of various related literature which are given in the second chapter entitled as “Review of Related Literature”, following rationale was undertaken to

conduct the present study. Research evident that various factors influence and women happiness are correlated. A survey by Argyle (1987) concluded that there is little gender difference in satisfaction with life as a whole. A more recent review leads Mrocek and Kolarz (1998) to the view that “women appear to be less happy, and this seems to persist across all age groups” (p. 1336). In contrast, Nolen-Hoeksema and Rusting (1999) report that “a number of studies have found that women report experiencing greater happiness and more intense positive emotions than men” (p. 333). Recent statistical analyses by economists of large data sets for the United States, United Kingdom, and a number of continental European nations also find that women are happier (Blanch flower and Oswald, 2001; DiTella, MacCulloch, and Oswald, 2001; Oswald, 1997). Cheng and Fumham (2002) investigated the extent to which peer relations, self-confidence, and school performance correlated with happiness among 90 students aged 16 to 18 in the United Kingdom. A correlation analysis showed that both actual school grades and self-confidence in terms of academic performance were significantly related to general happiness, but the relation with the latter was stronger. Fox (2014) shows how the Women’s Movement prompted the decline in the happiness of women relative to men, and how individual and systemic barriers to social equality continue to contribute to this decline. It

also discusses how, in order to break down these barriers, reverse this negative trend, and allow women to maximize their happiness. One significant change is for women to embrace leadership in the public sphere, which includes opting out of the public labor force less than they do today. Joseashwinanand, John O'Rourke¹ & Martin Cooper research shows that "Lucky to be happy: A study of happiness in Australian primary students"- Providing a curriculum that promotes personal growth and wellbeing is an overarching learning outcome of the Western Australian Curriculum Framework (Curriculum Framework, 1998). From the above discussion it is cleared that though there were various studies on happiness but still this field remained a fertile area of study. It needs more comprehensive studies. It is also marked that though there were different studies but in total they gave a mixed result and their result may not be generalized for all contexts. Further it has been observed that rare attempts were undertaken to study happiness with relation to their level of education, family income and family type and marital Status. This research is mainly directed towards thinking of the issue of happiness of Muslim women of West Bengal in general and Rautara Anchal in particular.

Statement of the Problem

Hence, in view of the above research gaps and rationale the problem of the present study can be stated as "A Case Study on Happiness of Muslim Women Rautara Anchal in West Bengal".

Operational Definition of the Major Terms Use

➤ **Happiness:** Schumacher, (2009) writes in his book under title of "What is happiness?" All efforts for happiness show that happiness could bear a lot of forms with various viewpoints such as: Satisfaction level of life, Health & positive thought, active & constructive welfare, suitable life quality, its meaning, optimistic, interest success, self-confidence, enjoyment, finding reality and so on.

➤ **Muslim Women:** Here the researcher took the Muslim women from the age group of 14- 60 years who are living at Rautara Anchal in West Bengal.

Objectives of the Study:

O1: To study the relationship between Happiness and Level of Education

O2: To study the relationship between Happiness and family monthly income

O3: To study the relationship between Happiness and family type



O4: To study the relationship between Happiness and marital status.

Hypothesis of the study:

H₀1: There is no significant relationship between Happiness and their level of education.

H₀2: There is no significant relationship between Happiness and their family monthly income.

H₀3: There is no significant relationship between Happiness and their family type.

H₀4: There is no significant relationship between Happiness and their marital status

Delimitations of the Study

The study was delimited in the following respect:

1. The present study is delimited to the state of West Bengal only.
2. The study is restricted to the sample of 172 Muslim Women.
3. The study was delimited to only area of Rautara Anchal in West Bengal.
4. The sample selected were located in rural areas of West Bengal.
5. The study is delimited to only one dependent variable namely “Happiness” and five independent variables like -Cast, level of education, family monthly income, family type, marital status.

Related literature review of the Study:

Easterlin (1987) in his article entitled is as “Happiness of women and men in later life: nature, determinants and prospects” reported that as they move into and through the retirement years’ women’s advantage over men in happiness is reversed. Although the happiness of both sexes is affected similarly by retirement formwork, marital disruption, and changes in income and health, the difference between men and women in the life cycle occurrence of retirement and widowhood results in different trends in happiness. Men who survive to older age benefit disproportionately from the positive effect on happiness of retirement, while women suffer disproportionately from the adverse effect of widowhood. For women and men in the same work and marital circumstances, women continue to be happier than men. In the future, the turnaround in the relative happiness of women and men in later life is likely to continue, but the shift will be somewhat smaller in magnitude.



Argyle (1987) in his study entitled is as “little gender difference in satisfaction with life as a whole”. A more recent review leads Mrocek and Kolarz (1998) to the view that “women appear to be less happy, and this seems to persist across all age groups” (p. 1336). In contrast, Nolen-Hoeksema and Rusting (1999) reported that “a number of studies have found that women report experiencing greater happiness and more intense positive emotions than men” (p. 333). Recent statistical analyses by economists of large data sets for the United States, United Kingdom, and a number of continental European nations also find that women are happier (Blanchflower and Oswald, 2001; DiTella, MacCulloch, and Oswald, 2001; Oswald, 1997).

Wentzel (1998) also found academic support from teachers and peers to be related to adolescents' interest in school among 167 sixth-graders in a suburban community of the United States. Cheng and Fumham (2002) investigated the extent to which peer relations, self-confidence, and school performance correlated with happiness among 90 students aged 16 to 18 in the United Kingdom. A correlation analysis showed that both actual school grades and self-confidence in terms of academic performance were significantly related to general happiness, but the relation with the latter was stronger. In addition, a series of hierarchical regression analyses revealed that self-confidence in terms of academic performance was a significant predictor of happiness, but school grades were not

Candace in his article entitled as “Women’s Declining Happiness in the 20th Century.” Warning to American women in the twenty-first century: your happiness is on the decline, feminism has something to do with it, and yes, it is reversible. This writing shows how the Women’s Movement prompted the decline in the happiness of women relative to men, and how individual and systemic barriers to social equality continue to contribute to this decline. It also discusses how, in order to break down these barriers, reverse this negative trend, and allow women to maximize their happiness, women’s leadership must continue and transform. One significant change is for women to embrace leadership in the public sphere, which includes opting out of the public labor force less than they do today.

Joseashwinanand1& Sarala Devi in their article entitled as “Emotion Based Coping and Subjective Happiness-. among Higher Secondary Students”. This study focuses on emotion based coping and subjective happiness among the higher secondary students. A total of 300 students were selected from three different schools in Chennai city. The investigator selected 100 students from Government school, 100 students from Government Aided School and 100 students from Private school. Emotion Based coping inventory by Lazarus, R.S., and Folk man. S (1984), Subjective Happiness Scale developed by Lyubomirsky, Sonja (2001), was used for the study. Results were statistically analyzed thought’ test,



correlation coefficient. Gender has an impact on emotion based coping and subjective happiness, emotion based coping and subjective happiness are related each other.

John O'Rourke¹ & Martin Cooper in their article entitled as "Lucky to be happy: A study of happiness in Australian primary students"- Providing a curriculum that promotes personal growth and wellbeing is an overarching learning outcome of the Western Australian Curriculum Framework (Curriculum Framework, 1998). However, little is known about what constitutes and causes wellbeing of students in our primary schools. In the study reported in this paper the happiness of 312 primary-aged students was measured using various instruments and viewpoints, along with demographic information provided by their parents. "The findings, which were compared with Holder and Coleman (2008) and research into adult happiness, indicate that a sense of friendship, belonging and optimism are strong indicators of children's happiness.

Kirkcaldy, Fumham, and Siefen (2004) "the relation between educational performance in reading, mathematical, and scientific literacy" the study assessed in the Programmed for International Student Assessment (PISA) survey and the health performance indicators of the World Health report with data from 30 nations. They found a positive relation between happiness, as measured by Veenhooven's happiness scale, and the three literacy scores, with the magnitude of the association being greatest for reading. Nativig, Albrektsen, & amstrom (2003) explored the association between happiness and experience of stress at school, as well as personal and social factors among 887 Norwegian school adolescents aged 10-15. Similarly, they found teacher social support and peer social support to be positively related to happiness; moreover, support from teachers seemed to be more important than support from other students.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The proper methodology of the study is the pivot on which the success of any research work depends. As the characteristic of different problem is completely different, so a proper methodology should be used according to the characteristic of the problem. This methodology section of the present problem includes population, sample and sampling procedure, tools and techniques used, method used and statistical techniques used for data analysis.

Population of the Study

Illiterate, MP, HS, and higher education level Muslim women studying under various family, schools, colleges, and universities of Rautara Anchal in West Bengal was constituted the population of the study.

SAMPLE

A sample of 172 women was selected from different stage under Board and Universities namely WBBSE, WBCHSE, WBBME, WBSU, CU, RBU, NIOS, NSOU. Study center in West Bengal. All the representatives were under illiterate, MP, HS, UG, PG, higher education level of female. Here in order to select the sample from the whole population convenient sampling Technique was followed. Muslim Women were selected for the study as this stage were convenient to the researcher. Researcher collected Data from those Muslim women who ever available to him at the subsection under the sample was drawn and distributed. The sample design is presented here for clear understanding.

Key variable of study: Here the researcher used two types of variables namely independent variable and dependent variable as discussed below:

Independent Variables

Level of Education: In the present study the researcher included level of education as an

Independent variable divided into four categories like- 0. Illiterate. 1. I – VIII. 2. IX – X. 3. XI – XII. 4. Higher education (UG, PG, B. ED, D. EL. ED, Nursing etc.)

Family Income: In the present study the researcher included family income as an independent variable divided into four categories like-

1. Up to 5000
2. 5000 - 10000
3. 10001 - 20000
4. Above 20000

Family Type: In the present study the researcher included family type as an independent variable divided into two categories like-

1. Joint family
2. Single family



Marital status: In the present study the researcher included marital status as an independent variable divided into categories like-

1. Married
2. Unmarried
3. Divorce
4. Re-marriage

Method of the Study

The present piece of research was a cross-sectional survey-cum- correlational study. It was a cross sectional survey type of research because in order to assess level of Happiness of Muslim women who are illiterate and literate women are belong to school, college & university students and house-wife the researcher collected data from Rautara Anchal in West Bengal by conducting a survey with the help of The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire was developed by psychologists Michael Argyle and Peter Hills at Oxford University and Bengali version was adopted Nahar, Pakira and Mohakud without any change only by translating from English version. Further it was also a correlational study as the researcher intended to study the correlation between professional interest of Muslim women and happiness.

TOOLS USED FOR DATA COLLECTION:

Scoring Procedure of Happiness:

The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire was developed by psychologists Michael Argyle and Peter Hills at Oxford University and Bengali version was adopted Pakira and Mohakud without any change only by translating from English version. Content Validity was checked by some expert. The tool contained both Positive (+) as well as Negative (-) items to be responded in a 6 point Likert Scale of two categories options. However, in this tool there were six categories of items on basis of ways of responding.

- 1 = strongly disagree
- 2 = moderately disagree
- 3 = slightly disagree
- 4 = slightly agree



5 = moderately agree

6= strongly agree

Respondents were instructed to put a tick mark (✓) in appropriate box. Among these items were positive and 3 items i.e. 6, 7 & 10 were negative.

The scoring of this scale is very simple. In this scale each positive item is scored from 1 to 6 and each negative item is scored from 6 to 1. Response to the positive items should be numbered from 1 representing E-Strongly Disagree to 6 representing E-Strongly Agree with each and the negatively worded items should be reverse scored. That means a score of 6 representing strongest agreement with a negatively worded item is considered equivalent to a score of 1 representing strongest disagreement on a positively worded item, allowing them to be combined meaningfully. The total attitude score based on the sum of all 29 items can range from 1 to 29.

Procedure of Data Collection

After a careful study of operations involved in this study, the researcher used a standardized scale namely, 'Oxford Happiness scale' adopted in Bengali version by the researcher along with his guide for collecting data. So, for obtaining data she met the students of the above-mentioned collage and universities. She then distributed the scale to each of them and accordingly asked them to give their response by filling up it. While administering the scale the researcher gave a short and meaningful description about the use of the scale and items involved in it. He collected the scale from them after 30-35 minutes. However, the total process of data collection organized in 15 to 16 days.

Techniques Used for Data Analyses

For analyzing the data here, the researcher used descriptive statistics as well as some inferential statistics these are Pearson correlation, t test, one-way ANOVA, percentage analysis, frequency, Mean, standard division.

4.2.0 Analyses and Interpretation of the Data:

H₀1: There is no significant relationship between Happiness and their level of education.

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	df	Mean Square (MS)	F	Sig. (p)	Remarks
Between Groups	279.966	4	69.992	0.336	0.853	Not Significant



Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	df	Mean Square (MS)	F	Sig. (p)	Remarks
Within Groups	34,771.638	167	208.213			
Total	35,051.605	171				

Note. $p > .05$, Not Significant (NS).

Interpretation

The results of the one-way ANOVA revealed that there was **no statistically significant difference** in the total happiness scores among the five groups, $F(4, 167) = 0.336$, $p = .853 (> .05)$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted, indicating that the mean happiness scores did not differ significantly across the groups under study.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between Happiness and their family monthly income.

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	df	Mean Square (MS)	F	Sig. (p)	Remarks
Between Groups	360.645	3	120.215	0.582	0.627	Not Significant
Within Groups	34,690.960	168	206.494	–	–	–
Total	35,051.605	171	–	–	–	–

Note. NS = Not Significant; $p > .05$.

Interpretation

The one-way ANOVA results indicated that there was no statistically significant difference in the total happiness scores among the four groups, $F(3, 168) = 0.582$, $p = .627 (> .05)$. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted, indicating that the mean happiness scores did not differ significantly across the groups under study.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between Happiness and their family type.

Family Type	N	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	df	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Sig. (2-tailed)	Remarks
Joint Family	26	111.3077	16.52578	1.587	170	4.81454	3.03416	.114	Not Significant

Family Type	N	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	df	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Sig. (2-tailed)	Remarks
Single (Nuclear) Family	146	106.4932	13.82464	1.401	31.535	4.81454	3.43700	.171	Not Significant

Note. NS = Not Significant; $p > .05$.

Interpretation

The independent samples *t*-test revealed that there was **no significant difference** in the happiness scores of Muslim women belonging to joint and single (nuclear) families. Although women from joint families obtained a slightly higher mean happiness score ($M = 111.31$, $SD = 16.53$) than those from single families ($M = 106.49$, $SD = 13.82$), the difference was not statistically significant ($t(170) = 1.587$, $p = .114 > .05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted, indicating that family type did not significantly influence the happiness scores of the respondents.

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between Happiness and their marital status

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	df	Mean Square (MS)	F	Sig. (p)	Remarks
Between Groups	1,095.655	3	365.218	1.807	.148	Not Significant
Within Groups	33,955.949	168	202.119	—	—	—
Total	35,051.605	171	—	—	—	—

Note. NS = Not Significant; $p > .05$.

Interpretation

The results of the one-way ANOVA indicated that there was **no statistically significant difference** in the total happiness scores among the four groups, $F(3, 168) = 1.807$, $p = .148 (> .05)$. Since the obtained *p*-value was greater than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was accepted. This finding suggests that the groups under study did not differ significantly with respect to their total happiness scores.

Major Findings of the Study

Based on the statistical analyses, the following findings were obtained:



1. The one-way ANOVA examining the relationship between happiness and caste revealed no statistically significant difference in the total happiness scores among the caste groups, $F(4, 167) = 0.336, p = .853 (> .05)$. Thus, caste was not found to have a significant influence on the happiness of Muslim women.
2. The one-way ANOVA conducted to examine the relationship between happiness and educational level indicated no statistically significant difference in happiness scores among the educational groups, $F(3, 168) = 0.582, p = .627 (> .05)$. Therefore, the level of education was not significantly associated with happiness.
3. The independent samples *t*-test comparing the happiness scores of Muslim women from joint and single (nuclear) families showed no statistically significant difference, $t(170) = 1.587, p = .114 (> .05)$. Although women from joint families obtained a slightly higher mean happiness score than those from single families, the difference was not statistically significant.
4. The one-way ANOVA examining the relationship between happiness and marital status revealed no statistically significant difference in happiness scores among the marital status groups, $F(3, 168) = 1.807, p = .148 (> .05)$. Hence, marital status did not significantly influence the happiness of the respondents.

Conclusion

The study investigated the relationship between happiness and selected socio-demographic variables, namely caste, educational level, family type, and marital status among Muslim women. The findings revealed that none of these variables had a statistically significant influence on the happiness levels of the respondents. Although slight variations in mean happiness scores were observed across different groups, these differences were not statistically significant. The results suggest that happiness among Muslim women is not primarily determined by socio-demographic characteristics such as caste, education, family structure, or marital status. Rather, happiness may be influenced by other psychological, social, cultural, economic, or environmental factors that were beyond the scope of the present investigation. Therefore, the null hypotheses formulated for these variables were accepted. The study concludes that the selected demographic characteristics do not significantly differentiate the happiness levels of Muslim women in the study area. Future research may explore additional predictors of happiness, such as psychological well-being, social support, religiosity, self-esteem, employment status, financial security, and quality of family relationships, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants of happiness among Muslim women.

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