

Research Paper

## Role of Positive and Negative Affect, Stress and Depression in Life Satisfaction among Higher Secondary School Students

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### ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to investigate the Role of positive and negative affect (PANAS), stress, and depression in satisfaction with life among higher secondary schools' students. Data were collected from different schools in the Varanasi and Jaunpur districts. The appropriate statistical method was used for analyzing the data, and the purposive sampling method was also used in this study. The result showed that there was a significant effect of PANAS, stress, and depression on satisfaction with life. Some suggestions were also suggested in this study for enhancing the level of psychological health in adolescents.

*Keywords: PANAS, Satisfaction with life, Stress, Depression*

Positive and negative affect refers to the two broad dimensions of emotional experience. Positive affect represents the spectrum of positive emotions and feelings, such as happiness, joy, contentment as well as excitement. Positive affect reflects the extent to which a person experiences pleasurable emotions and is in a good mood (Watson et al., 1988). Negative affect encompasses negative emotions and feelings, like sadness, fear, anger, as well as distress. Negative affect measures the degree to which an individual experiences, unpleasant emotions in a bad mood (Watson et al., 1988). The role of positive and negative affect, stress, as well as depression in life satisfaction among higher secondary school students is a complex and multifaceted topic. Research in this area has shown various relationships and factors to consider; Higher levels of positive affect, which include emotions like happiness, joy, and contentment, are generally associated with greater life satisfaction among students (Huebner & Dew 1996). Positive emotions can contribute to a sense of well-being and overall satisfaction with life. Conversely, high levels of negative affect, including emotions like sadness, anxiety, and anger, can negatively impact life satisfaction. Persistent negative emotions can lead to dissatisfaction and reduced overall well-being. Stress is a common experience for students, particularly in higher secondary school. Moderate levels of stress can be motivating and help students perform better (Talib & Zia-ur-Rehman 2012), but excessive or chronic stress can lead to life satisfaction. Effective stress management strategies are essential for maintaining satisfaction (Moksnes et al., 2016). Depression is a serious mental health condition that can significantly affect life satisfaction. Depressive symptoms, such as low mood, loss of interest, and feelings of

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hopelessness, can lead to a reduced sense of satisfaction with life ((Moksnes et al., 2016). Early identification and intervention are crucial for students experiencing depression. It's important to note that these factors often interact with each other. For example, high levels of stress can contribute to the development of depression, which, in turn, can further reduce life satisfaction. Additionally, individual differences, coping strategies, and support systems play a significant role in how these factors affect students' life satisfaction. Parents play an important role in the development of the child. Children all the time expect positive and complimentary responses from parents, especially in adolescence age (Noori & Siddique, 2023). During this phase, children often start to grow more quickly. It includes some big changes to physical, sexual, emotional, cognition, and social (Zaky 2016). A parent's acceptance-rejection behavior influences an individual's psychological adjustment (Rohner & Britner 2002), which means a condition of an adolescent can cope with any psychological problems. Psychological health focuses on behavior, emotional, cognition, and social well-being. Psychological health is an integral part of our overall holistic wellness. Psychological health is not just the absence of signs of mental health problems or disorders, but the presence of balanced thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. When our psychological state is unbalanced, we may have trouble with ambiguousness, controlling our behaviors, managing our emotions, interacting with others, and coping with stress and other challenges (Galderisi et al., 2015).

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The literature underscores the complex interplay between positive and negative affect, stress, depression, and life satisfaction among higher secondary school students. Some researchers have drawn a parallel between the work context in adult life and the school context, underscoring the importance of increasing social as well as academic demands in school as normative stressors in students' lives (Eccles & Roeser 2011; Lohre et al. 2010; Suldo et al. 2009; Undheim & Sund 2005). The study by Proctor et al. (2010) and Gilman and Huebner (2006) showed that in comparison to students with average life satisfaction, those with high life satisfaction also scored higher on all indicators of adaptive, positive psychosocial functioning and reported lower levels of emotional symptoms, including depression. The study by Moksnes et al. (2016) showed that support for the stress of academic performance was significantly and positively related to depressive symptoms and significantly and adversely related to life satisfaction. Watson and Clark, (1984) showed that negative affect was broadly correlated with symptoms and diagnoses of both anxiety and depression, confirming earlier findings that it is an important general correlate of mental disorders. Watson et al. (1988) showed that negative affect was found to have a strong relationship between anxiety and depression as well as inverse relationship with positive affect. In Gençöz's (2000) work, positive emotion is delineated as the experience of pleasure and joy, whereas negative emotion is characterized as the result of unsettling emotions like stress, fear, and anger. This definition establishes a framework for examining the impact of these emotional categories on individuals' well-being. Studies conducted internationally have brought focus to the connection between positive or negative emotions and various factors. These factors encompass perfectionism (Cumming & Duda, 2012; Damian, Stoeber, Negru & Băban, 2014; Gaudreau & Thompson, 2010), as well as life satisfaction, awareness, perceived social support, and depression (Fredrickson, Cohn, Coffey, Pek & Finkel, 2008). Yılmaz and Arslan's (2013) investigation revealed a positive and notable correlation between positive affect and subjective well-being, whereas a negative and noteworthy association was observed between negative affect and subjective well-being. Similarly, Eryılmaz and Ercan's (2010) study with university students identified a positive

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and significant relationship between perceived control and positive affect, along with a negative significant relationship between perceived control and negative affect. These findings suggest a connection between positive or negative emotions and the life satisfaction of students.

### *Objectives*

- To examine the relationship between PANAS, Perceived Stress, Depression, and Satisfaction with Life among students.
- To examine the contribution of PANAS, Perceived Stress, and Depression on Satisfaction with life among students.

### *Hypothesis*

1. a. There was a significant relationship between PANAS and satisfaction with life among higher secondary students.
1. b. There was a Negative relationship between Perceived stress and satisfaction with life among higher secondary students.
1. c. There was a Negative relationship between Depression and satisfaction with life among higher secondary students.
2. a. There was a significant contribution of PANAS on satisfaction with life among higher secondary students.
2. b. There was a Negative contribution of Perceived stress on satisfaction with life among higher secondary students.
2. c. There was a Negative contribution of Depression on satisfaction with life among higher secondary students

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *Sample and Design*

This study used a Correlational design. Participants were 260 (130 male and 130 female) students in Varanasi and Jaunpur district. The samples were chosen by using Purposive sampling. The samples were picked out based on amenities, willing consent, and suitability. We assured them that the documents will remain confidential. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was examined to determine the relationship between different variables. To find the contribution of predictors on criterion variable multiple regression analysis was used in this study

### *Measures*

General information schedule; The purpose of this personal data sheet was to collect the personal and background information of the participants. The schedule consists of information regarding the participants, name, age, gender, caste, religion, school, class, parents' education parents' income, etc.

- **Satisfaction with Life Scale** (SWLS; Diener et al.,1985) The Hindi version of Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS-H; Jaiswal et al.,2020) was used in this study. It consists of five items that measure an individual's life satisfaction on a 7-point Likert scale range of 5 to 45.
- **Beck Depression Inventory-II** (BDI-II; Beck, Steer, & Brown,1996) The Hindi version BDI-II (Rani, 2011) was used in this study. The BDI-II comprises 21 sets of statements, each representing a symptom. These statements are arranged based on the severity of their content. Respondents rate each symptom on a 4-point scale,

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ranging from 0 (not present) to 3 (severe). The scale covers cognitive, emotional/affective, and somatic/vegetative symptoms without sub-scales. Total scores can range from 0 to 63, with higher scores indicating more severe depression (Beck, Steer, & Brown; 1996).

- **Perceived Stress Scale (PSS; Cohen et al., 1988)** The Hindi version of Perceived Stress Scale-10 (PSS-10; Jaiswal et al., 2021) is a 10-item scale that assesses how stressful life events are perceived. The questions ask about feelings and thoughts during the last month, a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from ‘never’ (0) to ‘very often’ (4)
- **Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson et al; 1988)** The Hindi version of Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Jaiswal et al., 2022) is a scale that measures (1) Positive Affect (PA), which is a person’s level of enthusiasm, activity, and alertness. High Positive Affect (PA) is characterized by an elevated level of energy, complete concentration, and enjoyable participation, and (2) Negative Affect (NA) spans a wide range of adverse mood states and is a general dimension of subjective distress and unpleasant engagement. Anger, contempt, disgust, guilt, anxiety, and anxiousness are linked to low PA, whereas sadness and lethargy are linked to high NA. The PANAS is a 20-item scale consisting of two scales namely Positive Affect and Negative Affect with ten items in each scale.

### RESULTS

**Table 1: The correlation coefficient between positive and negative affect, perceived stress, depression, and satisfaction with life (N=260)**

Variables	Positive Affect	Negative Affect	Perceived Stress	Depression
Satisfaction With Life	0.246**	-.167**	-.217**	-.141*

**P\*\*<0.01, p\*<0.05**

**Table 1** showed that there was a positive correlation between positive affect ( $r= 0.246$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) with satisfaction with life. Further, it also showed a negative correlation between negative affect ( $r= -.167$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) with satisfaction with life. Moreover, Perceived stress ( $r= -.217$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and depression ( $r= -.141$ ) were also negatively correlated with satisfaction with life among students.

**Table 2: Regression analysis using Perceived stress as a Predictor and satisfaction with life as a criterion**

R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	F
0.217	.047	.043	-.217	12.55**

The present table showed that Perceived stress was significantly negatively associated ( $\beta= -.217$ \*\*) with Life satisfaction ( $F=12.55$ \*\*,  $df=1,255$ ), and it explains 4.7% variance in explaining life satisfaction.

**Table: 3 Regression analysis using Depression as a Predictor and satisfaction with life as a criterion**

R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	F
0.229	.053	.049	-.229	14.173**

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The present table showed that Positive affect is significantly negatively associated ( $\beta = -.229^{**}$ ) with Life satisfaction ( $F = 14.173^{**}$ ,  $df = 1,255$ ), and it explains 5.3% variance in explaining life satisfaction.

**Table: 4 Step-wise multiple Regression analysis using positive and negative affect as Predictors and satisfaction with life as a criterion**

<i>Predictor Variables</i>	<i>Criterion Variable (well-being)</i>	
	<i>Step 1</i>	<i>Step 2</i>
<i>Positive affect (<math>\beta</math>)</i>		<b>0.250<sup>**</sup></b>
<i>Negative affect (<math>\beta</math>)</i>		<b>-0.174<sup>*</sup></b>
R	.246	0.300
R <sup>2</sup>	0.061	.090
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.057	0.083
F change	16.494 <sup>**</sup>	12.602 <sup>**</sup>

The present table showed that Positive affect is significantly positively associated ( $\beta = .250^{**}$ ) with Life satisfaction ( $F = 16.494^{**}$ ,  $df = 1,255$ ), and it explains 24.6% variance in explaining life satisfaction. Further, it was also shown that Negative affect was significantly negatively ( $\beta = -.174^{**}$ ) associated with life satisfaction ( $F = 12.602^{**}$ ,  $df = 2,254$ ) and it explains 17.4% variance in explaining life satisfaction.

**DISCUSSION**

Understanding and supporting adolescents during this critical period is vital for their holistic development. Schools, parents, and communities often work together to provide a nurturing and empowering environment that helps adolescents navigate the challenges and opportunities of adolescence. Effective communication, mentorship, and access to mental health resources are essential components of supporting adolescent school students. Interventions to improve life satisfaction among higher secondary school students often focus on promoting positive affect, managing stress, and providing support for students experiencing depression. These interventions can include counseling services, stress management programs, and promoting a positive school environment.

PANAS has shed light on the importance of positive affect in shaping life satisfaction. Research consistently indicates that individuals with higher levels of positive affect tend to report higher levels of life satisfaction. PANAS has provided valuable insights into the specific positive emotions, such as joy, enthusiasm, and contentment, which contribute most strongly to overall life satisfaction.

The finding of a negative relationship between stress and depression and satisfaction with life among higher secondary students raises important concerns about the well-being of this population. This discussion aims to explore the implications of these results and highlight potential interventions that can help improve the overall satisfaction with life in this group.

Firstly, it is crucial to acknowledge that stress and depression are prevalent among higher secondary students. This period of adolescence is characterized by multiple stressors, including academic pressure, peer relationships, and self-expectations. These stressors can lead to the development of depressive symptoms, which further exacerbates the dissatisfaction with life experienced by these students.

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The negative relationship found in the study emphasizes the need for early detection and proactive intervention strategies targeting stress and depression in higher secondary students. Schools, parents, and mental health professionals need to work together to implement effective prevention and intervention programs. These programs should focus on building resilience, coping skills, and promoting mental well-being among students. Furthermore, it is important to recognize that the relationship between stress, depression, and satisfaction with life is reciprocal. While stress and depression can reduce satisfaction with life, a lack of satisfaction can also contribute to increased stress and depressive symptoms. This highlights the importance of adopting a holistic approach that addresses both the psychological and environmental factors affecting satisfaction with life.

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### ***Conflict of Interest***

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