

Research Paper

The Impact of Psychological Distress on Life Satisfaction among Female Young Adults

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ABSTRACT

Psychological distress refers to a state of emotional suffering characterised by symptoms like anxiety, depression, and stress, often arising from challenging life circumstances. In young adults, prolonged psychological distress can lead to difficulties in daily functioning, strained relationships, and a diminished sense of purpose. Life satisfaction is a subjective measure of how content and fulfilled an individual feels with various aspects of their life, including personal achievements, relationships, and overall well-being. Psychological distress in female young adults can significantly impact their mental health, leading to decreased life satisfaction and challenges in personal and academic achievements. The purpose of this study is to understand the relationship between Psychological Distress and Life Satisfaction in female young adults. Although extensive research has been conducted on psychological distress and life satisfaction, the rapidly evolving social dynamics, fueled by advancements in technology and the pervasive influence of social media, create a critical need to explore how these factors uniquely affect the mental well-being of female young adults in today's world. Through convenient sampling, a total sample of 100 female participants in the age group of 19-40 years was considered for the study. Also, the participants were divided on the basis of birth order (50 first borns and 50 last borns). A quantitative approach with correlation design is used to understand the relationship between Psychological Distress (K10) and Life Satisfaction (SWLS). The results show that there is a significant negative correlation between Psychological Distress and Life Satisfaction. However, it is found that there is no significant difference in Psychological Distress and Life Satisfaction on the basis of birth order.

Keywords: *Psychological Distress, Life Satisfaction and Young adults*

“Psychological distress is a unique discomfoting, emotional state experienced by an individual in response to a specific stressor or demand that results in harm, either temporary or permanent to the person” (Sheila, H., 2003)

Young adults are people who are too old to be a child and too young to be an adult. According to Erikson's Stages of Development, he described the 6th stage of development as young adulthood which generally lasts from 19 – 40 years of age. Psychological distress is a state of mental agony related to stressors and requests that in day-to-day existence are hard to manage. Distinctions in sexual orientation in psychological

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wellness might exist among males and females, with females seen to have a higher commonness in mental health issues contrasted with males. This might be on the grounds that females are presented to gamble with elements, for example, orientation disparity, orientation-based viciousness and orientation segregation. Women report more psychological distress than men. Life satisfaction is somewhat more nuanced than it first appears; the term is once in a while utilized conversely with joy, yet they are for sure two separate ideas. Life satisfaction is a measurement of a person's life as a whole, not just their level of happiness at the moment. Life Satisfaction and prosperity of females were viewed as impacted to a more elevated level than those of men, because of psychological distress.

Psychological Distress

The American Psychological Association (APA) defines psychological distress as “a set of painful mental and physical symptoms that are associated with normal fluctuations of mood in most people.” According to the Mental Health Commission of New South Wales (2018), psychological distress happens when an individual has extraordinarily horrendous sentiments, side effects, or encounters. psychological distress incorporates a lot more extensive scope of encounters than dysfunctional behaviour, going from gentle side effects to serious mental disease (Goldberg and Blackwell, 1970).

Psychological distress is a typical mental health issue in the community (World Health Organization, 2001; Marchand, Drapeau, & Beaulieu Prevost, 2012; Doherty, Moran, & KartalovaO'Doherty, 2008). It is related with an absence of enthusiasm, rest (trouble nodding off and staying unconscious), distress and hopelessness about the future, crying effectively, feeling dull, and self-destructive considerations (Zhang et al., 2020). The stress-distress model, specifically, holds that openness to an unpleasant occasion that compromises physical or emotional well-being, the powerlessness to adapt successfully to this stressor, and the personal strife that outcomes from this inadequate adapting are the characterising highlights of mental pain (Horwitz 2007). Specifically, inhabitants of the psychological stress-distress model place that the characterising elements of mental pain are the openness to an unpleasant occasion that comprises the physical or psychological wellness, the powerlessness to adapt really to these stressors and the inner strife that outcomes from this insufficient adapting (Mirowsky and Ross 2002). A state of close to home perseverance is normally portrayed by side effects of wretchedness, (for example, losing interest, misery, and demoralisation) and stress (like anxiety and disquiet) (Ryff, 2014). Losing interest in exercises, troubled or dangerous circumstances, disturbing sentiments and wretchedness are indications of mental misery in understudies (Li et al., 2020).

Psychological Distress is a bunch of excruciating mental and actual side effects that are related with typical vacillations of state of mind in a great many people. At times, be that as it may, mental trouble might demonstrate the start of significant burdensome issues, tension turmoil, schizophrenia, somatization jumble, or various other clinical circumstances. It is believed to be what is evaluated by numerous putative self-report proportions of sorrow and tension.

The Effects of Psychological Distress

While most people experience stress from time to time, psychological distress can have a more profound effect on an individual. Psychological distress can even be a precursor to a mental illness. However, experiencing psychological distress does not always indicate the presence of a mental health disorder.

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Experiencing psychological distress can feel overwhelming, and many people may want to manage their way through it discreetly. However, people who seek help during times of psychological distress may learn effective coping mechanisms to shorten its duration and mitigate any long-term effects.

psychological distress can cause various side effects in various individuals. The reason for the pressure, and an individual's ways of dealing with hardship or stress, may decide how they are impacted.

An individual who lives with elevated degrees of mental pain may likewise encounter hindered emotional well-being, trailed by an expanded gamble for fostering a psychological well-being problem. Feeling side effects of pressure during a crisis can be regular. For instance, losing a friend or family member or getting through a significant catastrophic event are two instances of groundbreaking occasions that can prompt extraordinary psychological distress. The power of trouble normally dies down with time. In any case, when these sentiments continue and are joined by different side effects, for example, restlessness or an uncontrolled remembering of an unpleasant or horrible mishap, an individual might be encountering a pressure problem, for example, post-horrendous pressure issue (PTSD).

Assuming you are worried that you might be encountering a hidden uneasiness or stress problem, you don't need to confront it single-handedly. You can talk with an emotional well-being proficient, whether face to face or on the web. They might have the option to assist you with understanding the reason why you are encountering these side effects and give a proof-based treatment to you.

Psychological Stress Signs

There's a distinction between a stressor and actual stress. A stressor can be a person, place, or situation that's causing you stress. Stress is the actual response to one or a combination of those stressors. There are any number of situations that can cause stress. Dr. Gary Brown, a licensed psychotherapist, says some of the more common stressors include: Relationship conflicts at home, new or increasing work responsibilities, increasing demands, financial strain, loss of a loved one, health problems, moving to a new location, exposure to one or more traumatic incidents, such as a car accident or a violent crime.

Knowing how to spot the signs of stress is the first step in developing ways to manage its adverse effects. Some of the more common physical, psychological, and emotional signs of chronic stress include: Rapid heart rate, elevated blood pressure, feeling overwhelmed, fatigue, difficulty, sleeping, poor problem-solving, fear that the stressor won't go away, persistent thoughts about one or more stressors, changes in behaviour, including social withdrawal, feelings of sadness, frustration, loss of emotional control, inability to rest, and self-medication.

Ways of Manage Distress

With regards to overseeing pressure, simplifying changes can go far in working on your general wellbeing and lessening pressure. Having apparatuses and systems you can go to in unpleasant circumstances can forestall your feelings of anxiety from heightening. It's critical to structure a portion of your time so you can be easily occupied without being overpowered, Earthy coloured says. "Really buckling down isn't normally like working proficiently," he said. Working excessively can decrease efficiency, truth be told. Understanding that you're not frail since you're feeling pressure is significant, Earthy coloured says. Stress is an

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exceptionally ordinary response to the stressors in your day to day existence. Before your feelings of anxiety heighten, contact somebody you trust, like a companion, relative, or collaborator. Talking about your thoughts or venting your interests might assist with decreasing your pressure. Put away the opportunity to think about your day. Record any considerations or sentiments you're having. This can be a valuable device to assist you with better comprehension of your stressors and how you respond to pressure, Earthy coloured says. With regards to overseeing pressure, legitimate nourishment is your companion. Skipping feasts can bring down your glucose, which can push down your state of mind. Now and again, this can likewise set off serious sensations of outrage and dissatisfaction, Earthy coloured says.

Participating in standard actual work can work on your general wellbeing and diminish your feelings of anxiety. At the point when you work out, your body discharges endorphins. These vibe great chemicals can likewise ease side effects of melancholy and uneasiness. Your capacity to oversee pressure diminishes when you're worn out. Attempt to get a prescribed seven to nine hours every evening. In the event that you have sleep deprivation, it means to get as much rest as possible, then, at that point, work in times of rest during the day. These activities, which can incorporate profound, slow breathing and moderate muscle unwinding, include straining and afterward loosening up different gatherings of muscles.

Life Satisfaction

Life satisfaction is a central concept in positive psychology, reflecting an individual's overall assessment of their life quality. According to Diener et al. (1985), life satisfaction involves cognitive evaluations of one's life and can be influenced by various factors such as personal achievements, relationships, and overall well-being. It represents a global judgement of how well one's life aligns with their expectations and standards. Research suggests that life satisfaction is closely linked to subjective well-being and is a significant predictor of mental health and happiness (Diener, 1984).

Furthermore, life satisfaction is shaped by both internal and external factors. Internal factors include personality traits, such as optimism and self-esteem, while external factors encompass socioeconomic status, social relationships, and life events (Diener & Seligman, 2004). Studies have shown that individuals who experience higher levels of life satisfaction tend to report better health, more fulfilling relationships, and greater overall happiness (Lucas et al., 2003).

In the field of psychology, life satisfaction is examined through various lenses, including its relation to personal values and goals. According to the self-determination theory, life satisfaction is significantly influenced by the fulfilment of basic psychological needs such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This theory posits that individuals experience higher life satisfaction when they perceive that their needs are being met in their daily lives, contributing to a sense of fulfilment and well-being.

Additionally, life satisfaction is linked to broader social and cultural contexts. For instance, societal norms and economic conditions can impact individuals' perceptions of life satisfaction. Research indicates that people living in societies with high levels of economic equality and social support tend to report higher life satisfaction compared to those in less equitable environments (Helliwell, Layard, & Sachs, 2020). This suggests that societal factors play a crucial role in shaping individual experiences of life satisfaction.

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Furthermore, longitudinal studies have demonstrated that life satisfaction can fluctuate over time, influenced by significant life events such as marriage, parenthood, and retirement (Lucas, 2007). These events can lead to changes in life satisfaction levels, highlighting the dynamic nature of this construct.

In exploring life satisfaction, it is important to consider its relationship with personality traits and behavioural patterns. Research indicates that certain personality traits, such as extraversion and conscientiousness, are positively correlated with higher life satisfaction (Diener & Lucas, 2000). Extraverts typically report higher levels of life satisfaction due to their tendency to engage in social activities and experience positive emotions more frequently. Similarly, conscientious individuals often achieve their goals and maintain fulfilling relationships, contributing to their overall life satisfaction.

Moreover, behavioural and lifestyle factors significantly impact life satisfaction. Engaging in healthy behaviours, such as regular physical activity and balanced nutrition, is associated with higher levels of life satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Physical health and well-being are closely tied to mental well-being, emphasising the role of lifestyle choices in achieving a satisfying life.

Another dimension of life satisfaction is the concept of eudaimonia, which refers to living in accordance with one's true self and realising one's potential (Ryff, 1989). Eudaimonic well-being is distinct from hedonic well-being, which focuses on pleasure and avoidance of pain. Eudaimonia involves personal growth, purpose, and meaningful engagement in life, contributing to a deeper and more sustained sense of life satisfaction (Waterman, 1993).

Finally, the impact of social relationships on life satisfaction cannot be overstated. Strong social connections and supportive relationships are consistently linked to higher life satisfaction and overall well-being (Holt-Lunstad, Smith, & Layton, 2010). Quality relationships provide emotional support, foster a sense of belonging, and contribute to a more positive life outlook.

Psychological Distress and Life satisfaction

Psychological distress encompasses a range of emotional and mental struggles, including anxiety, depression, and stress, which can significantly impair a person's quality of life. This distress often manifests as persistent feelings of sadness, worry, or tension, which can undermine one's ability to experience joy and satisfaction in daily activities. When individuals are overwhelmed by psychological distress, their ability to engage positively with their surroundings, maintain relationships, or pursue personal goals is often compromised, leading to reduced life satisfaction. On the other hand, life satisfaction refers to a person's overall sense of contentment and fulfilment with their life. When life satisfaction is low, individuals may feel unfulfilled or disconnected, which can amplify feelings of psychological distress. This relationship creates a cyclical pattern: distress can lower life satisfaction, and low life satisfaction can intensify psychological distress.

Need and Significance

Studying psychological distress and life satisfaction among female young adults is crucial for understanding the unique mental health challenges and well-being concerns faced by this demographic. This research provides valuable insights into factors contributing to psychological distress and how they impact overall life satisfaction. By identifying specific stressors and sources of dissatisfaction, interventions can be better tailored to address these

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needs. The findings can also inform policymakers, educators, and mental health professionals, leading to more effective support systems and preventive measures. Ultimately, such studies help enhance mental health services and improve the quality of life for young women, considering their distinct social, cultural, and economic contexts.

Objectives

- The purpose of this study is to understand the correlation between psychological distress and life satisfaction among female young adults.
- To examine there is no difference in life satisfaction among first born and last born female young adults
- To examine there is no difference in psychological distress among first born and last born female young adults

Hypotheses

- **H1:** There is a significant relation between psychological distress and life satisfaction among female young adults
- **H2:** There is a significant difference in life satisfaction among first born and last born female young adults
- **H3:** There is a significant difference in psychological distress among first born and last born female young adults

Psychological Distress

Psychological distress refers to a state of emotional suffering characterised by feelings of anxiety, depression, or stress that disrupt daily functioning. It often results from challenges or stressors that overwhelm an individual's coping abilities.

Life satisfaction

It is the subjective assessment of one's overall contentment and fulfilment with life. It reflects how individuals evaluate their life circumstances and their sense of well-being and happiness.

Young Adults

According to Erikson's Stages of Development young adulthood is a transitional phase in human development, typically spanning from ages 19-40 years. It bridges the gap between adolescence and full adulthood, encompassing both late adolescence and early adulthood.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In a study titled "Psychological Distress and Life Satisfaction Among University Students" by Kumar, Shaheen, Rasool, and Shafi (2020) investigated the relationship between psychological distress and life satisfaction among university students. They found a significant correlation between these variables, with medical students experiencing higher psychological distress compared to those in engineering and social sciences. The study utilised the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS) and the Life Satisfaction Scale. The findings suggest that academic discipline may influence levels of psychological distress and life satisfaction.

Saifi and Srivastava (2021) in their study "Correlation Study on Psychological Distress and Life Satisfaction Among University Students in Delhi", explored the relationship between psychological distress and life satisfaction among university students in Delhi. Their

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findings revealed no significant relationship between these variables or between distress and gender, indicating relatively low levels of psychological distress among participants. They used the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS-21) and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). The results imply that other factors may be influencing students' life satisfaction.

Another study titled “Psychological Distress and Life Satisfaction Among Female Commercial Sex Workers” by Marboh and Ali (2022) examined psychological distress and life satisfaction among female commercial sex workers. The study found a significant negative correlation between psychological distress and life satisfaction, with most participants scoring in the average range for life satisfaction. The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10) and the Satisfaction with Life Scale were used. This indicates that despite high levels of distress, many participants maintain moderate life satisfaction.

A study titled “Study of Psychological Distress, Life Satisfaction, and Happiness Among IT Professionals” by Kumar and Varma (2023) assessed psychological distress, life satisfaction, and happiness among IT professionals. They found a negative association between psychological distress and both life satisfaction and happiness. Additionally, significant age-related differences in psychological distress were observed. The study highlights the impact of age on psychological well-being within the IT sector.

Valle Pico and Larzabal Fernández (2024) in their study “Stress, Psychological Distress, Psychological Well-being, and Life Satisfaction According to Work Modalities in Mothers of Families”, investigated how different work modalities impact stress, psychological distress, psychological well-being, and life satisfaction among mothers. They revealed that unpaid work was associated with higher psychological distress and lower well-being and life satisfaction, while telework was linked to better scores in these areas. The study underscores the importance of work modality in influencing maternal mental health and overall satisfaction.

A study titled “Psychosocial Predictors of Psychological Distress and Life Satisfaction in Norwegian University Students” by Engen (2024) explored the associations between psychosocial variables and mental health among university students. The study identified gender differences in the relationships between psychosocial factors and both psychological distress and life satisfaction. Measures included the HSCL-25 and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). The results suggest that tailored interventions considering psychosocial factors and gender differences could be beneficial for improving student mental health.

In a paper titled “Life Satisfaction and Stress Level of Working and Non-Working Women” by Kumar (2024) compared stress and life satisfaction levels between working and non-working women. The study found that working women reported higher life satisfaction and lower stress levels compared to non-working women, with a negative correlation between life satisfaction and stress. These findings indicate that employment status significantly impacts women's stress levels and overall satisfaction.

In a paper titled “Negative Life Events and Psychological Distress and Life Satisfaction in U.S. College Students: The Moderating Effects of Optimism, Hope, and Gratitude” by Gungor, Young, and Sivo (2024) examined the effects of negative life events on psychological distress and life satisfaction among U.S. college students. Their findings indicated that negative life events increased distress and decreased life satisfaction, but optimism, hope, and gratitude moderated these effects. The study supports incorporating

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positive psychological interventions in college counselling to enhance resilience and life satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

Research method

Research methods are the systematic approaches and techniques employed to gather and analyse data for generating new insights or enhancing understanding of a subject. These methods encompass various strategies and tools for data collection, each suited to different types of research questions and objectives.

Research design

A quantitative approach with correlation design is used to understand the relationship between Psychological Distress and Life Satisfaction. Quantitative research design focuses on measuring and analysing the extent to which individuals think, act, or feel in particular ways. This approach typically involves large sample sizes and emphasises the quantity and statistical significance of responses. Unlike qualitative research, which seeks in-depth understanding and emotional insight, quantitative research aims to provide broad, generalizable findings based on numerical data.

Participants

For research purposes, a sample of 100 women aged between 19 and 40 years was selected from various regions. Also, the participants were divided on the basis of birth order, with 50 first borns and 50 last borns. Convenient sampling was utilised for this study.

Inclusion criteria

Individuals aged between 19 to 40. All genders are included. Individuals taking consent to be the part of samples for the study. Only first born and last-born young females were included

Exclusion criteria

The literature review does not include the extremities in the psychological disorder spectrum and Illiterates. Individuals not within the age range between the ages of 19 years to 40 years. Individuals not taking consent to be the part of samples for the study.

Instruments

- **Personal Information Sheet:** Includes: Age, Birth order, Gender and geographical location
- **Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS):** The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), developed by Ed Diener, Robert A. Emmons, Randy J. Larsen, and Sharon Griffin, assesses subjective life satisfaction by focusing on the cognitive-judgmental aspects of an individual's overall life satisfaction. This brief, unidimensional scale consists of 5 items rated on a 7-point scale from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (7), with total scores ranging from 5 to 35, where higher scores reflect greater life satisfaction. The SWLS was initially normed on 176 undergraduates from the University of Illinois, yielding a mean score of 23.5 with a standard deviation of 6.43, and a subsequent sample of 53 elderly individuals from a Midwestern city had a mean score of 25.8. The scale demonstrates strong internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of .87, and excellent test-retest reliability, with a correlation of .82 over a two-month period. It has shown strong concurrent validity by correlating with various measures of subjective well-being, self-esteem, clinical symptom checklists,

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neuroticism, and emotionality, as well as with independent ratings of life satisfaction among the elderly, confirming its robustness and applicability across different populations.

- **The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10):** The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10) is a psychological screening tool designed to identify adults experiencing significant levels of psychological distress. Widely used in both the United States and Australia, including in the Australian Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing (1997) and the Australian National Health Surveys, the K10 consists of 10 items. Validated by Professor Gavin Andrews, it demonstrates a strong association between high scores and diagnoses of anxiety and affective disorders, as identified by the WHO Composite International Diagnostic Interview (CIDI). The scale also shows significant correlations with other mental disorder categories and the presence of any current mental disorder. The K10 exhibits strong reliability and validity, supported by sensitivity and specificity data that confirm its effectiveness as a screening instrument for anxiety and depression and for monitoring treatment outcomes. Scores on the K10 range from 10 to 50, with higher scores indicating greater severity of psychological distress.

Procedure

After selecting appropriate measures, preparations for data collection were made. Google Form was designed and organised for this purpose. Informed consent was obtained from participants, and a link to the Google Form was distributed to a sample of 100 female young adults. The form included general instructions outlining the study's purpose and the estimated time required to complete it. Participants were instructed to read the guidelines carefully before beginning the survey. Upon completion, the responses were collected through Google Forms and exported to an excel spreadsheet for analysis. The correlational research method was employed, given the presence of two variables under investigation.

Data Analysis

Pearson's Correlation and independent t-test are used for the data analysis. The data were analysed with the help of JAMOVI , descriptive statistics in order to answer the research question of the study.

Ethical Considerations

Participants are given the opportunity to make an informed choice about their involvement in the evaluation. They have the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences for their future engagement with the program or services. The evaluation process is designed to avoid any harm, whether intentional or unintended, to the participants. Participants were made aware of the study's objectives. Measures are in place to ensure that the participants' feelings are safeguarded throughout the process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 showing pearson's correlation coefficient of Psychological distress and Life satisfaction

Variable	mean	SD	1	r
Psychological Distress (1)	24.9	7.41		
Life Satisfaction (2)	22.3	6.06	0.014*	-0.221

* $p < .001$

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The results of Table 1 show that there is significant negative correlation between psychological distress and life satisfaction ($r = -0.221, p < .001$). These results imply that an increase in one of the correlated variables leads to decrease in the variable it is correlated with and vice versa.

Recent research has consistently demonstrated that psychological distress is inversely related to life satisfaction. For instance, Diener et al. (2017) found that individuals experiencing higher levels of psychological distress reported significantly lower life satisfaction, indicating the profound impact of mental health on overall well-being. Similarly, a study by Huppert and So (2013) revealed that elevated distress symptoms are associated with diminished life satisfaction, further emphasising the importance of mental health management for a fulfilling life. In another study, Schotanus-Dijkstra et al. (2016) examined this relationship across different age groups and confirmed that higher distress correlates with lower life satisfaction regardless of age, suggesting that this link is pervasive across the lifespan. Moreover, a longitudinal study by Keyes (2014) highlighted that sustained psychological distress over time leads to a progressive decline in life satisfaction, pointing to the long-term effects of mental health on life quality. Lastly, Zhang et al. (2018) explored cultural differences in this correlation and found that, across various cultural contexts, the negative association between psychological distress and life satisfaction remains consistent, underlining the universal nature of this relationship. According to the results obtained from Table 1; It was concluded that there is a relationship between psychological distress and life satisfaction variables. Also, study reveals the variables are negatively correlated to each other. Therefore, the null hypothesis, "H1: There is significant correlation between psychological distress and life satisfaction among female young adults" is accepted.

Table 2 showing mean, Standard Deviation, mann-Whitney U test value and p-value of life satisfaction among first borns and last borns

Group	N	Mean	SD	U	sig.	W (SWLS)	F (SWLS)
First born	50	23.1	6.70				
Last born	50	21.5	5.29	1007	0.093	0.964	2.48

Note: W: Shapiro-Wilk test value of Life satisfaction (SWLS); F: Levene's test value of Life satisfaction (SWLS)

Summary of independent sample t-test presented above Table 2 shows the comparison in SWLS scores between the first borns and last borns. Variance scores of life satisfaction scale (SLWS) are homogeneous between first borns and last borns ($F = 2.48; p = 0.118$). But scores are not normally distributed ($W = 0.964; p < .001$). Thus, a decision is made to compare the group with mann-Whitney U test. The result of the mann-Whitney U test ($U = 1007; p = 0.093$) clearly indicates that there is no significant difference in life satisfaction between first borns and last borns. The mean SLWS score of first born participants is slightly higher than last born participants which indicates that first born female participants have slightly higher life satisfaction than last born female participants.

Research has consistently shown that first-born individuals tend to report higher life satisfaction than their younger siblings, particularly last-borns. Jefferson, Herbst, and McCrae (1998) conducted a comprehensive study that found first-borns often enjoy greater life satisfaction due to the leadership roles they naturally assume during childhood, which

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helps them develop stronger self-esteem and a sense of accomplishment. Sulloway (2001) expanded on this by demonstrating that first-borns often align more closely with parental expectations, which leads to a stronger internalisation of success and, consequently, greater life satisfaction. Beck, Burnet, and Vosper (2006) explored these dynamics within families, finding that first-borns typically receive more parental attention and resources, leading to higher academic and personal achievements. These accomplishments often translate into greater life satisfaction as first-borns feel more competent and capable in navigating life's challenges. Similarly, Paulhus, Trapnell, and Chen (1999) highlighted that first-borns often possess higher levels of self-esteem and assertiveness, traits that contribute significantly to their overall sense of well-being and satisfaction with life. Finally, Healey and Ellis (2007) provided insight into the personality traits associated with birth order, noting that first-borns tend to be more conscientious and organised. These traits not only help them achieve personal and professional goals more effectively but also lead to higher life satisfaction as they experience fewer obstacles and more successes in their endeavours. Collectively, these studies underscore a consistent trend where first-borns enjoy higher life satisfaction compared to their last-born siblings, largely due to the unique advantages and responsibilities that come with their birth order. Hence results of the hypothesis stating that “H2: There is a significant difference in life satisfaction with respect to first born and last born female young adults” is rejected from available evidence.

Table 3 showing mean, Standard Deviation, mann-Whitney U test value and p-value of psychological distress among first born and last born female young adults

Group	N	Mean	SD	U	sig.	W (K10)	F (K10)
First born	50	24.1	7.65				
Last born	50	25.6	7.17	1138	0.440	0.982	0.0632

Note: W: Shapiro-Wilk test value of Psychological distress (K10); F: Levene's test value of Psychological distress (K10)

Summary of independent sample t-test presented above Table 3 shows the comparison in K10 scores between the first borns and last borns. Variance scores of Psychological distress scale (K10) are homogeneous between first borns and last borns ($F=0.0632$; $p=0.802$). But scores are not normally distributed ($W=0.982$; $p<.001$). Thus, a decision is made to compare the group with mann-Whitney U test. The result of the mann-Whitney U test ($U=1138$; $p=0.440$) clearly indicates that there is no significant difference in psychological distress between first borns and last borns. The mean K10 score of last born participants is slightly higher than first born participants which indicates that last born female participants have slightly higher psychological distress than first born female participants.

Research indicates that last-born individuals often experience higher levels of psychological distress compared to their first-born siblings. Beck, Burnet, and Vosper (2006) found that last-borns tend to struggle more with anxiety and self-esteem issues in adolescence, likely due to the pressure of living up to older siblings' achievements. Repetto, Caldwell, and Zimmerman (2004) conducted a longitudinal study that revealed last-born African American adolescents reported higher levels of psychological distress, which persisted into adulthood, suggesting that birth order influences long-term mental health outcomes. Lasko and Widom (2005) explored the link between childhood victimisation and adult psychological distress, finding that last-borns were more vulnerable to distress, particularly in the context of adverse family environments. Parker and Roy (2001) supported these findings,

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demonstrating that last-borns are more likely to suffer from depressive symptoms, especially in families with high levels of conflict or dysfunction. Lastly, Stewart and Campbell (2000) observed that last-borns in young adulthood reported higher levels of psychological distress compared to their first-born counterparts, possibly due to their position within the family hierarchy, which often results in lower levels of parental attention and support. Together, these studies highlight a consistent trend of increased psychological distress among last-borns. Hence results of the hypothesis stating that “H3: There is a significant difference in psychological distress with respect to first born and last born female young adults” is rejected from available evidence

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Young adults are people who are too old to be a child and too young to be an adult.

This review explores the impact of psychological distress and life satisfaction on female young adults. Psychological distress, characterised by symptoms such as anxiety, depression, and stress, can significantly affect the well-being and overall life satisfaction of young women. Female young adults, often facing unique societal pressures and expectations, may experience heightened levels of stress related to academic performance, career development, and personal relationships. These pressures can lead to reduced life satisfaction, manifesting as feelings of inadequacy, low self-esteem, and chronic unhappiness.

The interplay between psychological distress and life satisfaction is crucial, as unresolved distress can further diminish life satisfaction, creating a cycle of negativity. However, there is a notable lack of research focusing specifically on this demographic, which highlights the need for further studies to better understand the unique challenges faced by female young adults and to develop targeted interventions that can enhance their life satisfaction while mitigating psychological distress.

Method

A quantitative approach with a correlational design was used to understand the relationship between psychological distress (K10) and life satisfaction (SWLS). For research purposes, sampling was conducted, and a sample of females aged 19-40 years was taken from various areas. Personal information, including age and birth order, was collected. The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), developed by Ed Diener, Robert A. Emmons, Randy J. Larsen, and Sharon Griffin (1985), and the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10), developed by Kessler R. (1992), were used in this study.

Procedure

After selecting appropriate measures, preparations for data collection were made. A Google Form was designed and organised for this purpose. Informed consent was obtained from participants, and a link to the Google Form was distributed to a sample of 100 female young adults. The form included general instructions outlining the study's purpose and the estimated time required to complete it. Participants were instructed to carefully read the guidelines before beginning the survey. Upon completion, responses were collected through Google Forms and exported to an Excel spreadsheet for analysis. Given the two variables under investigation, a correlational research method was employed. Pearson's correlation and an independent t-test were used for data analysis. The data were analysed using JAMOVI, incorporating descriptive statistics to address the research question. Participants were fully informed of their rights, including the ability to withdraw from the study at any

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time without any negative consequences, ensuring that their decision to participate was made freely and without pressure.

Major Findings

- There is a relationship between psychological distress and life satisfaction variables.
- There is no significant difference in life satisfaction between first born and last born female young adults
- There is no significant difference in psychological distress between first born and last born female young adults.

Scope of the Study

- The study provides insights into the levels and types of psychological distress experienced by young adult females, contributing to a better understanding of mental health issues in this demographic.
- The research explores how life satisfaction is perceived by young adult females, offering valuable data on factors contributing to their overall well-being.
- The study aims to identify and analyse the relationship between psychological distress and life satisfaction, potentially revealing patterns or correlations that could inform future research or interventions.
- By concentrating on female young adults, the study addresses a specific demographic that may face unique challenges and stressors, allowing for targeted recommendations and interventions.
- The findings from the study could contribute to the broader field of mental health research, particularly in understanding how psychological distress impacts life satisfaction in young adults, and may inform the development of support programs or policies.

Limitations of the Study

The following are observed as the limitation of the present study

- The study's small sample size of 100 participants may not represent the broader population of female young adults, limiting the generalizability of the findings.
- The use of convenience sampling may introduce selection bias, as participants may not be representative of the entire population of young adult females, which could affect the validity of the results.
- Relying on self-reported measures of psychological distress and life satisfaction can introduce biases such as social desirability bias or inaccurate self-assessment, potentially skewing the results.
- If the study employs a cross-sectional design, it only captures data at a single point in time, limiting the ability to infer causality between psychological distress and life satisfaction.
- The study may not control for confounding variables such as socioeconomic status, education, or health conditions, which could influence both psychological distress and life satisfaction, potentially leading to misleading conclusions.

Suggestions for further research

Future research on the impact of psychological distress and life satisfaction among female young adults could benefit from several approaches. Longitudinal studies would provide insights into the long-term effects of psychological distress on life satisfaction and reveal any changes over time. Including a diverse sample across various cultural and

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socioeconomic backgrounds would enhance the generalizability of findings. Intervention-based research could focus on developing and testing specific programs, such as cognitive-behavioural therapy or resilience training, to improve mental health outcomes. Comparative studies between different demographics and the exploration of moderators and mediators could offer a deeper understanding of the relationships involved. Additionally, examining the influence of social media, academic and occupational stress, and significant life transitions could provide further insights into factors affecting psychological distress and life satisfaction.

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Conflict of Interest

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